



STEPHEN • BUTLER  
RARE BOOKS & MANUSCRIPTS

# A Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts



Autumn 2021

# Stephen Butler Rare Books & Manuscripts

+44 (0)7866 695476

+44 (0)1908 511625

email: [stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk](mailto:stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk)

web: [www.butlerrarebooks.co.uk](http://www.butlerrarebooks.co.uk)

To subscribe to our Catalogues, please visit [butlerrarebooks.co.uk](http://butlerrarebooks.co.uk) and register. Alternatively send us an email at [stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk](mailto:stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk)

We also have an extensive stock which is currently unlisted, but available for purchase. If you have specific 'wants' please let us know.

## Introduction

Our items are all guaranteed original and 'as described' with the additional comfort of knowing that we are members of the ABA / ILAB. This means that we adhere to a rigorous set of Guidelines and Practices in our dealing.

Additional photographs of any item are available on request.

Stephen Butler



## Acknowledgements

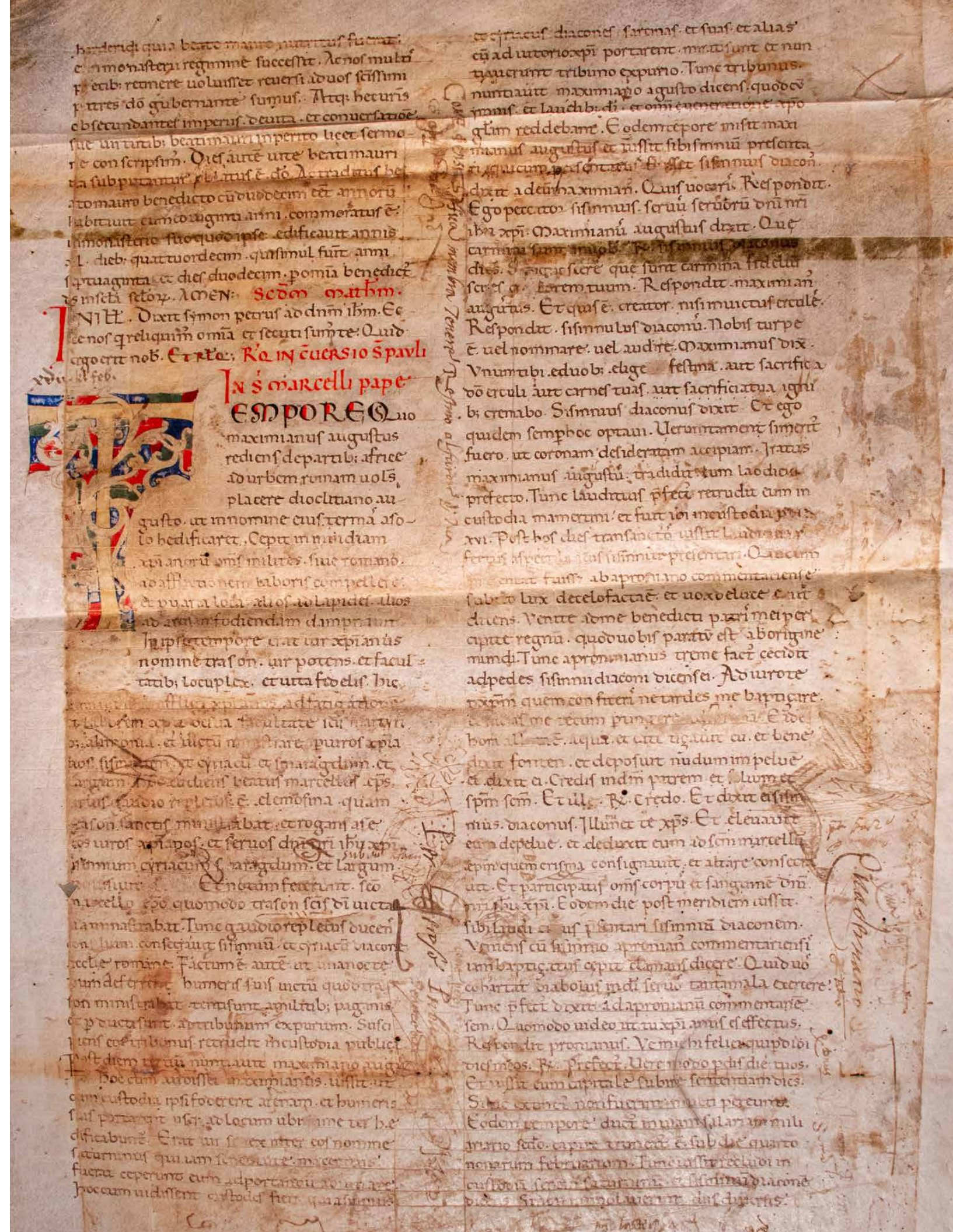
Several people have helped in the collation and research of this Catalogue:

Peter Kidd

Enzo Ferro, Bibliopathos

Dr Tim Bolton

Sam Fogg



## The Inspiration for Humanistic Script and Decoration

### 1. A 'White-Vine' initial on a vast leaf from a Passionary in Latin [Italy (Tuscany?), 12th century (2nd quarter?)]



Parchment, a vast single leaf, c. 475×360mm, preserving all four margins, blind-ruled for two columns of 59 lines, written in a fine Italian Romanesque bookhand, decorated with a large (12 lines high) initial drawn in ink, coloured with a yellow wash, engulfed in coiling white-vine foliage, against a parti-coloured ground of red, blue, and green; used as a book-cover and thus with typical stains, creases, etc., and several pen-trials by 17th-century Italian hands.

#### Provenance

i) The parent volume was apparently still in use in the 15th century, when the date “xvii kl. Feb.” (16 January) was added immediately before the reading for St Marcellus.

ii) Broken-up probably in the 16th century, and this leaf used as the cover of a bookbinding, apparently of a very tall, narrow, ledger-format volume, whose front

cover has a title written over an area of erasure: “1547 – 1548 bastardello ba(n)ci mei(?) Evangeliste” (a bastardello was a register kept by notaries to record deeds of different kinds in a single non-homogeneous series, hence the name).

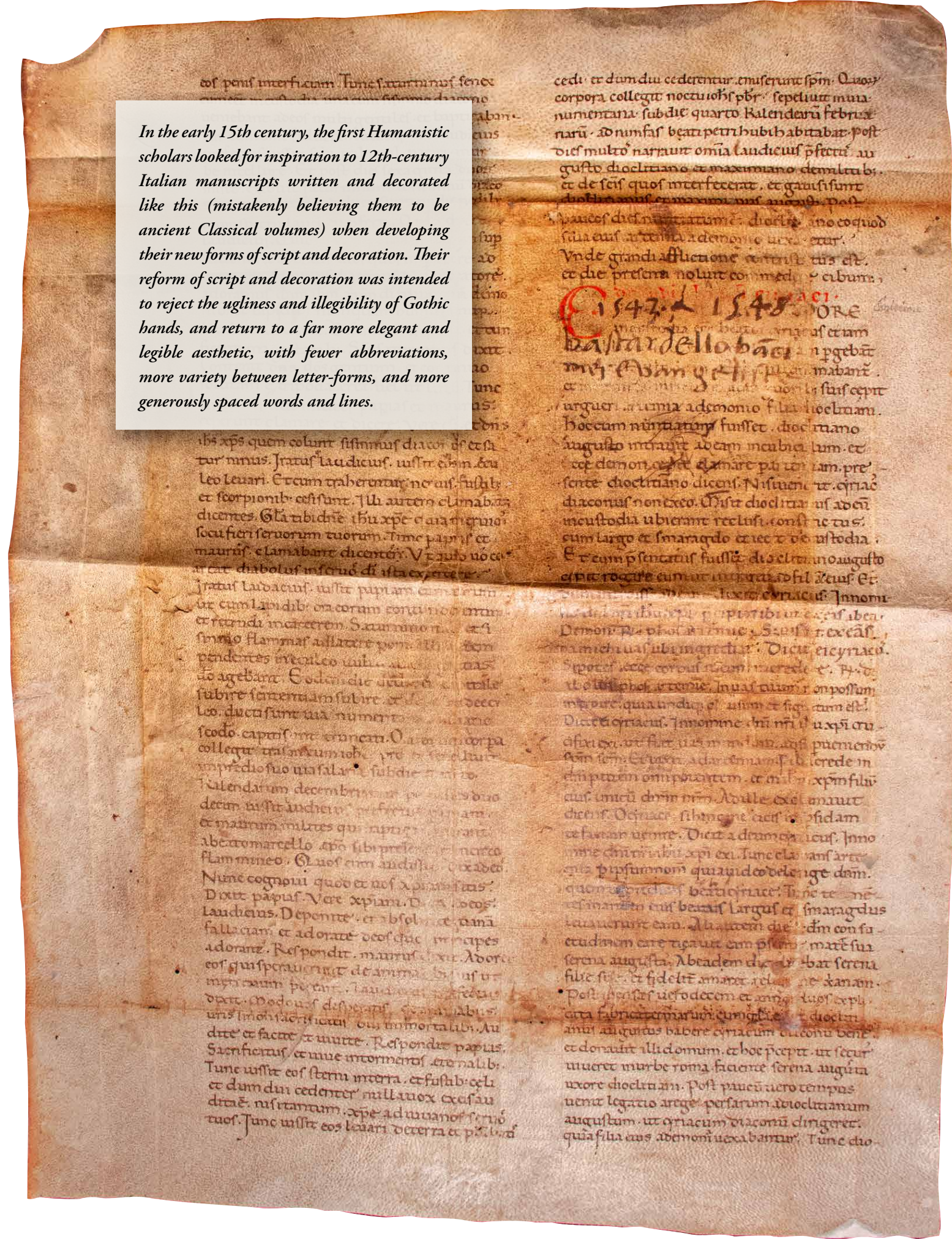
iii) Sold as part of Sotheby’s, 7 December 2010, lot 3 (illustrated in colour in the catalogue).

