

acra et Profana

Music in Medieval Manuscripts

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Sacra et Profana



Music in Medieval Manuscripts

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Jennifer Sawhill

The exhibit team 齣

Professor Judith Steinhoff, Curator
Lisa Garrett, Graphic Designer
Other members include Elnaz Bokharaci, David W.G. Brown, Misha Burgett, Jose Candelaria, Monica Fuentes-Dominquez, Gabriella Flournoy, Diana Guzman, Rachel Harmeyer, William Johnson, Crescida McCue, Hanah Mirza, Sara Royer, Tanja Vaughn

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Established as a formal academic discipline in the 19th century, art history has evolved into a dynamic area of study that addresses every aspect of art and visual culture, from aesthetic form to broader social and historical contexts. At UH, art history students are encouraged to develop fully their skills in the critical analysis of art and visual culture, and to communicate their insights effectively through writing and oral discourse. The art history classroom is complemented by the extensive resources of the Houston museum and art communities, with ample opportunities for art history students to obtain valuable internships.

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Foreword



By Crescida McCue

"Nothing exists without music, for the universe itself is said to have been framed by a kind of harmony of sounds, and the heaven itself revolves around the tone of that harmony."

© Isidor of Seville

In *De Musica* Saint Augustine established the primacy of music for Christian worship by declaring that nothing can be understood without music because music "made everything comprehensible and delicious to the senses."

According to medieval legend, sacred music, known as Gregorian chant, was dictated to Saint Gregory the Great by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. The purpose of sacred music was to offer unending praise to God and it was performed by cloistered nuns and secluded monks as well as by the secular clergy in parish churches and cathedrals. As the medieval musical repertoire expanded, musical notation (neumes) became useful to indicate nuances of melodic detail. While evidence suggests Christian music was written down earlier, the first records of it date to the Carolingian period (768–814 CE). Notated or written music helped to aid the memorization of the order and elements in the liturgy or religious service. Only later was secular music also written down. By the late eleventh century, Christian sacred music was transformed by liturgical changes with specialized forms developing for the Divine Office and the Mass. The various participants in the sacred celebrations each had

different roles to play and chants to sing, which are reflected in the many types of music manuscripts.

Sacred music has also been a central component of Jewish, Islamic and many other faith traditions that flourished in the middle ages. Jewish religious ritual incorporated chant from its ancient beginnings, and Islamic chant grew directly out of the first seven words revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, which commanded the recitation of the holy word of the Qur'an.

Medieval secular music was performed in royal courts and public venues by traveling artists, both male and female. Their verse and illustrations in medieval manuscripts help give us a sense of the richness of medieval musical life. Some musical forms combined both sacred and secular elements, as does early Persian music and the *Cantigas* written in honor of the Virgin Mary by the Spanish King, Afonso X.

The creation of sacred and secular musical manuscripts flourished during the late medieval period and into the Renaissance. Some of these beautifully decorated and illustrated medieval music manuscripts have found their way into public and private Houston collections, and our proudly displayed in the exhibition. ❧

See catalog entry 6.15, p. 68



Introit

Sacred Music, Sacred Texts

By José Candelaria

The vast majority of surviving medieval music is liturgical. In the face of divergent and at times polarizing influences, the western Church created compilations of approved liturgical texts and music in order to standardize rituals, help stamp out heresies and overall assert its spiritual authority over the West. Far from being monolithic institutions, the Mass and the Divine Office, the two earliest and most commonly practiced Christian liturgical services, illustrate the constant process of transformation that occurred throughout the Middle Ages. This essay intends to provide a brief historical overview of the development of the western liturgy, its music, and the development of the Antiphony, the main musical book created to organize and preserve Christian liturgical chant.

The liturgy developed through alternating periods of diversity and uniformity. Starting with its humble beginnings in the Eastern reaches of the Roman Empire, it expanded westward geographically and vertically in Roman society. Later on, Christianity assumed a cultural and religious unifying role after the Empire dissolved politically into the Germanic kingdoms that had coalesced in the resulting power vacuum. As Byzantine power and influence waned and focused east, Frankish influence—particularly under Carolingian rulers—proved decisive in the standardization, enrichment and dissemination of the liturgy through the entire continent for the rest of the Middle Ages. Throughout this time frame, while the western Church's liturgical language shifted from

the vernacular Greek to Latin, and its theology converged through sword, flame and word into zealous orthodoxy, all Christian worship shared a common means of expression appreciated by Church Father, pagan and heretic alike—music.

Until gaining legal protection via the Edict of Milan issued by Constantine in 313, Christians gathered in nighttime assemblies at homes to—in the words of Pliny the Younger—"sing a hymn to Christ as a god."¹ Christians near Antioch and Jerusalem initially started congregating in gatherings largely improvisational in character called Vigils.² These ceremonies began at midnight and ended early Sunday morning and consisted of prayers, Scriptural readings and the chanting of Psalms—activities rooted in Jewish hours of prayer. The Vigil culminated with a communal meal in remembrance of Christ's last supper with his disciples—a primitive Eucharist, the central rite of the Mass. Years later the night ceremony split into Matins and Lauds and, prior to the Vigil, an early form of Vespers began to take place at sunset on Saturdays. By now, communal Christian worship started in the late hours of the Jewish Sabbath and ending in the early hours of the new—Christian—holy day of Sunday, in commemoration of Christ's resurrection.³ Thus, the two main Christian Liturgies—the Liturgy of the Hours (also known as the Divine Office) and the Mass arose from a single ancient ceremony.

Jewish and Greek influences ran deep in the rites, acclamations and formulas that constitute the early

1. Adrian Fortescue, "Concerning Hymns," *Sacred Music* 134, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 32.

2. Richard H. Hoppin, *Medieval Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978), 31.

3. *Ibid.*, 92.

Christian liturgy. Additionally, words like "Amen" and "Alleluia" are Hebraic in origin, and practices such as baptizing and anointing are rooted in Greek mystery religions.⁴ The Christian liturgy's musicality also owes its existence to both Hellenistic and Jewish influences. Christian celebrants continued the ancient rhetorical convention—practiced in Greek public speaking as well as Jewish religious ceremonies, for example—of cantillating, or embellishing oration with a musical cadence to make it memorable as well as pleasing to the ear.⁵ As Christianity spread beyond the Jewish community, gentile converts followed St. Paul's exhortation to "speak to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody from their heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19).⁶ Furthermore, an increasingly intellectual approach to Christian music emerged as educated Romans joined the nascent Church and applied Greek thought to their new beliefs.⁷

Christianity's explosive growth from obscure Jewish sect to the official religion of the Roman Empire and the European kingdoms that succeeded it—particularly the Franks—marked the end of the extemporaneous prayer and ceremony that characterized the early liturgy and paved the way for the creation of liturgical books.⁸ The resulting influx of new converts created the need for material changes to the Mass: larger buildings, louder music and higher visibility. Sixth and seventh century popes, particularly Gregory the Great, modified church architecture, standardized rituals and chants, instituted the church choir, and created new roles to assist in officiating the Mass.⁹ Accordingly, Mass texts became highly specialized. For example, passages from the Gospels and the Apostolic letters were redistributed among books called Evangelaries and Epistolaries to be read by those now charged with their reading—deacons and subdeacons, respectively. The Sacramentary, the book of the celebrating priest or

bishop, contained the different Mass rituals. Like many liturgical manuscripts, their initial form colated diverse prayers and rites originally recorded in loose booklets, or *libelli*.¹⁰

The Mass, held in large buildings, replaced the daily observance of the Hours as the principal means of congregational devotion and the monastic orders assumed the duties to celebrate the Hours. By 530 the Rule of St. Benedict accounted for them in the form still observed to this day: Vespers, Compline, Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext and None.¹¹ Throughout the Middle Ages, the Hours continued the tradition of reciting psalms and hymns and reading from scripture, hagiographies and martyrologies (lives of saints and martyrs, respectively) as well as Patristic readings.¹²

A similar level of specialization evolved on the musical side of Mass and Office. The cantor had his own book of chant, the *Cantatorium*, and *libelli* of antiphonal chants for the choir were incorporated into the early forms of chant books, or Antiphonaries.¹³ Antiphonal singing, the chanting of alternate psalm verses by two choirs (or a cantor and a choir), was introduced from the East in the late fourth century by St. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan. To western ears, accustomed to the congregation either repeating or adding intonations to the same verse sung by the cantor, antiphonal singing sounded "like two Seraphim...exclaiming one after the other" and quickly gained popularity in both the Mass and the Hours.¹⁴

The Franks' taste for spectacle is most responsible for the look and sound of Antiphonaries to this date. Early Christian manuscripts were deliberately created without narrative illumination in observance of the second commandment warning against graven images. It was not until the Carolingians that narrative iconography developed. Initially, the book's dogmatic content and visual role in the

4. Theodor Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, 2nd ed. Trans. John Halliburton. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) 6-7.

5. Gustav Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1940), 8.

6. Fortescue, *Concerning Hymns*, 30.

7. Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*, 61. Also see my essay "Pipers at the Gate: Music, Musicians and the Church" for an overview.

8. Fortescue, *Concerning Hymns*, 31.

9. Edward Foley, *From Age to Age: How Christians Celebrated the Eucharist* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1991), 47-54.

10. Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 19-61.

11. Hoppen, *Medieval Music*, 93.

12. Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books*, 113-134.

13. Foley, *From Age to Age*, 53-54.

14. Isidore of Seville, Isidore of Seville: *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*, trans. Thomas L. Knoebel (New York: Newman Press, 2008), 32.



Chanting choir,

illustration from
La Bible Historiale
 Paris Bibliothèque
 Nationale de France MSS Français
 159, f. 277v
 French (late 14th century)

ceremony determined the decoration it featured. Therefore, Evangelaries and Sacramentaries, theologically important and highly visible during Mass and processions, warranted large-scale decoration both within their pages and on their binding. For example, Sacramentaries often contained large images pertaining to the Liturgical Calendar—such as the feasts of saints and martyrs—and Biblical scenes related to the rituals contained therein. The *Crucifixion* in the MFAH Sacramentary leaf on exhibit is such an example.¹⁵

Carolingian chant books, of relatively lesser theological importance, less visible to the congregation, and functional in nature, generally did not feature lavish decorative cycles. Those that did belonged to high-ranking officials. Decorated initials—illuminated or otherwise—functioned mainly as separators between chants, often as a brief reminder of the feast being celebrated. In time, however, chantbooks, too, would become lavishly decorated.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the beauty and exuberance in Carolingian chant books lay in their music. Charlemagne imported innovations in Gregorian

chanting from English monasteries. Its use of Latin—a language foreign to the Frankish faithful—and its sophistication diminished the involvement of the congregation in singing and placed more weight on the celebrants and the choir.¹⁷ The growing importance of liturgical chant and the need to transmit music across the large Frankish holdings led to the widespread use of neumes, the earliest forms of musical notation, to ensure musical uniformity across the kingdom.¹⁸ The great many Carolingian modifications to the Antiphony used in the Mass resulted in it being better known as the Gradual, its Frankish name.

Liturgical texts are structured in accordance to the Liturgical Calendar, which divides the year into seasons and feasts centered on the lives of Christ and the Saints. Accordingly, the Gradual is subdivided into chants of the Proper and chants of the Ordinary. The Proper consists of songs that change daily according to the feast celebrated on that given day, such as the martyrdom of a saint or a major Marian feast. The Ordinary of the Mass consists of the *Kyrie*, *Gloria* (...in *Excelsis Deo*, not to be confused with the *Gloria Patri* appended to the end of antiphons), *Credo*, *Sanctus* (including the *Benedictus*) and *Agnus Dei* chants. With the exception of the *Gloria* during Advent, Lent and ordinary weekdays, these chants are repeated in every Mass and may have been initially meant for congregational singing.

Songs from the Proper and the Ordinary are juxtaposed in the singing of the Mass. The ceremony begins with an introit (introductory antiphon), followed by the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria*—chants of contrition and praise, respectively. A gradual chant and the Alleluia are sung in between the daily reading and the gospel. The *Credo* follows the scriptural readings and precedes the rites of communion, which feature an offertory (an antiphon chanted as the gifts are brought to the altar), the *Sanctus*, and

15 Polacco, *A History of Liturgical Books*, 57–60.

16 Ibid., 79–82.

17 Foley, *From Age to Age*, 75.

18 Hoppin, *Medieval Music*, 45–57.

the *Agnus Dei* (exultation and plead for mercy) and a communion chant.

The UH *Gradual* and *Sequentiary*, on display at this exhibition, features several arrangements of the chants of the Ordinary, either individually or in pairs—usually *Kyrie-Gloria* or *Sanctus-Agnus Dei*.¹⁹ Additionally, the UH codex owes the latter part of its name to its collection of *sequences*, musical appendages to the Alleluia sung between the epistle and the Gospel valued by music scholars as one of the most popular creative outlets in medieval music and literature.²⁰

The chantbook for the Divine Office, contained in the pages of the Antiphony (technically the *Antiphony of the Office*), did not warrant the Carolingian attention Graduals enjoyed. Unlike the Mass, the Office rites and chants developed within the relative autonomy and diversity of various monastic orders and did not lend themselves to the unifying liturgical function Charlemagne and subsequent Carolingian rulers sought for their kingdom. The expectation that monks know the chants by heart (early Antiphonaries only contained the first few words of the chants) also delayed the appearance of musical notation in Antiphonaries until the tenth and eleventh centuries.²¹ Nevertheless, both the Gradual and the Antiphony are generally characterized by their size when compared with other liturgical books since they are meant to be sung from by multiple people at the same time.²² The introduction of the lectern in the latter Middle Ages facilitated the increase in size.²³ As evidenced by examples in this exhibition, Spanish Graduals and Antiphonaries are particularly notable for their large scale.²⁴

The latter Middle Ages saw simultaneously a great consolidation of liturgical books as well as a proliferation of books for specialized use and private devotion. Lectionaries emerged for the Mass (and for the Office as well), organizing readings in

accordance to the liturgical calendar. Compilations of *libelli* pertaining to sacraments, rites and benedictions executed by bishops evolved from the first official *Pontificals* in the tenth century under the Ottonians.²⁵ Similarly, the *Processional* evolved from gatherings of *libelli* of antiphons for processions within the Mass and the Office into an official liturgical book for orders such as the Dominicans by mid-thirteenth century, containing rubrics and chants for rituals like the washing of feet on Holy Thursday.²⁶

Meanwhile, the Sacramentary began to incorporate chants progressively, as the celebrant priest or bishop was required to sing to himself all the parts of the mass beginning in the ninth century. By the twelfth century the priest was able to conduct the entire Mass by himself if necessary as the Sacramentary and the Gradual merged into the Missal, which facilitated the celebration of the Mass in private chapels.²⁷ Similarly, the different books of readings (hagiographies, martyrologies, and the Office Lectionary) were combined with the Antiphony, resulting in the all-encompassing volume for the Divine Office, the Breviary.²⁸

The consolidation of the major liturgical books of the Mass and the Office into single volumes towards the end of the middle ages portended a new era of individualized worship that coincided with the rise of humanism. The expensive and laborious production of liturgical manuscripts eventually disappeared with the introduction of the printing press in the Renaissance. While the hegemony of Catholic liturgy was subsequently shattered by the Protestant Reformation and its focus on personal praise, liturgical music—no longer the exclusive realm of churchmen—continues to be an integral vehicle of worship to this day. ❧

19 Ibid., 131–132.

20 Ibid., 155.

21 Palumbo, *A History of Liturgical Books*, 135–142.

22 Nicolas Bell, *Music in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 45.

23 Palumbo, *A History of Liturgical Books*, 80.

24 Lorenzo Candalaria, *The Rosary Canon* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 17.

25 Palumbo, *A History of Liturgical Books*, 196.

26 Ibid., 229–231.

27 Ibid., 107–110.

28 Ibid., 169–172.

A Stream and its Source

Gregorian Chant

By Sara Royer

"Between a stream and its source, which has the purer water?"

Charlemagne



3 monks singing

(Breviary, Use of Sarum
detail of initial C (*anate Domino*)
at beginning of Psalm 97, LBL
Stowe ms 12, f 195
[Norwich, England])

Gregorian chant is, arguably, the most popular form of medieval Christian liturgical music still in use today. It is named after St. Gregory, during whose papacy Roman liturgical music was collected and codified.¹ Both Pope Gregory's biographer and later evidence attest that the sixth-century Pope was responsible for

having existing Christian liturgical music organized into two collections: the *Antiphonarium* and the *Graduale Romanum*. These collections designate the chants to be used for the various kinds of prayer services.² However, scholars disagree on whether or not St. Gregory also created a notation for recording this

1 Henry Beveridge, "Gregorian Chant," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06779a.htm> (accessed April 26, 2012).

2 Neil Valentine D'Silva, "The History Of Gregorian Chant," <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/the-history-of-gregorian-chant.html> (accessed April 26, 2012).

* Quote Source "A Stream and its Source"
Charlemagne

According to John the Deacon, *Vita Gregorii*, in: J. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia latina*, Paris, 1892, vol. 75, col. 90-91

chant, since the earliest surviving musical notation dates to the ninth century. Once it was transcribed with simple musical notation, the chant we know as "Gregorian" quickly superseded all other Western plainchant traditions.

One school of thought credits Charlemagne (king of the Franks and Holy Roman Emperor during the late eighth and early ninth centuries), with the naming and writing of plainchant. Among his other goals, Charlemagne was committed to converting his tribal, pagan subjects to Christianity and to unifying the Carolingian Empire through religion. He was also determined to increase literacy among his people, for which purpose he sponsored the systematization of script in the form we today call Carolingian miniscule. In naming sacred music after the scholar and Church Father, St. Gregory, nearly two centuries after his death, Charlemagne enhanced the legitimacy of his agenda. It is said that he required his clergy to use Gregorian Chant under "pain of death."³

Unlike other forms of medieval music, Gregorian chant has been performed continuously since its creation, before it was written down or known as "Gregorian." Also called plainchant or plainsong, Gregorian chant was by no means a static musical mode, even during the Middle Ages. As it spread by law across the Carolingian Empire, it began to absorb Gallican chant. It also contains Hebraic, Greek, Byzantine, Roman and Frankish elements, and has undergone substantial literary and musical adaptation.⁴ The term "Gregorian Chant" actually refers to a variety of musical recitation, ranging from monophonic to polyphonic. Simple monophonic sound is a single melody without the accompaniment of harmony. Unison polyphonic sound, in contrast, involves two or more voices or parts, each with an independent melody but harmonizing together.⁵

From the Gospels (Matt 26:30) we know that music was used to express Christian worship since the time of Christ. Later forms of Gregorian chant represent an effort to shape and organize this expression. There have been periods of reform and reprise for Gregorian Chant. In the mid-twentieth century, Gregorian Chant had largely gone out of practice, but since then it has again become popular and is used to accompany mass and worship in the Roman Catholic Church. In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI called for the "preservation of the Church's heritage of sacred music."⁶ This was a deliberate step by the Catholic Church to promote the Roman school of polyphonic sound. Gregorian Chant represents, to this day, an important contribution to music over the millennia and deserves to be preserved for its powerful historical significance. The true origin of Gregorian Chant may be disputed, but the name is truly fitting. Saint Gregory did organize the existing liturgical music of his time, and his devotion to chant and music continues to be expressed in worship. ❧

³ Music Outitters, "Gregorian Chant Resources and History," <http://www.musicoutitters.com/gregorianchants.htm> (accessed April 26, 2012).

⁴ Francis P. Schmitt, *Church Music Transgressed* (New York: Seabury Press 1977), 16.

⁵ Dictionary.com, definition of polyphonic, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/polyphonic> (accessed April 26, 2012).

