



A Simple Sigma Synopsis

□ Σ spelled S I G M A is the eighteenth letter of the Greek alphabet. □ Sigma symbolizes the sound "S" as in SUN. □ Sigma is the Phoenician Shin (W) standing sideways. □ Sigma also signifies certain stars situated somewhere in the vast solar system. □ Statistically, Sigma symbolizes standard deviations. □ In mathematics, Sigma is a symbol suggesting summation.

sigma

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kaph

*This is kaph. He was created in the year
1000 B.C. by the Phoenicians. The Greeks
adopted kaph in 900 B.C. changing his name to
"kappa" and reversing the direction that he
faced. That was the beginning of our friend
Phi Beta's, angarops, oala Bears and iwi fruit.
Words like knitting, knee and knife would have
spelled exactly how they sound. I'm not licked
pink. Are you? We're just licked with pins!
Thank heavens for little kaph. He's O.K.!*

SAM#KH. This is Samekh of the Phoenician alphabet. Samekh's story is of great importance because out of Samekh grew the letter S of our modern alphabet. Samekh was

born in the Third Millenium B.C. in the Egyptian hieroglyphic alphabet. Samekh grew and traveled to many, many places, simplifying herself through time. After Samekh

landed in Greece, she was transformed from Samekh to Shin and finally to Sigma. It was under the Romans that Samekh at last achieved her true form, becoming the letter S.

The Phoenician letter "mem" evolved from the Egyptian hieroglyphic owl. From "mem" came the Greek "mu" and eventually the presentday letter "m." This character lineage began during ancient Phoenicia's days as a major papyrus dealer. They traded with Egypt for the papyrus. This constant communication with Egypt led to a tremendous Egyptian influence on Phoenicia's developing alphabet. The Phoenicians, however, were interested in letterforms simply as a means of concise communication for business and trade. Therefore, decorative Egyptian picture symbols became simple line forms. Both the Israelites and the Greeks adapted the Phoenician alphabet; subsequently, the writing greatly influenced both the Hebraic and English alphabets.



