

College of the Holy Cross Classics Day First Annual Manuscript Challenge

Sponsored by the Holy Cross Chapter of Eta Sigma Phi and the HC Manuscripts, Inscriptions, and Documents Club

Challenge Description & Rules

As a group of 3-5 students, pick one of the following four manuscripts to work on:

Servius on Virgil's *Aeneid* - <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0861/2>

Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* - <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/vad/0307/1r> (Only Do First Paragraph)

Ovid's *Metamorposes* and *Fasti* - <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/cb/0124/2r/medium>

Cicero's *De Inventione -* <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/cb/0052/1r/small>

The challenge pertains only to the first page (or paragraph) of each manuscript. The challenge will be conducted in the following manner:

* + 1. Make a transcription of the Latin text on the first page, rendering on paper what your team believes to be the most accurate rendering of the text on that page.
    2. Translate the first page of the chosen manuscript into clear readable English while remaining faithful to the Latin, but not simply copying from a published translation.
    3. Analyze the manuscript for unique qualities, which would be difficult to reflect in a translation. These could include images on the page (“folio”), text, which is ambiguous, the handwriting, accents and other grammatical marks, etc.
    4. Consider what your observations of the manuscript itself can tell us about the scribal process.
    5. Send in your transcription, translation, observations, and conclusions in a single orderly pdf document with your school name and the names of the students participating. The deadline for submitting the Classics Day Manuscripts Challenge will be MARCH 25th 2013.
    6. Holy Cross will evaluate each school’s entry and select the top contenders to present their findings in order to decide who wins first prize etc. BE PREPARED TO PRESENT in the event that your school is chosen. Presentations should be no more than 10 minutes long, and cover your procedures, findings, observations and any questions that you raised or struggled with while completing the challenge. Presenters will be informed roughly one week before Classics Day.

Thank you for your interest in the Manuscript Challenge. Send submissions to the email [arboud15@g.holycross.edu](mailto:arboud15@g.holycross.edu) with the subject line MANUSCRIPT CHALLENGE. In addition, send any questions or concerns you might have to that email address. Since this is a new event, we are more than willing to work with you in working through any problems. Good luck to all competitors. AMDG.

Descriptions of Manuscript Choices

**1)A commentary by Servius on Vergil, Aeneid (VI-VIII)** - Part I of the commentary of the late Roman grammarian Servius (ca. 400) on Virgil's Aeneid (Books 6 through 8 [v. 685]), produced at the Abbey of St. Gall in about 900. Part II of this widely disseminated commentary is found in [Cod. Sang. 862](http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/csg/0862).

**2)Titus Livius, Ab urbe condita, libri 21-30** - This volume is the second of a three-volume set, an edition of Livius written in 1442 and 1143 in Padua. It is of particular interest because the texual model is well-known: the Livius manuscript of Sicco Polentone (1375/76-1446), Chancellor of Padua, today Holkham Hall Library, MS 349. This manuscript is written in an extremely regular semi-Gothic script augmented with exquisite white-void initials.

**3)Ovid, Metamorphoses, Fasti** - The double page at the beginning of this manuscript of the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti* of Ovid shows its connections to antiquity: the use of initials in the fashion of antiquity, the purple tint that colors the entire double page and the laurels that crown the poet's verses and anchor the production of this volume in the Italian Renaissance. The dedication in golden letters on the back of the first page confirm this origin: the manuscript was copied by the Neapolitan Ippolito Lunense for the secretary of Ferdinand I. of Aragon, Antonello Petrucci, whose coat of arms, surrounded by *putti* and horns of plenty, may be found on the back of the second page. The style, color and ink are changed according to the text. The decoration with *bianchi girari* of a very high quality is typical of Neapolitan production methods that were practiced by the royal illuminator Cola Rapicano.

4)**Cicero, De Inventione** - While Cicero is regarded today mainly as a philosopher and politician, he was regarded during the middle ages mainly as a teacher of public rhetoric. This is demonstrated by CB 52, most likely of French origin, which consists of copies of "De inventione" and a work long attributed to Cicero, "Rhetorica ad Herennium". The manuscript dates from the beginning of the 12th century.

Descriptions obtain from [*www.****e****-****codices****.unifr.ch/*](http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/)

Key Terms for Certamen and Manuscripts Challenge

Recto - the right hand side of a double page, or the front of a folio, in a book, abbreviated as r.

Verso - the left hand page of a double page of a book, or the reverse of a folio, abbreviated as v.

Folio - a single leaf or page of a manuscript; they are numbered with r (recto) for the front or right hand page and v (verso) for the back or left hand page.

Quire - a bundle of rectangular parchment sheets, folded and stitched to form a section of a book prior to binding; also called a gathering.

Majuscule - any script composed entirely of capital letters.

Minuscule - script composed of lower case letters.

Cursive - script, which is rapidly written as letters are joined together.

Uncial - script derived from late Roman form, comprising rounded capitalized letters.

Scholion - are [grammatical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammar), critical, or explanatory comments, either original or extracted from pre-existing commentaries, which are inserted on the margin of the [manuscript](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuscript) of an ancient author. The earliest attested use of the word dates to the 1st century BC.

Illuminated Manuscript - the decoration of a manuscript with gold leaf; the term is used loosely, but not strictly correctly, to refer to any illustrated manuscript.

Codex - a manuscript in the form of a book.

Gloss - a commentary on, or sometimes a translation of, a manuscript work written between the lines or around the margins of the main text.

Hand - the distinctive features of the handwriting of an individual.

Incunabula - a book printed before 1500.

Papyrus - writing membrane made from the stem fibres of reeds beaten together in layers at right angles.

Ligature - a method of writing certain letter combinations in which two separate letters are joined into a new form.

Palimpsest - a manuscript, which has been re-used by scraping off the original text and writing over the top.

Scribe - a person who transcribes documents or undertakes dictation by hand

Definitions obtained from <http://medievalwriting.50megs.com/glossary2.htm> found courtesy of Nikolas Churik