



N e w s
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Handwriting
Professional and
Serious Student

January - March, 2007



Happy Birthday, Abbe Michon

For the first time in the history of *The Vanguard*, I've devoted most of the pages in an issue to a single article. It has been my policy to always include articles about handwriting, psychology, marketing, news from around the world, and a little something for fun. This time, however, I was presented with the opportunity to publish something that I believe is important for all graphologists who have ever called Michon the Grandfather of Graphology—an article by highly respected Israeli graphologist, Shaiké Laundau. The article is much longer than I would usually accept. In fact, there's a second part, which will be split between future issues, along with the footnotes, as unfortunately, there simply was not enough space.

Why is the article important? Last November 21 was the two-hundredth birthday of Michon. In this article, which tells more about our graphological ancestor than anything anyone in the United States has probably read about him, Shaiké dispels some of the myths about the man and his method. Writing in a wonderfully readable and interesting manner, and with the addition of Michon's photo and handwriting, he makes what could have been simply a dry recitation of history come alive. I know you'll agree.

In other areas of this issue, you'll note on the Bulletin Board that two new courses for college credit are being offered by Dr. Marc Seifer and Dr. Ze'ev Bar Av. This is fantastic progress that hopefully will lead to more serious acceptance of handwriting analysis as a subject for serious study in institutes of higher learning.

Next month, I'll be embarking on a book tour to promote the 2nd edition of the *Complete Idiot's Guide to Handwriting Analysis* (just released), and the first Claudia Rose mystery, *Poison Pen*. While the new *Idiot's Guide* has one-hundred pages less than the original, the important information about graphology is intact. In editing the new book, I discovered many redundancies that were easily cut, so I hope you'll enjoy the new, leaner, meaner version and that it will surpass the first one, which has sold more than 31,000 copies worldwide. The samples are all new, 99% celebrities, and much better this time around.

The first stop on my tour will be Left Coast Crime, a Conference for fans of mystery in Seattle Feb. 1-4. I'll be speaking on a panel: Avoiding the Jessica Fletcher Syndrome. Fans of the television show, *Murder She Wrote*, will remember Jessica Fletcher as the amateur sleuth of Cabot Cove. The joke is that everyone Jessica knew seemed to be involved in a murder. It shouldn't be too hard to show how my handwriting expert sleuth, Claudia Rose, has a *legitimate* reason to become embroiled in mystery and murder. Early reviews note that readers enjoy learning a about handwriting analysis as they read the mystery. *Poison Pen* will be in bookstores in March. If you don't read mystery novels, please tell your friends about it. Check www.claudiaroseseries.com or www.sheilalowe.com for details about other cities I'll be visiting.

Finally, January 23 is National Handwriting Day. If you hurry, you can send out press releases to your local media and perhaps get an interview. This event was started in the early 1980s by the Writing Instrument Manufacturers Association to bring attention to the need for better handwriting. January 23 was the birthday of John Hancock, whose bold signature is easily seen on the American Declaration of Independence. Choose a recent topic of interest that lends itself to handwriting and write a paragraph that will catch the eye of an editor looking for a good story.

Meanwhile, see you in the Spring!



Very Punny

*You feel stuck with your debt
if you can't budge it.*

*He often broke into song be-
cause he couldn't find the key.*

*Every calendar's days are
numbered.*

*A lot of money is tainted. It
t'aint yours and it t'aint mine.*

*He had a photographic mem-
ory that was never developed.*

*The short fortuneteller who
escaped from prison was a small
medium at large.*

*Once you've seen one shop-
ping center, you've seen a mall.*

*Those who jump off a Paris
bridge are in Seine.*

*Bakers trade bread recipes
on a knead-to-know basis.*

*Acupuncture is a job well
done*



The Vanguard is the sole property of Sheila Lowe. It is a quarterly publication available on a subscription basis at a rate of \$25/ year for the electronic version; \$30 for print version. Advertisements related to handwriting analysis will be considered. *The Vanguard* logo on the cover of this issue was created by Lena Rivkin.

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Michon and the Birth of Scientific Graphology

Jean-Hippolyte Michon, Catholic priest, educator, preacher, archaeologist and author, is the undisputed father of graphology. In the last decade of his life, after spending more than thirty years collecting handwriting samples and performing research, he published a series of works on graphology that still constitute the foundation for all schools of graphology until the present.

Despite Michon's importance, none of his books have been translated into English. The descriptions of Michonian graphology by authors belonging to the German school that are available to the English reader are based on half-truths and descriptions taken from second-hand, or even third-hand, sources. Those authors were acquainted with Michon mainly through the first books written by Crépieux-Jamin, which had already been translated into German by the early twentieth century soon after their publication in the original language. But Crépieux-Jamin—who processed and consolidated Michon's theories into a systematic and structured system that remains at the foundation of French graphology—does not, however, always do justice to his illustrious teacher.

On the basis of the criticism that Crépieux-Jamin leveled at Michon, those authors described Michon's work as graphology of isolated signs with a fixed meaning that was not context-dependent and that focused on trivial formal elements of the handwriting, ascribing exaggerated importance to the meaning of the forms while disregarding the aspect of movement in the handwriting.¹

This stage in the development of graphology is commonly referred to in the literature as “the school of isolated signs”.² In this article, I will attempt to correct the historical injustice done to Michon and to provide a more credible description of his methods.

Educational and scientific work

First, however, we turn to a short description of Michon's turbulent life. He was born on November 21, 1806, in a small village in the département of Charente in Western France. He completed his studies at the Angoulême Seminary and in 1830 was ordained to the priesthood and appointed priest to a small parish. A year later, he opened a school in the town where he lived, and served as its principal until it went bankrupt and closed in 1842 after ten years of operation. It was here that he first heard about the possibility of analyzing people's character through their handwriting from Father Flandrin, who taught philosophy at the school from 1834 to 1836.

When the school closed, Michon resigned from his post as a priest in which his talents were underused, and turned instead to preaching and scientific endeavors; he quickly became renowned as one of France's greatest preachers.

He devoted most of his energy to historical and archaeological research into the region and published several tracts on the religious history of Charente. The jewel in the crown of his scientific work during that period was his great treatise on the monuments of Charente, a work he accomplished with government support and published in installments over the period 1844 to 1849. Based on meticulous mapping of the ancient historical sites of the département, the work describes the region's political, religious and societal history and provides detailed documentation of its historical monuments, categorized by period and type. This endeavor earned Michon recognition as a leading historian and archaeologist within the scientific community of his time. It led to his invitation in 1850 to join, as an archaeologist and botanist, a scientific archaeological expedition to the Middle East and the Holy Land.

