

La Sfera Challenge

# Team USA

**Team USA** will work with the copy of *La Sfera* housed at the Yale University’s Beinecke Library, ff. **1r-24v**.

## TEAM DOCUMENTS

**Transcription Portal**

**Project Log**

**Rules and Guidelines**

---

### Team Updates:

**May 28:** Team USA submitted, timestamp 5/28/20, 18:48 EST. Whew! It was a great ride! For a look back on the experience, enjoy **this small reflection** by team member Caterina Agostini. It’s in the judges hands now!

**May 26:** Yesterday was a holiday, so things were slower, but Team USA still met up to run through our transcription protocols. The “transcription statement” was assembled by members Laura Ingallinella and Winston Black, and is a tour de force of script and manuscript know-how.

What resonated most from our discussion is the iterative nature of transcription; it is only through our interactions with this script and text that we understood the scribe’s idiosyncrasies and how we might transfer this expression of scribal practice to a keyboard-oriented version of the text. Moreover, we are beginning to feel a kind of intimacy with our scribe. We really don’t like those extra-

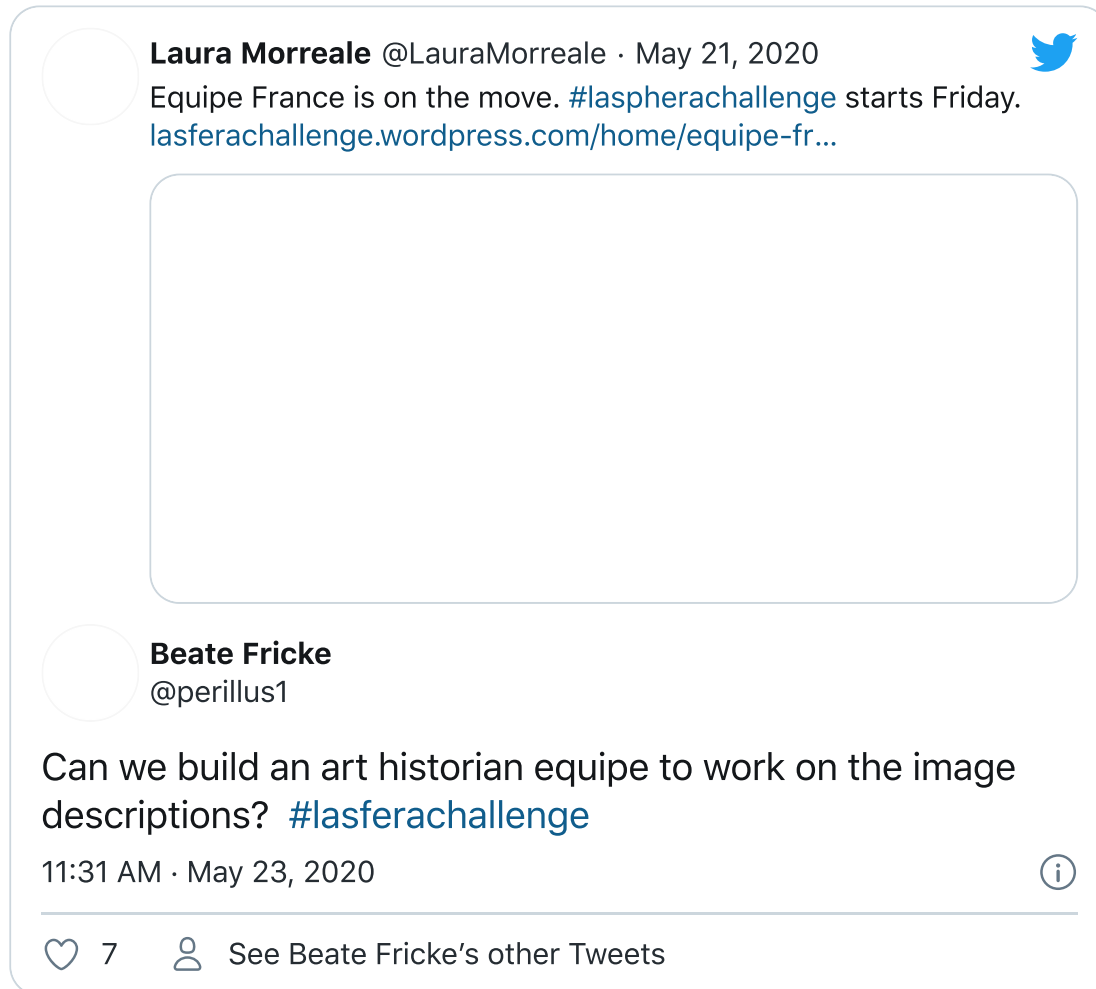
long tails on certain of the letter “a’s,” and the use of the barred “p” to mean “pr,” “per,” or even “pl” is frustrating. But we are starting to understand each other, across time and medium, and that is always exciting.