#### Text

The recto begins with the final paragraphs of the reading for the feast on 15 January of St Maurus, disciple of St Benedict (BHL, no. 5773), followed by the first few lines of a reading from the Gospel of Matthew, with a rubric indicating that the rest of it may be found in the feast on 25 January of the Conversion of St Paul (“Require in conversio sancti Pauli”). There follows a decorated initial ‘T’ introducing the reading for the feast on 16 January of the 4th-century Pope St Marcellus (“In sancti Marcelli pape. Tempore quo Maximianus Augustus rediens de partibus Africe ...”, (BHL, no. 5234/5, continuing on the verso with the (partly erased) start of the reading for St Cyriacus, “Et dum multo tempore in custodia esset beatus Cyriacus ...”; cf. BHL, no. 2057).

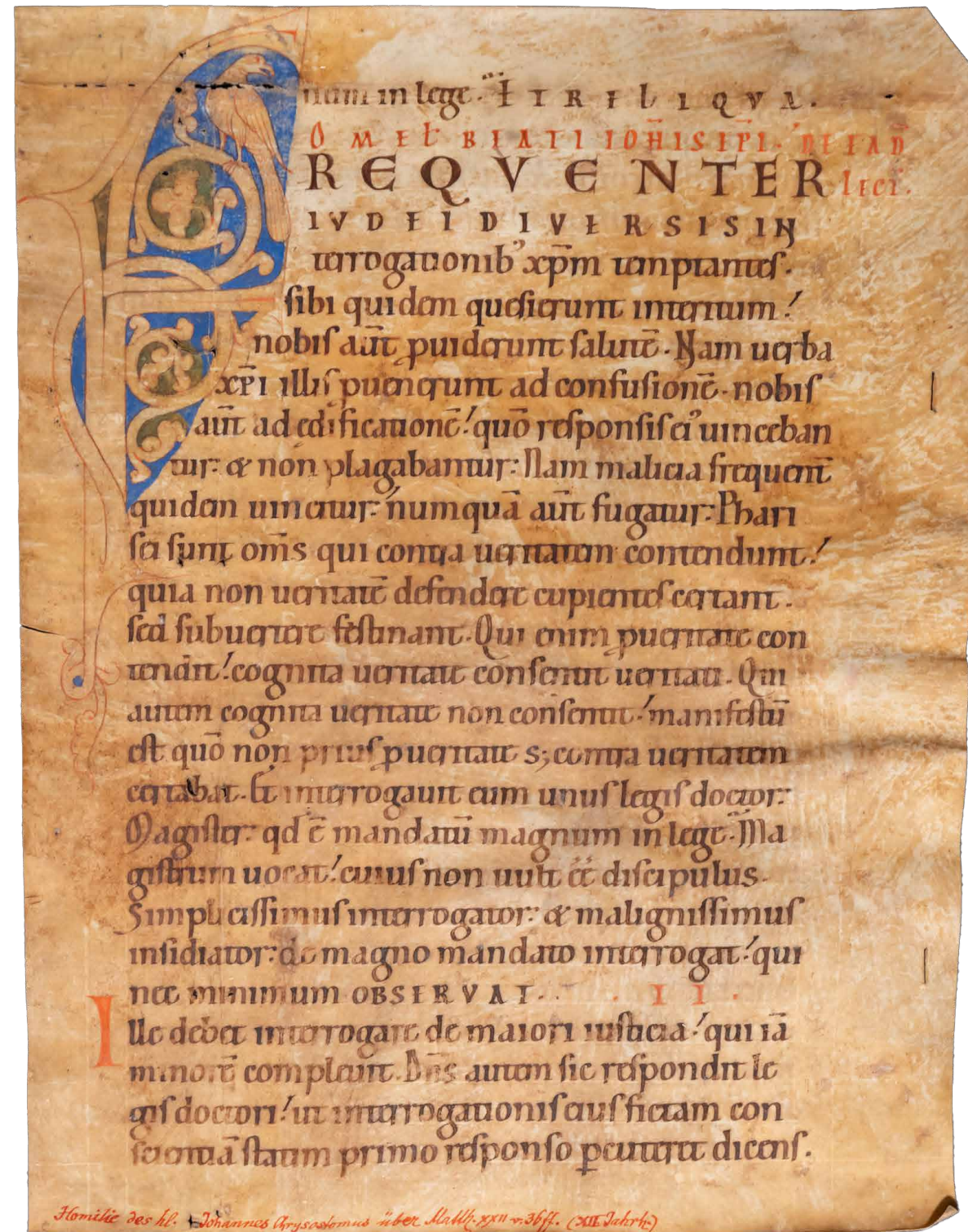
£5,000

*In the early 15th century, the first Humanistic scholars looked for inspiration to 12th-century Italian manuscripts written and decorated like this (mistakenly believing them to be ancient Classical volumes) when developing their new forms of script and decoration. Their reform of script and decoration was intended to reject the ugliness and illegibility of Gothic hands, and return to a far more elegant and legible aesthetic, with fewer abbreviations, more variety between letter-forms, and more generously spaced words and lines.*



## Very Fine and Important Twelfth-Century Salzburg Illumination and Script

### 2. Joseph with his Coat of Many Colours, and other initials on leaves from a Lectionary in Latin [Austria (Salzburg), 12th century, second half]



Parchment, 4 partial leaves, c.330×220–240mm, apparently all from a single manuscript, blind-ruled for 27 lines (c.275×175mm), very finely written in a bold round Romanesque bookhand; very finely decorated with human, bird, and foliate designs, pen-drawn in brown ink, or in red against a background of green and blue; the margins and a minimal amount of text cropped; recovered from use in bindings thus with typical stains, creases, and wear. In a modern clamshell case lettered "From the Carl von Frey Collection".

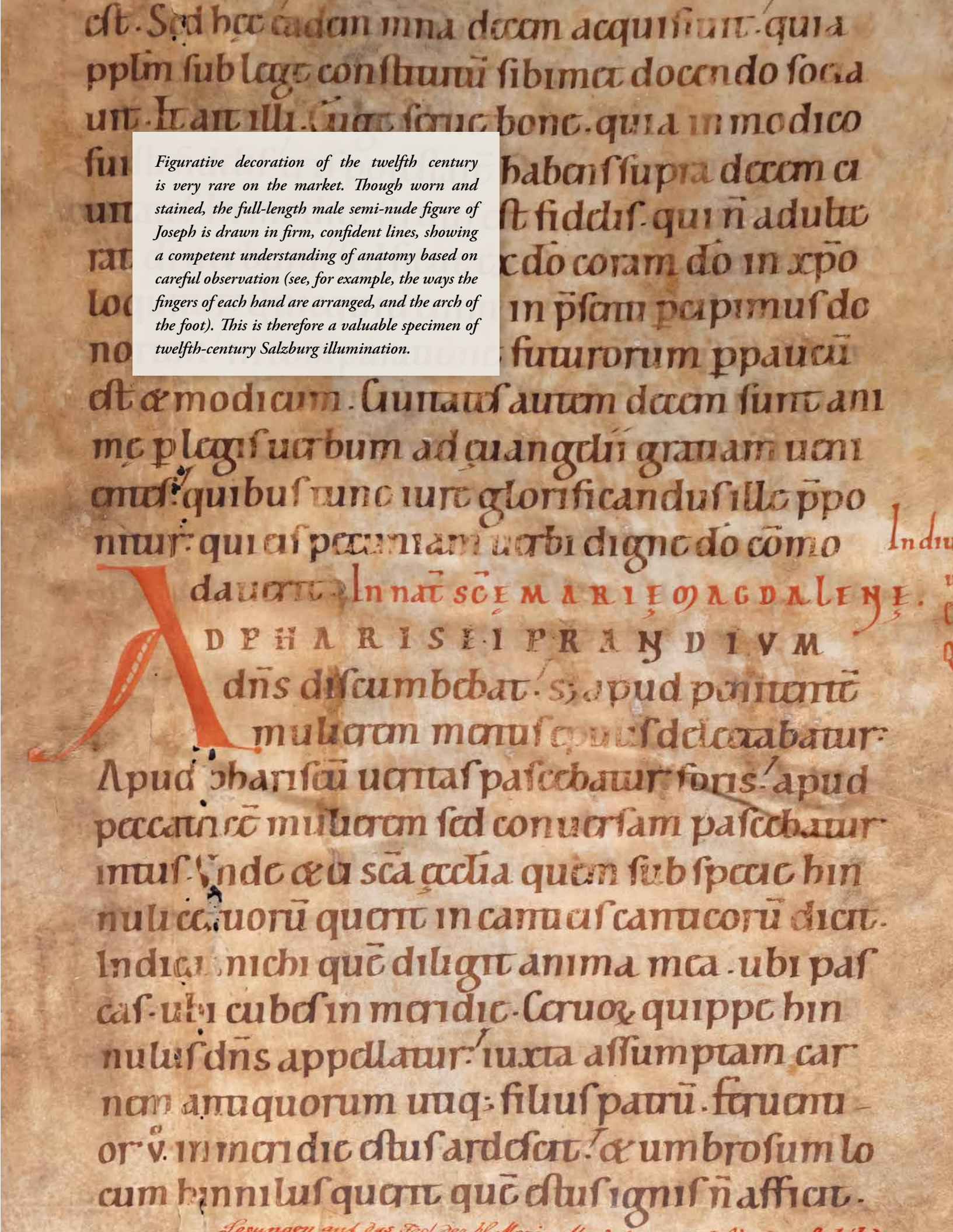
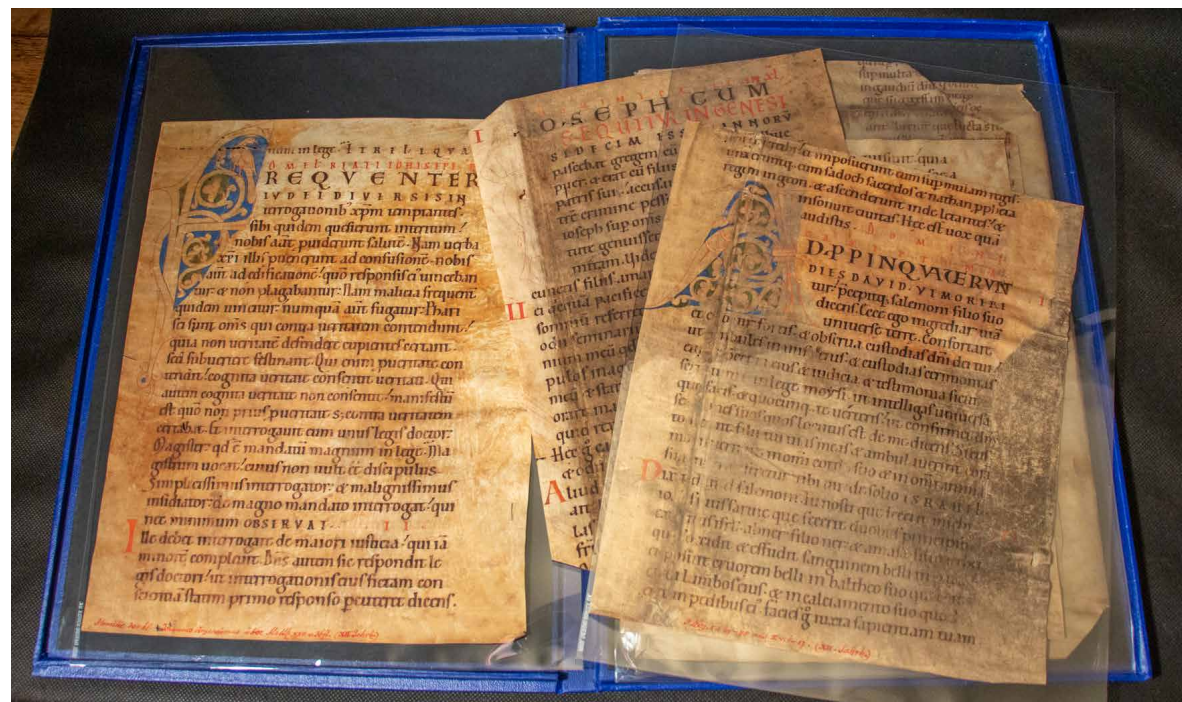
#### Provenance

