

Fragmentology

A Journal for the Study of Medieval Manuscript Fragments

Fragmentology is an international, peer-reviewed Open Access journal, dedicated to publishing scholarly articles and reviews concerning medieval manuscript fragments. *Fragmentology* welcomes submissions, both articles and research notes, on any aspect pertaining to Latin and Greek manuscript fragments in the Middle Ages.

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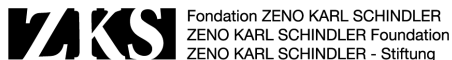
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Conference Report

Fragmenta Liturgica. Colloque internationale
Paris (France), 6–7 November 2024

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The international conference *Fragmenta Liturgica*, organized by Laura Albiero (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis – Musik Akademie Basel) and Francesco Siri (École nationale des chartes) in collaboration with the Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes (CNRS) and the École nationale des chartes, was held on November 6 and 7, 2024, at the École nationale des chartes (Salle Delisle) in Paris.

In response to recent scholarship emphasizing the importance of studying, analyzing, and understanding medieval fragments, Albiero and Siri organized a two-day conference focusing on a specific category of medieval fragments: liturgical fragments. These represent one of the most complex and understudied types of medieval sources. Liturgical fragments make up a substantial proportion of the surviving medieval material, often preserving unknown texts and music, and providing invaluable insights into the historical, social, and theological contexts in which they were created and used. Liturgical books, originally designed as instruments to support the mass, office, and other religious actions, were disassembled over the centuries for various reasons. As a result, liturgical books took on new functions, their fragments being repurposed as pastedowns, flyleaves, and bindings for other books. Alternatively, liturgical fragments often survive as loose leaves in archives or as protective covers for other documents.

The conference addressed the many facets of the complex history of liturgical fragments and had three main objectives: 1) to provide a platform for scholars to share current research and projects with the international community, 2) to stimulate discussion on issues

related to the preservation and description of liturgical fragments, and 3) to foster international and interdisciplinary dialogue on the multiple approaches to the study of liturgical fragments.

Fragmenta Liturgica brought together twenty-three international scholars, including musicologists and medievalists for two days of presentations and discussions. Giacomo Baroffio provided the inaugural lecture, *Il frammento oltre i frammenti*, in which he explored the nature and limitations of fragmentology, a field concerned with surviving sources that, by definition, offer only partial views of the past. He emphasized that this is particularly true in the study of medieval liturgy and music. Even complete liturgical books, he argued, fail to convey all the materials required for the performance of the liturgy, as many liturgical actions—such as gestures, texts, and music—were not recorded in written form but were instead part of an oral tradition. Prof. Baroffio also highlighted the inherently religious aspect of liturgical sources, for liturgy is an expression of faith. He distinguished between two perspectives: the academic approach, which seeks to reconstruct gestures as expressions of the past, and the religious perspective, which seeks to interpret these gestures within the broader context of Church history, revelation, and faith. In his conclusion, Prof. Baroffio made several methodological recommendations, emphasizing the need for the realization of new repertoires and research tools for the study of liturgical books, with the aim of establishing standardized and internationally recognized references.

Following the inaugural lecture, the conference proceeded with seven sessions organized into four thematic categories: *Perspectives* (I and II), *Methodologie, Catalogues et Projets* and *Decouvertes* (I–III). These sessions were chaired by François Bougard (Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes), Alexis Douchin (Archives Nationales de France), Laura Albiero, and Francesco Siri.

Perspectives I–II

These sessions featured presentations of six ongoing projects focused on the recovery and valorization (description and publication) of liturgical fragment collections of varying sizes, types,

and geographic locations. The first session opened with Veronika Drescher (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek), who, in her contribution *Des trésors liturgiques parmi les déchets de reliure ? – Le quotidien d'une bibliothécaire*, discussed the challenges of identifying and cataloging liturgical fragments held at the Austrian National Library. Some fragments are found as isolated leaves, detached from their host-volumes; more often, however, fragments are found within the volumes of the library. Drescher emphasized that identifying and describing these fragments is a resource-intensive process, complicated by the lack of comprehensive catalogs or inventories, which are typically limited to basic shelfmark lists. She also underscored the need for standards and protocols for fragment description, especially in the context of digital humanities, which seek to make fragment descriptions publicly available through open-access databases. David Andrés Fernández (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) further examined the absence of standard cataloging protocols in the Spanish-speaking world in his talk *Musico-Liturgical Fragments in the Spanish World: Some Notes on Historiography and New Publications*. Christian Meyer (Strasbourg) offered a different perspective in *La collection Bohn: un cas d'espèce?*, reflecting on the significance of private collections of liturgical fragments. Such collections, often deliberately assembled by collectors, can include rare pieces and serve as valuable pedagogical tools for study.

The second session of *Perspectives* was introduced by William Duba (Université de Fribourg), who presented *Sorting out the Mass of Liturgical Fragments: An Ongoing Process*. Duba discussed the conceptual and practical challenges associated with the description of liturgical fragments within the *Fragmentarium* project—the first international, open-source database dedicated to the identification and description of medieval fragments. In her presentation, *The Complex Relationship of Fragments and Their Carriers*, Zsuzsa Czagány (HUN-REN Research Centre for the Humanities) provided an update on the state of research regarding digital fragment catalogs in Hungary. She also examined an anomalous case in which multiple fragments from a single manuscript were repurposed as binding material for several books within the same library. Michael Braunger (University of Tübingen) concluded the session with

Digital *Approaches to Liturgical Music Fragments from Württemberg*, highlighting how digital humanities can aid in the reconstruction of lost books and the tracing of liturgical changes and historical causes that led to the creation of liturgical fragments.

