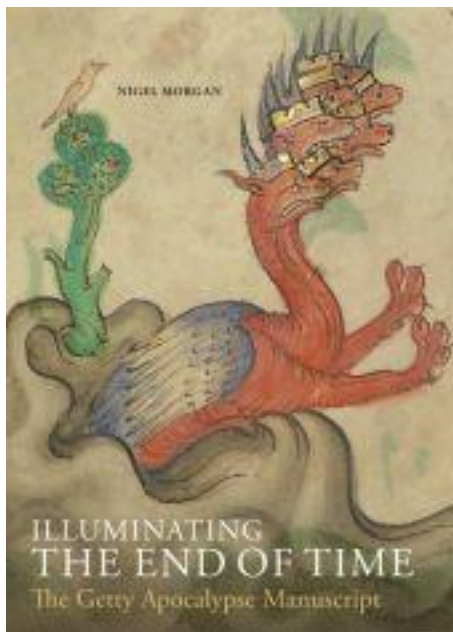


**ILLUMINATING THE END OF TIME: THE GETTY APOCALYPSE MANUSCRIPT**, by Nigel J. Morgan. J. Paul Getty Museum, March 2012. 180 p. col. ill. ISBN 9781606060711 (cl.), \$75.00



With commentary by the renowned scholar Nigel J. Morgan, this volume is a beautifully-rendered facsimile of the Getty (or Dyson Perrins) Apocalypse, an illuminated manuscript from mid-thirteenth-century England. Half of this oversized monograph is comprised of large, luxurious, full-page reproductions of the Apocalypse in which gold foil printing is used to recreate the original gilding. In addition to the book's value for art history, it would also be of special interest to scholars of religion and researchers investigating the intersection between text and image.

Wildly popular with lay people in the thirteenth century, nearly a score of illustrated Apocalypses survive today. Most from this period contain scripture passages from the Book of Revelation, lavish illustrations, and commentary on the passages in either Latin or the vernacular. The Getty Apocalypse is thought to have belonged to the English royal family and is an especially excellent example of the genre. Morgan asserts that the

British Apocalypses are modeled on the *Bibles Moralisées*, or manuscript of illustrated scenes from the Bible with commentary, which were used for King Louis IX's religious instruction. Apocalypses are also historically important because their production required close interaction between a cleric who selected the relevant passages for inclusion and the book's production staff. The Getty Apocalypse is visually notable as it includes depictions of St. John covertly observing his visions through keyholes.

Nigel M. Morgan's other work focuses on English manuscripts and Apocalypses including *The Douce Apocalypse*, a similar manuscript from the Bodleian Library. Compared to *The Douce Apocalypse*, this volume includes less background about the subject matter. A substantial portion of the text of *Illuminating the End of Time* is taken up by providing translations of the text that accompanies each image, including the relevant passage from Revelation and the thirteenth-century commentary. The introductory matter is brief, sixteen pages of text and eighteen black-and-white images from other manuscripts, designed to help situating the manuscript culturally and artistically. While readable, the material is dense and the style scholarly while primarily summarizing pre-existing scholarship. As a result, the manuscript has limited use for research outside of its utility as a facsimile. Instead, it works well as an accompaniment to pre-existing scholarship or as a modern and affordable substitution for M. R. James' rare 1927 facsimile. This work would be best for a library that already contained material about early Gothic manuscripts or Morgan's other works.

The bibliography is extensive. Physically, the book is high-quality: thick paper, sewn gatherings, a sturdy hard cover and beautiful dust cover.

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