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Edited by Richard Gameson
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I

The oldest manuscripts of the Latin Bible

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The police investigation of 19 May 303 into the Cirta (now Constantine) community in Africa reported the seizure of thirty-four biblical manuscripts: one very large, five large, two small, twenty-five of unrecorded size and one made up of four unbound quinions.[1] The figures could suggest that there were a large number of Bible manuscripts in fourth-century Africa. Very many more must have been made when Christianity had survived the persecutions of Diocletian and as it expanded in the following centuries to the barbarian West. Even if Christianity was never to be planted as densely and as intensely in much of the barbarian West as it had been in Africa in the fourth and fifth centuries, there must have been thousands of Latin books of the Bible available in the centuries before 800: indeed they were so numerous that some, no longer wanted or appropriate, came to be discarded and their parchment reused for other texts before that date.[2] Of these probable thousands only 363 have survived and are listed in the palaeographical guide to Latin manuscripts before 800, E. A. Lowe's *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (hereafter CLA), and a large number of these, precious though they may be, are wretched scraps and fragments.[3] The following pages survey the evidence for our oldest Latin biblical manuscripts as it is presented in Lowe's monumental publication. The external characteristics of these books will be considered: their size and appearance; the scripts in which they were written; how their texts were laid out on the page and how these were introduced and concluded; and what changes took place in their external appearance. There will be a brief examination of the decoration and illustrations in early biblical books, and the paper will conclude with a brief survey of their function and use.

[1] *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, ed. C. Ziwsa, S. Optati Milevitani libri VII, CSEL 26 (Vienna, 1893), 187–8. This was cited by B. Fischer, 'Bibelausgaben des frühen Mittelalters', *Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo. X La Bibbia nell'alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1963), 519–600; repr. in his *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften im frühen Mittelalter*, Vetus Latina 11 (Freiburg, 1985), 35–100, at 38.

[2] Examples of discarded fifth-century texts include: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 6400G (fols. 113–30), Acts and Apocalypse (Old Latin) with a fragment of the Catholic Epistles (CLA V, 565) reused in the seventh to eighth centuries; Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, lat. 1 (fols. 1–10, 17–18, 20–1, 23–6, 31–5, 38–40, 44, 49), Kings (Old Latin) (CLA III, 389) reused in eighth-century Bobbio; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, lat. 5763 + Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek, Weiss 64, Judges and Ruth, (CLA I, 41), also reused in eighth-century Bobbio. Not all reused texts were Old Latin.

[3] Addenda by B. Bischoff and V. Brown in *Mediaeval Studies* 47 (1985), 317–38, cited as CLA Addenda.

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For much of the Middle Ages, single-volume Bibles must have been as rare as manuscripts of separate parts of the Bible were common. If surviving evidence is a reliable guide there was only one period of extensive production of large single-volume Bibles, the Carolingian, and this is the subject of David Ganz and Rosamond McKitterick's chapters.[4] Four of these Carolingian Bibles are dated before 800, and are therefore included in CLA (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 9380; Le Puy, Trésor de la Cathédrale, s.n.; Metz, Bibliothèque Municipale, 7; St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 75; these are respectively CLA v, 576, vi, 768, 786, vii, 904). Apart from these, only one other single-volume Bible survives intact, and that is the *Codex Amiatinus* (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Amiatino 1; CLA iii, 299), which was made at the monastery of Wearmouth–Jarrow sometime before it was taken to the continent in 716.[5] Unless written in a minute hand, Bibles in single volumes would have to be very big. It is for that reason that surviving manuscripts of imposing size, even though they may now provide only part of the Bible text, have been seen as mutilated or truncated remains of such tomes: the fragments from another Wearmouth–Jarrow Bible (London, British Library, Add. 37777 + Add. 45025 + Loan 81, the latter belongs to the National Trust, Kingston Lacy, Dorset; CLA ii, 177, Addenda, 351–2) are a certain example, but the earliest possible candidate is the seventh-century Spanish codex now at León (Cathedral Archives, 15; CLA xi, 1636).[6] Large size is one reason for thinking that two Anglo-Saxon codices, some Gospel fragments in Durham (Durham, Cathedral Library, A. ii. 10 fols. 2–5, 388–9 + C. iii. 13 fols. 192–5 + C. iii. 20; CLA ii, 147) and a manuscript now in the royal collection in the British Library (Royal 1. E. vi; CLA ii, 214), were originally part of a New Testament and a Bible respectively.[7] Texts like the Pentateuch or Octateuch, of course, would make substantial volumes on their own, and it would be a mistake to regard every outsize book as the relic of a single-volume Bible. There would be no difficulty in distributing a text as long as the Bible over two or more volumes which could each be very large.[8] Equally the text could be spread over several smaller volumes as the well-known miniature of Ezra in the *Amiatinus* Bible shows.[9] The six-volume Maurdramnus Bible (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 (fols. 2–192) + Paris, BN, lat. 13174 (fols. 136, 138); CLA vi, 707) is the best-known example from this period –