⁶ CatholicCulture.org, "Pope Urges Recovery of Traditional Sacred Music," <http://www.catholicculture.org/news/features/index.cfm?cnum=44963> (accessed April 26, 2012).

An Evolution of Tradition

Jewish Medieval Music

By Sara Royer



See catalog entry 6.06, p. 59

The Jewish people have a musical and cantorial tradition that dates from early Judaism and is practiced to this day. The Jewish Bible, or Tanakh, has three sections: Torah, Prophets, and Writings. Many of the books in each section are often ritually chanted in synagogue services through cantillation (recitation embellished with a musical cadence), namely the Pentateuch, the Prophets, Esther, Lamentations, Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Psalms, and, in some traditions, Job.¹ The Talmud states that holy text should be made understandable to the hearers in a musical, sweet tone—facilitating the

evolution from spoken word to chant, and eventually to music.² There is little surviving evidence of Jewish liturgical music, however. One reason is that music was considered sinful by some, including the renowned twelfth-century Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides. In this view singing might glorify the singer and thus detract from the word of God and ceremonial music was therefore deemed unworthy of practicing or performing.³

Despite such prohibitions, some Jewish groups continued to perform music in synagogue and home. Cantors, artists of chant, demonstrated artistry and

1 A.Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), 36.

2 Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 35.

3 Louis Jacobs, ed., *The Jewish Religion: A Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 641.

*The Book of Esther,
in the shape of a bear*

Hirsch Ilya Schlomowitz
Russia, 1870
Library of Jewish
Theological Seminary

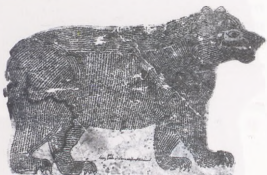
pride in creating their own secular melodies and liturgical chant. While honoring the traditions of the past, each cantor created unique *hazzanots*, a style of free vocal recitation.⁴ A Jewish cantor, or *hazzan*, would then pass down these chants through oral tradition from teacher to student. Although little survives of musical manuscripts, we do have some textual evidence that common chants and themes began to develop within Jewish communities. Two fragments written by a twelfth-century cantor and teacher, a Jewish convert named Obadiah, survive to this date and serve as evidence of this practice in Jewish chant.⁵

Another impediment to the development of the notation of Jewish music during the Middle Ages was that the Hebrew language was (and still is) read right to left, but music was notated from left to right. It was therefore very difficult to reconcile the words of the sacred texts with medieval musical notation systems. Thus, that a Jewish medieval musical tradition existed cannot be denied; how it sounded, however, largely remains a mystery.

During the Middle Ages, the Sephardic Jews lived peacefully in the Iberian Peninsula alongside Christians and Muslims under Muslim rule (from 711 to 1492). Many of the hymns still sung in the Jewish liturgy were composed by Sephardic poets during this Golden Age.⁶ The Sephardic Jews absorbed various cultural traditions from the places they later settled, but their sacred music retained its "Moorish" tone from the Middle Ages. Thus, to the extent that oppressors or rivals did not destroy Jewish material culture, medieval Spain offers scholars insights into the development of Jewish chant and practices that are otherwise unavailable.

Systematic persecution forced the Hebrew people to scatter over many lands throughout the centuries. The diaspora led to the incorporation into Jewish chant both sacred and secular elements from

Iberian, North African, Eastern Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern musical traditions. Consequently synagogal chant was never absolutely pure.⁷ One such example is the chant for the Book of Esther, often referred to as *The Megillah* (texts in scroll format), although in fact several other texts are also in scroll form. The Book of Esther is chanted twice during the Jewish holiday of Purim, in a modal tone called the "Oriental-style."⁸ While the Book of Esther is traditionally written on a scroll, it was occasionally written in micrography, minute text shaped in the form of an abstract or representational design. Micrography is one example of the absorption of Eastern traditions into Jewish practices.



Hebraic chant has served a crucial role in maintaining cultural identity for a people scattered across a vast geographic area. Although very few medieval Jewish music manuscripts survive, the musical conventions developed during that time are evident in modern synagogue music. While it remains unknown exactly what medieval Jewish music sounded like, one can conclude that contemporary Jewish music would be very different without the transformations that occurred during the Middle Ages. ❧

4 Jonathan L. Friedmann, comp., *Music in Jewish Thought: Selected Writings, 1890-1920* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2009), 36.

5 Nissan Mindel, "Ovradiah the Gzer," Kehot Publication Society, http://www.kehot.org/library/article_cdo?aid=112385/jewish/Ovradiah-the-Gzer.htm (accessed April 26, 2012).

6 Jewish Music Institute, University of London, website: jewishmusic.org.uk

7 Jonathan L. Friedmann, comp., *The Value of Sacred Music: an Anthology of Essential Writings, 1831-1918* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2009), 140.

8 Kleibohm, *Jewish Music*, 38.

"Recite in the Name of Thy Lord"

Chanting the Qur'an

By Hanah Mirza



"Recite in the name of thy Lord." (Qur'an 96.1) These seven words are the first revelation of the Holy book of the Muslims, the Qur'an. These seven words changed the face of Islam; they introduced the art of reciting. According to Islamic records, the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty-three years. Muhammad was forty years of age when he received the first revelation in 610 CE. The last revelation occurred in 632 CE, the year in which he died.

The Qur'an is divided into one hundred and fourteen chapters called *surahs*. Each *surah* is

composed of multiple verses. Some are classified as being revealed to Muhammad during the time he spent in Mecca and some while he was in Medina. Originally, the Qur'an was not to be written down anywhere, just memorized by those who were close to the Prophet and then passed on from believer to believer. After the death of the Prophet, there were only a select few people who knew the entire Qur'an by heart. The number of religious battles being fought between the Muslim empire and those surrounding it reduced those few further, and the leaders of the Islamic empire feared that the Qur'an would be lost with the deaths of those who knew it. For that reason, they decided to start writing down Muhammad's revelations and compiling the *surahs* into a book, although the chapters were not arranged in any particular order. The book of the Qur'an has stayed the same through the years: the script has not changed and it is prohibited to change any of its characters in making subsequent copies.

During the medieval period, the Muslim empire either encompassed or existed adjacent to cultures with other religious traditions that used chant and recitation with their sacred texts, including the Sephardic (Spanish) Jewish, and Armenian and Eastern Orthodox Christian cultures. These religions all practiced some form of chanting in their worship. It is most likely that the idea of Qur'anic chant was influenced by these other practices. Like Jewish and early Christian sacred music, Islamic

See catalog entry 6.19, p. 73

music was prohibited from using instruments. The lack of instrumental music forced Muslims to hone their vocal skills to achieve artistic mastery in order to chant the Qur'an.

The Qur'an was written in Arabic, the mother tongue of the Prophet Muhammad. The Arabic alphabet consists of twenty-eight letters and is written and read from right to left. Accentuation was the key to chanting the Qur'an; everything depended on it. Qur'anic chant was made up of very simple elements. A series of long and short vocal tunes accompanied the Arabic script.¹ Chanting of the Qur'an is done using four forms or elements of musical accentuation, namely pitch, duration, ornamentation and vocal timbre. Traditionally, the reciter starts off the verse with a high pitch, and proceeds to lower it. Pitch also served to highlight the repetition of a piece of verse for literary purposes.

Duration plays a very important role in Qur'anic chant. The motifs above the scripture indicate how long the reciter should pause or read.² The term musical ornamentation refers to notes or keys that embellish the chanting of a verse, making it sound more elaborate. In the case of the Qur'an, however, there is no set melody or tune. A final major element of Qur'anic chant is vocal timbre. Changing the timbre is a common means of accentuation in vocal music. The human voice can be manipulated to sound either clear or husky, to change from chest to head tone, and to go from thin to rich. These techniques are employed in Qur'anic chant to emphasize certain part of the *surahs* that are being read.

The combination of these four elements not only make Qur'anic chant pleasurable to the ear, but they also work together to make the chanting and recitation a practice which can be followed by Muslims everywhere. The Qur'an is structured to emphasize some parts more than others, and the guidelines for Qur'anic chant allow this to happen:

when a certain verse stresses a particular religious act the Qur'an is arranged so that verse is also stressed vocally. Going back to the first words that were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, we can see that Qur'anic chant has followed them faithfully, "Recite in the name of thy Lord." Muslims who believe in their God and wish to please Him, will recite and chant in His name. ❧


1. Lois Ihsen al Faraqi, "Accentuation in Qur'anic Chant: A Study in Musical *Tawa'uz*," *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 10, (1978), 57.

2. Lois Ihsen al Faraqi, "Accentuation in Qur'anic Chant," 62.

Processionals

Walking, Singing, and Performing Piety

By Mónica Fuentes-Domínguez

"The body is the vestment of the spirit, which has a living voice, so it is proper for the body, in harmony with the soul, to use its voice to sing praises to God."  Hildegard of Bingen



Processional manuscripts played an important role in the complex world of medieval processions, a part of the liturgy that was as dynamic as the different groups that engaged in them. In their most basic form, liturgical processions are the orderly and sacred movement of members of the church from one place to another.¹ In reality, however, processions can be highly complex, taking into account

the order of the participants, the objects to be carried, the music to be sung, and the destination.

Liturgical processions, which can occur either inside or outside religious buildings, are broadly categorized into cyclical and occasional.² Cyclical processions are arranged according to the feasts and seasons of the Christian calendar—such as Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, and Corpus Christi.³ Occasional processions take place during other religious celebrations like burials, the consecration of churches, the translation and exposition of relics, coronations, and pilgrimages.⁴ Music and chant were an intrinsic part of medieval liturgical processions.

Processional books were an indispensable aid to the performers. The participants had numerous chants and a large amount of dialog to remember. While the books did not systematically cover what was to take place during the procession, they were a way for participants to keep track of the various parts. Specifically, Processionals helped the participants remain focused while alternating chants with the officiant as the procession moved. Also, by walking and singing at the same time, the faithful were meant to undergo a very intimate and visceral experience with the music becoming one with his or her body.⁵

See catalog entry 6.18, p. 72

1 Roger E. Reynolds, "The drama of medieval liturgical processions," *Revue de Musicologie* 86 (2000): pp. 127–142. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4140484>

2 *Ibid.*, 134.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 Anne Bagnal Yardley, *Performing piety: musical culture in medieval English nunneries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 113.

* Quote Source: "The body is the vestment of the spirit..."

Hildegard of Bingen

Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman, trans., *The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 79, letter

Processional manuscripts sometimes included musical notation in the style of the region of origin of the book. The manuscript could also contain antiphons, bible passages, and even instructions for liturgical dramas.⁶ The most elaborate processions employed elements of performance and drama, take hours and hours to finish and include props and multiple "hosts" such as relics or images of saints. Most strikingly, processions reached out to the layman more than other parts of the liturgy, making the faithful into participants rather than simply witnesses to piety. The act of singing and walking created a vehicle for synchronizing viewers, performers, and holy "hosts." Unfortunately, Processionals, particularly the printed (and thus widely circulated) versions, rarely survived the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century.⁷ Protestant reformers condemned the Catholic church for many of its doctrines and rituals, especially the worship of images and the emphasis on deeds, rather than pure faith, in order to demonstrate piety and attain salvation. As pomp and piety, seemingly mutually exclusive terms, were central aspects of processions, reformers filled with religious zeal took particular pleasure in destroying manuscripts that aided practices in which icons and images were so prominent.

While life in medieval cloistered communities and the specifics of their individual liturgical practices were rarely documented, their surviving Processionals offer insights into the power politics within their walls. For example, the processionals codified the order in which the participants of a procession were arranged. In communities of nuns, that arrangement was an opportunity to showcase the nun's power and influence both as an individual and as a woman. Because of gender issues women did not partake often in public processions and when they did they would be situated at the back. In contrast, on major feasts nuns would march in procession to

churches outside their convent, visible to all. On such occasions, the world was witness to the power of their gender.⁸

The Processional for Dominican nuns in this exhibit is one of those rare survivals that bears witness to women's politics and lives during the Middle Ages. The manuscript displayed contains most of the major liturgical processions such as those for Palm Sunday. It is also noteworthy that many of the initials have been shaped in humorous or grotesque forms which speak to the intimate relationship that the owner of the book would have had with it. The nun(s) who owned the manuscript would have constantly used it to perform the liturgy. The handwritten notes within the manuscript are a result of this and, whether the notes come from the original owners or later ones, they were helpful hints on the complex road of performing piety. ☸

⁶ Ibid., 117.

⁷ F.G. Rendall, "Some liturgical accessories," *The British Museum Quarterly*, 15 (1941-50): pp. 13-14, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4422248>

⁸ Ibid., 115.

Antiphonal Iconography



Symbolism and Style in a Renaissance Choral Book

By Miha Burgett



The Choral Service Book in the Special Collections at the University of Houston's M.D. Anderson Library (Special Collections MS. no. 2147) is a beautiful example of an antiphony. Antiphonaries contained the music for prayer services performed by nuns, monks, and clerics in monastic settings. Scholars speculate that this codex comes from the Collegio Capranica of Rome, founded in 1417.¹

On the opening page a female martyr, usually identified as St. Agnes, inhabits a large initial "M". Legend says that St. Agnes was tortured at a young

age when she refused to allow herself to be courted by suitors. As further punishment, she was sent to work in a brothel. In response to her petitions, God made her hair grow long until it covered her body and protected her from the lust of men. Ultimately she was martyred. Thus the martyr in the initial is identifiable as Agnes by her long hair and accompanying lamb, attributes that typify her virtue and devotion to Christ. In addition, Agnes's name means lamb and, in Christianity, Jesus is called the Lamb of God. The lamb is therefore a common attribute of Agnes, symbolizing both her innocence and her connection to Christ. Agnes's privileged position on the opening page of this manuscript strongly suggests that the codex was made in and for a convent dedicated to the female martyr. It also supports the speculation that the manuscript originates in Rome, as Agnes likely came from a wealthy Roman family.²

In the *bas-de-page* (a scene in the bottom border) on the same page, two monks kneel at either side of a cross from which hang two whips and a crown of thorns. Their posture suggests either a special devotion to Christ's torture and suffering, or to the flagellant movement through which followers mortified their flesh in order to experience the sufferings of Christ. Like many other female Christian martyrs, Agnes is said to have overcome the fear and pain inflicted on her through the strength of her commitment to God.³ In the left margin of this page, is an image of a small boy whipping a goose, recalling a highly ritualized and tortuous practice known from

See catalog entry 6.10, p. 63

¹ University of Houston Special Collections.

² Clara Erskine Clement, *A Handbook of Christian Symbols and Stories of the Saints as Illustrated in Art* (1886; repr., Detroit: Gale Research Company 1971), 44-45.

³ *Ibid.*, 44.

See catalog entry 6.10, p. 63

See catalog entry 6.10, p. 63

a recipe for cooking goose.⁴ This image, perhaps surprising in a religious book, evokes the torture of Christ and Agnes in vernacular terms.

The border decorations found in the choral book from the Roman convent of St. Agnes are in the Italian Renaissance style. While many of the other manuscripts in this exhibit also date to the fifteenth century, the decoration of those from Northern Europe and France generally are medieval in their style. In contrast, the decoration of this choral book reflects the ideas and tastes of Humanism, which emerged in Italy during this period, but was not fully embraced in the rest of Europe until the sixteenth century. For example, northern European leaves tend to be sparser and neither as colorful nor as elaborate as Italian Renaissance examples. The choral book from the convent of St. Agnes features rich floral decorations in a combination of red, blue, and green as well as the distinctive gold circles that are also characteristically Italian Renaissance. This codex's floral decorations also feature more rounded petals and more petals than leaves when compared to the Medieval style of vines and floral border decorations.⁵ Other Renaissance manuscripts, such as MS 90 in the Getty Collection, illuminated by Franco dei Russi, often show a border design that is similar to that of the University of Houston choral book. In particular, a page in honor of St. Louis is quite similar in style to UH MS 2147.⁶ Both manuscripts were made in Italy and can be dated to the fifteenth century. ❧



⁴ Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt, *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 1-4.

⁵ The rendering of the St. Agnes and St. Helena in the historiated further supports the identification of Renaissance style. Their bodies can be seen underneath their drapery and their faces are very rounded-out, which is typical of Italian Renaissance style and speaks to the interest in humanism in art at the time.

⁶ The J. Paul Getty Museum, Initial T: Saint Louis of Toulouse, <http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/art/ObjectDetails/artobj+265425> (Accessed Mar. 31, 2012).

From Lower Saxony to Stavelot

Questions of Origin for the Canon Page from a Sacramentary

By Jennifer N. Sawhill



A single leaf from an unidentified Romanesque manuscript at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, poses intriguing questions regarding its parent manuscript and place of origin. Traditionally dated to c.1150-60, the *Canon Page from a Sacramentary* [MFAH 71.8] has been attributed to Hildesheim due to commonalities with two local manuscripts, the *Ratmann Sacramentary* and the *Stammheim Missal*.¹ However, the illumination's style and iconography

more directly align with the miniature design and champlévé sculpture of Stavelot in the Meuse River Valley of Belgium, namely the *Stavelot Sacramentary* and *Stavelot Portable Altar*. Thus I intend to propose a Mosan origin for the Canon page.

The sacramentary is a liturgical book containing the Canon, or service of the Eucharist, in which the Body and Blood of Christ are given.² The decoration of the sacramentary reflects the culminating ritual of the Eucharist with a *Crucifixion* miniature commemorating the physical sacrifice of Christ.³ The Houston folio includes an elaborate champlévé-inspired *Crucifixion* miniature on its recto, with the opening words of the *Te igitur*, a prayer of supplication, inscribed along the bottom. The prayer continues on the unilluminated verso.

Beginning in the early twelfth century, artists in the Mosan region in Belgium rejuvenated the enamel technique of champlévé, utilizing this sleek, durable product to augment cloisonné and further advance the Romanesque goal of abstraction and legibility.⁴ Champlévé metalwork took on a newly important role in conveying Christian iconography, while the previously dominant medium of manuscript painting often adapted to imitate its sculptural counterpart.⁵ A century earlier, Bishop Bernward led Hildesheim to become a major center of champlévé production while also encouraging the incorporation of enamel design elements into manuscript decoration.⁶ A *Te igitur* page from a sacramentary that Bernward commissioned ca.1014-22 offers an unsophisticated

See catalog entry 6.20, p. 74

1 J.L. Schrader, "The Canon Page From a Lost Sacramentary and its Significance to Romanesque Lower Saxon Style," *The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Bulletin*, vol. 2, no. 8, (Dec. 1971): 145.

2 Some early Sacramentaries even included the chants but were later removed to the Gradual. Robert G. Calkins, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 162.

3 James Clifton, *The Body of Christ in the Art of Europe and New Spain, 1150-1800* (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston/Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1997), 104.

4 Patrick M. De Winter, "The Sacral Treasure of the Guelphs," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, vol. 72, no. 1, *The Sacral Treasure of the Guelphs* (Mar. 1985): 63.

5 De Winter 1985, 63.

6 Schrader 1971; De Winter 1985.



intermingling of local and foreign styles while exhibiting the isolated figural group and geometric background common to the Houston miniature.⁷ These traits were also known to have prevailed at Stavelot Abbey in the mid-twelfth century, however, as will be further explored.⁸

Characteristics of champlevé enamelwork in the Houston miniature also appear in the *Stammheim Missal* (c.1150) and *Ratmann Sacramentary* (1159) from Hildesheim, which share striking similarities with one another. Both contain miniatures depicting references to St. Bernward as well as numerous design commonalities.⁹ Like the Houston page, the *Stammheim Missal* possesses a beautifully illuminated *Crucifixion* miniature. The Houston image,

however, incorporates the enamel-inspired design more authentically. Its geometric background interacts harmoniously with the figural group, as though the blocks were polychrome enamels poured into sculpted cavities. Thus the Houston folio may relate in space and spirit to the renaissance of champlevé in the Mosan region, rather than to Hildesheim.

