

A Graphic Renaissance

CHAPTER FIVE —

Printing comes to Europe

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Typography is the term for printing with independent, movable, and reusable bits of metal or wood, each of which has a raised letterform on the surface.

The invention of **typography** ranks near the creation of **writing** as one of the most significant advances in civilization. Writing gave humanity a means of storing, retrieving, and documenting knowledge and information; typographic printing allowed for greater spread of knowledge and literacy around the world.



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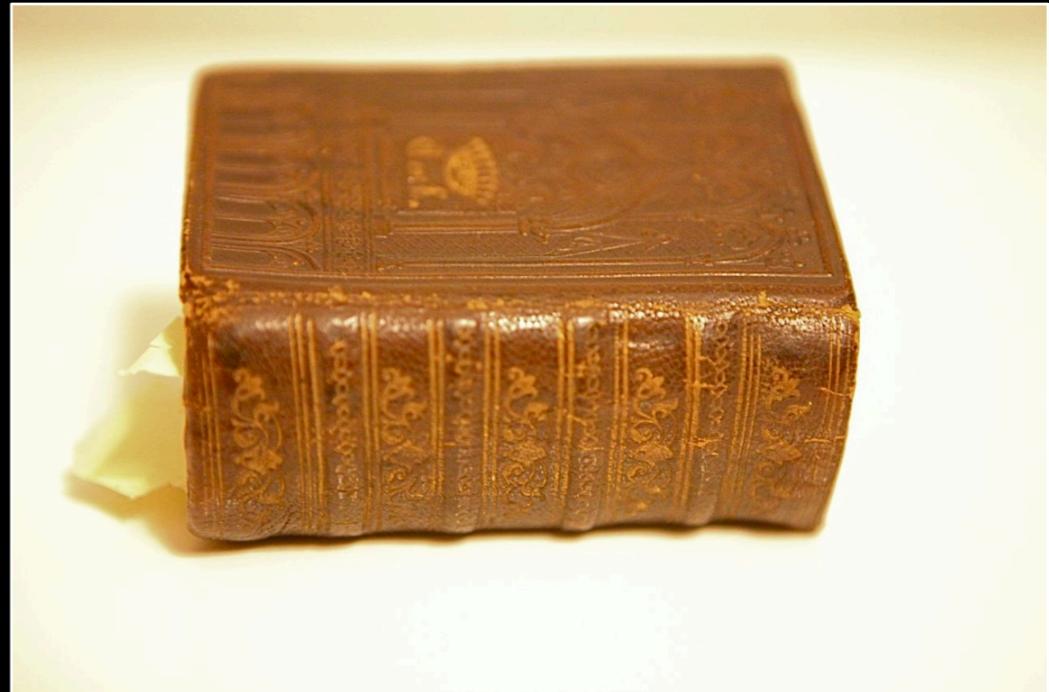
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The demand for books became insatiable with an emerging literate middle class and students attending university.

But even a simple two-hundred page book required four to five months labor by a scribe and/or illustrator, and at least 25 sheepskins were needed for the parchment pages alone.

The value of single book may be equal to the value of a farm or vineyard.



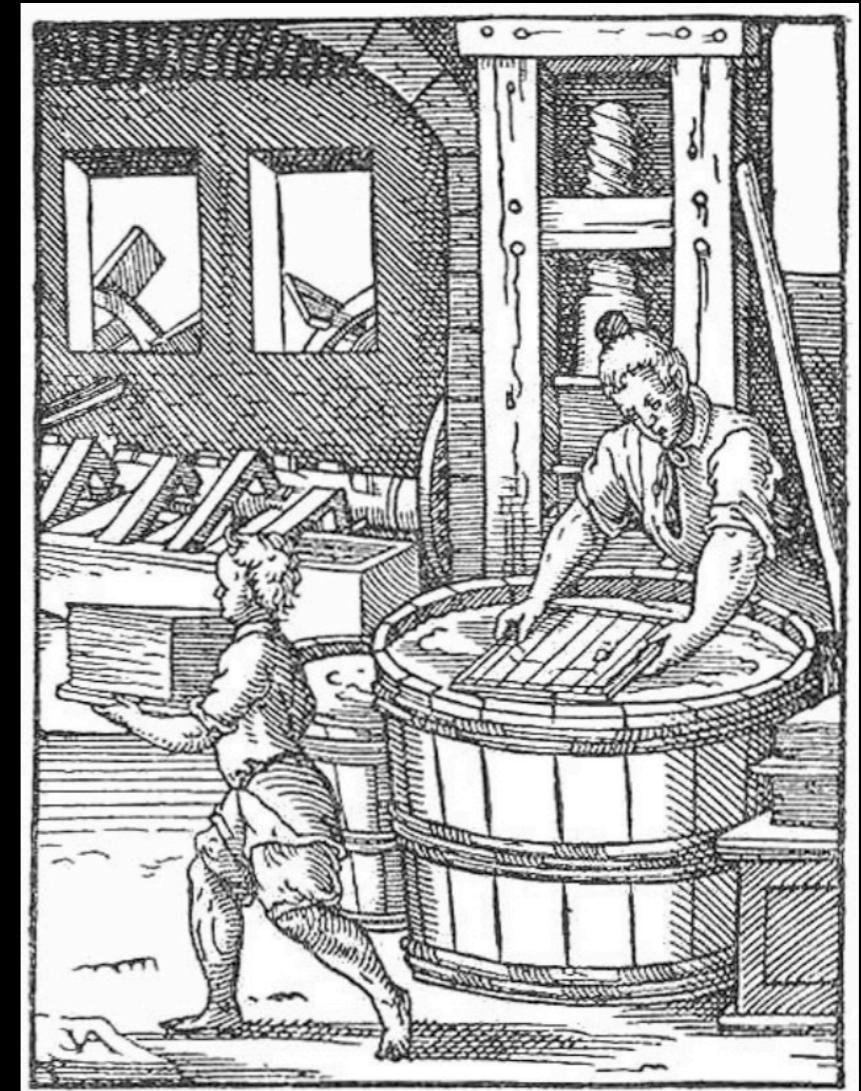
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From China to Europe, the development of paper made from rags and other plant materials revolutionized the way books were made and paved the way for modern printing technology.

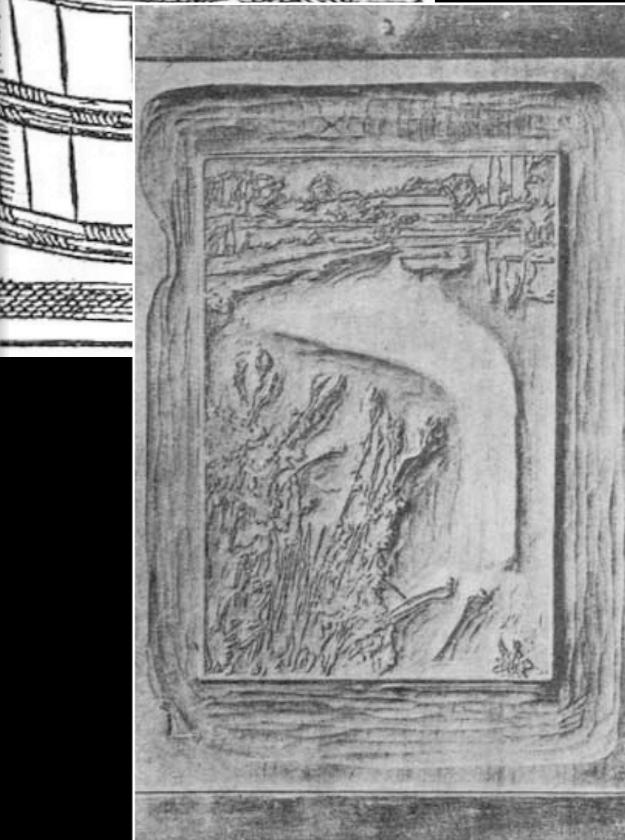
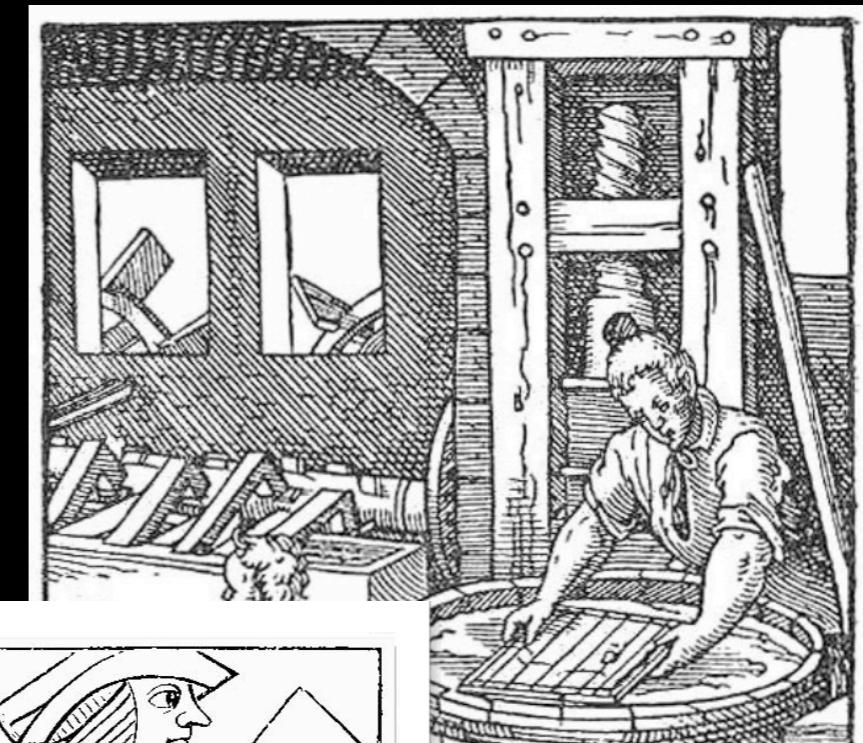


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From China to Europe, the development of paper made from rags and other plant materials revolutionized the way books were made and paved the way for modern printing technology.

Prior to the invention of the printing press in the mid 1400's, woodblock printing on paper was popular in Asia and Europe. Playing cards and religious images were early evidence of this new technology.



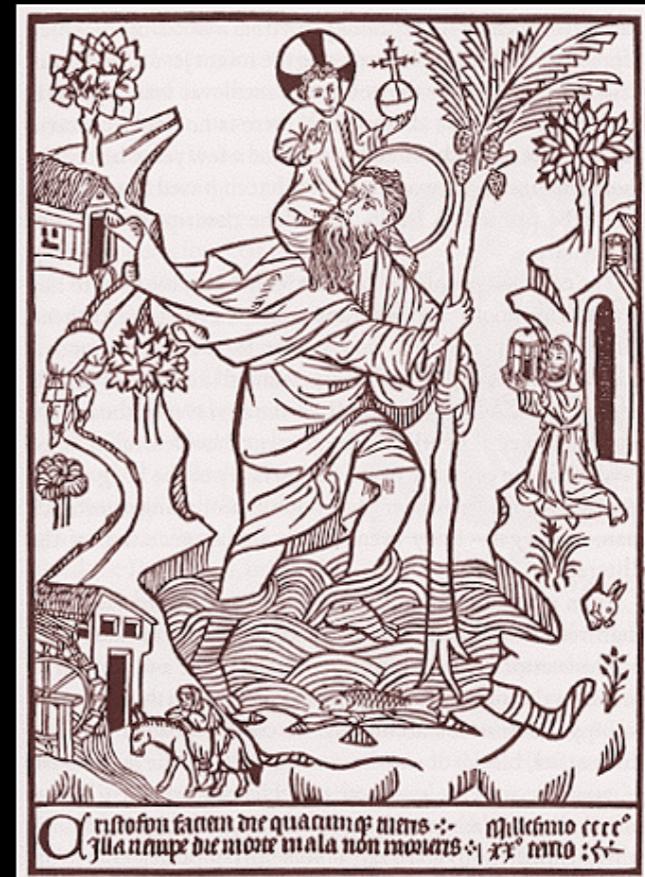
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In addition to playing cards, the early European images were devotional prints of saints. Images and lettering were both cut from the same block of wood.