We now have the last push ahead of us! Go Team USA!

**May 24:** As day 3 of the challenge begins, it is a moment to reflect on the wild ride that was day 2. Team USA member Caterina Agostini sums it up in one tweet:

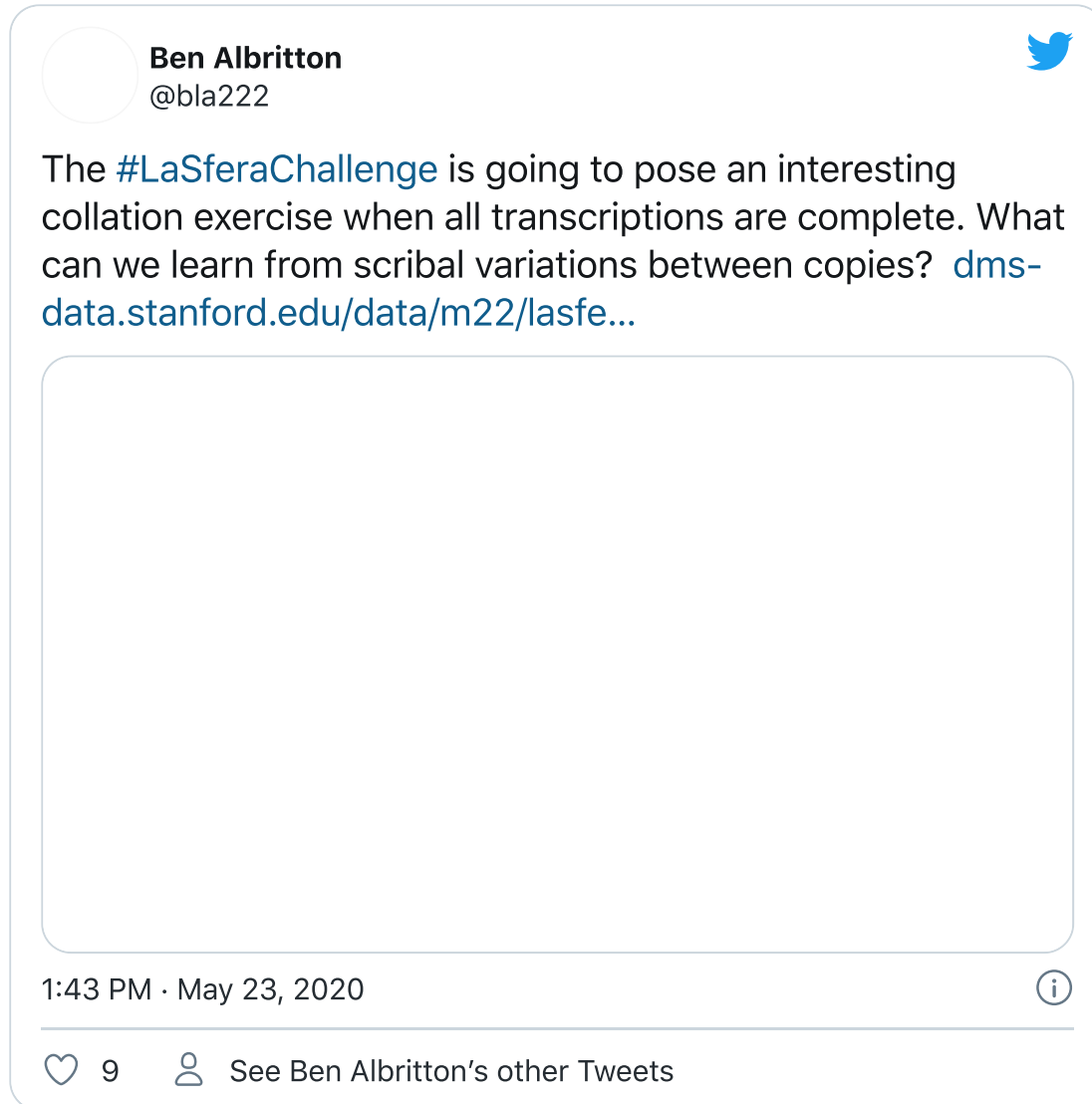


Aside from Team USA getting out a rough transcription of nearly 3/4 of our text, we also heard on Twitter from a group of art historians who are interested in the image tradition and might want to “help” us with our image descriptions. Of course it would be wonderful to have such expertise! According to our art historians, emails have been sent to new collaborators, so we will see if we can add a “Team Artiste” page to this website.