- i) All these fragments doubtless come from the Romanesque library of a church in Salzburg, broken-up and used as binders' waste probably in the 16th century, and recovered in the 19th century probably after the secularisation of ecclesiastical properties
- ii) **Carl von Frey (1826–96)**, businessman, art lover, and landscape painter; acquired in Salzburg, and shown in 1893 to Willibald Hauthaler (1843–1922), medieval historian and, from 1901, Abbot of St Peter's, Salzburg, who wrote the neat identifications in red ink at the lower edge of each leaf.
- iii) Sold at Christie's, 23 November 2010, lot 2, where the above provenance is recorded.

**Text and decoration**

- i) Readings for the third Sunday in Lent, beginning with a **very fine historiated initial 'T' in the form of a drawing of Joseph as a youth wearing nothing but a cloak** ("Dominica III in XL. Ioseph cum sequentur in Genesi sidecem [sic] annorum pascebat gregem ..."; Genesis 37:2–10); the text relates how, as a youth aged 17, his father gave him a 'coat of many colours'; the recto blank except for cropped vestiges of a later 3-character shelfmark or number.
- ii) Readings for the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, beginning with a **large fine initial A** ("Dominica Septima. Adpropinquauerunt dies David ...", III Kings 2:1–17), preceded by III Kings 1:44–45
- iii) Readings for the 28th Sunday after Pentecost, beginning with a **very fine large initial 'F' inhabited by a bird** ("Omelia beati Iohannis episcopi de eadem lectione. Frequenter Iudei diversis ..."; St John Chrysostom's Homily LXXI on Matthew 22)
- iv) Readings for the feast of the Birth of Mary Magdalene (22 July), beginning with a large orange initial 'A' ("In nat. sanctę Marię Magdaleny. Ad Pharisei prandium dominus discumbebat ..."; a homily of St Gregory (PL, LXXVI, 1243), preceded by the end of a homily of Bede.

£24,000



*Figurative decoration of the twelfth century is very rare on the market. Though worn and stained, the full-length male semi-nude figure of Joseph is drawn in firm, confident lines, showing a competent understanding of anatomy based on careful observation (see, for example, the ways the fingers of each hand are arranged, and the arch of the foot). This is therefore a valuable specimen of twelfth-century Salzburg illumination.*



**A wonderful illuminated capital “M” from a 13th C. Antiphony**

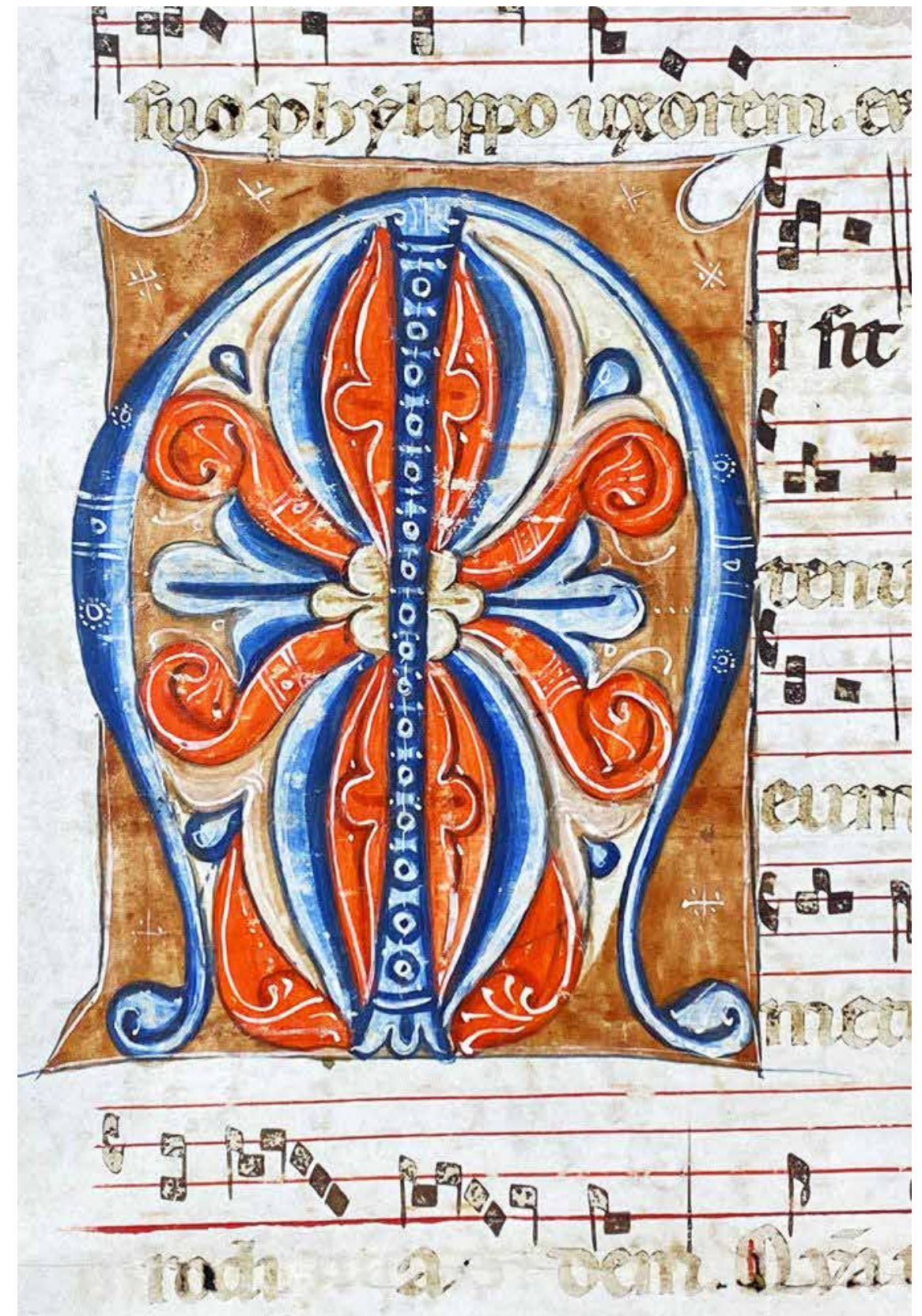
**3. Medieval Antiphony, single parchment leaf (443x305 mm), Siena, Italy 13th century century.**