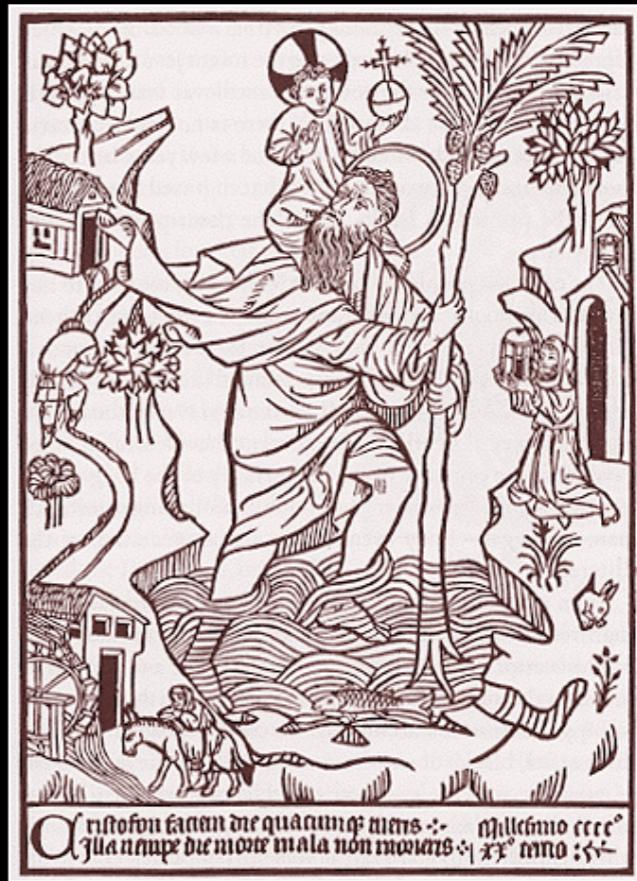


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In addition to playing cards, the early European images were devotional prints of saints. Images and lettering were both cut from the same block of wood.

Eventually, these prints evolved into block books which were picture books with religious themes and brief text. Again, each page was cut from a single block of wood and were primarily used for religious instruction of illiterates.



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Most of these prints were hand colored, but most were printed with a hand rubber roller (brayer) and brown or gray ink. But this rubber roller impressed the wood into the paper making double-sided printing not an option. Each double-page spread was followed by two blank pages.

Color was added by using stencils.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgCYovlFRNY>



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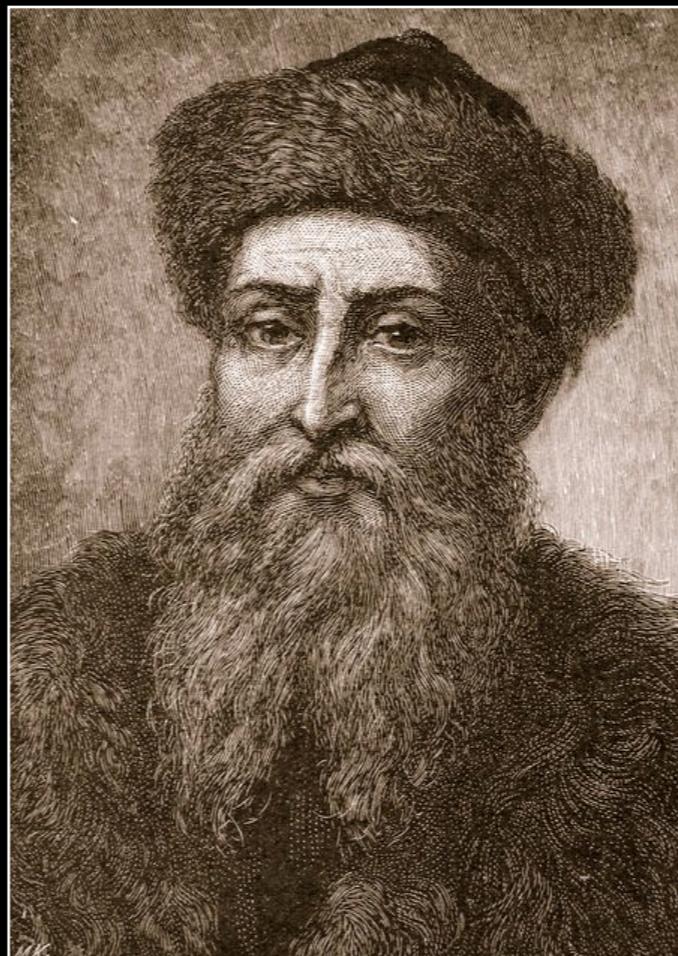
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With the availability of paper and a growing demand for books, the mechanization of book production was sought by printers all over Europe.

History notes that **Johann Gutenberg**, of Germany was the first to create a process for printing books using a wine press as a foundation.



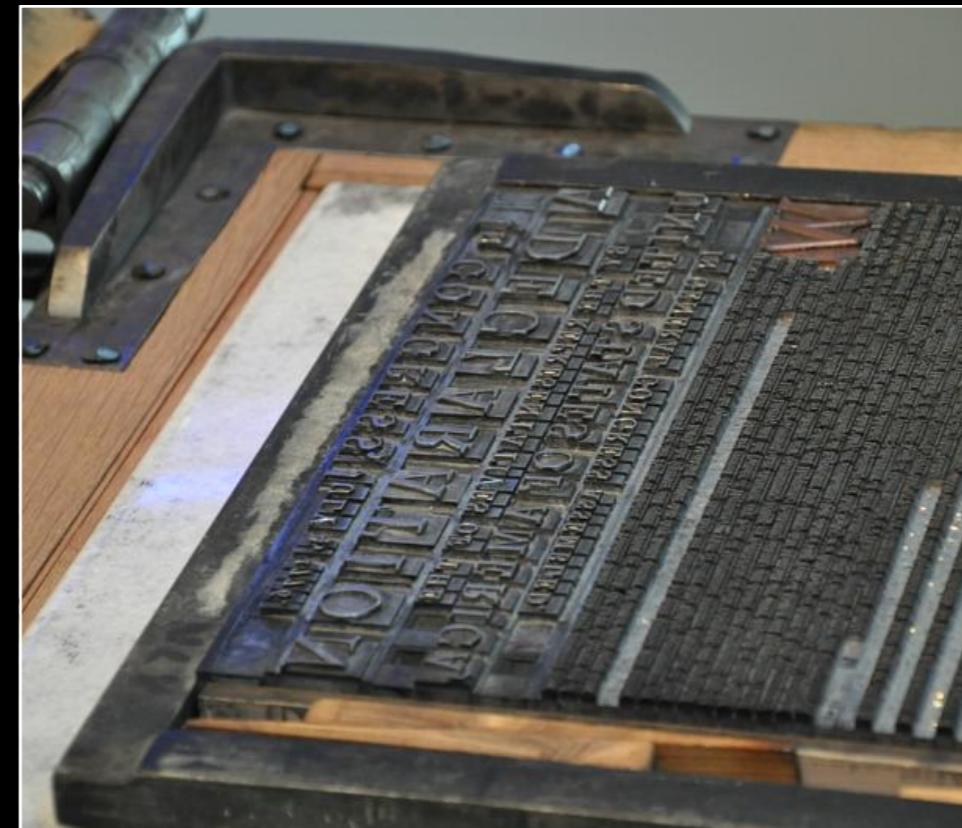
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But with the invention of the printing press came a need for a different type of ink that would stick to metal type, a smoother paper, and most of all, a method for creating movable type and a system for aligning all the type on a page.



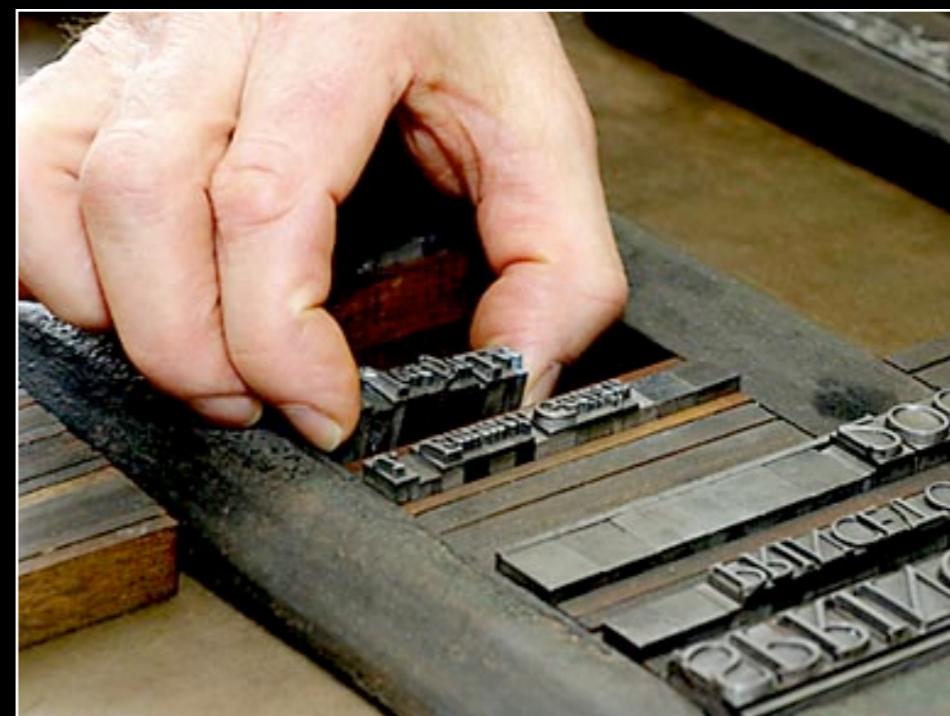
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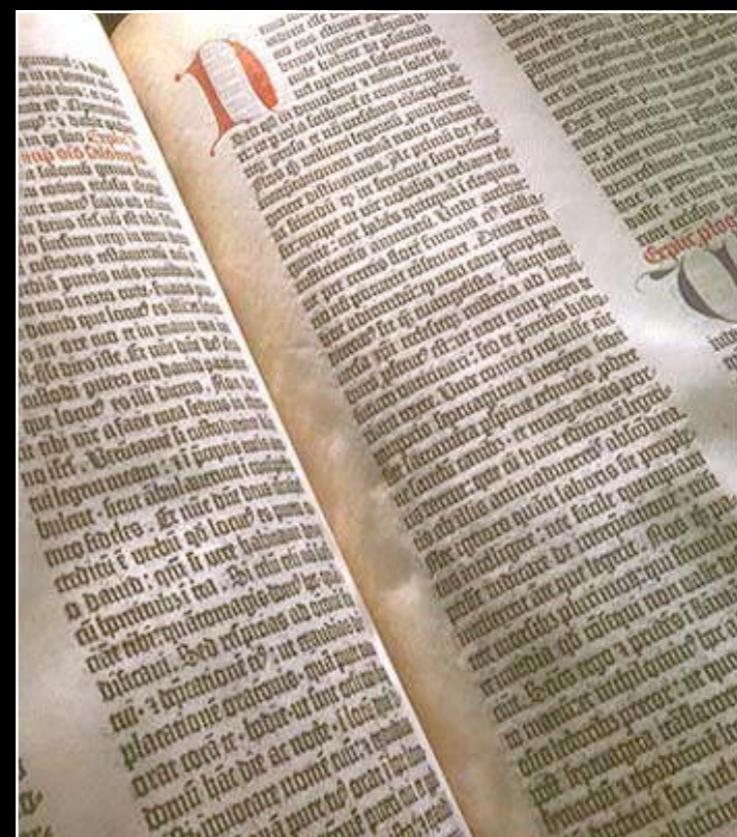
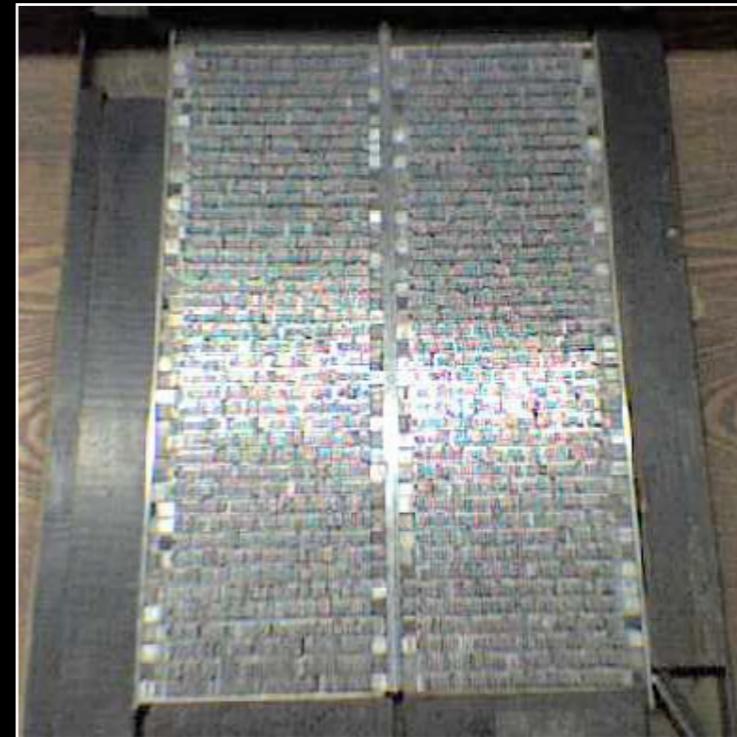
Gutenberg needed as many as 50,000 single pieces of type in use at a single time, so the speed and accuracy of setting type in a mold was key.