Interest in the program of illustrations led Ben Albritton to create a view of the three different #lasferachallenge manuscripts, presented side by side in a **IIIF Mirador View** for easy comparison. Since FromThePage relies on the same IIIF technology as the

viewer below, our transcriptions are already visible on each page:



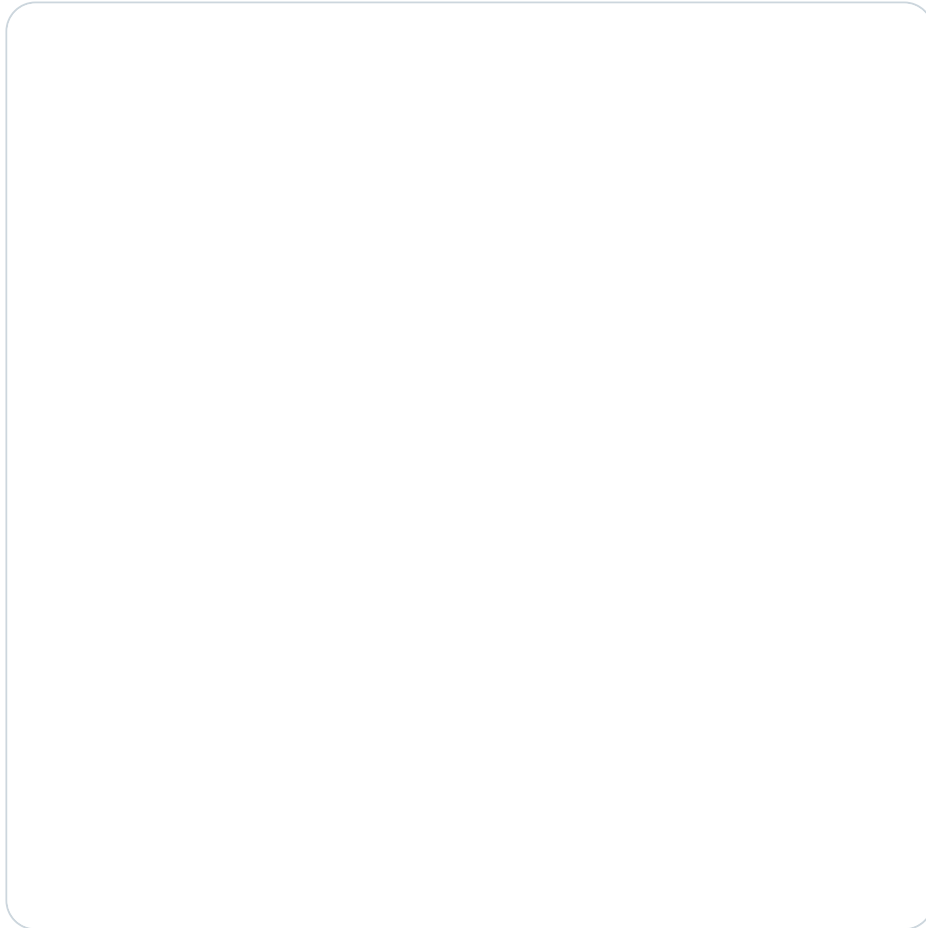
Other libraries with their own versions of the text chimed in, including the Newberry Library with its digitized version. The Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas has one as well!



