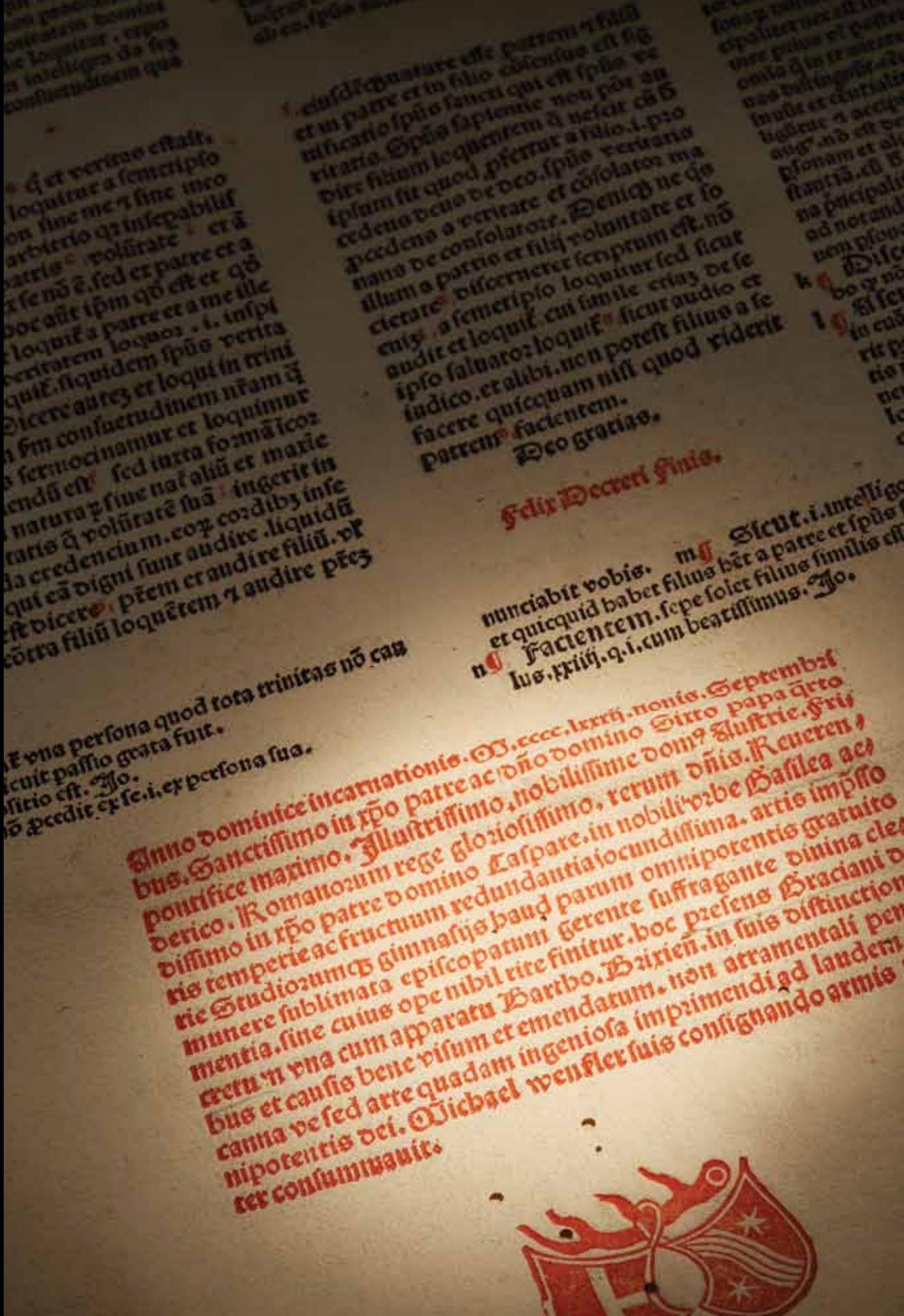


ILLUMINATIONS



... et veritas est. loquitur a semetipso non sine meo arbitrio quod inseparabilis patris voluntate. et a se non est, sed ex patre et a patre. hoc autem ipsum quod est et quod loquitur a patre et a me ille veritatem loquitur. i. in se loquitur. siquidem spiritus veritatis dicitur aures et loqui in trinitate. in se consuetudinem nostram quod in se consuetudinem et loquimur. sed in se forma. natura per se sine alio et maxime in se voluntate sua. ingerit in se credentium. eorum cordibus infertur ea digni sunt audire. siquidem est dicere. patrem et audire filium. et contra filium loquentem et audire patrem.

... eiusdem nature esse patrem et filium et in patre et in filio. edocuit est significatio spiritus sancti qui est spiritus veritatis. Spiritus sanctus non potest autem dicere filium loquentem a patre. et ipsum sit quod patrem a filio. i. procedens a veritate et consolator manus de consolator. Denique ne quod illum a patre et filii voluntate et societate. discernere scriptum est. non enim a semetipso loquitur sed sicut audit et loquitur. cui simile est de se ipso saluator loquitur sicut de se iudico. et alibi. non potest filius a se facere quicquam nisi quod viderit patrem facientem. Deo gratias.

Felix Decretum finis.

nunciabit vobis. **ms** Sicut. i. intelligo et quicquid habet filius habet a patre et spiritus factentem. sepe solet filius similis esse patris. **Jo.**

... est una persona quod tota trinitas non carnis. sicut passio gratia fuit. officio est. **Jo.** non procedit ex se. i. ex persona sua.