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The first printed typographic book, attributed to Gutenberg, but actually finished by a financial partner, Johann Fust, was called the 42-line Gutenberg Bible.



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With lines of about 33 characters, each page had over 2,500 characters set from a font of 290 different characters.



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In addition to the Gutenberg Bible, Johann Fust and his business partner, and former assistant to Gutenberg, Peter Schoeffer, published a book of biblical psalms called a **psalter**.

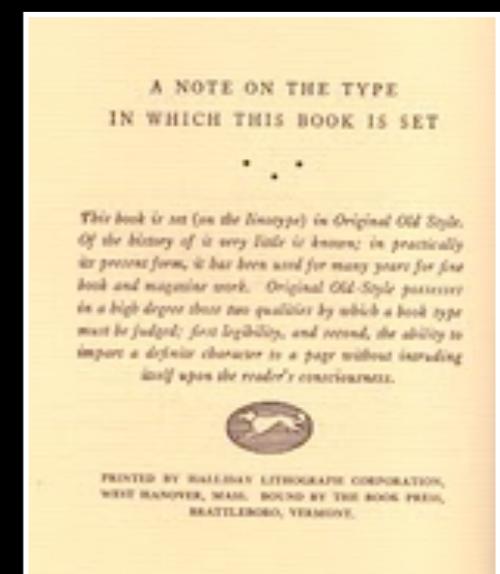
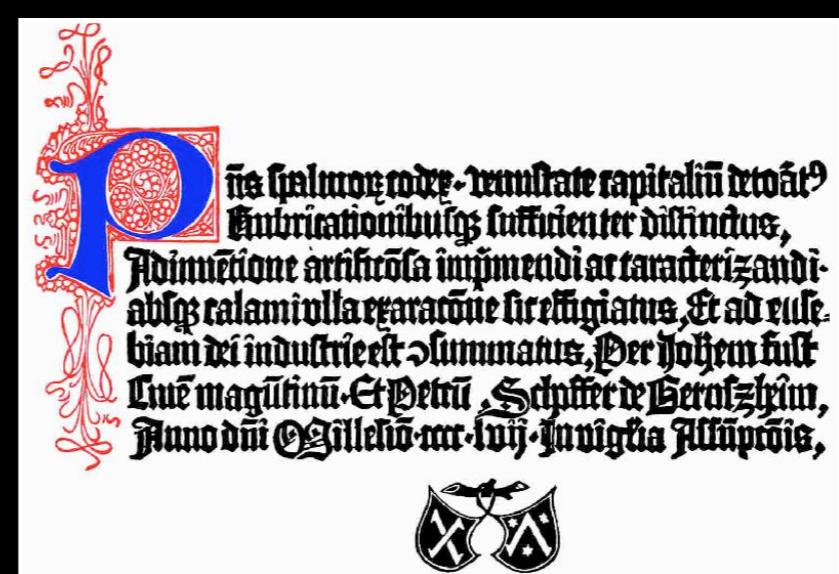


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In addition to the Gutenberg Bible, Johann Fust and his business partner, and former assistant to Gutenberg, Peter Schoeffer, published a book of biblical psalms called a **psalter**.

This psalter introduced two-color initial caps and was the first book to bear a printer's trademark and date of publication called a **colophon**. Colophons are commonly found today at the end of a printed novel or other book.



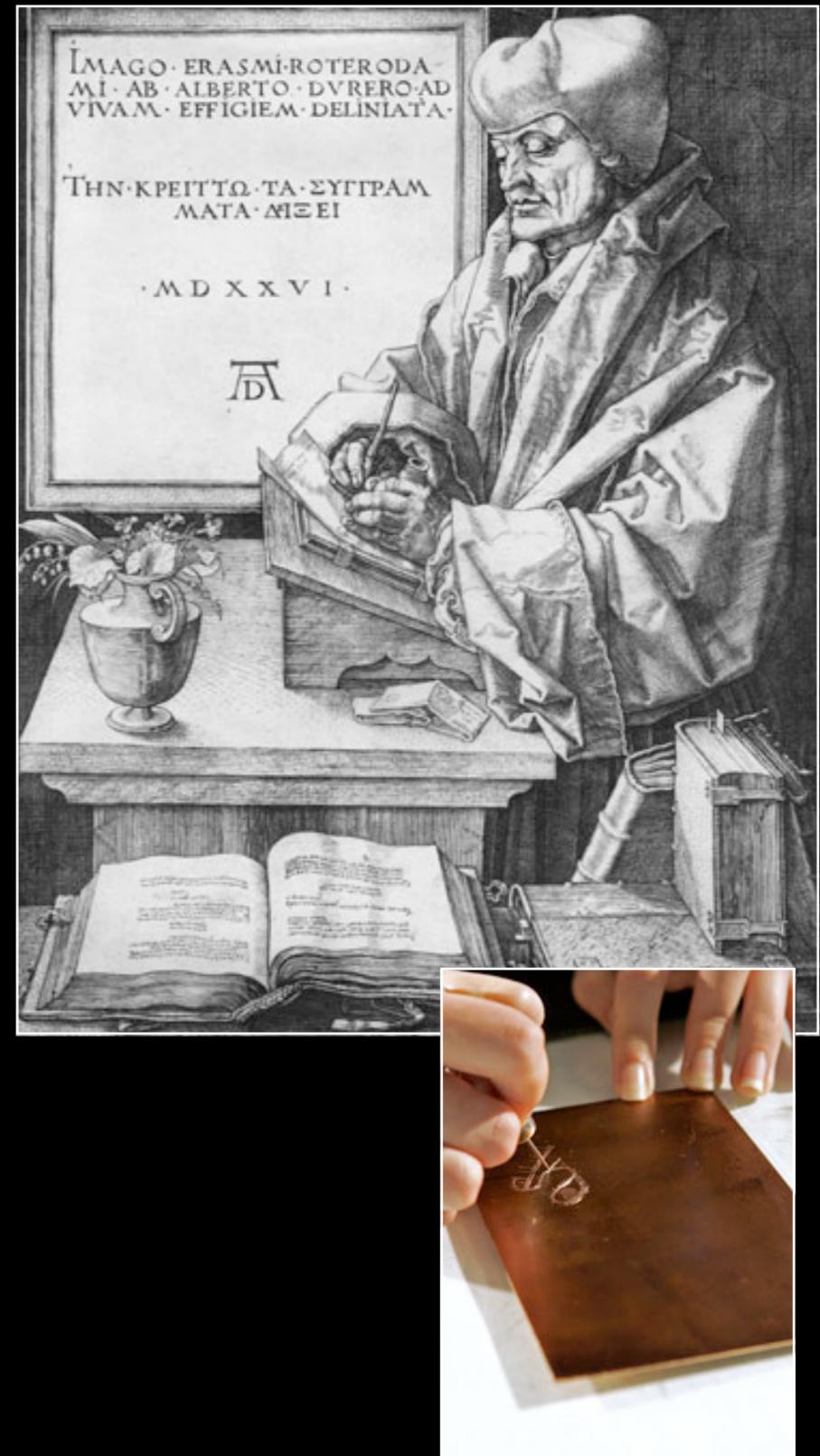
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During the same time, copperplate engraving was popular. It involved scratching an image into a smooth metal plate, applying ink into the depressions, wiping the surface clean and pressing paper against the plate to receive the image.



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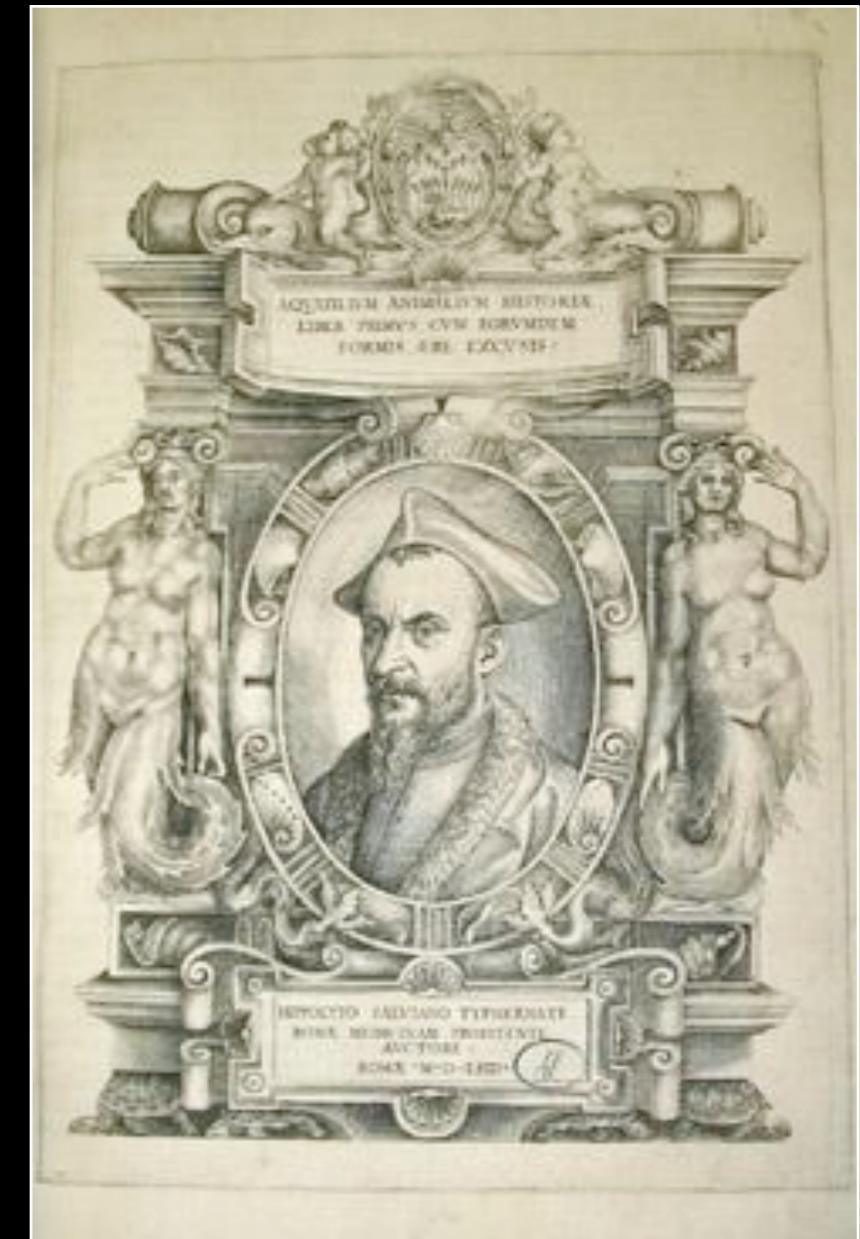
During the same time, copperplate engraving was popular. It involved scratching an image into a smooth metal plate, applying ink into the depressions, wiping the surface clean and pressing paper against the plate to receive the image.

