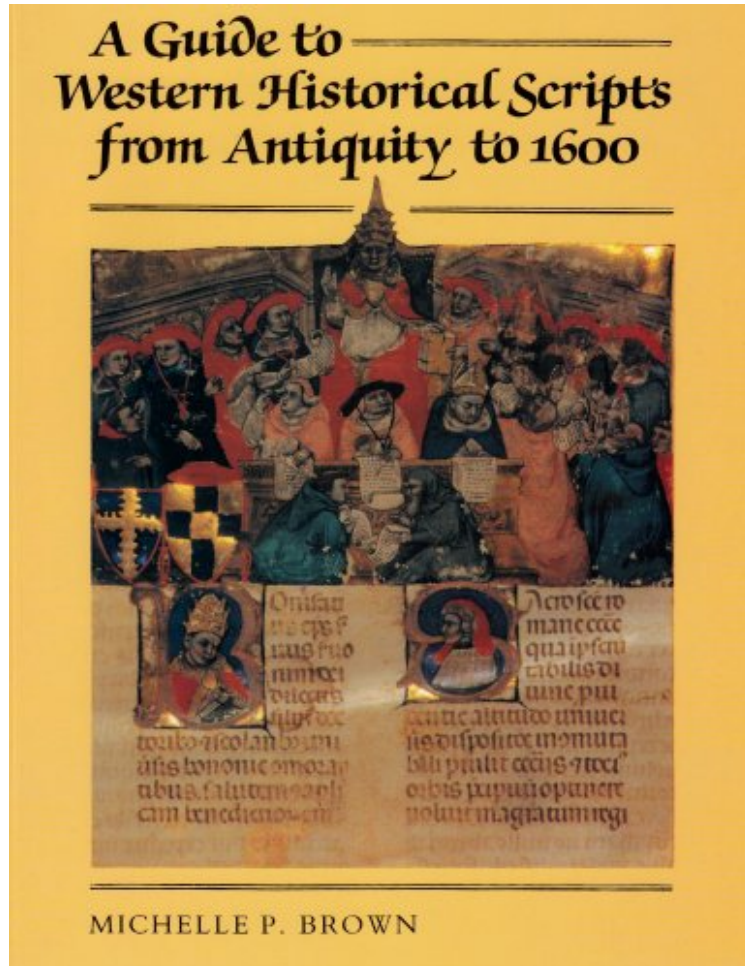


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A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600

Michelle P. Brown

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Michelle P. Brown : A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Paleographer's Best FriendBy tadMichelle Brown has gathered examples from just about all of the Classical, Late Antique, and medieval Latin book-hands, from the extremely difficult-to-decipher Roman cursive to the all-too-clear Caroline Minuscule. Good introductions are offered for each script as well as copious notes on scribal errors/alterations, distinctive traits, and decorative elements. Each example displays a plate of a particular script on the right-hand page and a description/identification on the left. Also, there is a brief transcription (about 15-20 lines) on the left with all the words separated and the abbreviations expanded. Subject matter ranges from Virgil to biblical passages, with many things in-between. This is a must have for the student taking a paleography course or just interested in medieval book culture. Also recommended: Barbara Shailor, the Medieval

Book.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Intro to Latin (and other western) scripts By A Latinist, Ciceronian, and student This book provides essential background of the various Latin scripts (as well as others), and excellent examples. The transcriptions of portions of the samples enables readers to practice reading the scripts while having the proper transcription available for consultation. 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Good reference tool By Dame Droiture Michelle Brown's book is a must-have for the beginning student of paleography or codicology. It includes full-page (generally readable) photos of manuscripts which demonstrate characteristics of certain medieval scripts by country, region, and date - with facing page transcriptions and explanations. There are a few minor mistakes and questionable areas, such as her p. 26 transcription of the half-uncial (probably a typo), and p. 130 transcription of the humanistic book script (also probably a typo). The book is best utilized in conjunction with a course in either paleography, codicology, or both, and then mainly as a preliminary reference tool for rough-dating or localization. Pay attention to the details, for similar scripts (like the various gothics) can get tricky.

For readers who wish to trace the evolution of scripts in the West from antiquity to the early modern period, and who want to read the work of their scribes, this volume provides a wide-ranging collection of materials supported by 55 full-page illustrations from manuscripts. Brown provides a synopsis of each of the major phases of development, a bibliography at the beginning of each section, and comments on regional and chronological diffusion where appropriate. Each plate is accompanied by a facing page of commentary giving a brief description of the manuscript and its script, followed by a transcription of the text.

'What the book represents, in essence, is a mini correspondence course in palaeography. ... In a clear and coherent manner, moreover, Brown describes the function of various national hands and how they developed one from the other. ... An untrained student or interested researcher might use the texts and transcriptions as a means of developing expertise before embarking on a program of research' (Epilogue/Epilogue) 'It is a pleasure to read so successful a popularizing account, accurate, well-balanced and succinct, together with an excellent selection of illustrations from the famous as well as the less familiar of the surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.' (Times Literary Supplement) "The book should be in the hands of every classicist ... It has no rival here or abroad.' (Bryn Mawr Classical) From the Back Cover A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600 is a much-needed survey of the evolution of scripts and introduction to reading historical documents, extensively illustrated from a wide range of manuscripts. Fifty-five full-page plates give examples of the major western scripts in broadly chronological sequence, each accompanied by a commentary identifying the type of script, its historical and regional currency, distinctive features and style, and a transcription. With an introductory essay and select bibliography, fully revised and updated for this new paperback edition, this is an important and authoritative introduction to the subject. About the Author Michelle P. Brown is a curator of Western Manuscripts in the British Library and author of several books, including A Guide to Western Historical Scripts and The Book of Cerne.