The *Stavelot Sacramentary*, which contains a miniature linking twelfth-century enamelwork and manuscript design, further connects the Houston page with Stavelot Abbey.¹⁰ The cross in the Houston page graphically divides the background which is patterned with blocks of blue and green. The Virgin and St. John the Evangelist flank the crucified Christ. The Stavelot page mirrors the distinctive arrangement of de-contextualized figures,¹¹ with the feet of Mary and St. John gracefully overlapping the ground line. The champlevé-inspired design of the background establishes a precedent in Stavelot for the sculpturally influenced *Crucifixion* in miniature we find in the Houston image.

The *Stavelot Portable Altar*, a sumptuous work of champlevé enamel dated ca.1150-60, also offers compelling stylistic and iconographic evidence for the Houston page's Mosan origin. The altar's *Crucifixion* figures likewise exist apart from a narrative context.¹² Although the entire altar mensa is itself a riot of figural activity, individual scenes are viewed discretely, comparable to miniatures in a manuscript. In the *Crucifixion* panel, the gilded, grieving figures are shown against a background of alternating blue and green enamel blocks, corresponding to the Houston page's own harmonious composition.

The Houston figure of St. John poses listlessly—right arm lifted to his cheek in sorrowful perplexity and supported by his left hand—so closely relating to the apostle's stance in the altar that the parallel can hardly be coincidental. The iconographic correlation

7 Francis J. Tychon, *Saint Bernward of Hildesheim*, vol. II. (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1942), 33-4.

8 Joyce Brodsky, "The Stavelot Triptych: Notes on a Mosan Work," *Gesta*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1972): 19; William D. Wixom, "Byzantine Art and the Latin West," *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 438.

9 As if this alone could not localize the books to Hildesheim, an account of the facial types of Bernward even indicate execution by the same hand.

10 William Voelkle, *The Stavelot Triptych: Mosan Art and the Legend of the True Cross*. (New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library/Oxford University Press, 1980).

11 I would posit it may have even provided a model for the background of the Houston page, as the Stavelot manuscript was created some thirty years earlier.

12 Elizabeth C. Teviotdale, *The Stammheim Missal*. (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2001), 65.



Crucifixion
(detail from *Stavelot*
Portable Altar)

may indicate a local preference. In the Stammheim *Crucifixion*, in contrast, John looks downward, his right hand firmly pressed to his chest while his left clutches his cloak, clearly separating the Houston miniature from its supposed Hildesheim partner.

The presentation of the body is significant as well. Whereas the Stammheim St. John's red cloak appears basically flat, both the Houston miniature and the altar convey bodily volume through draperies cascading over the body. A comparable tension in fabrics links St. John's neck to his elbow in the Houston miniature and in the altar, creating an emotive dynamism totally absent in the Stammheim piece. The possibility of direct collaboration between enamellers and illuminators in the production of Mosan manuscript designs is an essential component to this hypothesis and has been explored by scholars.¹³

Theological motivations contribute to the proposed attribution as well. The *Stavelot Portable Altar*

served as a pedestal for the Eucharist and thus housed the Body and Blood of Christ. The *Sacramentary* itself could be viewed as a reliquary, as it contained the image of the *Crucifixion* and aided the service of the Eucharist. A patron may have sought imagery connecting the Canon page to sacramental sculpture. Moreover, the strong resemblance in these two artworks may suggest a common workshop of origin, that of Stavelot Abbey. Thus similarities in style, rather than suggesting mere patterns of influence, become indications of common patronage and purpose intended to propagate a local brand or tradition.

In conclusion, an examination of style, iconography, and possible patronage reveals important relationships between the *Houston Canon Page* from a *Sacramentary*, the *Stavelot Sacramentary* and *Stavelot Portable Altar* and indicates a shared place of origin. ❧

13 Suzanne Collon-Gevaert, "Metalwork," in *A Treasury of Romanesque Art: Metalwork, illuminations and sculpture from the Valley of the Meuse*, ed. Suzanne Collon-Gevaert, Jean Lejeune, et al. (New York, NY: Phaidon Press Ltd, 1972), 89; Jacques Stenon, "The Miniature," in *A Treasury of Romanesque Art: Metalwork, illuminations and sculpture from the Valley of the Meuse*, ed. Suzanne Collon-Gevaert, Jean Lejeune, et al. (New York, NY: Phaidon Press Ltd, 1972), 115.

See catalog entry 6.09, p. 62



Pipers at the Gate

Music, Musicians, and the Church

By José Candelaria

In his *Confessions*, early Church Father St. Augustine testified to music's power to stir mind and spirit: "How did I weep, in Thy Hymns and Canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of Thy sweet-attuned Church! The voices flowed into mine ears and the Truth distilled into my heart."¹ Many Patristic opinions survive on music's role in worship, revealing attitudes that remained strong through the entire Middle Ages. Influential early Christian philosophers and scholars such as Augustine and Boethius shared the Greek philosophical belief that music was part of mathematics and among the purest of sciences. Like Roman Neo-Platonists and Neo-Pythagoreans, they viewed music as a vehicle to transcend the material world and access the realm of the abstract² which meant, from a Christian perspective, that music allowed man to engage in a direct dialogue with God.³

Regarding what was allowed within church walls, the Church Fathers made a very clear-cut distinction between music, executable only through the human voice, and music-making, mere virtuosity practiced by instrumentalists and performers regarded, by the standards of the day, among the dregs of Roman society.⁴ About the former, Clement of Alexandria stated: "the one instrument of peace, the Word alone by which we honour God, is what we employ."⁵ Conversely, secular musicians and, by extension, their musical instruments—redolent of paganism, prostitution and obscenity—were summarily barred from the liturgy.⁶ One Church Father

asked rhetorically, "did God send souls [to earth]... so that as males they become pederasts and as females they become harlots, harpists and kitharists, giving their bodies for hire?"⁷ St. John Chrysostom summarizes the Patristic attitude more tersely: "Where [flute]-players are, there Christ is not."⁸ Some, like the fourth century Egyptian Abbot Pambo, rejected even singing as unwholesome, lamenting the "monk who, whether situated in the church or in his cell, lifts up his voice like a bull."⁹ Nevertheless, the Church Fathers generally welcomed singing in the liturgy—as long as it remained within the boundaries of modesty and sincere devotion—but categorically rejected any notion of musical instruments within holy places.¹⁰

The Biblical mention of Jews using instruments in Jerusalem's Temple posed an interesting dilemma. Many Church Fathers persevered in their wholesale condemnation of instruments as defiled due to pagan use. Clement of Alexandria, one of the earliest, begrudgingly excused only the lyre and kithara (a kind of lyre) since King David—widely believed to have written the psalms—supposedly had used them.¹¹ Most dodged the question altogether, interpreting the Biblical instruments symbolically instead. St. Augustine, for example, took a Christological tack: "On the timbrel [tambourine] leather is stretched; on the psalter [an ancient kind of lyre] gut is stretched; on either instrument the flesh is crucified."¹² Finally, others argued that the use of instruments in the Temple, like animal sacrifices and other practices,

1 Carl Johann Perl and Alan Kriegsmann, "Augustine and Music: On the Occasion of the 1600th Anniversary of the Saint," *The Musical Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (Oct. 1955): 506.

2 Gustav Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1940), 58-59.

3 Perl and Kriegsmann, "Augustine and Music," 501.

4 *Ibid.*, 502.

5 Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*, 62.

6 Edmund A. Bowles, "Were Musical Instruments Used in the Liturgical Service during the Middle Ages?," *The Galpin Society Journal* 10 (May 1957): 45.

7 James McKinnon, "The Meaning of the Patristic Polemic Against Musical Instruments," *Current Musicology* 1 (1965): 73.

8 McKinnon, "The Meaning of the Patristic Polemic," 69.

9 Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*, 66.

10 Bowles, "Were Musical Instruments Used," 47.

11 Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*, 61.

12 *Ibid.*, 64.

*Inhabited Initial with
King David Playing a Lyre*

*(Detail)Guryanay Bible
University of Houston,
Special Collections,
MS BS75 1200r
Northern France,
13th century*

was a concession by God due to the "immaturity" of the outdated Mosaic law: "If God accepted even sacrifice and blood because of the immaturity of the men at that time, why are you surprised at the music of the kithara and the psalterium?"¹³

Ironically, repeated condemnations of both musicians and their instruments only highlight the resiliency of secular music as a threat. Since most scribes were churchmen, few secular music manuscripts survive; yet musicians unquestionably remained part of the medieval consciousness.¹⁴ Illustrations mocking itinerant musicians, like those at the margins of some documents in this exhibition, reflect the attitude prevalent for the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity. Yet external pressures from the secular world never ceased.

The strongest pressures spilled from just outside church walls, thanks to the Frankish taste for liturgical spectacle. The first man-made instrument to infiltrate the Western liturgy was the organ, introduced and used since the sixth century by the Merovingians. The primitive organ's complexity eased its acceptance since only clerics, not minstrels, were educated enough to operate it. Later on, the Carolingians employed the organ and the trumpet in ecclesiastical processions up to the church doors and to announce the beginning of Mass. Trumpet use spread further into the Mass, accentuating climactic events such as the entry of high clergy and, by the twelfth century, the elevation of the host during the consecration of the Eucharist.¹⁵ Thus, by the end of the Middle Ages, the gates were finally open: the reviled musicians often led the faithful to the very doors of the church and musical instruments were participants in the Eucharistic climax of the Mass. ❧



¹³ McKinnon, "The Meaning of the Patristic Polemic," 75–76.

¹⁴ Bowles, "Were Musical Instruments Used," 48.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 48–52.

Secular Musicians of the Middle Ages

The Troubadour Tradition

By Diana Guzman



courtly behavior, love's constant sorrows, and rare blissful joys as topics of poetry and songs. They were intellectual literati who, with a few exceptions, were not of the nobility and depended on patrons for compensation.¹

The troubadour influence spread through most of Southern France, known as Occitania, and south into Iberia where rulers frequently exchanged visits and were entertained by their hosts with troubadour songs, thereby effectuating mutual exchanges in troubadour music. In reading Alfonso X's *Cántigas de Santa Maria*, a facsimile of which is in this exhibit, one can see the influence of Occitanian troubadours on Spain's music and poetry, and conversely, the influence of Iberian troubadours can be seen in Occitanian verse.²

Troubadours also traveled to Northern France during the twelfth century. The Crusades were the impetus for many meetings between the nobles of both the North and South and these encounters provided the occasion for demonstrations of troubadour art. The northern troubadours, known as *trouvères*, imitated the Southern masters in their own language and followed the Southern technique.

Female troubadours, known as *trobairitzes*, also wrote lyric poetry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Twenty women troubadours are known today; all of the women were from Occitania and all were aristocrats. There were substantial differences in the legal status of aristocratic women in the south of France from those in the rest of Europe,

Heinrich von Meissen ("Frauenlob")
Manesse Codex (facsimile)

Zürich (Switzerland),
1300-1340
University of Houston,
Special Collections,
PT1419.H4C62 1981,
Vol. 12, fol. 399r

Secular poetry and songs changed forever in Europe with the emergence of professional itinerant musicians, troubadours, in early twelfth-century France. Prior to the twelfth century the most common type of songs were epic poems about the exploits of historic and contemporary feudal warriors. Such songs were generally long poems sung to a short melodic formula that fit the rhythmic patterns of the poem. The troubadour tradition developed in the mid-twelfth century in the west-central area of modern day France when lyric expression of feudal service and warrior virtues were replaced by amorous desires,

1. Stephanie Cain Van D'Elzen, "The Minnesingers," in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, edited by R.P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 267.

2. Gerald A. Bond, "Origins," in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, edited by R.P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 243.

and troubairitzes enjoyed more independence than they would have elsewhere. Troubairitzes wrote from a female perspective and under their own names. They, too, wrote about love, but their language and the situations they described are markedly different from those of their male counterparts. Their verse is rhymed but written in a more straightforward manner, as if part of a conversation. They did not idealize relationships, and they did not use allegorical figures. It is unknown whether the troubairitzes performed their own songs, and only a handful of their works have been translated or studied.

The troubadour tradition also spread to Germany and Austria where musicians were known as Minnesingers. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century Minnesängers wrote and sang poems of courtly love that were almost completely imitative of the French troubadour melodies. Over time the songs began to show a greater individuality and became filled with abstraction, ambiguity, and tortuous reasonings, making them difficult to explain or interpret in a satisfactory way today. The troubadour's poetry flattered his lady, perhaps to gain political advantage from her while her husband was fighting in a Crusade; the Minnesänger's did not. While the troubadour praised the beauty of his lady, the Minnesänger praised the virtues of his.³

The Songs & Their Audiences

There were many themes of lyric poems written by the troubadours but the most popular was courtly love, an idea based on proper behavior for aristocrats and chivalrous deference to women as the weaker, purer, more virtuous sex. Such lyrical expressions were an attempt to attain an unnamed good that could only be bestowed by a lady. It was a dialog without reply. The insurmountable distance separating the lovers fuelled the composer's poetry, a distance filled with pleasure, sadness, hope, and fear.⁴ Minnesängers, who

were members of the lower nobility, were often stewards or estate managers of a lord or prince, and the unattainable woman of their songs was often the wife of the singer's lord. These songs were meant as a kind of tribute to, or a sly reaction against, their liege.⁵

The elevation of the lady in lyric poetry was in direct contrast to the actual social status of women in the Middle Ages when women were the pawns of men. Women lived in varying degrees of comfort or misery, depending on their social class. This new kind of leisured civilization no longer had the continual need to defend itself and the knights of Occitania found their lives to be of comparative ease. This new relaxed atmosphere caused a change in relations between the sexes that resulted in an adulation of the place of the lady in noble society. The performance of a noble musician-poet in an aristocratic court evolved into giving the patron the same esteemed reputation as success in battle would have given in earlier times.⁶

There is some argument over whether courtly love was about love at all. Frenzel writes that romantic love is largely physical and fulfilled, whether within a marriage or without, and generally is physically consummated. Courtly love, on the other hand is frequently unfulfillable. In fact, there is a sizable body of song in which love would be destroyed by consummation.⁷ As Page writes, "only the male view of love was interesting." The troubadours' poetry examines male emotions, never female emotions, and more often than not their singing was meant to be heard by other men, only rarely by the lady for whom the song is intended. In other words, the songs were not for women but about women; not expressions of love but how a man represents himself when talking to a male audience.⁸ In a miniature found in a Franco-Italian manuscript (ca. 1350) containing the *lange d'ol story Guiron le courtois* (ca. 1230), a troubadour knight is performing for King Arthur and the

³ Van D'Elden, *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, 267.

⁴ Paul Zumthor, "An Overview: Why the Troubadours?" in *A Handbook of the Troubadours* edited by F.R. Alchouart and Judith M. Davis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 15.

⁵ George C. Schofield, "Foreword," in *German Poetry from the Beginnings to 1750*, edited by Ingrid Walz-Engel (New York: Continuum, 1992), xx.

⁶ Albert Senn, *Music in the Medieval World* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 63.

⁷ Peter Frenzel, "Minne-Sang: The Conjunction of Singing and Loving in German Courtly Song," *The German Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (May, 1982), 337, <http://www.jstor.org/eprints/lib.ub.edu/stable/406087> (accessed March 28, 2012).

⁸ Christopher Page, *Listening to the Trouvères, Early Music* 25, no. 4 (Nov., 1997), 647, <http://www.jstor.org/eprints/lib.ub.edu/stable/3128410> (accessed March 28, 2012).

men of his court. Arthur sits enthroned, surrounded by his barons who stand, all listening intently and quietly to the singer who performs a composition written by King Meliadus for the love of a lady who is Arthur's guest. No women are present, however, not even the dedicatee of the song.

The Songbooks

The names of more than 400 troubadours who lived between 1100 and 1350 are known, yet we know relatively little about their music. A small portion of their poetry can be found in the forty surviving written collections called *chansonniers*, most of which contain only lyric poems without musical notation. The trouvère songs comprise the largest repertory of secular medieval song in the *chansonniers*. Nine of the forty extant *chansonniers* are trouvère songs, possibly because many trouvères were also authors of lengthy non-musical works and were likely as interested in writing down their works as they were in their creation and performance.⁹ By far the best collection of Spanish songs of the Middle Ages during the thirteenth century is Alfonso X's *Cántigas de Santa María* which contains over 400 complete songs.

Only four *chansonniers* contain solely troubadour songs but all four contain music, 264 melodies in all, one of which was written by a trobairitz. These four are vastly different from each other in provenance and date, layout, contents, dialectal/orthographical peculiarities, and procedures used for entering text, decoration, and music, and none are complete. Some are richly illuminated and superbly executed by master calligraphers for the libraries of princely and noble patrons or practitioners of the art, while others were subsidized by gifted nobles for presentation purposes or simply for glory. The earliest of the *chansonniers* date from 1254 and were either produced in Italian workshops

or brought to Italy shortly thereafter. More than fifty percent of those from the 1300s were produced in Venice, Padua, and Treviso in Northern Italy.

The *Manesse Codex*, perhaps the most famous of the Minnesänger songbooks, was created in Zurich between 1300 and 1340 and contains only verse with no musical notation (almost 6,000 verses from 137 poets written from 1150 to 1340 and over 140 blank or partially blank pages).¹⁰

The most glaring omission in medieval music notation is the lack of indications of rhythm, tempo, or inflection. While a standardization of tempo and inflection in a particular song is not necessary, without a rhythmic notation it would have been very difficult to expect a song to be sung by different people at different times or locations in the same manner. Some argue that it is possible that the metric structure of the music matched the rhythmic nature of the poetry¹¹ while others believe that the lack of rhythmic indications implies that the songs were sung in free-style and that some form of rhythmic notation would have been created had rhythm been important to the performance of the song. The manuscripts that were destined for notation were arranged in such a way that the scribe in charge of copying the text would first draw in a musical staff or leave an open space between the lines of the first verse of each song which a notator would fill in. Empty staff lines above poetic texts suggest that scribes often drew on different exemplars for the melodies than for the poems. In addition, the rubrics are often lacking, erroneous, or conflicting, and it is impossible to know whether they refer to the melodies, to the poems, or both. The compilers did not see the collections as simple catalogs but as encyclopedic, documentation of the lyrics and of the lives of the poets.

Each extant *chansonnier* appears to have had several exemplars, both for texts and for music. Most of the compilers of the songs never intended

9 John Haines, *Eight Centuries of Troubadours and Trouvères: The Changing Identity of Medieval Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13.

10 University of Heidelberg, "Codex Manesse," <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Englisch/allg/benutzung/bereiche/handschriften/codexmanesse.html> (accessed March 18, 2012).

11 Searcy, *Music in the Medieval World*, 66.

to include music in their manuscripts and therefore did not provide space for it, as they did do for rubrics and decorated initials. The lack of surviving music in general thus appears to be no accident. Only one other *chansonnier*, produced in Catalonia in 1268 (manuscript V), was measured and ruled for musical staves, although music notation was never entered.

In addition to lyric poems and melodies some *chansonniers* contain *vidas*, small biographies about the poet-composers, and *razos*, prose narratives that purport to explain the circumstances lying behind the composition of a song. Care was taken to situate the poet geographically and socially, but often the text used to explain the poetry was created retroactively and described the poem as a direct consequence of its creator's experience. For example, Bernat de Ventadorn's poem "Lark in the Morning" reads: "*Can vei la lauzeta mover de joi sas alas contral rai.*" (When I see the lark move its wings for joy against the ray [of sunlight])

According to the *razo* for this poem it was "[i]nspired one day when the poet, hidden behind a curtain in the bedroom of a lady named Alauzeta, watched her raise her arms ("wings") to embrace a lover named Rai." It appears that the *razos* were written more to entertain an audience interested in literature than to clarify history for posterity.