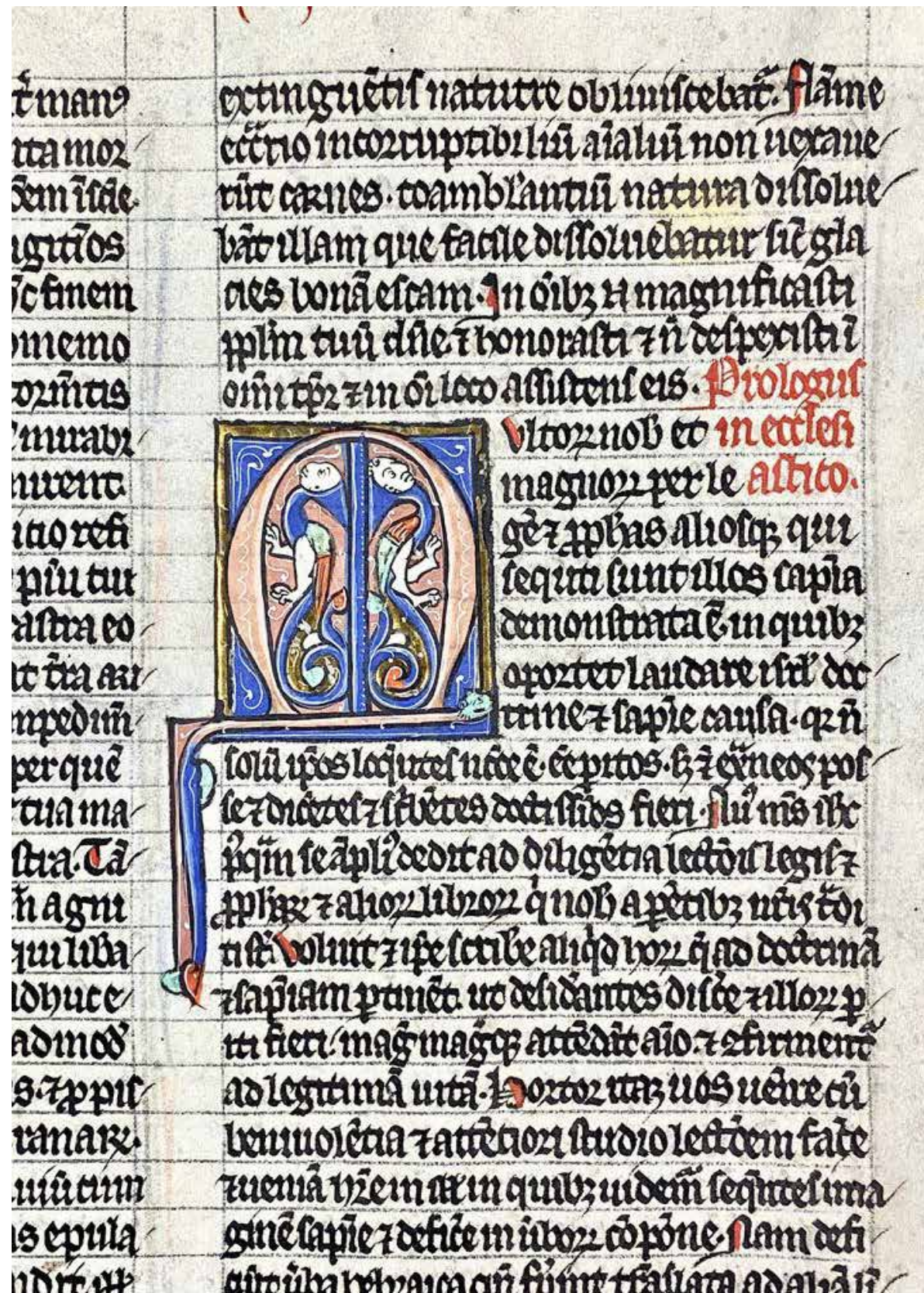
Illuminated capital “M” (110 x 80 mm). 11 lines of text, written in Latin, Gothic, 4 lines musical notation.

A beautiful example of a miniature painted capital from Central Italy, most likely Siena used to embellish a giant 13th Century Antiphony.

Opening of “Misit Herodes rex manus”, the third responsory of the first night for the feast of San Giovanni Battista. The capital ‘M’ is hand painted in light blue with white filigrees to form bands and circles, and, to close the corners, an orange background with blue Acanthus leaves that rise from a central point.

£2,000





## A Medieval French Bible Leaf “Everything is Meaningless”

4. MEDIEVAL BIBLE Leaf. French illuminated medieval manuscript on vellum, written in Latin, Gothic textura. Ecclesiastes. [North of France, about 1280]. Folio (327x210 mm), two columns, 46 lines.



A precious and tasteful illuminated leaf from a medieval Bible, containing the prologue of Ecclesiastes, probably the most influential book of Old Testament because of its pessimistic and “contemporary” content, regarding the pain and frustration engendered by observing and meditating on the distortions and inequities pervading the world.

The major illuminations are a seven line M, at the starting of Prologue, and a nine lines O at the starting of the book of Ecclesiastes. At verso a two line P illuminated in gold with extensions.

Inside the M we find a two winged monster with human face, side by side, while inside the O, on a blue background and beside three trees we find a woman, shown crowned and with a chalice, possibly Ecclesia, a personification of the (Christian) Church (and often contrasted with Synagoga, the personification of the Jewish church).

£5,000





**A rare example of high quality Spanish illumination**

**5. Jonah Kneeling in Prayer Before God on a bifolium from a Bible in Latin [Northern Spain (diocese of Álava?), late 13th or early 14th century]**

Parchment, a bifolium, each leaf c.400x275mm; ruled in plummet for two columns of 33 lines; written in a fine Spanish Gothic script; illuminated with with a large nine-line historiated initial, a two-line illuminated chapter initial, and three three- to five-line initials introducing the prologues; rowing of sewing holes along the upper and outer margins show how the bifolium was sewn to form a document pouch; two small worm-holes in the background of the initial do not detract from it unduly; water-staining in the upper outer corner of the bifolium does not touch the illumination and does not affect the legibility of the text.



### Provenance

i) Owned by the monastery of San Juan Bautista, Quejana (in Álava province, 25km south-west of Bilbao), to judge by the later provenance; apparently dismembered there, perhaps before the end of the 18th century, with leaves being used as wrappers and pouches for documents including “privilegios”; among the added inscriptions are the dates 1795 and 1809, and several place-names including Menagarai, Zuaza, and Orduña (all within five miles of the monastery), Okondo, Orozco and Arakaldo (all within ten miles), Menoio, Zeberio, and Zollo.

ii) Inscribed “Vitoria: Clausula del Testamento de D(o)n Ygnazio Luis de Ancaya – â Favor de N(uestr)a S(eñor)a del Rosario, de este conv(en)to de S(a)n Juan de Quesana ...”.

iii) A bound group of 34 bifolia from the same Bible was sold at Sotheby’s in 1996; six more were sold at Christie’s in 2016 and 2017, the present one being 8 December 2016, lot 12.

### Text

The first leaf has the last two verses of Obadiah; followed by two prologues to Jonah (Stegmüller, RB, nos. 524, 521), and Jonah 1:1–11; the second has Nahum 2:12–(end), and most of a prologue to Habacuc (Stegmüller, RB, no. 531). There would probably have been three more bifolia containing the text from Jonah 1:11 to Nahum 2:12.

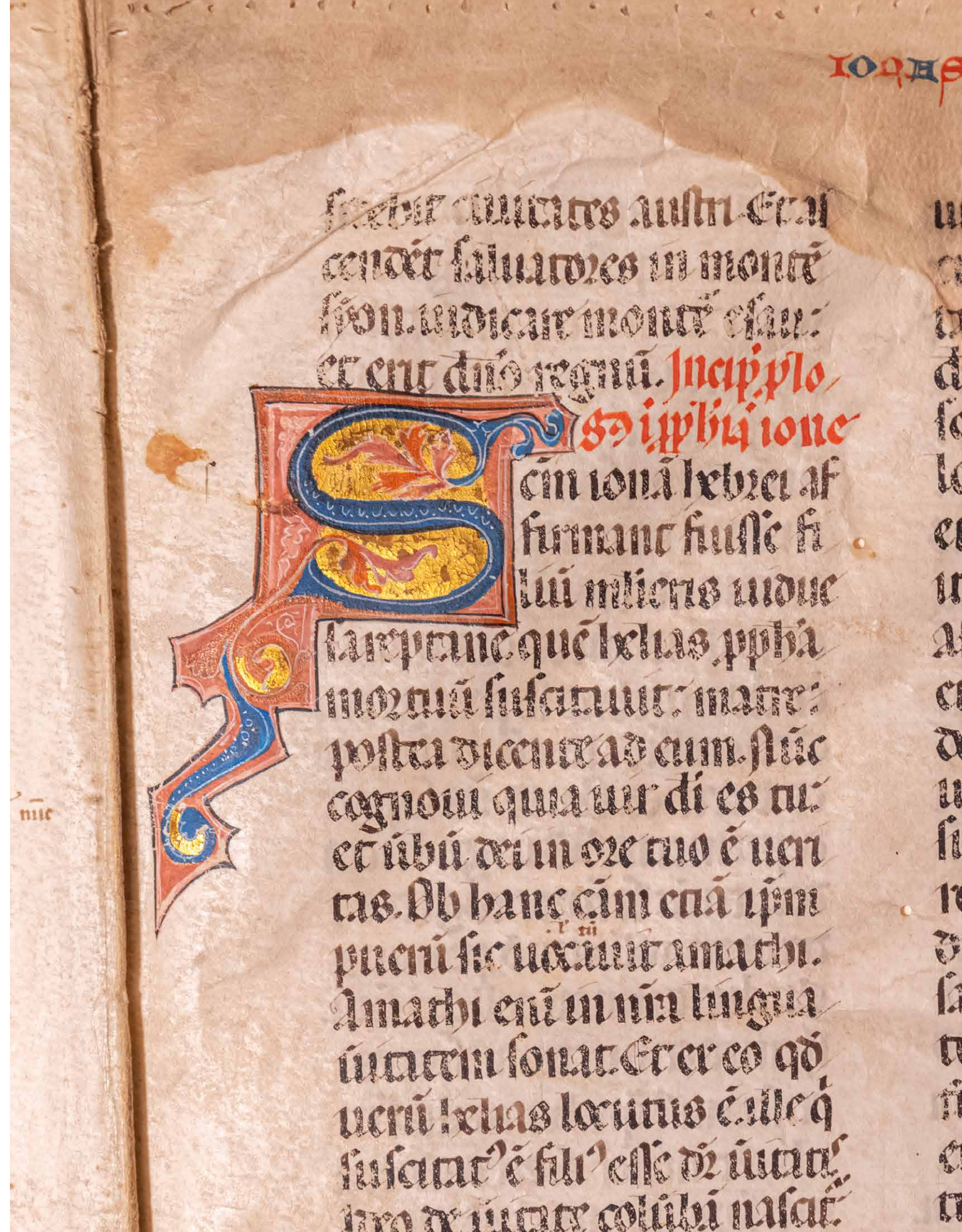
### Decoration

The large historiated initial depicts Jonah kneeling in prayer on a diaper floor, looking up at God above, in clouds against a gold ground; this illustrates the text which begins “Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh ...’”.