**Lisa Fagin Davis** @lisafdavis · May 23, 2020



Let's not get so caught up in transcribing that we fail to appreciate the amazing illustrations of Dati's La Sfera! Here's a diagram of Earth shadowing the moon when the sun is in opposition. Geocentric, but points for effort. (@BeineckeLibrary MS 328, f. 5r) #laspherachallenge



**Karen Christianson**  
@KACNewberry

The [@NewberryLibrary](#) has the most gorgeous illustrated manuscript version of Sfera, from c. 1425! Fully digitized here [digcoll.newberry.org/#/item/nby\\_dig...](http://digcoll.newberry.org/#/item/nby_dig...)  
[@DigitalNewberry](#) #medievaltwitter #medievalmanuscripts #medieval #maps

3:49 PM · May 23, 2020



9



See Karen Christianson's other Tweets

Manuscript wizard Lisa Fagin Davis began the collation and stemma-building process, comparing one stanza across our three different versions. We are beginning to see various textual families, based on both word choice and illustration program. Equipe France's arsenal manuscript seems to be an outlier.

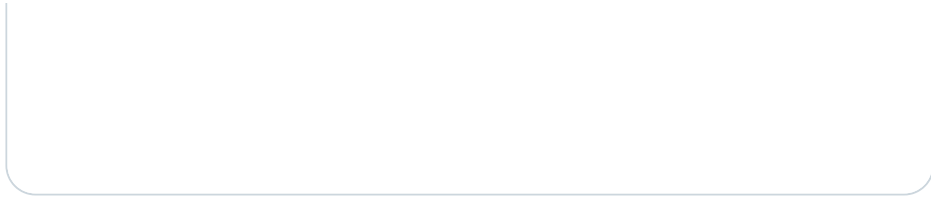


**Lisa Fagin Davis** @lisafdavis · May 23, 2020



Replying to @lisafdavis

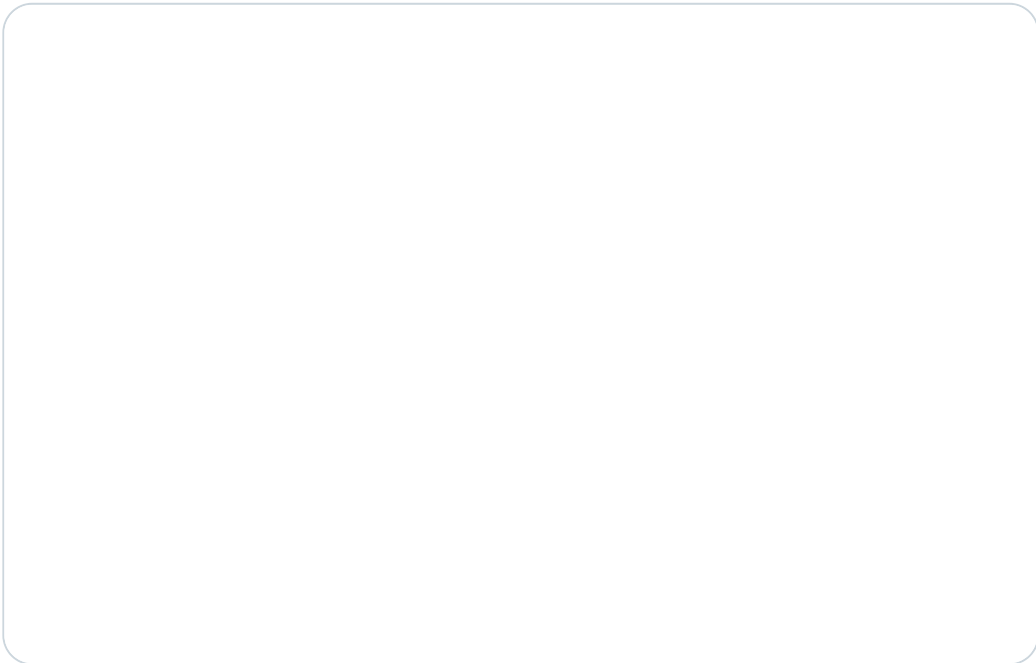
Here's another, w/ the 3 subject mss. We're observing different orthographic traditions + textual variants. Will be interesting to see if the illustrative grouping (Vat. and [@BeineckeLibrary](#) vs. BnF) is manifested in the text as well. Need to compare more mss!!!  
[#lasferachallenge](#)



**Lisa Fagin Davis**

@lisafdavis

Because I couldn't resist, I collated one stanza (shown here, starting with "Frison") of the three [#lasferachallenge](#) mss against mss [@HoughtonLib](#) [@BPLBoston](#) and a second [@BeineckeLibrary](#). BnF was a textual outlier, giving "intra molto" on line 5 where others give "e va molto".



2:35 PM · May 23, 2020



 5  See Lisa Fagin Davis's other Tweets

