Contents

| List of figures | | page ix |
|------------------|--|---------|
| Pref | face Tace | xv |
| Acknowledgements | | xvi |
| I | Introduction: building models like a wigwam | I |
| 2 | Text | 4 |
| 3 | Orality and genre | 11 |
| 4 | Myth | 18 |
| 5 | Literacy | 21 |
| 6 | Tradition | 26 |
| 7 | Memorization | 29 |
| 8 | M. L. West and the Eastern origins of Greek tradition | 33 |
| 9 | Cultural transmission by literate means in the Near East | 48 |
| ю | Writing: general | 56 |
| ΙΙ | Writing: semasiography and logosyllabography | 62 |
| 12 | Writing: the Chinese enigma | 72 |
| 13 | Oral and written in the land between the rivers | 80 |
| 14 | Oral and written in the Valley of the Nile | 89 |
| 15 | The West Semitic revolution | 99 |
| 16 | The invention of the Greek alphabet and the end | |
| | of multiliteralism | 112 |

| viii | Contents | |
|----------------|--|------------|
| 17 | Where does Homer fit in the alphabetic revolution? | 125 |
| 18 | The aoidos in context | 134 |
| 19 | Aoidic innovation in myth: stories from pots | 146 |
| 20 | Summary and conclusions: early Greek literature in context | 188 |
| Bibli Inde: | iography x | 197 206 |

Figures

| I. | The Bankes papyrus, showing <i>Iliad</i> 24.649–91, second | |
|----|---|--------|
| | century AD. London, British Museum, Papyrus cxiv. | |
| | © The British Museum | page 5 |
| 2. | Sappho with unrolled papyrus holding poetic text, which | |
| | would be performed to the accompaniment of the lyre | |
| | that a companion holds. Attic red-figure, c. 430 BC. | |
| | Athens, National Archaeological Museum, 1260 | 31 |
| 3. | Fresco from the throne room at the palace of Pylos as | |
| _ | reconstructed by Piet de Jong, c. 1200 BC. Photo courtesy | |
| | Blegen Archives, University of Cincinnati | 45 |
| 4. | A three-fingered bronze lyre-player from Crete, | |
| - | с. 750-700 вс. Heraklion, Archaeological Museum, | |
| | 2064 | 47 |
| 5. | Reliefs of scribes, from the palace of Tiglath-pileser III, | |
| _ | c. 725 BC. London, British Museum, 118882. | |
| | © The British Museum | 53 |
| 6. | Bulla with impressions, southern Iraq, c. 3500 BC | |
| | (after Schmandt-Besserat, 1996, figure 72) | 57 |
| 7. | Sign showing duck and ducklings. Author's photo | 63 |
| | Burning cigarette | 63 |
| 9. | Hellenistic technopaignion in form of an altar, second | |
| | century AD (after Bucolici Graeci, ed. A. S. F. Gow). | |
| | Used by permission of Oxford University Press | 66 |
| o. | Column from the tomb of Nefertari, west face, | |
| | Chamber G, Valley of the Queens, thirteenth century BC. | |
| | Los Angeles, The Getty Conservation Institute. | |
| | © J. Paul Getty Trust, all rights reserved | 67 |
| Ι. | The Buddha as the character fo. Photo © Wang | |
| | Miao/Paris, Agence de Press, ANA | 76 |
| | | |

| 12 | 2. Wooden tablet from the Ulu Burun shipwreck, c. 1300 BC. | |
|-----|---|-----|
| | Courtesy of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, Texas | |
| | A&M University, photo by Don A. Frey | 82 |
| 13 | 3. Waxed ivory writing boards from Nimrud, c. 720 BC. | |
| | London, British Museum, 131952-3. © The British | |
| | Museum | 83 |
| 14 | Horus leads Ani into the presence of Osiris, from the | 03 |
| | Nineteenth-Dynasty Papyrus of Ani, Spell 30B. London, | |
| | British Museum. © The British Museum | 00 |
| 15 | . The ceremony of opening of the mouth, Chapter 21 of | 93 |
| | the Book of the Dead, from the Nineteenth-Dynasty Papyrus | |
| | of Ani. London, British Museum. © The British Museum | |
| 16 | Trade routes of northeastern Mediterranean. Madison, | 95 |
| | University of Wisconsin-Madison Cartographic Lab | |
| 17 | . Ugaritic signary, with transliteration into Roman | 100 |
| • | characters, characters from the International Phonetic | |
| | Alphabet, and modern Hebrew characters (after Naveh, | |
| | 1982, fig. 25) | |
| 18. | The Inscription of Zakur, king of Hamath, c. 800 BC | 104 |
| | (after Naveh, 1982, figure 73) | |
| 10. | A miniature amuletic ivory writing board from a tomb in | 105 |
| - 5 | Marsigiliana d'Albegna in northern Etruria, c. 700 BC | |
| | (after Guarducci, 1967, figure 89) | |
| 20. | A boy doing lessons on a folding tablet, from an Attic | 115 |
| | red-figured kylix, с. 450 вс. Philadelphia, University of | |
| | Pennsylvania Myconym of Archard Land | |
| | Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, MS 4842 | |
| 21 | | 116 |
| 41. | A man holding a papyrus roll, beside his wife who holds a | |
| | folding tablet and stylus, from the House of Terentius | |
| | Nero, Pompeii, first century AD. Photo: Naples | |
| | Archaeological Museum, Archives G. dagli Orti. Courtesy | |
| | Soprintendenza Archeologica delle Province di Napoli e Caserta | |
| 20 | | 117 |
| 22. | The oldest Greek inscription, from Gabii in Latium, | |
| 20 | c. 775 BC (after Ridgway, 1997, figure 2) | 811 |
| 23. | The Dipylon Oinochoe Inscription, c. 740 BC (after | |
| | Powell, 1988, figure 2) | 119 |
| 24. | The earliest written law from Greece, from the temple of | |
| | Apono at Dreros on Crete, c. 640 BC (after Guarducci. | |
| | 1967, figure 59a) | 119 |
| | | |

