manuscript culture

history of information february 4, 2009

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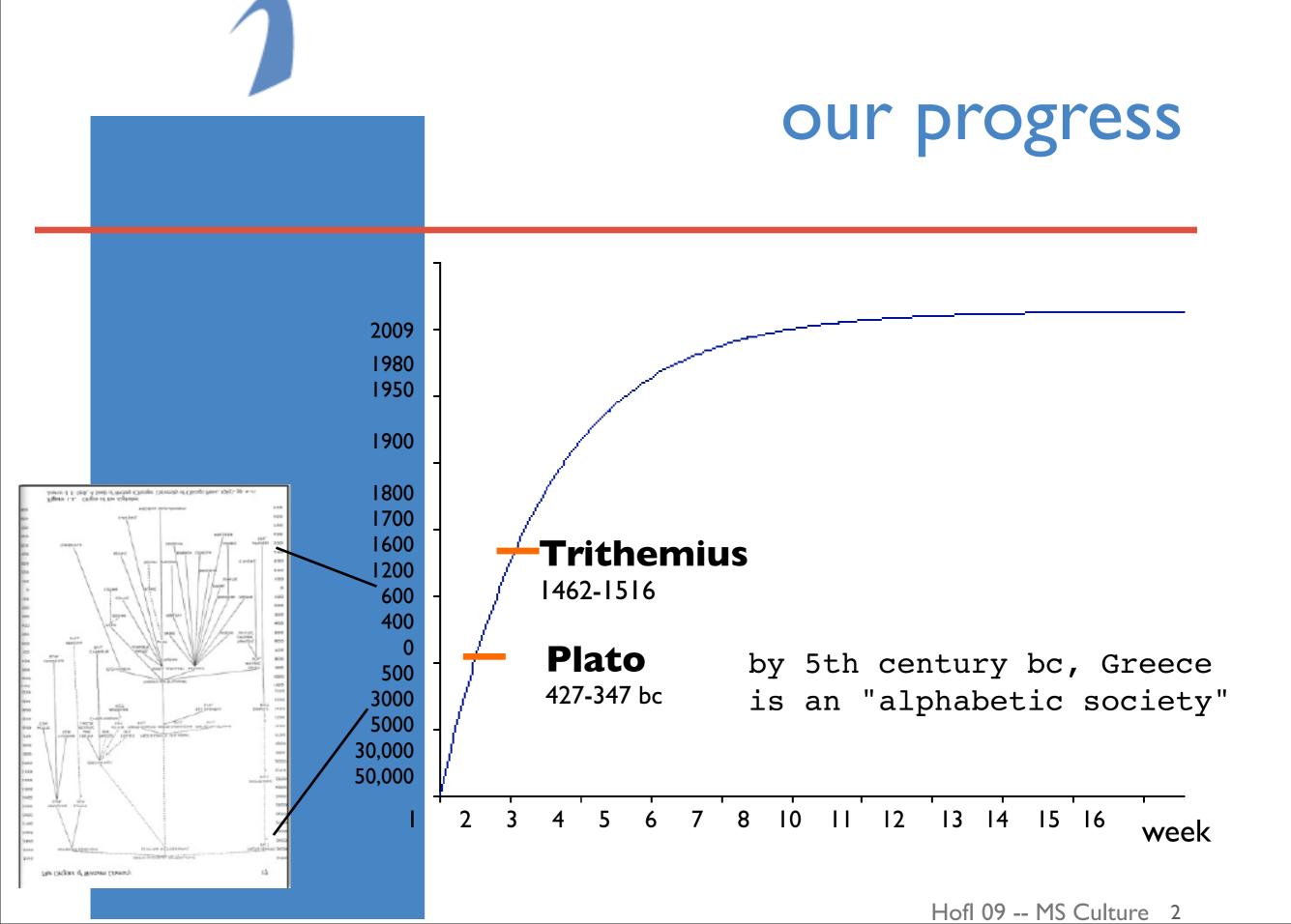
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book talk

the turning point of print

pre-print: what came before

understanding change

technologies institutions practices

manuscript culture



eyewitness reports

Plato,

Phaedrus, ?370bc/1973

Johannes Trithemius,

In Praise of Scribes, 1492/1974

pre-print

There have been three revolutions in the history of human thought. The first ... when language first emerged. ... The second cognitive revolution was the advent of writing ... The third ... the invention of a type and the printing press. ... the fourth cognitive revolution, which is just about to take place with the advent of "electronic skywriting".

Steven Harnad, "Post-Gutenberg Galaxy: The Fourth Revolution in the Means of Production of Knowledge", 1991

print: the measure of the present

"Not since the landmark institution of the printing press, beginning half a millennium ago, has there been so much excitement over the publishing of words" www.rimric.com on the wiki

"Not since Gutenberg invented the modern printing press more than 500 years ago, making books and scientific tomes affordable and widely available to the masses, has any new invention empowered individuals or transformed access to information as profoundly as Google."

David Vise, The Google Story. 2005



print: the measure of the present

Not since the invention of the printing press have the people of the world been privy to so much information. With the invention of the printing press, the Dark Ages was brought to an end. It was the progressive ideas contained in affordable books that also made the Renaissance and the Age of Reason possible. Amin Sharif, 'Third world cyberactivists' http://www.nathanielturner.com/

Now, I want to say a few things about the net. ... This is the most extraordinary invention for empowering ordinary people since the invention of the printing press in the 1400s. It really is. It has re-democratized America. There is an enormous shift in power. I thought the YouTube/CNN debate was sensational. Howard Dean, Yearly Kos. Chicago, Aug 4, 2007; http://howardempowered.blogspot.com



"Not since Gutenberg unveiled his miraculous invention of a printing press with moveable type has the book world been privy to another event as thrilling as NuvoMedia's Rocket eBook."

Netscape: Rocket eBook - Rocket eBook Tour PE Rocket eBook Explore the Features of the Rocket eBook ▶ Home The Rocket eBook is packed with features that are both powerful and easy to use. About Rocket eBook Buy a Rocket eBook How to Get Titles Explore the Rocket User Testimonials Book icon 6 Underline passages, add notes, find specific text, set bookmarks, and look up words from the built-in Random House Dictionary . Rocket 2Book RocketWriter Bookshelf icon P User's Guide Display the list of books on your Rocket eBook bookshelf. Stories The Rocket effork lets Touch any book to open it. You can also change text size and backlight intensity by touching the Settings. you do all of the things you like to do when you Rocket User's Guide FAQ read--scribble margin Shortcut icon notes, highlight passage Create custom shortcuts on your Rocket eBook. The bookmark pages. And **Download Skins** preprogrammed shortcut changes font size. A rocket image in you can search, browse the menu indicates the programmed shortcut. and index references in Rocket Support ways that are impossible Page Orientation icon Software Updates User's Guide with paper books. Change the page orientation by touching one of the four Troubleshooting directional arrows. If your touch-screen is not responding Put a world of books in properly, the bulls-eye in the center lets you realign the the pain of your hand. Vour Rocket Account screen. 0 Page Forward/Back News & Events Press Clippings Press Releases Awards Scrolls text to next page or previous page. Touchscreen The Rocket eBook's touch-sensitive digitized screen is the best available Reading Room Featured Titles Bestseller List screen for reading text on a portable device. Use your finger to touch the (Actual size is 5" x 7*" x 1*) icons and links, or use the stylus, stored in the back of the Rocket eBook spine. The hybrid-technology monochrome display has an exceptionally Library eNewsstand Pre-Loaded Titles wide viewing angle, extremely high contrast in all light conditions, a stunning white backlight, and surprisingly low power consumption. The screen is 3-1/2" X 5-1/2" with resolution of approximately 106 dots per For Publishers inch. Contact Form Publisher Support Publisher List Page Navigation Bar Skip through your title easily and quickly. Touch the bar and it displays the location of your current page as a percentage of the total length of the title. It also displays the location you want to skip to. For Sales Partners Contact Form Reading is personal. Everyone has their own preferences, from the type of reading material they choose to how they like to hold their books. Reading on your Rocket eBook™ is no different, because you can adjust it to Contact Us match your own preferences - like the size of the text, and how the pages are oriented - so you're sure to have a relaxing and enjoyable reading experience.

FAQ

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He who saw the deepset all his labours on a tablet of stone

See the tablet-box of cedar, Release its clasp of bronze Lift the lid of its secret, Pick up the tablet of lapis lazuli and read out The travails of Gilgamesh ...

technologies

stone clay wood wax parchment / vellum papyrus paper palm silk ink pens binding codex





business bureaucracy law religion education

presentism

"Printed books evolved into better-designed packages of information"

-- Grendel, Cambridge Hist. of Renaissance Philosophy

"The need for readily available information, which had been steadily rising, was accelerated by the advent of Christianity ...

"The need to find information more rapidly than is possible in a papyrus-roll-form book initiated the development of the Greco-Roman codex in the second century ..."

