

MANUSCRIPTS ON MY MIND

No. 31 September 2020

Dear colleagues and manuscript lovers, Greetings from my new center of operations

The John Ward Happy Hour: Collaborative Transcribing in the Age of Corona
For seventeen consecutive weeks

Figure 2. Quantifying fuzels. Folger V.a.291, fol. 153v. Ward repeats this passage in Folger V.a.295, fol. 69r.

During the spring and summer, our group was composed of fourteen regulars, of whom nine showed up on average to each of thirty-four happy hours on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for seventeen consecutive

Projects

An Ambitious Campaign for the Restoration of Gold and Ivory Treasure Bindings from the Bibliothèque nationale de France

The Bibliothèque nationale de France preserves one of the most important collections of treasure bindings in the world, containing ivory plaques and gold metalwork. Around forty manuscripts—mainly from the Manuscripts Department of the Bibliothèque nationale, but also from the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal—illustrate the history of this luxurious bookbinding from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. Due to the ravages of time and history, such bindings have become extremely rare. They have come down to us in various conditions; some of them are in a bad state of conservation, whereas others are simply dirty or oxidised. In 2016 the Bibliothèque nationale initiated a programme of conservation study, restoration, and digitisation of these exceptional bindings. Eleven of them have already been restored, and nine will be restored in 2020. Several will then be exhibited in the new museum of the Bibliothèque nationale, which will open at the end of 2021. Furthermore, once the restoration process is co

Treasure Bindings, cont nued.

In 1789, the Royal Library bought the [Gospel Book of St Gall](#) (Lat n 9453) at the sale of the library of Charles of

Treasure Bindings, cont nued.

The cathedral treasury at Metz was not the only one thus singled out. The two [Gospel books of Saint-Sauveur](#) (Lat n 9456 and