[4] See chs. 3 and 4 below. Large Bibles were produced again in numbers in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but most were in two or more volumes.

[5] E. A. Lowe, *English Uncial* (Oxford, 1960), 9–13, discusses the identification of the *Codex Amiatinus* with one of the three Bibles known to have been made before 716 at Wearmouth–Jarrow.

[6] The Wearmouth–Jarrow book measures 480 × 335 mm. The León codex measures *c.* 440 × 320 mm and is written in two broad columns of closely packed half-uncial in two columns of 71 to 76 lines.

[7] The Durham fragments measure at least 385 × 250 mm. The size of the leaves is the chief reason for considering them a part of a larger volume like a New Testament. The Royal book measures 470 × 345 mm. Its high quire signatures alone would have suggested that it was part of a Bible. See M. O. Budny, 'London, British Library MS Royal 1. E. vi: the Anatomy of an Anglo-Saxon Bible Fragment' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1985). It is now firmly ascribed to the ninth century.

[8] Two examples of Bibles in two volumes chosen at random are Paris, BN, lat. 11553, the ninth-century second volume of a two-volume Bible from the Paris region, and London, British Library, Royal 1. E. vii and Royal 1. E. viii, an early eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon Bible.

[9] J. J. G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts 6th to the 9th Century* (London, 1978), ill. 27.

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although as presently constituted these six volumes do not include all the Bible. Other examples in CLA might also be relics of such smaller-scale multi-volume codices.[10] Single volumes of varying sizes devoted to a substantial section of the Bible, such as the Octateuch or the Prophets or the New Testament or the Four Gospels were also produced, just as there might be single volumes of one Gospel (say Matthew or John) or one other text such as Genesis.[11]

A recent survey of early Latin Bible manuscripts by Pierre Petitmengin has divided up the extant material before 600 according to the categories represented by the nine volumes of Cassiodorus's Bible, namely Octateuch, Kings–Job, Histories, Psalms, Solomon, Prophets, Gospels, Epistles and Acts–Apocalypse. Table 1 records the survivors in these same categories at three periods: before 600 (where the figures are based on Petitmengin's), between 600 and 800, and before 800.[12] The number in brackets after each total shows the category's position in the 'league of survivors'.

The high proportion of gospel books among the extant material, over 43 per cent in all periods, is immediately striking; the other popular categories (like the Psalms, Prophets or Epistles) lag far behind. It should, however, be remembered that in the early Middle Ages the greatest effort was spent in the making and keeping of gospel books: they were often the most valued and treasured possessions of a church, monastery or region and this must have helped their survival rate. It is quite possible therefore that this high proportion misleads and that it reflects the favourable conditions for survival rather than the number that was originally made. One other figure might be worth noting, and that is the higher proportion of Psalters from the later period than from the earlier.

[10] Possible examples are (i) Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D. 30 inf. (fly leaves), Ecclesiasticus (CLA III, 330), and D. 84 inf. (back fly leaves) Paralipomena (CLA III, 333), the measurements of the second being *c.* 300 × 230 mm; and (ii) Kremsmünster Stiftsbibliothek, Fragm. I/1 and Mattsee, Stiftsbibliothek, 46 (fly leaf), fragments of two manuscripts of Kings and Prophets, (CLA X, 1445) with identical measurements and numbers of lines (*c.* 380 × 270 mm, written space 305 × 215, two columns of 28 lines).