--Kilgour, The Evolution of the Book

keywords -- Socrates



"The discoverer is not the best judge"

keywords -- Socrates

manuscript

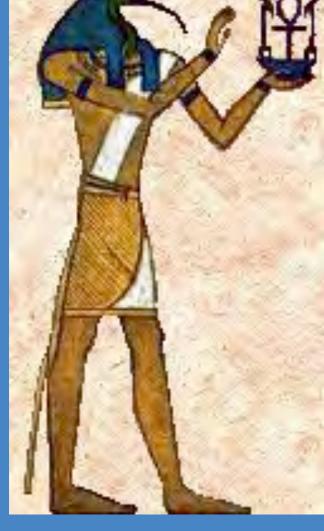


"The discoverer is not the best judge"

keywords -- Socrates

manuscript

speech



"The discoverer is not the best judge"

keywords -- Socrates

manuscript

speech

writing





"The discoverer is not the best judge"

keywords -- Socrates

manuscript

speech

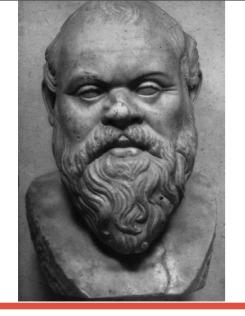
writing

information





"The discoverer is not the best judge"



Socrates - information

"your pupils will have the reputation for [wisdom] without the reality; they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction." --Penguin

alternatives

"You are supplying the opinion of wisdom to students, not the truth. For you'll see that, having become hearers without much teaching, they will seem to be sensible judges, while being for the most part senseless." --Cornell

"[Writing] is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you will give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth ... they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality." --Jowett



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... all going direct the other way

Sumer & the origin of writing

"His speech was substantial, and its contents extensive. The messenger, whose mouth was heavy, was not able to repeat it. Because the messenger, whose mouth was tired, was not able to repeat it, the lord of Kulaba patted some clay and wrote the message as if on a tablet. Formerly, the writing of messages on clay was not established. Now, under that sun and on that day, it was indeed so. The lord of Kulaba inscribed the message like a tablet. It was just like that. The messenger was like a bird, flapping its wings; he raged forth like a wolf following a kid. He traversed five mountains, six mountains, seven mountains. He lifted his eyes as he approached Aratta. He stepped joyfully into the courtyard of Aratta, he made known the authority of his king. Openly he spoke out the words in his heart. The messenger transmitted the message to the Lord of Aratta."

--Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta



"I readily admit my boundless and unceasing love of

studies and books. Neither could ever satisfy my desire to know everything which can be known in this world. It is my greatest pleasure to own and to know all books I ever saw or which I knew to have appeared in print To my regret ... money was always lacking ... for the satisfaction of my passion for book".

Trithemius

1462-1516

Abbot of St Martin's, Sponheim, 1483-1505

bibliophile

1483, 48 books in the library 1505, 2,000 books intensive to extensive

troubled reign

Exhortationes ad Monachos, 1486 De Laude Scriptorum, 1492 "The collector of books should beware that his inclination and liking do not become ends in themselves."

Trithemius

1462-1516

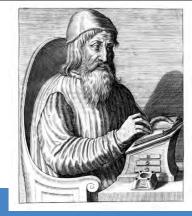
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Trithemius & the press

De Laude Scriptorum

"For all his dislike of mechanical reproduction, 'Trithemius] proved particularly deft at exploiting the printing press. ... He had his book... published in Mainz by Peter von Friedberg, his favourite printer, and ... set the work not in Gothic type normally used in Germany, but in an innovative and attractive Roman font".

Grafton & Williams, Christianity and the Transformation of the Book, 2006.

Catologus Scriptorum Ecclesiastorum, 1494

SIMI VIRI, REVERENDIQUE IN CHRI

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MII ABBATIS SPANHE MENSIS DE LAVDE SCRIPTORVM MANVALIVM LITER Argumenta lingulorum Capitum.

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Item dispatationis Petri liber vmat. Hee auté duo vleima volumina inter apocrypha cóputantur, vt pa tet, st, dift. Sé da Romana. Ferunt eius & alix epte, led apocryphr. Ionyfius Ariopagita Athenienfis, philosophia infognis, per beatum Paulum apoftolum conterfus ad fidem, pri-mus(vt quibuídam placet) Athenienfis epifcopus ordina tus eft, vir eximize fanchitatis & incomparabilis doctri-nz. Hunc polt deceffum apoftoloró, beatus Ciemens Romane vr-bis epifcopus eŭ Ruftico peef bytero & Eleutherio diacono ad féli-candú géribus verbů dei mifit in Felciam, alioin eius locă ordinato eniforno. Scriphit autem grzeo fermone nuulta przechar opufcula. epifcopo. Scripfit autem græco fermone multa præclara opufcula. De quibus apud latinos tantum inueni fublečta. De cælefti hierarchia lib.vnű. Omnedatű optimű őć,

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lib.vnű. Omne datű optimű &. lib.t. Szcerdotij quidem nli. 16.1. Nunciam vir dei polt, 16.1. Trinitas fuperfabitant. Defym 2 2

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under threat

"brothers, concentrate now all your fervor on the sacred books, for the salvation of your souls and the order"

the university

"In the 700 years between the Fall of Rome and the 12th century, it was the monasteries which enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of book production and so of book culture.... from the end of the 12th century a profound transformation took place ... reflecting in the founding of the universities and the development of learning". Febvre & Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, 1984

> humanism printing Hofl 09 -- MS Culture

Monks "are so detested that it is considered bad luck if one crosses your path"

Erasmus, In Praise of Folly, 1511





survival

LaserDonks Saving you money, Serving those in need

Products	About LaserMonks	Our Programs	Monastery Links	Customer (
E-Mail:		Password:		Login

Our prayers and blessings go out to the families of those affected by the



a 900-year tradition of community service and outreach.

survival

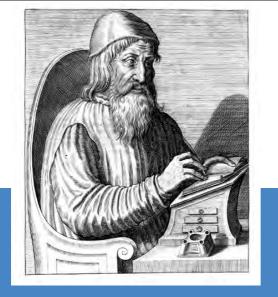
LaserDonks Saving you money, Serving those in need

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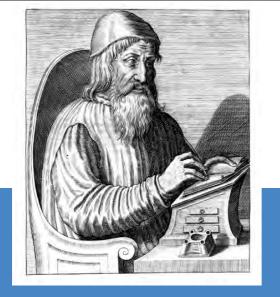
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service and outreach.

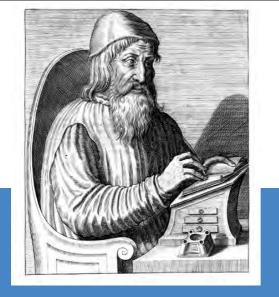


keywords -- Trithemius



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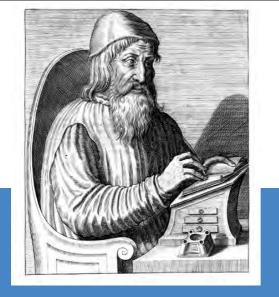
book (liber, libello, impressura, codex, voluminis)



keywords -- Trithemius

book (liber, libello, impressura, codex, voluminis)

scribe, script, scripture

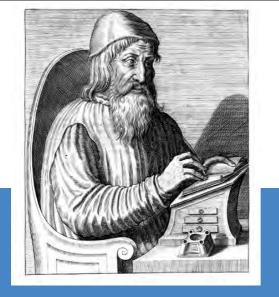


keywords -- Trithemius

book (liber, libello, impressura, codex, voluminis)

scribe, script, scripture

writing, copying



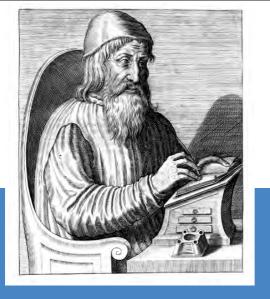
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writing, copying

information



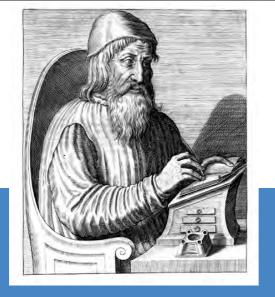
on scripture

monks should not stop copying because of the invention of printing

"Every word we write is imprinted more forcefully on our minds"

"Knowledge of Scripture will enhance you in the sight of God and man. You will be admired by all and esteemed by your superiors. Nobody will doubt your words, kings and princes will call you friend ..."

"scripture, my dear brothers will serve many purposes"



manu-script

"The written word on parchment will last a thousand years. The printed word is on paper. How long will it last? The most you can expect of a book of paper to survive is two hundred years. Only time will tell."

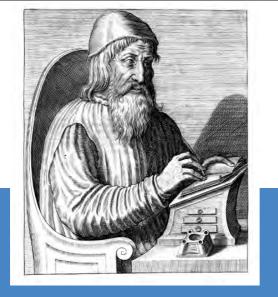
"He who gives up copying because of the invention of printing is no genuine friend of the holy Scripture ... Printed books will never be the equivalent of handwritten codices, especially since printed books are often deficient in spelling and appearances."

there's copying and then there's ...

Quadruplex est modus faciendi librum. Aliquis enimp scribit aliena, nihil addendo vel mutanda; et iste mere dicitur scriptor. Aliquis cribit aliena addendo, sed no de suo; et iste compliator dicitur. Aliquis scribit et aliena et sua, sed aliena tampquam principalia, et sua tamquam annexa ad evidentiam; et iste dicitur commentator non auctor. Aliquis scribit et sua et aliena, se sua tamquam principia, aliena tamquam annexa ad confirmationed et debit dici auctor.

