

Isidore of Seville (560-636 AD, Saint Isidore in 1598)

"le dernier savant du monde ancien" ("the last scholar of the ancient world").

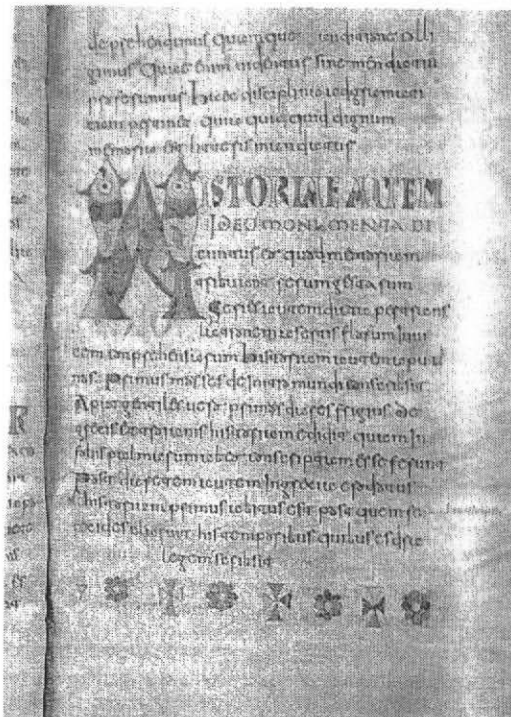


St. Isidore, depicted by Murillo

Patronage (only proposed, but quite well embraced) computers, the internet; students (☺)

Isidore was the first Christian writer to attempt the task of compiling an Encyclopedia of the knowledge of the times, called the Etymologiae (taking its title from the method he used in the transcription of his era's knowledge).

Until the twelfth century brought translations from Arabic sources, Isidore transmitted what western Europeans remembered of the works of Aristotle and other Greeks, although he understood only a limited amount of Greek. The Etymologiae was much copied, particularly into medieval bestiaries.



This text was what educated men studied for the Quadrivium.

Pope Sylvester II (Gerbert d'Aurillac)

(946-1003 AD)

He introduced Arabic knowledge of arithmetic, mathematics, and astronomy to Europe, reintroducing the abacus and armillary sphere which had been lost to Europe since the end of the Greco-Roman era.

In 967, abbot Borrell II of Barcelona (947-992), visited the monastery, and the abbot asked to take Gerbert with him so that the lad could study mathematics in Spain and acquire there some knowledge of Arabic learning, but probably only through Latin translations. Gerbert learned from the Arab teachers in Spain subjects that no one in the rest of Europe had even heard of, the most important being the Arabic numbers.

*First appearance in West of 0-9
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Quadrivium:

Gerbert, as a scientist, was said to be far ahead of his time. Gerbert wrote a series of works dealing with matters of the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music). Gerbert's reintroduction of the emphasis on these liberal arts in Europe was inspired by the educational institution of Cordoba in Islamic Spain.

In Rheims, he constructed a hydraulic-powered organ with brass pipes that excelled all previously known instruments, where the air had to be pumped manually.

In a letter of 984, Gerbert asks Lupitus of Barcelona for a book on astrology and astronomy, two terms which historian S. Jim Tester states were used synonymously by Gerbert.

Gerbert may have been the author of a description of the astrolabe that was edited by Hermannus Contractus some 50 years later.

As Sylvester II he wrote a dogmatic treatise, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*.

Also introduced counting board (aka, an abacus)