hypostyle hall of the mortuary temple to Ramses III at

36. The battle of Til-Tuba, from Nineveh, Southwest Palace of King Sennacherib, Room 33, c. 660–650 BC. London, British Museum, 128801/802. © The British Museum

37. A hero stabs a female Cyclops, on a terracotta relief from Khafaje, c. 2025–1763 BC, from the Diyala excavations of

157

158

Medinet Habu, c. 1150 BC. Author's photo

| the Oriental Institute. Chicago, University of Chicago, | |
|---|-----|
| Oriental Institute, 3195 | 150 |
| 38. Two heroes fighting a seven-headed serpent, on a cylinder | 159 |
| seal from Tell Ashmar, c. 3000–2340 BC. Chicago. | |
| University of Chicago, Oriental Institute, 7237 | 160 |
| 39. Hero fighting bird, on an Assyrian cylinder seal | 100 |
| c. 750–650 BC. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library. | |
| 089 | 161 |
| 40. Marduk and the dragon, from a seal found in Babylon, | |
| 600–700 BC (after Oates, 1979, 198, figure 126) | 163 |
| 41. North frieze, military landing and naval battle. Room 5 | - 3 |
| west nouse, Akrotiri (Thera), c. 1650 BC. Athens | |
| National Archaeological Museum | 165 |
| 42. Siege scene on a silver rhyton from Shaft Grave IV of | • 3 |
| Grave Circle A at Mycenae, c. 1550 BC. Athens, National | |
| Archaeological Museum | 166 |
| 43. Hero kills a seven-headed serpent, with scorpions, on a | |
| Sumerian seal, c. 3000–2500 BC (after Frankfort, 1055 | |
| pr. 47, no. 497. Ct. Ahlberg-Cornell, 1002, 20) | 168 |
| 44. Siege engine from the palace of Tiglath-pileser III | |
| at Nimrud, c. 730 BC. London, British Museum | |
| © The British Museum | 169 |
| 45. The Trojan Horse and Heracles on a Boeotian fibula, | Ū |
| c. 700 BC. Drawing after London, British Museum, 2205 | |
| © The Brush Museum | 170 |
| 46. The Trojan Horse on a pithos from Mykonos, c. 670 BC. | • |
| Mykonos Museum, 70 | 170 |
| 47. Early Attic sherd showing archer, c. 650 BC. Athens, | · |
| National Archaeological Museum, 16400 | 171 |
| 48. Bird-strangler on an Assyrian cylinder seal, eighth-seventh | · |
| Century BC. Bibliothèque Nationale de France Paris | 172 |
| 49. Geometric vase, c. 750–700 Bc. Copenhagen, Ny | |
| Carlsberg Glyptotek, I.N. 3153 | 173 |
| 50. Assurbanipal killing a lion, from Nineveh, 668–630 BC. | |
| London, British Museum. © The British Museum | 174 |
| 51. Presentation scene on a cylinder seal from Ur, c. 2500 BC | |
| (U 18974, L. Legrain, Ur. Excavation X. Seal Cylinders, | |
| New York, 1951, pl. 19, no. 295) | 174 |
| 52. The Judgment of Paris on a Laconian comb, from the | = |
| sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta, c. 625 BC. Athens, | |
| National Archaeological Museum, 15368 | 175 |
| | |

| | List of figures | xiii |
|-----|---|------|
| 53. | The Judgment of Paris on a Corinthian olpe, c. 600 BC. | |
| | Rome, Villa Giulia, 22679 | 175 |
| 54. | Man holding a lion, facing a lion, from the Geometric | |
| | stand, c. 735 BC (see another view in figure 31). Athens, | |
| | Kerameikos Museum, 407 | 177 |
| 55. | Tarantine stater showing man riding dolphin, c. 735 BC. | |
| | Madison, University of Wisconsin, Elvehjem Museum of | |
| | Art, Gift of Herbert M. Howe, 1980.148 | 180 |
| 56. | Man riding dolphin, on a black-figure lekythos by the | |
| - | Athena Painter, c. 490 BC. Baltimore, Baltimore Museum | |
| | of Art, Antioch Subscription Fund and Frank J. and | |
| | Elizabeth L. Goodnow Collections, by exchange, | |
| | 1960.55.1 | 181 |
| 57. | Blinding of Polyphemus on a proto-Attic amphora, | |
| • | c. 670 BC. Eleusis, Archaeological Museum, 546 | 183 |
| | | |