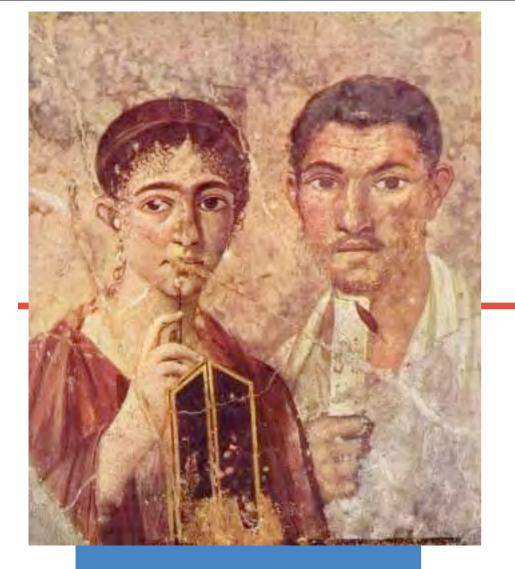
There are four ways men make books. One writes another's words, but adds or changes nothing. He is called a writer. Another writes others' words and adds work from yet others. He is called a compiler. A third adds his own words to the writing of another, but the other remains the central text, what is added merely evidence. He is called a commentator. And one writes both his own and another's words, but his are the main text and the other is added as confirmation. He truly can be called an author.

St Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1217-1274),



and information

"Whoever may want more information on this subject should read the book by Johannes Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, *De Laude Scriptorum*. There can be found in abundant detail the above-mentioned benefits and a multitude of collected arguments in praise of the good scribe."



Homerus ... Vergilius ... Cicero ... Titus Livy ... in membranus ...quam brevis immensum cepit membrana Martial (c38-103 ad), Epigrams, book XIV

technological issues

volumen to codex

"the revolution between the second and fourth centuries that changed the very structure of the book by substituting the codex for the roll" Roger Chartier, Forms and Meaning 1995



)

technological triumph?

western europe

200 ad, codex gaining, scroll losing

500 ad, codex dominating

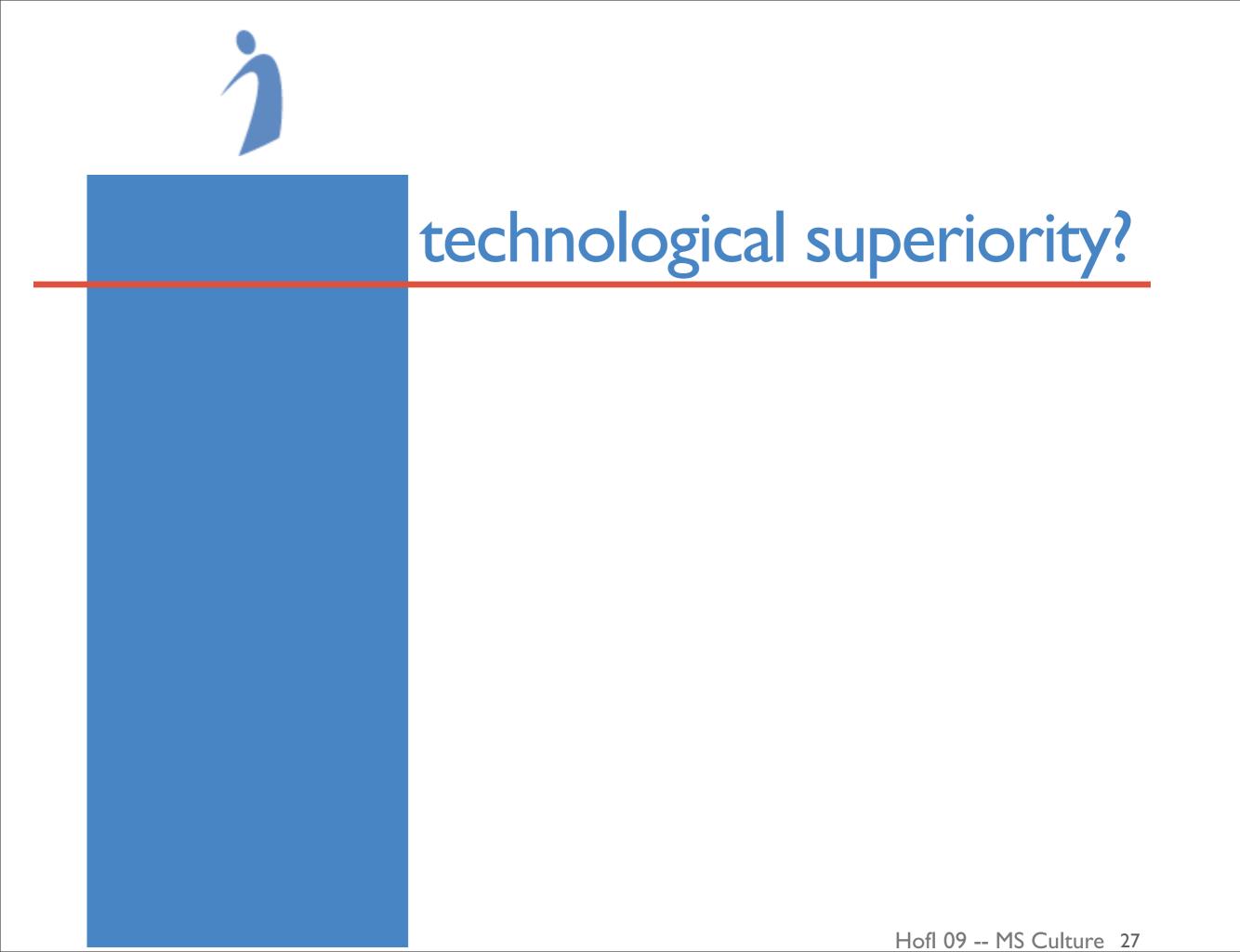
"The roll continued to serve for ... writing of the sort that goes into files or archives, but the codex took over in literature, scientific studies, technical manuals ... the sort that go onto library shelves". Casson, Libraries in the Ancient World, 2000

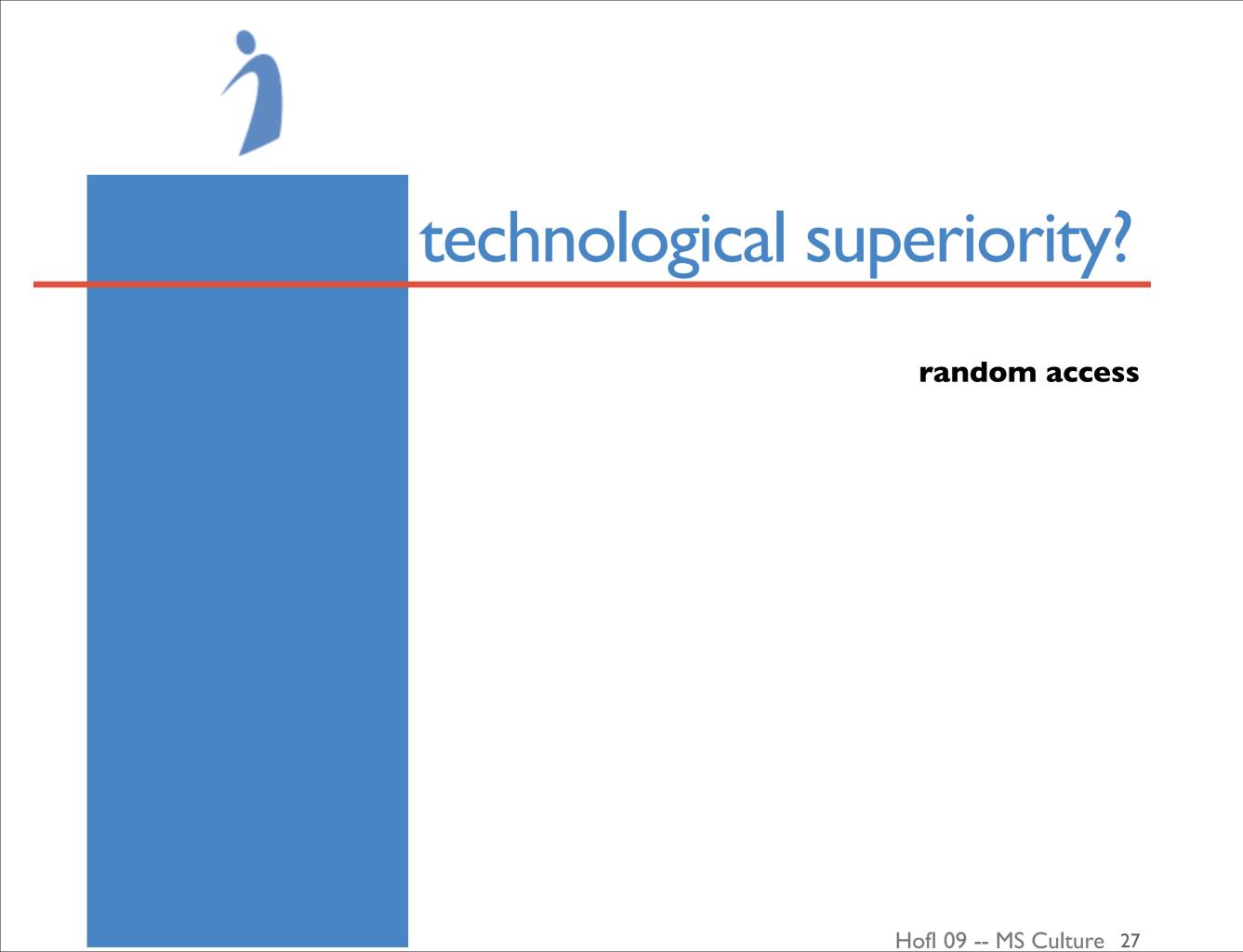
why?