[11] Examples are (i) Matthew, Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. p. th. f. 61; CLA IX, 1415, (ii) John, St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 60; CLA VII, 902 and (iii) a possible Genesis, Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, lat. 1 (fols. 11–16, 19, 22, 27–30, 36–7, 41–3, 45–8, 50–2); CLA III, 390.

[12] P. Petitmengin, 'Les plus anciens manuscrits de la Bible latine', *Le monde antique latin et la Bible*, ed. J. Fontaine and C. Pietri (Paris, 1985), 89–123. For convenience CLA is regarded as the corpus and its dates are followed even though some have been revised. Following the revised dates might have reduced the total number of books as some of CLA's borderline eighth to ninth century are now assigned to the ninth. Petitmengin's convention of assigning manuscripts dated in CLA to the turn of a century to the earlier century has been adopted in this table. Thus CLA 'VI–VII' has been assigned to the sixth century. The following Bibles and New Testaments (or Bible and New Testament fragments) have been excluded from the calculations: Bibles: London, British Library, Add. 37777 + Add. 45025 + Loan 81; British Library, Royal 1. E. vi + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. bib. b. 2 (P) + Canterbury, Cathedral Library, Add. 16; these being CLA II, 177, 214, 244 and 262 respectively; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Amiatino 1; CLA III, 299; Paris, BN, lat. 9380; CLA V, 576; Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 (fols. 2–192) + Paris, BN, lat. 13174 (fols. 136, 138), Le Puy, Trésor de la Cathédrale, s.n., Metz, Bibliothèque Municipale, 7; these being CLA VI, 707, 768 and 786 respectively; St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 75; CLA VII, 904; Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek, Fragm. I/1 + Mattsee, Stiftsbibliothek, 46; CLA X, 1445; and León, Cathedral Archives, 15; CLA XI, 1636; New Testaments: Dublin, Trinity College, 52; CLA II, 270; Braunsberg, Lyceum Hosianum, 205 and Fulda, Hessische Landesbibliothek, Bonifatianus 1; these being CLA VIII, 1071 and 1196 respectively. The differences between the above figures for codices before 600 and Petitmengin's are due to the addition of two items from CLA Addenda and the exclusion of the sixth-century New Testament, Fulda, Hessische Landesbibliothek, Bonifatianus 1.

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Table 1.

	Before 600	Between 600 and 800	Before 800
Octateuch	10 (3)	25[b] (3)	35 (5)
Kings–Job	9 (4)	17[cd] (6)	36 (2)
Histories	2 (9)	10[cd] (7)	12 (8)
Psalms	5 (6)	31 (2)	36 (2)
Solomon	5 (6)	9[e] (7)	14 (7)
Prophets	8 (5)	21 (5)	29 (6)
Gospels	41[a] (1)	119[e] (1)	160 (1)
Epistles	11[a] (2)	25[ef] (3)	36 (2)
Acts–Apocalypse	5[a] (6)	7[bf] (9)	12 (8)

Notes: [a] One item counted thrice (Cambridge, University Library, Nn. II. 41; CLA II, 140, Gospels, Acts, Epis.) and three items counted twice (Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, lat. 2 (fols. 42*, 43–56, 71–5); CLA III, 395, Acts, Epis.; Ravenna, Archivio Arcivescovile s.n.; CLA IV, 411, Acts, Epis., Apoc.; Paris, BN, lat. 6400G (fols. 113–30); CLA V, 565, Apoc., Acts, Epis.).

[b] One item counted twice (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, II. 1052 (fols. 137–40); CLA X, 1550, Judges, Ruth, Acts).

[c] One item counted thrice (Stuttgart, Württemburgische Landesbibliothek, HB. II. 35; CLA IX, 1358, Proverbs, Solomon, Job, Tobias, Esther, Esdras).

[d] Four items counted twice (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 24 (fols. 10–15, 38–53, 72–176); CLA I, 68a, Paral., Tobias–Esther; St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 6; CLA VII, 895, Tobias, Judith, Job, Esther; Cassel, Landesbibliothek, Manuskripten-Anhang 19. 1a; CLA VIII, 1145, Job, Tobias, Judith, Esther, etc.; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 6239; CLA IX, 1254, Job, Tobias, Judith, Esther).