Lisa was also able to look at four more versions, scattered around the internet, so we will see what day 3 brings. Day 2 was fascinating, inspiring, and a reminder of how many wonderful people we have in our community. But, in the end, what is most important is...GO TEAM USA!!!!

**May 23:** Team USA starting player Lisa Fagin Davis sums it up well:



**Lisa Fagin Davis**

@lisafdavis



Day two of [#laspherachallenge](#) begins with Team USA in the lead, but Equipe France has the time-zone advantage and is already hard at work. Team USA has at least one member in California, so we won't be at full speed for a few more hours. Stay tuned! [fromthepage.com/stanfordlibrar...](http://fromthepage.com/stanfordlibrar...)



TEAM USA members include:

- Benjamin Albritton, Stanford University Libraries, Editor
  - Laura Morreale, Independent Scholar, Team Lead
  - Raymond Clemens, Yale University Library
  - Marie Richards, Independent Historian
  - Christina Bruno, Fordham University
  - Caterina Agostini, Rutgers University
  - Rose McCandless, Ohio State University
  - Lisa Fagin Davis, Medieval Academy of America
  - Winston Black, Independent Scholar
  - Laura Ingallinella, Wellesley College
- 

Share this:



**Customize buttons**



One blogger likes this.

**Edit**

**[La Sfera Challenge](#), [Blog at WordPress.com](#).**



**May 22, bis:** Our FromThePage partners observe the following:



**May 22:** Team meeting: we decided on a “nesting” strategy to mark images and marginalia. Ray Clemens informed us that there are somewhere around 40 or 50 copies of this text that are also illustrated. The text is valuable for the understanding of geography, but also educations, as this was probably used as a school text. We’ll meet again on May 25 to compare notes from our first transcription efforts.

**May 16:** TEAM USA is full and ready to go. On May 22, we will meet and set our strategy. En garde, Equipe France.

---