

The Roman Vergil (or Codex Romanus, so named by Valeriano in 1521) is one of the most precious manuscripts in the Vatican Library. Produced in Rome before the end of the 5th century AD, it is a finely designed and beautifully illuminated copy of the works of Vergil. Its influence on the development of medieval manuscript art is important in many ways; for example, the first page of the text of the Aeneid is the earliest known decorated incipit page. All twenty illuminated pages will be reproduced in sequence, with explanatory text. In the accompanying commentary, Professor Wright provides a wide-ranging discussion of the place of the manuscript in the history of art and of book design, illustrated with comparative material from other manuscripts, mosaics, and ivories, along with an analysis of the script and letter forms. Aimed at a general audience of lovers of manuscripts and classical art and culture, this is the fascinating story of a 1500 year-old manuscript, interpreted by its leading scholar.

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