Illustrations

The size, quality, and occurrence of illustrations in the *chansonniers*, as with most medieval manuscripts, were dependent upon the patron or organization who commissioned them and how much they were willing to spend. Some contain portraits of the troubadours, some show troubadours who appear to be singing or playing instruments, others depict troubadours as valiant knights on horseback with swords or spears drawn. Some troubadours are shown reading a book or conversing with a

lady. Illustrations for the *trouvère chansonniers* are more diverse and numerous than the troubadour *chansonniers*.

The most remarkable elements of the Minnesinger's *Manesse Codex* are the full-page miniature paintings of the poets whose work are contained therein, arranged in order of societal rank opening with Emperor Henry VI and closing with the commoner ranks. Meister Heinrich von Meissen, known as *Frauenlob* (literally, "woman's praise"), shown on f.399r and represented in this exhibit, was also known as the King of the Minstrels, and established what may be the first school for Minnesingers.¹²

The troubadour era spanned the end of the eleventh century to the end of the thirteenth century; however, the great majority of documented songs date to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹³ This would indicate a rise in interest in the written forms of the songs and in the collections themselves after the troubadour tradition died out. As the songs began to be written down in collections they became removed from their geographical beginnings which has caused a debate as to whether all the preserved lyrics and melodies were truly composed by the troubadours and passed on orally or whether some of them were only written closer to the date of the surviving manuscripts.¹⁴

Although the troubadour tradition declined rapidly after 1210, the music of the troubadours, *trouvères*, *troubairitzes*, and Minnesingers laid the groundwork for the secular music and its performance that followed. In the early 1300s Guillaume de Machaut composed songs about the joy, hope, pain, and the heartbreak of courtly romance, the epitome of courtly love, against a polyphonic setting, one in which two voices sing two different melodies at the same time, ushering in a method of songwriting that continues to this day. ❧

12. Heidelberger Liederhandschrift, Grosse, and Kurt Martin. 1971. *Minnesinger: verandernsunge fertige Wiedergaben aus der Manessischen Liederhandschrift*. Aschen: W. Klein.

13. Haines. *Eight Centuries of Troubadours and Trouvères*, 8.

14. Ian Parker, "The Performance of Troubadours and Trouvère Songs: Some Facts and Conjectures," *Early Music* 5, no. 2 (Apr. 1977): 184-207, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3125917> (accessed March 28, 2012).

Monstrous Music

Marginal Musicians in the Reims Hours

By Rachel Harmeyer



In 1125 Bernard of Clairvaux wrote to censure the grotesque decoration that had become common inside the sacred space of the church. When one takes into account the many examples of monstrous decoration that flowered in the late Middle Ages in Europe, including marginalia, it seems Bernard's condemnation against the grotesque went largely unheeded.

Marginalia in the context of medieval manuscripts refers to the illuminations that exist outside the boundary of the central block of text. Marginalia often serves as a counterpoint to any miniatures that exist within the margins as well as to the text itself. Positioned literally as well as metaphorically outside the framework of the sacred text, the subject matter of marginal images is often playful, humorous, and vulgar. The margins of the medieval manuscript can also be a site for social satire. The function of marginalia in relation to the holy words and images within the margins is a topic of some debate. By examining the images of secular medieval musicianship in the Book of Hours, use of Reims, (MS no. BX2080 .A2 1400z) a manuscript in the University of Houston's Special Collections, we can form a better understanding of marginalia, hybrid creatures and monstrosity in the medieval imagination.

Books of Hours and Psalters were the most popular types of illuminated manuscripts commissioned by the laity in medieval Europe.² By the fourteenth century, the Psalter was superseded by the Books of Hours in terms of popularity.³ Books of Hours

See catalog entry 6.07, p. 60

"What excuse can there be for these ridiculous monstrosities in the cloisters where the monks do their reading, extraordinary things at once beautiful and ugly? ... Here is one head with many bodies, there is one body with many heads. Over there is a beast with a serpent for its tail, a fish with an animal's head, and a creature that is a horse in front and a goat behind... One could spend all day gazing fascinated at these things, one by one, instead of meditating on the law of God. Good Lord, even if the foolishness of it all occasion no shame, at least one might balk at the expense."¹ Bernard of Clairvaux

1 Heidi Thimann, "Marginal Beings: Hybrids in the Other in Late Medieval Manuscripts," *Horlulus* 5, no. 1 (2009) http://www.horlulus.net/~horlulus/index.php/%22Marginal_Beings_Hybrids_in_the_Other_in_Late_Medieval_Manuscripts%22_by_Heidi_Thimann (accessed April 26, 2012).

2 Alise Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 47.

3 *Ibid.*, 53.

were used for private devotion and were owned by the nobility and by some people from more humble backgrounds. The Book of Hours was a type of prayer book which usually contained a series of prayers, called the Hours of the Virgin, which were recited throughout the day, along with a liturgical calendar and Psalms as well as other prayers to the saints.⁴ Despite their usage for devotional purposes, Psalters and Books of Hours often contained considerable amounts of marginalia, which was often humorous, bawdy, and irreverent in terms of subject matter.

The scholarly literature on marginalia discusses ways in which marginal images provide a contrast to the miniatures that illustrate the sacred text. It has been suggested by Thijmann that the "carnality and monstrous embodiment" of marginal figures in medieval manuscripts serves a dual purpose: to amuse and then to instruct the viewer.⁵ According to this analysis, the viewer's focus on the monstrous actions displayed in the margins could be corrected and refocused through meditation on the central images provided: the miniatures which appear within the frame of the text.⁶ Outside the frame of the margins, sinful behavior was portrayed, while the miniature held the promise of potential grace and salvation to the viewer.⁷ The decorative scheme in this particular Book of Hours, however, is comprised almost entirely of marginalia, and eludes such a binary reading. In this manuscript, the marginalia interact directly with the text, a juxtaposition of secular image with sacred word, without sacred miniatures to act as intermediary. Only one historiated initial, that of the Virgin and Child, appears early in the text (f.27r). The rest of the figures in the manuscript fall into three major categories: beasts, hybrids (half human, half beasts), and, interestingly, musicians.

The majority of the musicians in the manuscript seem to be defined as secular ones. This can be seen in their manner of dress as well as in the instruments

they play. In the lower left-hand corner of f.52v, Nones, a figure dressed as a jester wearing a green hat plays a *vielle*, an instrument similar to a modern violin, with a large bow for an audience of two small apes and a dog. The apes position their posteriors in the air, while the dog sits composed. The musician appears to be human from the torso up, but he has a pair of beast-like legs, which are painted green, like his cap. He sits in the foliated border of the margins.

What is to be made of this hybrid musician with his audience of beasts? In the context of marginalia, hybridity can be read as a type of monstrosity. In the Middle Ages, there was a great deal of interest in "the monstrous races," who were purported to exist in the most marginal reaches of the world.⁸ The monsters thought by medieval Europeans to exist in foreign lands have been seen as projections of "the other." The monstrous races can be seen as a social construct which reveals more about those who invented them, rather than describing any real group. These monsters can only exist at a far distance, and are disconnected from everyday life. Unlike the monstrous races, who were consistently described as distant and foreign, the hybrid figure in question appears to be neither. In fact, the marginal figures in this manuscript seem to point to a different "other." If his monstrous hybridity defines him as the "other," this character embodies a more familiar other: the secular musician. Otherness here is defined not in terms of geographic distance, but in terms of social difference.

The beasts who constitute the audience for the hybrid musician on f.52v demonstrate a sort of bodily humor common in marginal images. The ape on the left displays his backside to the musician. A great deal of marginal humor in medieval manuscripts is based around images of human or animal posteriors, which indicates the popularity of such subject matter with medieval illuminators and their patrons.⁹ Apes in the margins often play the role of the mimic, as

4 Ibid.

5 Thijmann, "Marginal Beings".

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Asa Simon Mittman, "The Other Close at Hand: Genial of Wales and the 'Marvels of the West,'" in *The Monstrous Middle Ages*, Eds. Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 97.

9 Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 53.

they do in this manuscript. On f.64r, *Compline*, an ape appears in the guise of a physician and sits on the top of the decorated initial. He inspects what appears to be a vial of urine, which he holds in his right hand. The ape points toward the vessel with his left hand. Inspection of a patient's urine was a common practice of physicians of the time, who believed that its color might indicate certain diseases. The ape's mimicry of a medical practitioner constitutes a social commentary on the relatively new profession of physician, operating outside the monastic tradition. Perhaps more specifically, this marginal image could function as a satire of physicians who deceive or extort money from their patients, activities considered sinful by the church. The apes and the dog who sit in audience to the hybrid musician can be seen as mimicking the audience for secular music: an amusing, if perhaps unflattering, comparison.



Another example of secular musicianship appears in the lower left corner of f.174y, the *Oration*, where a figure plays a bagpipe. A green dog and a blue fox or dog stand and sit respectively in front of the piper. On the far right is a figure of a woman. Unlike the musician who plays the *vieille*, this piper is not a hybrid. Like the hybrid musician, however, he sits in the foliated border on the left-hand side of the leaf and plays to an audience positioned directly below the sacred text. His instrument, a bagpipe, cannot be associated with the liturgical music tradition. Unlike the harp, with its associations to celestial music, the bagpipe references the secular music, which was performed outside the space of the church.

Certain depictions of bagpipes in other marginal images confirm this association with rude noises. In the Luttrell Psalter, a hybrid plays the bagpipes and a horn simultaneously: the human-like top half of the hybrid plays the bagpipes, while the beast-like lower half of the figure has a second human head in place of its bottom which plays a long trumpet.¹⁰

A connection is being made in this marginal image between secular music and obscene noise, perhaps a commentary on the value of secular music. No such overt imagery is used in the depiction of the bagpipe player in the Reims Hours. The audience for the secular musician, like that of the hybrid musician on f.52y, contains two beasts: a dog and a fox, or fox-like dog. They appear to be attending to the piper as he plays. Opposite, there is a human figure in the audience: a woman, apparently dancing to the music, holds up her dress with her left hand and raises her open right palm up near her face.

The figure of the woman dancing on f.174y presents several questions to the modern viewer. First of all, is this a positive or a negative portrayal? A negative attitude toward dance is revealed in medieval Christian texts, and while some images of dancing figures in medieval art are given a positive significance,

See catalog entry 6.07, p. 60

¹⁰ Ibid.

single dancers, especially women dancing alone, had a negative connotation.¹¹ The solo dance was associated with sexual abandon, and often the solo dancers shown are women, objectified under the male gaze.¹² Images of women dancing alone were relegated to the margins to indicate disapproval.¹³ Another problem is identifying the social status of the woman dancing on f.174v. She does not appear to wear a covering on her head, and she lifts her red dress so that the tips of her toes are discernible, a detail which incidentally points to erotic subject matter.¹⁴ A marginal image of a woman dancing alone from another Book of Hours which may have originated in Maastricht circa 1300 shares some similarities with the female dancer on f.174v.¹⁵ Both women stretch out one or both hands with palms facing outward, both display their feet, and both are accompanied by a single male musician.¹⁶ Alexander notes that the Maastricht dancer has an element of acrobatic display, and connects the image to *jongleurs*, marginal figures who existed on the edges of society.¹⁷ This female dancer may be a *jongleur*, along with the piper who accompanies her. The marginal illuminations on f.174v can be understood as a reference to, and a condemnation of, secular music.

A major exception to the negative portrayal of solo dancers as well as musicians is the representation of King David.¹⁸ (see p. 24) At the beginning of Terce, f.44v, a bearded figure wearing a red tunic and an Egyptian hat, is playing a harp in the upper left-hand corner on top of the decorated initial.¹⁹ King David, an important figure in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is traditionally considered the author of the Psalms, prayers which would have been sung accompanied by a lyre or a harp. The figure on f.44v is quite possibly a representation of King David, who was often depicted with his harp, as he is in the miniature in the Book of Hours, for the use of Utrecht, also in the University of Houston's Special Collections (MS no. BX2080 .A2 1400zb).

The decorated initial on which he sits is a D, which could be an allusion to the name David. Unlike the depictions of secular musicians, the figure playing the harp does not appear to be overtly comical. In contrast to the other images of musicians, this figure is placed high up on the page, above the text. These differences draw a distinction between sacred and secular musicianship.

A connection can be made between the inversion of order seen in marginalia and the ritual inversion of order seen at carnival.²⁰ Camille describes both the season of carnival and marginalia as a controlled way to temporarily allow behavior prohibited by church doctrine. He makes the crucial point that though such expressions seem to challenge or subvert the status quo, the social order is never truly subverted.²¹ Rather than subverting the official order imposed by the Church and civic authorities, the marginal image served to reify it. With this understanding, it is plausible to read the marginal images of secular musicianship as a commentary on or satire of secular music and its audience in medieval Europe. As Camille observes, carnival was not a marginal event, but a central one: it took place in the public square.²² The same can be said of the performance of secular music, which was not a marginal event, but one central to public life. However, within the construct of a devotional manuscript, such a non-liturgical cultural production and its associated behaviors could be relegated to the margins. The musicians could be characterized as monstrous, the audience beastly and licentious, and secular music itself could be re-framed as marginal. ❧

11 Jonathan J. G. Alexander, "Dancing in the Streets," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 54 (January 1996): 147.

12 *Ibid.*, 154.

13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*, 153.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*, 156.

19 University of Houston, Special Collections, Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts Collection

20 Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (Routledge Books, 2004), 143.

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*, 145.

Persian Secular Music



By Elnaz Bokharaei



Iran has an extremely ancient and sophisticated music tradition. Scholars trace the earliest forms of culture in the region of Persia to the Elamites in the fourth millennium BCE. However, the emergence of a distinctively Persian culture is associated with the

Achaemenid Empire (550 B.C.), which extended over the geographical area that today includes Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, the Caucasus, Greece, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Sin Jiang, Pakistan and North India. During the Achaemenid period, Zoroastrianism introduced some new elements into the ancient music of Persia, which scholars believe accompanied many Zoroastrian religious and traditional rites. Historical records show that both solo and choral music were broadly practiced at various ceremonies and occasions in fire temples and other Zoroastrian religious institutions before the advent of Islam.¹

The earliest known musical system in Iran dates back to the Sassanid dynasty (224-652 CE), which has left us considerable evidence of a lively musical culture in Persia. During this period, the court musicians Barbad and Nakisa (a woman), among others held an exalted status. Barbad, the most famous and skilled court musician of King Khosro Parviz, created a musical system comprising seven royal modes, thirty derivative modes, and three hundred sixty melodies, which represent the days of the week, month and year, respectively. Lutes and harps were among the many different types of musical instruments in the Sassanid dynasty.

After the Arab invasion (643-750 A.D.), musical activity was suppressed for a time. The Abbasid dynasty (750-1258 A.D.) re-established music at the courts, and Iranian musicians were called to perform throughout the Muslim world. Farabi (870-950

*Illuminated Manuscript,
Book of kings (Shahnameh),
Fariburz marries Farangis*

*Walters Art Museum
Ms. W.602, fol. 196a*

¹ Hormuz Fathali, *The Traditional Art Music of Iran* (Tehran: High Council of Culture and Art, Centre for Research and Cultural Co-ordination, 1973)

A.D.) and Avesina (980–1039 A.D.) were the most important Iranian scientists and musicians of this period. Farabi's book laid the foundations for the musical tradition that still form the core of music in the Muslim world, and Avesina codified the mode into twelve divisions with six melodies. Persian musical structures were perpetuated through an oral tradition in order to train each student to be capable of creatively performing music through improvisation and to pass that tradition down to the next generation. During the Qajar dynasty (1794–1925), however, some musicians started using western musical tones for the first time. The music practiced in Iran today is primarily traceable to Qajar times.²

The image shown in the exhibition is from the Persian national epic poem, the *Shahnameh* (ca. 977–1010 CE), which chronicles the legendary history of the pre-Islamic kings of Iran. Firdowsi, its author, spent over three decades working on this masterpiece, which became one of the most influential works of Persian literature. The scene depicts the marriage of Farangis and Fariborz. Farangis was the eldest daughter of the Turanian king, whose first husband was the saint-like prince of Iran, Siavash. When King of Turan had the innocent Siavash killed, Farangis abandoned her father and homeland, choosing instead to be loyal to her husband's country, to which she fled with her son, a legendary hero and later king of Iran, Kai Khosrow. After seven years, Farangis married her brother-in-law, Fariborz, who took an oath to avenge his brother, Siavash.

In the scene on exhibit, we see the royal wedding. According to ancient Iranian tradition, such ceremonies were supposed to last seven days and nights. In addition to dancing and the offering of gifts to the royal family, the artist shows musicians playing two instruments. The three-stringed long-necked lute (dating back to 1500 BCE) is called the Tanboor and the frame drum is called a Daf.

These instruments as well as a large variety of others that were used in ancient Persia can be identified by archaeological evidence, but we learn most about them from Firdowsi. In the *Shahnameh* he talks about both different types of ancient music and the different types of instruments they used. Firdowsi says that the Barbat was used for ritual and memorial ceremonies due to its sad sound. The Chang (the Iranian harp or lyre), which was mostly played by female musicians, was used for hunting ceremonies, while the Karna, made of wood and brass, was used for martial music due its loud sound. Among the many other important musical instruments in the repertoire of ancient Iran is the Nay, a vertical reed flute with a long history in Persian classical music. It appears in Rumi's thirteenth-century poem, *Masnavi*. Rumi speaks of the Nay as having a melancholy sound.

One of the most fundamental components of Persian music is known as the *radif*, a collection of melodies and ancient pieces that is orally transmitted from master to apprentice. The *radif* is regarded as central to Iranian cultural heritage. The other major component of Persian music is called *āvāz*, which is an improvised singing without rhythm. The singer uses a particular technique involving glottal closure, a vocal ornamentation similar to yodeling called *tahrir*.³ A typical performance consists of a rhythmic prelude which sets the mood, a free rhythmic motif, an improvised non rhythmic singing (*āvāz*), a composed song in a slow metre, a rhythmic piece without singing, and the final section, comprised of a closing rhythmic composition, or dance tune.⁴

Persian music was infused with the same spirituality and philosophy as many other aspects of Iranian culture. The complexity of the music can be particularly closely compared with the intricate designs of Persian carpets and with Persian literature and poetry. ❧

2 Gabriel Solis and Bruno Nettl. *Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

3 Owen Wright. *Tuning Kuran and Persian Classical Music: An Analytical Perspective* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2009).

4 Richard Nidel. *World Music: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Sacred as Secular

The Ambiguous Nature of the *Cantigas de Santa María*

By Mónica Fuentes-Domínguez



The *Cantigas de Santa María* is a collection of 420 religious poems that are set to music. There are four extant manuscripts, known as T (the *códice rico*, in the Escorial Library), To (the Toledo MS, now in the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid), E (the *códice de los músicos*, also in the Escorial) and F (the Florence MS, in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence).¹ These manuscripts have long been admired for their overall beauty and for the insight they provide into medieval culture. The *Cantigas* are attributed

to Alfonso X (1221–1284), also known as Alfonso “el Sabio” (the Wise), a Castilian king whose great number of written works makes him one of the most highly recognized Spanish monarchs. Alfonso left an important legacy in the form of manuscripts relevant to various fields including history, music, religion, politics, and science. However, none of his other works is as enigmatic or as visually striking as the *Cantigas de Santa María*. Is it a liturgical manuscript? Is it secular music? Can it be placed in any one category? This essay focuses on Codex T (in the Escorial) to address the ambiguous character of Alfonso’s *Cantigas* generally, and suggests that the answer lies within the interaction of sacred and secular in the medieval world.