Anno dominice incarnationis. M. cccc. lxxviii. nonis. Septembris. pontifice maximo. Illustrissimo. nobilissimo domino Sixto papa quarto. Romano rege gloriosissimo. verum dominus. Reuerentissimus. Studiorumque gymnasiis haud parum omnipotentis gratia munere sublimata episcopatum gerente suffragante divina clementia. sine cuius ope nihil rite finitur. hoc presens Braciani decanus et causis bene visum et emendatum. non atramentali penicilla ve sed arte quadam ingeniosa imprimendo ad laudem omnipotentis dei. Michael wensler suis consignando armis.



Illuminations



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Above: This manuscript, Saint Mark's Monastery (Jerusalem) 129, contains theological works of Patriarch Quryaqos, who died in 817. On the right page is a brief scribal request for prayer, and on the facing page (in another script) is the colophon proper, which gives the date of the manuscript's completion as Sept 3, 1118 Anno Graecorum and 192 Anno Hegirae, that is, the year 806 AD. This copy was made, therefore, before the author's death.

ON THE COVER: Colophon from an edition of Gratian's Decretum (canon or church law), printed in 1482 at Basel by Michael Wenssler, whose device (two shields) appears below the text. Wenssler includes the names of the pope (Sixtus IV) and emperor (Friedrich III) in his colophon. From the Saint John's Rare Book Collection, Saint John's University (Collegeville, Minnesota).

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library

The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library's mission is to identify, digitally photograph, catalog, and archive endangered manuscripts belonging to threatened communities around the world. Having formed partnerships with over 480 libraries and archives, HMML has photographically preserved over 125,000 medieval, renaissance, and early-modern manuscripts from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and India. These resources, available through HMML's online catalog, OLIVER, and image database, *Vivarium*, have become essential tools for global manuscript research. HMML is the home of *The Saint John's Bible*.

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Dear Friends,

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, HMML is hard at work on four continents. In Europe, we have two cameras operating in Malta, as we extend one of our flagship projects into new collections (see “Where We’re Working” in this issue). Our Middle East work continues to reach libraries in Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, Israel/Palestine, and Syria. In Aleppo, we are finishing up the manuscripts of the Armenian diocese despite the turmoil and uncertainty that has beset Syria for the past year. In Iraq, our partner Fr. Najeeb Mikael, OP, has been invited to digitize the remains of the patriarchal collection, damaged in the run-up to the 2003 invasion. He will use equipment provided by HMML, and we will ensure that copies of the manuscripts are safely stored in our digital archive, cataloged, and made available to researchers. In India, we are finishing up the major Syriac manuscript collections and exploring work in the archives of Goa, the historic capital of Portuguese India. Finally, in Africa our efforts to return to Ethiopia have borne fruit in a new joint venture with the Patriarchate of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the “Ethiopian Manuscript Digital Archive.” We see this as a successor to the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML), one of our most spectacular projects, which was halted by the revolution, civil war, and other troubles that beset Ethiopia in the 1980s.

Back in Collegeville (continent number four!), we are processing the thousands of digital files coming in each month, archiving them in multiple formats in multiple locations, and setting about the slow but fruitful work of cataloging these precious witnesses to human imagination and culture. Our work abroad immediately captures the interest of those who learn about us, but it is the daily effort of the core staff at HMML that adds scholarly value to the manuscript photographs and makes it possible for others to use them. Our fieldwork in exotic places has garnered acclaim and funding, but the infrastructure that makes such work possible and ensures its long-term usefulness requires the support of generous friends. I hope you’ll help keep us busy!



Representing Minnesota’s 4th district, U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., joined HMML Board Chair, Tom Joyce, me and HMML friends at a February celebration of our IMLS award. Congresswoman McCollum nominated HMML for the IMLS National Medal of Honor.

Sincerely,

Columba Stewart, OSB

Columba Stewart, OSB
Executive Director

Introduction to Colophons

By Matthew Z. Heintzelman

Very so often in modern German theater an actor will step out of his or her role and comment directly to the audience about the events of the play or even on the actions of the characters. The playwright Bertolt Brecht encouraged this deliberate breaking through of the illusion of the “fourth wall” of the stage so that the audience would react critically or analytically to characters and events. By distancing him/herself from the story or characters, the actor creates a distance or alienation (*Verfremdungseffekt*). While the analogy is not complete, a rather similar

by re-presenting his/her words. The colophon provides the opportunity for the scribe/printer to remove this mask and speak directly to the reader. Today, of course, we rely on title pages, tables of contents, introductions, and many other resources in a book to orient us as readers.

Along with information about the title, author, place of copying, name of the scribe, or other pertinent information about the contents of the books, the colophon will sometimes include little comments from the scribe as well, such as curses on those who might steal the book, or thanks to God for having (finally) finished such a large task.



Colophon from Kacmarcik Ms. 34, a liturgical manuscript dated 1594, showing who copied the text, as well as when and where, and the name of the owner. From the Arca Artium Rare Book Collection, Saint John's University (Collegeville, Minnesota).

The colophon on Kacmarcik Ms. 34 tells us that the book belongs to Simon Joanninus, the rector of the parish church of Saint Liberata, and was intended for the use of this church. Beyond that, the scribe has included his name (Joseph Signus) and that he copied it in 1594 in “Pistorii” (or Pistoia, Italy). Most likely, the church of Saint Liberata was also located in Pistoia. So, not until the end of the book—when Joseph strips away his mask—do we know who copied the book, or when or where, or even for whom the book was intended. With these clues, historians can attempt to learn more about this church, its congregation, or even its rectors.

situation presents itself through the colophons in manuscripts and early printed books. The colophon offers the scribe or printer the opportunity to step into the light by identifying to a greater or lesser degree the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the book or manuscript.

