

**H**ec virgo cuius natus a uide  
us est portatus sum l' felle & aceto  
re uidente datus leto. ps. vñ.

**Q**uis  
in adiutorium meum  
intende: dñs ad adiuuandū  
me festina.

**C**onfundantur et reueant  
qui querunt aīam meam.

**U**ertantur retrorsum & e  
rubescant: qui uolunt in  
mala.

**U**ertantur statim erubesc  
centes: qui dicunt in euge

## 1. Psalter fragment

Northern France, late 13th century

Ricketts 21

5 leaves; 16x11cm. (9x6.25cm.); vellum

Illuminated initials; zoomorphic borders; red and blue penwork

The devotional function of psalters is emphasized in Ricketts 21 by the placement of short, rubricated prayers addressed to the Virgin between the psalms. They are surrounded with an elaborate border consisting largely of elongated dragon types.

The borders are connected to the illuminated initials (approximately 1.2cm. sq.) that open each psalm. Smaller gold letters surrounded by blue filigree penwork alternate with blue letters outlined in red at the beginning of each verse; line endings are filled with red and blue inked patterns sometimes highlighted with small gold spheres. Each page is pricked and ruled for fifteen lines; the writing frame is often slightly crooked.

The five leaves in the Lilly fragment (now foliated 1-5) were not originally consecutive. Folio 1 contains Psalm 11:3 to the end and, on the verso, a complete prayer with the beginning of Psalm 12:1-2. Psalm 34:13-22 appears on folio 2; folio 3 contains the end of a rubricated prayer and Psalm 37:1-11. Since folios 2 and 3 are still loosely joined, they aid in reconstructing the complete Psalter to which the Ricketts 21 fragment originally belonged. In order to accommodate the remaining text of Psalm 34 and Psalms 35-36, plus additional intercessory prayers, there would have originally been approximately six folios (or 12 pages) between them. Folios 4 and 5 may have been part of the same quire, since Psalm 67:7-17 on folio 4 is followed by the end of Psalm 68 from verse 33 on folio 5r; 5v contains another complete prayer and Psalm 69:1-4.

The illuminator employed an extensive palette and a keen imagination while creating the zoomorphic borders and their accompanying initials. The palette consists of blue, mauve, a warm gray, and a red-brown as well as black, white, and occasionally green. Burnished gold accented with red fills the intervals of the blue or mauve initials. The bowls of the initials also contain twisted animal-like forms (1v, 5v) or floral imagery (3r). Gold is heavily applied in the border, although the beasts themselves are painted with a beige pigment similar in tone to the gold.

The Lilly attribution of this fragment to northern France in the late thirteenth century is supported by its marked similarity to a psalter for Franciscan usage in Oxford (Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 48) dated to 1235-1253/55 (Branner, 211). Attributed to the Guines Atelier, a workshop that moved from the far north to Paris at about this time, this Franciscan Psalter contains a similar blue with red and gold with blue system of alternating verse capitals, as well as the red and blue line fillers found in the Lilly fragment. Although this decoration is common in Gothic manuscripts, it is notable here since it is combined, as in Ricketts 21, with attenuated hybrids intertwined with the decorated initials opening each psalm.

*PROVENANCE*

Acquired by C.L. Ricketts from E. Weyhe, New York, 1929; Lilly Library, 1961

J.R.G.