Time, Place, & Patron

Following the tradition for the rearing of royal children in Castile and León, Alfonso X was raised and tutored in a rural setting, through which he was exposed to the Galician language as well as to troubadours. The troubadours made such an impression on the young Alfonso that he wrote poetry to emulate the musicians. He was also an avid reader and had at his disposal the libraries in his father’s kingdom. Alfonso developed a wide range of interests including science, law and politics, music, and religion. He wrote poetry and songs and translated ancient texts into Castilian.

Alfonso X was crowned at the age of 31 and inherited a kingdom that had expanded since the

Cantigas de Santa María:
Cantiga XXVI

Non É Gran Cansa
(Real Biblioteca del Escorial,
Ms. T.I.1. Fol. 40 v.)
Spanish (13th century)

1. University of Oxford, “The Oxford Cantigas de Santa María Database”
CSM.oxford.ac.uk, <http://oxford.ac.uk/csm/> [p. intro]

time of his father.² Under Alfonso's stewardship the arts and other aspects of Spanish culture flourished so markedly that some scholars refer to his reign as a thirteenth-century renaissance.

Alfonso spent large amounts of money on the translation and creation of manuscripts about many different subjects. Medieval Spain, and specifically Alfonso's court, created a crucible for cultural exchange, since it was one of only a few places where Christians, Muslims, and Jews cohabited in relative peace for some time.³ Alfonso encouraged his court and his people to delight in this religious and cultural diversity.⁴ The musical instruments and the racial diversity depicted in the illuminations of the *Cantigas* reflect this interplay. While Alfonso strenuously supported interaction among different religious groups, he lived his life as a devout Christian and was particularly devoted to the Virgin Mary.

Sacro: The Sacred in the Iberian Peninsula

Christianity reached the Iberian Peninsula as early as the third century. Most of the Peninsula came under Muslim rule in 711, but was reclaimed by Christians through a series of campaigns that began immediately and culminated in 1492.⁵ The Muslims, particularly tolerant of the Jews, infused the peninsula not only with Arabic music but also allowed a Judeo-Spanish musical tradition to flourish.⁶ The sacred sphere of the Iberian Peninsula was thus infused with influences from several systems of religious belief. Known under the misleading term 'Mozarabic-rite', the liturgy of the Spanish church is best described as 'Old Spanish' or 'Hispanic.' This style was a combination of several musical traditions. By the eleventh century the Old Spanish rite, which had been gradually suppressed in areas of the peninsula, was replaced by the Roman rite. However, many hymn texts and melodies were native compositions and some were probably remnants of the Old Spanish Rite.⁷

Although deeply influenced by other cultures, Catholic Spain remained a fundamental part of the Christian world. The peninsula housed several sites along the medieval pilgrimage route since the eighth century, including Santiago de Compostela. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Compostela became one of the most important pilgrimage sites since the city of Jerusalem and all other Christian shrines in the Holy Land were held by the Muslims.

Profano: The Secular in Medieval Spain

The tradition of secular music is harder to trace in the Iberian Peninsula than elsewhere in Western Europe. Current knowledge relies on a very small number of manuscripts that date back to the tenth century.⁸ Most secular music was not written but was transmitted through a long oral tradition. Troubadours would sing and read poetry as they traveled from court to court throughout the peninsula.⁹ Their songs were mostly tales of illicit and unrequited love that became particularly popular in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the era of chivalry.

Ambiguity in The Cantigas

Since the *Cantigas de Santa María* are a collection of songs of praise to the Virgin Mary, they at first seem to be a type of religious music. However, their musical character and structure resemble those of love songs or poems that would have been performed in a secular environment rather than a religious one.¹⁰ Unlike secular music, which still relied on oral transmission, the *Cantigas* are written using a highly detailed notation system more characteristic of liturgical chant.

Yet, in line with their idiosyncratic character, the *Cantigas* feature a unique mixture of characteristics in its notation. Musical notation had been steadily developing since the creation of neumes in the tenth century and becoming more standardized throughout

2 John E. Keller, *Alfonso X, El Sabio* (New York: Twayne, 1967), 30.

3 Albert I. Bagby, Jr., "The Jew in the *Cantigas* of Alfonso X, El Sabio," *Speculum* 46, no. 4 (Oct. 1971): 670-688. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2856326>. (accessed April 26, 2012).

4 Keller, *Alfonso X, El Sabio*, 34.

5 Mark Everist, *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 161.

6 *Ibid.*, 161.

7 *Ibid.*, 163.

8 *Ibid.*, 168.

9 *Ibid.*, 168-169.

10 *Ibid.*, 39.

Europe and the Iberian Peninsula.¹¹ By the time the *Cantigas* were being written in the early thirteenth century the four-line staff had become the norm.¹² While the *Cantigas* incorporated notational forms adopted by the Iberian peninsula, they used a five-line staff format, which was less common. Moreover, the color of the staves changed every time the piece was intended to be sung by a different group.

The performance of the *Cantigas* also separates them from other music manuscripts. As Cunningham points out, it is impossible to be sure of how the *Cantigas* were originally meant to be performed. In fact there is strong evidence that the *Cantigas* were meant for a heterogeneous environment and performed not only in the church but also in the court.¹³ This underscores the unprecedentedly ambiguous character of this document. While the *Cantigas* may have been composed with an ecclesiastical intent, they stand out among other medieval chants for their secular quality. Conversely, during in-court performances they would have stood out for their religiously themed secular music.

Clearly the sacred and the secular worlds intersect within the *Cantigas*. The rise of the cult of the Virgin Mary during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries finds another outlet in the *Cantigas*. By applying the secular principles of courtly love to the veneration of the Virgin Mary, Alfonso united two of his passions, that of the poetry and that of devotion to the Virgin.¹⁴ By mixing a clearly secular ideology with the worship of the Virgin Mary, Alfonso irrevocably gave the *Cantigas* an ambiguous nature. Each *Cantiga* may depict a miracle or a situation in Alfonso's life, but rather than eliminating any trace of secular ideas, Alfonso embraced both in order to create a contemporary narrative of his religious beliefs. Inadvertently, Alfonso opens a special window onto medieval Spain. The illuminations in the manuscript portray gatherings, dances,

performances, music instruments, and other valuable depictions of everyday life in the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁵

One Example Among Many

Cantiga XXVI, "Non É Gran Couso" ("Nothing to Worry About"), which is on display in this exhibit, encompasses a fascinating interplay of poetry, miniature, and music. It provides insight about medieval life since it deals directly with pilgrimages during the middle ages and specifically the famous pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. This *Cantiga* tells the story of a man who was about to begin a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Before departing, however, he committed a sin by having intercourse with a woman out of wedlock and then, without having confessed his sin, he embarked on his trip. The devil, disguised as Santiago (Saint James) tricked the man into cutting off the 'agent of [his] sin' to spare himself from 'the lake of fire in hell.' The pilgrim died as a result and when his fellow pilgrims found him they ran away so they would not be charged with his death. Later on demons came to take the soul of the pilgrim. While they were moving the soul, they passed by a beautiful chapel out of which the real Santiago de Compostela emerged, telling them that they could not take the pilgrim's soul since they had used treachery to gain it. The demons argued reminding him that the pilgrim's soul could not be received or taken to God because the pilgrim had died by his own hand. Santiago then convinced the demons to appeal to an 'incorruptible judge' who would ultimately decide the fate of the pilgrim's soul. When they found themselves in the presence of the Virgin Mary, each party told their argument and asked for their share. The Virgin acknowledging the treachery used by the devil to trick the pilgrim decided that the demons had to go back and return the soul of the pilgrim to where they had taken it so that he could be saved. The pilgrim was returned to

11. Nicolas Bell, *MUSIC IN MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 12.

12. *Ibid.*, 26-27.

13. Martin G. Cunningham, *Cantigas de Amor* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2002), 17.

14. Suzanne Lord, *MUSIC IN THE MIDDLE AGES: A REFERENCE GUIDE* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006), 108.

15. *Ibid.*, 108.

the spot where he had died and was resurrected, for which he thanked God. But he never had the ability or the will to repeat his sin.¹⁶

The pilgrimage is illustrated in the miniature as well as included in the music. In the miniature for this cantiga, there is an image of the Virgin Mary feeding Christ and the caption above it is the only reference that we get to the story. The second panel puts us right in the middle of the action where the devil is tricking "Romeu" the pilgrim, while his fellow pilgrims stand behind him watching. In the next panel we see many things happening at the same time: the pilgrim lying dead on the floor with blood seeping through his clothing in his groin (the only hint of his sin that we get in the miniature), his fellow pilgrims fleeing the scene in fear, and the demons coming to take hold of his soul. The fourth panel shows the argument between the real Santiago de Compostela and the demons. The next panel portrays the judgment of the Virgin Mary, and the resolution of the story portrays the pilgrim's resurrection.

The refrain of this cantiga alludes to the importance and the righteousness of the judgment dealt by the Virgin Mary: "Non é gran cousa se sabe bon joio dar a madre do que o mundo tod' á de joigar." ("There is nothing to worry about as long as the judgment is good and done by the mother of the one who one day the world will judge.")¹⁷ In addition to praising the piety of the Virgin Mary, it reinforces the relationship between music and miniature, which are woven together by the text. The harmonious relationship between text, illumination, and music, and their coexistence in the manuscripts of the *Cantigas* exists not only in manuscript "T" from The Escorial, but also in the other copies as well.

Thus, study of Alfonso's authorship of the *Cantigas*, their musical and poetic character, as well as their illuminations reveals the manuscript's inherently ambiguous nature. In many ways distinctive

in its hybrid sacred-secular nature, the *Cantigas* also embodies the deep and widespread intermixing of these two realms of life through much of the medieval world, as well as the remarkable cross-culturalism that characterized thirteenth-century Spain. ☒



Notated Music

The Persistence of Memory

By José Candelaria



See coding entry 6.13, p. 66

"Unless sounds are held in the memory by man they perish, because they cannot be written." © Isidore of Seville

This seventh-century statement by Isidore of Seville underscores the medieval difficulty in preserving and transmitting melody. While the words to chants had long been recorded in scrolls and codices, no visual means existed to represent how they were meant to be intoned. The earliest evidence

of musical notation dates from around 900 in the Frankish kingdom, which means that for nearly nine hundred years music was transmitted almost exclusively orally, undoubtedly altered by the fickleness of human memory. Until the full development of musical notation in the High Middle Ages, the melodies

* Quote Source: "Unless sounds are held in the memory by man..."

Isidore of Seville

Burney, Stephen A. *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), xiv (Music and its name), p. 95.

of liturgical chants inevitably changed as they were transmitted verbally. Yet, the appearance of neumes did not extinguish the oral tradition. Even as early musical notation evolved into forms familiar today, reliance on memory persevered.

Isidore's quote offers a telling example of the challenge of reproducing music. Is he asserting a Neo-Platonic position and stating that music belongs to the realm of ideas and simply cannot be properly reproduced by hand? Or is Isidore simply resigned to the fact that in that particular time and place there was no way to preserve music other than by oral repetition? Is it a combination of both? The fact that these questions stem from a modern translation obscures the author's intent even further. The translator's word choices and biases as well as Isidore's own command of the Latin language cloud the true meaning behind his thoughts. Yet, while the written word offers no certainty of the author's intent, reliance on the memory of individuals offers even less. The nuances of tempo and rhythm of the oldest surviving chants either were lost or, in the best cases, became unrecognizable over time.

Music historians place the origin of notation near the beginning of the tenth century, with exemplars from different regions within Frankish territory and its periphery. The origin of neumes themselves remains a subject of debate among music paleographers. Some speculate that now-lost prototypes were instituted in the time of Gregory the Great. Others go further back, arguing that neumes evolved from accents used in Classical antiquity, namely the Alexandrian "ten prosodic signs," known to the Franks either directly from ancient texts or indirectly through Byzantine versions. Scholars have also proposed that the dots, slashes and waves that constituted the first neumes were meant to replicate hand motions employed by choirmasters.¹

Another theory asserts that early neumes were repurposed Carolingian punctuation and editing marks, a byproduct of Charlemagne's emphasis on literacy and the refinement of Latin. Carolingian minuscule script, perfected in the 770s, was shortly followed by a system of punctuation in the next decade that set the stage for the development of a compact and simple means of communicating sound. Two texts on the theory and practice of music written in the mid 800s, *Musica enchiridis* and *Musica disciplina*, illustrate the cultural impetus for a tangible representation of melody. The former utilized diagrams in an attempt to visually and permanently represent sound while the latter drew parallels between language and musical phrasing. Ultimately, the relatively simultaneous adoption of musical notation in different locations in Western Europe at the turn of the tenth century strongly demonstrate the common drive from within a literate culture started by Charlemagne over a century earlier.²

The dot (*punctum*), the slash (*virga*), the hyphen (*tractum*), and other marks placed above syllables along a single line served as the first neumes. Primitive neumes complemented and aided oral dissemination but did not replace it immediately, rather serving as mnemonic devices that established the value of one note relative to the previous one. Individual regions also developed their own forms of notation. One of the earliest and most commonly used systems corresponds to the St. Gall notation originated in modern-day Switzerland. It was developed to preserve Gregorian chant and among its characteristics was the use of strings of neumes to denote melismas, the use of various notes consecutively to sing a syllable.³ Written melodies begin to take shape, literally, with the Aquitanian practice of placing neumes at different heights above lines of text. Staves labeled with letters signifying pitches—initially two—were introduced later, in the eleventh century, to clarify

1 Kenneth Levy, "On the origin of neumes," in *Early Music History*, 7, 1987: 59-65.

2 Leo Treitler, "Reading and Singing: On the Genesis of Occidental Music Writing," in *Early Music History*, 7, 1984: 135-151.

3 Nicolas Bell, *Music in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 12-13.

the specific relationship between notes. Gradually, the Aquitanian verticality was combined with the variety of neumes developed elsewhere in Europe to further clarify tones and pitches. By the thirteenth century, as four-line staves and the "nota quadrata" (the "square-note" form derived from Gothic script) became the norm, music was finally recorded in a way that could be reproduced for the rest of history. Five and six-line staves became the rule by the sixteenth century for instrumental music, although four-stave notation remained popular with chant.⁴

Reliance on memory continued despite the fact that chants were written down. For instance, the *cantatorium*, the cantor's book in use since Roman times and eventually absorbed by the Antiphonary in the Middle Ages, served a merely ceremonial purpose in liturgy. In the ninth century, Amalarius of Metz wrote: "The cantor...without being obliged to read his text, holds in his hands [the cantatorium whose cover is decorated with ivory] plaques."⁵ In the High Middle Ages, the word "eucuse" functioned as a mnemonic device to remind singers to repeat the last verse and end the chant with the *Gloria Patri*, as was customary at the end of introits and other psalm-based chants. Eucuse (also written as "evovae") originated from the vowels of the two words at the end of the *Gloria Patri* (...[e]c[e] [u]l[e] [o]f[u]l[u]m.) A[m]e[n].⁶ and is featured multiple times in the Menil Collection's *Antiphonal for Dominican Use* and once in Racc's *Sepulchrum Stephanum vni timonati*.

These two examples, from the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively, exemplify how deeply intertwined music and memory remained throughout the Middle Ages. At the root of medieval musical thought, music shared the same abstract realm as the divine. Not surprisingly, before admonishing his readers of the ephemeral nature of sound, Isidore reminds them that ancient poets called the Muses the daughters of Jupiter and Memory.⁷ ❧



Initial U
with "winged" design
and "Eucuse" from
Antiphonal for Dominican Use

The Menil Collection,
Manuscript no. 45-62.13, f. 250 v.
Italy, Tuscan;
Between 1240-1257

4 Ibid., 12-28.

5 Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Matthew Bennett (Oxford: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 74-75.

6 Willi Apel, *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1953).

7 See note 1.

xcvi

DOMINICA

II. POST PASCHA.

✿ Introitus. ✿



M

Isericordi a

Domini ple na est

ter ra, alle lu ia: ver -

bo Do mini cœli fir-

See catalog entry 6.16, p. 70

Between Pen and Print



By Dave W.G. Brown

When movable type was introduced to Europe in the fifteenth century, the older tradition of hand-made manuscripts became an outmoded means of production. However, a curious interaction occurred between hand rendering of text and the printing press that gave rise to new forms of producing the codex.

The *Gregorian Chant Book* (Museum of Printing History, Houston, Texas) is a large codex, measuring 26 inches up its fore-edge, 19 inches across its head, and three and a quarter inches across its spine, bound in brown leather over boards. The text of the codex is rendered in red and black point or ink throughout the volume. Unusually, the text, musical notation, and decoration have been applied to the paper through stenciling. It is the unique use of stenciling throughout the codex that sheds light on the relationship between illumination and printing in the incunabula period, the first 100–150 years after the introduction of movable type in Europe.

Close observation of the text reveal brushstrokes with hand edges that do not correspond to the brushstrokes present within the body of the letter. The multiple strokes of the brush that create the letter come to an abrupt end at the letter's edges. This suggests that the scribe, if this designation can be applied to the person responsible for the production of the text, could freely apply paint to the substrate without making the text illegible. This was most likely accomplished by using some kind of barrier as an outline for the scribe to use when creating

the text, instead of the technique of pouncing (dusting charcoal or a chalk-like material through holes pricked in an earlier example) more commonly used by scribes and illuminators. Furthermore, the individual elements that comprise the parts of each letter in the text are not connected and appear as if they must have been rendered using a flat sheet of paper or card with the text cut out of it as a guide. In short, the text of the *Gregorian Chant Book* seems to have been stenciled.

The use of stenciling in this sixteenth-century codex raises questions. By the sixteenth century, printing texts using movable type, in particular liturgical texts such as antiphonaries, would have been the most efficient means to produce a codex. Why then was the *Gregorian Chant Book* stenciled? One possible answer to this question is suggested by Sandra Hindman.¹ With the introduction of the mechanical reproduction of the word, and in the case of the *Gregorian Chant Book*, many scribes and book collectors realized that the end of the art of illumination had come. In her essay, "Cross-Fertilization: Experiments in Mixing the Media," Hindman presents evidence that a new appreciation of the hand illuminated manuscript developed in the fifteenth century.² While illuminated manuscripts were being re-published using movable type in what is called the incunabula period, printed volumes were being copied by scribes in the manner of illuminated manuscripts. This suggests that the tradition of illumination was still appreciated for its formal qualities

1. Sandra Hindman, "Cross-Fertilization: Experiments in Mixing the Media," in *Pen to Press: Illuminated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing, 1450–1550* (College Park: Johns Hopkins University, 1977), 301–336.


2. Hindman, *Cross-Fertilization*, 101–103.

despite the growing popularity and cost-effectiveness of printed codices. This appreciation is mirrored in printed texts. Many of the aesthetic qualities of illuminated manuscripts such as the decoration, script, and the layout of the text were emulated in printed volumes to such an extent that some codices were printed on parchment rather than paper, which had become the preferred substrate.³

This exchange between two traditions of printing codices sheds some light on what was transpiring in the sixteenth century when the *Gregorian Chant Book* was produced. The reason for the decision to use stencils rather than to hand write or print the text and decoration is still unclear. A possible connection can be made through the technique of xylographic printing, the printing of the text and images of a full leaf from one carved block of wood. Developed concurrently with movable type, xylographic or blockbooks were produced, not by printers or scribes, but mainly by members of the carpenters guild.⁴ The connection to stenciling occurs in the apparent similarity between the two methods' appearance on the page. The Metropolitan Museum of Art describes the illustrations in *Fascicolo di medicina*, a 1493 medical codex, as being colored by woodblocks or stencils.⁵ The practice of applying paint to the woodblock rather than rolling it on with a brayer results in an impression that is visually similar to the brushstroke pattern that can be discerned in the text of the *Gregorian Chant Book*. It is possible that the artisan who crafted this codex was emulating blockbooks as scribes did printed codices, but through a stencil medium.

