

Rare Book School 2007

M-40. Latin Paleography, 1100-1500

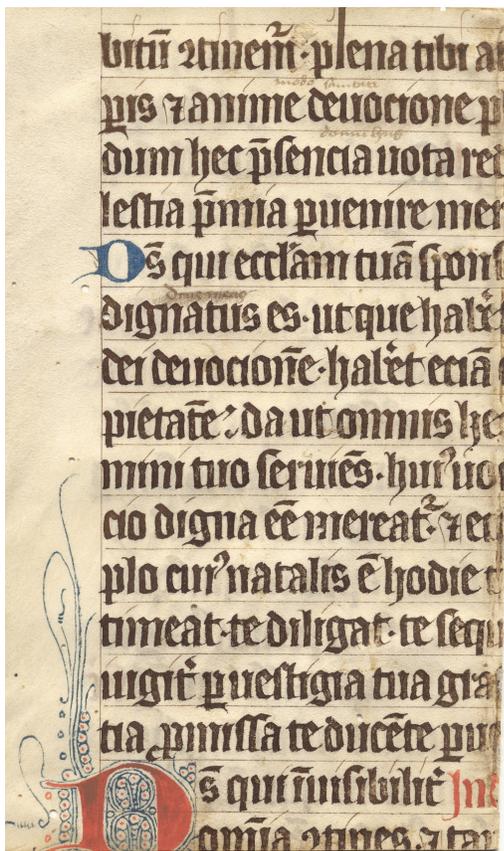
**Albert Derolez**

15-19 October 2007

University of Virginia

Albert Derolez is the author of *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books from the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge 2003) and other books. He is the Past President of the Comité International de Paléographie Latine. He holds the Kenneth and Shirley Rendell Chair in Manuscript Studies at RBS.

For many years, there has been a striking contrast in the scholarly attitude toward Latin scripts of the early and of the later Middle Ages. While the paleography of the early medieval and Caroline periods has been the object of serious academic study, late medieval scripts have hitherto mostly been



Fragment from a c15 German missal  
(RBS collection)

examined (1) for reading literary and documentary texts and (2) for dating manuscripts. As manuscripts of the later Middle Ages are incomparably more numerous than early medieval codices, this is a paradoxical situation, one that needs to be redressed.

The course provides an introduction to the subject, including reading, transcribing (and expanding abbreviations), identification, classification, dating and localization of the principal kinds of Gothic and humanistic book script. Examples of Latin texts (and, exceptionally, French and English ones) will be studied from photocopies, slides, and manuscript fragments. The course will have a practical character, concentrating on a broad range of scripts. Starting from the tangled image presented by late medieval manuscripts, a much-needed systematization will be developed, and gothic and humanistic scripts will be given a place in the history of handwriting in the West.

The course will try to systematize our knowledge about the gothic and humanistic scripts in all their diversity of forms and styles. It will include: the examination and reading of examples of Latin texts (exceptionally French or English ones); the study of abbreviations; the typology and nomenclature of scripts, according to the Lieftinck-Gumbert system and other systems; the dating and localization of scripts; the techniques and principles of historical and diplomatic transcription and editing.

The course is intended for scholars and researchers, librarians and antiquarian booksellers with a good basic knowledge of Latin who, sooner or later, are likely to deal with late medieval manuscripts. Applicants should have had some previous formal introduction to paleography. The course will be limited to six students.

Course tuition \$870. For further information about RBS and a downloadable application form, visit the RBS website at <http://www.virginia.edu/oldbooks/schedule/>