

New Facsimile

The Bibles of Ripoll (Les Biblias de Ripoll)

Two complete Ripoll Bibles survive, one held now in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (ms. lat. 5729) and the other in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (ms. lat. 6). There are also remains—five folios—of a third bible, discovered through years of research; these fragments are found in the Library of Montserrat and the ACA Aixiu Reial of Barcelona.

In order to differentiate them, the bible held in the Vatican is referred to as the “Ripoll Bible” and the one in France, as the “Rodes Bible”. The third, discovered among the remains of the archive of St. Miguel de Fluvià, is named after that monastery. The complete work is entitled “Les Biblias de Ripoll”. The monks of the Ripoll monastery came to produce these bibles during the 10th and first half of the 11th centuries; this was a period of great activity in Ripoll which had become an important cultural center and where an outstanding figure, the Bishop of Oliba, trained monks as copyists and illustrators and set up a scriptorium and workshop.

Among the artists that worked there the Monk Guifré de Ripoll seems to have copied the entire “Ripoll Bible” and is in many ways the most important of them. There is also an anonymous artist, a perfectionist, whose work is seen in this bible and who takes into account the proportions, the parallelism and the symmetry of the scenes. He is highly regular in the realist schematization of the human and animal figures and in the depiction of domestic and musical instruments. None of the scenes that he drew are colored. It appears that the monk Guifré de Ripoll colored the scenes in the first part with the same sense of movement he brought to the drawings of the biblical scenes.

These wonderful bibles are probably the most splendidly decorated bibles of Europe during the 10th and 11th centuries and are the first monumental works and treasures of the Catalan miniature.

Available now:

Volume I: The Bible of Ripoll (facsimile)

Limited edition: 850 copies

133 folios, in the original size, 45 x 60 cm (reproduces only folios with illuminations)

Volume III: Commentary (in Catalan) by Prof. Anscar M. Mundó.

404 pp. (summaries in Italian, French, German, English & Spanish)

Price of volumes I & III: Euro 1,945. Please call for special OMI offer.

(The Bible of Rodes (vol. II) will appear next. Price not yet established)