Illuminators had long used patterns for historiated initials and decorations. Pre-existing designs were kept in pattern books and either traced through thin parchment or, if the parchment was too thick to be adequately translucent for the pattern to be seen through it, transferred to its surface by pouncing. In

this process, perforations are made along the outlines of the design of the model and then dusted with charcoal.⁶ The charcoal would pass through the perforations and create the outline of the pattern on the parchment's surface. The practices of pouncing and stenciling are similar enough to suggest the introduction of the stenciling technique to manuscript illumination was accepted because it so closely resembled a technique already in use. The direct application of paint to substrate using a stencil not only speeds up the production of the manuscript, as opposed to tracing the decoration from a pattern book, it also emulates printed text as can be seen in the *Gregorian Chant Book*.

The conversation between the use of printed type and hand illumination created a unique and interesting medium. The emulation of illuminated manuscripts by printers at the same time as the copying of printed text by scribes, points to an exchange of technology and aesthetics that allowed the production of unique mediums such as the blockbook and the stenciled *Gregorian Chant Book* to be developed in the medieval period. 

3 Ibid.

4 Hindman, *Cross-Fertilization*, 109-110.

5 The Metropolitan Museum of Art. (2007, March). "Johannes de Ketham: Fascicolo di medicina (38.52)". In *Hollbraun Timeline of Art History*. <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/38.52> (accessed April 26, 2012).

6 Christopher de Hamel, *The British Library Guide to Manuscript Illumination: History and Techniques* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 62-64.

By Hand

Making Medieval Manuscripts

By Tanja Vavrinec



Medieval manuscripts in bound or codex format were produced between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries in Europe and the Near East.¹ They were first made during the latter days of the Roman Empire, gradually replacing the scroll. The process of creating a manuscript was long, labor-intensive and involved a number of different craftsmen, so the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century led to a sharp decline and the eventual disappearance of manuscript-making.²

Very few people owned books in the early Middle Ages since most were illiterate. Almost all manuscripts were produced by monasteries and were largely for their own use. Monastic libraries contained not only books for prayer and religious rites, but also volumes representing the entire body of accumulated knowledge acceptable to the Church.

By about 1200 the monks' desire to have up-to-date and comprehensive collections meant that they could no longer keep up with their own ability to produce and they began to seek help from the secular world.³ A shift from monastic to secular, professional manuscript production was further spurred by the birth of the first universities, such as those at Paris and Bologna. University classes needed new texts and also created a demand for great numbers of those texts for both students and professors. The growing urban middle classes also began to want to own books. By 1250 there were bookshops in all the big university and commercial towns. By 1300 almost everyone, including monks, bought their books from bookshops while monastic production drastically declined.⁴ Customers could either purchase a manuscript second-hand or commission a new one. Scribes (writers of the text) and illuminators (artists who decorated and illustrated the books), were hired by the bookseller.⁵ The wealthier the patron, the more lavishly the manuscript was decorated.

Music manuscripts generally had similar functions to those of other types of books: they could serve as presentation copies or gifts (and be elaborately decorated), be used for performance at a particular institution, or as a means of transmitting or preserving a repertory. Until about 1100, scribes seemed to have assumed that the performers knew the music and needed only hints to help them reconstruct how to sing them. By the fourteenth century, as polyphony developed and required larger numbers

Monk inspecting sheet of vellum (close up)

1. Manuscripts are the first form of the book and were made entirely by hand. The term *codex* refers to the fact that they were made as sheets that were gathered and bound together at the spine.

2. De Hamel, Christopher, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1986), 7.

3. *Ibid.* 3.

4. De Hamel, Christopher, *Medieval Craftsmen: Scribes & Illuminators* (London: British Museum Press, 1993), 5.

5. *Ibid.* 5.

of singers to read from the same manuscript, choral manuscripts became extremely large.

The main tools necessary to produce a manuscript were parchment, chalk, lead or graphite, ink, paint, quill or reed pens and a knife. Whereas the earlier manuscript scrolls were made from the papyrus plant, parchment (animal skin) was preferred for the bound codex as it was less prone to crack when folded. Parchment was most often made from sheep or calf skin but depended on local availability; therefore goat, pig, deer, and hog were sometimes used. Parchment preparation was a lengthy and expensive process. The skin was cleaned with water and the hair removed. The most common practice for removing the hair was to soak the skin in vats of lime and water for three to ten days. Then the skin was stretched so the hair could be quickly scraped off with a knife.⁶ Great skill was needed to exert the exact amount of pressure needed to remove the hair without tearing the hide. The skin was cleaned again in fresh water to remove the residual lime. Next the skin was stretched on a frame with pegs and given a final scraping with a crescent shaped knife called a *lumellum*.⁷ Then the skin was allowed to dry, removed from the stretcher, and either rolled up to be stored or sold.

Once prepared, the parchment was cut and folded into bifolios and stitched into small gatherings or quires, usually of four bifolios each. It is usually apparent which side was the hair (also called the grain) side because it is darker or more yellow than the white flesh side. Sometimes the tiny dots of the follicles are still visible. Parchment also tends to curl in on the grain side.⁸ To minimize the impact of these differences, hair side always faced hair side and flesh side always faced flesh side. If small holes or rough patches appeared but the parchment was otherwise usable, the text would be written around the flaw rather than throw away such a precious commodity.⁹

The scribes and illuminators normally worked on the quires before the codex was bound, although occasionally single leaves with illustrations were added later.¹⁰ The scribe first rubbed the parchment leaf with chalk or bread to absorb oils and make the surface suitable for writing. He would then rule it with guidelines for the script. Until the early twelfth century, these lines were incised with a stylus; later, they were drawn with graphite, lead or silver.¹¹ The entire page was laid out by the scribe, who left spaces for initials and decorations. In music manuscripts, after ruling, the scribe wrote in directions for the performance. Because text and music scribes were often not the same person, coordination between text and music notation could be problematic, but usually the scribe seems to have known how much space was needed for the music.

For illuminations a rough sketch was first drawn in graphite or lead. Next, gesso, a mixture of plaster, lead, sugar or honey and sometimes gum arabic, was applied where the gold leaf was to go. Gold leaf, which had to be extremely thin, was very hard to work with. Gesso helped the fragile leaf to adhere, especially when mixed with bole, a greasy red clay. The bole or other coloring agents that were brown or pink also added a warm tone to the gold.¹² The gold leaf was applied with a brush and then burnished with a dog's tooth or piece of agate, much the same procedure as was used for panel painting. Paint was made by combining a binder, often egg white (called glair), with natural, sometimes toxic pigments made from minerals or plants, such as lead to create white and arsenic to make yellow.

The decoration of a manuscript made the manuscript more user-friendly. While illuminations illustrated and helped the reader to understand the text, various forms of decoration served to mark the beginning of important new sections and as mnemonic devices to help a reader or singer remember words that they had memorized.¹³ Layout

6 *Ibid.*, 8.

7 *Ibid.*, 12.

8 *Ibid.*, 13.

9 *Ibid.*, 15.

10 *Ibid.*, 18.

11 *Ibid.*, 23.

12 De Hamel, *Medieval Craftsmen*, 59-63.

13 De Hamel, *History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 84, 101.

was standardized according to the type of book, and included the use of large decorated initials to mark the beginning of a chapter. Initials varying hierarchically in size and decoration marked the relative importance of sections within the text. Beginning in the twelfth century red ink rubrics marked the heading of a new verse or section.

Medieval manuscripts are often beautiful works of art that were portable and could be used on a daily basis. The imagery became a part of people's everyday visual experience. This is significantly different from how most people interact with handmade art today, which is likely to be in a museum or gallery setting. Manuscripts contain mistakes and imperfections. The human hand is seen in these works in a much more direct way than is possible with a printed book. ■

The story of the Middle Ages is a story of the struggle for power between the papacy and the secular rulers. The papacy was the most powerful institution in the West, and the secular rulers were the most powerful in the East. The struggle for power between the two was the central theme of the Middle Ages. The papacy was the most powerful institution in the West, and the secular rulers were the most powerful in the East. The struggle for power between the two was the central theme of the Middle Ages.

Structure of the Medieval Codex



By Dave W.G. Brown

The written word has enabled the human race to communicate ideas, philosophies, technical information, histories, and other forms of information to a broad audience. Music has provided inspiration to the human race for a much longer time. The packaging of musical notation, in all its various incarnations, has played no small part in this phenomenon. From the earliest Babylonian notations of melody in the thirteenth century BCE to the mass-produced songbooks available in any contemporary bookstore, the packaging of musical notation has gone through

a remarkable evolution. The first recognizable book, generally referred to as a codex or manuscript, seems to date from the third or fourth century BCE.¹ In the seventeen or so centuries since, the structure of the codex has grown more complex. This exhibition displays original bindings and re-bindings of musical manuscripts ranging from the thirteenth to twentieth centuries. The evolution of the codex as seen in these examples can be characterized by the four major developmental elements of sewing supports, endbands, fastenings, and furnishings.

1. J. A. Stansel, *The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding* (Berkeley: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1999), 7.

See catalog entry 6.10, p. 63




The predecessors to the medieval codex, the scroll and the single quire codex, were composed of papyrus. With the adaptation of parchment (animal skin) to bookbinding the codex became more compact and thus easily read and stored. The Carolingian development of sewing supports, cording that added extra support to the quires of the codex and appear as raised bands traversing the spine of the codex, allowed the size of the codex to increase by adding more support to the chain stitching that served as the major binding structure in Coptic, Islamic, and Byzantine codices.

Endbands, found at the head and foot of the spine of the codex, have been an integral element to the structure of the codex since the development of the early Coptic binding. Endbands add strength to the head and foot of the textblock by providing an additional substrate to which each quire is directly sewn.² By the Gothic period endband construction becomes more varied. Seven main types of Gothic endband constructions can be identified.³ While support and protection are still their primary functions, decorative elements are introduced to endbands through embroidery and braiding techniques.

The fastenings of the medieval codex, the various forms of hardware used to keep the codex closed, exhibit a similar evolution in form as the endband. Gothic binding introduces the hook-clasp to the structure of the codex at the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁴ Normally attached directly to the bookboards after they are covered, hook-clasps consist of a catch plate attached to one cover and slightly protruding from the fore-edge, and a hook plate attached to a length of leather (and in rare cases ribbon) that is attached to the opposite cover.⁵

Furnishings, as they relate to the codices of this exhibition, are the metal additions to the cover of the codex that serve to protect the codex in some fashion and first appear in Romanesque bindings in

the form of half-dome bosses that protect the cover of the codex from damage.⁶ The presence of protective furnishing diminishes in the Gothic period compared to those of the Romanesque. Gothic furnishings are found on codices that were heavily used, such as liturgical codices and codices that were available to the public, and particularly large volumes are found with metal bosses and metal edge guards.⁷ As with endbands and fastenings of the Gothic period, a greater variety of style and decoration of furnishings develops in the Gothic codex.

The physical development of the sewing structure, endbands, fastenings, and furnishings in the structure of the medieval codex displayed in this exhibition showcase the importance that the packaging of the written (and printed) word—and music—has held throughout time and across cultures. 

2. Edith Dorland, *Bookbinding: Its Background and Technique* (New York: Dover, 1982), 192.

3. Integral endband, primary round endband, middle-stitch endband (see primary round endband, primary endband with secondary outboarders, primary round endband with secondary braiding, primary outboarders endband, and short-cut endband [Stevens, 10]).

4. *Ibid.*, 251.

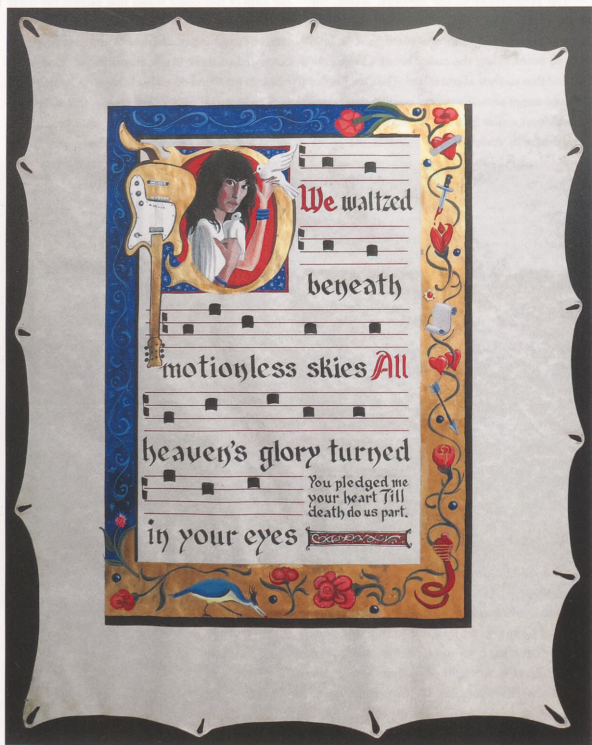
5. *Ibid.*, 251–252.

6. *Ibid.*, 165–169.

7. *Ibid.*, 263.

A Visualization by Dennis Harper

2011, University of Houston



A Modern Madrigal

A Visualization by Dennis Harper

By Gabriella Floerouy




Dennis Harper received his MFA from the University of Houston in 2009. He currently resides in Austin, Texas and exhibits his installation and video work.

Dennis Harper

In this contemporary music manuscript leaf, former UH student Dennis Harper immortalizes 80s rocker Patti Smith. Using imitation parchment and contemporary inks and paints, he appropriates the form of a leaf from a large medieval choral book, transforming it into a modern sheet of popular music.

Harper inscribes the parchment with the song *My Madrigal*, using a four-line staff and *nota quadrata* (square musical notation). To transcribe this music Harper used a contemporary tool, the computer program, *GarageBand*, to create the notation (or *neumes*) for the song, which he then translated into a four-line medieval format. The lyrics he selected are the first two lines of the third verse of the song. Harper chose these lines for their poetic quality. The song's title refers to a medieval song which would have included several voices. Although Smith's song only has one human voice, she uses a guitar for accompaniment.

Harper chose to include a large historiated initial, in which he depicts Smith looking into the eyes of the audience and holding two white doves—an image from one of her album covers. The long vertical guitar shape, Smith's own Les Paul instrument,

forms the initial "P" for Patti. Harper chose to contrast a late medieval type of border characterized by *rompe l'oeil* foliage and insects with classic rocker imagery. The top left of the border is decorated with a celestial display in a deep blue expanse. The bottom right features a shimmering gold leaf background, strewn with icons such as a heart and a bloodied dagger. Intermixed with these images, repeated patterns of flowers and flourishes create a densely decorated border. Using contemporary materials, Harper succeeds in creating something unique that has medieval inspiration. 

Antiphonary

6.01



Houston Public Library, Houston Metropolitan Research Center
Spanish, ca. 1500

40 x 29 in (101.6 x 73.4 cm) open, 20 x 29 in (50.8 x 74.4 cm) closed,
195 leaves

Language: Latin

Layout: Six five-line staves with square notation

Provenance: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Gift of Annette Finnegan

The distinguishing features of this Antiphonary are its metal worked decorative cover and size. Created in Spain during the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, it includes over 100 illuminations on 96 leaves. Age and poor early conservation, however, have left this codex in fragile condition. It is rarely opened as a result so that it is difficult to give a detailed analysis of its contents.

The cover consists of two large pieces of wood, which were covered in leather and bound using alum-tawed cording (made from cured pigskin and used to bind signatures together, creating the raised bands on the book's spine). The traditional method of binding included the use of pegs to connect all the pieces. The leather is peeling away at the edges and exposing the cover's wooden anatomy. This process has additionally revealed vestiges of several layers of leather that may have been part of a conservation treatment. There is also damage to the outer cover, where liquid has left a dark stain. Five

small, circular metal bosses decorate and protect the original leather facing. The metal edge guards were intended to provide additional protection from wear. Hook-clasps most likely kept this codex closed in the past, but now only the metal joining pieces and small leather remnants remain.

The enormous size of this Antiphonary demonstrates how large medieval music manuscripts could be when intended for communal use. GF 𐀀

Antiphonary for Dominican Use

Leaf with initial "P"



The Menil Collection, MS no. 65-62 Df, f. 25r
Italy, Tuscany, Between 1240–1257
17 x 11.7 in (43 x 29 cm)

Language: Latin

Layout: Musical notation (eleven staves and eleven lines of text) and a decorated initial

Provenance: Marquis of Lothian; Ulrico Hoepli, Milan (a family of art publishers), end of 19th century; Private Swiss Collection; William H. Schulz, New York; John and Dominique de Menil (1965); Menil Foundation, Inc. (1965)

6.02

The inhabited "P" is the first letter of the first response of the Nocturn in the feast of the Ascension, derived from Acts 1:3,9: "Post passionem suam per dies quadraginta apparuit..." [Appearing for forty days after his passion...] This spectacular initial, one of fifty-six in the Antiphonary, stylistically borrows from champlevé Limoges enamels imported into Italy. Like with the Crucifixion in Canon Page from a Sacramentary, part of the exhibition and examined in this catalog, this letter serves as an example of the emulation of enameling techniques in medieval illumination. At least four skilled specialists worked exclusively on the codex's initials.

A dragon-like beast at the bottom of the page spews out bright orange flames that create the letter over a green field encased by blue rectangular walls. The initial's lobe ends in a snake's head and encircles another blue snake in a figure eight adorned in blue, red and orange leaves. The hybrid monster—dragon head in blue, lion forelimbs and eagle wings

in orange, and knotted snake tail in purple—ends in a blue human head wearing an orange Phrygian cap. The hat, along with the face's prominent nose and long beard, constitute grotesque medieval signifiers of Jewishness.

As discussed in Rachel Hammer's essay on hybrid monsters and musicians in marginalia, illuminators often juxtaposed the grotesqueness at the margins against the sublimity of the inspired Word to emphasize the message of the sacred text. In context, then, it should be no surprise that Christ's triumphant departure is counterweighted by a demonic beast and by a caricature of those reviled as willing unbelievers. JC

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Literature & Exhibitions: A Young Teaching Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (organized by the University of St. Thomas), 7 November 1985–12 January 1986, p. 58–59, no. 46; Selection from the Menil Collection, Rice University, Houston, TX, 24 September 1971 – 30 April 1972; *A Renaissance Translation of Egerton, Objects, Paintings*, The Menil Collection, Houston, TX, 28 January 1993 – 6 February 1994. No catalog.

Sources: Garrison, E.B. "Letter to Philippe Verdier." *Menil Object File*. The Menil Collection, July 28, 1978; Strickland, Deborah. *Sinners, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003. 94–155; Verdier, Philippe. "65-62 Df Dominican Antiphonary." *Menil Object File*. Houston, TX: The Menil Collection, 1981.

6.03

Antiphonary Initial

Baptism of Christ



The Menil Collection, MS V 9016

Germany, Upper Rhine region, early 14th c.

5.5 x 5.1 in (14 x 13 cm)

Layout: Cutting of a historiated initial

Provenance: Hohenzollern Collection; Sigmaringen, South Germany; Mr. Boehler (well-known German dealer, purchased it at auction in Sigmaringen in the 20s or 30s); Otto Boehler, his son; Otto's widow; Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, NY; John and Dominique de Menil (1959); Menil Foundation, Inc. (1998)

This historiated "H" may have started one of the chants in an Antiphonary for the feast of John the Baptist (June 24): "Hic praecursor directus et" or "Hic est enim propheta." Its traditional composition in tempera and gold leaf shows Christ, flanked by John the Baptist and an angel holding a veil, submerged to his neck in what scholar Philippe Verdier described as a "bell" of translucent blue water.

