Review

Reviewed Work(s): The Corpus of the Miniatures in the Manuscripts of the Decretum Gratiani by Anthony Melnikas
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terminated Canon law manuscripts was taken with the period, even so thorough a connoisseur of the profusely illustrated and decorated, however little memorable exhibition in Bologna of 1952, Mostra Orationale of St. Erentrud1.

The latter type of manuscripts, numerically the most important, has long been the most neglected. Consisting of hundreds, or rather thousands of books on Canon and Civil law, most of them are profusely illustrated and decorated, however little one would have thought such treatment appropriate. To what extent even de luxe copies of such texts have escaped the attention of art historians can be shown by the following example. When publishing books on Canon and Civil law, most of them are part untilled land. This applies particularly to three periods in their history have been neither fully investigated nor adequately published. The research undertaken in the course of the last hundred years has been chiefly concerned with the liturgical manuscripts of the pre-Romanesque period, on the one hand, and on the other, with the de luxe products of the later Middle Ages. The period in between — from ca. 1080 to ca. 1380 A. D. — is still in part untilled land. This is applied particularly to three categories of illuminated manuscripts: the large choirbooks, the vernacular texts written and illustrated for secular purposes and, last but not least, the juridical codices.

The two other great schools of illumination, the pre-Romanesque and the Romanesque, are both of considerable importance and, in this field, has been chiefly concerned with the liturgical manuscripts of the pre-Romanesque period, on the one hand, and on the other, with the de luxe products of the later Middle Ages. The period in between — from ca. 1080 to ca. 1380 A. D. — is still in part untilled land. This applies particularly to three categories of illuminated manuscripts: the large choirbooks, the vernacular texts written and illustrated for secular purposes and, last but not least, the juridical codices.

The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to his friends Robert Benson, Gerhard Ladner and Stephan Kuttner for having read this review in a draft and suggesting several welcome improvements. I am also grateful to Mrs. Helen Loerke for editing it from the point of view of language.

1 On which see Georg Swarzenski, Die Salzburger Buchmalerei, Leipzig, 1908, pp. 144 ff.
the same time the lines of text in sepia above or mention only the most conspicuous deviations. At originals, a bright vermillion has turned into been able to check the reproductions against the cannot be suppressed. In most cases where I have appointment in the quality of the colour plates knowledge of Medieval book illumination. How-

perhaps have been entrusted instead to a team of scripts: Schools of Illumination and their Stylistic characteristics, the last to contain a catalogue of all the manuscripts included in the first three parts of the Corpus.

This is, indeed, a vast undertaking for which the life and the capacity of a single scholar would hardly seem to suffice. For that reason, it should perhaps have been entrusted instead to a team of specialists, preferably in close cooperation with the American Institute of Medieval Canon Law (first in Washington, now in Berkeley), which is directed by a leading scholar in the field, Stephan Kuttner. Melnikas has, however, completed all by himself the first point on his program: a broad survey of the miniatures in the manuscripts of Gratian’s Decretum. It has appeared as vols. XVI to XVIII of the Studia Gratiana, each copy numbered and signed by the author and by Father Stickler, a procedure rather startling in a serious scholarly work.

The first volume opens with a preface in Latin by the editor of the Studia Gratiana, followed by the blessings, given in advance, by two distinguished art historians, Millard Meiss (†) and Cesare Gnudi. In his own introduction, the author renders an account of his working principles, as he had done before in the Festschrift in honor of Stephan Kuttner (Studia Gratiana, XII, 1967, pp. 325–328).

The most valuable part of the Corpus consists of more than 1800 illustrations, 200 of which are in colour, selected out of 150 manuscripts. It is probably no exaggeration to say that more than 70% per cent of these miniatures have never before been published; from that point of view the Corpus certainly constitutes an enormous advance in our knowledge of Medieval book illumination. However praiseworthy this may be, a feeling of disappointment in the quality of the colour plates cannot be suppressed. In most cases where I have been able to check the reproductions against the originals, a bright vermillion has turned into orange, or a deep blue has lost its saturation, to mention only the most conspicuous deviations. At the same time the lines of text in sepia above or below the image in the Italian manuscripts have become either black or appear strangely fragmentary, as if hit by some mysterious illness. Another calamity is that a great many illustrations, both in black and white and in colour, are reproduced out of scale by being unnecessarily enlarged by one tenth or more. This damages their stylistic authenticity. In spite of all this, one cannot but rejoice in having such a great number of reproductions put at the disposal of scholars of various disciplines for further research – certainly the principal purpose of such a Corpus.

The 150 codices from which the reproductions in Melnikas’ publication have been selected constitute qualitatively an important, but quantitatively only a certain percentage of all the Decretum miniatures in existence. At the end of his third volume the author has an index of some 480 manuscripts, chiefly excerpted from Stephan Kuttner’s fundamental Repertorium der Kanonistik (Studi e testi, LXXI, 1937), although this is not explicitly stated. I take it that this second list represents the entire number of illuminated Decretum manuscripts from which the author made his final choice. It is a pity that he does not comment upon the principles underlying his selection, and that in his indices he has not followed Kuttner’s sound practice of starring manuscripts examined personally. It leaves the reader uncertain as to whether the author has covered the ground with sufficient thoroughness. Since the 150 manuscripts selected represent less than one third of those in the second list, one may even wonder if the exacting word »Corpus« should be applied to the title. (It should at least have read »A« Corpus, and not »The«!) It is true that of the 330 discarded items there are many which, from the point of view of art history, are of minor interest and would have to be left out by any standards. But this does not apply to all of them; on the contrary, one could easily mention thirty or forty manuscripts with as much if not greater interest than many of those selected. Examples will be given below in a discussion of the schools of illumination represented in the Corpus.