An extraordinary amount of detail could be achieved with this process.



Copperplate engraving continued to grow in popularity as technical refinements greatly increased its range of tone, texture, and detail. In addition to commissioning engravings for placement in printed books, studios began producing them to hang on a wall. This enabled people who were unable to afford oil paintings, the opportunity to purchase art.

The nature of engraving—scratching fine lines into metal—encouraged the development of script letterforms with extremely delicate lines.



CHAPTER SIX —

The German Illustrated Book

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The Latin word **incunabula**, meaning “cradle” was adopted as a way to describe the very rare books that were published in the early 1500s. Gutenberg’s mechanized invention set into motion over the next three hundred years, a process that would lead to the Industrial Revolution in the 18 and 1900s.

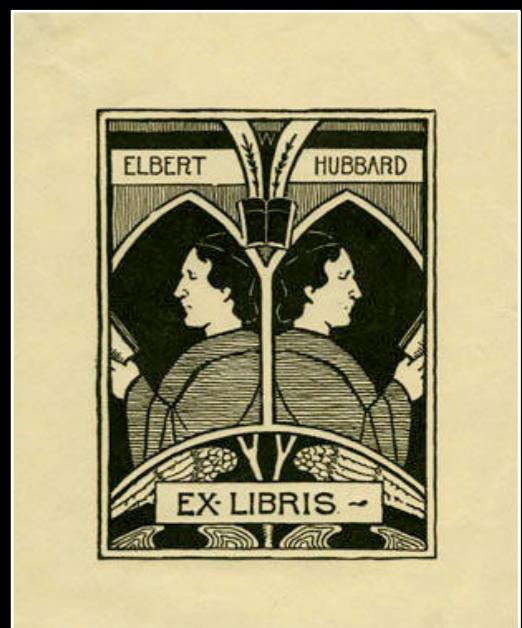
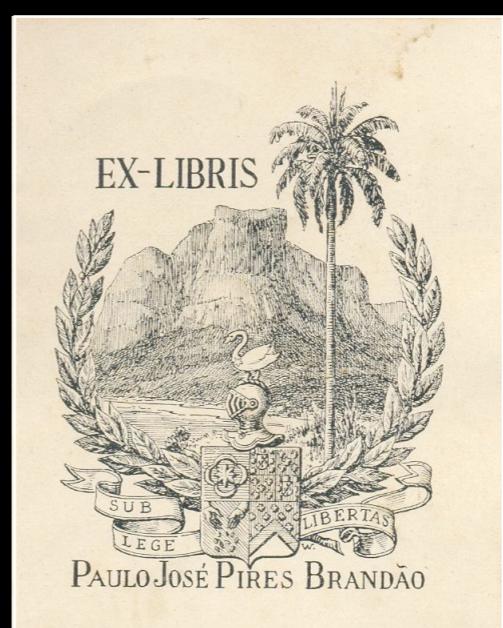


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A printed ex libris, or bookplate, was pasted into the front of a book to identify its owner.



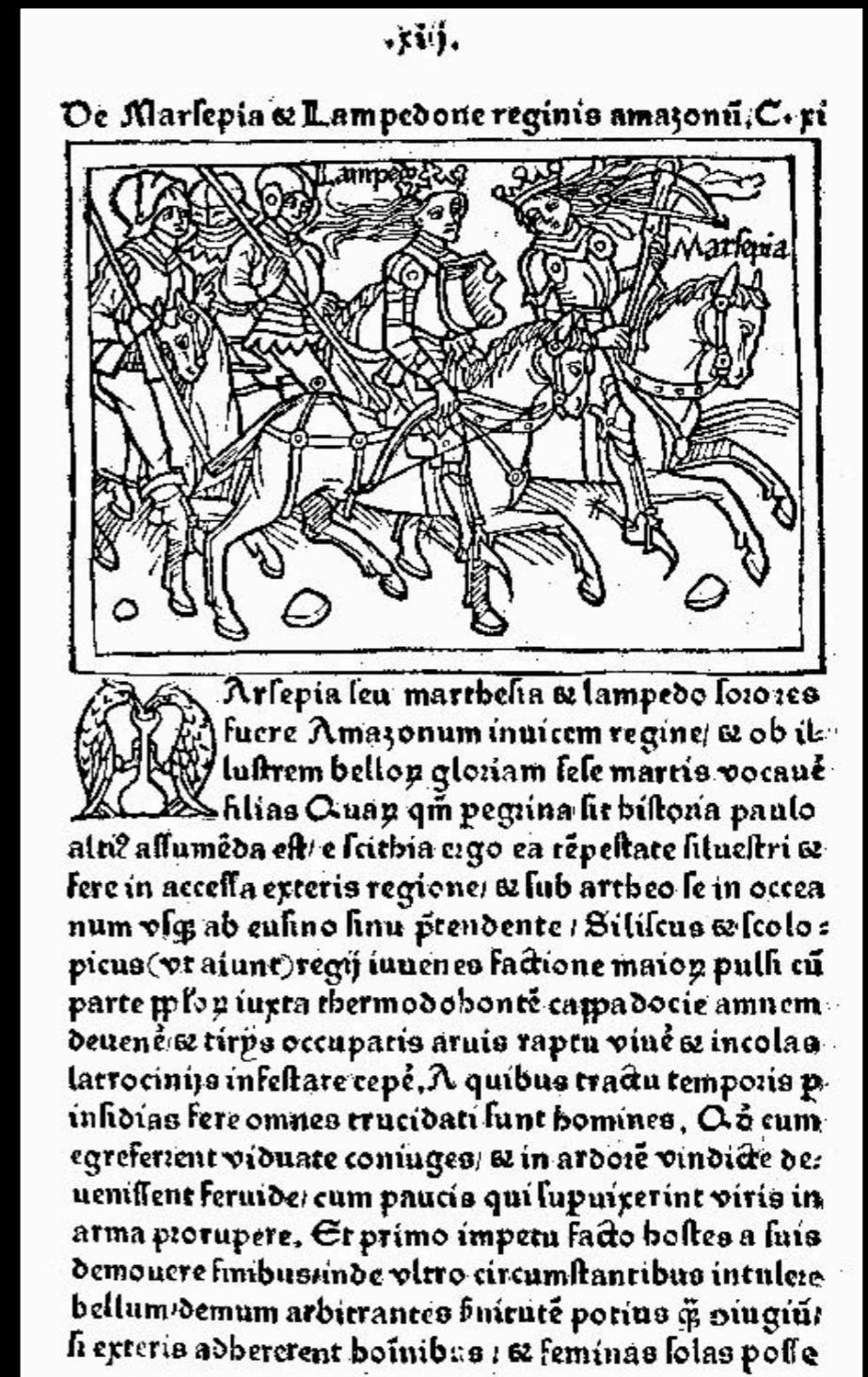
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In Germany, woodcut artists and typographic printers collaborated to develop illustrated books and broadsheets. One early typographic book by Albrecht Pfister, was illustrated with woodblock prints, similar to the earlier process used for playing cards and woodblock books. Over the decades, printers increased their use of woodblock illustrations and ultimately created a booming demand for blocks, and along with it, a growing demand for graphic illustrators.



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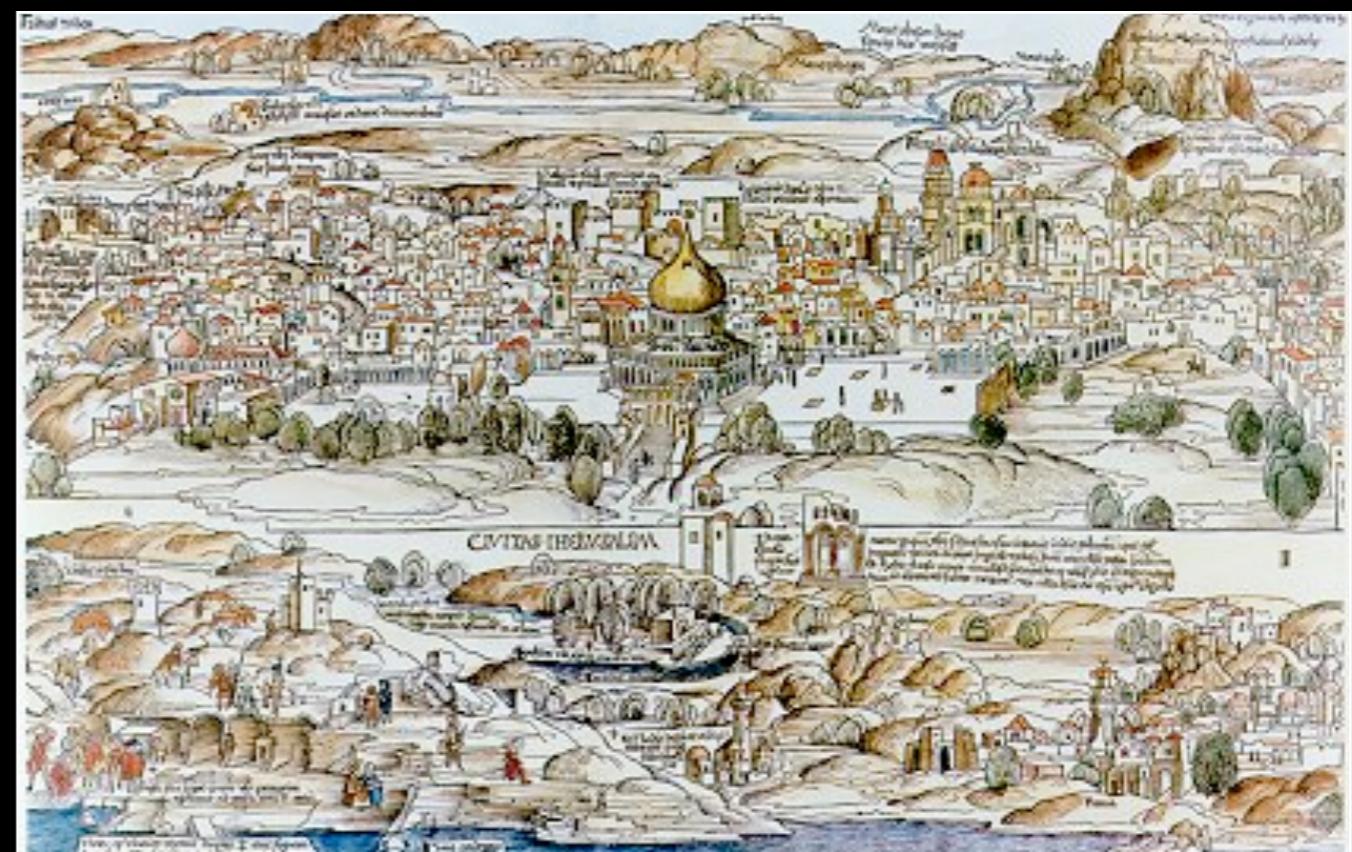
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Many of these illustrations were not completely enclosed with a border, allowing for more white space to flow from the wide margins of the pages.

One of the first travel books to be printed was illustrated by Erhard Reuwich who introduced crosshatching and fold-out pages. This illustration/map depicts the travels of a German nobleman through the Holy Land.



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Albrecht Dürer was perhaps the most prolific and respected illustrators in the early 1500s. His extraordinarily detailed woodcuts were very popular and led him to become a major influence in bringing the Renaissance spirit and philosophy to Germany.