A printed book from 1485 has a half-title page that only indicates that it is part two of the “German Passional” (or collection of saints’ lives). On the very last page, in very large type, the printer states:

In this sense, a manuscript or printed book “pretends” to speak directly for the author. That is to say, the author’s words are presented directly to the reader as coming straight from the thoughts of the author. And yet, manuscripts from before the early modern period are only very rarely preserved in the author’s own hand. So, in a sense the scribe or printer “acts” as the author

“Here ends the second part of the German Passional of the lives of the saints through the whole year. Combined with pertinent stories in the year of our Lord MCCCCLXXXV (1485) on the eve of all saints (i.e., Halloween). And Ludwig van Renchen, a citizen of Cologne, has printed this for the glory of God.”

So why not just look at the title page to learn about all this stuff in the colophon? Well, until the early 16th century, manuscripts and printed books generally had no title pages, or at best only very brief ones with abridged titles. But the early history of the title page is perhaps a topic best left for another day . . .

Colophons: Where Scribes Speak

By Adam C. McCollum

The word colophon is of Greek origin, in which (classical) language it means “summit, peak” and figuratively “the finishing touch.” The Oxford English Dictionary gives a passage from 1774 as the earliest use of the word in English with the meaning of relevance here. It still serves as a convenient technical term but the word subscription (from Latin) was also used with this meaning in English as far back as the mid-15th century.

Early examples of colophons survive not only from communities we may typically think of in relation to manuscripts, such as Greek and Latin, but also earlier in Egyptian and in Akkadian (Assyrian and Babylonian), both of which cases bear remarkable witness to the stability of form and contents of colophons across centuries, languages, and cultures. The scribes in these colophons, as their successors, are grateful for divine help, and they give a little information as to the circumstances of their having copied the texts. They mention their names, patronage and ownership of the copies they made, fidelity to the copies on which their own were based, and they warn with divine curses potential thieves and others who might disturb the book.

A simple example of a Greek colophon is,

“The end, with God’s help. Thanks to God who brings good things to completion.”

Elaborations on this theme of completion give the scribes opportunity to wax poetic: “As strangers rejoice to see their homeland, so also do writers the end of a book.” A famous variation is one in which the scribe is likened to a sailor, and it goes something like, “As a sailor rejoices when his ship reaches the harbor, so too does the scribe at the last line he writes.” We find this formula in, besides Greek manuscripts, Syriac and Arabic, at least, and scholars have noted some of the great variety manifested in these lines in different manuscripts, but more continue to be found. From



The beginning of a colophon from a 16th-century female scribe named Maryam. The manuscript, Mor Gabriel 118, contains a Gospel lectionary in Arabic.

HMML’s collections, for example, come some notable expansions on the basic form: “The sailor rejoices when his ship, loaded with great wealth, reaches the harbor, but a scribe rejoices even more than him at the last line he writes, for he sees his pages full of spiritual wealth,” and in another manuscript, “As the sailor rejoices that his ship has reached the harbor, so the scribe rejoices at the last line he writes. As the worker rejoices at the furrow of his land as it is plowed, there is rest for the scribe in the line of his right hand as it works.”

Continued on page 5

While a (pre-Christian) Egyptian scribe referred to himself as “with pure hands,” Christian scribes in Greek, Coptic, Syriac, and other languages would rarely or never do this. They often went to extreme, colorful, and verbose lengths to assert their humility, loathsomeness, and immorality. Scribes across these languages apply to themselves words like “sinner,” “lowest,” “wretch,” “humble,” and “unclean.” One particularly remarkable such self-deprecation in Syriac comes from the hand of a scribe named Abraham bar Behnam:

“the sinful slave, weakest of all, perishing, stupid, unclean, an idiot, boor, and fool, a beast and an animal, adulterer and fornicator, salacious and lascivious.”

An Arabic scribe said of himself, “in name a monk and priest, in deed more evil than the devil.” Scribes often refer to their “feeble,” “deformed,” or “mixed-up” writing, and they apologize for errors the reader may observe. Scribes sometimes claim not really to be scribes and that they wrote “for lack of scribes,” and in any case “no one is perfect but God.” They stress that their names are unworthy to be recorded in holy books, but “for the prayers of the readers” they commonly give their names anyway!

Scribes knew well that their activity was bequeathing to the world something of lasting importance, indeed something that would likely outlast them. This recognition gave rise to a scribal formula first, it seems, in Coptic, but it spread also to Greek, and in Arabic both Muslim and Christian scribes would use it. The simple form is,

“My hand will decay in the dust, but my writing will last in the book.”

As scribes clearly thought about the future of the books they made, it is hardly surprising that they wanted them kept safe and with their proper owners. Not a few colophons, as well as notes from later owners, contain dire threats of eternal anathema. “Whoever borrows this book,” one manuscript has, “whether to read it or to copy or transcribe from it, or for any other reason at all, and does not return it to its owner in its original condition, or if it happens that he tears out a leaf or a quire, or hides it, let his

portion be with Judas Iscariot, and let him know that he will have to give an answer for it at the day of judgement!” There are innumerable variations on these imprecatory lines. Book thieves, some of these notes tell us, will inherit “the rope of Judas.” From a Gəʿəz manuscript comes the simple but authoritative warning,

“Whoever steals or erases this book, may he be cursed in the authority of Peter and Paul!”

In addition to these more entertaining features of colophons, scribes commonly also supply immensely valuable information as to the date and place of the copy. This information is sometimes very specific, as when the scribe gives not only the year, month, and day that the copy was completed, but even the hour of the day. The place of completion, too, is occasionally described very exactly. An 18th-century manuscript from Mardin, Turkey, for example, was copied,

“in the holy Church of Mar Sargis and Mar Bacchus, victorious martyrs, which is in the blessed village of Ḥbāb, in a high cell with a large window that looks out over the south.”

