

# Palaeography

DIGITAL HUMANITIES FOR MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCES


## 2. Manuscripts and writing

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<https://www.dhcluj.ro/dhm/>

- 1 Writing tools and supports
  - 2 Technical limitations of writing
  - 3 Letter shape
  - 4 Ductus
  - 5 Example
-  Homework<sup>10</sup>

In the Middle Ages the books were handwritten.

■ Writing tools:

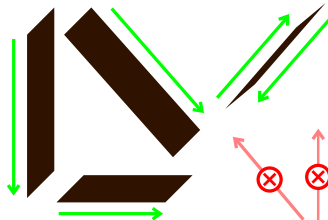
- quill or reed pen
- ink
- small knife (for recutting the quill and erasing)
- lead stylus (for lining)

■ Writing supports:

- parchment (types, hair/flesh side)
- papyrus (fiber direction)
- paper (watermark)



- writing support is expensive, the space is limited
- the quill cannot write upward
- to avoid ink blotches and to write cursive, letters have terminations
- the erasure may destroy the support
- sometimes the poor quality parchment has defects
- some inks affect the support (e.g.  $Cu_2O$ )
- sometimes the writing is obstructed by later writings (glosses, palimpsests)



Majuscles and minuscules

ADGIPL adgipl

median line

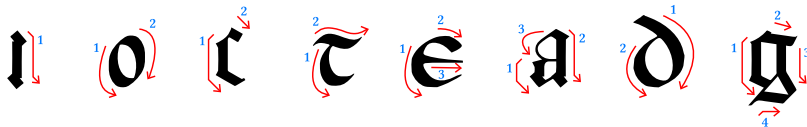
baseline

ascender

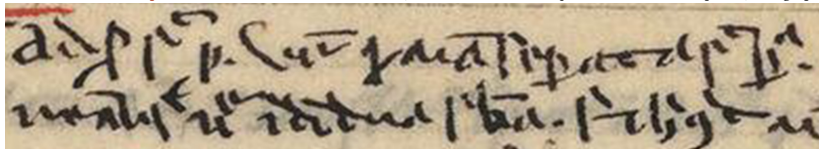
letter body

descender

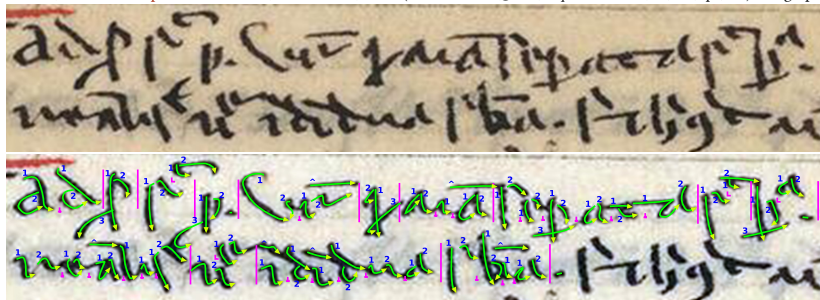
In deciphering the handwriting, the most important is the determination of the dynamics of the traces which make up the letter = **ductus**



Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.Lat.9851, f. 15v (THOMAS DE AQUINO, *Super Sententiis*, III, d.5, q.3, a.2) autograph

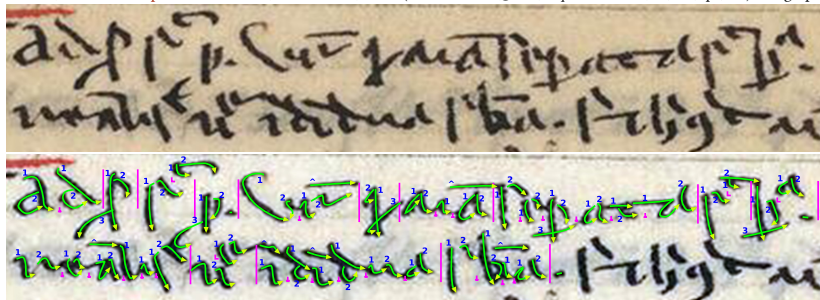


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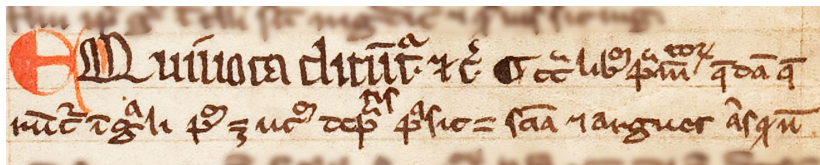
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ad 2<sup>o</sup> p. vñ q̃ aīa sepata 1<sup>o</sup> p<sup>a</sup>.  
 roālis n<sup>e</sup> idīdua lbīa.

Ad secundum sic proceditur. Videtur quod anima separata sit persona.  
 [...] rationalis naturae individua substantia.

Try to trace the ductus of 5 words from the following manuscript:



Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F III 20, f. 113vb (14<sup>th</sup> c.)

PETRUS DE ALVERNIA, *Quaestiones super librum praedicamentorum Aristotelis*

**E**quivoca dicuntur etc. ¶ Circa librum predicamentorum quedam que|runtur in generali, primum est utrum de predicamentis possit esse sciencia, et arguet aliquis quod non [...]