

# The periods of medieval inscriptions in Hungary

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## **Abstract:**

*Although the fonts on the earliest seals are quite various due to technical imperfections, they still bear the features of the antiqua tractation writing, which marks the Romanesque age.*

*Saint László's seal was the first to apply semi-circle shaped uncials next to the classic forms, while King Imre's great seal from 1202 included a closed maiuscula E letter.*

*The lettering style of the Romanesque era can be dated from 11<sup>th</sup> century in the case of stone monuments. The last creation of this age is dated to the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.*

*There is a group of Early Gothic stone relics containing also more uncial shapes, which appears around 1165-1172. The last remnant of this group comes from 1262.*

*The coexistence of Romanesque and Early Gothic style is not common on rulers' seals, the differences of each era are more obvious. In this case the end of the Romanesque era, which can be dated back to the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (around 1205) and so the reign change of Imre I. and András II., is easy to determine. The end of the Early Gothic era in the case of rulers' seals can be set to 1270, the end of Béla IV's rule.*

*The advancement of gothic maiuscula can be well observed on the lettering of István V's dual seal.*

*The stone inscriptions in Transdanubia are created in gothic maiuscula style only after the first third of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but several relics in medieval Hungary are from the end of 13<sup>th</sup> century. The upper endmark of the maiuscula-era is around 1400 on stones.*

*Despite the end of the maiuscula era, the third dual seal of Zsigmond from 1435 still has maiuscula letters, just like the majesty seal of King Albert from 1438 and the new seal of Ulászló I. from 1444.*

*The gothic maiuscula was replaced on ruler's seals when the first minuscule style letters appeared during the reign of Zsigmond. 12 different types of seals used by Mátyás contained inscriptions formed from gothic minuscule letters. This indicates that this style was used until the end of his reign.*

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*The gothic minuscule style came into fashion on stone-inscriptions around 1365-1370. The font style was also widely popular in the next century, moreover, two provincial variations from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century were found.*

*The italian style humanist capitalis lettering appeared very early on the golden seal of Mátyás (1464). From this time, the humanist capitalis is dominant letter type on seals. The appearance of capitalis on stone monuments can be dated from 1467. After 1500, the use of excessive ligatures and enclaves occurs while the provincial variation of the font also appears.*

*The capitalis fonts, called „early humanist” by the special literature, appeared in 1472 on the smaller secret hungarian-czech ruler's seal of Mátyás, and from 1483 on the stone-inscriptions.*

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