How to make the best choice is, of course, a real problem, not only because of the number of codices whose artistic quality entitles them to consideration, but also because of the wealth of miniatures or initials that adorn them. The norm is that a complete Decretum manuscript contains at least 38 miniatures or decorative initials; namely, one at the beginning of the first part, the Distinctiones; one for each of the thirty-six Causae; and one for the third and final part, De consecratione. Many early manuscripts have an introduction beginning In prima parte agitur. We neither know when this practice was first introduced, nor how long it remained in use; but this section can have up to twenty decorative or figurative I-initials, the first of which may display a personification of Jurisprudence as a charming young girl holding a flower, such as the one to be found as a marginal figure in a Decretum manuscript in the State Library of Bamberg, Msc. Can 13 (Fig. 1). In many codices there is also after Distinctio LXXIII a set of alphabetical
tables with Arabic, Greek and Roman numbers, the so-called *litterae formatae*, set into a simple framework of arcades. There are furthermore inserted in Causa 35 two full-page schemata of family relationship, the *Arbores consanguinitatis* and *affinitatis*, both of great art historical interest. The first is carried by an impressive bearded figure, whereas the second has man and wife holding crossed family ties. Finally, but only in the later manuscripts, a special illustration to Causa 33, qu. 3, *De poeniten-
tia*, makes its appearance, the introduction of which, as pointed out by Stephan Kuttner (*Reper-
torium*, p. 120–122), coincides with a new division of the Decretum into four instead of three parts. Such are the basic facts, and one is a bit astonished not to find them stated in the introduction to the publication.

Even if there had not been more than a hundred manuscripts containing a full set of miniatures and/or initials, to have fully illustrated all of them would have required some 4000 reproductions. This rough estimate may give an idea of what a high percentage of the material had to be left out in order to bring the illustrations down to the more manageable number of ca. 1800. Faced with this obligation, Melnikas has, as mentioned, first of all reduced the number of codices to ca. 150. He has furthermore wisely avoided treating them all alike. A limited number of key manuscripts have all—or nearly all—miniatures illustrated, and some twenty manuscripts have been considered important enough to receive up to thirty illustrations each. On the other hand, a good many first-class manuscripts have been rather grudgingly treated, with only half a dozen reproductions or less; some are even represented by only one or two, often borrowed from plates in other publications. This creates the suspicion, possibly unfounded, that the author may not have had time to examine them at first hand. New photos from previously unpublished parts of the decorations of these manuscripts would definitely have been more useful.

At this point I hear the author impatiently object: How could more codices and more illustrations have been included without adding additional plates to a publication already too voluminous? My first answer would be that among the manuscripts selected there are quite a few which, without great loss, could have been less generously reproduced. This applies particularly to those early manuscripts which have only decorative initials—Tours 557, with eight, and Barcelona Archivo, Ripoll 78, with six, for instance; one or two specimens of each would have been enough. The same procedure could have been followed with the manuscripts having predominantly decorative initials; for these the historiated ones alone would have sufficed. It is particularly difficult to understand why the two Decretum manuscripts from the codices Palatini in the Vatican should have received so many reproductions, even several in colour, when their initials only occasionally contain figurative illustrations. It would not have hurt if, for instance, the thirty-four reproductions from Pal. lat. 622 had been reduced

1. *"Jurisprudentia est mater actionum"*. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Can. 13, fol. 270v
to four or five. Had such economy been carried through, there would have been space for perhaps as many as a hundred illustrations from manuscripts now missing or insufficiently documented.

One could even imagine a more radical revision. In the publication as it is, about the same number of illustrations have been given each Causa, some forty to fifty each. However, all the juridical cases chosen by Gratian as samples of controversial issues have not proved equally rewarding from the artistic point of view. Some are rather monotonously treated, particularly those dealing with bishops rightly or wrongly accused. In contrast to them, other Causae have more dramatic implications, referring to graver sins such as assault, murder and adultery (even in flagrante), committed by laymen as well as clerics. In dealing with these stories, the illustrators saw better opportunities to represent scenes of action, and the way they staged them is often marked by a considerable ingenuity. Of special interest is Canon 26 which deals with a priest accused of sorcery. Several different methods of soothsaying were practiced in the Middle Ages, and in the Decretum manuscripts the choice of method clearly varies with the schools of illumination. In short, it would have been legitimate to reproduce more extensively the illustrations of the more dramatic topics, while for the others a few examples the main types would have sufficed.

In one respect, Melnikas has proceeded quite radically by simply reserving the Arbores for treatment in a later volume, his unmentioned reason for it no doubt being that the same images occur in other pre- and post-Gratian treatises as well. In the meantime one of the Arbores has been the subject of a so far unpublished German doctoral dissertation by Hermann Schadt, Die Darstellungen der Arbores consangninitatis bis zum 4. Laterankonzil (Tübingen, 1973), which hopefully will not be further delayed to appear in print. Although one can well understand that Melnikas has chosen his course also because of considerations of space, one cannot help regretting it, since the Arbores – being the only full page miniatures – are of particular relevance for localizing and dating the manuscripts in which they appear. Some of them are among the most impressive creations of Medieval book illumination on the whole.

So much for the relation of Melnikas’ Corpus to the enormous mass of material it ought to cover in one way or another. Once the decision had been taken as to which manuscripts and which parts of their decoration should be selected for reproduction, there was the further problem of how the pre-

sent the material in the most efficient way. There were two possibilities: either the usual one to treat the manuscripts as wholes in chronological order, or to split their decoration and assemble the miniatures or initials according to subject matter or place in the text. Of these alternatives Melnikas chose the latter. It has the advantage of facilitating a direct comparison between the illustrations of the same topic in different manuscripts, and it is indeed fascinating to observe how each theme, receives a different interpretation at various times and in various countries. Unfortunately, this arrangement has caused the author to repeat, in chapter after chapter, to which school he thinks a manuscript or a group of manuscripts belongs, and it is rather tiring to be given the same information again and again. It does not improve matters that many of his attributions are vague and, as will be stated in what follows, questionable.

For a better understanding of the subject matter, the reader is presented at the beginning of each chapter with a quotation from the opening sentences of Gratian’s text on which the illustrations focus – certainly a commendable device, and all the more so since the texts are given both in original Latin and in English translation. Then follows a discussion about how the theme has been interpreted by different illuminators. While most of these comments are limited to two or three pages and concern observations which can be made without greater insight in the juridical side of the problem, in the case of those introducing the Distinctiones and Causa 23, which deals with a bishop’s right to fight heresy with arms, the author soars into verbose digressions on the ideological implications of the issue in a tone quite out of step with his main task as an art historian and editor of a Corpus.

2 The late Rosy Schilling has the merit of being the first art historian to give proper attention to the Arbores in her paper on «The Decretum Gratiani in the C. W. Dyson Perrins Collection», Journal of the Archaelogical Association, 3rd ser., XXVI (1963), pp. 23–39. There is a stimulating discussion of the theme in the presidential address to the Medieval Academy of America by Gerhard Ladner, »Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism: A Comparison«, Speculum, LIV (1979), p. 245. The dissertation by Hermann Schadt is by now in print with the title Die Darstellungen des Arbores consangninitatis und der Arbores affinitatis. Bildschema in juristischen Handschriften, E. Wasmuth, Tübingen, 1980. It treats more than 640 items from c. 450 manuscripts and is by far the most thorough investigation of the topic.