Michon was one of the only members of the priesthood at the time to display any interest in science and he was famil-

iar with empirical research methods; this would profoundly influence his religious thought and, as we will see later, his work as a graphologist.

The Catholic Protestant³

Michon was one of the most important Catholic liberal thinkers of his generation and devoted the best years of his life to battling the conservatism of the Church and its resistance to the spirit of the time.⁴ During the 1848 revolution, he sought election as the Liberal representative for the constituent assembly. On his return from the Middle East, Michon relocated his activity to Paris where he founded a liberal Catholic periodical. When it closed, he continued publishing his polemical writings in other newspapers.

In tandem with his journalistic activity, Michon published numerous essays in which he called for a change in the church's attitude towards science, liberalism and democracy; for separation between church and state; a reduction in the power of the Pope; intensified democratization of the ecclesiastical hierarchy; and for comprehensive reform of the church. With the “Roman Question”⁵ already reverberating in the background, Michon voiced his objections to the monarchical rule of the Pope, called on him to restrict his authority to the spiritual sphere, and proposed that he transfer the Papal seat to the most appropriate city—Jerusalem.

Whereas Michon's scientific and liberal background underpinned his efforts to bring about a reconciliation between religion and the modern world, his journey to the East and his encounter there with members of various non-Catholic Christian denominations allowed the utopian element to filter into his religious philosophy—the aspiration towards a rapport between the different

Christian sects—which ultimately became known as ecumenism.

To prepare the way for this, Michon suggested treating other non-Catholic Christian denominations with greater respect and brotherly love, and called for convening a joint council, stressing that executing such a plan would be impossible without a process of renewal within the Catholic Church itself.

But the most complete and integrated expression of Michon's religious thought is found in his book, *On the Renewal of the Church* (1860), which synthesizes all his previous ideas into a uniform ideological whole. He believed that renewal would start, paradoxically, in contemporary secular culture as it moves towards a united, global civilization, a process he views as an evangelical instrument of divine providence: "The day is coming when the peoples of the world will come together, when the interests that propel the world will lead to a fusion between nations that for such a long time have been kept apart by impassable borders. This is a period of preparation for the merging of all the truths in the world."

That cultural and ideological unification of humanity was to be constructed on the ruins of the past, which would undergo a rigorous process of sorting and selection; what would remain are "sustainable principles ingrained deep in the consciousness of the peoples and constituting the eternal laws of their society." The religious world would follow in the footprints of its secular counterpart, but this, too, could not happen without discarding the outmoded patterns of the past.

Le Maudit (The Pariah)

Michon's essay was greeted with horror by the Church. It was added to the *Index of Prohibited Books*, and Michon was forced to publicly retract what he had written in the book and to halt its distribution. In the years that followed, Michon, stung by the Church's attitude towards him, opted for a new tactic in his battle to reform the church. Instead of theological treatises aimed at a limited audience, he turned to a broader commu-

nity of readers through a series of sensational anticlerical novels published between 1863 and 1869 under the pseudonym, Father ***. The first of them, *Le Maudit*, relates the chronicles of a young priest, Father Julio, undoubtedly created in the likeness of Michon himself, who is hounded by his supervisors because of his progressive opinions and his desire for renewal in the Church.

The novel takes issue with the Church for its greed, intolerance, resistance to the dissemination of knowledge, and its desire to impose theocratic rule



Jean-Hippolyte Michon (1806-1881)

instead of reconciling itself with the modern world. He scorns the superstitions of the Church, and believes that people from all cultures who work for God but worship him differently are good Christians.

Special attention is paid to describing the difficult life of humble priests, subject to the tyranny of their superiors, transferred frequently from one diocese to another, and threatened with dismissal for any hint of disobedience. He also criticizes the vow of celibacy that priests must take, thus precluding them from having a family, as a custom that is inappropriate for the modern period, preferring the attitude of the Eastern Church which is to allow priests to marry.

"The grim critics of all the pleasures linked to the senses by God have always ignored that exalted and noble emotion called love. Unlike what they claim in their crude psychology, love does not ruin our character, but is a sacred and pure emotion," writes Michon in one of his later novels, *The Confessor*. Michon gives voice here to his own personal tragedy—his great and unconsummated love for Emilie de Vars, his close friend and confidante, who was actively involved in his graphological work and even put in writing the story of the birth of graphology as primary source witness.⁶

It was a resounding success and was translated into several European languages,⁷ a triumph not achieved by any of his graphological texts. Upon publication, the novel became the talk of the town in religious and intellectual circles throughout Europe. Everyone tried to guess the name of novel's mysterious author, and Victor Hugo and George Sand were among the 'suspects'.

The church went to great lengths to discover the 'traitor' within it, but failed. It was only after Michon's death that the riddle was solved, when his student, Varinard, in a modest monograph in his memory, revealed that Michon was the author.⁸

In 1866 Michon was accorded some measure of satisfaction when his long scientific essay on the life of Jesus⁹ was favorably received in Rome. Michon was summoned to an audience with the Pope in the course of which he taught Pius IX the geography of the Holy Land.

Michon's satisfaction was to be short-lived. The first Vatican Council was summoned in December 1869, the first since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. It was intended to make the 1864 Syllabus of Errors binding dogma: the Syllabus was a papal document that condemned most ideas of the time¹⁰ and launched an attack on everything in which Michon believed.

The Council was also intended to strengthen the Pope's authority in his fight against the modern world, by means of the dogma of papal infallibility—the notion that the Pope, who is guided by the Holy Spirit, cannot err in

his apostolic role when he rules on issues of faith and morality.

Michon warned participants in the Council of the schism liable to occur in the Catholic world and declared that he, like many other Catholics, would not accept that illegitimate decision. Following the capture of Rome by the Italian Army, which put an end to the papal state, the Council was suspended before it could make the Syllabus binding dogma, however the dogma of papal infallibility was passed by a large majority.

Despite more than a few dilemmas, Michon remained loyal to Catholicism, but the decisions of the first Vatican Council marked a turning-point in his life. From then on, he abandoned his religious battles almost entirely and channeled all his energy in a new, stimulating direction—founding graphology and spreading it throughout Europe.

We will never know to what extent the existence of graphology is due to the conservatism of Pius IX or, if matters had unfolded differently, whether the ‘new science’ would have remained forever locked in the teeming brain of its discoverer.