Scribes used various systems of dating, including those of the Age of the World, the Greeks (usually called “the perfidious Greeks”), the Martyrs, the Hijra, and AD, and occasionally more than one system is given. Scribes sometimes report not only the completion date of the copy, but also the starting date, and with this information one can quickly divine how long it took a scribe to copy the manuscript. When we know enough about an individual scribe, as with the prolific 20th-century scribe and scholar Mor Julius Çiçek, we can determine how old the scribe was when he copied a given manuscript. Çiçek, for example, completed a short manuscript at the end of 1955 when he was only 13, but he finished another the next year that is more than 400 pages! Since the beginning and end of manuscripts are the most susceptible to loss, it is all too common that a scribe’s colophonic witness is missing, and we are thus deprived of clear evidence about the manuscript.

Scribes use colophons, too, as a place to mention translators, teachers, and any who may have helped—

directly or indirectly—with producing the manuscript. One scribe in a colophon from 1789 names his daughter,

“because she labored much with me on the elegance of the paper and the preparation of the ink, and she assisted me. She was twelve years old.”

With this mention of assistance, scribes add requests that readers pray for others, in addition to the scribe himself. At the end of a Gəʿəz book, for example, we find,

“May God write in his kingdom when he comes again the names of the one who wrote the book, the one who had it written, the one who read it, and the one who translated it.”

Finally, colophons preserve precious evidence of historical detail. While we now and then find long colophons in Syriac and Arabic with particulars wholly unrelated to the manuscript itself and the copying of it, it is especially in Armenian colophons that

there is a witness to certain historical matters that for some reason were on the scribe’s mind. This is so much the case that Armenian scholars have published a great number of such colophons, a selection of which have been translated into English. And for their singular nature, colophons are all the more important. While for most texts there are several copies, colophons are almost always unique, and thus record the particulars about a single act of manuscript production, and sometimes even other matters, and this information is rarely (but sometimes) copied again.

It will have been seen that colophons serve the role that title pages, acknowledgements, and prefaces have in modern books. Even in early printed books, though, this same method was followed: the 1488 Florentine edition of Homer has, for example, (in Greek) “The printing of all of Homer’s poetry has reached its end with God’s help in Florence . . .” Catalogers and bibliographers cannot thus help but be infinitely grateful for these places at the end of their manuscripts (and printed books), where scribes (and printers) take advantage of their handed-down and privileged spot to speak freely, whether it is to share information about the circumstances of scribal activity, prayers, verbal demonstration of their vaunted humility, or seemingly unrelated history.

Learn More by Visiting the Authors’ Blogs



Matthew Z. Heintzelman

Curator of Austria/Germany Study Center | Cataloger of Rare Books

Matthew Heintzelman, PhD, is the Curator of the Austria/Germany Study Center and the Rare Book Cataloger for the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. His blog, *Books from the HMML Basement*, is dedicated to the special collections here at HMML. The collections hold over 10,000 rare printed books, along with several European, Ethiopian, and other manuscripts. The articles in this blog offer insights into these collections.

Visit Matthew Heintzelman’s blog, *Books from the HMML Basement*, at <http://booksfromthehmmlbasement.blogspot.com>.



Adam C. McCollum

Lead Cataloger of Eastern Christian Manuscripts

Adam McCollum, PhD, studied Semitic languages at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and is now leading the cataloging of the vast and growing collection of Eastern Christian manuscripts available at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. His blog, *hmmllorientalia*, concerns manuscripts and the languages, literature, scholarship, and history of Christian culture in the Middle East.

Visit Adam McCollum’s blog, *hmmllorientalia*, at <http://hmmllorientalia.wordpress.com>.

Where We're Working

The Old Notarial Archives, Valletta, Malta

By Theresa M. Vann



Before the modern period, notaries were important men. At a time when few people were literate, notaries were the official record keepers for the community. They drew up wills, recorded testimony, made inventories, and drafted contracts. By law, they preserved copies of all their transactions for an indefinite period of time and made them available upon request, leaving an invaluable historical source for the daily lives of ordinary people.

The oldest notarial registers on Malta date back to the 15th century, before the arrival of the Knights on the island in 1530. Grand Master Lascaris ordered the creation of a Notarial Archive for Malta in 1640. In 1850, the entire Notarial Archive was housed in Valletta in the former Auberge d'Italie, located on Merchants' Street.

Malta underwent extensive aerial bombardment during the Second World War. In August 1939, anticipating Italian bombing raids, the Notary to Government moved all the original

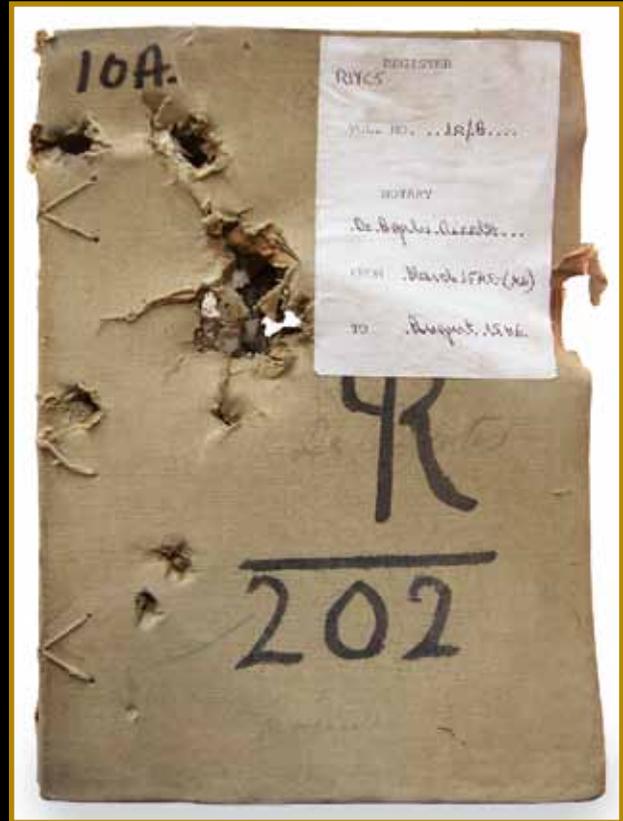
Notarial Register of Placido Abela, vol. 1, 1557-1558. City of origin: Birgu (Vittoriosa). Placido Abela was a public notary in Birgu between 1557 and 1585. Three volumes of his registers survive; this one, dated 1557, is the oldest.