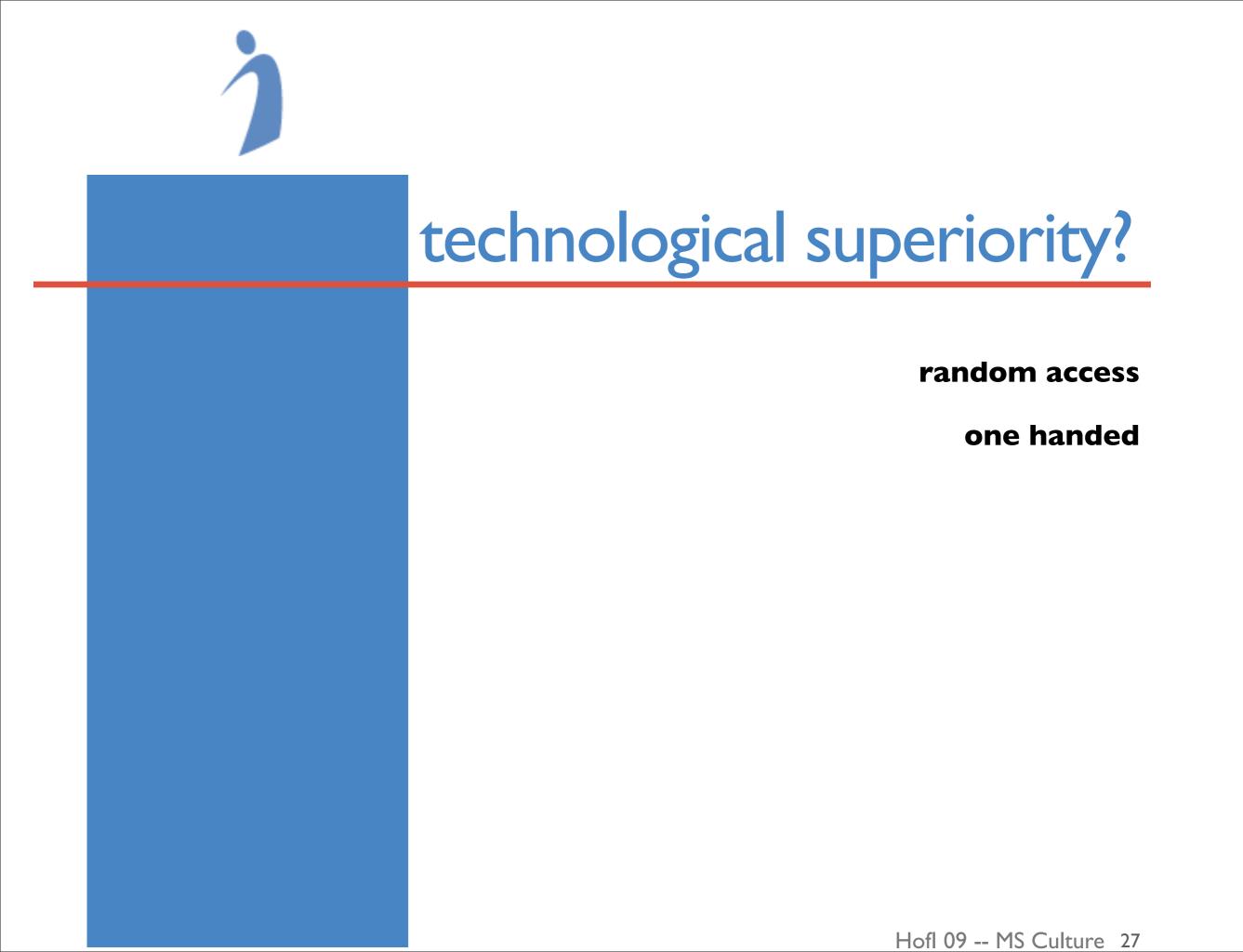
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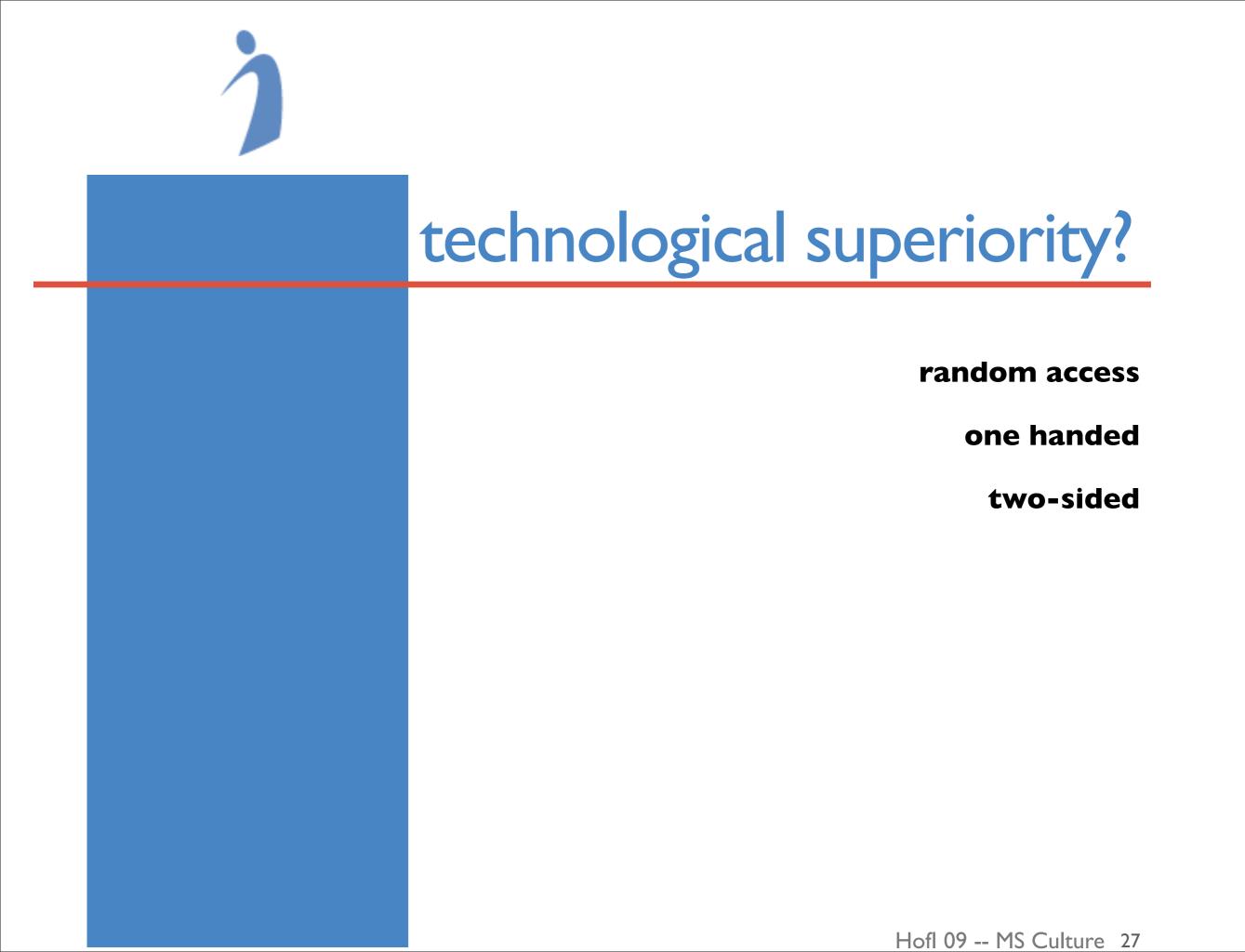
codex: trunk of a tree

