

## Vergil and the Changing Mise-en-Page from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages

This paper will trace the changing form of Vergil in manuscripts from late antiquity through the humanist period. Late antique manuscripts like the *Vergilius Augusteus* (Vatican, BAV, MS Vat. lat. 3256) and *Vergilius Romanus* (Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 3867) both retain conventions of the papyri copies from which they derive, using *scriptura continua*, without word spacing and punctuation. The text is now in one broad undifferentiated column, and each page starts in the *Codex Augusteus* begins with a small decorated initial – each page is given a prominence not given the column in a scroll. In the *Vergilius Romanus*, rubrics are in red, but are in the same hand as main text. It adapts its illustrations from earlier media, some radically adapted for the codex, like council of the gods, taking advantage of the codices' two page spread. Each poem is introduced by verse *argumenta* from the late antique classroom, and its readers have made comprehension easier by adding points between the words (Nordenfalk, 1976; Wright, 2001; Parkes, 1992).

In our earliest Carolingian manuscripts like Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS lat. 7906 from Germany, the appearance of the text has been transformed. There is a strong distinction between the uncial display script and the minuscule of the main text. The text is now in two columns, each introduced by a *littera notabilior* set in a column slightly to the left of the main column of text, the preferred format in the rest of the middle ages. Word spacing and punctuation are thoroughly incorporated. A new kind of decorated initial is used: the initial *A* of *arma* is formed of a grotesque (a dog) biting the mouth of an eagle, both filled with Germanic interlacing. The late antique verse summaries are here redeployed to articulate the beginning of each book, otherwise unnumbered. While Vergil had long been the subject of self-standing commentaries like Servius', in the Carolingian period manuscripts begin to integrate his

commentary into the same manuscripts as the text. The process of integrating commentary and text was difficult, and in the earlier manuscripts the commentary might be several pages from the text (Novara, 1990; Contreni, 1984).

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a more elaborate paratext appears in many manuscripts, often including one or more sets of verse summaries. Many manuscripts include one or more *accessus*, introductions situating the poems within medieval organization of knowledge in ethical branch of philosophy and including one or more lives (Munk Olsen). Glosses reflect different approaches to the text, spiritual allegory, moral allegory, and an interest in the text as a source for information about the ancient world (Baswell, 1993). Illustrations such as those of the twelfth-century Dessau, Anhaltische Landesbücheri, MS HB 13, often reflect such allegorical readings (Wlosok, 1998).

In humanist manuscripts we see a return, at least conceptually, to the classical past (Williams and Pattie). Patrons were often lay lords, whose author portraits and coats of arms might appear on the first page (see, for example, London, British Library, MS Burney 270, f. 1, with the Strozzi family arms). The humanists adopted a minuscule based on the Carolingian script found in manuscripts that they believed to be ancient, while their capitals drew on those of monumental imperial inscriptions. They wished their manuscripts to be distinct from those of scholastic works in gothic script and so incorporated specific elements of script which they believed to be ancient. They used the ampersand used in Carolingian manuscripts but not in gothic ones, and restored “ae” and “oe” or “ę” where gothic manuscripts used “e”. Decorative elements like cupids draw on from the classical repertory, but they adopted other elements from “ancient” manuscripts in Carolingian minuscule, such as interlacing white vines from “ancient”

Carolingian. While evoking the antique in striking ways, these manuscripts do not succeed in returning to it (Kallendorf, 2015).

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