At that time Valletta had not been built and Birgu was the seat of government of the Knights of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. In the years 1557-1558 Abela recorded close to 300 transactions in his register, mostly wills, contracts, and the resolution of disputes. The first transaction, dated October 2, 1557, records the testimony of Grace Gaulitana, widow of Roderic Calleya. She had married him in Constantinople, where they had been enslaved, and lived as his wife in Malta after they were redeemed. Roderic died without a will, and his father disputed Grace's rights to her household goods and furniture. Visit Theresa Vann's blog, Melitensia, to find out the outcome of this trial.

registers from the top floor of the Auberge d'Italie into its basement and into the basement of a nearby house. Despite these precautions, the entire collection was severely damaged, and parts of it were destroyed. The Auberge was bombed twice in April 1942. One of the bombs bounced into the basement, where it exploded among the clean copies of the notarial registers. The second bomb destroyed part of the roof, damaging the Bastardella, which were the notary's rough copies.

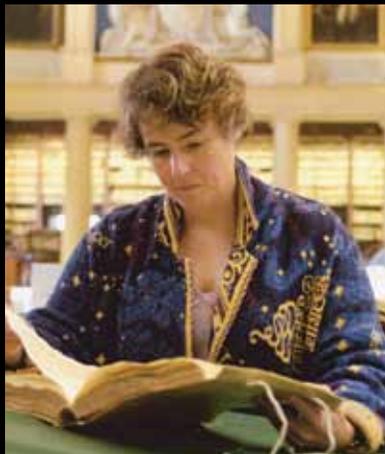
Between April 1942 and December 1945, the surviving registers were salvaged and transferred to 24 Saint Christopher Street. At some point, the more modern, or "current" notarial registers were stored at the Main Office of the Notary to Government, located at 2/3 Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street. The "historical" notarial records remained in 24 Saint Christopher Street. The building lacked basic amenities and was closed to outsiders. Maltese scholars and researchers formed the Notarial Archives Council to work for better access to the archives.

In November 2009, a new Notary to Government, Dr. Cora Vella, assigned more resources to the Saint Christopher Street location. Government workers and volunteers began cleaning, organizing, sorting, and listing the thousands of registers. Many still bore the marks of shrapnel damage from the bombings during the Second World War. With the help of a grant from the Laura Jane Musser foundation, and the support of Dr. Vella and the Notarial Archives Council, the Malta Study



Valletta, Notarial Archives of Malta, Register 202, showing shrapnel damage from World War II.

Center of HMML began a pilot project in March 2010 to solve the technical problems of digitizing the registers. After the successful completion of the pilot project in 2011, HMML, the Notary to Government, and the Notarial Archives Council signed an agreement to digitize the 16th-century notarial registers.



Learn More About Placido Abela and his Work at Theresa Vann's Blog

Theresa M. Vann
Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center

Since 1995, Theresa Vann, PhD, has been the Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center at HMML. She also teaches medieval history at Saint John's University. Vann has made many visits to Malta. She is also keenly interested in all aspects of Hospitaller Mediterranean history, including the crusades, the island of Rhodes, and piracy.

Visit Theresa Vann's blog, *Melitensia*, at <http://melitensia.blogspot.com>.

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library *Awarded National Medal of Honor*

 Last fall HMML was awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The National Medal is the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums and is sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal agency.

HMML was one of five libraries and five museums chosen to receive this annual award. Medal winners are selected from nationwide nominations for institutions that demonstrate innovative approaches to public service, outstanding community outreach, and advancement of global cultural understanding. U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) nominated HMML for the award.

“The work of HMML is inspiring, vitally important, and deserves recognition for excellence. The National Medal is an honor that places HMML among America's preeminent libraries and highlights its commitment to preserve the world's most endangered manuscripts. HMML's executive director, Father Columba Stewart, OSB, and the entire HMML team deserve congratulations for earning this award. They have my deep appreciation for their tireless efforts to ensure the world has access to these sacred texts for generations to come,” said Representative McCollum. The congresswoman represents Minnesota's 4th district, which includes Minneapolis and St. Paul as well as Ramsey County, northern Dakota County, and western Washington County.

“We are deeply gratified to receive this honor,” said Father Columba, “As a ‘library of libraries’ HMML has formed partnerships with over 480 libraries and archives, and has photographed more than 120,000 manuscripts in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and India. We partner with scholars,

librarians, teachers, religious leaders, and government officials around the world to ensure that written documents from endangered cultures will be digitally preserved, shared with scholars, and studied to reveal their significance for everyone's better understanding of the world in which we live.”

“Congratulations to the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. The work you have done is an inspiration to libraries and museums throughout the nation,” said Susan Hildreth, IMLS Director. “With innovation, creativity, and a great deal of heart you have achieved an outstanding level of public service.”



Cataloger and Director of HMML's Ethiopian Study Center Dr. Getatchew Haile (seated) accepted the National Medal award on HMML's behalf. Standing from left to right: HMML executive director Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB, NPR Senior News Analyst Cokie Roberts, HMML Board Chair Tom Joyce, and Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services Susan Hildreth.