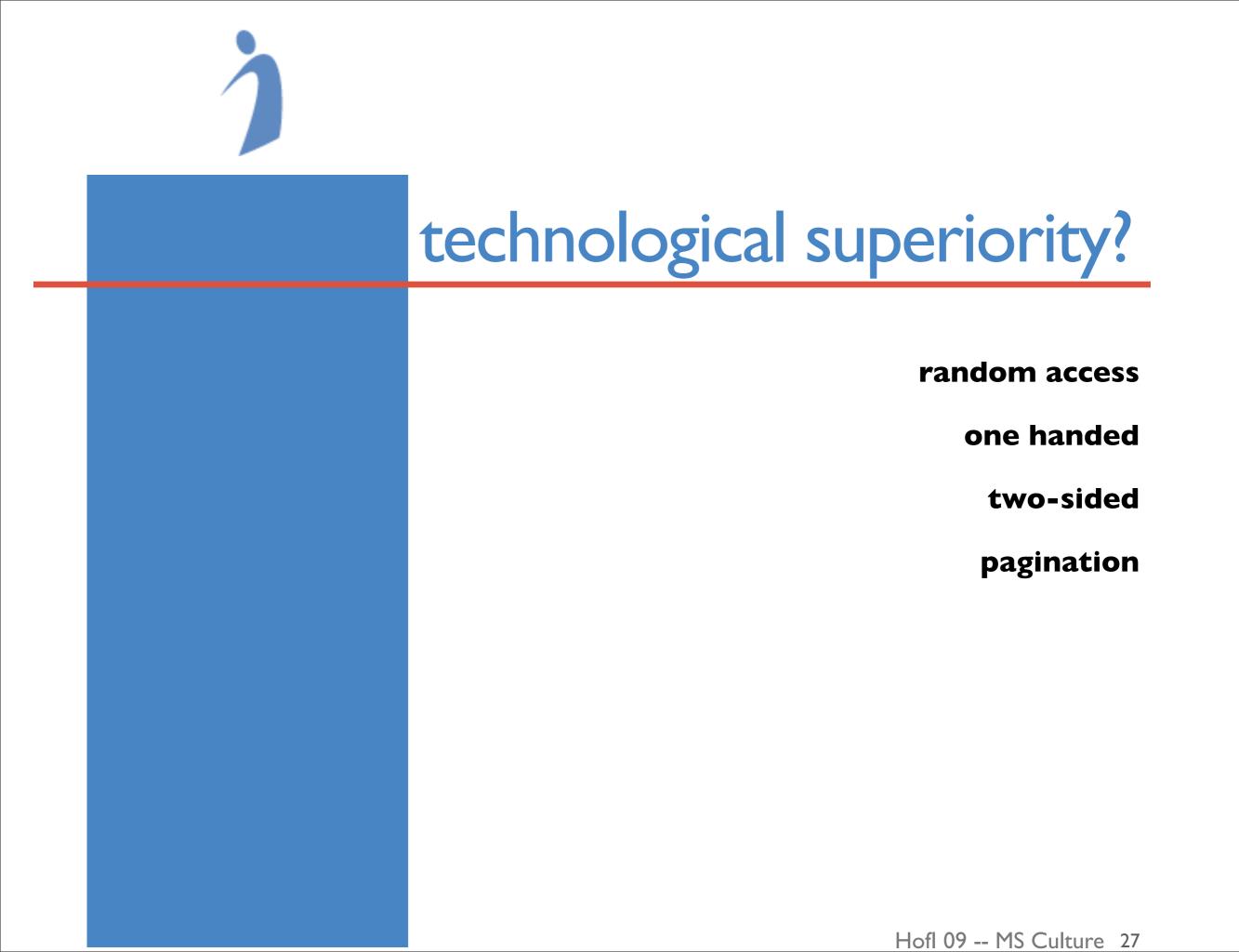
liber: bark of a tree

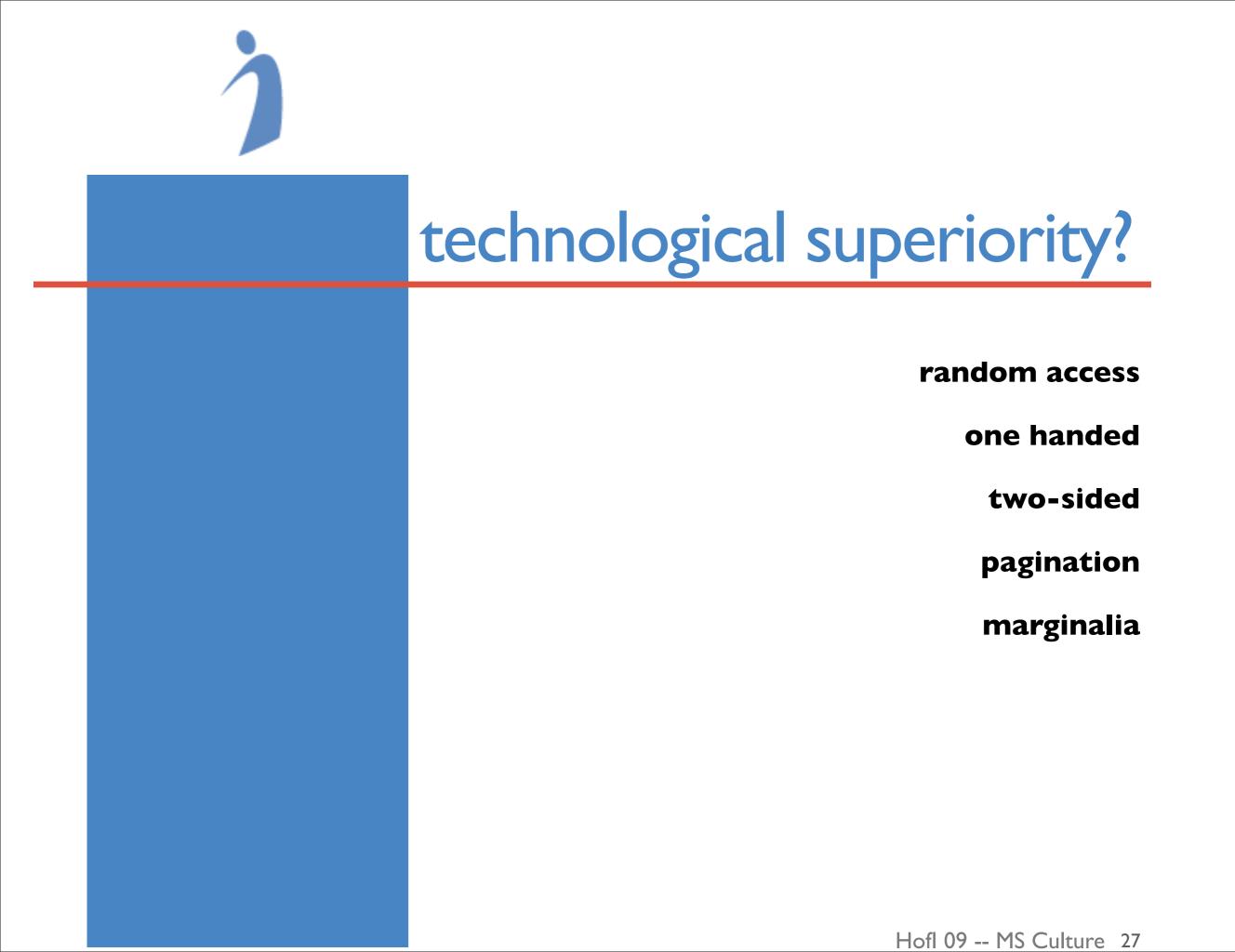


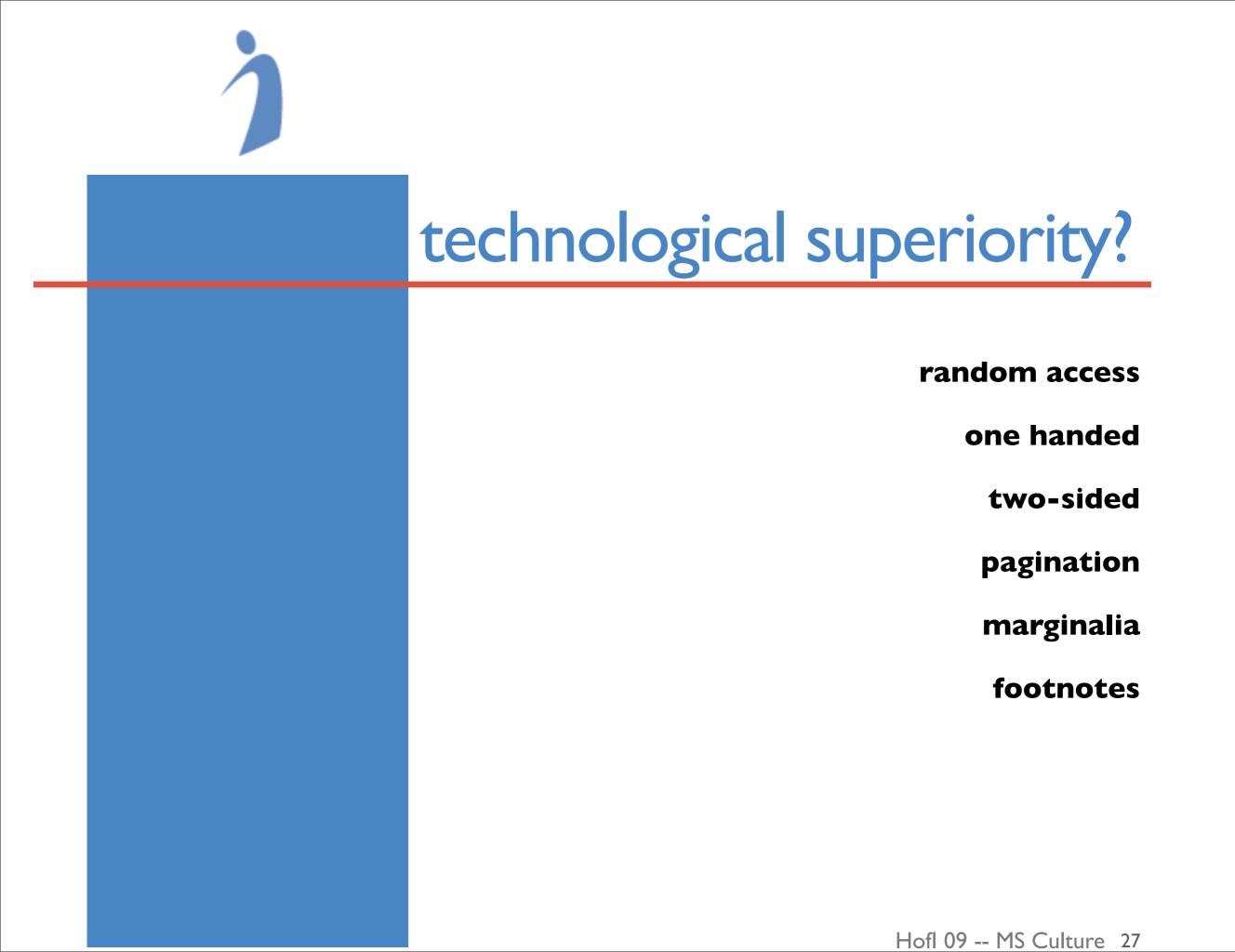


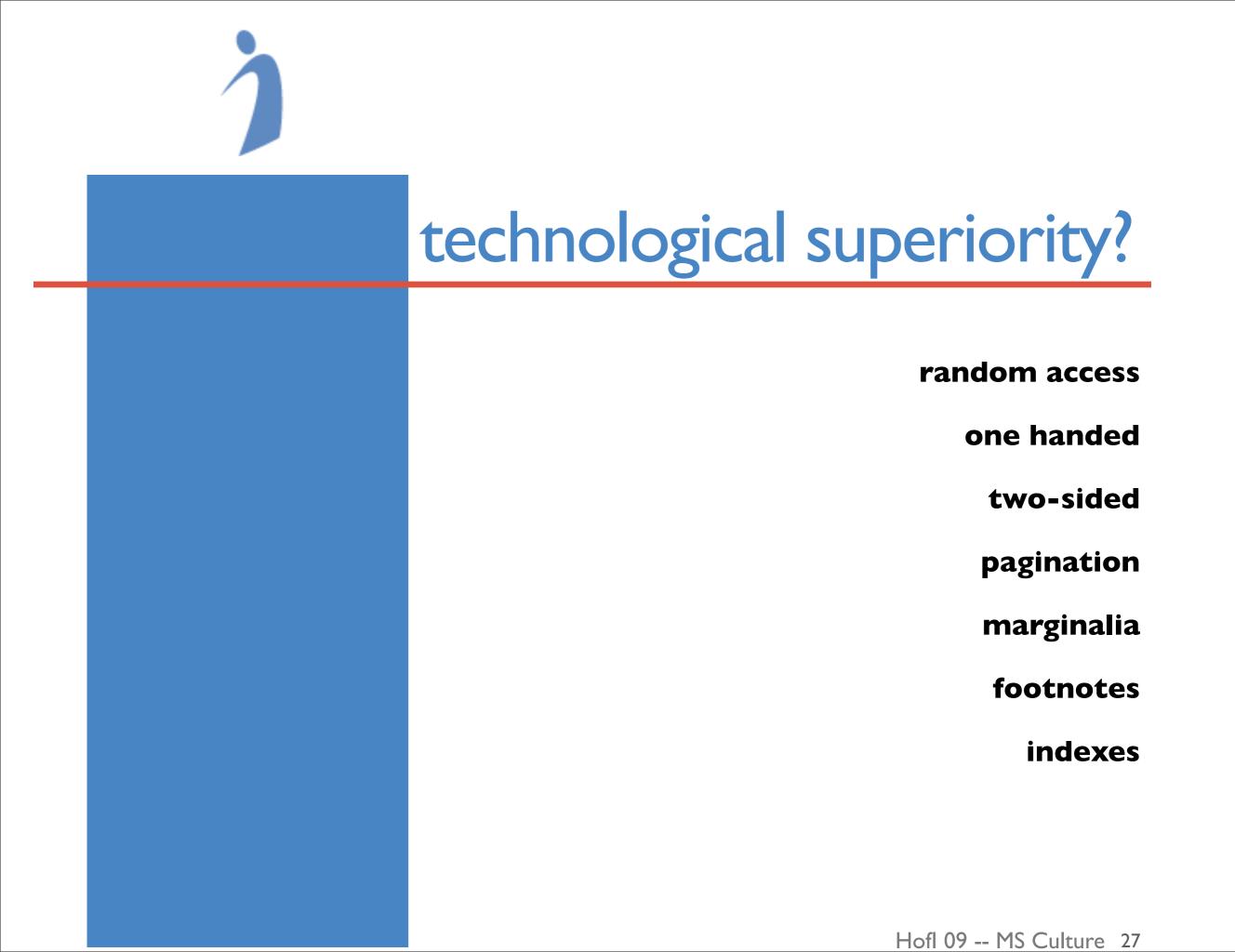


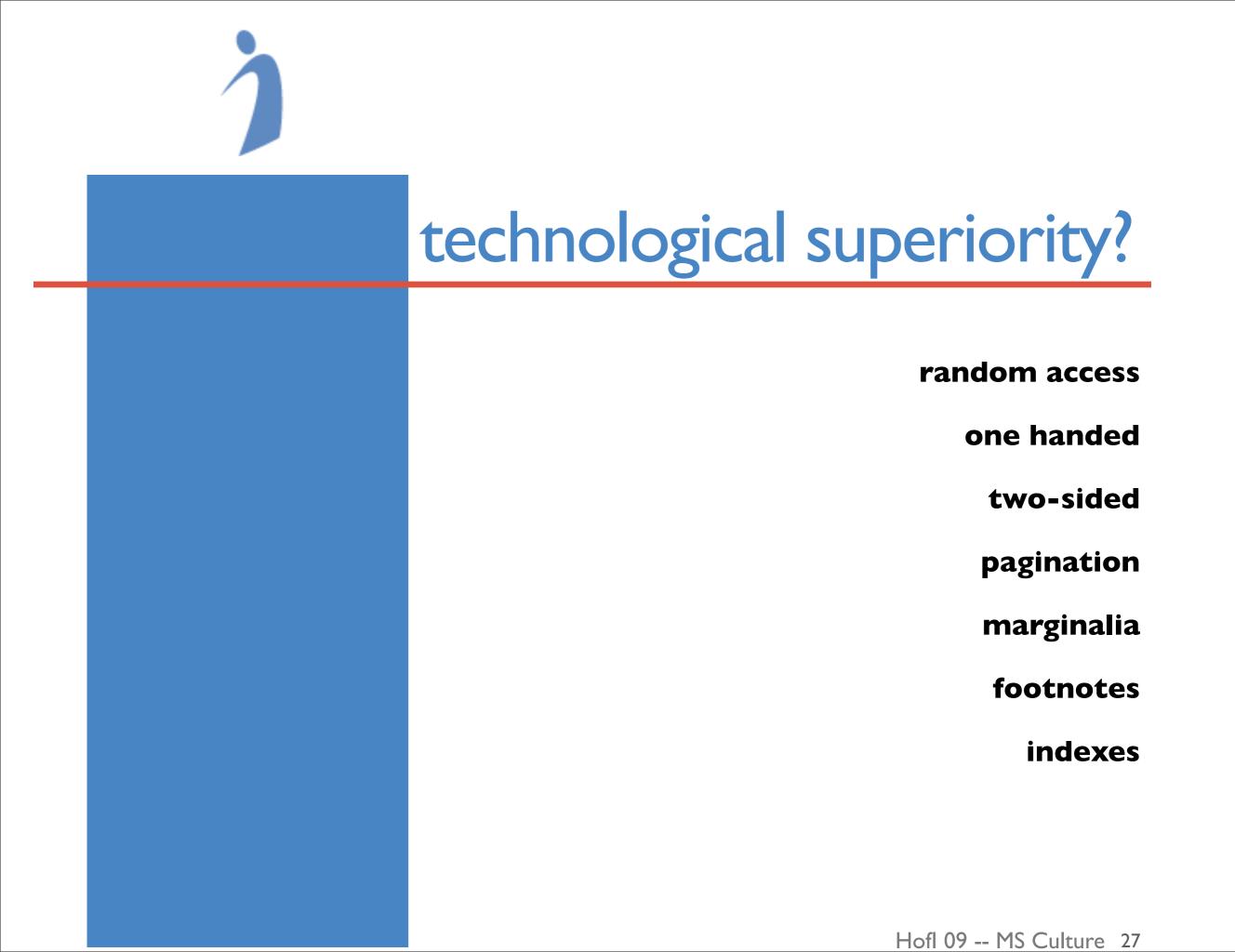


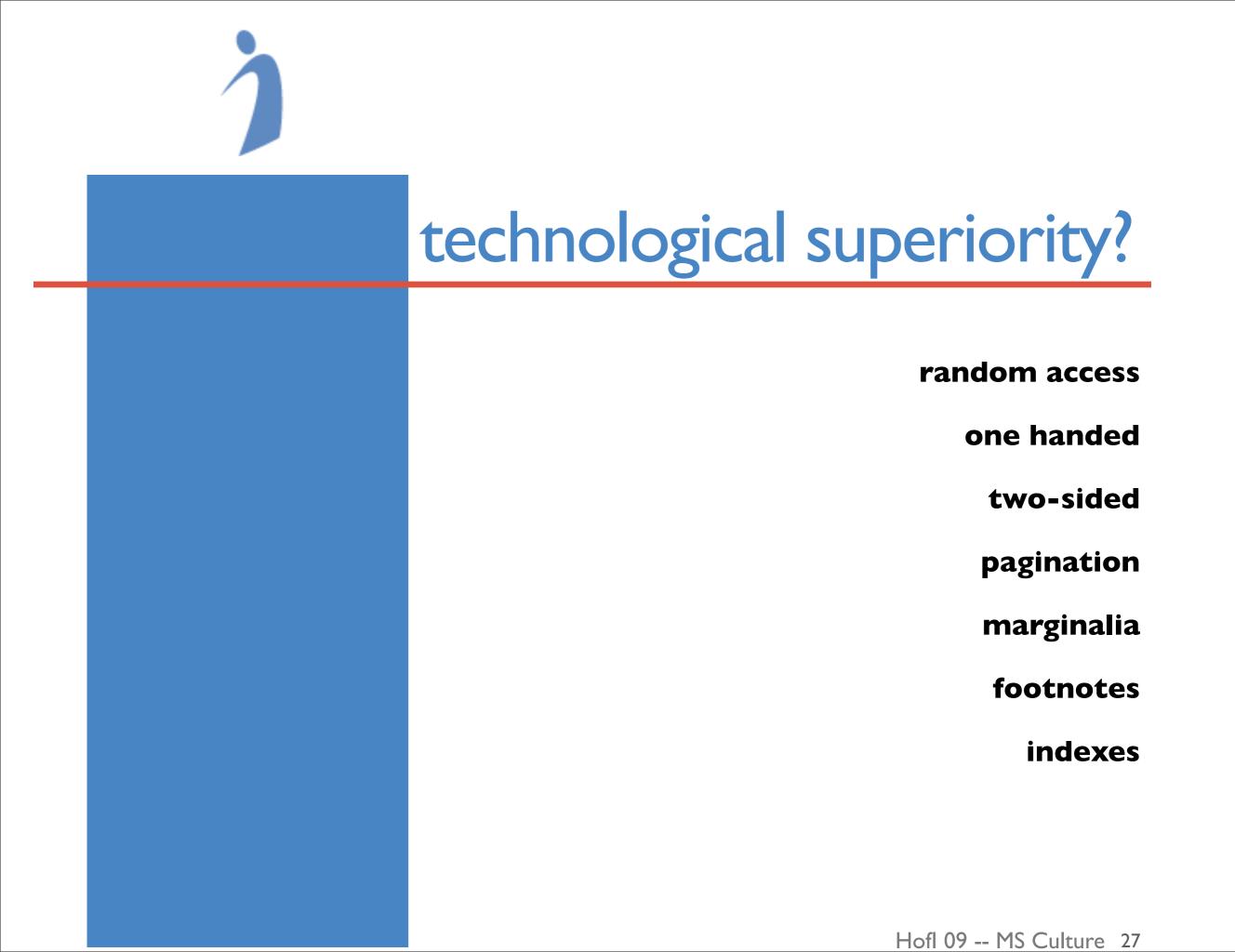












technological superiority?



random access

one handed

two-sided

pagination

marginalia

footnotes

indexes

not quite so dumb?

handy

pages

collection

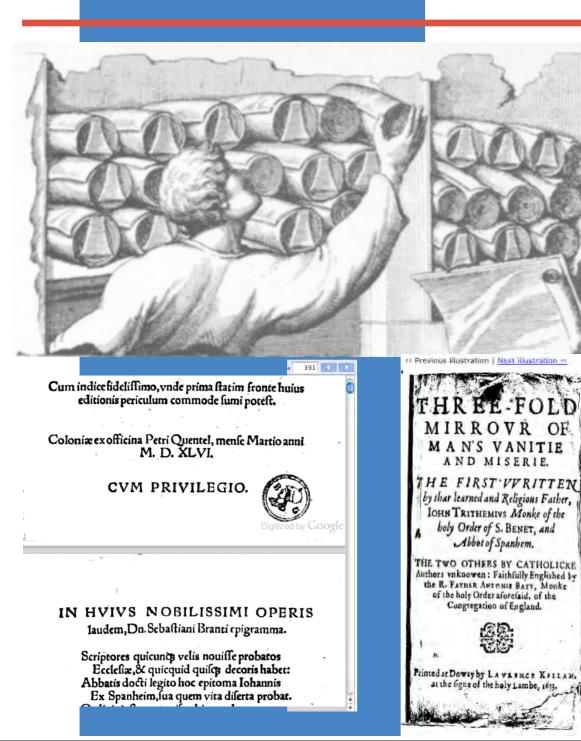
divisions

(incipits, explicits, colophons

random access

(sillyboi)

doesn't crack



know when to fold 'em

"the move from scroll to codex was accompanied by a move from papyrus to parchment"

> **papyrus** processed plant

parchment

animal skin

"the parchment alone in a fine Bible, even allowing for the shorthand script of the day, represented a flock of perhaps three hundred sheep" --North, God's Clockmaker



kinds of determinism