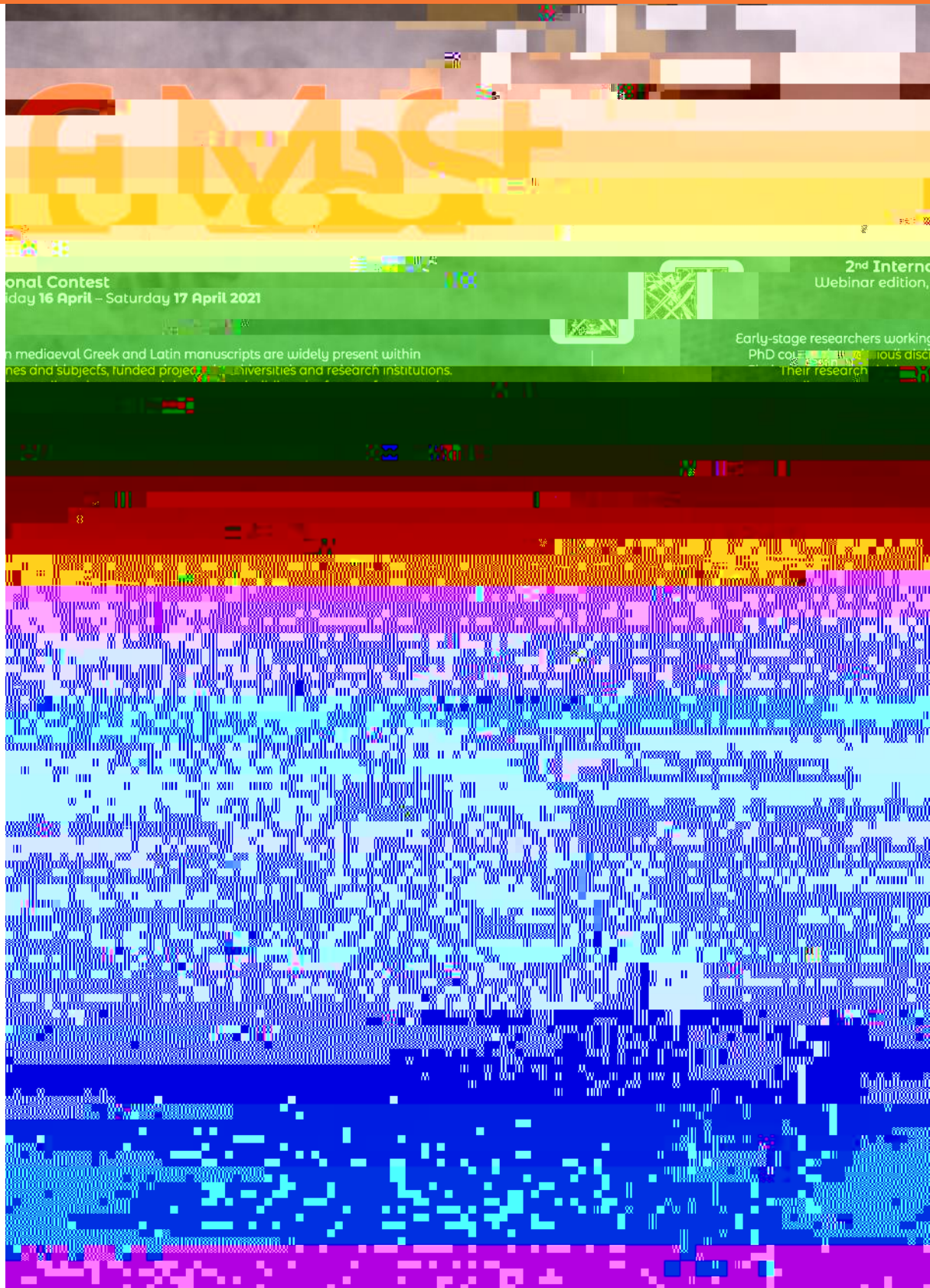
Nostalgia

You always remember your first manuscript

In the summer of 1995, I presented a paper at a biblical manuscripts conference held at Hampton Court, a castle in Herefordshire, UK. The last day of the conference all the speakers were invited to a medieval banquet in the castle, and I was pleasantly surprised to find myself sitting next to Father Leonard Boyle—yes, THE Father Leonard Boyle. I have to admit it made me quite nervous: he had been the plenary speaker at the conference, he was the Prefect of the Vatican Library, he was an amazing scholar—good grief, he was famous! What was I going to talk about over dinner to this great man?!

I needn't have worried. He was warm and charming, and quickly put me at ease. We talked easily and laughed a lot. He knew how to make conversation with a total stranger, something I was not skilled at. I remember thinking This priest is a better date than most dates I've had!

Marilena Maniaci has sent us this call for papers for the second edit on of their manuscript contest,





Scot Gwara, cont nued

Codices in the sale usually set led in around the reserve, or just below it in post-sale contracts. It's an impressive accomplishment in a COVID economy. A grand Italian paper copy of the *Summa* by Bartholomeus de Sancto Concordio hammered for £28k (lot 132), a strong price. Yet a similarly large copy of Aquinas on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (dated 1479) only achieved £10k, post-sale. The difference reflects the bindings (original and handsome, in the case of the *Summa*) and the con-

Antiquarian News

NEWS FROM

This Fall, *Les Enluminures* is proud to present the latest publication in our Satellite Series, titled *Go forth and learn: The Artist Joel ben Simeon and a Newly Discovered Hebrew Manuscript*.

Born in Germany, where he trained as an artist and scribe and from where he was probably expelled, Joel ben Simeon spent most of his itinerant career in the book arts in northern Italy. We perhaps know more about him—from his colophons and his signed works—than any other illuminator-scribe, Jewish or Christian, in the fifteenth century. He depicts himself as a traveler in one manuscript next to the words *Go forth and learn*, which we hope to accomplish here.

The discovery of a new manuscript with more than 300 drawings by his hand prompts a reassessment of his career at a time of great religious uncertainty, economic opportunity, and cultural exchange. The scholarly publication, written by Sandra Hindman and Sharon Liberman Mintz, will be accompanied by a series of digital events:

–an international [Round Table Webinar](#), co-sponsored by Fordham University, The Center for Jewish Studies, the Department of Art History and Music, and the Medieval Studies Program and *Les Enluminures* on Thursday October 22, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM (Eastern Time).

–a Podcast, hosted by Sandra Hindman and in conversation with Sharon Liberman Mintz.

–a Video and a *Turning the Pages* feature.

For further information, please contact us at info@lesenluminures.com

[on the web: Short](#)

More scholarship under COVID:



And last but not least: Creative Distractions

by Christine Jakobi-Mirwald