The 2011 award-winning libraries and museums were honored at a Washington, DC, ceremony on December 5, 2011. Journalist Cokie Roberts presided over the ceremony and conferred the awards.

Malta Study Center Acquires Rare Incunable: *Strassburg edition of d'Aubusson's letter to Holy Roman Emperor*

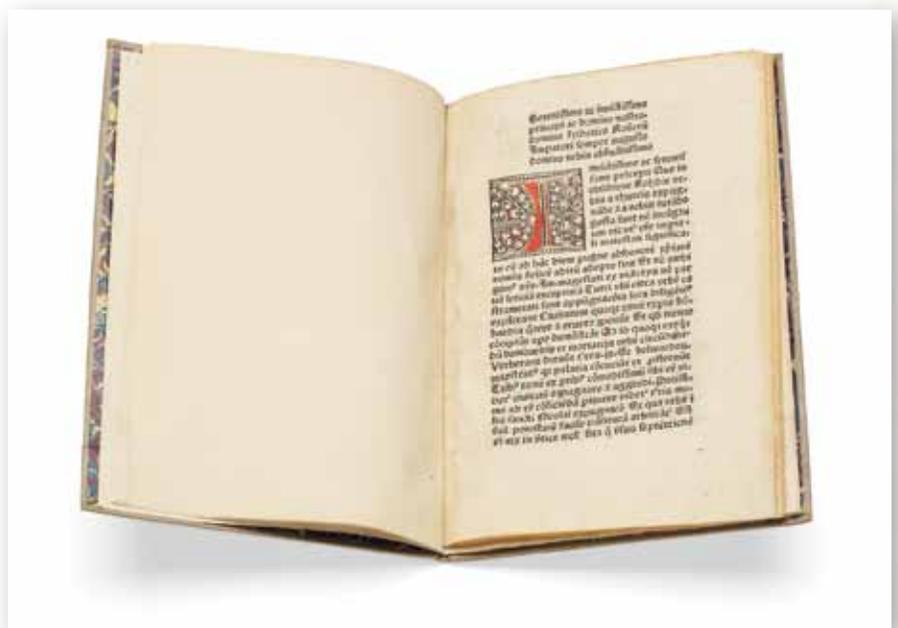
On September 13, 1480, Pierre d'Aubusson, Grand Master of the Sovereign Military Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, wrote a letter to Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor, reporting the outcome of the Ottoman siege of Rhodes. The army of Sultan Mehmet II had surrounded the city with guns and bombards on May 23, 1480. D'Aubusson had expected the attack, and he personally led the defense of the city for the next 88 days. Christian Europe celebrated the successful defense of Rhodes, and the new art of printing fed the public's desire for news about the event.

The Grand Master's letter to the Emperor was one of three eye-witness Latin accounts published in 1480 (one of the accounts, the longest, was written by d'Aubusson's own vice-chancellor, Guillaume Caoursin). Europeans were fascinated by the details of the siege, the heroism of the defenders, and the horrors of the Ottoman attack. The accounts by d'Aubusson and Caoursin were reprinted many times in different cities, testifying to the popularity of their works. Four German printers, in Mainz, Nuremberg, Strassburg, and Cologne published d'Aubusson's letter in 1480 in separate editions, of which 18 copies survive today.

Books printed before 1501, called incunables, are increasingly rare. Although they are not technically manuscripts, they share many characteristics with them. For example, only one copy of a text may survive, or there are considerable differences between print runs of books that survive in multiple copies. The study of incunables tells us as much about the readers as about the texts themselves.

The Malta Study Center recently acquired one of those copies, the Strassburg edition of d'Aubusson's letter to the Holy Roman Emperor. It joins the Center's copy of Guillaume Caoursin's *Description of the Siege of Rhodes*, which it acquired some years ago. The two incunables are important witnesses to the realities of warfare and conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean. Theresa M. Vann, the Joseph S. Micallef Curator of the Malta Study Center, has been preparing an edition of these works for publication.

This important acquisition was made possible through the support of the Cherbec Advancement Fund and Friends of the Malta Study Center.



First page of Pierre d'Aubusson, De obsidione urbis Rhodiae (On the Siege of the City of Rhodes). (Strassburg, 1480).

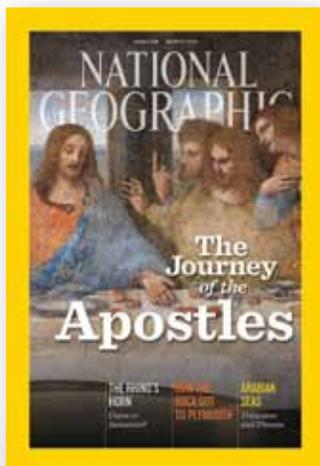
HMML Launches the Ethiopian Manuscript Digital Archive

HMML is pleased to announce the launch of the Ethiopian Manuscript Digital Archive (EMDA), the 21st-century successor to the historic Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML). HMML executive director Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB, finalized the details of the project during a visit to Ethiopia in January, and an agreement has now been signed with representatives of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. First priority will be the manuscripts held at the Patriarchate in Addis Ababa and the hundreds of manuscripts held by the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem. Work will then spread to churches around Addis Ababa and to monasteries and churches in other regions. The EMML project microfilmed almost 9,000 manuscripts, often in very difficult conditions. The scope for EMDA is just as vast, as Ethiopia has one of the world's richest and least-explored manuscript cultures. The announcement of the EMDA agreement was made at a conference on "Global Ethiopia" held at Saint John's University on March 17, 2012. At the conference, HMML staff Columba Stewart, Adam McCollum, and Getatchew Haile spoke on aspects of Ethiopian manuscript culture to an audience of students from the local area, faculty, and staff. Further news on EMDA will appear in future issues of *Illuminations*.