The Mysteries of handwriting

In December 1868, a meeting was held in Paris that would be of crucial importance for the future of graphology. Adolphe Desbarrolles, an eminent chirologist who had tried in vain to develop a method for analyzing handwriting for use in his chirological analysis was introduced to Michon at the salon held by de Saulcy, head of the archaeological expedition to the Middle East in which Michon had participated. Discovering that he had a fully formed method of analysis—the method for which he himself had fruitlessly sought for such a long time, Desbarrolles persuaded Michon to publish his method and undertook to finance the project.

Michon consented, on condition that his name would not appear on the essay. It soon transpired that the partners had differences of opinion regarding their partnership. Michon was amazed to hear that Desbarrolles was insisting on having a hand in the writing and hoped to play a crucial role in it. After some discussion, they agreed that Desbarrolles would

write the preface, but this was not the end of Michon’s troubles.

Desbarrolles insisted on combining chirology with graphology in the preface, and even threatened to sue Michon should he delay printing. Despite Michon’s strong objections to mixing occultism and graphology, he was forced to agree to the ‘ridiculous preface.’

By late September 1869, Michon had finished writing the book, but mean-

free graphological analysis as a bonus for subscribers to the journal.

On November 24, 1871, Michon held his first public meeting in Paris in which he presented his discovery to the public. In the years that followed, he traveled to all the large French towns and to other cities in Europe to win people over to his theory. During his lectures, he usually demonstrated a few principles of his methods and then analyzed anonymous handwriting samples written by people in the audience. Michon set about disseminating ‘the new science’ with the same enthusiasm he had shown to preaching his religious ideas, and even used to describe his work in terms of a religious mission.

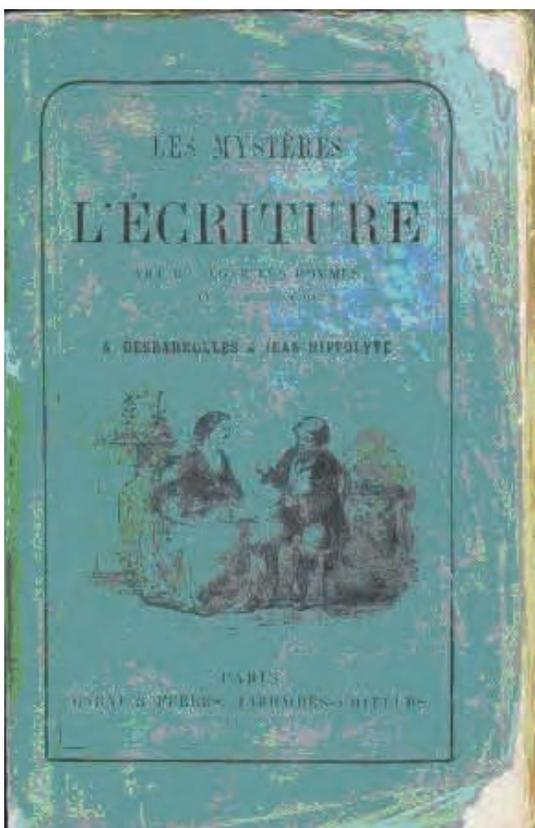
Further to his utopian vision, he perceived graphology as a means for profound self-recognition, for self-improvement, and for the moral revival of humanity: “*Graphology has proved itself to be a new tool for the moral world, one that has appeared through divine intervention at the height of material advances brought about by the discovery of the steam engine and electricity.*” (258-259).

In the years that followed, Michon published two books, which he considered to be complementary texts¹³ setting out his fully evolved method. In 1875, *Système de graphologie*¹⁴ appeared, presenting the Michonian system of signs, followed in 1878 by the sequel, *Méthode*

pratique de graphologie,¹⁵ which describes the principles of graphological analysis of handwriting as a whole. In 1879, *Histoire de Napoléon I^{er} d’après son écriture*¹⁶ was published, in which Michon provides a longitudinal analysis of Napoleon’s handwriting from his military service as a young artillery officer until his exile on St. Helena, towards the end of his life. On May 8, 1881, lucid and with his faculties intact, Michon died from complications of pneumonia.

The new science

In the nineteenth century, the possibility that handwriting could reveal the writer’s personality was already a commonly held notion. The herald of modern graphology was the renowned physiognomist, Lavater, whose book



while the Franco-Prussian war had broken out and it was only in April 1872 that the book was finally published.

Michon loathed the book’s title *The Mysteries of Handwriting*,¹¹ which made it essentially the sequel of a previous book by Desbarrolles, *The Mysteries of the Palm*, and maintained that it was more evocative of magic and Kabbalah than of serious science.

Michon decided to dissolve the partnership¹² and devote himself to disseminating the ‘new science.’ On November 18, 1871 the first issue of his graphological journal was published, and in it Michon publicly uses the term ‘graphology’ for the first time.

In order to convince his readers of the effectiveness of his method, he offered a

*Physiognomic Fragments*¹⁷ raised the idea and also offered a theoretical basis for it. He argued that handwriting reveals the personality, as do other expressive manifestations such as the way people walk and talk, but he did not suggest any method of performing such an analysis.

Unlike previous works, like that of Camillo Baldi in the seventeenth century, which had little impact and fell into oblivion, Lavater's book was widely read throughout Europe and sparked off considerable interest in the subject. A variety of essays were published restating and even adding to Lavater's ideas, and graphologists who worked intuitively were soon active in a number of places in Europe.¹⁸ Michon's intention was, however, quite different:

*"All those who wrote about graphology before us, of whom the most famous is Lavater, only examined the general impression made by handwriting ... which has nothing to do with science. When we say science, we are talking by necessity about exact rules, about a method based on experience, about principles and laws that derive from the nature of what is being described."*¹⁹

Michon was an empiricist in every fiber of his being: "Experimentation means submitting a theory or method to testing. Nothing can be accepted as a true and irrefutable principle, nothing can be accepted as a science... unless it has passed the rigorous test of experimentation. Graphology has passed that test successfully..." (24 footnote 2).

An idea of Michon's empirical work can be obtained from the following description:

"When I wanted to create this group, I employed the natural method, which in all the sciences leads to practical results in a manner that leaves no room for error."

I began by classifying my collection of autographs of strong-willed authors and weak-willed authors... The comparative research of thousands of handwriting samples shows that all weak-willed people cross their 't's feebly. The line is always weak, filiform, and terminates with a scarcely noticeable pin-head... in contrast, all strong-willed writers cross their 't's forcefully and firmly, while exerting strong pressure on their pens."

This is the graphological principle. It holds not only for the 't' bars but for all strokes without exception, short or long, that have an end point.