The known leaves are listed and discussed in Peter Kidd, *The McCarthy Collection, II: Spanish, English, Flemish and Central European Miniatures* (London, 2019), no. 8. Their text extends from Kings in the Old Testament to the Pauline and Catholic Epistles in the New. The Bible may originally have been in a single huge volume, but medieval foliation suggests that it was later divided into two, or perhaps three, volumes: the present leaves were the outermost bifolium of the first quire of one volume, and is foliated “i” and “viii”. There seem to have been three illuminators: the one responsible for the Jonah initial also painted the initials introducing the New Testament books.

£10,000

*Spanish illumination very rarely appears on the market. The present high quality example was probably made in the small kingdom of Navarre, flanked by the much larger Aragon and Castille, and not far from southern France, with which it has some stylistic similarities. During the period when the present Bible was created the region was, in fact, under the rule of successive Kings of France, as a result of Philip IV of France’s marriage to Joan of Navarre in 1284.*



## From the so-called Bible of “Mirmelus Arnandi”

### 6. St James Preaching in an historiated initial on a leaf from a Bible in Latin [Paris, late 13th or early 14th century]

Parchment, a single large leaf, c.410×272mm, ruled in plummet for two columns of 50 lines, written in formal gothic bookhand including a top-line cadell of a squirrel, running headers and chapter numbers in red and blue characters, illuminated with a large (16-line) historiated initial, a four-line prologue initial and two three-line chapter initials, each with foliate bar-extensions running the full height of the text, various medieval and later marginal annotations; one area of text excised and repaired.

#### Provenance

i) The parent manuscript was likely written for a Carthusian house (perhaps the Chartreuse de Vauvert, Paris), with the punctus flexus punctuation typical of Cistercian and Carthusian books, and later added Carthusian markings in the margins.

ii) When 210 disbound leaves, with 8 historiated initials, were sold at Sotheby's, 11 December 1984, lot 39, Christopher de Hamel read several partially erased inscriptions and deduced that the Bible had been bequeathed in 1450 by “Mirmellus Arnandi”, lawyer and judge, to an unidentified Dominican convent. François Avril has recently identified both the donor (whose name was not Mirmellus Arnandi) and the Dominican convent; his findings will be published in the forthcoming catalogue of the Naito Collection at the Museum for Western Art, Tokyo.

iii) ‘The Property of a Gentleman Resident on the Continent’, Sotheby's, 7 July 1931, lot 389.

iv) The property of an Italian Private Collector, sold at Parke-Bernet, New York, 30 November 1948, lot 326, where it was still substantially complete and described as having 503 leaves and 86 historiated initials; bought by Philip C. Duschnes and/or:

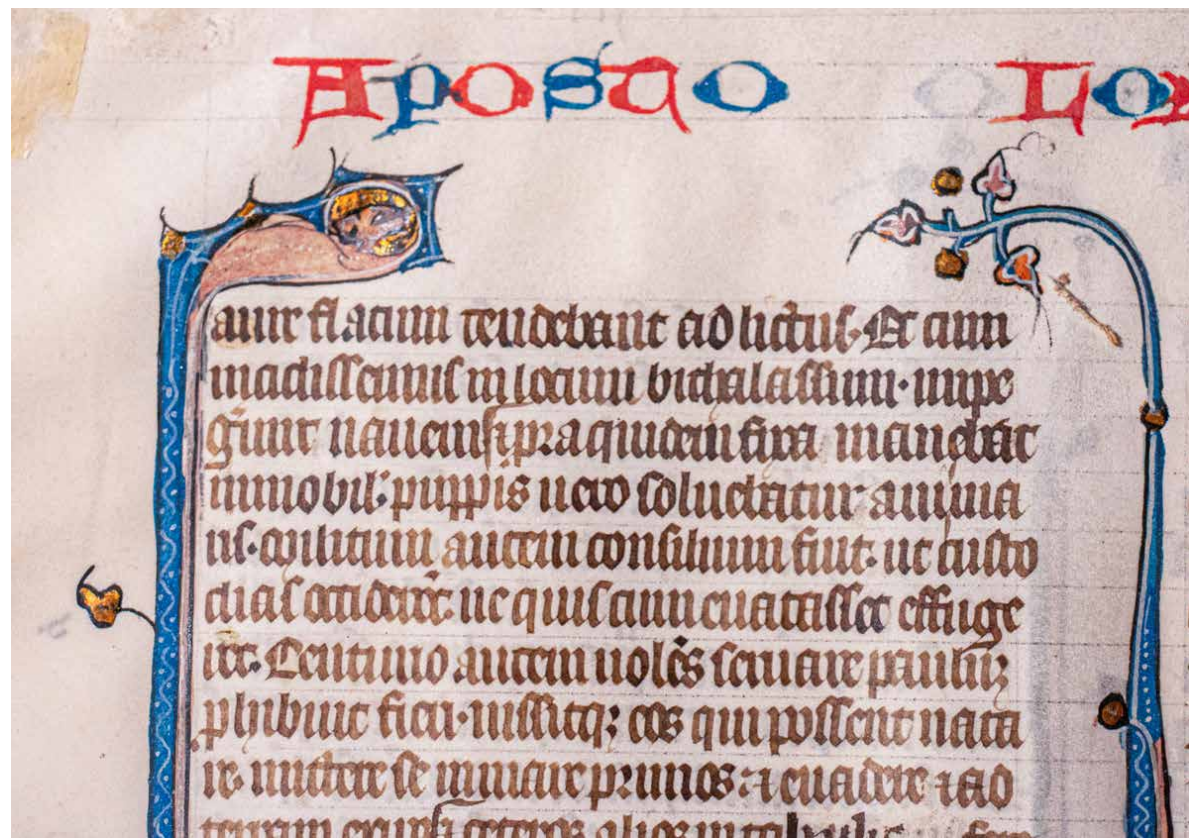
v) Otto F. Ege (1888–1951), of Cleveland, broken-up by him, and with his(?) (partially erased) pencil description in the lower margin of the verso.

vi) Sotheby's, 10 July 2012, lot 2(b), the initial reproduced in colour in the catalogue; bought by:

vii) Private collection, London; recently deaccessioned.

*This is a leaf from a very grand Bible, written and decorated on a scale rarely found after the late twelfth century, by which time most monasteries were already equipped with such books for reading in the choir and the refectory*





**Text**

The main text is from Acts 27:40 to the end of Acts, a prologue to James (Stegmüller no. 809), and the start of James as far as James 2:4, but a portion of text has been cut out and replaced by a patch of parchment from the following leaf of the same manuscript, containing parts of James 2:10–3:9 and 4:8–5:20. This leaf both confirms that Acts appeared between Hebrews (the last of the Pauline Epistles) and James (the first of the Catholic Epistles), and that Acts had an historiated initial.

**Illumination**

Previously attributed to eastern France, and perhaps Metz, and dated to various periods from c.1280 to c.1330, the style of illumination should in fact be attributed to Paris, c.1300, as François Avril kindly informed us.

The parent manuscript is discussed, and the known leaves listed, by Peter Kidd, *The McCarthy Collection, III: French Miniatures* (London, 2021), no 60, pp.199–202, citing the present leaf on p. 201, no. 80, when still in private collection.

£5,000





**In the style of the Papeleu Master  
(Richard of Verdun?)**

**7. An Angel Hybrid in a historiated initial on a cutting from a  
Choirbook in Latin [France (Paris), early 14th century]**



Parchment, a cutting, c.185×160mm, the reverse preserving part of five lines of text in Gothic script and music in square notation on four-line red staves, the text and music mostly erased from the side with the illuminated initial.

**Provenance and Sister Cuttings**

i) Leo Olschki, of Florence, bookseller and publisher, with his stock number “27755” inscribed in pencil on the reverse; apparently owned c.1913: two further cuttings, with initials “B” and “D” containing very similar winged human-head hybrid creatures, are at the Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana, MS Ricketts F9; they are inscribed in pencil on the reverse with the numbers “27752” and “27753” and “From Olskie [sic], while he was in England – 1913”. Another cutting from the same manuscript was MS 1189 in the collection of Neil F. Phillips, Q.C (1924–1997), of Montreal, New York and Virginia, and was exhibited at the Katonah Museum of Art, New York (J.B. Benton, ed., *Medieval Monsters: Dragons and Fantastic Creatures* (1995), pp. 24–25 and fig. 67), and subsequently Sotheby’s, 2 December 1997, lot 64 and Christie’s, 11 December 2019, lot 204.

ii) Les Enluminures, Paris and Chicago, 2015.

*We are grateful to François Avril who observes that the style is that of the late 13th and early 14th-century Parisian illuminator known as Papeleu Master, after Jean Papeleu, copyist of a Bible completed in 1317 (Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, ms. 5059), and who probably also contributed to a Somme le roi (Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. 870) written in 1295. He may perhaps be identified as Richard of Verdun, son-in-law and associate of the leading Parisian illuminator of the later 13th century, Maître Honoré. The artist and his works are discussed, by Richard and Mary Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris 1200–1500* (London, 2000), I, pp. 145–54; II, pp. 126–27, and Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts 1260–1320, Part One* (2 vols, Turnhout, 2013), I, pp. 57–58 (list of attributions) and II, cat. nos. I-29–30 and I-62.*

**Text**

The illuminated initial 'A' doubtless opens the text for Resurrection Sunday, "Angelus domini locutus ..." (in which the angel of the Lord spoke to the women who arrived at Jesus's tomb to find it empty), as can be determined by its continuation on the verso: "[Jesu]m queritis iam sur[rexit Venite et videte alleluia] alleluia. An[gelus domi]ni loquutus est [mulieribus dicen]s quem queritis an [Ihesum queriti] s. Iam surrexit venite [et videte]".