Ambassador Robert Shafer Hosts HMML Presentation at the Mission of the Permanent Observer of the Order of Malta

Ambassador Robert L. Shafer, KM, and his wife, Ellen Shafer, DM, hosted a soirée at the Mission of the Permanent Observer of the Order of Malta at the United Nations in New York City on February 8, 2012. Members of the Order of Malta who were present included Ms. Nicky Benz Carpenter, DM, and Frà Elie de Comminges, KJ.

The evening included two slide presentations featuring the work of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML). HMML executive director, Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB, presented stories and images that chronicled how HMML is continuing the Benedictine legacy of preserving endangered ancient Christian manuscripts using modern technologies. The curator of HMML's Malta Study Center, Theresa Vann, presented images from HMML's preservation studios at the Notarial Archives, the National Archives of Malta, and the Priory of Rome.



HMML Referenced in March 2012 Issue of *National Geographic*

National Geographic magazine's March 2012 cover story, "In the Footsteps of the Apostles," mentions HMML's preservation work in Kerala, India, and offers insights from HMML's executive director, Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB. Last year, Fr. Columba traveled with the author of the article and introduced him to HMML's preservation partners in India. Visit HMML's website at www.hmml.org to find a link to the story.

The *Nachlass* of William Macomber (1921-2008) Donated to HMML

By Adam C. McCollum

From the perspective of an interest in eastern Christianity, the foundational name at HMML is that of William Macomber, a name well known to scholars of eastern Christianity thanks to his numerous manuscript catalogs and articles. In November 2011, his family donated several boxes of his papers and other belongings to HMML, where Dr. Macomber had served as cataloger of oriental manuscripts beginning in 1974. The donation included cataloging notes, article drafts and proofs, study notes, copies of manuscripts and research materials, offprints, project drafts, and more.

Macomber (July 27, 1921–December 6, 2008) was born in Duxbury, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard with an AB in comparative philology and classics in 1942, after which he was a lieutenant in the US Navy (Pacific theater). He later went on to earn an MA from Boston College, a licentiate from the Gregorian University (Rome), a licentiate from the Oriental Institute (Rome), and a doctorate from the same place (1964). He taught English and mathematics at Baghdad College during 1951 and 1952 and theology and philosophy at Al-Hikma University, Baghdad, where he was also head of the theology department from 1962 to 1964. He was prefect of studies at St. Peter's Seminary in Baghdad from 1965 to 1968 and *extraordinarius* professor of oriental liturgy at the Oriental Institute in Rome from 1967 to 1974, when he came to HMML and worked mostly on the then new Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (EMML). He had been a Jesuit priest, but left the order and married in 1976. He was later the cataloger for several microfilming projects by Brigham Young University (BYU) in the 1980s.

As mentioned above, Macomber is especially known for his catalogs. These range from brief handlists to fuller descriptions and cover (at least) Gəʿəz, Arabic, Syriac, and Coptic manuscripts. Macomber was the first cataloger for the EMML project mentioned above. Getatchew Haile, who fondly refers to Macomber as his mentor, later joined him in this work on the EMML collection and continued in this task after Macomber's retirement. These catalogs, now ten in number (with the 11th soon to be published), were

prepared by Macomber alone (vols. 1-3), by Macomber and Haile (vols. 5-7), and by Haile alone (vols. 4, 8-10). While a bare form of this data is available through OLIVER, the full catalogs, much more detailed, are a treat to study. Macomber himself gave reports and announcements about the EMML project in journal articles and at conferences, and the catalogs were reviewed as they appeared. Macomber's other cataloging for various collections and languages is spread over journal articles and books, some of which



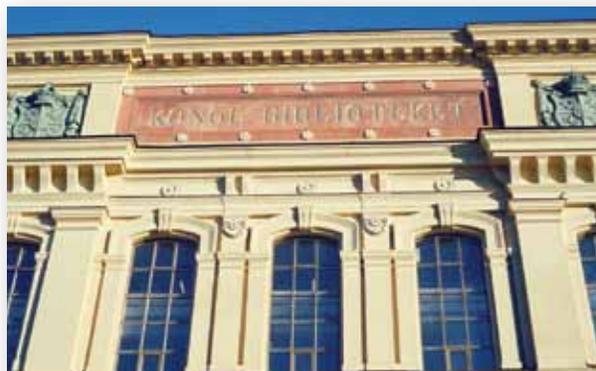
Macomber working at HMML in October 1974.

are at least a little difficult to find, but now we are fortunate to have easy access to many of them thanks to the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts (CPART) at BYU.

I am reminded almost every day of Macomber's work cataloging manuscripts and studying texts in Syriac, Arabic, and Gəʿəz, not least because I work at the very place he did. The study of *orientalia christiana* at HMML really begins with him, and it was a good beginning. With the collection of manuscripts in these languages available at HMML much larger and more varied than when he was active here, his legacy continues to inspire.

Resuming Work in Sweden

In the late 1990s, HMML embarked on a new direction in microfilming medieval manuscripts when it signed an agreement with the Royal Library (also called the National Library) of Sweden. Work began shortly before the new millennium and progressed smoothly until about 2003, when several staff changes at both libraries (including the retirement of the HMML field directors) left a gap in the process for microfilming. With nearly 600 manuscripts (of an estimated 1,000 to 1,100) completed, the project in Stockholm has held hopes of resurrection for the past nine years. In recent months representatives of the digitization lab at the Royal Library and HMML have been discussing plans to resurrect the project. One of the great stumbling blocks to the original project was the need to create catalog descriptions before photography, so that an inventory card could be filmed along with the manuscript. With the turn to digital photography, the cataloging can now be accomplished after the digital files are sent to HMML. We hope in the next few months to begin photography again, and with the aid of photocopies and PDF files of existing cataloging information, the HMML staff will undertake fuller cataloging descriptions in Collegetown, not Stockholm. Stay tuned for more developments in the coming months!



