

De Rerum Natura Early Manuscript - codex oblongus

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 5, 2024 at 7:32 AM

There already exists some information on the forum about the early manuscripts (but could not find that thread) so posting this in a new thread.

Quote

This manuscript distinguishes itself by the spacious layout of the page. In spite of its large dimensions, the page counts only twenty lines. The ample spacing does full justice to the excellent Carolingian minuscule, the new script which was developed towards the end of the 8th century. As happened so often, this original manuscript was corrected afterwards. Sometimes this was done by comparing the copied text carefully with the exemplar, the book which served as a model for the copy. At other times the corrector would use his own judgment. Of course it was desirable to save the book's appearance as much as possible. In the case of parchment this is not difficult, for the writing is easily scratched out with a knife. This is what the corrector of this Lucretius manuscript did. One alteration on the presented page, folio 22r., immediately catches the eye, because the corrector replaced one single line by two new ones, marring the layout of the page in the process. The corrector's adjustments are easily recognizable, because he used another script, the so-called Insular script, which originated in England and Ireland.

We even know the corrector's name. Bischoff discovered that the writing must be of the hand of the learned Irish monk Dungal, who had been invited to the continent by Charlemagne. The provenance of the manuscript from the circles nearest to the emperor himself explains the magnificent design of the book.

[Scribe and corrector — Highlights — Medieval Manuscripts in Dutch Collections — Koninklijke Bibliotheek](#)