

Palaeography

DIGITAL HUMANITIES FOR MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCES

4. Uncial, semiuncial, carolingian minuscule

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<https://www.mihaimaga.ro/dh/>

1 Evolution

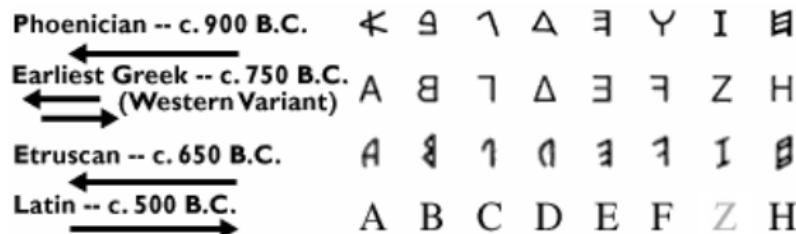
2 Characteristics

3 Abbreviations

4 Example

Homework

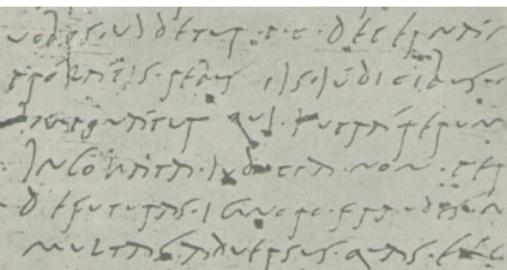
The Latin alphabet originates in the Etruscan alphabet, which in turn originates in the western variant of the Greek alphabet.



Initially there was a single set of characters (capitals), which began to differentiate by support and author of writing (writing hands).



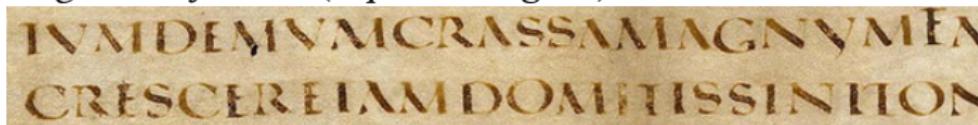
Trajan's Column (2nd c.)



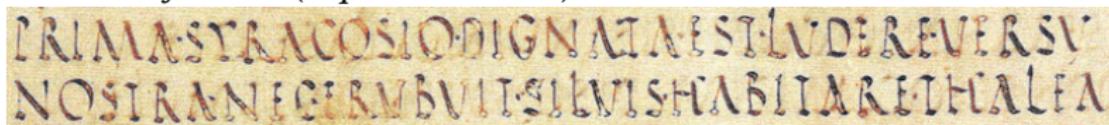
Papyrus with Senate discourses (1st c.)

Gradually, the letter shapes transformed to accommodate the writing needs.

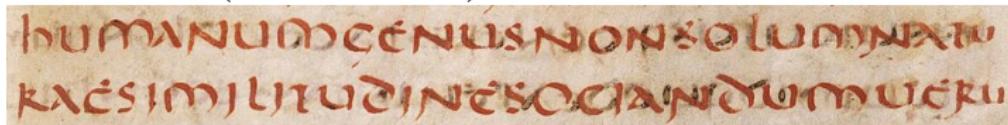
- elegant majuscule (*capitalis elegans*) 1st–4th c.



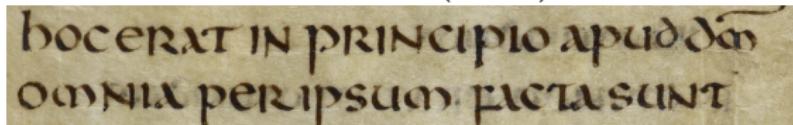
- rustic majuscule (*capitalis rustica*) 1st–9th c.



- uncial letter (*littera uncialis*) 3rd–10th c.

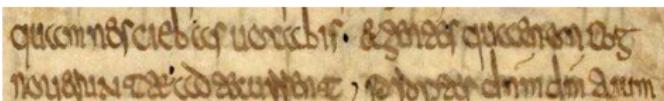


- semi-uncial letter 5th–8th (-10th) c.

