

The Printed Text and the Electronic Text

This text of *Alexander's Letter to Aristotle* was described earlier as a transcript of manuscript features together with editorial additions, these two elements encoded in a way that prevents overlap or contamination. The design of the text was characterized as being open to incorporation of additional editorial information without changing the original text.

The text has been prepared in two versions: as a printed text and as an electronic text. In this instance the printed text is a straightforward derivative of the electronic text. It has been transformed to accommodate processing by \TeX , a typesetting system which has produced the printed text that follows (as well as this Introduction). There is no textual information from the *Alexander's Letter* manuscript in the printed version, though, that is not in the electronic version, and vice versa. They are different at this stage only in the most obvious way—the one in ‘hard copy,’ reproduced for this website as PDF files, the other in computer files. Or to put it more formally, one is a record in a format easily readable by humans, the other a character-encoded record on magnetic disk readable by machines and appropriate to manipulation by computers.

Unless these different versions could uniquely serve different purposes there would be no point in having both of them. The purpose of the printed (or printable PDF file) text will be clear enough from its medium and format. It presents textual information about the manuscript source visually and in stable images. It can be read from the page or the screen. Its systematic modifications of the original text are conventional, and they are fully stated in the description of the text, above (‘The text’): the letter shapes are modern, the notation for manuscript spacing has been put into superscript numerals, and so on. With only a little practice anyone should be able to read *Alexander's Letter* in this version about as easily as it can be read in standard editions; for while numerals functioning as spacing notation may at first seem to be intrusive, the hyphens and spacings can only clarify word structures. Ultimately, the function of the visual text is to be read directly from the record that it constitutes, whether for learning about its information structure, for checking its accuracy against the manuscript (facsimile) source, for recording any modifications to be made in it, or for some direct analyses of the information that it encodes. And finally, it exists only in fixed form. It can be replaced by a revision, but it cannot be enlarged or modified without having to be reconstituted.

The electronic version is almost the converse. As it is designed, the information in it can be extended—or abbreviated—without restructuring the basic textual information. Simple grammatical parsing can be added, each word being tagged for part-of-speech classification; or more detailed parsing can be incorporated adding syntactic function, valence, and semantic field. Word-stress notation can be spliced in easily enough. Labels can be inserted to make explicit certain other kinds of textual information—one or more editors’ emendations or punctuation, commentary or interpretation, occurrence of ligature, scribal corrections, and more. As the electronic text is augmented in one then another then another

of these ways it becomes progressively less useful for visual analysis. Ultimately, the function of the electronic version is to provide for abstracts containing just the kinds of textual and/or editorial information that a person wishes to consider on a given occasion.

Character codes underlying the printed text

The font was produced by Humanities and Arts Computing Center (now superseded by the Center for Advanced Research Technology in Arts and Humanities), University of Washington. Letters shared by Old and Modern English alphabets are transcribed with their usual ASCII values. (The letters *j q z* do not occur; *w* transliterates *p*.)

a 97	b 98	c 99	d 100	e 101	f 102
g 103	h 104	i 105	k 107	l 108	m 109
n 110	o 111	p 112	r 114	s 115	t 116
u 117	v 118	w 119	x 120	y 121	
A 65	B 66	C 67	D 68	E 69	F 70
G 71	H 72	I 73	K 75	L 76	M 77
N 78	O 79	P 80	R 82	S 83	T 84
U 85	V 86	W 87	X 88	Y 89	

Old English letters not part of the modern English alphabet:

þ 180	ƿ 181	ð 178	Ð 179	æ 145	Æ 146
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‘Long’ vowels, and vowel letters with superior accent-like mark (all of the latter are also long vowels) have these values:

ā 192	ǣ 194	ē 196	ī 198	ō 200	ū 204	ȳ 206
Ā 193	Ǣ 195	Ē 197	Ī 199	Ō 201	Ū 205	Ȳ 207
á 224	æ̇ 226	é 228	í 230	ó 232	ú 236	ý 238

Abbreviations and other signs:

þ̇ 249	ꝛ 246	ę 247	Δ 191
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All remaining characters have ASCII values.

Character codes for the electronic text

Letters shared by Old and Modern English alphabets are transcribed with their usual ASCII values. (The letters *j q z* do not occur; *w* transliterates *p*.)

Characters not shared with Modern English are transcribed as follows.

T _E X Encoding	ASCII	UTF-8 Character	UTF-8 Value	Name
145	\221	æ	æ	small ae ligature
146	\222	Æ	Æ	cap AE ligature
178	\262	ð	ð	small eth
179	\263	Ð	Đ	cap ETH
180	\264	þ	þ	small thorn
181	\265	Þ	Þ	cap THORN
192	\300	ā	ā	small a macron
193		Ā	Ā	cap A macron
194	\302	ǣ	ǣ	small ae ligature macron
196	\304	ē	ē	small e macron
195		Ē	Ǣ	cap AE ligature macron
197	\305	Ē	Ē	cap E macron
198	\306	ī	ī	small i macron
199		Ī	Ī	cap I macron
200	\310	ō	ō	small o macron
201		Ō	Ō	cap O macron
204	\314	ū	ū	small u macron
205		Ū	Ū	cap U macron
206	\316	ȳ	ȳ	small y macron
207		Ȳ	Ȳ	cap Y macron
224	\340	ā́	ā́	small a macron acute
226	\342	ǽ	ǣ́	small ae ligature macron acute
228	\344	é́	ḗ	small e macron acute
230	\346	í́	ī́	small i macron acute
232	\350	ó́	ṓ	small o macron acute
236	\354	ú́	ū́	small u macron acute
238	\356	ý́	ȳ́	small y macron acute
246	\366	ɇ	٦	
247	\367	ɛ	w	small e ogonek
249	\371	þ̄= for þ	þ=	barred thorn

Any remaining characters have ASCII values.