geographical determinism?

parchment at Pergamum

papyrus at Alexandria

religious determinism?

palm in India silk in China



breakthrough innovation?

paper

200 bc? - 105 ad, **China** Ts'ai Lun, Emperor Ho-ti, Hunan bark, rags, bamboo

diffusion:

300 ad, **Korea** (Koguryo dynasty) 5th century, 'domestic' uses, **India** 610, **Japan** 750, **Samarkand** ...

795, Baghdad

9th century, **Byzantium**





se slow on the uptake

?IIth century Spain

12th century Genoa, Nuremberg

hesitation

1145, Roger of **Sicily** ordered all charters on paper to be copied to parchment then destroyed

1248, paper accepted for us by the notaries of Languedoc (**France**)

"The written word on parchment will last a thousand years. The printed word is on paper. How long will it last? The most you can expect of a book of paper to survive is two hundred years. Only time will tell."



Christian codex, 2d century

Islamic codex, 8th century

Hebrew codex, 9th century

Chinese sutra fold, 10th century



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technological superiority?

"In late antiquity, all authority was founded on Scripture ...: and the highest authority, the authority of the church, was represented by the codex." Cavallo

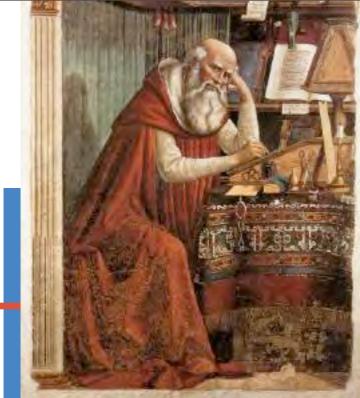
"Men began to think of facts not as recorded in texts but as embodied in texts, a transition of major importance ... help[ing] to isolate what man thought about from his process of thinking." Brian Stock, Implications of Literacy, 1893

technological superiority?

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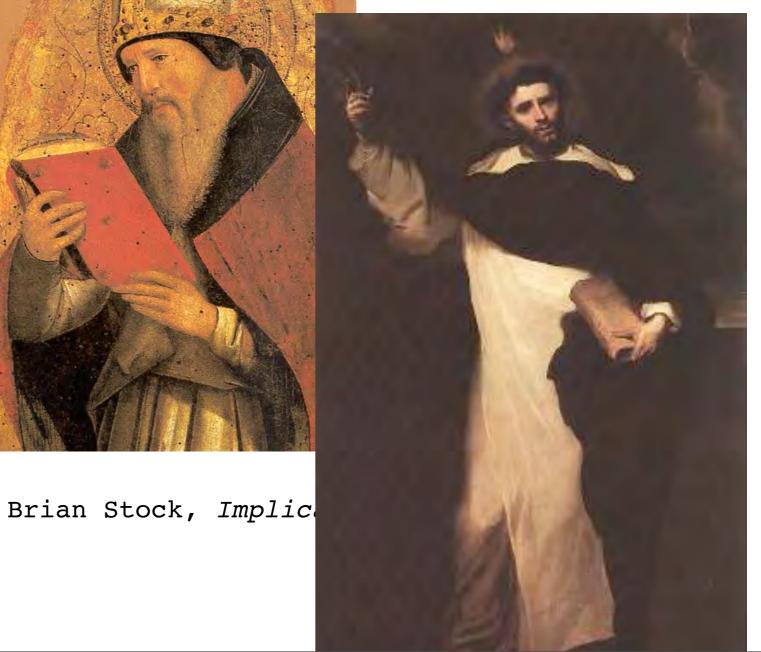
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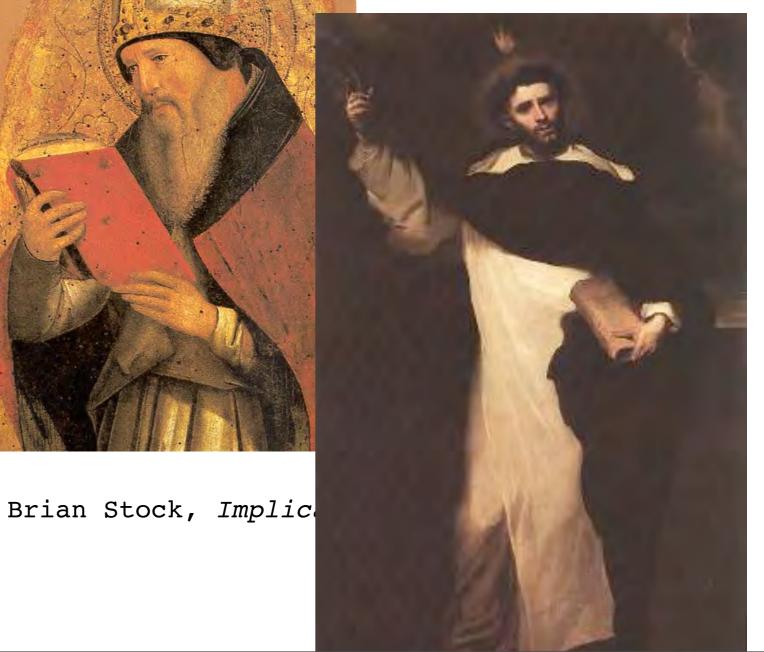
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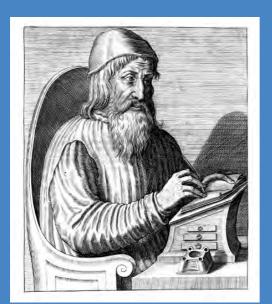
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dividing up