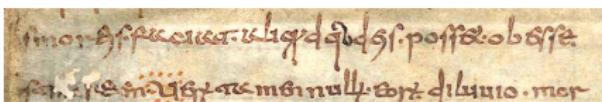


Starting from the 7th c. forms of cursive writing appear in different areas of Western Europe (national hands).

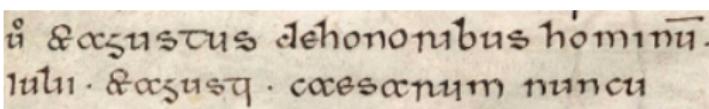
- merovingian cursive
(Luxeuil)



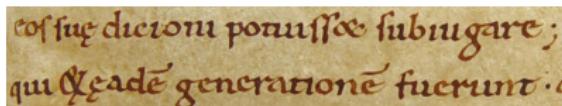
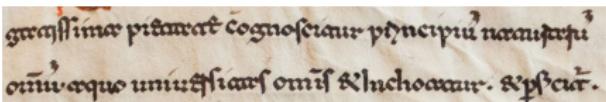
- visigothic cursive



- insular (irish) cursive

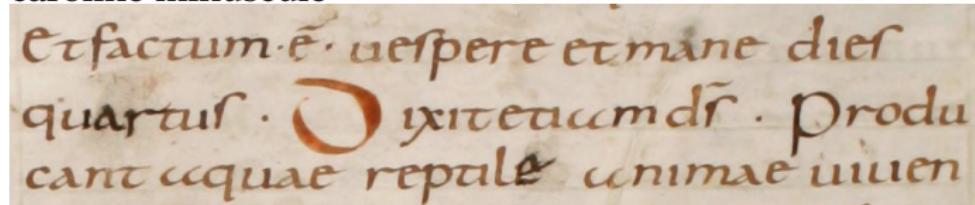


- italian pre-caroline (beneventan and franco-lombardic) cursive
- german pre-caroline cursive



Starting from the 8th c., following the reform initiated by Charlemagne, a new writing is developed, intended to be easier to read and uniform in the Holy Roman Empire.

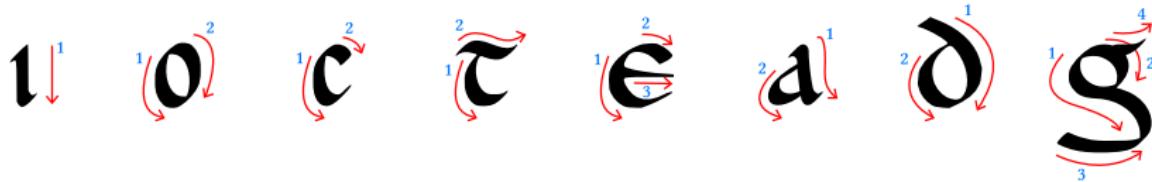
- caroline minuscule



Some national hands continue to be used in some territories even after the caroline reform. Simultaneously, the uncial or the roman capitals start to be reused to differentiate the initials.

- rounded lines
- discrete hooks
- uniform letter widths

Ductus



Some letters have a new shape in minuscule cursive writing:

f/s s **r** r **a/d** a **g/z** g **d/b** d **l** l **t** t **e/e** e

Abbreviations are less frequent and have multiple forms:

- sigla inherited from the Romans
& (et) **ꝝ** (cum/con-)
- usage of the tilde for nasalization and contraction

hominū (hominum) **ōm̄s** (omnis)

- *nomina sacra*
īhc (Ihesus) **xpc** (Christus) **ds** (Deus) **sps** (Spiritus)

Gradually abbreviations appear from the common ones (see *Course 3*)

- common abbreviation signs
p (per) **q** (quod) **ē** (est) **ꝝ** (-que) **ꝝ** -ae- **ꝝ** -us
- irish abbreviations
.n. (enim) **.i.** (id est) **.f./.s.** (scilicet)