**Illumination**

The three-part hybrid creature that occupies the initial conforms to standard medieval conceptions of hierarchy: the upper part is human, the middle part is animal, and the lower part is vegetation.

£7,500



**A Rare Example of 14th-Century English Illumination**

**8. Decorated Initial and Border on a bifolium from a Psalter in Latin [England, 14th century (2nd quarter?)]**

Parchment, a bifolium, c.240x345mm (in total), 21 lines per page, the ruled space c.190x120mm, written in a fine high-grade gothic bookhand, the text comprising Psalms 104:7–104:33 and 109:1–111:4 ("Ipse dominus ... finium eorum", and "Dixit dominus ... et iustus"), the verse initials left-justified and indented into the text area, initials, lines-fillers, and run-over symbols alternately blue or red, the ordinary Psalms introduced by an indented 2-line initial alternately in red with blue penwork ornament, or vice versa, the decorated initial to Psalm 109 seven lines high and with foliate borders filling most of the upper and inner margins; recovered from use as a wrapper, with losses on all four sides, affecting some parts of the text but barely touching the painted decoration, losses repaired with modern parchment.



**Provenance**

The parent volume from which this bifolium comes was doubtless dismembered in the 16th century when centuries-old volumes of common texts written on parchment became more valuable as scrap material than for their content, both because thousands of such books became redundant with the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII, and because books printed on paper were available comparatively inexpensively. The present bifolium was apparently used to serve as a protective wrapper around another book, as suggested by the 16th-century 'spine title' written vertically in the blank space between the columns of text. The value of such binding waste was recognised in the 19th century (cf. no. \*\*\* above), and often removed from the (often uninteresting and valueless) books into, or around, which they had been bound.

**Illumination**

Various decorative hierarchies can be found in medieval illuminated Psalters, but it is almost invariably the case that eight (or in England and Germany ten) Psalm initials receive special emphasis, and of these the most lavishly/finely

decorated is at Psalm 1 ("Beatus vir", Blessed is the man), and the next most elaborate is Psalm 109, because this was the first psalm of the evening service, Vespers, on Sundays. The present bifolium, with its Psalm 109 initial, therefore, gives us a very good idea of the overall luxury of the parent volume.

The individual parts of the decoration are generally symmetrical: the initial itself contains a regular design based on heart-shaped panels; the upper border has a row of clover-leaves, springing alternately from above and below, and alternately blue or yellow, while the vertical border has an even more regular procession of acorns, each flanked by two oak leaves. The style of the decoration is very difficult to parallel, in part because the foliage forms are unusually flat and unmodelled: rather like pressed flowers in an album. The general aesthetic (but not the details of style) can perhaps be paralleled in the very unusual decoration of a copy of John of Tynemouth's *Historia aurea* in Cambridge University Library (MS Dd.10.22), which was produced in England, perhaps at a Cistercian monastery, perhaps in Herefordshire, probably not long after 1342 (see P. Binski, P.N.R. Zutshi, and S. Panayotova, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts: A Catalogue of the Collection in Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge, 2011), no. 162 and col. pl. IV).

£5,000



**9. A large and impressive Bohemian initial showing Christ in Majesty**

**Christ in Majesty in a historiated initial on a bifolium from a vast Gradual in Latin [Bohemia, mid(?) - 15th century]**

Parchment, a bifolium, each leaf c.550x390mm, each page with 10 lines of text and music in lozenge-shaped notation on red four-line staves; the upper margins with 'F' and the folio numbers, 'xv' and 'xvi'; both the text and the folio numbers are consecutive from one leaf to the next, showing that this was the central bifolium in its quire (the volume was therefore probably arranged in quires of 10 leaves, the first two quires being fols. 1-10 and 11-20); the final verso with a large illuminated historiated initial "B" and foliate border, other initials are alternately blue, ink with yellow wash, red, ink with yellow wash, etc.; with some cockling and creases in the margins, some slight wear to the initial, the edges of which have 16th-century inscriptions (see Provenance).



**Text**

The first three pages of the bifolium contain chant for the Saturday after Pentecost, and the illuminated initial introduces the Introit for the Mass “Benedicta sit sancta Trinitas ...”, for the following day, Trinity Sunday.

**Provenance**

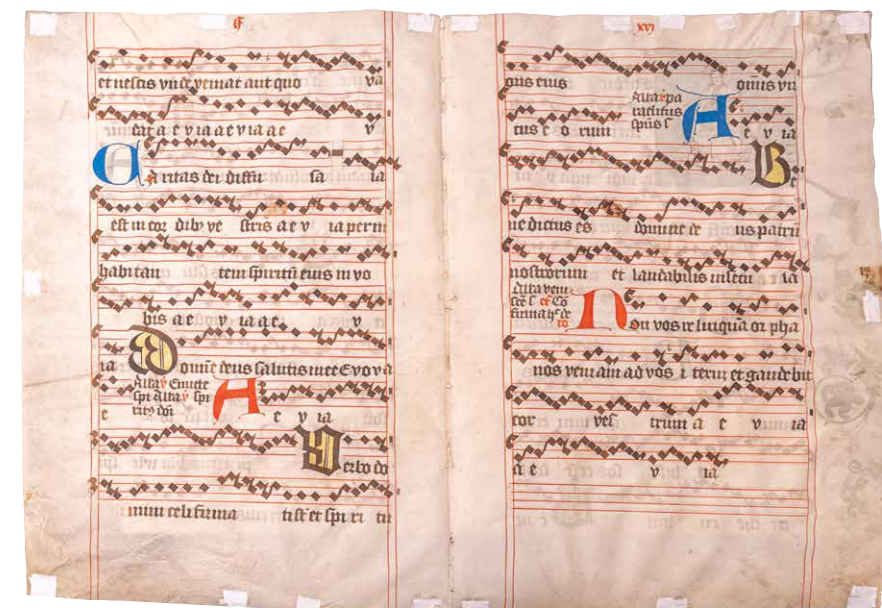
i) The illuminated initial is inscribed with nine names – perhaps of choristers – several with dates ranging from 1544 to 1568: ‘Venceslaus Wiss[...] Hermano [ ... ] 1544’, ‘Jacobus Ngrond[...] (?) 1557’, ‘Hieronymus Rotarii Prag’. 64’, ‘Vence F[...] 64’, ‘Marcus Misæ Flostuh(?) 1568’, ‘Andreas Krziek Misen[...] 68’; others are undated: ‘Michael Haurmon’, ‘Gæor[g]: Petvzi’, ‘Venceslaus Vidolang przywoznie(?)’, ‘Johannes [...]clios(?) Oczovine Sskrzepak(?)’. Further research may allow some of these men to be identified, and thus the location of the volume in the mid-16th century.

ii) Jörn Günther, *Mittelalterliche Handschriften und Miniaturen: Katalog und Retrospektive* [1993], no. XXVII (col. ill.)

**Illumination**

Christ sits on an orange bench, holding a sceptre and cross-topped orb, wearing a green-lined soft-pink cloak over a reddish-orange tunic, set against a blue ground with white curlicue ornaments (representing sky and clouds?); the initial itself in blue-grey, incorporating a ragged staff and acanthus, the whole against a green panel background, the initial prolonged into an elegant foliate border filling the outer margin. The style is unusual, especially the drapery-folds like jagged rocks: they are related to the zigzags and z-shapes of German Zackenstil, but with more broken folds, creating a craggy effect. The modelling combine a very draughtsmanlike outlining of contours, with subtle painterly shading in purple orange, and burgundy.

£16,000



## An Unusual Example of First-Hand Ornithological Observation

### 10. A Hoopoe, in an initial on a vast leaf from an Antiphony in Latin [Italy (north-east), late 15th century]



Parchment, a single leaf, c. 515×370mm, each page with six lines of text and music in square notation on four-line staves, one line in red, comprising the chant for Easter day, illuminated with a large initial containing a naturalistic Hoopoe perched on a semi-naturalistic branch with flowers, accompanied by a foliate border nearly the full height of the page; with post-medieval pagination “13” and “14”, suggesting that this was the seventh leaf of the parent manuscript, which would thus have been a Summer volume, starting with Easter; minor cockling, and thumbing in the lower outer corner, not affecting the text or decoration, the top edge cropped with very minor loss of the extremity of the border decoration.

#### Text

The initial introduces the responsory after the hymn on Easter day: “*In pasca d[omi]ni ad mat[utine]. R[esponsorio] p[ost] hym[nus]. Benedicam dominum in omni tempore ...*”.

#### Illumination

This is a very unusual subject for an initial in a liturgical manuscript, and an interesting example of close observation from life. The only comparable example we have found is in Kyriale K, one of the choirbooks of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice (see Giulio Pesavento, ‘Maestro del Kyriale K, un miniatore veneto-ferrarese alla ricerca di un catalogo’, in *I corali miniati di San Giorgio Maggiore a Venezia: L’inCanto nella Parola*, ed. by F. Toniolo and C. Ponchia, 2021, pp. 215–223, and p. 271 fig. 5d). It may possibly even represent an extinct species: today there are three very similar species, all with the distinctive crown of feathers, orange-brown upper body, striped black and white wings, and black tail. One other species is known only from its skeleton, having become extinct in the 16th century. The present example has white wispy feathers at the tips of its crown and thus differs from all three extant species, which all have black ends to their crown feathers.

£6,000







**11. St Paul, in an initial on a leaf from a vast Gradual, in Latin [Northern Italy (Lombardy, perhaps Milan), late 15th century (c.1480–90)]**



Parchment, a single leaf, c.560×340mm, with five lines of text and music in square notation on four-line red staves, the illuminated initial “S” opening the introit “Scio cui credidi et certus ...” for the feast of the Conversion of St Paul (25 January), depicting St Paul, shown half length, holding a book and a sword, wearing a blue-lined green cloak over a red tunic, its hem lettered “VENIAS” in white; contemporary foliation “lxi” in red, the reverse with one decorated initial in blue with red penwork decoration; some creases and cockling, and the ink has eaten through the parchment in a few places, but not affecting the decoration.