mem

SHIN

W

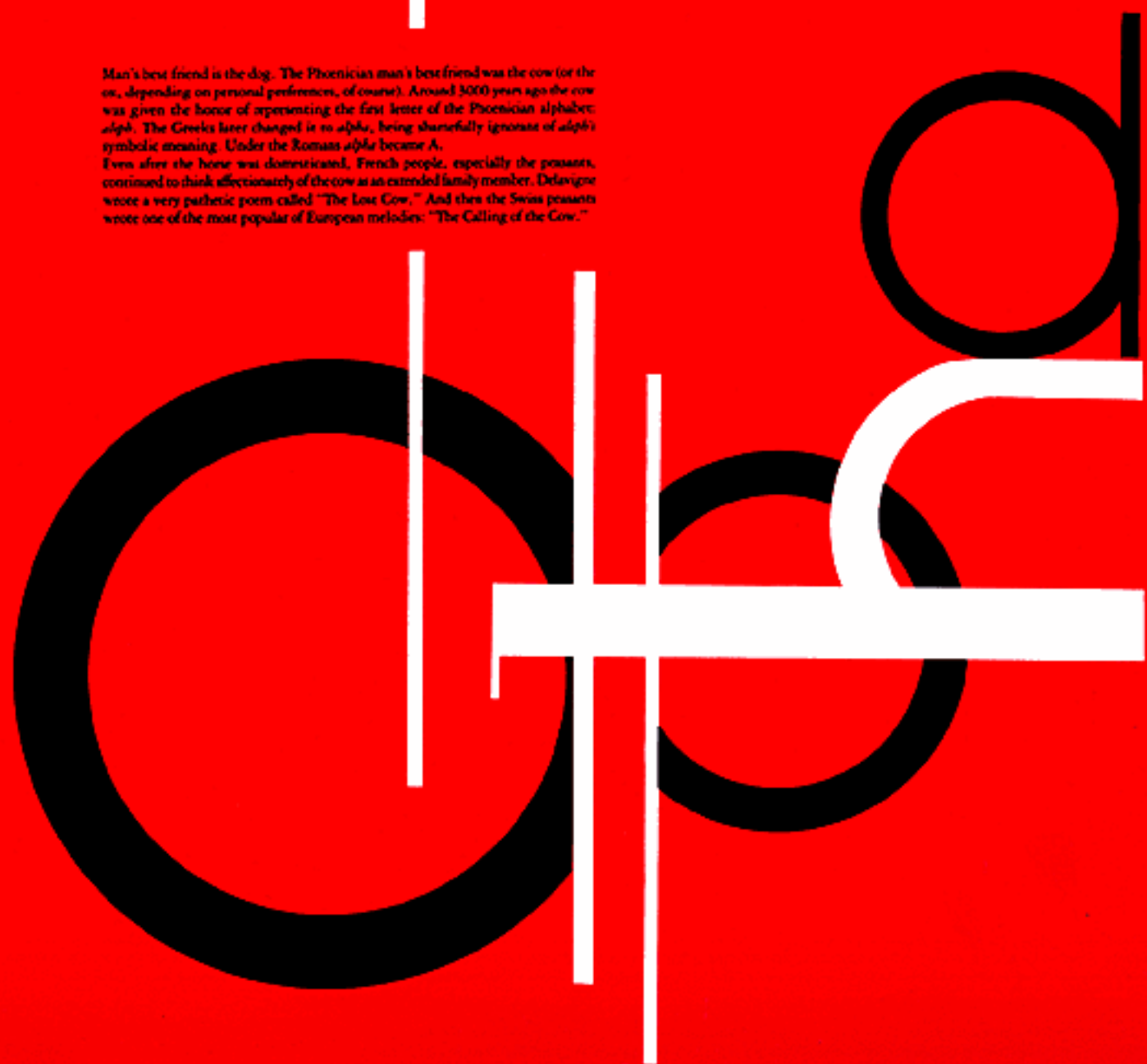
ETA

THE PHOENICIANS
 GAVE BIRTH TO SHIN
 AROUND 1200 B.C. HIS FIRST
 FORM LOOKED LIKE TWO SHARP
 TEETH OR A W . BETWEEN THE
 NINTH AND SIXTH CENTURIES B.C.
 SHIN WAS ADOPTED BY THE GREEKS
 WHO IN THE EARLIEST STAGES TURNED
 HIM ON HIS SIDE AND STRAIGHTENED OUT
 HIS SLANTED LINES TO FORM
 ETA. THEN ETA WENT ON
 TO LIVE WITH THE
 ROMANS IN CLASSICAL
 TIMES. DURING THIS
 PERIOD, HE GREW UP TO
 BECOME . LEAVES HIS
 MARK IN HIS TRAVELS,
 STOPPING ALONG THE WAY TO HELP
 OTHERS, AS IN .O. , AND TO GIVE
 DIRECTIONS BY
 INDICATING SOUTH IN
 GEOGRAPHY. IS A
 CAPITALIST. HE IS
 CONSTANTLY INVOLVED
 WITH MONEY, ALWAYS
 PUTTING HIMSELF BEFORE
 A ROW OF DOLLARS AS IN
 \$. MULTIPLIES ALMOST
 EVERY WORD HE JUMPS
 BEHIND. DABBLES IN
 SCIENCE AS THE SYMBOL
 FOR SULFUR AND LINEAR
 DISTANCE. REPRESENTS THE LINE OF
 BEAUTY IN ART, AS WELL AS A CERTAIN
 SERPENTINE CURVE . MUSICALLY, HE
 FIGURES AS THE SIGN OF SOLO. IS
 TRULY THE RENAISSANCE LETTER.
 THE PHOENICIANS GAVE BIRTH
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E is the first letter with a true Greek name, *epsilon* meaning “bare,” “simple,” “without aspiration.” The frame of E is angular but always open, representing the womb sheltering a horizontal dash pointing in an outward direction, indicating the expulsion of the child as in pregnancy. The small e arises later than the capital E. The minuscule epsilon resembles the oval of O disrupted. In Greek the letter e in singular form represents pain and woe which can be related to labor convulsion as in the German form *weh*.





Man's best friend is the dog. The Phoenician man's best friend was the cow (or the ox, depending on personal preferences, of course). Around 3000 years ago the cow was given the honor of representing the first letter of the Phoenician alphabet: *aleph*. The Greeks later changed it to *alpha*, being shamefully ignorant of *aleph*'s symbolic meaning. Under the Romans *aleph* became *A*. Even after the horse was domesticated, French people, especially the peasants, continued to think affectionately of the cow as an extended family member. Delavigne wrote a very pathetic poem called "The Lost Cow." And then the Swiss peasants wrote one of the most popular of European melodies: "The Calling of the Cow."



EPSILON Everything started with *epsilon*. *Epsilon* is the Greek symbol Ε, or ε, which was adopted and modified by the Romans to produce our modern-day E or e. The Greeks themselves had borrowed it from the Phoenician letter ḥē (𐤅). However, they carelessly dropped the *h*, leaving themselves with nothing more than a single *e*. Soon thereafter they changed the *e*'s name to *epsilon*, literally meaning "simple *e*," in order to distinguish it from their symbol for the long *e*, *ēta*. With its newfound identity, the *epsilon* went on to become an *e* of responsibility and importance.

Perhaps because it is so common, the virtues of the *e* are sometimes overlooked. The *e* is hard working, the most often used letter in the English language, but it is usually cast aside the moment a good-looking suffix enters the room. Many times, the *e* is ignored completely, kept silent so that a long vowel sound may be heard. It is time we granted the humble *e* the recognition it deserves; after all, the English language would be very strange without it.

A large, stylized graphic of the letter 'E' in red, set against a background of black and white geometric shapes. The 'E' is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page, partially overlapping a white rectangular area. The background consists of various black and white blocks and lines, creating a complex, abstract pattern.