changing book, changing church

beyond the monastery

"The late medieval book differs more from its

early medieval predecessors than it does from the

printed book."

--Parkes, "Influence" 1976

gloss

running titles subdivisions: books, chapters analytical tables of contents chapter headings cross references alphabetical order page numbers, indexes

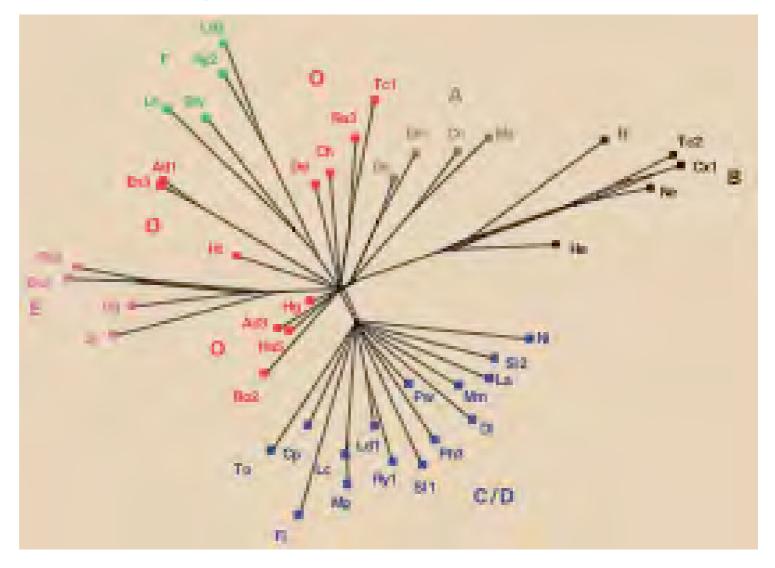
Hofl 09 -- MS Culture 35



"The expectation of readers was changed, and this was reflected in changes in the physical appearance of books. A writer organized his work for publication, and if he did not ... then a scribe would .. The production of books became more sophisticated ... The most spectacular example ... the Ellesmere manuscript of the Canterbury Tales." Parkes, "Influence"

copying

the phylogeny of The Canterbury Tales



Barbrook, et al, *Natur*e, August, 1998

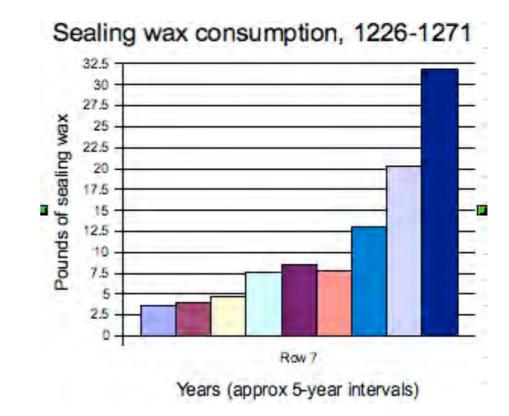
meanwhile ...

business and the bureaucratic state

"The oldest writings to survive to our time were inscribed five thousand years ago by temple bureaucrats recording economic transactions ... crops, animals, manufactured goods" Lerner, The Story of Libraries, 1998

"In the twelfth century... magnates used documents occasionally ... In the thirteenth .. laymen began to convey property to each other by charter; in the latter half ... this practice extended below the gentry class to some peasants. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record, 1993

bureaucratic state







an information age?

preparing the ground

Domesday cadastras dates names spelling titten evidence authenticity centralization

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Domesday cadastras dates names spelling written evidence authenticity centralization

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From objects and the spoken word to written evidence: "We don't accept the evidence of monks against bishops, why should we accept that of a sheepskin?"

--Clanchy, Memory to Written Record

an information age?

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a linear model?

reversible trends

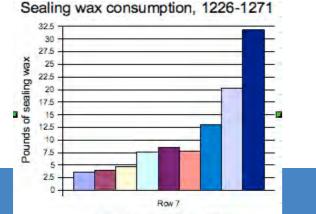
"Seals were indeed 'two-faced' images': they looked back to charms and memorized symbolic objects and forward to the automation of writing". -- Clanchy

"Up to the eleventh century, western Europe could have returned to an essentially oral civilization. But by 1100 the die was cast". --Stock

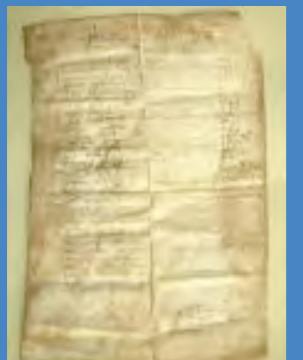
the return of the roll

"the reason why medieval England ... kept its records predominantly in rolls remains a mystery". --Clanchy

fall of literacy



Years (approx 5-year intervals)







unintended consequences

quo warrento

"No document coming from such centres of proved fabrication as Westminster, Evesham, Winchester cathedral, Chertsey and Malmesbury should be accepted at its face value without close examination.

"Ancient monasteries like Chertsey had traditionally forged charters. Now that the king was keeping copies ... abbots ensured that their forged documents were reinforced by inspection in the Chancery and enrollment among the royal records. The Chancery rolls, which were intended to prevent fraud, thus became a means of making forgeries official." --Clancy, From Memory to Written Record "some of the advantages which manuscript publication gave over print in other periods--immediate appearance, relative freedom from censorship"

Woudhuysen, Sir Philip Sydney, 1966

manuscript beyond print

records and single documents

accounting

scribal publishing

note taking

personal communication

music



"some of the advantages which manuscript publication gave over print in other periods--immediate appearance, relative freedom from censorship"

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"subersive forms" (Love)



"some of the advantages which manuscript publication gave over print in

other periods--immediate appearance, relative freedom from censorship"

For (b) use in the business of Electri-Woudhuysen, Sir Philip Sydney, 1966 cal Shows. ript beyond print To F. W. BENSON, To F. I. DUNBAR, Secretary of State. (d) _____ a single individual ______, desiring to secure within the State of Oregon the sole and exclusive use of a (a) _____ name ___ records and single documents for use upon (b) _____Electrical Shows _____ in accordance with the provisions of Chapter V, Title XXXVIII, Bellinger and Cotton's Annotated Codes and Statutes of Oregon, hereby presents this application for the regaccounting istration of the ("______name_____, described as follows: - "DREAMLAND" Name to be used in connection with Electrical Show, at present located at 133 Fourth St., Portland, Oregon. scribal publishing a fac simile of which is marked "Exhibit A," hereto attached. This name as shown in the exhibit is to be used upon (b) ______Electrical Show _____(c) 133 Fourth St note taking Portland, Oregon. said above named JOSEPHINE JONES And by reason of being the originator and original user of the personal communication (")_______ Hame______ herein described and shown in the exhibit hereto attached, the said ______ IOSEPHINE JONES _____ hereby claims the right to the sole and exclusive use of the same within the State of music Oregon for the uses and purposes herein stated. ue toncol "subersive forms" (Love) his is to certify that Josephine one appland store me this kg day of aluque

1907 and actin sweldged the above as

print beyond manuscript

and so to Gutenberg

Eisenstein

Eisenstein, Elizabeth. 1983. "Some Features of Print Culture," pp 42-91 in Elizabeth Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

[in the reader]

questions

either

Does Eisenstein strike you as a determinist? Suggest what kind of evidence or argument would support or challenge her thesis that print culture has particular features.

or

Some scholars have accused Eisenstein of "trashing" scribal culture to make her case about print culture. Based on what you know of scribal culture, does that strike you as fair?