

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-58907-9 - Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet

Barry B. Powell

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>List of figures</i>	page	xiii
<i>List of tables</i>		xiv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>		xv
<i>Abbreviations</i>		xvi
<i>A note on terms and phonetic transcriptions</i>		xix
<i>Chronological charts</i>		xx
<i>Maps</i>		xxii
Foreword: Why was the Greek alphabet invented?		i
1 Review of criticism: What we know about the origin of the Greek alphabet		5
Phoenician origins		5
Single introduction by a single man		10
The place of adaptation		12
The date of transmission		18
The moment of transmission		20
The names of the signs		32
The sounds of the signs		38
The vowels		42
The problem of the sibilants		46
The problem of the supplementals φ χ ψ		48
The adapter's system		63
Summary and conclusions		66
2 Argument from the history of writing: How writing worked before the Greek alphabet		68
Elements in the art of writing		69

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-58907-9 - Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet

Barry B. Powell

Table of Contents

[More information](#)

xii

CONTENTS

	How logo-syllabic writing works: Egyptian hieroglyphic	76
	How syllabic writing works: the Cypriote syllabary	89
	How syllabic writing works: Phoenician	101
	Summary and conclusions	105
3	Argument from the material remains: Greek inscriptions from the beginning to c. 650 B.C.	119
	The lack of semantic devices in early Greek writing	119
	I. "Short" Greek inscriptions from the beginning to c. 650 B.C.,	123
	II. "Long" Greek inscriptions from the beginning to c. 650 B.C.	158
	Conclusions	181
4	Argument from coincidence: Dating Greece's earliest poet	187
	I. What dates does archaeology give for objects, practices, and social realities mentioned in Homer?	190
	II. Is there anything about the language of the <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i> that can be dated?	207
	III. What are the earliest outside references to Homer?	208
	IV. Homer's date in ancient tradition	217
	Conclusions: the date of Homer	219
5	Conclusions from probability: how the <i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> were written down	221
	Writing and traditional song in Homer's day	221
	Conclusions	231
	APPENDIX I: Gelb's theory of the syllabic nature of West Semitic writing	238
	APPENDIX II: Homeric references in poets of the seventh century	246
	<i>Definitions</i>	249
	<i>Bibliography</i>	254
	<i>Index</i>	277