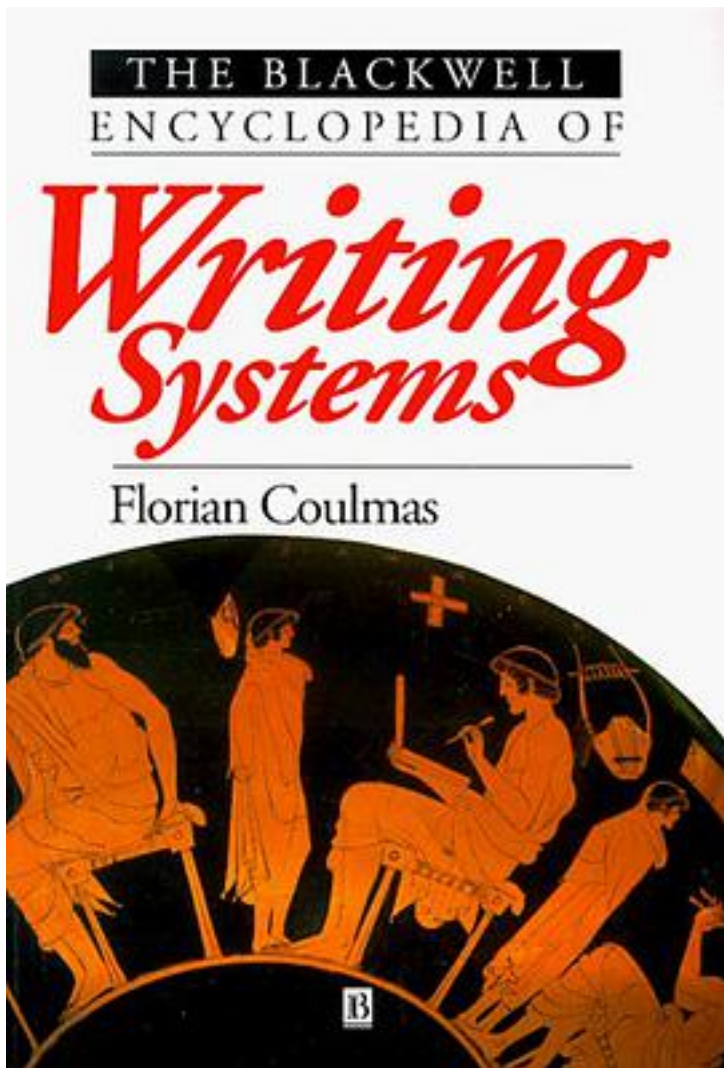


The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Writing Systems



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出版者:Blackwell Publishing, Incorporated

出版时间:1999-02-01

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780631214816

This is an encyclopedia of writing systems, scripts and orthographies of all the world's major languages, past and present. It provides both a fully illustrated description of over 400 writing systems and an account of the study of writing in many different disciplines, from anthropology to psychology. Entries in this encyclopedia describe how writing systems evolved, how they work, and how they differ from each other. They deal with technical aspects such as handwriting, printing, word processing; with practical problems of decipherment, alphabet making and spelling reform; and with theoretical questions such as the functions of writing and the typology of writing systems.

Florian Coulmas starts from the view that writing reflects a process of linguistic analysis. Yet he ranges widely among different scientific disciplines. He draws on historical and paleographic research into fundamental structural options of representing language by means of a graphic code, on psychological investigation into the social conditions and consequences of literacy.

Entries vary between short explanations of terms and concepts, brief accounts of individual writing systems and longer theoretical articles. The encyclopedia contains an exceptional array of visual examples and is supported by a comprehensive bibliography.

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