[e] One item counted twice (Paris, BN, n.a. lat. 1063; CLA V, 679, Gospels–Epistles).

[f] Three items counted twice (Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, B. 25ii, CLA IV, 430; Paris, BN, lat. 6400G (fols. 113–30); CLA V, 565; Carlsruhe, Landesbibliothek, Aug. CCXXII (fols. 1–61); CLA VIII, 1096, all Acts–Epistles).

The table does not show which books contained both a biblical and a non-biblical text. However Commentaries on the Apocalypse, for example, are found with Apocalypse texts. Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, B. 25ii (CLA IV, 430) includes Bede's commentary along with Acts, the Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse; and Cassel, Landesbibliothek, Theol. Oct. 5 (CLA VIII, 1142) adds to the Apocalypse a copy of Caesarius of Arles' homilies on it. The earliest example of such a combination is the early seventh-century copy of Kings at Verona (Biblioteca Capitolare, II (2); CLA IV, 477) where a copy of Honorius's *Cosmographia* follows immediately after the last book of Kings, but the best-known example is the Book of Armagh where the New Testament is combined with Patrick and Martin of Tours texts (Dublin, Trinity College, 52; CLA II, 270). There is also an example of a text which was laid out to accommodate a commentary or gloss (Zürich, Staatsarchiv, A. G. 19, no. XII (fols. 24–5 = pp. 61–4; CLA VII, 1008, Ezekiel with commentary and gloss). Here there are three columns per page and text and commentary are visually contrasted. The text in the central column is written in larger script and in fewer lines than the commentary in the outer margins. Though text and commentary are not clearly keyed in to each other as in later medieval glossed or commentary books the format was an advance on that in the

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Table 2.

	Before 600	600–800
Uncial	75 (1)	90[a] (6)
Half-uncial	12	9[a] (3)
Rustic capital	3[b]	2 (2)
Majuscule	–	62[a] (4)
Minuscule	–	97 (1)
Other	–	8 (1)

Notes: [a] One of these (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, G. 82 sup., pp. 209–20, 375–6, 385–6, 449–52, 461–2, 471–4; CLA III, 344b), is counted three times as uncial, half-uncial and Irish majuscule appear in the same manuscript.

[b] One of these three (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, lat. 3806 (fols. 1–2); CLA Supplement, 1766), is made up of the fragmentary canon tables of a gospel book in which the only script was the rustics in the headings and explicits. It is very unlikely that the main script in the Gospels was rustics.

Irish eighth-century Matthew (Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. p. th. f. 61; CLA IX, 1415) where glosses and commentary accumulate in a haphazard fashion between lines, in margins and on inserted scraps of parchment.

A glance at any handbook on early Bibles, whether Greek, Coptic or Latin, will suggest that most were written in uncials. Table 2 which classifies the scripts in the biblical manuscripts of CLA before and after 600 confirms the truth of that impression. The numbers in brackets indicate manuscripts which have been counted twice since they contain more than one script.[13]

Uncial was dominant before 600, and it remained unchallenged as the favoured script on the continent until the later eighth century and the spread of minuscule scripts: eighth-century manuscripts like the Beneventan or Gundohinus Gospels are clear examples of a continuing, if faltering, practice.[14] Consciously revived among the Anglo-Saxons, its prestige still came to account for a fair proportion of their biblical books – and this in the face of a vigorous and well-established Insular tradition of luxury majuscule codices.[15] The uncial tradition was also consciously recreated in some Carolingian books which testify to a new clarity and design in script and book

[13] The same conventions for dating have been adopted here as in the previous table, see note 12 above. 'Bd' uncial books have been counted as uncial. The classes of majuscule and minuscule are taken from CLA, and there has been no attempt to apply other criteria, for instance, the late Julian Brown's different grades of Insular scripts.

[14] London, British Library, Add. 5463 (CLA II, 162) probably 736–60; and Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, 3 (S.2) (CLA VI, 716) dated 754.