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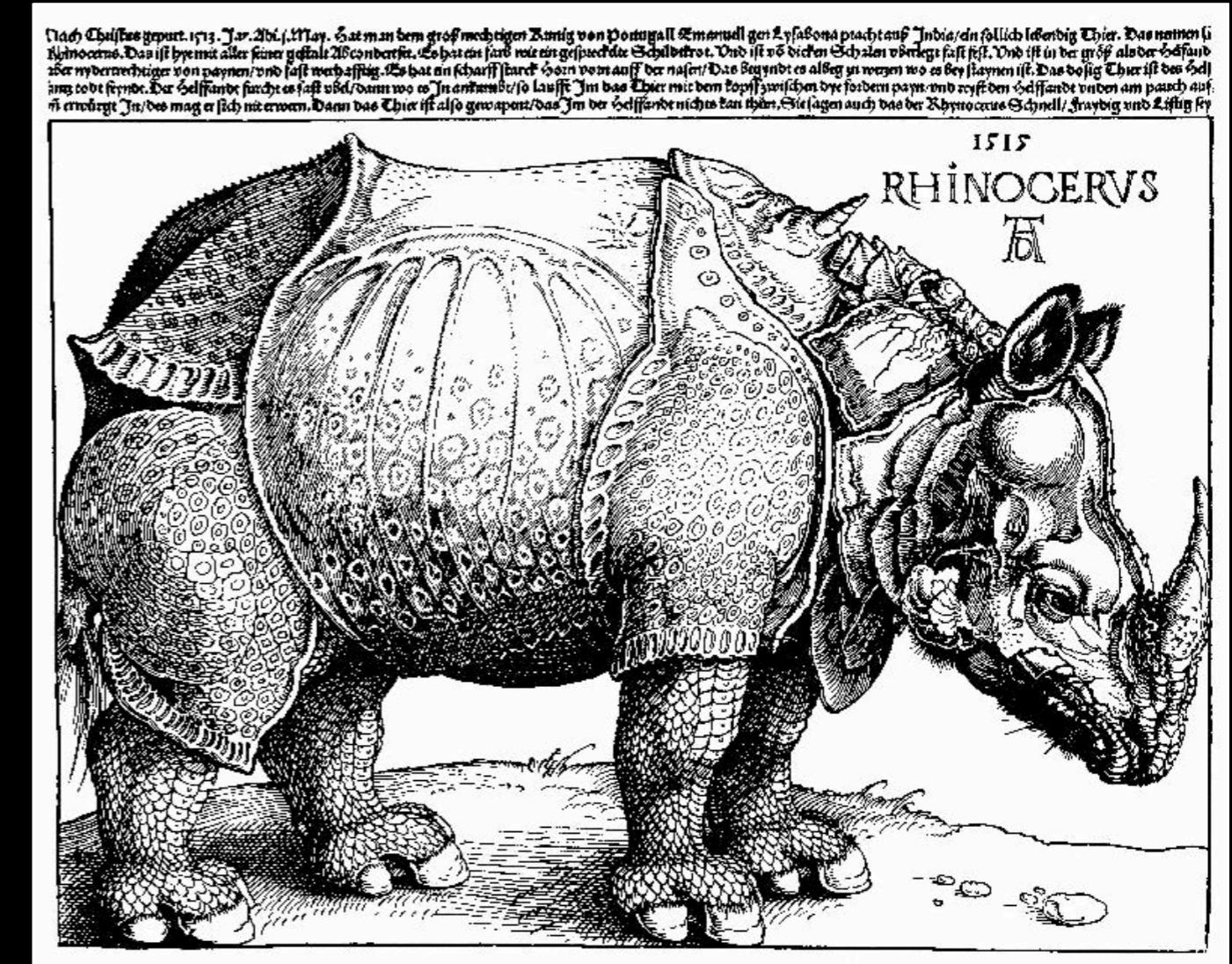
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His illustration entitled *Rhinoceros*

was reprinted in eight separate editions over the next three hundred years. While highly detailed, the image contained many anatomic inaccuracies, but nonetheless became one of the most notable and historically significant illustrations and thus had a profound influence on the arts.



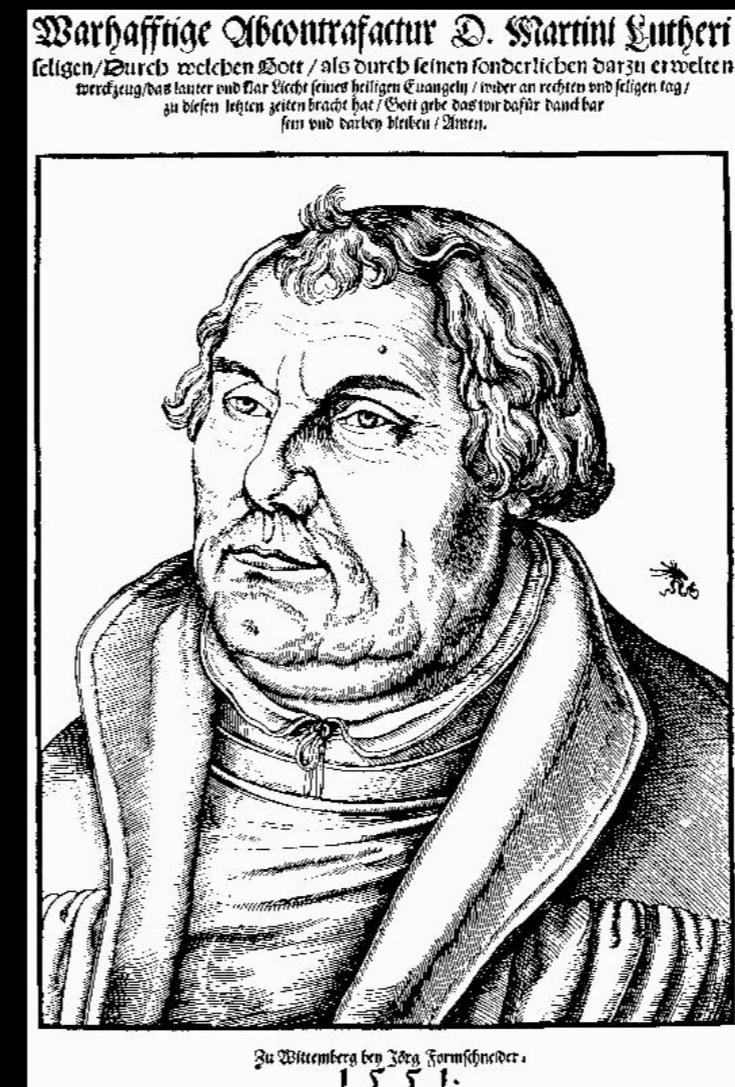
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Rhinoceros was created as a **broadside**—a single piece of paper printed on one side. Festivals were advertised, lottery tickets sold, political causes and religious beliefs were proclaimed—all because of the large and visually arresting printed images. When both sides were printed it was called a **broadsheet**. Broadsides were the precursor to posters, which are still very popular today.



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Throughout the 15 and 1600s, German graphic design continued to showcase **blackletter** typography and woodcut illustrations. The typeface **Textura**, noted because of its dense visual “texture” was favored throughout Germany. Today, this typeface style has strong connotative associations with religious holidays, gothic themes, and oddly, tattoos.

oblationem servitutis nostre: & a
cõtre familie tue. Quesumus do
mine ut placatus accipias: diesq;
nros i tua pace disponas. atq; ab
eterna damnaciõe nos eripi: et in
elector; tuor; inheas grege mune
rari. Per r̄pm dñm n̄m Amen.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Renaissance Graphic Design

The word **Renaissance** means “revival” or “rebirth.” Originally this term was used to denote the period between the 14th and 15th centuries in Italy, but today the word is generally used to describe the period marking the transition from medieval to the modern world.

Type design, page layout, ornamentation, illustration and even complete book design were reconsidered by Italian printers and scholars. Graphic design, the arts, music, literature, music—all flourished during the Renaissance and some of our greatest masters lived and created during this time.

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Renaissance Graphic Design

Venice, Italy, the center of commerce and trade between Europe and other Eastern Mediterranean nations, led the way in Italian typographic book design.

Nicholas Jensen is noted as one of history's greatest typeface designers. Throughout his career, he designed and published 150 books as well as outstanding Greek and Gothic fonts.



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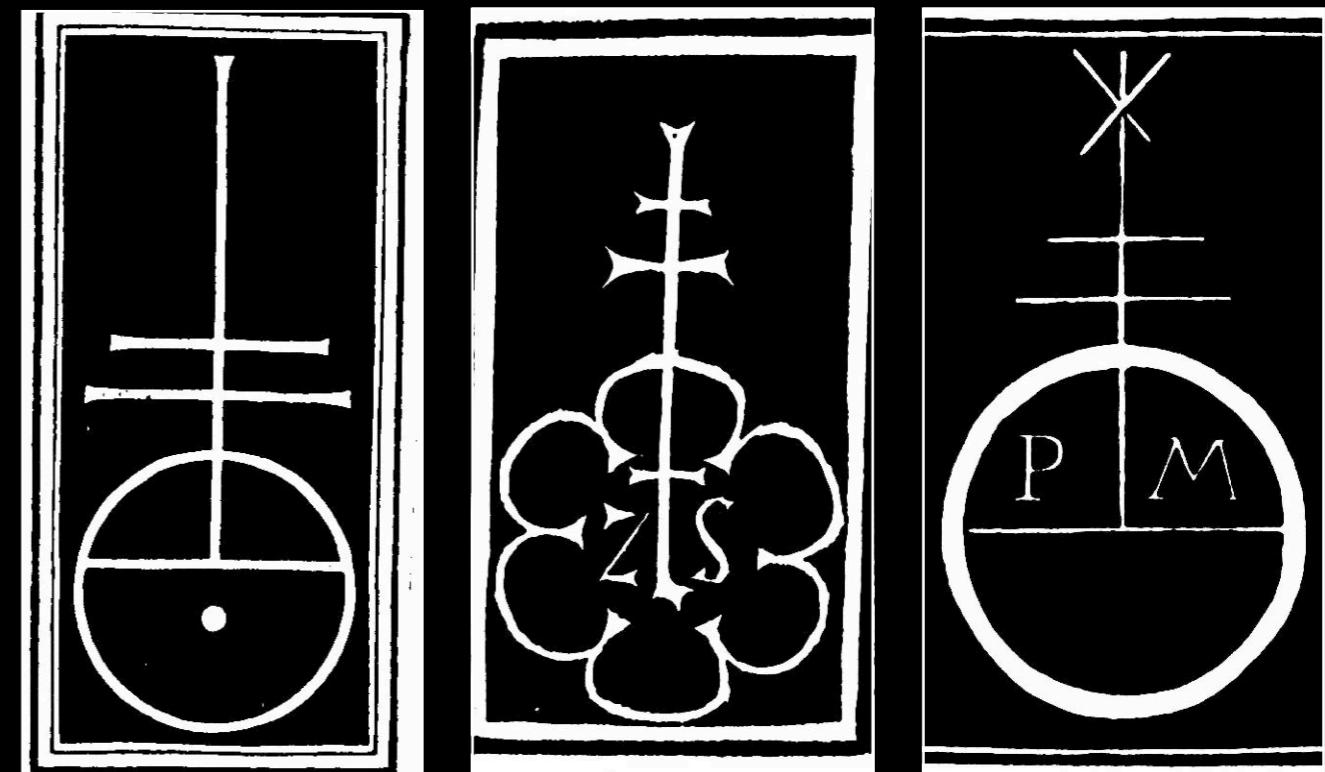
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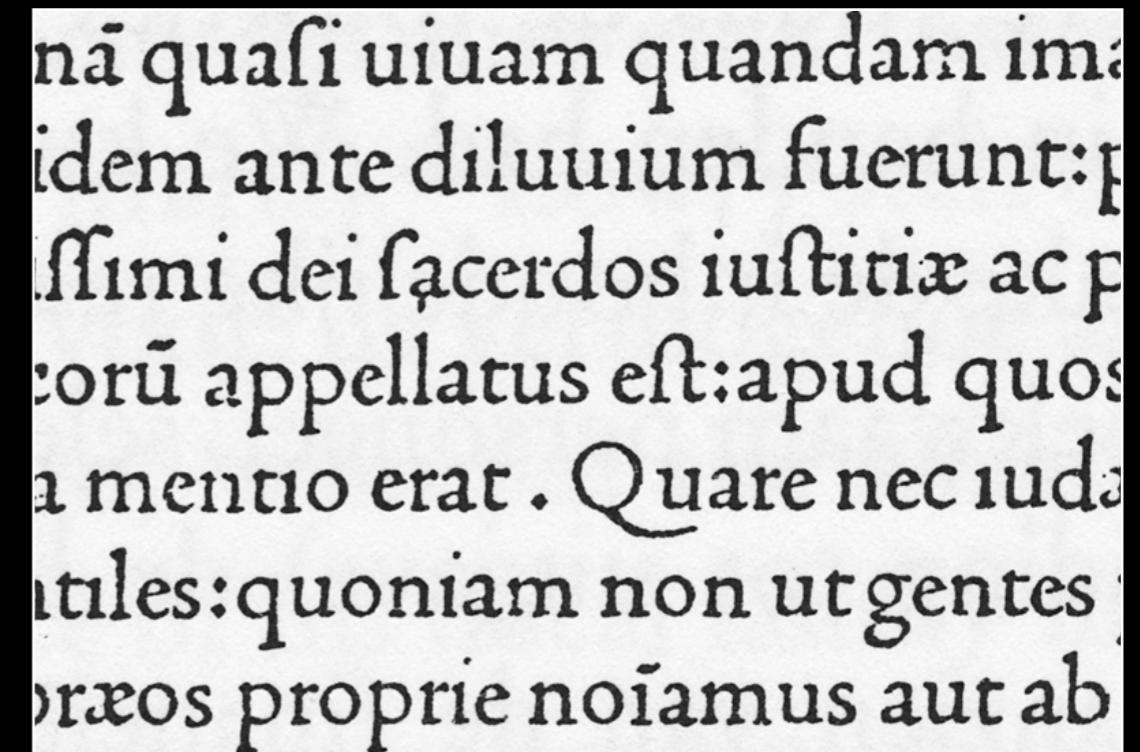
Jensen, as well as other early printers designed trademarks to identify their books, leading the way to logo design as an art form.