**Provenance**

Sotheby’s, 7 December 2010, lot 8.

**Illumination**

The style of the illuminator has in the past been compared the work of the Master of the Graduals of San Salvatore at Pavia, christened by Pier Luigi Mulas after the illuminations in two surviving graduals from a series of choir books for that Benedictine monastery (see ‘Le Maître des Graduels de San Salvatore de Pavie’, in *Quand la peinture était dans les livres*, 2007, pp. 223–33, and ‘I Corali di San Sisto’, in *I corali benedettini di San Sisto a Piacenza*, 2011, pp. 45–66). While there is some similarity, this comparison is not very close. Our St Paul has a rather flat, long, face, an impression strengthened by his long tapering beard, unlike the Pavia master, whose faces tend to have more prominent cheekbones.

£4,000



## A Swiss Illuminator in Bavaria

### 12. The Trinity, by Nikolaus Bertschi the Elder or his workshop, on a leaf from a large Antiphony in Latin [Germany (Augsburg), 16th century (c.1520–30)]



Parchment, single leaf, c.460×345mm, each side with 7 lines of text and music on a 5-line red staff, the recto with a large illuminated initial from which extend foliate borders into the outer and upper margins, incorporating a fine Wild Man (a border of the ex-Sotheby's and Christie's sister leaf also has a – heavily cropped – Wild Man), and large initials in red or blue incorporating human profiles in the penwork ornament; the upper border somewhat cropped (as are the sister leaves)

#### Provenance

Apparently from the same manuscript as a leaf with an initial "A" depicting the Resurrection that was in the collection of Carl Richartz, Amsterdam, by 1966, and a leaf with an initial "A" depicting the Last Judgement, sold at Sotheby's, 7

December 2010, lot 10 (attributed to a

followed of the panel painter known as the Master of the Munich St John on Patmos), resold at Christie's, 11 December 2019, lot 213 for £8,750.

#### Illumination

A significant oeuvre has now been attributed to the Swiss artist Nikolaus Bertschi (see Ulrich Merkl, *Buchmalerei in Bayern* (1999), pp. 41–48 and 273–314). He was born in Rorschach am Bodensee, but moved to Augsburg, where he worked from c.1510 until his death c.1541. Two comparable choirbooks illuminated by him, from early and late in his career at Augsburg, are dateable to 1511/12 (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Inventar-Nr. Cod. mus. fol. I 65) and 1531 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.lat. 28 150). Absolutely typical of Augsburg illumination is the frame around the initial, in alternating sections of red and green, and typical of Bertschi are the faces, in which the eyes are painted as straight black lines terminating in a dot. The gold background is not tooled, but instead is patterned with a pale wash in scrolling designs. Immediately adjacent is a finely painted Wild Man, as often found in Bertschi's borders.

£8,000



## Two Venetian paintings on vellum, early gilt frames



### 13. Two full-page miniatures of Mythological Subjects [Italy, mid-16th century (c.1540?)]

Parchment, 2 leaves, c.240×165mm, each with a full-page miniature and a blank reverse, in 18th- or 19th-century giltwood frames, glazed; the leaves slightly wormed at the edges, the frames with some cracking and worming.

#### Provenance

- i) Apparently from a series that also included at least four other miniatures:
  - Soldiers battling a creature like a lion with wings and horns (Jörn Günther, *Catalogue 6: Miniatures and Illuminated Leaves* (Hamburg, 2002), no. 68, col. ill.)
  - An army marching past an enthroned emperor outside the walls of a city (*ibid.*, col. ill.)
  - A queen or empress in a wooden box (coffin?) being raised from the sea by men with ropes on board a galleon (Jörn Günther, *Brochure 11: Passion of Collecting* (Hamburg, 2009), no. 37, col. ill.)
  - A battle scene, with the leader of one army taken prisoner in the foreground; in a landscape, including Venus in her chariot drawn by swans (*ibid.* no. 38, col. ill.)
- ii) Ambroise-Théodore Comte d'Estampes (1830–89): from the “Collection de Comte d'Estampes / 12, Rue Pigalle”, as recorded on printed labels on the backs of the frames.
- iii) Private Collector, New York, 1948: probably the “Pair of Miniatures: Parchment, North Italian: Circa 1550. Two finely painted subjects from Roman History, probably from an illuminated manuscript. In very handsome period carved and gilt wood frames. [ ... ]. – 9¼ x 6½ inches [= c.235×165mm]”, sold at the Kende Galleries of Gimbel Brothers, New York, 17 December 1943, lot 12, for \$65. [Catalogue online].
- iv) Sotheby's, 6 December 2016, lots 10 and 11 (col. ills.).

### Illumination

These and the sister-miniatures presumably illustrate Classical or neo-Classical myths, but their subjects have thus far defied identification. They show:

i) Venus/Cupid and Apollo in a chariot drawn by four swans on a cloud in the sky, over a view of Rome, while in the foreground a man delivers news to, or receives orders from, an emperor enthroned in an aedicule. Several features of Rome are clearly recognisable, including the statues of Castor & Pollux, the Baths of Constantine; the Pantheon with its portico facing towards us; Trajan's Column; the Coliseum; old St Peter's; the Ponte and Castel Sant'Angelo; three other bridges over the Tiber; and perhaps Santo Spirito. The city is seen from the same angle as the view of Rome in the Nuremburg Chronicle, and was perhaps partly dependent on it.

ii) A landscape, in the foreground of which a priest and a crowd of other men have chosen a sacrificial bull (with a garland hung around its neck); the sacrificial pyre in the middle ground.

£18,000



## A Very Fine Secular Miniature from an Exceptionally Lavishly Illuminated Vernacular Manuscript

### 14. The Death of Ptolemy, a miniature on a cutting from Laurent de Premierfait, *Du cas des nobles hommes et femmes* (his translation into French of Boccaccio's Latin *De casibus virorum illustrium*) [France, probably Troyes, c.1470]



Parchment, a cutting, c.105×80mm, with a miniature on one side and 17 lines of text on the other, ruled in pale red ink, written in a very fine lettre bâtarde script, capitals stroked in yellow, a gold paraph with blue penwork, with some minor flaking of pigments in the sky at the upper edge and in the ground near Boccaccio's feet.

Unlike most of the items in this catalogue, which have survived down through the centuries only through luck and good fortune (while the rest of the volumes from which they come have long-since been destroyed or discarded), the preset cutting represents a completely different kind of survival. In this case the text leaves of the parent manuscript have perhaps suffered the same fate as binders' waste, but the illuminations were carefully cut out and preserved, probably in the 19th century. As such the miniature shows none of the signs of rough handling that the others do, and is in very good condition.

#### Script

The so-called lettre bâtarde (so named because it was the offspring of very different cursive and gothic scripts) required fewer pen-lifts than gothic, and could therefore be written more swiftly, than more formal gothic 'textura' book-hands, yet it could also be written with a very high degree of regularity and elegance, as in the present example. The characteristic letter-forms are the 'f' and tall 's' that have a wide shaft and descend well below the line, the cursive loops at the top of 'd' and 'l', the 's' at the end of words shaped somewhat like a small '8', while the loop at the top of 'd' makes it appear similar to a large '8'. Where formal gothic scripts are usually upright, with fairly vertical minims, lettre bâtarde leans to the right, like Italic. The fact that the text is in French rather than Latin also affects the overall appearance, through the more frequent use of the letters 'y' and 'z' (the former with a tail that turns to the right and the latter shaped like a '3' descending below the line).



### Text

Part of Book VI, chapter 11; the first and last pairs of fully legible lines read:

“fit. Car en celle bataille vint mil[ ]  
 Egypciens furent desconfiz et occis d[ ]  
 ...  
 ses armes. ¶ Cesar doncques en[ ]  
 uoya aux Alexandrinoiz le auberg[ ]”

The translation was made for the Duc de Berri, and is a rather surprising choice of text as it relates a series of stories about how successful and rich people come to a bad end!

### Decoration

The style of illumination of cuttings from this volume has usually been compared to that of the Parisian Coëtivy Master (who was previously thought to have been based in the Loire valley), but more recently Mara Hofmann has suggested that it should instead be attributed to Troyes where a pupil of the Coëtivy Master, the Master of the Glazier Hours, worked at least temporarily (he illuminated a lectionary for the use of the Bishop of Troyes).

By comparison with other manuscripts we know that the foreground figure with white academic garb and a conical hat represents Boccaccio, but the subject of the scene is not yet confidently identified. In 2014 Sotheby's described it as “the Victory of Caesar during the Siege of Alexandria and the Death of Ptolemy: Boccaccio at the left gesturing towards a battle scene at a riverbank, with Ptolemy lying on the ground and a priest standing behind him, the dead body being attacked by Caesar's soldiers (Ptolemy drowned when he attempted to cross the river)”, but this does not fully explain the “priest” (dressed as a Carthusian?), nor does it explain why a soldier would need to strike Ptolemy's neck (from which blood pours) if he had already drowned. It may be that the artist did not know the text and has added the incongruous details, not found in his exemplar.

### Provenance

- i) With a half-page miniature at the beginning of each of the nine books and a column-wide miniature at the beginning of each chapter the parent volume would have had about 175 miniatures, and can only have been commissioned by or for a patron of exceptional wealth, either a member of the upper aristocracy or of the royal family: two of the most lavishly illuminated copies were made for Jean, Duke of Berry, and his brother John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.
- ii) Heinrich Wilhelm Campe (1770–1862), Leipzig art collector, educator, and writer: with his collector's mark (Lugt 1391) on the mount when sold by his descendants in 1981:
- iii) Christie's, Important Old Master Drawings, 8 December 1981, part of lot 98 (ill.).
- iv) Helmut Tenner, Heidelberg, sale 141, 19–21 October 1982, no. 25/26 (ill.), according to:

v) Dr Jörn Günther Antiquariat, Catalogue 6: Miniatures and Illuminated Leaves from the 12th to the 16th Centuries (Hamburg, 2002), no. 42 (col. ill.).

vi) Sotheby's, 2 December 2003, lot 25; bought by:

vii) (7) Roger and Alixe de Kesel; sold at Sotheby's, 8 July 2014, lot 19.