Example

Palaeography

460vb

guagnata idem p̄ dñob̄lū fuit
nō r̄unglaia māre uncedū
I n̄fūnēdū uenēdū aliquid fuit
r̄um laur̄ ne p̄ytiāde quā
quā p̄ecare cōpellor̄.
E quid m̄r̄ dñi m̄r̄ p̄opriam cō
ut̄ p̄ecl̄p̄ar̄ aūlām nō
nō anglicū abūmātū
nālē cōtrūrē cōsequitū
cō
p̄oritū dāmūlār̄.
Quōdū audēc̄d̄r̄e aut̄ d̄
r̄ aut̄ anglicū ne quāb̄o
cālōr̄ m̄lī p̄elb̄at nāfūr̄
fūlācc̄r̄ p̄elb̄alār̄ nō
aūfēr̄ aq̄n̄ aq̄n̄ māl̄
cōr̄sūf̄a. aq̄n̄lān̄
guagnata ual̄r̄ al̄mōr̄.
F̄ec̄r̄nt itaq; ciuitates duas &
mōles duos terrenām scilicet
amorū usq; ad contemp̄tūm dī.
Caelestēm uero amor dī usq; ad eon-

461ra²

contum̄sū. d̄onq; illa inscip̄a h̄c
in dñō gloriatur. illa enī querit
ab hominib̄ gloiam huic aut̄
d̄c̄conscientiae tētis maxima est
gloria. illa in gloriāsa exaltat
caput suum. haec dicit dñosuo glo
riame & exaltans caput meum.
¶ Illi in principib̄ sc̄iūs uelinas
qua subiugat nationib̄ domi
nandi libido dominatur in hac
seruiunt in uicem incaritate:
¶ T̄ p̄aep̄oſiū cōſulēndo & ſubdit̄
obtemperando illa in ſuī potenti
bus diliḡt uirtutē ſuā. haec
dicit dñosuo. Diligam te chē
uirtus mea. Ideo quae in illa ſapien
tes eius ſecundum hominem uiuentes
aut corporis aut animis ū bona aut
utriſq; ſectatis ūnt. Aut qui potuer̄
cognoscere et̄m non ut dñ honorā
uerunt aut gratias egerunt ūt
euauierunt in cogitationib; ūt
& obſcuratum ēt in ſip̄e coeolu
dicentes ūtē ſapientes id est domi
nante ſibi ſup̄bia ſuā ſapien
ſe ūtē ſtūta factū & in mu
tauerunt gloriam incorruptib̄l̄
d̄i in ſimilitudinē imaginis cor
ruptibilis hominis & euoluerūt
461ra

quadrupedum & d̄p̄oraū adhuc
cēmodi enim ſimulacra adoranda
uel duces populoū uel ſectatores
fuerunt & coluerunt atq; ſtr̄. iuxta
creaturaē potius quam creatori q
est benedictus in ſc̄a. In hac aut̄
nulla est hominis ſapien
tia ūtē ſolitūr ueruſ dñ. id
expēctans p̄mū ſociat̄ ſeoy
non ſolum hominū uerum & ange
lorū ūt ſit dñ om̄a in omnibus.

IX pli cit lib XIII.

461rb

St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 177, ff. 460vb–461rb (middle of 9th c.)

AUGUSTINUS, *De civitate Dei*, lib. XIV, cap. 29.

Transcribe the following manuscript fragment:

MAGNA QUIDEM
libri huius. apud peri
patheticam sectam pro
batur auctoritas. Hic
namq. aristoteles. simplicium propo
sitionum naturam diligenter exa
minat, sed eius series scrupulosa im
peditur semita. & subtilibus pressa
sententias. aditum Intellegentiae

St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 820, p. 62 (second half of 9th c.)

BOETHIUS. In Perihermeneias Aristotelis

4. Uncial, semiuncial, carolingian minuscule