<http://typography timeline.html>



Renaissance Graphic Design

Jenson's fonts were extremely legible and his attention to the space between the letters and within each letterform set the pace for type designers today, and placed the mark of genius on his work.



nā quasi uiuam quandam ima
idem ante diluuium fuerunt: p
issimi dei sacerdos iustitiæ ac p
corū appellatus est: apud quos
a mentio erat. Quare nec iuda
itiles: quoniam non ut gentes
oræos proprie noīamus aut ab

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The modern version of Jenson's typeface is used frequently by designers today. Its thick and thin strokes, and bracketed serifs make it a highly legible face appropriate for reading large bodies of text.

nā quasi uiuam quandam ima
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tiles: quoniam non ut gentes
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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
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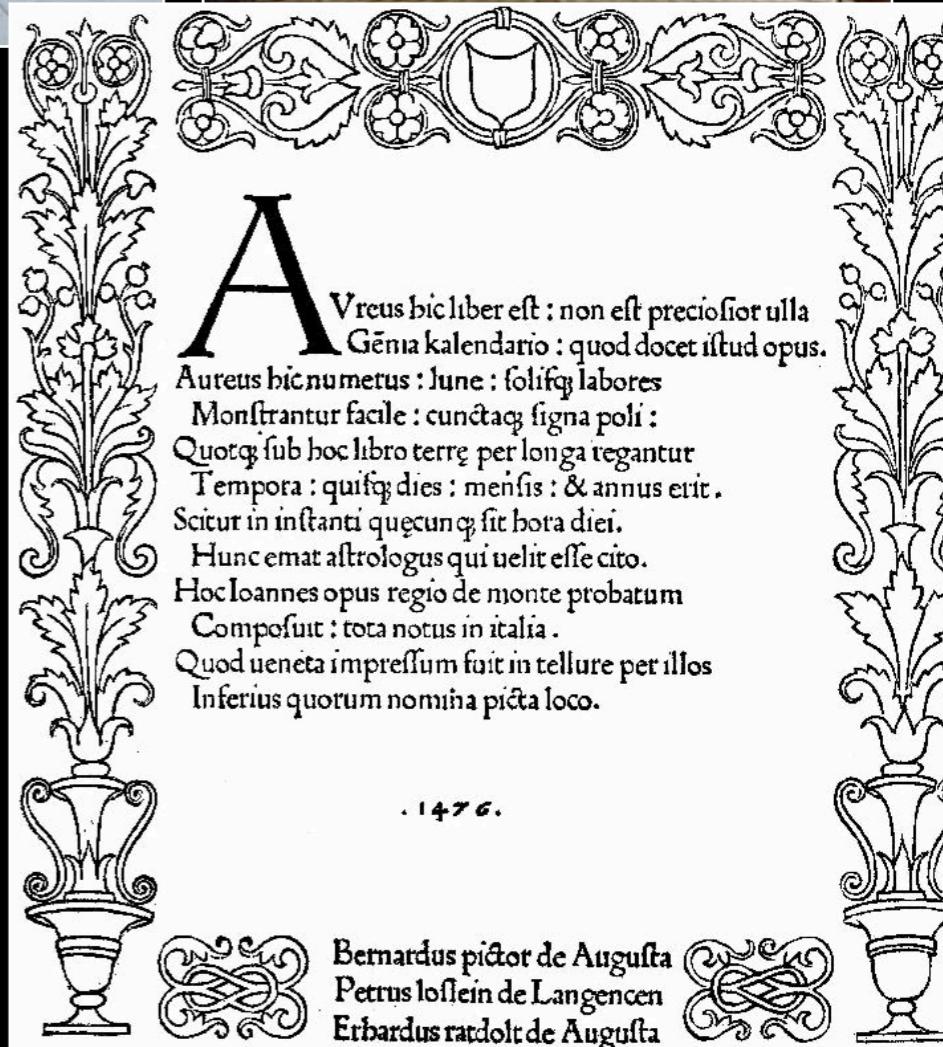
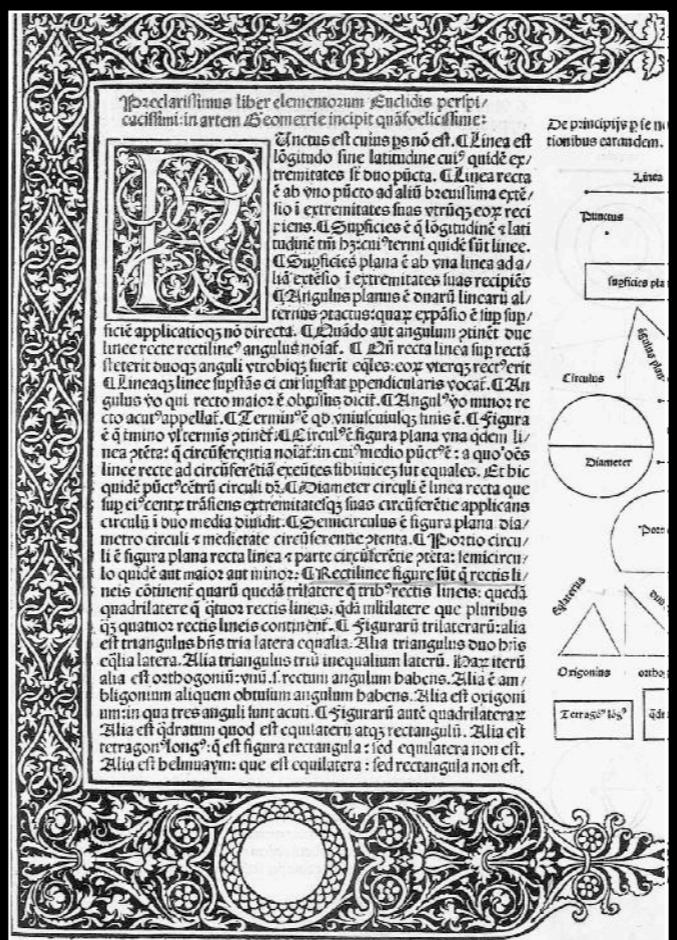
Renaissance designers loved floral decoration in furniture, architecture, as well as printed manuscripts. This design aesthetic carried over into book design with a collaboration between the typographic printer and the illuminator who added initials and embellishments to the page.



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During the early 1500s, a turning away from medieval beliefs toward a new concern for human potential and value, characterized Renaissance humanism —a philosophy of human dignity and worth that defined man as capable of using reason and scientific inquiry to achieve both an understanding of the world and self-meaning. This new spirit was accompanied by a renewed study of classical writings from Greek and Roman cultures.

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One such notable humanist and scholar was **Aldus Manutius** who established a printing press in Venice called the Aldine Press. His vision of publishing the major works of the great thinkers of the world became a reality through his dedication and hard work.



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Renaissance Graphic Design

Manutius addressed a growing need for smaller, more economical books by publishing the first prototype of the pocket book. This first edition of Vergils' Opera was only 3.75 x 5 inches and contained the first italic typeface.



e studiis alios præcurrere ærit
et iusto te prosequar æquis ho-
bos et nostra tuo dignaris Amor
c contra affectus debere fatetur
; pari gratae par gratia ment

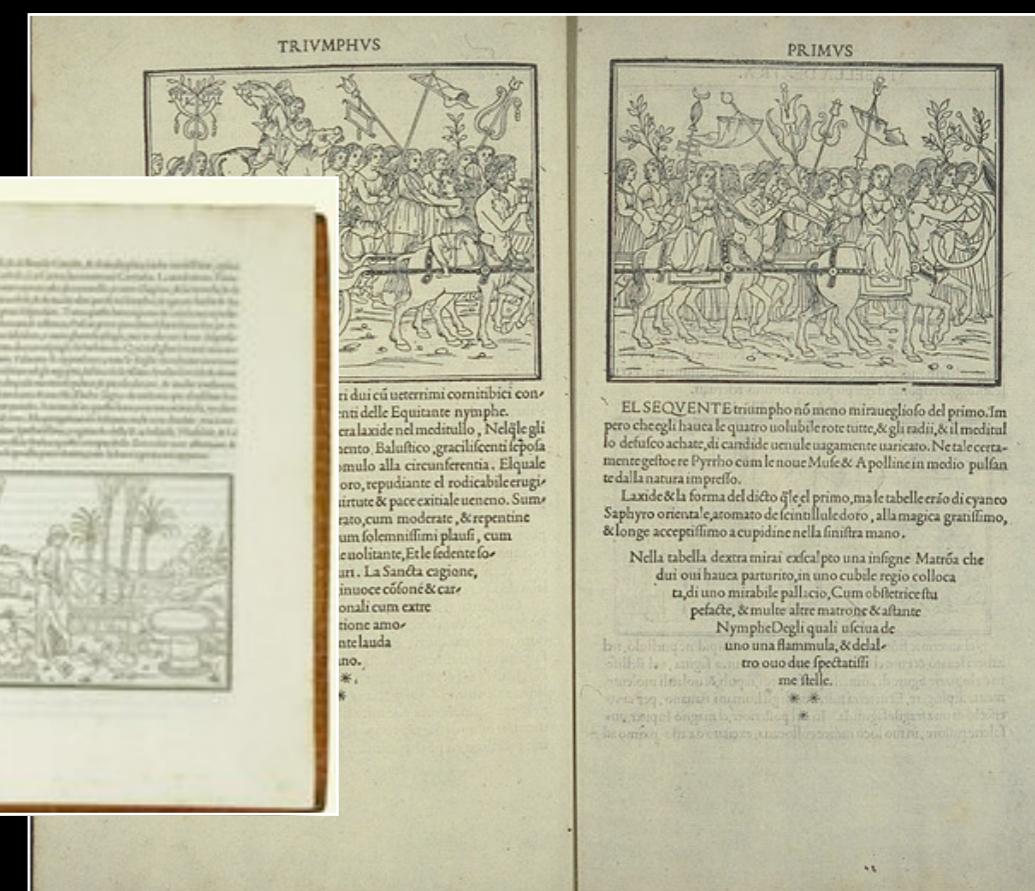
The brilliant designer of the italic typeface was a man named Francesco da Bologna, surnamed **Griffo**. His style survives today as the book text face **Bembo** and is widely used by modern-day graphic designers. His elongated ascenders and descenders resulted a lighter look to page layout, especially combined with generous margins, finer paper and meticulous presswork.