#### Sister-Cuttings

The surviving fragments suggest that the manuscript had a large half-page miniature introducing the first chapter in each of the nine books and small single-column miniatures for each (or most) of the subsequent chapters. Other miniatures all from the same manuscript, include:

- 1) Book I.1. Samuel Anointing Saul and Boccaccio Writing His Text (Sotheby's, 11 April 1961, lot 96)
- 2) Book I.6. Cadmus with the Cow on the Future Site of Thebes (S. Berger, London; Maggs Bros, 1943; Sotheby's, 22 June 1993, lot 35 (ill.); Les Enluminures, Catalogue 3, 1994, no. 25a, at \$15,000)
- 3) Book IV.15. The Murder of the Children of Arsinöe II Philadelphus (Boerner, Leipzig, 9–10 May 1920, part of lot 250 (ill.); Maggs Bros, Bulletin 3, (1965), no. 30 (ill.); 'The Property of Mrs Raymond Lister', sold at Sotheby's, 10 July 1967, lot 9 (ill.); re-offered in Les Enluminures, Catalogue 1, 1992, no. 26 (col. ill.))
- 4) Book V.1. Seleucus Callinicus and Antiochus Hierax Before Boccaccio (Hoepli, Milan, 9 April 1927, lot 324 (ill.); Jakob Hirsch, Geneva; Herbert Straus; Therese K. Straus; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.1057)
- 5) Book V.2. The Death of Laodamia in the Temple of Diana (Sotheby's, 29 November 1990, lot 35 (ill.))
- 6) Book V.14: Andriscus, the Imposter King of Macedon, Placed in the Stocks (Sotheby's, 29 November 1990, lot 36 (ill.); Alan Thomas sale at Sotheby's, 21 June 1993, lot 36 (ill.), £3,680)
- 7) Book V.17: The Execution of Demetrius Nicator, King of Syria (Sotheby's, 29 November 1990, lot 37)
- 8) Book VI.8. The Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (Les Enluminures, Catalogue 3, 1994, no. 25b (col. ill.), at \$13,000)
- 9) Book VIII.20. The Execution of the Privernate General Vitruvius (Boerner, Leipzig, 9–10 May 1920, part of lot 250 (ill.); Maggs Bros, Cat. 948 – Ancient, Medieval and Modern No. 8 (1972), no. 18, pl. XIII)
- 10) Book IX.2. Emperor Heraclius Expounding his Heresies (H.P. Kraus, c. 1970; Bernard Breslauer collection, Voelkle and Wieck, 1992, no. 5, col. ill.)
- 11) Book IX.9. The Sultan Receiving the Emperor Diogenes (H.P. Kraus, c. 1970; Bernard Breslauer collection, Voelkle and Wieck, 1992, no. 6, col. ill.)
- 12) Book IX.22. Boccaccio Addressing the Philosophers Theodorum, Anaxarchus, and Scaevola (H.P. Kraus, c. 1970; Bernard Breslauer Collection, Voelkle and Wieck, 1992, no. 7, col. ill.)

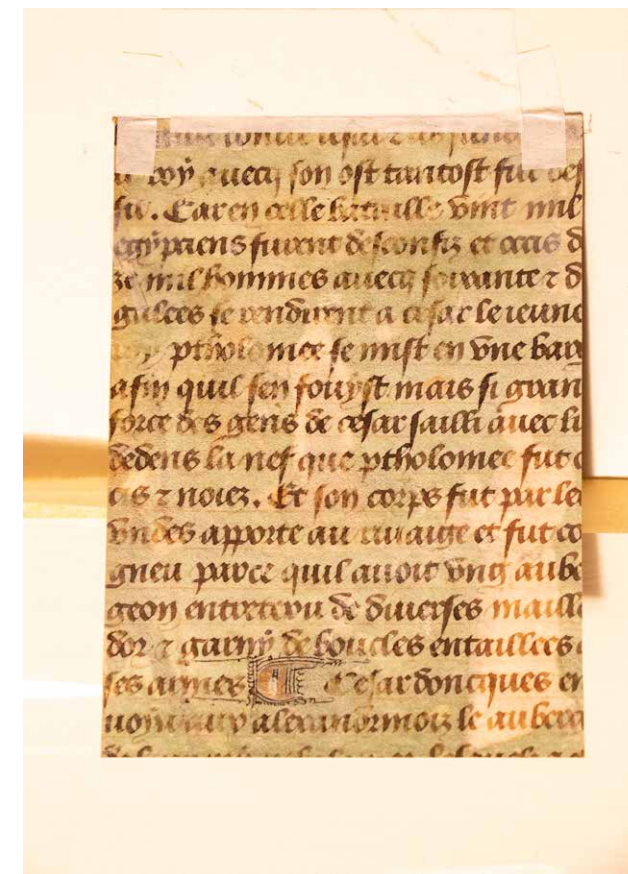
The subjects of six more miniatures are unknown, including four acquired in 1888 by the Print Room of the Rijkmuseum, Amsterdam (they have paper pasted to their backs, obscuring the text and hampering identification of the scenes):

- 13) One soldier killing another, outside the entrance to a church. Christie's, Important Old Master Drawings, 8 December 1981, part of lot 98 (ill.)
- 14) A king and his retinue entering the study of a scholar (RP-T-1888-A-1463)
- 15) A scholar addressing three noble ladies (RP-T-1888-A-146)
- 16) A scholar between two groups of men (RP-T-1888-A-1465)
- 17) The Death of Caesar(?): a scholar watching as a richly-dressed man is stabbed in the back by one member of a group of men (RP-T-1888-A-1466)
- 18) A large miniature in a Paris private collection (cited by Voelkle & Wieck, 1993, p. 74)

Only a few of these are mentioned in Vittore Branca, *Boccaccio visualizzato: narrare per parole e per immagini fra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (3 vols, Turin, 1999), III, no. 57 pp. 158–60.

A recent study of illustrated copies of the text (not including the present series of miniatures) is Anne D. Hedeman, *Translating the Past: Laurent de Premierfait and Boccaccio's 'De Casibus'* (Los Angeles, 2008).

£12,000





**Illuminated Historiated Initial “Quo Vadis”  
from a C15th Latin Choral book.**

£2,200

**15. Cut with an initial on vellum (163x167 mm), from a German choir-book, Rhine XV century.**



Wonderful Initial S (163X167 MM) for the Feast of San Pietro, Central Europe, Probably Rhine, Late XVth Century. The text on reverse includes the beginning of the Song: “[Tu es] Petrus et super [hanc Petram. Aedificabo Ecclesiam Meam...]

The miniature illustrates a rare scene taken from the Apocryphal Gospels (The Apocryphal Gospels are a heterogeneous group of religious texts that refer to the figure of Jesus Christ and which over time have been excluded from the canon of the Christian Bible.)

The story tells of St. Peter who escapes from Rome where the Romans, pagans, wanted to kill him. During his escape Peter meets the risen Jesus Christ and, amazed, asks him in Latin “Lord where are you going?” “Domine quo vadis?”

Jesus, who carries a cross, replies "I'm going to Rome", meaning to be crucified and die. Peter understands the message of Jesus Christ, repents, retraces his steps and comes back to Rome where he will be killed, asking to be crucified upside down, not deserving the same end as our Lord.





**From a Precisely Dated and Localised Manuscript Written by Named Scribes for Named Patrons**

**16. Readings for Lent on a leaf from a Lectionary, in Armenian [Iran (Isfahan), dated 1671]**



Paper, single leaf, c.380x260mm, written in bolorgir script in two columns of 33 lines, the written space c.285x160mm, the verticals ruled in red ink, the horizontals blind-ruled; each verse beginning on a new line with a red capital; decorated with a bird with long tail feathers, eating fruit from a leafy frond, and another bird with foliate tail; and notches for our sewing-stations at the gutter edge; the recto foliated(?) "18" between the columns.

**Provenance**

i) From a volume of 721 leaves, written in 1671 by two scribes, Astuacapov (or Asapov) and the deacon Tëron in Isfahan, for Yohan, son of Yovhannës, and Elisabet, according to its colophon (whereabouts now unknown), according to A.K. Sanjian, A Catalogue of Medieval Armenian Manuscripts in the United States (1976), pp. 64-5, summarising a description in Armenian published in 1919.

ii) Otto Ege (1888–1951); acquired at unknown date before 1936; the manuscript was misdated by him to 1121, based on its colophon, which uses the Armenian calendar whose Year 1 corresponds to 552 of our calendar. Ege included leaves in of his first portfolio of Original Leaves from Famous Bibles, issued in 1936 (see Scott Gwara, Otto Ege's Manuscripts, pp. 5-6, HL 56, and fig 90) His description read: "Leaf from an Armenian Manuscript Bible, 1121 A.D.; Fifth century translation by Mesrop written in the Haikian alphabet of thirty-eight characters (Iron writing) on early paper of the Near East. The Monophysitic doctrine and many other 'heresies' in the Armenian translation were a source of continual controversy with the Greek and Roman churches."

**Text**

This leaf contains readings from the end of Wednesday and beginning of Thursday of the third week of Lent.

We are grateful to Dr Sergio La Porta, Professor of Armenian Studies at California State University, Fresno, for identifying the text for us, and for confirming that the scribe is the same as that of other leaves of the ex-Ege Lectionary.

£1,500





STEPHEN • BUTLER  
RARE BOOKS & MANUSCRIPTS

ISBN 2370001590953



2 370001 590953

[stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk](mailto:stephen@butlerrarebooks.co.uk) [www.butlerrarebooks.co.uk](http://www.butlerrarebooks.co.uk) +44 07866695476