[15] Examples are (i) the Wearmouth–Jarrow books, Durham, Cathedral Library, A. II. 17 (fols. 103–11) (CLA II, 150); and Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliothek, 32 (fols. 94–105) (CLA X, 1587); and (ii) Avranches, Bibliothèque Municipale, 48 (fols. I–II) + 66 (fols. I–II) + 71 (fols. A–B) + St Petersburg, Saltykov-Scedrin State Public Library, O. v. I. 1 (CLA VI, 730).

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making.[16] As is well known, capital scripts, by contrast, came to be associated with pagan texts. The two surviving biblical fragments in rustics, one of the Gospel of John (Aberdeen, University Library, Papyrus 2a; CLA II, 118), and the other from a Greco-Latin version of the Pauline epistle to the Ephesians (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, P. S. I. 1306; CLA Supplement, 1694) are therefore of great interest.[17] They are both carefully made, and it is impossible to tell whether they represent the chance survival of many more Christian texts in capitals, or whether they are deliberately archaic productions. Rustics or other capital variants were of course used in early and late uncial books for display or for headings or colophons, but they were not again to serve as the main script until the antiquarian productions of the Carolingian period such as the Utrecht Psalter.[18] Capitals appear as a script for accessory texts in the rigorously uncial Anglo-Saxon *Codex Bigotianus* (Paris, BN, lat. 281 + 298; CLA V, 526), and share a Psalter with uncial in the awkward *Psalterium Duplum* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 11; CLA I, 101) from an as yet unidentified French centre in the later eighth century where a Gallican Psalter text in squarish capitals on the verso faces the Hebrew Psalter text written in uncials. The place of honour in bilingual texts in late antiquity is usually the verso, and if this convention were still being observed in this Psalter it is probable that the script rather than the particular Psalter version was being so honoured.

Half-uncial may have been far less common, but it was used for three famous early Bible manuscripts. The first is the earliest surviving copy of the Vulgate Gospels, the St Gall codex of the early fifth century (St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 1395 (pp. 7–327) + St Gall, Stadtbibliothek s.n. + St Paul in Carinthia, Stiftsbibliothek, 25. 4. 21a + Zürich, Staatsarchiv, A. G. 19, no. II (fols. 2–5) + Zürich, Zentralbibliothek, C. 43 (offset) + C. 79b (fols. 4–7) + Z. XIV. 5; CLA VII, 984). This has marginalia which have been related to notes added to an earlier exemplar probably by Jerome and by an unknown second scholar.[19] Its modern editor regarded it as a book 'presumably intended for personal rather than public use: but for a person of high office of some importance'.[20] The second is the sixth-century Italian Gospel book now at Split (Chapter Library, s.n.; CLA XI, 1669). This is written in a careful half-uncial (making it perhaps the most formally written of the early half-uncial biblical books). It was used liturgically in the early eighth century, and has marginalia from the tenth to eleventh

[16] An example of Carolingian uncial before 800 is Abbeville, Bibliothèque Municipale, 4 (1); CLA VI, 704. See the discussion by R. McKitterick, 'Carolingian Uncial: A Context for the Lothar Psalter', *British Library Journal* 16 (1990), 1–15.

[17] Good reproductions and useful discussion of both in R. Seider, *Paläographie der lateinischen Papyri. II. 2* (Stuttgart, 1981), 115–18, pl. 43a–b.

[18] See W. Koehler and F. Mütherich, *Die Karolingischen Miniaturen* IV: *Die Hofschule Kaiser Lothars–Einzelhandschriften aus Lotharingien* (Berlin, 1971) pls. 62–79 for reproductions of the two Carolingian Aratea, London, British Library, Harley 647 and Leiden, Universiteitsbibliothek, Voss. lat. Q. 79. A full colour facsimile of the second manuscript was published as *Aratea: ein Leitstern des abendlandischen Weltbildes*, by Faksimile Verlag Luzern (Lucerne, 1987). The commentary volume has papers by B. Bischoff, B. Eastwood, T. Klein, F. Mütherich and P. F. J. Obbema. A recent survey of the history of rustics is J. Autenrieth, '*Litterae Virgilianae': vom Fortleben einer römischen Schrift* (Munich, 1988).