"The process is carried out in the following way: we select at random the handwriting of people known for their strong will, and note that the writer always crosses his 't's strongly. This style of writing is not acquired in school ... Using the experimental method—the great teacher whose conclusions are indisputable—shows that strong-willed people never use rounded handwriting, but instinctively tend to angular writing, strongly formed strokes, and club-shaped endings." (133-134)

Even the term "fixed signs" (*signes fixes*), central to Michon and the object of so much misunderstanding and erroneous interpretation, is only a part of his scientific program and without it the entire foundation of graphology is destroyed. The employment of rigid rules tested by experience is what, in Michon's opinion, distinguishes science from occultism:

"It is thus the fixed significance of the sign that is the main principle of graphology. The conjecture that is the stock in trade of the craniologist and the lavaterian physiognomist has no place here. We are on much firmer ground when we base ourselves on signs that have been verified thousands of times by experience."

Michon later returns to this subject in greater detail: *"Here is the first law of graphic physiology to which there is no exception: a graphic sign never expresses the opposite trait to the one it represents. For example: large strokes, capital letters lost in the whiteness of the paper by excessive development, disproportionate with the height of the lower-case letters are a graphic sign of a wild imagination, being carried away with an idea, lack of restraint and sense of proportion, indicating an ebullient and ardent nature. This sign is never to be found and will never be found in the handwriting of a person who is in complete control of his imagination, who curbs it and keeps it in check; a person who is in no way volatile and impulsive, but calm and cool-headed."*

"Extremely simple letters, no higher than required for the correct formation of the letter; with no extensions above or

below the body of the letter, regular letters, in standard juxtaposition, maintaining a constant order, irrespective of the speed of writing, letters that have no trace of irregularity, artificiality, or excess motion, are the signs of a calm nature. A person with a wild imagination, when he writes quickly, naturally and spontaneously, cannot confine himself to this simple, regular, and monotonous style of writing.

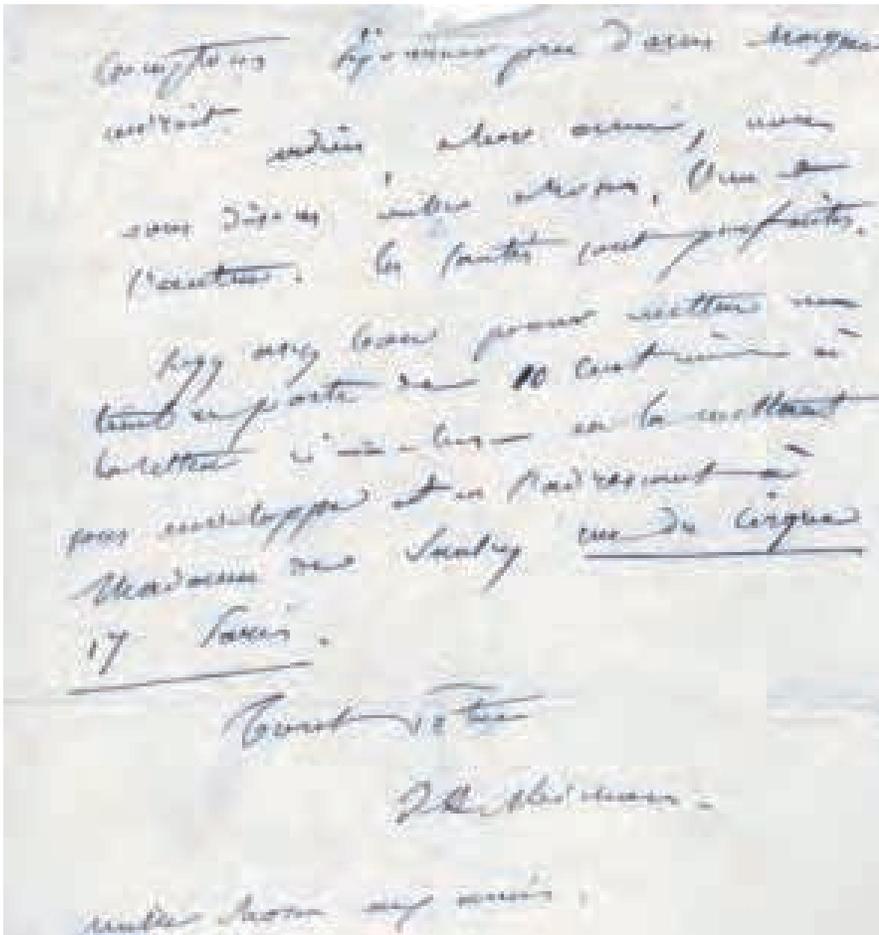
The second law is a corollary to the first: the graphic signs are fixed, because they are the product of fixed conditions of psychological and physiological creation. In fact, it is not feasible that two forces of contradictory and conflicting movements can produce an identical movement." (72-73)

It is easy to see that this principle has nothing to do with isolated signs with fixed meaning.²⁰ Michon is concerned here with the necessary condition for creating science, taking as his example the syndrome of signs and not an isolated sign. It may well come as a surprise to many, but Michon deals in his books mainly with graphic syndromes that relate to various personal characteristics. In his first book, the characteristics are introduced in alphabetical order, whereas in *Système de Graphologie* they are put into eight categories structured in layers from the very first predispositions of the mind which are innate and immutable to learned external behavior which is the result of a person's development and education.

Complex signs and the law of resultants

Michon's system of signs is still the primary basis of our graphology. But Michon claimed that only a small number of characteristics are represented by a simple graphic sign, *signe simple*, in his terminology. There are many more characteristics than graphic signs, and most of them are represented by a group of graphic signs which constitutes a *signe complexe*. The importance that Michon ascribes to complex signs can be seen from the following:

"The theory of complex signs ... opens a vast horizon for the new science. The game of possibilities, states, and movements of the human mind can provide countless combinations... there is an immense field of research here for students of graphology. A science that does



Michon's handwriting from the personal collection of the author

not progress is not a science. And I am happy to provide them, through this fruitful gift, with a precious working tool. It is this horizon, of infinite proportions, that I am opening up to future graphologists." (293)

But Michon does not stop here. In *Méthode Pratique de Graphologie* he develops the idea of complex signs and expands it into a synthesis of the whole. In the same way as a plurality of simple signs creates a complex sign, so do the different characteristics in writing influence one another and create new meanings. Michon calls this expansion the law of resultants (*loi des résultantes*).²¹

"The law of resultants is based on the psychological fact that one trait affects another. It never eliminates it when it is well delineated...but...gives it a special kind of nuance." Every graphic sign is therefore nuanced by another sign." (296)

We will demonstrate this with one of the mental powers most central to Michon's characterology—emotion. The basic sign of emotionalism is right-

slanted writing, because it is "far more flowing and easier to do" (90), whereas vertical writing is characteristic of people who control their emotions and their heart.

