

COMPETITION 6: CAROLINGIAN MINUSCULE

“dicebano illis. quid facitis quod nunciat in sabbatis. & responden sibi ad eos dix”

Things I have noticed:

- The t has changed to become taller, possibly to improve clarity between other letters.
- I has changed to have a “head” (dot), also probably to improve clarity.
- The transcript has very small spaces between words, maybe to save as much space as possible given how expensive and arduous paper was to buy and make at the time.
- The movement away from the long s into the curvier s could be so that you can differentiate better between s and r.
- There is not a capital letter after the full stop, capital letters show the start of sentences, again something that adds clarity to writing.
- Other than accent looking symbols and the long s the letters are all in today’s alphabet.

To check that I have got the right spaces between words and haven’t mistaken letters for others I referred to the rest of the transcript for evidence of repetition (so that my assumptions above are valid). Then I translated the Latin into English (using Google translate) and made the inferences below.

Translation:

“I asked them. What are you doing quod nunciat on the sabbath days. And respond to him in those en dix.”

This is interesting as the first part seems to be a question but there isn’t a question mark at any point in the transcript (there are only full stops and semi colons), implying that it is a more modern symbol, possibly needed to differentiate between a statement and a question.

Additionally, there are no commas which could imply that sentences have got longer and there has been a need to put in pauses.

In addition to “respond” and “in”, Sabbatis is very similar to the modern English word Sabbath; implying that religious vocabulary has stayed relatively unchanged as the language evolved from Carolingian Minuscule.

Commented [AG(1)]: Has accents on n and a stroke on the d which is not present in the d preceding it (leading me to believe it’s similar to an accent), these are absent from modern English, accents possibly getting removed as it moved away from Latin.

Commented [AG(2)]: Another word identical to that of modern English, although because of the different structure and rules of Carolingian Minuscule it has a different effect on the sentence.

Commented [AG(3)]: Word identical to that in modern English (has same meaning), the & sign seems to also hold the same meaning, although it is used much less in common writing, possibly replaced by and.

Commented [AG(4)]: A sort of accent also present here, not present in the other b in the extract.

Commented [AG(5)]: Accent also appears here.