Verdier notes a strong influence of the Regensburg School, makers of the *Regensburg Antiphonary* at the Pierpont Morgan Library. The historiated "D" in its third folio (PML MS M.870.3), depicting the moment when Saint Agnes's hair grew miraculously to cover her nakedness, illustrates his claim. Similarities in gold-leaf background, the coloration of halos (red indicates divine beings, blue identifies mortals), the blushed cheeks, the undulating lines obscuring nude bodies, and the common presence of the attentive angel point to, if not a same hand, a shared stylistic vision. JC

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Literature & Exhibitions: *Selection from the Menil Collection*, Rice University, Houston, TX, 24 September 1971–30 April 1972), p. 21 (not illus.); *The Visage of culture: A Telescopic Survey of Art from the Cave Man to the Present*, Jones Hall Fine Arts Gallery, University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX, 6 November–31 December 1959, p. 11; *A Young Teaching Collection*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (organized by the University of St. Thomas), 7 November 1968–12 January 1969. Not in catalog.

Source: Verdier, Philippe, "Baptism of Christ, Illumination on Vellum", *Menil Object Files*, V0916, The Menil Collection, Houston.

Antiphony Leaf

Creator Alme Siderum



Houston Public Library, Houston Metropolitan Research Center

Flemish, 15th c. (?)

35 x 24 in (89 x 61 cm), single leaf

Language: Latin

Layout: Four four-line staves with square notation and single column text on recto and verso

Provenance: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Gift of Annette Friesen

6.04

This leaf contains a simple six-stanza chant that depicts a higher being as the creator of the skies. Although the leaf is currently considered to be of Flemish origin, evidence suggests that the manuscript's illuminator may have been Italian. The dating could be revised to later than previously thought. The chant originally opened with the word *Consator* but was changed to *Onator* in the seventeenth century as part of Pope Urban VIII's complete rewriting of the hymns of the Roman Breviary to fit Renaissance prosodic tastes.¹ For this reason it is also possible that this folio belonged to a Breviary rather than an antiphony.

The text begins with a large C, which is decorated in rich blue and red. Within this almost purplish red lettering is a fabric motif. It appears the small diagonal diapering pattern was picked out with a stylus in the gilded center of the C while small flower shapes were stamped at the perpendicular cross-sections. Because only the hymn's first verse:

Jesu rede[m]ptor o[mn]ium inte[n]de votis supplicum
 ["Creator of the stars, bountiful, eternal light of the faithful, Jesus, the Redeemer of all things, be attentive to our prayers"] is notated, it seems to imply that this tune should be carried on throughout.

Very faint planning lines are still visible along with smudges of red pigment on the outer edges of both sides. It is clear that at one point the leaf had a tab attached, to make it easier to locate this often used chant. The outer gutter shows evidence of an original repair where a hole, probably made during the stretching of the vellum, was stitched back together. Now only the tear and small needle marks remain. Damage in the center of the leaf may have been caused by poor early storage. GF

1. Adrian Friesen, "Concerning Hymns," *Sacred Music* 134, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 43-44.

Antiphonary Leaf

Sepelierunt Stephanum viri timorati

6.05



Illuminated Sacred Music Collection, Woodson Research Center,
Rice University, MS 510-3
Southern Europe (Italy or Spain), ca. 1500
18.5 x 13.4 in (47 x 34 cm), single leaf

Language: Latin

Layout: Single column; six four-line staves with square notes.

Provenance: Woodson Research Center, Rice University

The recto text, "Sepelierunt Stephanum viri timorati, et fecerunt plan[c]tu[m] magnu[m] super eum," is a modified quote from Acts 8:2, which translates, "Devout men buried Stephen and made great mourning over him. It's verso, "Iste est Iohannes, qui supra pectus Domini in cena recubuit beatus Apostolus, cui revelata sunt secreta celestia," derives in part from John 13:22–25: "This is John, who reclined on the breast of the Lord at Last Supper: the blessed Apostle to whom celestial secrets were revealed."¹

The leaf is decorated with ink and tempera. No information is available about the larger volume from which it was taken, but the text on the exhibited recto side shows that it forms part of the antiphon from the Feast of Saint Stephen on December 26. This side of the leaf features two decorated initials: the capital S in "Sepelierunt" in dark blue with red pen flourishes and the I in "Iste" in red with pen flourishes in a lighter blue.

The verso side of this leaf contains an antiphon for the feast of St. John Evangelist on December 27. Thus, the feast of Christianity's first martyr is followed by the only apostle not martyred. The verso also displays a large decorated initial painted in various shades of red, blue, green, white, and black with white flourishes along with two smaller decorated initials, an A and an H, on the lower right. Like the two decorated initials on the recto side, the A is dark blue with red pen flourishes and the R is red with lighter blue pen flourishes.

The folio is ruled with a stylus and the lines are still discernible. The staves are inked in red, and the text is black and red. Based on the style of music notation used (the six four-line staves on each side with square notes), this manuscript leaf has been dated to the sixteenth century. RH

Book of Esther



Houston Public Library, Houston Metropolitan Research Center
Jerusalem, mid-18th c.

15.7 x 12.5 x 5.1 in (40 x 32 x 13 cm) as displayed

Language: Hebrew

Layout: Text laid out in 16 rows, 1 column

Provenance: Annette Finegan Collection (1931)

6/06, refer to p. 13

The *Book of Esther* narrates how Jewish heroine Esther delivered her people living in the Persian Empire from destruction at the hands of vizier Haman. The scroll is chanted twice during the Jewish holiday of Purim, which commemorates the event. At the points in the reading when Haman's name is spoken, it is customary to swirl Purim noisemakers and stamp one's feet to eradicate his evil name. Purim is the only time when there is a *mitzvah*, a commandment from God, to make noise.

The scroll itself is made of sheepskin parchment. Its text is undecorated and the page is unadorned. The parchment at the scroll's outermost edge, which is the most exposed to the elements, shows discoloration. The rest of the scroll remains rolled up and protected, although there is noticeable bleeding from the text onto the outside of the scroll. The wooden roller is light in color and undamaged. SAR

Book of Hours, Use of Reims

6.07

refer to p. 31



University of Houston, Special Collections, MS no. BX2080 .A2 1400:
Northern France, 15th c.

5.5 x 3.9 in (14 x 10 cm), bound to 5.9 x 4.3 in (15.1 x 11 cm), 197 leaves

Language: Latin, partially Old French (Calendar, Rubricated Introductions to the Hours and Sections, Hours of the Passion, Suffrages.)

Layout: Single column (full leaf), frame ruled in lead (86 x 51 mm). The Calendar pages are ruled differently from the text, to accommodate both letters and numbers (94 x 58 mm).

Script: French Gothic Textura. The scribe identifies himself as Paulinus de Sorcy in the colophon note on fol.15r. The first leaf of the Calendar, fol.1y, is by a different hand and resembles a Baratar script. A third hand wrote the "Hail Holy Queen" prayer on fol.193r with a clearer and more angular text.

Provenance: University of Houston Special Collections, gift of the Rockwell Fund

This parchment manuscript lacks miniatures but is profusely decorated with marginalia. Many folios include foliate borders that include intertwined dragons. Several folios (17r, 27r, 39r, 44y, 48y, 52y, 57r, 64r, 69r, 105r, 115y, 130y, 174y) feature significant ornamentation, such as human and half-human figures, apes, dogs, dragons and other animals.

Of particular interest are the folios including imagery of hybrid musicians and secular musicianship. In the lower left-hand corner of fol.44y, the beginning of the Hour of Terce, a bearded figure wearing a red tunic and an Egyptian hat, possibly King David, plays a harp. At Nones, on fol.52y, a hybrid musician dressed as a jester with a green hood plays a vielle with a large bow in the lower left-hand corner of the page, while two small apes dance and a dog sit in the middle. On fol.57r, Vespers, in the upper left corner, the figure of a man wearing a blue hat and a red tunic plays a long, thin trumpet. On fol.174y, Oration, a male musician blows a bagpipe

in the lower left corner while, opposite him, a lady appears to dance and raise her dress. In the middle, a green dog and a blue fox or dog appear; the former is walking while the latter lays down with a bone in its mouth. Other marginalia include an ape in the guise of a physician examining a vial of fluid (fol.64).

The gold leaf throughout the manuscript is slightly abraded, with some areas of parchment visible underneath the gold leaf. The manuscript is bound in dark brown leather over pasteboards. It is full gilt with a geometric pattern and tooled floral elements. The binding dates to the early twentieth century.¹ RH

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¹ Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection, University of Houston, <https://library.uh.edu/record-42958304-S11>

Book of Hours, Use of Sarum

Monks Chanting Office of the Dead



University of Houston, Special Collections, MS no. BX2080 .A2 1300r
France or Northern Belgium, 14th c.
7.1 x 4.7 in (18 x 12 cm), 76 leaves

Language: Latin

Layout: Frame ruled in reddish ink in one column per leaf. It is written in 23 lines, which starts right below the top line.

Script: The script used is formal gothic book in brown ink by a French or Flemish hand. There were a few errors extended by the scribe himself. There are later notes in English, including notes by its 16th-century owner, Edmund Bonner.

Provenance: St Edmund Bishop, of Cuswell, Norfolk, England, (1502-1569). Robert E. Gozon of Los Angeles. The Rockwell Fund, University of Houston, Special Collections.

4/28

In addition to the Liturgical Calendar, the Office of the Virgin, and several other standard texts common to Book of Hours, this codex contains the Psalter of St. Jerome. Primary initials are five lines high and floriated; the colors alternate red and blue on gold ground. They have tails that extend into ivy-leaf borders in blue, red, and gold. Secondary initials are two lines high in gold leaf on red or blue ground.

Full page miniatures on ff. 7v, 9v, 33v, 42v, and 64v depict, respectively, the Throne-of-Grace or Trinity, Annunciation of the Virgin, The Last Judgment, The Mass of the Dead, and St. Jerome. These illuminated leaves are not part of the original collation, however. The exhibited folio (42v) features a group of monks clustered around a funeral bier, chanting the Office of the Dead from an open choir book. An orange frame with golden flowers separates the rectangular scene from the rest of the leaf.

The binding is sixteenth-century blind-tooled brown calf over wooden boards. This binding would

originally have had two book-claps. Although both are lacking, all four bosses are still attached to the boards.¹ EB

¹ Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection, University of Houston, <https://library.uh.edu/medieval-6299030-511>

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Exhibitions & Literature:

Lucas: *Spiritual Treasures and Sensory Pleasures—Medieval Texts and Images from Houston Collections*. M.D. Anderson Library, University of Houston. 17 October 2005 through 17 February 2006.

Book of Hours, Use of Utrecht

David in a Landscape

6.09



University of Houston, Special Collections, MS no. BX2080 .A2 1400-
The Netherlands, 15th c.
5.9 x 4.3 in (15 x 11 cm), 151 leaves

Language: Latin

Layout: 1 column (full leaf), frame ruled in reddish ink (88 x 58 mm.) Leroy 01A1. It is written in 21 lines, below top line.

Script: The script used is Gothic, medium grade "textura" in dark brown ink with variant spelling.

Provenance: University of Houston, Special Collections, gift of Mr. Frel Allbright

The codex lacks a few final leaves. In addition to the standard texts (the Liturgical Calendar, the Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Penitential Psalms, Litanies, Office of the Dead, Hours of the Holy Cross, Hours of the Holy Ghost, and the Suffrages of the Saints), it also contains the Hours of Eternal Wisdom. The first page of the text is highly ornate. On a gold leaf ground, the inhabited initial "H" is twelve lines high, with an acanthus flower in its heart painted in blue with white arabesque inside. A rectangular linear border departs from the letter and frames the text. Red carnations and acanthus leaves run on three sides of the page while the fourth is decorated with a floriated partial bar border. Ornate primary initials eight, nine or ten lines in height are found at the beginning of every office. Secondary initials in gold leaf on blue and red ground, four lines high, occur at the beginning of the service for every hour. Linear partial borders in gold leaf run down the left margin of the page.

Acanthus leaf, flower and small fruit designs appear in the upper and bottom margin border. Tertiary initials, one or two lines high, alternate in red and blue. The Litanies section also includes decorative line endings. Full page miniatures are inserted in the collation as single leaves.

The exhibited folio 131y, a full-page miniature of King David kneeling in prayer with his harp beside him on the ground, serves as a reminder that he is considered the author of the psalms and their music. The binding, brown calf over wooden boards, is eighteenth or nineteenth century. There are five raised bands on the spine with gilt edges. Visible holes on the external margin indicate missing hook-clasps.¹ EB 翳

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¹ Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection, University of Houston, <https://library.uh.edu/recond=62958348-S11>

Choral Book

Convent of St. Agnes



University of Houston, Special Collections,

MS no. OVS M2147 XVM11

Italy, 15th c.

15 x 10.6 in (38 x 27 cm), 149 leaves

Language: Latin

Layout: Frame ruled with clear brown ink with additional ruling between staves for text. Six red 4-line staves and six lines of text per leaf.

Script: Various—folios 1 through 145, round Gothic liturgical script; 145y through 146y, humanistic "littera antiqua"; 147–149, "printed-like" humanistic.

The same hand that wrote ff. 145y–146y does corrections throughout the text. The index on ff. 1–6, ff. 1–27, and ff. 145–149 are written in late "italica" by the same hand that did the foliation. Guide titles are in a very small humanistic cursive.

Provenance: University of Houston Special Collections, gift of Mr. Phil Albright

6.10

refer to pp. 19–20

The large historiated opening initial, a Gothic "M" measuring 85mm x 72mm, depicts St. Agnes seated. The floral partial border on the upper left corner and lower margins dates the manuscript to the early Renaissance. In the left margin is a boy whipping a goose, which refers to legendary ritual about torturing the goose before cooking it. In the center of the lower margin an oval medallion is supported by angels on either side and features within it the Holy Cross, hung with flagellants' whips, with two clerics kneeling at either side.¹

A Gothic capital "N" on fol. 35y depicts St. Helen holding the Holy Cross. The binding is fifteenth to sixteenth century in brown calf over wooden boards. On the front board, there is a brass corner boss on each corner and another in the middle. The backboard has corner bosses on its two fore-edge corners. On the external margin of each board are two circular brass catches. The clasps are

leather and brass. The margins on the boards present a double foliated border. The spine features six raised bands, all blind tooled. MB

¹ Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts Collection, University of Houston, <https://library.uh.edu/record=62958337-011>

Gothic Scribe's Desk

Reproduction (2005)

6.11



University of Houston, Special Collections
Materials: Ash, Iron and Gold Leaf

The desk is a reproduction of a 14th century scribe's desk created in 2005 by a local master furniture maker, Kevin Stone, for a previous exhibition. Ash wood was chosen for its workability and widespread use during the medieval period. Each of these tables would have been made by hand, to a customer's specific description. The scribal worktops could hinge directly off the arms of a chair and support a separate stand to hold an exemplar. Once built, these desks could have been carved, painted, waxed or varnished. HM

Gradual and Sequentiary



University of Houston, Special Collections,
MS no. M2147 XV.M12¹
Germany, 15th c.

8.5 x 14.7 in (47 x 37.5 cm), 150 leaves

Language: Latin, with parchment leaf behind front cover in German.

Layout: All leaves are side ruled in red ink, forming nine four-line staves with corresponding lines of writing with independent parallel ruling in lead.

Script: German Gothic, liturgical script by one hand in dark brown ink; folio numbers in red Roman numerals.

Provenance: Nuremberg, Germany (1); Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; Gift from Fredl Albrecht Endowment.

This Gradual features the customary chants for the Proper (fol. 1 through 70v) and the Ordinary (fol. 142g through 150) of the mass. The former are chants specific to feasts or solemnities observed in particular days while the latter are those that are sung on every mass. Additionally, this parchment codex includes a collection of sequences (fol. 71 through 142), non-biblical verses that embellish the Alleluia sung prior to the Gospel.

A half-signature cut lengthwise on the first folio serves as an index entitled "Regist[um] festo..." in rubric with two double columns below, each listing feasts in black with their corresponding folio in red Roman numerals. The only adornments among its pages are decorated initials. The first folio has a large opening initial in green, obscured by the index half folio, followed by alternating capitals in red, brown and green in the first two quires. Afterwards blue substitutes for green. Each capital identifies a different verse and feast names are rubricated throughout.

It is bound in its original white embossed pig-skin cover with (broken) brass clasps as well as protective brass corner pieces. The shield of Nuremberg is recognizable on the cover. A parchment leaf of a liturgical manuscript in German is pasted inside the front cover. Original page tabs provide rapid access to Marian feasts and chants like the Immaculate Conception (fol. 1) and the Hail Mary (fol. 14) as well as major feasts like the Resurrection (fol. 27) and Pentecost (fol. 34). JC

¹ Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection, University of Houston.

Gradual Leaf

Beati immaculati in via

6.13

refer to p. 41



Illuminated Sacred Music Collection, Woodson Research Center,
Rice University, MS 510-9

1450–1500

24 x 16.9 in (61 x 43 cm), single leaf

Language: Latin

Script: Gothic Rotunda or Humanistic Minuscule

Six five-line staves in red with square notation

This leaf contains chants of the Proper of the Saints specific for feasts commemorating holy virgins and female martyrs. It is identified by the introit verse on the recto side (not exhibited) "Beati immaculati in via..." ("Happy those whose way is blameless...") from Psalm 119:1. The recto also features the beginning of the *Gloria Patri* that continues on the verso. It is followed in the middle of the sheet by the gradual chant, based on Psalm 45:3, "Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis: propterea benedixit [re Deus in aeternam.]" ("Grace is poured abroad in thy lips: therefore hath [God] blessed [thee for ever.]")¹ This particular combination of introit and gradual belongs to the feast of St. Agnes celebrated on January 21.

The vellum is generally in excellent condition although there are a few scattered stains in the upper right of the verso side and the ink of a few of the neumes is worn away. The elegantly decorated initial "D" (for "Diffusa") stands out the middle of the page, with fine white filigree decoration on the

maroon background within the initial and on the blue, shaped field around the gilded letter. Three delicate penwork vine scrolls with three gold leaves each sprout from the blue field of the initial into the border. Staves are in red; neumes (notes) and lettering are in black ink.

The leaf offers a good opportunity to observe the musical notation of the period. Staves below the D employ both melismas (the running together of notes to show sustained sound) and an extended and vibrating red bar line to emphasize that the words and letters should also be drawn out to correspond with the sustained notes. JS & JC

Gradual Leaf

Missa Angelorum



Illuminated Sacred Music Collection, Woodson Research Center,

Rice University, MS 510-6

Italy, ca. 1490

24.7 x 18.5 in (63 x 47 cm), single leaf

Language: Latin

Layout: Five four-line staves with square notation.

Provenance: Woodson Research Center, Rice University

6.14

This leaf, which has two gilded initials and several carefully composed pen-worked initials, contains the Kyrie and the start of the Gloria, two of the most well-known chants of the Mass: "Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus..." [Lord have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men...] This folio probably belonged to a Gradual, which contained all the chants of the Mass, or perhaps a Kyriele, which featured only those of the Ordinary: Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Credo and Agnus dei.

The two largest initials, a K(yrie) on the recto and G(loria) on the verso, are particularly stunning in their rich pink, green, and blue foliage, which, along with the particular forms of its accent flourishes and pen worked initials, identifies the manuscript as Italian in origin. Subsequent letters in words like Kyrie and Gloria have a vine or plant-like motif that are unrestrained

and overgrown in a way that does not appear in Northern European manuscripts.