Michon thought that even the simple signs may represent a variety of nuances of traits that alter according to the intensity of the sign and the frequency of its occurrence in the writing. Thus, for example, emotionalism may be mild or extreme according to the extent to which the writing slopes. When it slopes far to the right, the writer is controlled by his urges and passions. Will this emotionalism be expressed in love or in hate? At this point we need the complex sign:

"The graphic sign of hate is identical to the graphic sign of love...The steep slope of the writing is indicative of the ability to love with a passion. It is therefore also the graphic sign of those who can hate with a fury. Moreover, if writing with a steep slope is accompanied by signs of tenacity and obstinacy, of impetuosity bordering on tempestuousness; ... if the sense of self is paramount, if pride

is strongly indicated, wounded pride is unforgiving; if vanity and pretension are evident in the writing, pricked vanity also becomes implacable. Here you have the clear complex sign of a nature capable of hate." (227)

Michon developed detailed laws to describe how the signs affect one another long before Saudek proposed the idea of Counter-Dominants.²² The effect can be to intensify or mitigate, and contradictory signs may serve as counterweights to each other:

"It must not be forgotten that, because of the requirements of the analytical method, we consider every nuance of a [mental] faculty in isolation and completely independent of other dispositions and manifestations of the mind which might act as a counterweight. Thus, for example, emotionalism, extreme impressionability, takes the mind to the extremes of passion. However, if writing that indicates this intense emotionalism also contains the graphic signs of powerful resoluteness...the result is that—and this is an important psychological note—deep down this person will always remain emotional and feminine, but with a counterbalance, assisted by willpower, to en-

ables the mind to counteract excesses of emotionalism. It will no longer be a rudderless ship at the mercy of the waves, but a frail human craft with a lever with which to navigate through the waves and avoid the cliffs. Similarly, if the willpower...is lacking in emotionalism, if the emotional side is not developed, the willpower, deprived of a counterweight, will plunge into excesses of power." (132)

When the writing contains contradictory signs, it indicates a complex and contradictory personality in which "at certain times or on certain days one situation dominates the mind, and at other times the contrary state of mind is dominant" (369). Occasionally this is a sign of an unresolved inner struggle:

"Restrained emotionalism manifests itself in writing in which the letters tend to be straight, almost completely vertical, mixed with letters with a right inclination. This is the handwriting of all those of an impressionable nature who feel threatened by their natural sensitivity and suppress it so as to obey a plan

of ambitious conduct, qualms of conscience, immutable imperatives. Their emotionalism causes such souls great distress...in all cases, there is an [internal] struggle. This is usually the handwriting of priests. There is nothing more curious than to see how in such writing the movement of reason and the movement of the heart square up to each other." (130) Michon notes that this phenomenon is characteristic of his own handwriting.

Writing as an expression and a movement

We have seen that emotion as a basic power of personality is expressed in writing through a simple sign. The more specific the trait the more complex is its graphic syndrome. Here is how ardor is expressed in writing, identified by Michon with activity, a passion for doing, animation, spontaneity, and impulsiveness:

"All the movements are animated, brusque, executed with the shortest strokes possible, and above all, the t-bars are formed in extreme haste; the writing is careless and slipshod with no attempt at legibility, at creating identifiable letters or words that can be read; there is a predominantly upward slope to the letters and lines and the writing almost always has the sign of emotionalism and impressionability. The ardent are emotional." (177)

On the other hand, indolence, to which Michon attributes lack of vitality and activity, failure to develop the powers latent in the human personality, and the desire to avoid activity and effort are expressed as follows:

"The writing of the indolent completely avoids angles and firm strokes, and shows a propensity towards curves and malformed or half-formed letters... the lack of ardor and movement in the writing logically attests to indolence of the motor mind...it is one of the great proofs of the scientific value of graphology. The energetic and the apathetic never write like each other, whether they write in Hebrew, in Arabic, in Greek, or in French...[the indolent] makes no attempt to give letters their height and their elements, it's as if they were saying: read this if you can." (164-165)

Although in both cases the handwriting is sloppy and legibility is poor, the different context and mainly the different

A Graphological View of Eating Disorders by Linda Larson

This new, updated monograph covers the author's 1980 study of the handwriting of women with eating disorders and samples of some of their parents. 50 pages in PDF format or hard copy.

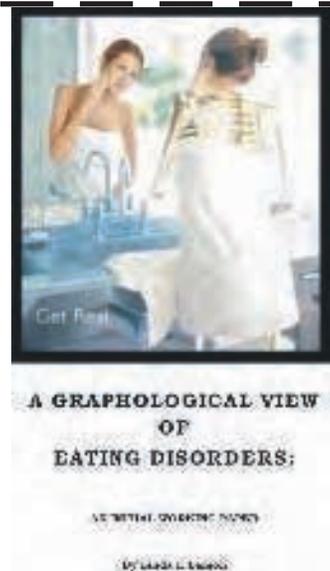
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"The information Linda shares in this monograph is very detailed and specific, and the samples are clear and concise. Definitely worth reading" Sheila Lowe



kind of movement give rise to completely different interpretation. Is this how isolated signs look that are independent of context?

Although Michon does not yet have any developed conceptualization of movement, his graphology is far from being purely concerned with form. The aspect of movement in writing is an integral part of his system and his descriptions of movement are occasionally even surprising in their subtlety. This is how he describes the emotion of happiness:

"The happy character is the logical antithesis of the sad, gloomy, cold, and depressed character. Such people are impressionable, sympathetic and tender. Laughter parts the lips, and gaiety opens up the letters in the writing. Graphic signs: many curves in the writing which is sloping, free, and unrestrained. The letters are animated, set down in haste on the paper. The cheerful cross the t with a curved and delicate bar. Letters are never compressed. There is a total absence of the signs associated with cold, sad, or restless natures." (202)

Beautiful and admirable simplicity

The concept of harmony, which was to become the trademark of French graphology, is a thread running through Michon's creativity. This striving for harmony is what underlies his religious philosophy: harmony between different Christian denominations, between reli-

gions, between religion and the secular world, universal, unifying harmony.

This concept is also evident in the way he approaches writing. We have already seen in our discussion of fixed signs how Michon identifies unbridled imagination with disharmony in all aspects of writing, expressed as an excess of movement, exaggerated extensions that interfere with the organization of space, artificial or irregular design of letters, and disruption of the rhythmical regularity of the writing.