Mem. The Phoenician , or *mem*,
was derived from an earlier
sign representing waves of
water. It is curious how this
came to be. Thousands of
years ago a lonely Phoenician
scholar stood along the shore-
line staring at the ocean. As
he looked at the waves he
had the urge to record the
motion of the water. He
drew a symbol for waves on
his crude clay tablet, which
he much admired. Excited
about his incredible new
design, he ran to show it to
all his friends. Now this
contemplative Phoenician
was very different and not
always understood by his
common friends. Upon see-
ing his marvelous new crea-
tion, they stared at it quite
baffled. They saw no resem-
blance between this scribble
 and the churning of the
sea. Their only comments
were a pensive "*Mmm*" and
"*Em, I see.*" From there grew
the legend of *mem*. Not quite
what the scholarly Phoeni-
cian had in mind, but at
least *mem*  caught on. 

Hello, I am *Sameth*, and in the form presented here I am a letter in the Phoenician alphabet. My shape and name have changed so drastically over the long centuries that you probably wouldn't know what letter I am today. My beginnings originate with the Egyptians, when in their hieroglyphic alphabet I was a picture of a sword. During years of change, my image lost some of its ornate qualities until in the Hieratic alphabet I became just a simplified symbol of a sword. I looked like a long, horizontal stroke intersected on one side by two short strokes. It was then that I received my name *Sameth*. When the Phoenicians took me over, they kept my old name, yet they added one more horizontal stroke and turned me 90° so now I am standing up instead of lying down. I guess in the form that I appear here I could pass for a letter in some Oriental alphabet. But that is not the end of my story, and you are probably wondering if I am still around and in use in the 20th century? Well, during my takeover by the Greeks I do not change my form much, yet they rename me. My name is now *xi*. Then the Romans, while adapting me into their alphabet, change my shape into something that looks like the letter X. So I am still around, not as an S, which might be a pretty good guess, but as the third from the last letter in the alphabet used in writing this. A letter most often used to represent mysterious and unknown factors, numbers, people, etc....X. Hello, I am *Sameth*, and in the form presented here I am a letter in the Phoenician alphabet. My shape and name have changed so drastically over the long centuries that you probably wouldn't know what letter I am today. My beginnings originate with the Egyptians, when in their hieroglyphic alphabet I was a picture of a sword. During years of change, my image lost some of its ornate qualities until in the Hieratic alphabet I became just a simplified symbol of a sword. I looked like a long, horizontal stroke intersected on one side by two short strokes. It was then that I received my name *Sameth*. When the Phoenicians took me over, they kept my old name, yet they added one more horizontal stroke and turned me 90° so now I am standing up instead of lying down. I guess in the form that I appear here I could pass for a letter in some Oriental alphabet. But that is not the end of my story, and you are probably wondering if I am still around and in use in the 20th century? Well, during my takeover by the Greeks I do not change my form much, yet they rename me.

The alphabet is the most highly developed,
the most convenient, and the most easily adaptable system
of writing because one sign represents a single sound
rather than an idea or syllables.

Whereas every sign represents a sound, O in Phoenician alphabet
which was the root of the current alphabet,
represents the "O", *o*, *u*.

But O, *u*, is important as 0, Zero, in the Arabic number
system. Until the 0, Zero, was invented, the number system was
incomplete. Likewise with the O
in the alphabet system.

Now the O is used in English, French, Italian, German, Spanish,
Turkish, Polish, Dutch, Czech, Croatian, Welsh,
Finnish, Hungarian, and many other languages. It was derived from
the alphabet once used by ancient Hebrews,

Phoenicians,
Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans.



ute

Q
O
P
H

Coupling the circular and the vertical, the Phoenician letter QOPH marries u n - like forms together in a tool of communication. The QOPH is modeled on the qau/qaw sounds; these onomatopoeic names express Q with vowels necessary for correct pronunciation. Many believe the monkey to be QOPH's ancestor. The letter resembles the animal perched in a tree, its tail hanging down.



Pizza. Phoenicia. It almost rhymes if you say it right. Coincidence? Perhaps, but then again, perhaps not. We already know that at the Phoenicians revolutionized the concept of written language with their creation of an alphabet in 1000 B.C. There was the first written language in which each sign represented a sound made in spoken language. We also know that each of the twenty-two symbols in their alphabet represented an object they deemed important: "QMEM" came from their symbol for water, F (SADIE) from their symbol for fishhook, but what about the mysterious @ (TETH), whose meaning is unknown? This circular, sliced symbol bears a remarkable resemblance to our modern pizza (regular, not Sicilian.) The Phoenicians enjoyed great prosperity as well as great pizza between 1200 and 900 B.C. but passed over to Roman rule in 64 B.C. after centuries of decline. The Romans, who were in the habit of modifying and adapting worthwhile pieces of the civilizations they conquered, quickly modified the number of slices from four to eight and adopted this Phoenician delicacy into their own culture. However, pizza was lost to barbarian invaders during the decline and fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century A.D. and it was not revived until the beginning of the twentieth century. Today, pizza is enjoyed all over the world and it is erroneously hailed as an Italian invention, despite strong historical evidence pointing to the Phoenicians as the originators of this round, sliced cheesy pie known as TETH @, or pizza. Actually, none of this is really true. I made it all up, except the part about the alphabet; that part was true. It does rhyme though, so here: Phoenicia-pizza.