3 Melnikas’ comments on the division of power between the ecclesiastical and the secular realm have since been supplemented in a paper by A. M. Stickler, »Ursprung
Instead of such digressions, one would have preferred more solid information about each relevant manuscript; but this is now reserved for a catalogue in the promised concluding volume of the whole series, which is not likely to appear within the foreseeable future. One would have liked to know the dimensions of each codex; to what extent its illustrations are complete; what date the author would assign to each set of miniatures; where other reproductions of the miniatures can be found; and what the current opinions are about each manuscript as far as it has been treated before—all bits of useful information which could have been included in abbreviated form in the first index. As it is, the publication puts higher demands on the expertise of the reader in such matters than can be expected from most of us. The Corpus does constitute, however, a welcome challenge to cope with its rich visual material prima facie, be it as a part of independent research or in critical examination of the ideas put forward by the author. Needless to say, this can be tried here only in the form of an outline, which might give as much occasion for dissentient opinions as the work under review does itself. I am also aware of another difficulty. In view of the fact that the scriptoria which produced the majority of the Decretum Gratiani manuscripts also took part in writing and illuminating hundreds of other juridical texts, it may be a bit premature to enter into a discussion about the different problems concerning date and localization on the basis of the Decretum codices alone. However, this is what Melnikas, too, has not been able to avoid throughout his work, at the same time promising a fuller treatment of his attributions in a future volume. To wait for this final treatment ad calendas graecas is not an attractive prospect. The floor is open for discussion, and it does not seem out of place now already to draw some preliminary conclusions from a more or less unbiased look at the documentation which the Corpus for the first time makes available.

A basic point of departure is curiously neglected by Melnikas. The production of the Decretum Gratiani, as well as the other juridical codices, must always have taken place in close cooperation with the institutions of learning at which Canon and Civil law were taught; i.e., in the first place, the universities of Bologna and Paris. It does not mean that there were no other places where the knowledge of laws and ordinances and a correct interpretation of them were essential, and that copies of the Decretum could not have been taken elsewhere. A certain number of manuscripts in Melnikas’ Corpus were undoubtedly produced in German scriptoria of the late 12th century, in regions in which the teaching of Canon law cannot be demonstrated. The Salzburg Decretum in Munich, already mentioned, is such a case; other manuscripts of the same sort belong to the Bavarian State Library in Munich, such as Clm. 17161 from Schäftlarn, distinguished by its lively historiated initials; or Clm. 23351,
which has a set of startling initials, mainly with apes so skillfully drawn that one would like to think the animals were studied from nature. From France and Italy, too, there are a few manuscripts of the same period which could only be provincial copies: Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery W. 777, formerly Chester Beatty 46 and Heiligenkreuz, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 44 (fig. 2), brought to my attention by Professor Kuttner. The latter manuscript, with its early cycle, deserved a place in the Corpus as much as the former.

Interesting though these manuscripts may be, it is primarily to the scriptoria working under the auspices of the universities in Bologna and Paris that the majority of the finer Decretum codices of the Romanesque period must be attributed, and naturally our attention should first focus on those which may have originated in the home-town of Gratian himself.

Admittedly, nothing indicates that Gratian intended his treatise to be illustrated. A key manuscript for the early history of the Decretum, because it has a firm *terminus ante quem*, namely the copy which was presented by archbishop Hartwic of Bremen to his cathedral before 1168, when he died, Bremen, Universitätsbibliothek, a 142, has characteristically enough but decorative initials at the beginning of the Distinctiones and the Causae (fig. 3). Only the *Arbores*, included already by...
Gratian's predecessor, Burchard of Worms, into his Collectio canonum, as seen, for example, in two copies in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 3861 (fig. 4) and 3862, may have been part of Causa 35 right from the beginning.

However, in Gratian's days the combination of human figures with the initial had already become a fixed part of book decoration, not only in the countries north of the Alps, where the historiated initial especially thrived, but also in Italy, often in the form of a standing figure replacing a vertical stem of a letter. There are numerous examples of such figurative I-initials in the In prima parte introduction, and it was by applying the same principle to the two upright stems of the first letter in the opening sentence Humanum genus duobus regitur of the Distinctiones that the illustration of the Decretum proper must have begun. Melnikas reproduces three initials of this sort from a group of closely related early Italian copies of the treatise: Arras 493, Bratislava 14 and Troyes 60; a fourth could be added, that in Biberach, Spitalarchiv, B 3515, the knowledge of which I owe to Stephan Kuttner (fig. 5). In this first sentence Gratian makes the fundamental distinction between the ius naturale, which is of divine origin, and has been laid down in the prescriptions of the Bible, on the hand; and mos, usage, which mankind has decreed on its own, on the other. As representatives of one and the other types of law, the H-initials show to the left the Pope, and to the right the Emperor, forming together the letter by grasping a common standard. By this action they display their consent to share on equal terms the supreme legislating power, an iconography borrowed from the Byzantine way of representing co-rule, often seen on coins.

That this type of H-initial represents the very earliest attempt to illustrate Gratian's compilation is confirmed by its appearance also in a Decretum copy written Cologne and still preserved there, Dombibliothek 127, probably dating from the last quarter of the 12th century, a codex considered by Friedberg, in his edition of the Decretum text, to be the best witness to Gratian's own version, i.e., a direct copy of a Bolognese exemplar still close to the archetype.

Melnikas localizes the aforementioned Italian manuscripts to Central Italy and ascribes their initials to an Umbro-Roman school, not more closely defined. However, among the 12th century illuminated manuscripts from that region, which have been penetratingly studied by E. B. Garrison and Knut Berg, there is no group into which these Decretum codices would fit; as a matter of fact, none of these scholars include any Decretum manuscripts in their survey of Central Italian 12th century book illumination. The reason for it is no doubt that they considered them all to be transapennine. The most likely place of origin would seem to be Bologna where the text originated and was first propagated as a handbook for the study of Canon law. But we are still waiting for a complete study of Bolognese 12th century book illumination.

8 On lat. 3862 see now François Avril and Yolante Zaluska, Manuscrits enluminés d'origine italienne, I. VIe–XIe siècles, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1980, no 74, pl. F.
that could confirm – or reject – this conclusion, based as it is on circumstantial evidence only.