Harmony is first and foremost in the inner reaches of man's mind: *"It is the nature of vanity not to find in ourselves a noble contentment in our value and what we are, but to look outside of ourselves. All the nuances of vanity are indicative of a desire to be prominent and to expect from others the esteem which we believe increases our value."* (192).

"Beautiful and admirable simplicity shines out in the writing, like a white flower in a grassy thicket that enhances its freshness and splendor. Even [apparently] ugly writing perfectly expresses a sense of the mind's modesty ... All writing that indicates modesty and simplicity attests in this way to the nobility of the writer's mind. Fools are pretentious." (194)

"Study the writing of the elite, the great writers, all manners of superior men. The mark of their intellectual value is an absence of any kind of superfluous, ridiculous, or contrived embellishment."

All artificiality is a sign of intellectual inferiority.” (220)

Harmonious writing is the clearest sign of distinction, good taste, and all that goes to make up the famous French *esprit* (196). On the level of social behavior, it is expressed in social refinement (*finesse*) the ability to express thought elegantly and implicitly, not directly, and in *charmer*. *Finesse* is expressed in writing in “*elegant and harmonious writing forms and particularly in the total absence of vulgar letters, of bad taste*”, and *charmer* is expressed in “*a shape of letters that is at the same time simple and artistic and in their harmonious organization in the space*” (208).

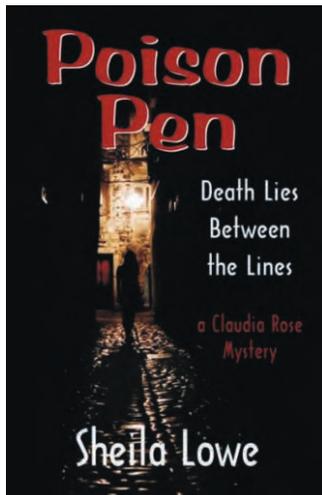
In contrast, in vulgar writing which Michon identifies with grossness, mediocrity, lack of distinction, intellectual shallowness, crassness, lack of manners and social refinement, and bad taste:

“*The graphic sign is the complete absence of harmony in the letters, and the capital letters are gross and unwrought. Writing may be ugly—that is to say hasty and malformed—and yet not vulgar. Vulgar writing has crooked pen strokes, disproportional connections between letters, improbable uprights, perpetual disharmony.*” (196).

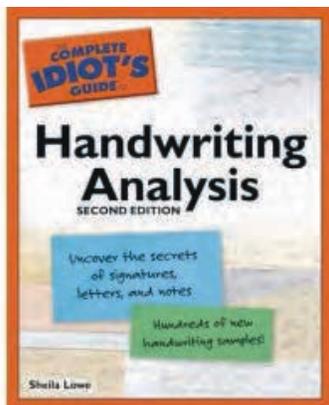
There is also moral harmony, as expressed in the following description, dedicated to the handwriting of a highly respected judge:

“*This writing, from the very first, is striking in its great regularity, which however is not the monotonous repetition of calligraphic letters; the human personality is plain to see. That he has a heart, that he is prone to sentimentality, albeit restrained, is clearly evident. But we admire his natural order, which allows for the play of light between the words and the lines, his scrupulous and undoubtedly unconscious punctiliousness, which never permits the pen even the slightest deviation of the long extensions... You don't have to be a graphologist to be struck by the [special] character of this beautiful writing, ugly perhaps in terms of calligraphy, but impressive as a visible expression of a venerable gravity and gentleness of personality of which it is the vital and spontaneous expression*” (44).

I will conclude with Michon's personal craving for harmony—the great



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and unconsummated love of Michon and Emilie de Vars:

“*I have lived my entire life in a relationship, which because of a vow of abstinence, could demand nothing of the senses and I had an affection (now consigned to the grave) that expressed the most passionate love, the warmest intermingling of souls, without the bliss of consummation for the enamored souls ... Only once in forty years did we share the same bedroom, the place where she used to sleep like an angel every night; it was the night after she breathed her last, and I wanted to be the only one there to watch over my dead beloved. We were wedded in death.*

This pursuit of love without the attendant senses...is not recommended from a moral point of view...a thousand times we were saved when we were aflame with desire. She was so beautiful! Now, after our last farewell, I am consoled... by the thought that I had the rare and exceptional privilege of not having violated this splendid creature. And yet, our

What readers are saying about *Poison Pen*

...the best thing about this book is the use of graphology itself. Without pulling you out of the story, Lowe manages to include a lot of fascinating information about handwriting, and does it in such a way that it works seamlessly in the plot. Bonnie Rauscher – *4Mystery Addicts*

...a riveting, entertaining, informational, and totally enjoyable read! – Caroline Craig, *DorothyL*
The “handwriting” is already on the wall –
Poison Pen is destined to be a hit. Lee Loffland – author of *The Book of Police Procedure and Investigation*

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way was the opposite of the truth, because every day we broke the holy law, the law of nature...”²³.

Despite the long way that graphology has come since the days of Michon, the foundations on which modern graphology was constructed are already contained in his work. It seems that if Michon was suddenly to reappear, he would not find himself in strange territory but would quickly adjust to the changes he himself predicted:

“*It is a law of every new science that it is constantly evolving and improving ...A science that cannot be improved is not a science; and my numerous disciples following in my path will one day develop it in a way that even its inventor never conceived of when he established its first principles.*” (265).

Due to space limitations. The footnotes will have to be included in a later section of the article. Apologies for the inconvenience.

Learn more about Michon and his work in the next issue of *The Vanguard*.
Shaiké Landau: landnet@netvision.net.il



Book Review

Reviewed by Michael Miraula

Personality Profiling in 90 Seconds: A 15-Point Guide for Quick Handwriting Analysis by Josh Batchelder, CGA, AB

Soft cover. \$29.70 quickprofiling.com or 770-621-9000

Most graphology books seem to be either for the very beginner or for the very advanced graphologist. Josh Batchelder's *Personality Profiling in 90 Seconds: A 15-Point Guide for Quick Handwriting Analysis* falls somewhere in the middle.

Part I of the book is divided into 20 chapters with 80 different samples. Each sample is presented with a one page or less analysis and kind of psychological description, such as "Lori, The Gifted One", "Ruthy, The Daydreamer", "Jeri, Does It All!"

The descriptions act as a shorthand for discussing particular graphological traits and the personality characteristics those traits signify. Each chapter outlines a specific part of graphology: The first chapter is margins; the second, spacing; the third, zones, etc. Each analysis discusses the graphological trait for that chapter as well as going into other psychological issues that seem relevant to the author at the time.

While there are many good points about the handwriting being discussed in each writing sample, many personality characteristics brought up in each sample are not explained.