[19] B. Bischoff, 'Zur Rekonstruktion des Sangallensis (Σ) und der Vorlage seiner Marginalien', *Biblica* 22 (1941) 147–58, repr. in his *Mittelalterliche Studien*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1966–81), I, 101–11.

[20] C. H. Turner, *The Oldest Manuscript of the Vulgate Gospels* (Oxford, 1931), xxvi.

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centuries concerning the ecclesiastical histories of Spalato and Nona. The third is the earliest surviving Latin single-volume Bible, the León palimpsest (Cathedral Archives, 15; CLA XI, 1636), which is written in a crowded half-uncial. Interestingly all three books are written in two columns. In contrast half-uncial usually appears in books in long lines; this applies both in the more utilitarian scholarly manuscripts, such as those carefully uncovered by Caroline Hammond Bammel, and in other texts, both biblical and non-biblical, early and late, such as the fifth- to sixth-century Verona Pentateuch fragments (Biblioteca Capitolare, IV (4) fols. 1–2); CLA IV, 479), the Irish seventh-century so-called Ussher Gospels (Dublin, Trinity College, 55; CLA II, 271) and the seventh- to eighth-century Anglo-Saxon Douce Primasius (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 140; CLA II, 237).[21]

There is less variety of range and quality of script before 600 than in the later period. There is nothing before 600, and indeed before 700, for example, to compare with the cursively written and relatively utilitarian early eighth-century copies of Kings in Verona (Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, III (3); CLA IV, 478) and of the New Testament in Paris (BN, n.a. lat. 1063; CLA V, 679) or with the minutely written, apparently personal Irish pocket gospel books of the eighth and early ninth centuries (e.g. Dublin, Trinity College, 59 and 60 (the books of Dimma and Mulling); CLA II, 275 and 276). It is very likely that personal small copies of biblical books in half-uncial (or in the unfortunately termed quarter-uncial hand) or just possibly even in cursive hands, were made before 700 but they have not survived.[22] As has already been noted, the creation of new scripts in the seventh and eighth centuries, whether majuscule in the British Isles, or lower grade scripts both there and on the continent, challenged the dominance of uncial. These new scripts affected the appearance and layout of many codices and these changes will be touched on later. It should be noted that the simple listing of scripts gives no impression of the great variety in size and scale of letters and the disposition of the writing on a page. These scripts varied from the minute hands in the Irish books to the monumental uncial of over 5 mm high in the fifth-century palimpsest Prophets book in the Vatican (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, lat. 3281; CLA I, 14). The Irish books were personal and easily portable copies, the Vatican copy of the Prophets was meant for display and for reading in public.

A recent sale catalogue of Sotheby's included a minute leaf from a Greek Gospel of Mark of possible fifth-century date: it measured 67 × 67 mm and represented a type of small codex familiar from the finds of early Greek papyri, a fair number of which were listed by E. G. Turner in his pioneering *The Typology of the Early Codex*.[23] Famous among these dwarfs is the Greek Gospel of Mani, dating from the fourth to fifth

[21] On such half-uncial literary manuscripts see C. P. Hammond Bammel, 'Products of Fifth-century Scriptoria Preserving Conventions used by Rufinus of Aquileia', *Journal of Theological Studies* 35 (1984), 347–93, at 379–93.

[22] For a discussion of some quarter-uncial see *ibid.*, at 379–93. One wonders in what script the Gospels carried by St Maximus (according to Gregory of Tours) were written: 'habens ad collum, cum evangeliorum libro, ministerium quotidianum, id est patenulam parvam cum calice', Gregory of Tours, *De Gloria Confessorum*, ch. 22, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* (Hannover, 1885), I. ii. 311.

[23] *Sotheby's, Western Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 18 June 1991 (London, 1991), item 68. E. G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia, 1972).