Another treatment of the H-initial occurs in a second group of related manuscripts, three of which, Amiens 354, Munich, Clm 4505 and Venice, Marciana IV, 117 (2435), have received a great number of reproductions in Melnikas' Corpus, an attention they fully deserve, since so many, if not all, of the Causae have now been illustrated with historiated initials, some with just one or two figures, some with small scenes. A fourth manuscript, Paris, Ste. Geneviève 341, in which the H-initial unfortunately is missing, belongs to the same group and is among the most completely reproduced codices in the Corpus. A fifth, with initials in line drawings, Florence, Laur., Plut. IV sin. 1, is stylistically, more than iconographically in agreement with the others.

In contrast to what was the case in the first group, the H-initial now emerges as an independent capital letter. The two legislators have been liberated from their duty to replace the vertical shafts of the H and have moved into the interval between them, both still standing side by side, but now so close that they elbow one another. A similar iconography appears in two codices omitted in the Corpus, Pommersfelden, Schloßbibliothek 327, and Darmstadt, Landesbibliothek 542 (2937), the latter an epitome (Abbreviatio) of the Decretum, yet like the complete work starting with an H(umanum genus) initial (fig. 6–7). A playful variant occurs in the above mentioned Florentine codex in which the two rulers are covered up to their necks by a large square featuring, for unknown reason, a large O-initial. The Munich copy and Ste Geneviève 341 belong apparently to an earlier, the one in Amiens to a later stage in the development of the group.

For the place of origin Melnikas again looks towards Central Italy and goes so far, in the case of the Ste. Geneviève manuscript, as to ascribe its miniatures to a specific artist, the «Master of the Avila Bible», so named by E. B. Garrison. In the case of the uncolored initials in the Florentine codex he prefers to talk about a «Tuscan draughtsman». There is no question about the strong influence of the Central Italian schools of illumination on the whole group, and resemblance of the Ste Geneviève initials to those of the Avila Bible master is obvious. But

13 I want to express my gratitude to Dr. Kurt Hans Staub, of the Darmstadt library, for having provided me with a photo of the initial here reproduced.
14 The manuscript from which the artist has his name is a Bible once in the Cathedral of Avila, now Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional. Vitr. 15. It is by no means certain that he was of Umbro-Roman origin. Garrison admits that the script of the Avila Bible points to northern Italy (op. cit. I, p. 2, caption). Another significant work by his hand, the Vita sanctorum in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B 55 inf., may also turn out to be north Italian (cf. Gengaro-Guglielmetti, op. cit., pp. 70–74).
from that to the assumption that all these Decretum manuscripts are the products of one or more Central Italian workshops, there is a considerable step. Already the type of display script with penwork in blue and red, peculiar to Bologna, but foreign to Tuscany, prevents us from drawing such conclusions. As to the Avila Bible Master, who must have worked a time in Tuscany, the possibility that he ended his day in Bologna cannot be excluded; he must, however, in such a case have looked back at a long career, for the Ste. Genevieve Decretum can hardly be dated before the last quarter of the 12th century, whereas some of the other manuscripts of the group may even be from around or after 1200. Again: where else but in Bologna could so many important copies of Gratian’s manual have been produced?

There is also a third coherent group of Romanesque Decretum codices displaying yet another type of historiated H-initials, this time undoubtedly written and illuminated in France in the last quarter of the 12th century. The finest ones, all represented in the Corpus by numerous illustrations, are four closely related manuscripts in Berlin, Lat. fol. 1, Cambrai 967, Douai 590 and Troyes 103; to which can be added as a fifth, Trier, Stadtbibliothek 906 (fig. 8). Also French, but less disciplined in its treatment of the figures, is a powerful codex in Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine 1287. The disadvantage with the second Italian type of H-initial was that the horizontal bar of the letter almost disappeared behind the bodies of the Pope and the Emperor. This drawback has been overcome in the French manuscripts by the two protagonists being presented only in half-length figure and set into the upper and the lower interspaces of the letter. One of them had to be given the place of honor at the top, and it matches the tenor of the text that the superior position was reserved for the head of the Church who, like Christ in the Maiestas Domini scene, is drawn strictly frontal and appears provided with a halo in the finest manuscripts. In this case, the illuminator may have had in mind the two historically most famed representatives of ecclesiastical and secular power, St. Silvester and Constantine. On the miniature in the Berlin codex the following words are entered on the scroll:

Rex ego sum regum, lex est mea maxima legum.
Te facio regem, tu rectam dilige legem.

The words can only be those of Christ, and we may therefore with Melnikas interpret them as handed over to the Emperor by the Pope, who raises his hand in a teaching gesture. In another H-initial, by a French illuminator but added to a codex with Bolognese script, Montecassino 64, fol. 3 (Melnikas, 1, fig. 25), Christ himself is shown in the upper half giving two men a scroll with ius naturale inscribed on it; whereas in the lower half, Justinian, the great codifier of Roman law, is indicated by the text on his scroll, which reads mos et ius iustinianum.

Is the «two-story» iconography an innovation attributable to the French school, in which it became a

15 Rather than St. Isidor or St. Peter Damian for the mitred figure, as suggested as a possibility by Melnikas, vol. 1, p. 33.
standard feature? It would be rash to jump to this conclusion, for the same idea is applied to the *H* in what is certainly an Italian Decretum manuscript of the same or perhaps even an earlier date; namely, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1576 (fig. 9). A Bolognese manuscript of this kind, possibly this very copy, may have served the French miniaturists as their model. The only new feature would be the connection established between the two legislators by means of the scroll. Moreover, there is a second Italian manuscript with a similar initial in the Bibliothèque Ste. Geneviève, cod. 168, of a somewhat later date (fig. 10).

Like the second Italian group, the French codices contain a whole set of historiated initials illustrating the opening sentences of the Causae, alternating with splendid decorative rinceaux initials. Apart from the manuscripts already mentioned, there are others with only ornamental H-initials, such as the Decretum Gratiani from Sainte-Colombe-les Sens, formerly in the Dyson Perrins collection, and now in the possession of Dr. Peter and Irene Ludwig. Their distinguishing features are the polyp-like quasi-animate end-flowers of the tendrils and the small, white lions, resembling weasels, sneaking around the spiral stalks. The same type of initials can be found in a great many Biblical manuscripts with or without commentaries by Peter Lombard, and like the Decretum codices, they display in their figurative parts a forceful plastic style, derived from Mosan art and presaging the early Gothic.