For example, the first writing sample in the first chapter of the book has a left margin very close to the edge of the page. Batchelder says that this indicates "Frugality and holding on to resources," but doesn't say why. There are several other personality traits Batchelder assigns to different parts of the writing but there is no explanation as to why the writing indicates those personality characteristics ("No top margin signals that she's a go-it-alone person"; "Vertical upstrokes are a sign of objective decision-making"; "This family's income is being threatened, which probably contributes to the absence of a top margin").

Even for someone who has had experience in handwriting analyses, this can be frustrating because Batchelder's train of logic of the analyses can often reveal something unique and interesting about the writer, yet the logic that led to that conclusion is not included.

Also, it's sometimes difficult to follow the specifics of the connection from the writing to the personality issue. Under

"Doug Williams and Mystery Artist" (two visual artists discussed in the same analysis), Batchelder says that, "The squeezing of many of his letters indicates some discomfort within himself." What exactly does that mean? He suggests that the discomfort is work-related but then uses the example of, "his art and music (sax, clarinet, and oboe)" in this same analysis but these are two visual artists, not musicians, being discussed, so ultimately it's conjecture on what kind of instrument this artist might play if he played an instrument. It still doesn't really answer the question about the origins and level of discomfort of the writer as indicated by squeezed letters.

Part II is a test of the reader's understanding of the concepts of Part I by presenting 11 samples to analyze. Each writing sample has a "15-Point Profile Checklist" on the facing page. The checklist is a matrix of graphological terms from Part I listed vertically on the left with the various graphological types horizontally to the right. Batchelder chooses to circle the applicable traits for a sample on the checklist in some cases without a verbal analysis or explanation as to possible interpretations so the reader is left to draw their own conclusions for those samples.

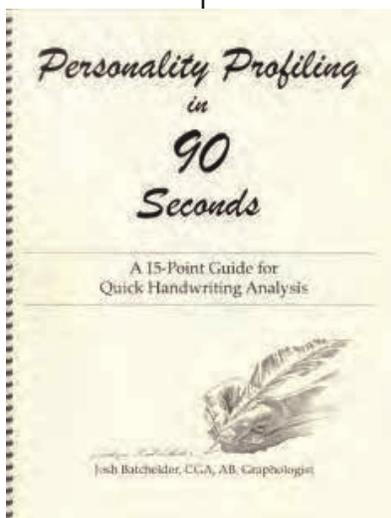
This kind of inference, that the reader is correctly interpreting the checklist for an accurate analysis without some form of

gestalt to help understand why this interpretation is correct and that one is not, is quite a stretch, considering that this may be the only book the reader may have ever picked up on handwriting analyses. It could be a difficult introduction for someone who's never done handwriting analyses before in their life, or a bit of a challenge to those with some experience.

There is an appendix at the end of the book, which gives more information about margins, stroking, and even T-bars. However, there is little in the way of specifics and detailed explanations for the reasoning behind the psychological interpretations, and as seems to be the case with much of the analyses in the book, the onus is on the reader to figure out the logic of the graphological principle interpretations to their psychological origins.

MiraulaM@earthlink.net

Have you read a book you'd like to comment on? You are invited to submit book reviews to *The Vanguard*. It doesn't even have to be a new book, just one that impressed you (favorably or otherwise), and that you'd like to share. Send to sheila@sheilalowe.com.



BULLETIN BOARD

□ *Insyte Professional Consultants are proud to announce that Loretta Du Bois has become the vice president of Insyte! Insyte founder, Sister June Canoles, says she is extremely proud of Loretta's work as an outstanding graphologist, presenter and contributor of news articles furthering their work.*
insyte@comcast.net

□ *After her successful graphology exhibit at UCLA last February, Susanne Shapiro has been invited by Triple Base Gallery in San Francisco to present a "first of its kind" show, dealing with Artists and Graphology. The Gallery is inviting ten Bay Area artists to submit a sample of their writing and Susanne will analyze each one before the show gets going. She will do some lecturing and hopefully involve other graphologists to present informal talks. "Mind to Hand – Artists and Graphology" will run from April 6 to May 6, 2007.* www.triplebase.com

□ *In December Lena Rivkin gave a talk to a book club in Los Angeles on a selection of novelists and their handwritings (Ernest Hemmingway, Langston Hughes, Norman Mailer, etc). In between each handwriting sample, she read a passage of their writing and we all discussed the content and impact. It turned out to be a creative experience for everyone.*

Two important new college courses are soon to be offered:

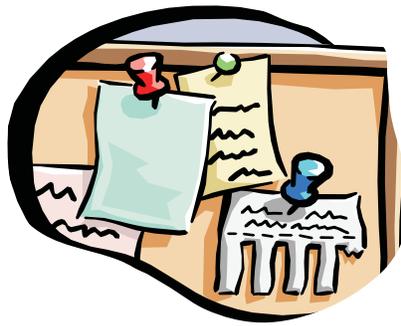
□ *Ze'ev Bar-Av is slated to offer a course leading to a Certificate in*

Graphology through Canyon College, an online college. The program will include two fundamental courses in psychology and introductory courses in Gestalt as well as in Trait Stroke. Report Writing is the fifth and final course.

The instructors are Ms. Linda Spencer and Mr. Reed Hayes, who will share the trait-stroke introductory course. Dr. Bar-Av will teach Introduc-

tion to Gestalt approach, Psychopathology and Graphology, and Report Writing.

The program is designed to provide the student with the foundation of the relevant psychological foundation of graphology, namely, Theories of Person-



ality and Psychopathology. This will ensure that the student receives a full understanding of human behavior as manifested daily as well as handwriting. Depending on response to the course, a BA in graphology may be offered, in which case, the courses taken for the Certificate will count toward the degree. An advanced degree may also be offered.
drzb@chater.net, 608-345-7100

□ *Marc Seifer will be teaching Forensic Graphology at Roger Williams University next semester where he teaches Psychology. His course consists of three parts: Profiling: Handwriting Analysis, Psychological & Behavioral; Neurophysiology: How Handwriting is Organized by the Brain; Questioned Documents: Forgery Detection, Disguised & Disputed Documents. Marc has also written a novel, Staretz Encounter. Read*

about it on his web site:
www.marcseifer.com

□ *From Argentina, Doctor Francesco Matozza reports that he and his team were enthusiastically received at a psycho-biology meeting in Venice. Their poster presentation was the only research on handwriting analysis and cancer at the conference, and will be published in the French Journal of Psychooncologie Francaise.*
fsmatozza@elsitio.net

□ *Silvio Lena writes from Italy of the death of graphologist Bruno Vettorzo, a founder of the Italian Graphological Society and teacher at the Graphological School of Urbino's University. Silvio says, "leave an example of skill, professionalism and a tireless activity to graphology and handwriting expertise."*
lena.silvio@infinito.it

AHAF Northern California Chapter

□ *February 13 at the Sunnyview Retirement home in Cupertino. Linda Larson will discuss eating disorders and Marcel Matley will conclude his discussion on his research on Aspects Of Writing. For information call 650-321-2995 or email lindalarson260@gmail.com.*

□ *Iris Hatfield will be the presenter at the Southeast Handwriting Analysts present their annual seminar February 2-4 in Cocoa Beach, Florida. For information cathlane@bellsouth.net*

ASPG Meetings

February 3 - Dor Gauthier (Canada), the Stroke and the Fourth Dimension in Handwriting, its Importance in Relation to Space, Form, and Movement.