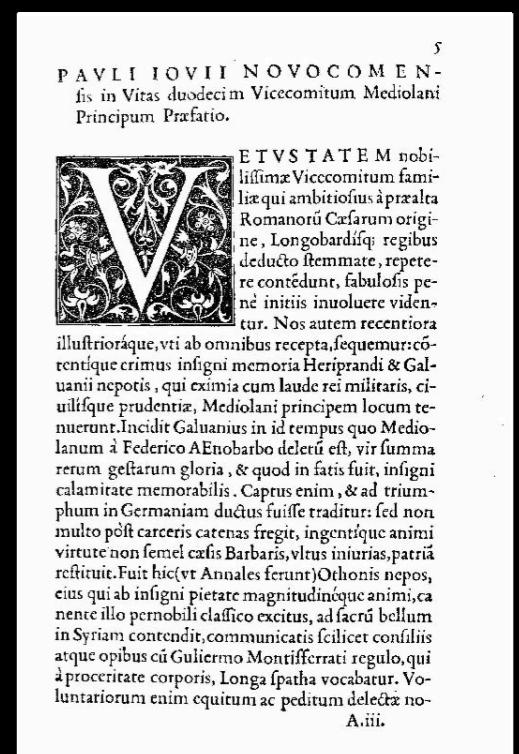
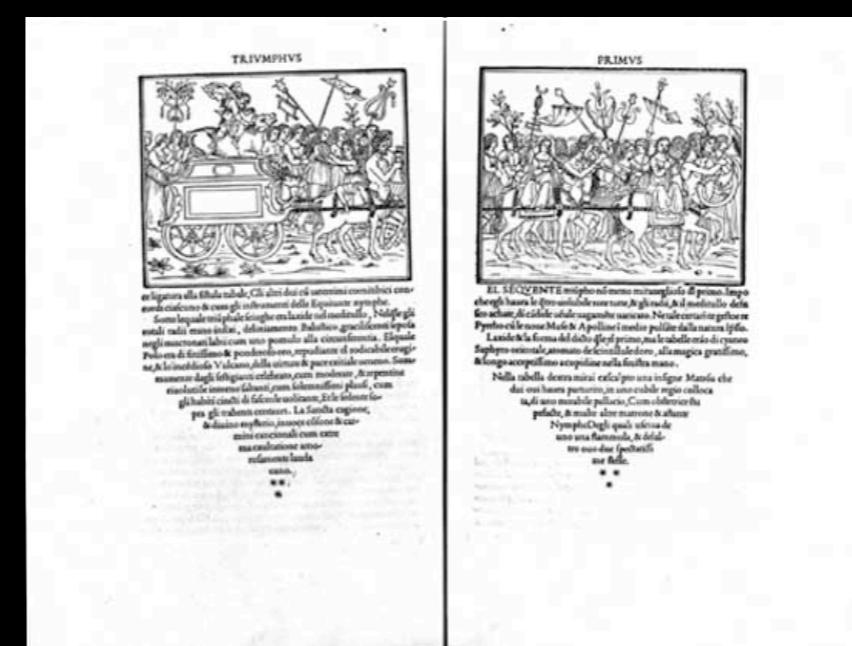
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Griffo typefaces became the model for French type designers who perfected his letterforms during the following century.

<http://bemboszoo.com/>



The typographic book came to Italy from Germany as a manuscript-style book printed with type. A series of design innovations, including the title page, roman and italic type, printed page numbers, woodblock and cast metal ornaments, and innovative approaches to the layout of illustrations with type, enabled the Italian printers of the Renaissance to pass on to posterity the basic format of the typographic book as we know it today.



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The Italian Renaissance began to fade after the sack of Rome in 1527 by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and his Spanish allies.

The sixteenth century has become known as “the golden age of French Typography.” The leading printers produced books of fine proportions, outstanding legibility, beautiful typography, and elegant ornamentation.

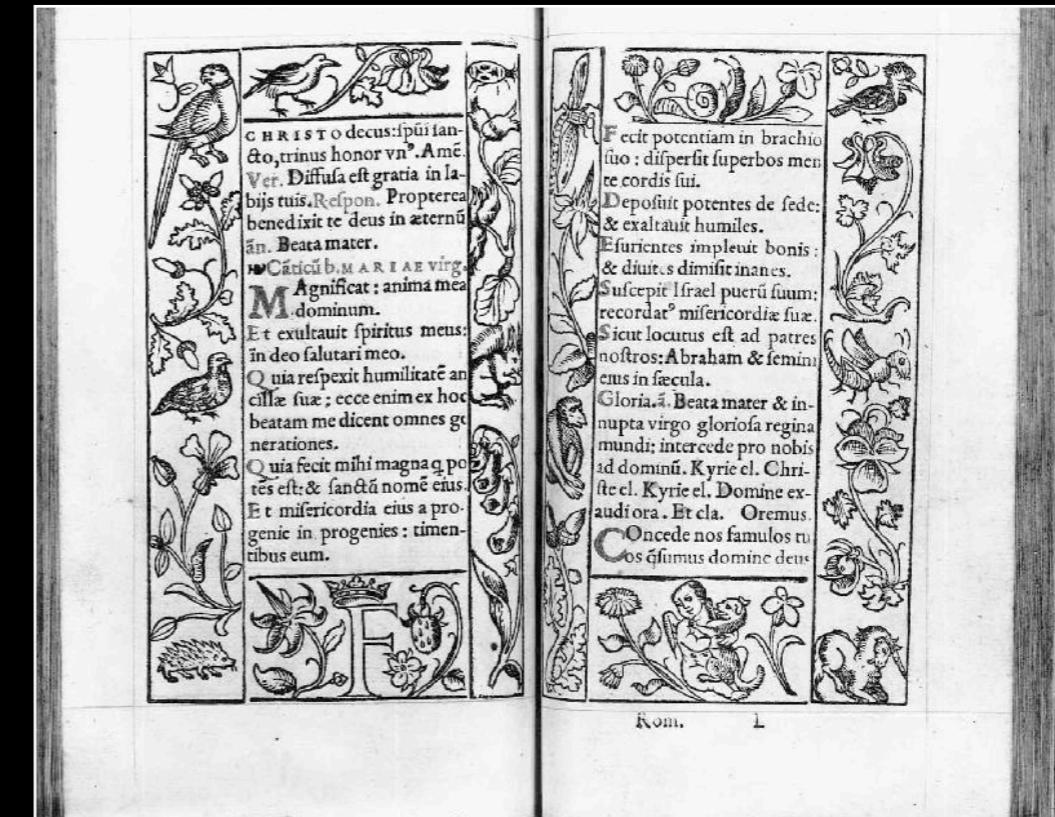
Two brilliant graphic artists, **Geoffrey Tory** and the typeface designer **Claude Garamond** created visual forms that were reproduced for over two hundred years. In fact, the Garamond typeface is one of the most widely used text font used by designers today.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z À
Å É Ï a b c d e f g
p q r s t u v w x
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0



The term “renaissance man” is often used to identify a unique individual whose wide-ranging activities in various philosophic, literary, artistic, or scientific disciplines result in important contributions to more than one field.

Geoffrey Tory was one such individual. His range of accomplishments is extraordinary: professor, scholar, translator, poet and author, publisher, printer, calligrapher, designer, illustrator and engraver. As a reformer of the French language, he introduced the apostrophe, the accent, and the cedilla. He was most influential in developing a uniquely French Renaissance school of book design and illustration.



Equally significant, were the contributions of **Claude Garamond**, the first type punch cutter to work independently of printing firms. His roman typefaces were designed with such perfection that French printers in the 16th century were able to print books of extraordinary legibility and beauty.



ILLVSTRISSIMA Galliarū reginæ Helianoræ

Jacobus Sylvius Ambianus Philiatros.
S. D. P.

DIci non po-
test, neque cogitari, re-
gina optima, maxima,
quām optatus, quām iu-
cundus, quām verendus
Gallis omnibus fuerit
tuus iste in Gallias ad-
uictus, augustinusque
tui cōspectus, non hic sine numine diuīnū cōce-
sus. Quandoquidem si nihil cōmodius, nihil felici-
cius, nihil denique diuinius pace ipsa hominibus à
diis immortalibus dari potest, o quā te memorem
regina, pacis toties ac tandem optata, secūdum deū
author, pacis alumna, pacis vinculum, faxit deus,
adamātinum. Quos tibi triumphos vniuersa de-

a.ii.

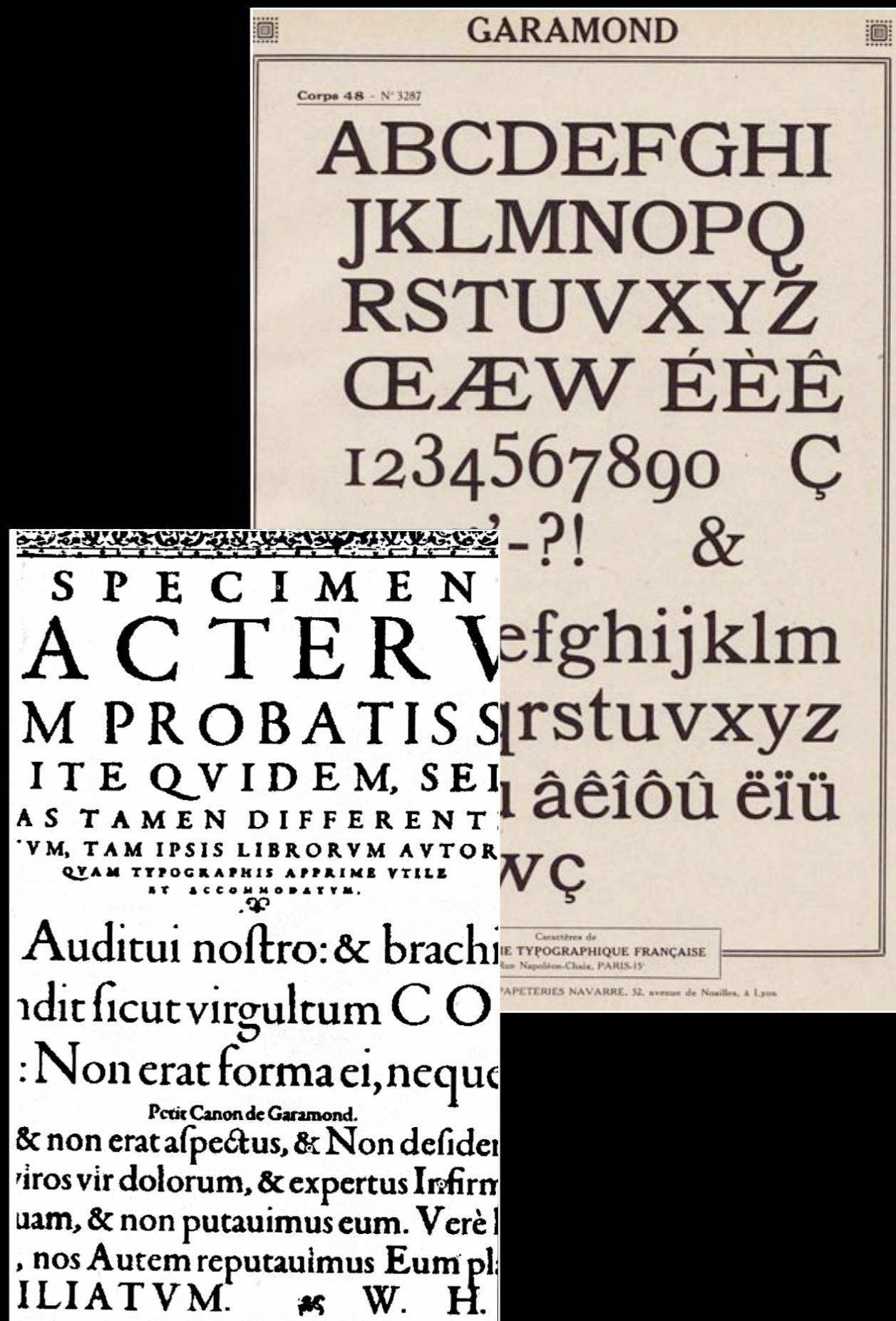
5

PAVL I OVII NOVOCOMEN-
fis in Vitas duodecim Vicecomitum Mediolani
Principum Præfatio.