The traditional idea has been that the great output of manuscripts illuminated in this style should be credited to the Anglo-Norman monasteries on both sides of the Channel. Since certain of these codices were acquired by Thomas Becket and his secretary, Herbert of Bosham, during their exile in France, attention has also been drawn to the centers east of Paris - to Sens and the Cistercian monasteries within its diocese, particularly Clairvaux and Pontigny.

Realizing that the two regions ought to be kept apart - the Cistercian monasteries being after all situated in Burgundy and not close to the Channel - Melnikas seems to make a division within this group between manuscripts such as the Ludwig codex, Mazarine 1287 and London, Royal 9. C. III (another member of the group), which he localizes to the Channel region; and manuscripts like Berlin, Lat. fol. 1, Cambrai 967, Douai 590 and Troyes 103, which he thinks are products of the Cistercian centers around (!) Citeaux and Clairvaux.

Neither one nor the other localization carries

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15a Avril and Zaluska, *op. cit.* p. 58, no. 99, where it is dated too late, sec. XII-XIII, and said to be probably Bolognese.
12. Complications with a Changeling. Illustration to Causa 30. Gothenburg, Röhrska Konstljudsmuseet, leaf from the Decretum Gratiani in the State Archives of Olomuc

conviction, however. Apart from St. Bernard’s aversion against initials painted with gold and multifarious colors and grotesque animals and monsters, of which there are many in these books, their derivation from monastic workshops is a priori little likely. In an elucidating article about the Parisian schools of illumination in the first third of the 13th century, François Avril has enforced the fundamental change in high class book production which occurred in Paris with the predominance of lay ateliers working for payment and often sponsored by the University. There are good reasons, however, to assume that the change may have come about even earlier and that already the Decretum manuscripts of the last decades of the 12th century owe their lavish decoration to secular artists. Their style is identical with those of numerous Bible manuscripts with initials of the »white lion« type of rinceaux which have Paris institutions as their provenance. Paris is also the likely place of origin for the Petrus Lombardus manuscripts bound in tooled leather with secular stamps, which have an important place in the history of Romanesque book binding and the initials of which belong to the same group.

It would seem that the production of the first secular Paris workshops of Decretum manuscripts satisfied the market for more than fifty years, for there are very few such codices decorated in the new style which made its first appearance at the beginning of 1220s, that of Gothic illumination. In his survey of Parisian book illumination of this period, Robert Branner included but a single fragment, a leaf with Arbores in the Glazier collection of the Morgan Library, probably, but not certainly extracted from a Decretum. He overlooked, however, an important manuscript in the University Library of Liège, MS 499 (127 E), which Melnikas is the first to publish, although with the mistaken attribution to the Mosan region. As already pointed out by François Avril, it is a typical product of the French capital, close in style to the Bibles moralisées. The importance of this manuscript would have justified more than eight reproductions. In addition one would have liked to see included in the Corpus the initial »H« in another manuscript of the same atelier, now in the Staatsbibliothek of West-Berlin, Lat. fol. 2 (fig. 11).

The relative rarity of Decretum manuscripts written and illuminated in Paris during the long reign of St. Louis (1226–1270) is nevertheless notable. It may in the first place be due to the fact that from 1234 on, there was, in Paris as well, a need for producing large numbers of a new work, Gregory IX’s Liber Decretalium. But it is also worth attention that his predecessor Honorius III had taken a more restric-
The Emperor as Legislator. Copenhagen, Royal Library, Thott 160 2°, fol. 32.

A number of Parisian illuminators took part in the boom which lasted well into the second quarter of the XIV century. Among the most outstanding of them is the anonymous master of the Vatican manuscript, Vat. lat. 1370, whose style Melnikas considers close to that of the Bible Historiale of Jean de Papeleu of 1317, although his excessively elongated figures could with more justification be compared to English painting of c. 1330. Only Pucelle does not seem to have lent his talent to the task of illuminating juridical codices, but there is a reflection of his style in the Copenhagen manuscript Thott 160 fol. which would have justified a place in the Corpus with at least some of its delicate miniatures (fig. 13).

Several Decretum manuscripts with French miniatures are written in the highly rounded littera bononiensis which is usually regarded as a trade mark of Bologna itself. In many cases they actually have been written in the Italian center and sent to Paris for illumination. We are reminded of this method through the account by a Bolognese jurisprudent Odofredo concerning the son of one of his compatriots who ruined himself by having his books sent to the French capital for embellishment. Another possibility is that some of these manuscripts were

29 C. Couderc, Les enluminures des manuscrits du Moyen
written by Italian scribes employed in the Paris workshops, just as an English calligrapher Thomas de Wymonduswold wrote and signed one of the codices with miniatures in the best Parisian style, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 9893. However, as the easily readable round-script was apparently considered most appropriate for juridical texts in general, one should perhaps not exclude imitations of the Bolognese hand by Parisian scribes trained for that purpose. The problems only hinted at here go back to the 12th century and call for a full treatment by Melnikas in one of his forthcoming volumes.

The illustration at the beginning of the Distinctiones in the Paris manuscripts of this period differs radically from that in the earlier codices. First of all, the figures are no longer included in the H-initial, but are set into a framed picture above it. Secondly, the legislation theme is differently formulated. Instead of the Pope and the Emperor appearing together as co-rulers, we see only one of the two in the very act of dictating his decrees to a seated clerk. The Pope is accompanied by two Cardinals, the Emperor by members of his counsel, one or two of them in armour (fig. 13). The Crown is not imperial, the legislator may be the French king. Whether the main actor be the head of the state or of the church, the old idea of the secular and the ecclesiastical powers sharing the supreme authority on earth on equal terms has been discarded. In most cases the monarch alone is shown to be the true and sole originator of law and justice. It is a telling image of the political situation created by the rise of the French monarchy to its most unrestricted power under Philippe le Bel, that led to the "Babylonian captivity" of the Pope at Avignon.

As could be expected, the Bolognese illuminators of the same period did not concur in the French ideology. Instead they remained faithful to the time-honored concept of the Pope and the Emperor being of equal rank, both deriving their authority from the Almighty. Already in one of the Late Romanesque manuscripts, the Decretum Gratiani in Beaune, Christ is introduced into the upper half of the initial »H«, leaving it to his supreme representatives on earth to share the space in the lower interstice of the letter.