The Royal Library (Kongl. Biblioteket) in Stockholm, Sweden, home to more than 1,000 medieval manuscripts in several languages.

Save the Date! 2012 Millennium Club Event

“The Archimedes Codex: Revealing the Secrets of the World’s Greatest Palimpsest”

September 20, 2012 • 6:00-9:00 PM

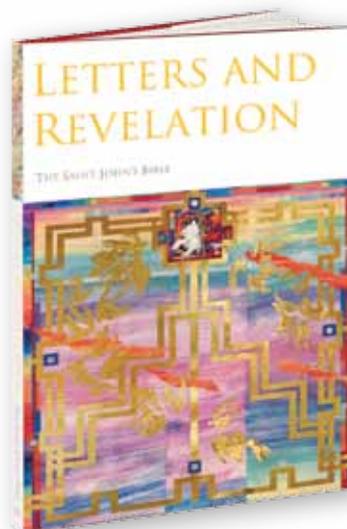
Weisman Art Museum
333 East River Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55455



Presented by William Noel, PhD, (pictured) Curator of Manuscripts and Rare Books and Director of the Archimedes Palimpsest Project. www.archimedespalimpsest.org

HMML Millennium Club members annually contribute \$1,000 or more to HMML. Members are invited to special events and lectures, and have opportunities to participate in international travels with other Millennium Club members led by HMML executive director, Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB.

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The Saint John's Bible and Interpreting the *Book of Revelation*

By Fr. Michael Patella, OSB

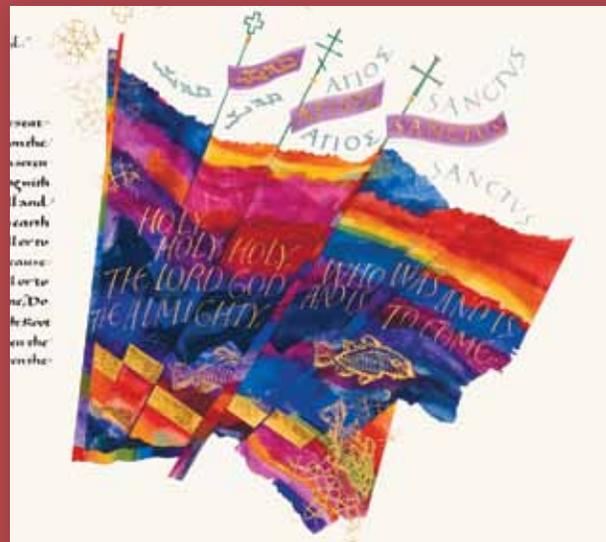
Ratclysmic fires, ruthless wars, devastating earthquakes, great floods, and cosmic destruction. Usually, these are the images that come to mind whenever we hear the title, *Book of Revelation*. Even people who are unfamiliar with the Bible know that when it comes to this work, much of it is bad news. We are not helped in this assessment by the media and popular culture, either. The book's fantastic descriptions and vivid accounts of happenings both on earth and in the heavens supply a bounty of material for any number of screenplays. We would do ourselves a tremendous disservice, however, if we were to let these Hollywood notions have full sway in interpreting this marvelous writing.

What makes the *Book of Revelation* such fantastic reading is that it is dealing with so many issues simultaneously. It addresses questions on the human, theological, and historical planes and interweaves them into an account that paints the mystery of Christian faith, if not in sharp and clear lines then certainly in ones profoundly deep and sacred.

The great mystery evoked in *Revelation* is the how and why of our salvation. The narrative takes place at the apogee of the Roman Empire and is written by a man called John whom Rome exiles to the lonely island of Patmos. According to the text, Christ commands John through an angel to record what he sees in a vision (Rev 1:1-2). The language is highly symbolic and corresponds not only to other works of the Bible, but also to the geopolitical circumstances of that time. Furthermore, John of Patmos speaks on behalf of those persecuted by Rome in coded language so that should the authorities read any of the writings, they will not have reason to suspect treason on the part of the Christian community. It is no wonder that we today have such a difficult time making sense of this last piece of the New Testament.

The *Book of Revelation* figures prominently in *The Saint John's Bible*; nearly every page of this ancient text has a brilliant illumination associated with it. In the first three chapters, John writes letters to seven churches within the vicinity of the great city

of Ephesus. He lists their good and bad points, and does not mince any words. Next, John is shown the heavenly throne and court of God, where present are 24 elders plus four living creatures. The number, 24, is significant, for it is the doubled amount of 12, and 12 recalls for the reader both the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 Apostles.



Heavenly Choir, Donald Jackson, 2011. The Saint John's Bible, Order of Saint Benedict, Collegeville, MN, USA.

The image seen here, connects the hymn in Revelation 4:8 with the letters to the churches in Revelation 1-3. *The Saint John's Bible* features that heavenly hymn on the banners, inscribed and fixed to the poles bearing the rainbow standards. It does so in a manner that underscores the depth and breadth of Christian Tradition. By rendering the refrain, "Holy, holy, holy" in three ancient languages, we can see these tongues in their respective alphabets, Syriac, Greek, and Latin; they are still used in liturgies today, and they cross many cultural divides.

This depiction is but one example of how *The Saint John's Bible* weaves Christian Tradition, art, theology, and contemporary response into a visual commentary of Scripture that inspires faith in the Word of God as we seek to build a better future for the world.

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