March 21 - Dafna Yalon (Israel), Emotional Aspects of the Star-Wave Test
 May 5 - Heidi Harrelson, how research results can be applied to analyzing handwriting.

September (TBA) - Kim Iannetta, handwriting analysis in jury selection
 For information: PatSiegel@aol.com

Footnotes

The January-March issue of *The Vanguard* featured a lengthy and informative article by Shaike Landau about Abbé Micron, which received a great deal of positive feedback. Unfortunately, space limitations didn't allow the inclusion of the footnotes, so they are presented here. We apologize for the inconvenience.

1 Saudek, Robert. 1925. *The Psychology of Handwriting*, London: Allen & Unwin, 13-19;

2 Jacoby, H.J. 1939 (1968). *Analysis of Handwriting*, London: Allen and Unwin, 22-23;

3 Stein-Lewinson, Thea & Zubin, Joseph. 1942. *Handwriting Analysis*, New York: King's Crown Press, 4-5; Roman, Klara G. 1952. *Handwriting: A Key to Personality*, New York: Noonday Press, 4-5.

Thea Stein-Lewinson, who never went to the trouble of reading Crépieux-Jamin in German translation, associates even him—the father of holistic graphology, diametrically opposed to fixed signs—with the school of isolated signs, and this nonsense is regurgitated over and over in the professional literature in English.

As Spencer refers to him in his book: Spencer Philip. 1954. *Politics of Belief in Nineteenth-Century France: Lacordaire, Michon, Veuillot*. New York City: Grove Press, 160.

4 The comprehensive biography of Michon by Savart, which I use in this article is entirely devoted to Michon's religious doctrine and activity and refers to his graphological pursuits in only a few pages:

Savart Claude. 1971. *L'Abbé Jean-Hippolyte Michon, 1806-1881. Contribution à l'étude du libéralisme catholique au XIX^e siècle*, Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres", Paris.

Shaike Landau (Israel)

5 The national movement to unite Italy, which was sweeping the Italian states at the time, was a threat to the monarchical power of the Pope, and the revolutionaries considered the Pope, whose state spread across the entire center of the country, separating the north from the south, as a hindrance to unification. In 1860, the Pope lost most of his lands, which joined the unification, with only Rome remaining within his jurisdiction. In 1870, the Italians conquered Rome which became the capital of a united Italy as the Pope's state ceased to be.

6 De Vars, Emilie. 1874. *Histoire de la graphologie*, Baschet, Paris.

7 The novel appeared in English translation entitled *Under the Ban*.

8 Varinard, Adrien. 1881. *J.-H. Michon, fondateur de la graphologie, sa vie et ses œuvres*, Paris: Bibliothèque graphologique, 12-13.

9 The full name of the essay was "The life of Jesus, according to the Synoptic Gospels, translated literally from the Greek, with the addition of philological, typographical and archaeological notes".

10 The Syllabus of Errors included a papal denunciation of eighty modern opinions that contradicted the Catholic faith and was a declaration of all-out war against the ideas of the time, like rationalism, liberalism, socialism, freedom of reli-

gion, and freedom of speech. The declaration denounced the demand for a separation of church and state, the notion that it was possible to attain redemption outside of Catholicism, and the demand for an end to the church's earthly rule. Last in the list of errors, and the encapsulation of the entire Syllabus, was the idea that "the Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization."

11 Desbarolles, A & Jean-Hippolyte. 1872. *Les mystères de l'écriture*, Paris: Garnier.

12 Later, Desbarolles even laid claim to Michon's status as the founder of graphology. We learn of the way matters developed in this affair from the detailed description by Emilie de Vars, in her *Histoire de la graphologie*, *ibid*.

13 In this article, I use the 1970 edition which includes both books in one volume, and all the page references in parentheses in the body of the article refer to that edition: Michon, Jean-Hippolyte. 1875. *Système de graphologie suivi de Méthode pratique de graphologie*, Paris: Payot.

14 Michon, Jean-Hippolyte. 1875. *Système de graphologie*, Paris:

Bibliothèque graphologique.

15 Michon, Jean-Hippolyte. 1878.

Méthode pratique de graphologie, Paris: Bibliothèque graphologique.

16 Michon, Jean-Hippolyte. 1879.

Histoire de Napoléon I^{er} d'après son écriture, Paris.

17 Lavater, Johann Caspar. 1775-1778. *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe*, 4 Bd., Leipzig und Winterthur: Weidmanns Erben und Reich und Heinrich Steiner und Compagnie.

18 For this early period in the history of graphology see the monumental work in three volumes by Seiler. Seiler, Joseph.

1995 (Volume I), 2000 (Volume II). *De Lavater à Michon. Essai sur l'histoire de la graphologie*, Fribourg, Suisse: Editions Universitaires. The third volume was still to be published at the time this article was written.

19 Desbarolles, *ibid*, 2.

20 Ludwig Wirz was the first to remark on the erroneous understanding of the principle of fixed signs in a 1981 article marking 100 years since the death of Michon: Wirz, Ludwig. 1981. *Die Lehre Michons von den signes fixes als Grundlage der Graphologie*. in: *Zeitschrift für menschenkunde*, Heft 2/1981, 73-86.

21 The law of resultants is at the very heart of this book which was never translated into German, and the report of it by Saudek and Klara Roman (see note 1), who attribute the law of results to Michon's successor, Crépieux-Jamin, is baseless.

22 Saudek, *ibid*, 205-213

23 The letter was published in its entirety by Varinard, *ibid*, 57-63.

Shaike Landau: landnet@netvision.il

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Inside This Special Issue

- Michon and the Birth of Scientific Graphology
- Book Review
- Very Punny
- Bulletin Board