Whether or not it was the inconvenience of the limited space offered by the interstices of the letter, the Bolognese artists were the first to abandon the historiated initial in favour of an independent image with a frame of its own and the initial attached to it below. The tendency of the figures to break out of the initial is documented already in the Romanesque period by the Consecration scene in the Ste. Geneviève codex, which is repeated on the cover of the Corpus, vol. II, in gold and red. But it is deliberately and systematically put to use only with
the great revival of Italian book illumination in the second half of the 13th century, in which Bologna took such a leading part. Among the earlier examples are two manuscripts, one in Florence, Bibl. Laur., Fiesole 120, and one in the Vatican Library, Vat. lat. 1390, in which the beginning of the Distinctiones shows Christ with the open book on his knees, flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist or John the Evangelist. However, in its canonical form, the Bolognese illustration to the Distinctiones followed the iconography of Christ enthroned in the center and the Pope and the Emperor kneeling on a lower level right and left of him, an adaptation of the Early Christian formula Dominus legem dat.

A further development is represented by a great many miniatures in which angels are seen putting the tiara on the head of the Pope and the crown on that of the Emperor, as in a Decretum Gratiani in the British Library, Add. 24642, which is from the workshop of Jacobinusa da Reggio (fig. 14). When the scene is staged with background architecture and an escort of dignitaries and subjects behind each principal figure, the width of a single text column-still respected in even the finest French codices-did not suffice. With the taste for monumentality, always inherent in Italian art even in book illumination, the scene was allowed to expand to cover both columns of the main text. This larger format remained in use even when Christ was not included and the two supreme powers were instead seated side by side in a syn-

tronom image, as in the Copenhagen codex, Gl. Kongl. Saml. 193 (fig. 15).

In the course of the first half on the 14th century the illustrations to Causa 2 to De poenitentia and to De consecratione were, in the most lavishly decorated manuscripts, enlarged to the same double column format. Finally, around the middle of the century, the decoration of the Decretum reaches in Bologna a non plus ultra of splendor, with the Distinctiones receiving a second illustration, not only at the beginning of the text, but also on the opposite page. With the enlargement of the main scene, figurative motifs of a more or less drölerie-like character began to invade the openings between the main text column and the surrounding commentary, forming under the former a bas-de-page and sometimes even continuing down into the lower margin of the page.

Curiously enough, Melnikas in his commentaries on the manuscripts and their illustrations avoids the use of the simple term »Bolognese«, speaking instead of the »Po valley«, a geographical qualifi-

15. Synthonon of Pope and Emperor. Copenhagen, Royal Library, Gl. Kongl. Saml. 193, fol. 1


The term here used for book decoration is babuinare, literally «decorate with apes», i. e. drolleries.

*Cecilia Davis-Weyer, »Das Traditio legis Bild und seine Nachfolge«, Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst, XIV (1961), pp. 7–45.*

cation one would not in the first place associate with Emilian center of learning. The reason for it seems to be a desire to leave open the possibility that some of the manuscripts might have been written and illuminated in other North-Italian centers. However, at this period, as well as earlier, the majority of the manuscripts must owe their origin to Bologna with its flourishing law school. This has always been taken for granted and may be Melnikas’ own opinion, since he does not raise any explicit objection to it.

The most difficult problem is how the whole movement again got under way in the crucial third quarter of the 13th century. Its investigation ought to start with the Decretum Gratiani in the Library of the Dominicans at Dubrovnik (Ragusa), cod. 22, the omission of which in the Corpus causes a serious gap. There is a description of it and four illustra-

tions in Folnesic’s volume of Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der illuminierten Handschriften in Osterreich, vol. VI, 1917, No. 60, where the manuscript is dated almost a hundred years too late. Unfortunately, only about one half of its miniatures escaped the sacrilegious knife of a pilfering student long ago. Most illustrations are still historiated initials, but at least in the double-decked story of the sick priest who had become a monk, then recovered and retracted, the image has become independent, leaving space for the initial in the upper right corner only. The cycle does not fully agree with what became the standard one in Bologna in the third quarter of the century, but it should be noted that in some scenes the actors are already set against or framed by arcades which later became the usual mise-en-scene. Stylistically the initials seem to fit the period around 1250. They owe a part of their inspiration to a French model, most evident in the grotesque naked old man who stands in for the vertical descender of the P-initial to Causa 30 (fig. 16).

From the illustrations in Melnikas’ Corpus, three main stages in the development of the Bolognese school can be distinguished. The earliest, ‚la prima maniera‘ one may call it, still belongs to the last third of the 13th century. It is represented by a dozen manuscripts, of which Berlin, Staatsbibl., Lat. fol. 6, can be cited as a particularly characteristic example, adequately featured by thirty-two reproductions. The Library at Reims happens to have three codices of this type, MSS 677, 678 and 679; the Escurial, two, c. 1.2 and c. 1.8; and the Vatican also two, Vat. lat. 1371 and 1374, the latter not included in the Corpus, as is also the case with a manuscript in Subiaco, cod. XI (fig. 17). This style reaches its greatest refinement in the Princeton Decretum, Garrett 97, probably from around 1300. It is rightly represented by six color plates and numerous illustrations in black-and-white.

The miniatures of this group of codices are characterized by certain lingering Romanesque fea-

31 The manuscript which is missing also in Melnikas’ second list, has on fol. 275v a subscription by a Bolognese scribe per manum Johannis Melliti de Bononia.
32 The late date is taken over in the catalogue of the exhibition held at Zagreb in 1964, Miniatura u Jugoslaviji, Muzej za umjetnost i obrt, no. 17, tab. 22.
33 The best survey of Bolognese book illumination in the Gothic period is probably still the unpublished one on the Bolognese Bibles by Count Erbach Fürstenau of which there is a typed copy in the Cabinet des Manuscrits of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. See also G. Faltani, «Richerche su i protagonisti della miniatura du- gentesco Oderisi da Gubbio et Franco Bolognese», Studi Danteschi, XLVIII (1971), pp. 137–151.
tures, although in the main the artists have drawn their inspiration from French Gothic forms, which they have translated into a typically Italian idiom. The dominating color harmony is a saturated blue and a pinkish red. The figures are inscribed within a framework of double or triple arcades, the capitals of which usually have the form of one or three balls (cf. fig. 17). Less frequent is another compositional device, the introduction of a straight curtain behind the principal ecclesiastical figure, as in the Decretum manuscript of the Bodmer Library, Coligny/Geneva. Some of the richer manuscripts have symmetrically arranged rinceaux spirals with drôlerie figures in the lower margins—animals, monsters or hybrid mannikins, not always behaving quite decently. A similar decoration occurs in a group of Bolognese Bibles of which one in Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, A 25, is dated A. D. 1272, and another in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 22, can on documentary evidence be shown to have existed before 1284.