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centuries and measuring 38 × 45 mm.[24] It has been suggested that some of these books may have served as amulets. The smallest Latin Bible manuscript, indeed early Latin codex, is the uncial Gospel of St John in Paris (BN, lat. 10439; CLA v, 600) dating from the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries, which measures 71 × 51 mm, with eleven lines per page confined to a written space of 45 × 34 mm. It may have been worn as an amulet before it was deposited inside the eleventh-century reliquary of the Virgin's shirt at Chartres where it was found in 1712. Other small books such as the Irish pocket Gospels or the Wearmouth–Jarrow Stonyhurst Gospels (to which a talismanic function has also been posited) are about twice as large as the Chartres St John. The smallest of the Irish books, the Cadmug Gospels now at Fulda (Hessische Landesbibliothek, Bonifatianus 3; CLA VII, 1198) measures 127 × 100 mm and is only slightly smaller than Stonyhurst, the dimensions of which are 135 × 93 mm (English Province of the Society of Jesus, on loan to London, British Library, Loan MS 74; CLA II, 260).

Other notable formats include tall and narrow volumes in Egypt, their dimensions sometimes recalling those of consular diptychs and some of these could have been designed for tall and narrow ivory covers. The narrowest Latin volume is the Fulda New Testament codex of Victor of Capua, which includes a Latin version of the Diatessaron, and which dates at the latest from 536–7 (Hessische Landesbibliothek, Bonifatianus 1; CLA VIII, 1196). It is just over twice as tall as it is wide (288 × 140 mm), and is proportionately just slightly narrower than its nearest rival, the late eighth- to early ninth-century Gospel fragments from Besançon (Bibliothèque Municipale, 184 fols. 58–74; CLA VI, 731), which measures 340 × 175 mm.[25] At the other end of the scale of course were the single-volume Bibles. The *Codex Amiatinus* (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Amiatino 1; CLA III, 299) measures 505 × 340 mm and has 1,030 folios. The oldest surviving Tours Bible, St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 75 (CLA VII, 904) represents an early stage in Bible production at that celebrated centre and is even larger in format measuring 540 × 395 mm, but its text has been compressed into 418 folios.

Some impression of the range of sizes of our biblical manuscripts can be obtained by arranging them in different groups according to size.[26] (See table 3.) There is a perceptible increase in the average size over these four centuries. This might be usefully complemented by table 4 which shows three arithmetic means: (i) of the total

[24] Cologne, P. colon., inv. 4780. E. G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, 2nd edn, rev. by P. J. Parsons (London, 1987), item 83.

[25] CLA VI, 731 says that 'the narrow length suggested that the Gospel book was meant to have an ivory cover'. The book contains Jerome's letter to Pope Damasus which opens with the words *Nouum opus* and a Gospel capitulary.

[26] The groups are those used by C. Bozzola and E. Ornato, *Pour une histoire du livre manuscrit au moyen Âge. Trois essais de codicologie quantitative*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1983), 218. The conventions used for dating are those adopted in earlier tables, see note 12 above. The fifth-century tally includes books dated 'IV–V' by CLA. Some items from CLA have been excluded because it has not been possible to reconstruct their original size. Measurements in CLA are not sharp or detailed enough to apply the interesting experiments in C. Bozzola *et al.*, 'Noir et blanc. Premiers résultats d'une enquête sur la mise en page dans le livre médiéval', *Il libro e il testo*, ed. C. Questa and R. Raffaelli (Urbino, 1984), 195–221, or in D.Muzerelle, 'Normes et recettes de mise en page dans le codex pré-Carolingien', *Les débuts du codex*, ed. A. Blanchard (Turnhout, 1989) 125–56.

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Table 3. Categories

	A	B	C	D
Fifth century	0%	36.66%	60%	3.3%
Sixth century	0%	37.5%	59.37%	3.125%
Seventh century	6.52%	47.52%	41.3%	4.34%
Eighth century	5.05%	60.11%	27.52%	7.34%

A where the sum of height and width of a page is over 670 mm B between 491 and 670 mm C between 321 and 490 mm D 320 mm or less

Table 4.

		Size of written space	
	Total page size	(i) two columns	(ii) long lines
Fifth century	463.23 mm	343.52 mm	331.17 mm
Sixth century	465.12 mm	392.43 mm	342.13 mm
Seventh century	510.89 mm	442 mm	332.64 mm
Eighth century	509.13 mm	434.55 mm	343.06 mm

size of page, (ii) of the total size of written space for books written in two columns (with no deduction made for the inter-columnar marginal space) and (iii) of the written space for books written in long lines.