The treatment of the neumes (notes) reflects a sophisticated system of notating tempo as well as tone. While most of the notes stand alone, some stretch into elongated rectangles to indicate sustained sound while complex shapes connect others to indicate a vibrato sound. GF

1. Woodson Research Center, Fendley Library, Rice University
Illuminated Sacred Music Manuscript Collection.

Gradual Leaf

Psalm 66, Fourth Verse

6.15

refer to p. 6



Illuminated Sacred Music Collection, Woodson Research Center,
Rice University, MS 510-12
Spanish, 15th or 16th c.
37 x 25.5 in (94 x 65 cm), single leaf

Language: Latin

Layout: Five 5 line staves in red with square musical notation

Provenance: Toledo, early 16th century; Paul Gotschalk, New York bookseller;
Woodson Research Center, Rice University (1949)

This well-preserved vellum folio belonged to a Gradual, the chant book for the Mass. Its beautifully decorated recto reads: "Omnis terra adoret Te, Deus, et psallat Tibi: psalmum dicat nomini tu—" and continues in the purely functional verso with "—o, Altissime. Iubilare Deo, omnis terra, psalmum dicite nomini ejus: date gloriam laudi ejus."¹ ("Let all the earth adore Thee, O God, and sing to Thee: let it sing a psalm to Thy name, O most High. Shout with joy to God, all the earth, sing ye a psalm to His name: give glory to His praise.") The text corresponds to the fourth and first verses of Psalm 66, sung as the traditional introit, or introductory antiphon, for the Mass of the second Sunday after the feast of the Epiphany (January 6th).

A blue rectangular band containing a garland of intertwined light-pink roses, birds and small golden beads frames the music. The recto's historiated "O" in "Omnis" features a robed, bearded man seated with an open book on his lap, staring in contemplation out the small window of an otherwise enclosed room.

Diane Wolfthal indicates that he lacks attributes that would readily identify him as a king, saint or martyr. However, because of his Jewish features and his pose, she believes he may represent King David.² Psalm 66 is also one of the "Selah Psalms," the fifty-four psalms that contain verses ending with "Selah," a word of uncertain meaning that conveyed a pause in the chant or an exhortation to meditate.³ Conceivably the illuminator (or sponsor) intended to literally communicate a sense of devout introspection. The verso's only ornamentation is another beautiful yet comparatively modest decorated initial, the "I" in "Iubilare," painted in blue, red and green flourishes.

The coat of arms at the bottom belongs to the powerful Diego López de Pacheco, Marquis of Villena and 2nd Duke of Escalona. The shield therefore identifies the manuscript's likely sponsor and strongly indicates Toledan provenance. Very similar border decorations, albeit with a different heraldic insignia—Christ's "Five Wounds"—adorn the first leaf of Yale University's Beinecke Kyriale and

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¹ Woodson Research Center, Fendren Library, Rice University.
Illuminated Sacred Music Manuscript Collection.

² Diane Wolfthal, "Sing the Glory: an illuminated manuscript of adoration" in *Youtube.com*. Fendren Library: July 2009. <http://youtu.be/K19W5Qy5jw> (accessed March 09, 2012).

³ Norman H. Sneath, "Selah," in *Vetus Testamentum* (BRILL) 2, no. 1 (Jan 1952): 43.

Literature and Exhibitions: Diane Wolfthal, "Sing the Glory: an illuminated manuscript of adoration." *Youtube.com*. Fendren Library. July 2009. (accessed March 09, 2012); Rice University, "Fendren Library Receives Priceless 15th Century Illuminated Musical Leaf." *Sallyport*, August 1949.



Historiated Initial A with
King David praying (Closeup)

by Bernardino de Caceres
Misal Rico de Cisneros (Misale
secundum consuetudinem abbas
eccl[esi]e Toletanae) Biblioteca
Nacional de España,
MS 1540, Vol. 1, fol. 1v;
Toledo, Spain (1529–1539)

individual folios scattered among collections such as New York's J.E. Morgan Library and Los Angeles's Getty museum. Recent scholarship indicates that these were once part of a set of sumptuous chant volumes, known collectively as *The Rosary Cantoral*, commissioned from Toledo's secular bookmaking workshops for a Dominican monastery by a religious confraternity comprised of members of the wealthy silk weavers' guild. It is speculated that the guild, dominated by conversos (converts) from Judaism, used the *Cantoral* as a show of loyalty to the Crown and the Catholic faith to the local Dominicans, zealous supporters of the Inquisition and the monarchs.⁴

The Marquis, himself rumored to be of Jewish ancestry and a reviled protector of humanists in this increasingly intolerant time, had at one time sided prominently with the armed opposition against eventual monarchs Fernando and Isabella's claim to the Spanish throne. His coat of arms on a manuscript so similar in style and dimensions to those in the *Cantoral* suggests that the Rice leaf may have

served an analogously conciliatory intent. Both the Rice folio and the *Cantoral* also share strong stylistic similarities with the *Misal Rico de Cisneros*, a sumptuous *Misale* for Toledo's archbishop, which possesses a well-documented sixteenth century provenance. Its first historiated initial—a King David bearing a striking likeness to the man in the Rice folio—not only cements the leaf's Toledan origin but also strengthens Wolfthal's conjectures. Furthermore it invites considering Psalm 66's figure—Semitic, clad in silken robes, yet humbled—to be a subliminal plea for the Dominicans to "Selah", to reflect on the fate of conversos. JC

⁴ Lorenzo Candellera, *The Rosary Cantoral*, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2010.

Gregorian Chant Book

6.16

refer to p. 44



Museum of Printing History, MS no. 2010.903.1
16th c.


26 x 19 x 3.2 in (66 x 48 x 9.5 cm), 180 leaves

Language: Latin

Layout: 18 quires of 10 leaves each; 6 five-line staves per side of leaf, stenciled font and decoration on heavy laid paper.

Provenance: A. M. Gibson, 1994; Museum of Printing History

The codex's first and last quires (sections of folded leaves) show extensive wear and repair. The remaining quires are in good condition. Linen repair tape has been applied to the first leaf of the first quire and the inside of the front cover along the spine-edge of the quire and cover. The textblock (or body of the book) is composed of heavy laid paper. The text and decorative ruling of the textblock is in red and black paint throughout and has been applied using a stenciling technique.

The binding consists of wooden boards covered in brown leather. Five raised bands traverse the spine. There is decorative embossing on the covers. Each cover has one bronze boss in the center and four bronze edge guards. There is one remaining hook-clasp of two attached to the fore-edge of the codex. DWGB 

Pontificale



University of Houston, Special Collections, MS no. BX1973 .O73 1500s¹
Northern France or Belgium, 16th c.
8.5 x 6.3 inches (20 x 16.3 cm), 96 leaves

Language: Latin, with paper leaf behind front cover in modern English

Layout: Leaves 1 through 72: 1 column, full page, frame ruled in red ink. Written in 38 lines below top line. Leaves 73 through 96: 1 column, full page, frame ruled in light brown ink, larger writing area than previous section

Script: Halfway between Gothic book-hand and a Rotunde (fl. 1472) and close to Humanistic (15th-16th). Text has been corrected and there are annotations in small Humanistic cursive script.

Provenance: Print label with a coat of arms above the name of "John Peacock," Varne and Cahill Library, Catholic See of Portsmouth, England (until 1967); Gift of Mr. Fred Albright (1978)

6.17

The Pontifical consists of the rituals, sacraments and benedictions appropriate for bishops, cardinals and popes, such as the ordination of priests in the exhibited leaf (fol. 1v rubric "Clerico Faciendo"). Musical notation is uncharacteristically absent, but the underlining of letters and discreet accent marks found sporadically probably served as devices to help the bishop recall his chant.

This is a marriage of two codices. Its first 72 leaves of fine parchment comprise the original Pontifical. Its style befits its owner's high ecclesiastical status, delicately decorated with foliate marginalia (in blue, green, browns and red) and two line-high initials (white and blue against gilded backgrounds). Its ruling is barely visible. The final section (ff. 73-96) includes blessings and benedictions framed by a fine gold border. It lacks border decoration; the initials, alternating red, blue and gold, have no background. The French Red Moroccan binding with gilt panel margins is not the original; the folios were trimmed down to their current size and gilt at a later date. JC

¹ *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection*, University of Houston, <http://library.uh.edu/record=62958046-531>

Processional for Dominican Nuns

6.18

refer to p. 17



Houston Public Library, Houston Metropolitan Research Center

ca. 1500

7.5 x 10 in (19.1 x 25.4 cm)

Language: Latin

Layout: four-line staves with square notation in red or black, single column text

Provenance: Houston Public Library, Houston Metropolitan Research Center

Judging by its small size, this codex, created for the use of Dominican nuns, was probably intended for the use of an individual. The manuscript is bound in red leather, which is only slightly worn (possibly rebound at a later date than the manuscript text and music). The inside cover contains fragments of earlier texts, called pastedowns, to protect and conceal the inner board of the cover. This practice of recycling and reusing older texts was not uncommon, and it offers a vivid insight into the creation and conservation of these sorts of manuscripts. The inner spine has begun to crack but the vellum manuscript is in good condition.

The text is embellished with small penwork initials, some of which are further elaborated with small illustrations of grotesque or humorous human figures. There are pricking marks visible on each leaf consisting of small dots at the top and bottom of the margins. One owner of the manuscript has added notes in German, such as *palm sonatig* in the top right hand corner of the first page to mark the initial chant for

the important liturgical feast of Palm Sunday. Such personal notes give a glimpse of the individual owner and the way she used her book. Since a nun would have been educated in Latin, it is possible that the note in German was added by a later, or at least by a non-monastic owner. This hypothesis is supported by the later addition of pages in the back of the book, which include handwritten marginal notes. Probably personal memorial records, these notations suggest this book was at some point used in much the same way as family bibles or books of hours, in which owners recorded important life events. GF

Qur'an Leaf



University of Houston, Special Collections
Egypt or Spain, 11th c.
10.6 x 13.3 in (27 x 34 cm), single leaf

Language: Arabic

Layout: Unbound, 1 column, 10 rows

Script: Egyptian or Spanish

Provenance: University of Houston, Special Collections Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Marcus

6.19

refer to p. 15

At the top of the leaf is the end of the 17th Surah of the Qur'an, "The Children of Israel" from verse 107–111. The passage reads, "And they say: 'Glory to our Lord! Truly has the promise of our Lord been fulfilled!' They fall down on their faces in tears, and it increases their (earnest) humility. Say: 'Call upon Allah (God), or call upon Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Neither speak thy Prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between.' Say: 'Praise be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion: Nor (needs) He any to protect Him from humiliation: yea, magnify Him for His greatness and glory!'" There are golden circular emblems at the end of each verse, and two gold and royal blue roundels at the beginning and ending of the final verse of the Surah.

Below, a thicker script gives the name of the next Surah. Along the left hand side of the text are two medallions. The upper is a palmette medallion, mainly in gold with outlines in blue, green and black.

The lower medallion is connected to the beginning script of the second Surah on the leaf. This medallion is also in gold, with the word "Allah" written in its center. The leaf seems to be in good condition. There are a few tears and slight weathering along the edge from previous binding in book form. Along the bottom half of the leaf is a stain, probably from liquid, which reaches up towards the text.

Each country in the Muslim empire had a different style of calligraphy writing. Based on the more "cursive like" script it is likely that the leaf is either Spanish or Egyptian in origin. The material used for manuscripts in the Arab world sometimes varied from those used in the West due to availability. If this Qur'an leaf was made in Spain, it would have been made of parchment; if it originated in Egypt, the material could be a thin layer of either gazelle or camel skin. HM

Sacramentary Leaf

Crucifixion

6.20

refer to p. 21



Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, MS 71.8
Hildesheim, Lower Saxony, Germany (?), ca. 1150–1160
11.8 x 7.8 in (30.2 x 20 cm)

Language: Latin

Layout: Single column. Ruling visible, border of recto miniature aligns with column of text on verso.

Script: Carolingian minuscule, in red and black inks.

Provenance: Ernst Koller-Tünninger, Lucern, Switzerland, from 1946. Purchased by the MFAH March 27, 1971.

This *Crucifixion* folio in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is executed in tempera and gold leaf with ink on parchment. It is in excellent condition, without any tearing or flaking of the paint, which remains vibrant and rich in color. The opening words are arranged in three lines of red ink below the miniature, and read as follows: "[T]e Igitur Clementissime Pater, per ihm xpm Filiu[m] tuum Dominum nostrum...." ("To you, therefore, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord...") This prayer continues on the verso.

This *Crucifixion* was originally part of a sacramentary, a liturgical book containing the text and sometimes the music for the Mass. The *Crucifixion* served as a visual representation of the sacramental celebration of Christ's sacrifice, and indicated the beginning of the Canon, or service of the Eucharist.¹ This illumination has been attributed to Hildesheim in Lower Saxony.² However, stylistic and iconographic evidence and especially

connections to champlevé enamelwork, suggest it may instead have been made at the Stavelot Abbey in the Mosan region of Belgium. JNS

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1 James Clift, *The Body of Christ in the Art of Europe and New Spain, 1150–1800* (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston/Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1997), 104.

2 Schrader 1971, 145.

Literature and Exhibitions: *El arte románico: exposición organizada por el Gobierno Español bajo los auspicios del Consejo de Europa, Barcelona y Santiago de Compostela* [10 julio a 10 octubre 1961; A Permanent Heritage: Major Works from the Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 23 October 1980–4 January, 1981; *The Glory of Byzantium*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, 3 March–6 July, 1997 (LN97.3), cat. no. 313; *The Body of Christ*, MFAH, December 1997–April 1998, cat. no. 45; J.L. Schrader, "The Canon Page from a Lost Sacramentary and its Significance to Romanesque Lower Saxon Style," *The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Bulletin*, December 1971, 142–149; MFAH: A Guide to the Collection, Houston: 1981, cat. no. 28, 17–18.

Torah Yad



The Mollie & Louis Kaplan Judaica Collection,
Congregation Beth Yeshurun, Houston, Texas
Russia, 18th c.
6 in (22 cm)
Material: Silver

6.21

Made from silver, this yad is flat and unadorned. It curves from left to right and ends as is customary—in the shape of a human hand with pointing index finger. This yad also includes a silver chain, from which it is hung when not in use. The metal is slightly tarnished and discolored.

A yad, Hebrew for "hand", is a pointer used as a guide during the ritual reading of Jewish scripture so that a reader does not have to physically touch the ink on the scroll. This not only retains the sanctity of the scroll, but also preserves the condition and the legibility of the text. While this particular yad was used to read the Torah, yads were also used to read scrolls such as the Book of Esther shown in the exhibition.

SAR

Contributors to the Exhibit

✿ **Professor Judith Steinhoff** specializes in Medieval and especially Gothic Art. Her research generally concentrates on Italian 14th century painting; however, she is also actively interested in Medieval illuminated manuscripts throughout Europe. She taught the course on Music in Medieval Manuscripts that resulted in the current exhibit, "Sacra et Profana," and provided overall support with planning, organization, and editing.

✿ **Elnaz Bokharaci** was a Master's Degree student in Art History at the University of Houston during the academic year 2011–2012 and is currently continuing her MA studies at Arizona State University. She holds a bachelor's degree in Art and Cultural management from the Azad University of Tehran.

✿ **David W.G. Brown** is a Master's student in Art History at the University of Houston. He is studying the conversation that occurs between the visual cultures of distinctly different societies using the print medium as a vehicle for discourse. He has volunteered and worked at the Museum of Printing History, Houston, fulfilling several roles including a brief stint as interim curator after he received his BA in Art History from the University of Houston.

✿ **Misha Burgett** is a Master's student in Art History at the University of Houston. She is currently concentrating on the Dada movement in preparation for her thesis work. Her current research interests include looking back at Dada through the lens of our postmodern era. She plans to continue her education by seeking a second Master's

degree in Library Science. Misha's contributions to the exhibition include doing all the photography involved with planning the exhibition and catalog.

✿ **José Candelaria** is a post-baccalaureate student in Art History at the University of Houston following fifteen years in the corporate world. He holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Notre Dame and is considering attending graduate school. In addition to his catalog contributions, José provided technical and editorial assistance.

✿ **Gabriella Flournoy** received her BA in Art History from University of Houston in May 2012. She hopes to continue her education in Art History so that she can one day work in museums.

✿ **Mónica Fuentes-Domínguez** is currently a senior at the University of Houston pursuing two degrees, one in Art History and one in History. Her research interest is the art and history of the Iberian peninsula during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. She is currently an intern for the Department of Prints and Drawings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. She also hopes to pursue an MA in Medieval studies.

✿ **Lisa Garrett** received her BFA and MFA in Graphic Communications from the University of Houston. Her professional practice examines the visual grammar of the urban landscape, and in particular, the semiotic relationship between the structural form of environmental signage and its message.

Suggestions for Further Reading

✱ **Diana Guzman** is currently a senior working on a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history at the University of Houston's School of Art, concentrating on Gothic art and architecture.

✱ **Rachel Harmeyer** is a Master's student in Art History at the University of Houston. Her areas of research interest include the visual culture of the nineteenth century and sentimental and mourning jewelry in Europe and America. She is also interested in popular art and domestic craft techniques of the nineteenth century. In addition to her studies in art history, she is a practicing visual artist.

✱ **Dennis Harper** received his MFA from the University of Houston in 2009. He currently resides in Austin, TX and exhibits his installation and video work in Austin, Houston, and elsewhere. He made the piece, "A Modern Madrigal: A visualization by Dennis Harper" displayed in the exhibit while a student in Dr. Steinhoff's course, "Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts" in Spring 2008.

✱ **Will Johnson** completed his Master's degree in medieval history at the University of Houston. As the resident linguist in this course, he did many of the Latin translations. He hopes to teach English abroad.

✱ **Crescida McCue** is a PhD student in medieval European history under Dr. Sally N. Vaughn at the University of Houston. Her field of specialization is eleventh century Norman women. She holds bachelor's degrees in history and English from Houston Baptist University and a master's degree from H.B.U.

She teaches at Summer Creek High School in Humble, Texas and is an adjunct faculty member for Lone Star College System.

✱ **Hannah Mirza** graduated from the University of Houston in May, 2012 with a Bachelor's degree in Art History and a minor in Studio Arts. Her main focus in Art History is Pre Columbian art, mainly that of the Maya and Inca civilizations. She currently works at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

✱ **Sara Royer** is an undergraduate Art History major at UH, where her main area of interest has been modern and contemporary art.

✱ **Jennifer Sauchill** received a BFA in Graphic Design from Sam Houston State University in 2009. In 2010-2011 she conducted post-baccalaureate work at the University of Houston, studying art history and Italian. Her essay in this catalog is based on a seminar paper she wrote for Dr. Steinhoff's course, "Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts."

Jenny also worked as a curatorial intern under Dr. Dena Woodall in the department of Prints and Drawings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston from 2009-2011. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree in art history at Penn State University.

✱ **Tanja Vaughn** received a BFA in painting from the University of Houston in May 2012. Her work has been included in exhibitions in Houston, including the Art Car Museum and Lowndale Art Center. She plans to pursue an MFA in painting.

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We now come to last things

The exhibit and catalog *Sacra et Profana: Music in Medieval Manuscripts*
is done and we have all survived

Let us sing Alleluia and say amen.

May all the hard-working students and other contributors
of which there are many be blessed by
Hushch, Allah, Christ or whoever the deity is called

by all the various peoples of the earth
equally and yet a special place in heaven be reserved
for the graphic designer and her father, too

And may the eyes and backs and bones of all the contributors be healed
after their long, arduous, and of course devoted labors.

To you the reader and exhibit viewer may you enjoy and appreciate the fruits of our
work, the creative and the scholarly and the tedious.

May you be entertained and edified and may your love of music increase.

To whoever desecrates or in any way damages this catalog
or the exhibit be warned that

lice, bad bugs, and fire ants will infest your entire body
or spiders bite you
or even worse.

It would be an especially bad idea to steal the headset.

We also cautiously suggest a place in purgatory for the lord of google docs
at least until the problems be resolved

Now that our work is done we offer our thanks

and will cheerfully take a break.

engage in rest and relaxation and, hopefully, holy wisdom,
not to mention a good beer.

Let us all celebrate together.

Finis adest deo gratias