The next stage in the development, «la seconda maniera», is characterized by a strong Byzantine influence. The arcade frames have, as it were, been shifted to the background where they form a scenae frons, consisting of more or less illusionistically painted attics and towers, rising over the heads of the figures, sometimes with a curtain or a veil wrapped over the roofs. Liberated from the constraint of the arcade frames, the figures have become livelier, and act more intensely. New dramatic episodes are introduced, such as in Causa 10 the soldiers looting at the order of his bishop a church built by a layman. The gay, confetti-like colors are combined with strong contrasts between light and shade in the modelling of the forms. Particularly striking are the dark greenish shadows in the eye sockets of the faces. A typical example of this style is the Vatican manuscript, Vat. lat. 1375, signed by a certain Jacobinus da Reggio who, in his colophon distich, proudly claims for it a place among books comparable to that of the rose among flowers. Other representatives of this style are in (eske Budejovice, in Frankfurt, Bart. 7, Munich, Clm 23553, Prag, Tepla 18 and Vienna, cod. 2060. Overlooked or deliberately omitted are three related manuscripts: Nimes, Bibliothèque municipale 67, Toledo, Chapter Library 4:2, and the already quoted Copenhagen manuscript Gl. K. S. 193 (fig. 15). Like the Decretum codices of the first phase, those of the second correspond stylistically to a number of richly illuminated Bibles, notably those in Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 18, London, Add. 18720 and the Vatican, Vat. lat. 20, and in Gerona.

17. A Bishop claims a Church built by a Laic. Illustration to Causa 10. Subiaco, Library of the Monastery, cod. XI, fol. 211v

The hope that a fuller knowledge of the Decretum Gratiani manuscripts would lead to an identification of the two Bolognese illuminators made famous by Dante's Divina Commedia (Purgatorio XI, 79–84), Oderisi da Gubbio and Franco Bolognese, has not come true. The prevalent theory that the style of the former would be reflected in «la prima maniera» and that of the latter in «la seconda» remains an hypothesis only.

The third phase is represented by a great many manuscripts from c. 1330–1380. The leading master of this period was Nicolò di GIacomo Nascimbene, who has secured his fame by signing several of his miniatures with his name in capital letters on the paint itself. Melnikas regrets that the two Decretum manuscripts in Munich and Geneva, which he, like other art historians, attributes to Nicolò himself, have no signed miniatures. However, there is a third Decretum, not included in the Corpus, which actually has the artist's name on three of its illustrations, Jena, University Library, El. fol. 51c (fig. 18).

34 The manuscript is mentioned in neither of Melnikas' lists. Cf. S. Stelling-Michaud, Catalogue des manuscrits juridiques de la fin du XIIe au XIVe siècle, (Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 11), Geneva, 1954, pp. 23–24, with three reproductions.

35 The exciting discovery of the signature «Oderisi(ius)» in a Bolognese manuscript, formerly belonging to Sir Chester Beatty and sold at Sotheby & Cie, June 24, 1969, lot 51, has not yet been properly evaluated.


Among the manuscripts close in style to Nicolo's early work is a group of codices which Lina Ciaccio, followed by other art historians, has dissociated from his oeuvre and given to an anonymous artist of equal or even greater talent, called by her *Pseudo-Nicolo*, and later on by R. Longhi, *l'Illustratore*38. To this group also belong some fine Decretum codices included by Melnikas in his Corpus, such as Bibliothèque Nationale, nov. acq. lat. 2508 and Vatican, Urb. lat. 161, of which the former has every miniature reproduced, in all no less than forty, the highest number of reproductions given to any manuscript in the Corpus. According to Kuttner (*Repertorium*, p. 118), their text depends upon the same exemplar, a statement largely, if not entirely, borne out by their miniatures as well. The Paris manuscript is written by a certain Frater Adigherius, who also wrote for Nicolo the Geneva manuscript 60, and the text was corrected by two Bolognese scholars in ecclesia sci Barbatiani which seems to indicate that the production of the Decretum manuscripts was by no means exclusively in the hands of secular craftsmen.

As pointed out by Toesca, it is not always easy to draw a neat line between the works of Pseudo-Nicolo and Nicolo himself39. The style is in both cases characterized by the frequent use of a black background densely covered with golden rinceaux, and both have the figures placed on a platform in front or architectural motifs rendered with perspectival foreshortening, so that a real impression of three-dimensional space is achieved. It is on the whole a more advanced style than that of the school of Rimini, to which Melnikas refers in the case of three manuscripts – Madrid, Vitr. 21,1, Siena, K. I. 3, and Vatican Archivio della Basilica di San Pietro A 24 – which also belong to the third phase.

There is little reason however, to assume that Rimini ever took part in the production of Decretum codices. The affinity between the schools of Rimini and Bologna in their book production depends upon Rimini’s following Bologna, rather than the other way around.

Looking for a manuscript with miniatures that could be ascribed to Oderisi da Gubbio, Paolo D’Ancona once proposed as a possible candidate the Decretum Gratiani in the Biblioteca Laurentiana, Edili 97\(^{40}\). It was not a very fortunate suggestion, since this manuscript is undoubtedly illuminated by the same artist as a Liber sextus in Reims, Bibliothèque municipale, 729, which is firmly dated 1345, whereas Oderisi most likely passed away before 1300. As a matter of fact, and that is one of the important new insights to be extracted from Melnikas’ publication, the Florentine Decretum forms part of a whole group of about a dozen manuscripts differing from the Bolognese output both in iconography and style. Generally, they are so strongly affected by the French Gothic that they cannot be Italian at all, in spite of being mostly written in an hand close to the \textit{littera bononiensis}. An example of their divergence from the Bolognese cycle is the scene illustrating Causa 26, which deals with a superstitious priest; in Edili 97 and its relatives he is shown communicating with a black bird in a tree, whereas in Bologna he is either using a water basin or sitting on a bridge looking up at the starry sky\(^{41}\).

Another characteristic of most manuscripts belonging to this group is the use of drollerie animals with a human head with a pointed top hat on a thin protracted neck that can be made to form a loop or a knot. The head of a long-beaked bird, not unlike a pelican, with a ball in its open bill, is another motif frequently employed.