Methodologie

Centered on the historiography of fragmentology, the papers in this session explored the creation and significance of fragment collections through three case studies. In *Fragments et histoire des bibliothèques: un bilan d'étape*, Thomas Falmagne (Bibliothèque nationale de Luxembourg) examined the production of liturgical fragments used as book bindings before 1600, now housed at the Bibliothèque nationale de Luxembourg. He demonstrated that their creation was closely linked to both liturgical reforms and the religious conflicts of the period. Giovanni Varelli (Università di Pavia) analyzed the collection of musical fragments assembled by Padre Gian Battista Martini. His contribution, titled “*What is there to say about liturgical fragments?*”: *The Origins of Musical Fragmentology and Contemporary Skepticism*, he highlighted how, in this case, fragments were collected specifically as tools for studying the past. Finally, Anette Löffler (Würzburg) presented *Ritual Determination of Liturgical Fragments – Curse or Blessing?*, a talk examining liturgical fragments found in the archives of East Prussia. Löffler discussed their potential to enhance our understanding of liturgical practices, noting, however, that such fragments often lack sufficient information to be definitively attributed to a specific rite or liturgical use, making any such identification potentially speculative.

Catalogues et Projets

This session was dedicated to three ongoing cataloguing initiatives. Alberto Medina de Seiça (CESEM-In2PAST, FCSH Nova University Lisbon) presented *Fragments of Chant Manuscripts in Coimbra Archives: Challenges, Methods, and Initial Findings of the ‘Lost and Found’ Project*, discussing the cataloguing process of the fragments held in the Archives of Coimbra and the first important

discoveries of this project. The contribution *The Catalogus fragmentorum cum notis musicis medii aevi in Slovacia Series and the Phenomenon of So-Called “Recycled” Musical Fragments in Slovakia*, by Eva Veselovská (Institute of Musicology, Slovak Academy of Sciences) presented the catalogues of Slovakian fragments published since 2010. This comprehensive project has two main objectives: first, to make the fragments accessible to scholars and medievalists through cataloguing and digitization, and second, to examine the historical significance of Slovakian fragments, which largely survive as manuscript waste (*maculature*). The final contribution of the session, titled *Prime analisi e proposte di ricerca sui frammenti liturgici in situ di una biblioteca cappuccina (Madonna del Sasso di Orselina, Svizzera)*, focused on the project *Ticinensia Disiecta*. Marina Bernasconi Reusser (Université de Lausanne) and Renzo Iacobucci (Biblioteca Salita dei Frati, Lugano) discussed how most of the fragments in the library of the Capuchin friars were repurposed as book bindings and reflected on the challenges of both describing and valorizing them while maintaining their attachment to their host volumes.

Decouvertes I–III

Eight papers presented in the three *Découvertes* sessions demonstrated how liturgical fragments can provide invaluable insights into the history of culture, liturgy, and music. In some cases, fragments preserve unique texts and music that would otherwise be lost to history; in others, the study of discrete collections of fragments allows historians to trace the development of libraries, the choices made by their curators, and broader cultural trends.

David Catalunya and Carmen Julia Gutiérrez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) delivered a presentation titled *New Fragments of a Late 13th-Century Liber Organi*. Through a detailed codicological, paleographical, and musicological analysis of a newly discovered polyphonic fragment, they explored its significance for the history of Parisian polyphony. Paleographical analysis was also at the center of Åslaug Ommundsen’s (University of Bergen) contribution, *Two curious ‘martyrology-missals’ in Nordic fragment-collections*, where

she provided an overview of the state of research on fragments in Scandinavia. In a region where fragments constitute the majority of extant medieval sources, Ommundsen brought the attention to two liturgical fragments that exhibit unusual paleographical features, prompting further investigation on their origins.

Laura Albiero, in her talk *Liturgies oubliées, liturgies retrouvées*, reflected on the role of liturgical fragments as witnesses to unique and otherwise unattested texts and chants. She presented several examples of *unica* discovered during research conducted at the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Archives Nationales de France, as part of her project *Fragment Parisiensia. Pour une grammaire de la destruction des livres liturgiques*. Christelle Cazaux (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis), in her contribution *L'office de saint Vincent de Saragosse dans les antiphonaires de la collégiale de Berne (fin XVe siècle)*, also discussed the presence of *unica* in the antiphonaries from the Church of St. Vincent in Berne.

Francesco Siri's paper, *De Mosomensis monasterii librorum fragmentis*, demonstrated how the study of a group of fragments from the monastery of Mouzon, now held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, significantly contributes to tracing and reconstructing the history of its medieval library.

Alessandra Ignesti (Università degli Studi di Pavia) shared her discoveries in *Liturgical Fragments with Musical Notation at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*. She described how some fragments at the library contain distinctive musical notation, documenting the transition from neumatic to square notation, while also revealing notational features linked to different geographic regions, thus inviting further investigation. Ignesti also emphasized that studying specific liturgical aspects of these fragments allows for comparative analysis that can help pinpoint their geographic origin.

Gionata Brusa (Universität Würzburg) discussed the unique situation of the fragments held at the Biblioteca Capitolare di Vercelli, Italy, in his paper *Medieval Fragments as a Part of a Network: The Case of the Vercelli Chapter Library*. The chapter library, which preserves part of its medieval heritage, offers valuable insights when its fragments are studied alongside local historical sources, such as

inventories and documents. This approach allows scholars to connect elements and trace aspects of cultural history.

From a different perspective, Shin Nishimagi (Conservatoire de Tokyo) presented on liturgical fragments held in private collections in Tokyo in his talk *Liturgie dans deux fragments de tonaire récemment découverts*. Some of these fragments are used for pedagogical purposes. Nishimagi focused on two fragments of tonaries, which provide crucial insights into the understanding of this liturgical book at the intersection of liturgy and music theory.