

Handwritten notes by
Carolyn McDonough

60 5th AVE NYU Remarque
Feb. 23, 2024 Institute

Specifying Modernism
The Alphabetic Labyrinth

* Visual Forms of Knowledge
Production

Pioneer in DH: Alphabet as a
Hegemonic Force
spoken language &
written ~~is~~
The full hegemony of the alpha

Lisa Gitelman: NYU

We talk about the Humanities
^{as} WHAT rather than How
META-THEORETICAL

Historiography assumes
there's an object of
inquiry

Chronology of Alpha Studies
who 1st speaks of it and in
← what
Alphabet studies is absent

Intellectual History
History of Astronomy, Phil
Poetics

What is technology of
the instantiation →

META TALK

Address materiality
as a performative
possibilities in
which
engagement takes place

Rhys Carpenter
"The Letter of Cadmus"

we don't know what
Herodotus is looking at

Lillian Jeffrey, 1961

Hani

- Textual
- Graphical
- Compendia
- Graphs/Charts

} I missed
these
4
points

Alphabet spreads from
The Levant to Greece

What alphabet, what
script was on the
TABLETS of MOSES?

Ninevah had no
libraries

no instantiations,
no exemplars

Moses Where are
 the pillars?
Adam what did
 he use?
Jeth what did
 he use?
Renaissance scholars
18th C. scholars

Exemplars can exist
w/out text

There are:
celestial scripts

the Alpha of Noah exemplar
and as to

EXOTIC SCRIPTS:
★ ISTER ★

Has to be seen to be copied

picture: copy form
to know the sequence of
doctrines? strokes

Byrhtferth Manuscript

The Technology of COMPENDIA

Agrippa

makes an argument:
these things are
comparable and
valent *

QABALISTS

Guillaume Postel

1st European to get a copy

of HEBREW

Script

maybe the language
of the TABLETS →

No archeological evidence

Hasmonean COINS

RENAISSANCE IS
COMPENDIA CRAZY

The Alphabet of EZRA

COMPENDIA as EXEMPLARS

Mythical (alphabet) texts

ca. 1590

Angelo Rocca Vatican Library
medieval scripts of angels
were purged: dark magic

1616, Virga Aurea

72 names of God

but we have no scripts ←

A SIGN of AUTHENTICITY

They must be seen to be copied

Fry

1799 Edmund Fry
punch cutter English
Back to the CHALDEAN
SCRIPT

CHARLES, ROBERT, WILLIAM
Fry MODELS How →

In complete respect the
cultural otherness of
the past

Hasmonean is already
the Roman period

Cannot find evidence
of the Bible →

Material is an argument
Kircher 1679 Structure
CHARTS The
Rhetoric is:
"similarity across scripts"

Cartoon
Vignette, phantasmatic
(fantasmatic)

Antiquity Explained
Bernard de Montfaucon
curiosity cabinets of Europe
The material of antiquity
has in its instantiation the...

Richard Pococke
1743-45
Inscriptions from Mt Sinai

Thomas Astle keeper of
the Tower of London
1784

Modern thinker
Comparative Study
not just equivalencies

1855 Arch
Sudan

Eshmunazar II 1855
Basalt sarcophagus
w/ inscription
Very sophisticated
Phoenecian
Text can be read
Chided in hieroglyphics
did not catch on
1st mini-archeology
near archeological
evidence in Louvre
Ottoman Empire
located the script in
geography
mini-
Paleography

CHART BECOMES a
DATA ~~SET~~ STRUCTURE
(SET)

Used for many purposes

Issac Taylor, 1899 Alpha

Lawrence Waddell, 1927
The Aryan Origins of the Alpha

Petrie's Egyptologists, 1905
Cairo → Jerusalem
"The Exodus Route"

Museum
The British Library
1700 - 1500 BCE
SEMITIC INSCRIPTION

Location,
Flinders-Petrie
Alphabet consolidates
wrong but good try

Where did the alphabet
originate?

Darnell's SEMITIC but on
the CONTINENT of AFRICA
not the SUDAN

Equal

Forensics in cultural
of history

Franciscus Mercurius
van Helmont,

The

Alphabeti veri 1667
naturalis

= to archeological
empiricist

LISA GITELMAN, NYU

historiographical epistemology
history and its origins
are consistently
reproduced

EPIGRAPHY → The papers squeeze

BIBLIOGRAPHY

HISTORIOGRAPHY

EPISTEMOLOGY

MEDIA STUDIES!

LOGAN

The Alphabet Effect
DRUCKER criticized LOGAN
"Specious Greek origins"

BRUNO LATOUR

"non-alphabetic"
writing has limited
China's growth
C is for CRACKPOT LOL
→ relate to the archeological

TOOL or HOW of KNOWING
a

Photog no good when looking at
inscriptions why?

MATERIALIALITY

Part of the production of semantic value
B/W stones or chips (Romans)

SEMIOTIC (eland Mark)
(plastic, plasticity)

Only available scholarship is found
in CINEMA SCHOLARSHIP

Bertrand

The materiality of the
Signifier

Q: How is the materiality
contributing to the
discourse → the production
of an argument. Re →

→ Pedagogy → what is the work
being done by the

ever-used all the time

Materiality as performative
Yes, but...

The Charts: columns + rows
* the argument made by the
chart, an argument is made

JD:

"all virtual has a
material instantiation"

WALTER RALEIGH, SIR
USHER'S CHRONOLOGY in the
KING JAMES BIBLE

materiality?

NEWTON

Chronology of Ancient
Kingdoms amended
"Asher is wrong
by 4 days + 3 hours"
ATTEMPT to come up w/ a
COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

BONAVENTURE'S
72 SCRIPTS
COMPENDIA

- Celestial scripts were
used for incantations
- Adamic script never used
for anything, so
what is their cultural
resonance?
A SIGN of, A TESTIMONY of
to BELIEF that the
Angel Raphael brought
a script to Adam

- KING LETTERS get used
in HEBREICA

ROSETTA STONE is not
READ

HERCULANEUM: AI w/
PAPYRI-LAYERS BURNT /
SCROLLS OF BURNT and
SOLIDIFIED PAPYRUS

Benefit of AI:
automated systems do
things at scale

KNUSD
a mathematician ^{attempted} and
LETTER FORMS ^{algorithm}
SEMIOtic SYSTEM ^{his math}
A relates to B there is ^{for} formulae
NO INHERENT "A"

A needs B to make sense WOW

Alpha numeric substrate
of communication

Scripts will continue to
evolve and emerge
Question of chronological
scale

letter forms that morph
to inflect meaning

- affect? J

- play a technology
present in handwriting

letter form can be
an affective communication

YOWZA! What a talk!