These figures can only give the crudest of guides to size and averages not least because it is difficult to know how representative is the surviving evidence. The samples are very small and therefore easily subject to many distortions. The figures both for total size of page and of written space in two columns for the seventh century, for instance, were affected by one or two large volumes such as the León palimpsest Bible or the Durham Gospel fragments. Conversely the apparently anomalous stability in size of written space of manuscripts written in long lines between the fifth and eighth centuries could be affected by the many small books in this category which survive from the eighth and the turn of the eighth and ninth centuries.

The figures do show that books were bigger in the eighth century than in the fifth, the switch from a class C to a class B majority being particularly noticeable. What they do not convey is the differences between individual biblical books. Appropriately for a verse text, Psalters tended to be written in long lines, and they also tended to be smaller than other books, particularly Gospels. In the eighth century, for instance, the average mean total page size of Psalters was 454 mm as against the 509 mm of Bible manuscripts as a whole, or the 508 mm of all gospel books. Curiously enough, eighth-century gospel books originating in England tend to be larger than contemporary volumes produced elsewhere, their average being 568 mm as against 474 mm – or

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against 495 mm if the small Irish pocket books are excluded. The sizes of the written space confirm this contrast, the Anglo-Saxon average for two columns being 457 mm against 408 mm, and for long lines 419 against 373 mm. Large dimensions are also a feature of some non-biblical Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. The exceptional size of the Durham Cassiodorus manuscript (Durham, Cathedral Library, B. II. 30; CLA II, 152, measuring 429 × 295 mm) has always been noted, and more recently CLA Supplement, 1746 drew attention to the similarity in the dimensions of written space and in the number of lines between the Cassiodorus and two other probably Northumbrian manuscripts, a fragment of the second Pauline epistle to the Corinthians (Paris, BN, lat. 9377 (fol. 3); CLA Supplement, 1746) and a Pliny in Leiden (Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. lat. F. 4; CLA X, 1578). If no Anglo-Saxon Gospels reach these proportions, they are nevertheless often substantial. They are, however, matched by the sizes of certain elaborate Continental copies like the *Codex Beneventanus* (London, British Library, Add. 5463; CLA II, 162; 355 × 255 mm) or the sumptuous products of the first court school of Charlemagne such as the Harley Gospels (London, British Library, Harley 2788; CLA II, 198; 367 × 255 mm) or the Gospels at Abbeville (Bibliothèque Municipale, 4 (1); CLA VI, 704; 355 × 247 mm). It may therefore be that the greater size of Anglo-Saxon Gospels reflects nothing more than the chance survival of a greater number of more sumptuous books originating in this island than from elsewhere. It need not suggest, for instance the use of larger skins. The limitations of the evidence make it impossible to draw firm conclusions on such matters.

The ratio of books written in two columns (or more) to those in long lines does not alter much during the period, only increasing slightly in the eighth century. However this increase would be much greater if two groups of books were excluded from the calculations: those with Irish connections and those from Rhaetian or Allemannic scriptoria. Most Irish books were written in long lines and their numbers affected the ratio in the eighth century. Many Bible manuscripts from Swiss scriptoria were small and small books tend naturally to be written in long lines. As an example the Bible manuscripts in the hand of the well-known St Gall scribe, Winithar, might be mentioned. His Bible books range in size from 245 × 155–9 mm (St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 2 (pp. 301–568), Acts and Apocalypse; CLA VII, 894) to 285 × 200 mm (St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 70, Pauline Epistles; CLA VII, 903). The case of the Maudramnus multi-volume Bible seems to confirm the association of long lines with a small format. The largest and possibly the first volume of the set, the Pentateuch (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, 6) is of a good size (380 × 260 mm) and is written in two columns whereas the others, which are all smaller (within the range 300–15 × 200 mm), are in long lines (all of them are in CLA VI, 707). Two or even three columns are used in small books as the pocket Gospels of Dimma or Mulling (Dublin, Trinity College, 59 and 60; CLA II, 275 and 276) show, but these are written in extremely small hands. It would have been difficult to write a stately capital or majuscule script over two columns on a small page, and, in any case, such a layout would have produced an unwieldy and bulky book for all but the shortest text.

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