Apart from the Florentine Decretum, the manuscripts belonging to this group are mostly found in libraries outside Italy. There are two in Berlin, Lat. fol. 4 and Ham. 279, and three in Escurial, c. I. 4, c. I. 5 and c. I. 7, which seem to come from the same workshop, dependent upon the Bolognese \textit{prima maniera}, yet featuring a style with a dominating French component\(^{42}\). Even more outspokingly French are the manuscripts related to Edili 97, such as Avignon 559, Madrid, 19.148, Amiens 355 and Reims 697, the last mentioned not included in the Corpus. The same applies to Montpellier Bibliothèque de l’Université, 34, by an artist who may have been an apprentice of Pucelle\(^{43}\). A place of its own within the group is held by an important codex which must have fallen a prey of some unscrupulous dealer, who cut out the illustrated pages in order to sell them with higher profit separately. Three of them, acquired by the museums in Cambridge, Cleveland and Detroit, are included in the Corpus without being recorded as coming from the same manuscript. A fourth has been given to the Art Museum of Princeton University (fig. 19). Quite likely more leaves are still hiding in other public or private collections.

\(^{40}\) \textit{L’arte di Oderisi da Gubbio}, \textit{Dedalo}, II (1921), pp. 89–100.

\(^{41}\) In illustrating this scene, the artist of Edili 97 placed it by mistake at the beginning of Causa 25 and the scene proper to Causa 25 at the beginning of Causa 26. Melnikas adds to the confusion by reproducing the sorcerer miniature twice, once at Causa 25 in black-and-white, apparently after some other reproduction, and again in color at Causa 26, here with the wrong folio number.

\(^{42}\) Curiously enough the Escurial manuscript c. I. 2, a typical exponent of the \textit{prima maniera} of the Bolognese school, has at the beginning of Causa 10 a miniature in the same style as Berlin, Lat. fol. 4 et consortes.

\(^{43}\) Another work of his hand is the manuscript with the Decretales of Gregory IX in the Stockholm Nationalmuseum, cod. B. 1652, see C. Nordenfalk, \textit{Bok-

If D’Ancona went wide of the mark in connecting the Florentine codex with Bologna and Oderisi da Gubbio, Melnikas is not very convincing either when he defines the style of this group as “Franco-Flemish,” related to the art of Jean de Grise, the Bruges artist who, between 1338 and 1344, illuminated the Romance d’Alixandre in the Bodleian library, Bodl. 264. To refute this idea it is sufficient to say that in the Flemish manuscript, famous for its wealth of Gothic drolleries, there is no trace of a direct Italian influence, whereas this feature is prominent in most Decretum codices here under discussion.

Perhaps sensing that his attribution does not work, Melnikas sometimes prefers to speak, in connection with this group of codices, about Franco-Flemish artists “active in the Royal scriptoria of Barcelona and Naples” or of “a scion of Jean de Grise, active in Barcelona or Naples.” What a deluxe manuscript written and illuminated in Barcelona really looks like, can be seen from the Decretum Gratiani in London, British Library, Add. 15274–75, rightly featured in the Corpus, by a complete set of reproductions. It takes little experience to recognize that it is a style very different from that of our group. As to Naples, there is no evidence that the book illuminators working for the Angevin court ever produced an illustrated Decretum. The truth about the whole group of “Franco-Flemish” manuscripts is that they are all from the south of France. It is by no means a new idea, but it has been repeatedly stated, for example, by Count Vitzthum, in his monograph on French book illumination around 1300, he cites en passant the Decretum Gratiani in Berlin, Lat. fol. 4, as being south French. More research will be needed to arrive at a more exact localization of the relevant manuscripts which are not likely to have been written and illuminated all in one place. Most of them are no doubt products of the centers in South of France where Canon and Civil law was taught and practiced with particular authority – Montpellier and Avignon. That so few manuscripts are still preserved in either of these centers no doubt has to do with the fact that their scriptoria, like those of Bologna, chiefly worked for visiting clients or for export. However, there is at least one typical example left in each city, and it is to Melnikas’ credit that, in the case of Amiens 355, beside his “Royal scriptoria at Barcelona or Naples,” he also mentions Avignon as a possible place of origin.

The great boom in the production of illuminated juridical manuscripts came to an end not long after the third quarter of the 14th century. One of the last copies of the Decretum from a Paris workshop is the one in the Bibliothèque Mazarine, cod. 1290, which has miniatures close in style to the Durandus written in 1374 for Charles V of France. It is distinguished by having illustrations also to several of the Distinctiones (fig. 20), so that the entire number of scenes, in spite of some losses, amounts to forty-eight. There must have been a similar Decretum de luxe at Albi which was admired shortly before 1717 by Durand and Martin, the two travelling Benedictins, and reported by them to have had “plus de soixante miniatures d’une beauté charmante.”

From the 15th century there are only two richly
illustrated manuscripts, both included in the Corpus, one from the school of Bouchardon, the other by two different Ferrarese court artists. Contrary to our expectations the great Councils in Con stance and Bale do not seem to have given an impetus to the writing of Decretum copies with miniatures in the style of their time. Maybe the treatise was already considered old-fashioned. On the other hand, there are no less than forty-five different printed editions published between 1471 and 1500, some of them with copies decorated by hand-painted initials or miniatures. Understandably Melnikas’ Corpus stops short of this last chapter in the history of the treatise.

This review should not end without a word of acknowledgement to the author for the insights into the history of the illuminated Decretum manuscripts which his publications undoubtedly offers, chiefly through its wealth of reproductions and the way they are assembled. With little groundwork by older art historians to build upon, it is a pioneer work. One can deplore that from the point of view of scholarship it does not live up to the highest expectations. But such wisdom after the event does not serve much of a purpose. If faced with the groans of dissatisfied users of the also physically ungainly volumes, the distinguished editor of the Studia Gratiana may well answer by applying to them the words of Clemens XIII regarding a called-for reformation of the Jesuits: Sint, ut sunt, aut non sint. That the publication of the remaining illuminated Medieval law manuscripts will continue along the same generous lines, is certainly the hope of every scholar interested in this important project.

Albi Canons, was a gift by the Cardinal d’Amboise, it too might have belonged to the Duc of Berry.

49 Erich Will, >>Decreti Gratiani incunabula<<, Studia Gratiana, VI (1959), pp. 5-280.

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