ET VS TATE M nobilissimæ Vicecomitum familiæ qui ambitiosius à præalta Romanorū Cæsarum origine, Longobardisq; regibus deducto stemmate, repe-
re contéidunt, fabulosis penè initiis inuoluere viden-
tur. Nos autem recentiora
illustrioraque, vt ab omnibus recepta, sequemur: cō-
tentique crimus insigni memoria Heriprandi & Gal-
uanii nepotis, qui eximia cum laude rei militaris, ci-
uitisque prudentiæ, Mediolani principem locum te-
nuerunt. Incidit Galuanius in id tempus quo Medio-
lanum à Federico AEnobarbo deletū est, vir summa
rerum gestarum gloria, & quod in fatis fuit, insigni
calamitate memorabilis. Captus enim, & ad trium-
phum in Germaniam ductus fuisse traditur: sed non
multo post carceris catenas fregit, ingentique animi
virtute non semel casis Barbaris, vltus iniurias, patria
restituit. Fuit hic (vt Annales ferunt) Othonis nepos,
cuius qui ab insigni pietate magnitudinēque animi, ca-
nente illo pernibili classico excitus, ad sacrū bellum
in Syriam contendit, communicatis scilicet consiliis
atque opibus cū Guliermo Montifferrati regulo, qui
à proceritate corporis, Longa spatha vocabatur. Vo-
luntariorum enim equitum ac peditum delecta no-
A.iii.

Around 1530 Garamond established his own independent type foundry to sell to printers cast type ready to distribute into the compositor's case. The fonts Garamond cut during this time were a master of visual form and had a tighter fit that allowed closer word spacing and a harmony of design between capitals, lowercase letters, and italics.



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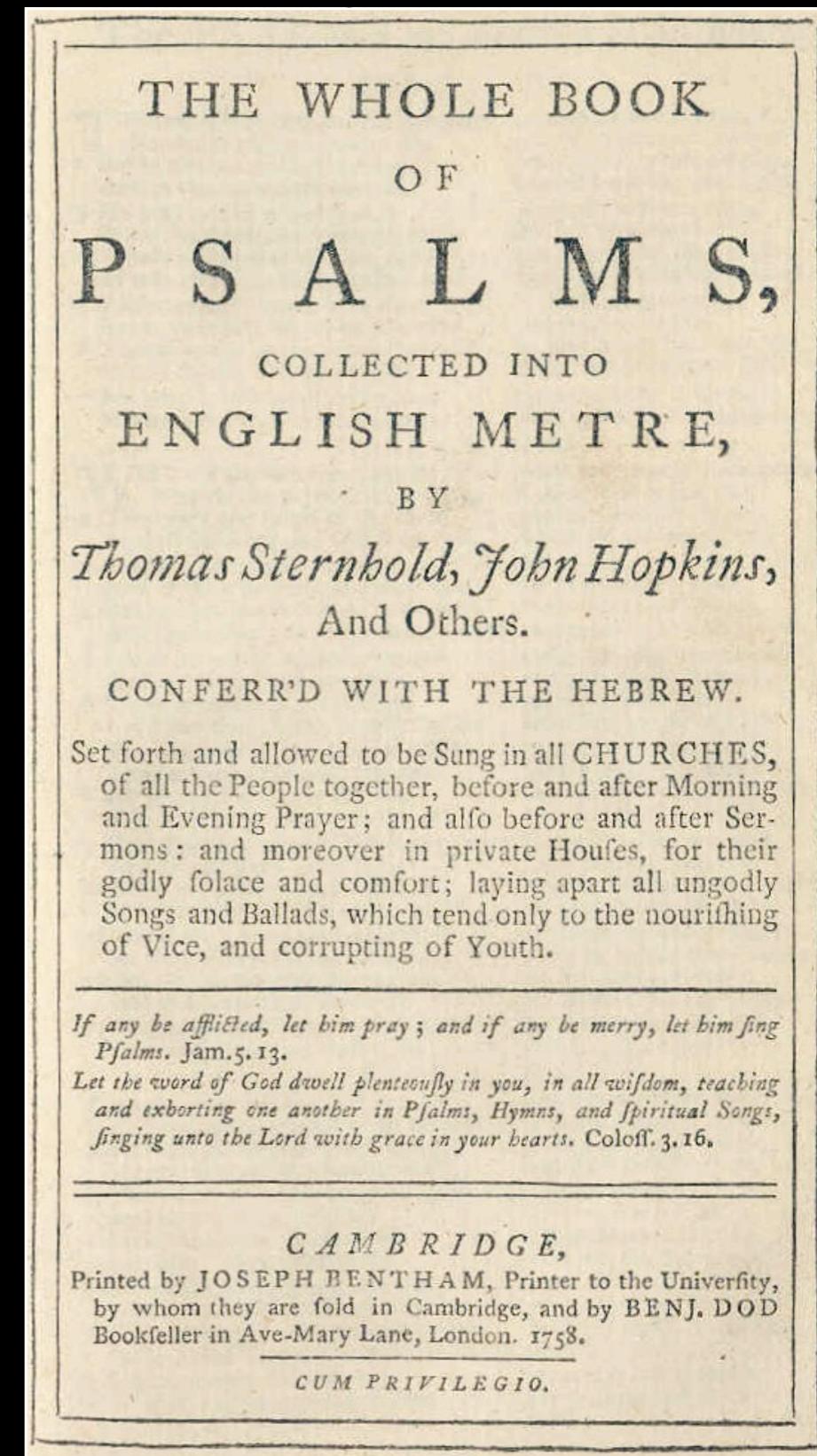
During the 1500s, **Basel**, in Switzerland, and **Lyons**, a French city southwest of Basel, became the major centers of graphic design.

Hans Holbein came to Basel around 1520 and was first involved with illustrating books for Johann Froben, a leading printer in the town. Holbein created forty-one woodcuts illustrating The Dance of the Death, a procession in which skeletons or corpses escort the living to their graves. This was a major theme in the visual arts at the time as a reminder to the unfaithful of the inevitability of death.



During the Renaissance, a remarkable library of exquisite books and art were created. However, during the 17th century, not much work was innovative as there was an abundant stock of ornaments, punches, matrixes, and woodblocks. Printers had little incentive to commission new graphic materials.

Printing came to North America when a British locksmith named Stephen Daye came to the new world to establish a printing press, ending up in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The first printing was in early 1639 and the first book to be designed and printed in the English American colonies was called The Whole Book of Psalms.

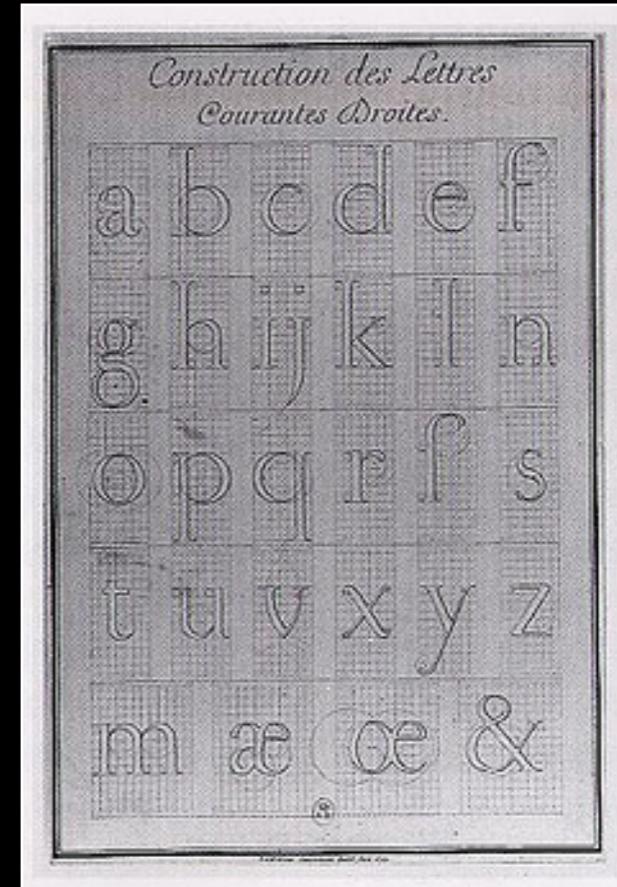
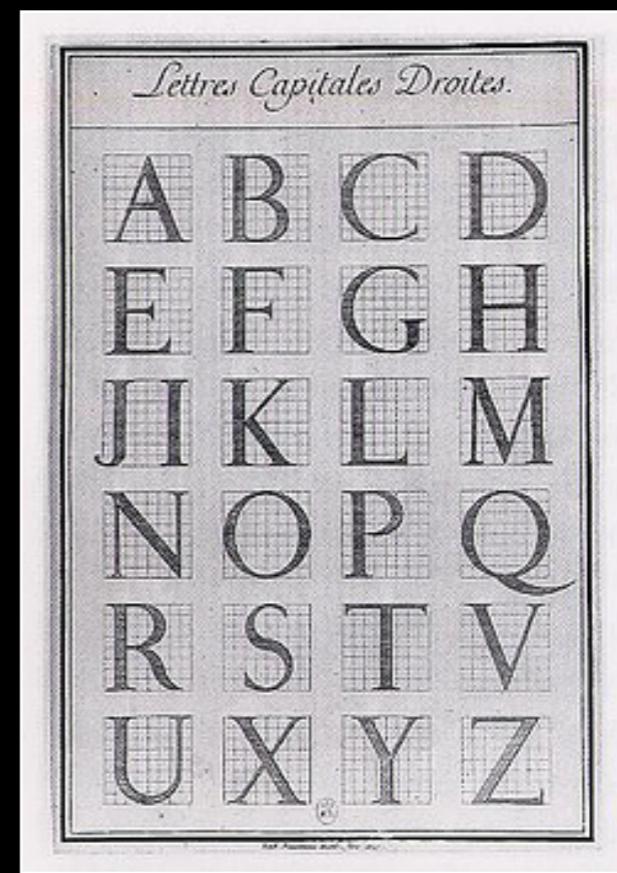


An Epoch of Typographic Genius

After the drought of graphic design originality in the seventeenth century, the 18th brought about remarkable innovation and creativity.

Typographically, at the request of French King Louis the XIV, a committee was formed to design a new standardized typeface based on scientific principles. **Romain du Roi**, a typeface based on a squares divided into grids, increased the contrast between thick and thin strokes, sharp horizontal serifs, and an even balance to each letterform.

<http://ilovetypography.com/2008/01/17/type-terms-transitional-type/>
ilovetypography.com



Century Old Style

Baskerville

An Epoch of Typographic Genius

Romain du Roi initiated a new category of type called **transitional** that was a break from the heavier bracketed serifs and relatively even stroke weights of the **old style** fonts.

<http://ilovetypography.com/old-style>

<http://ilovetypography.com/transitional>



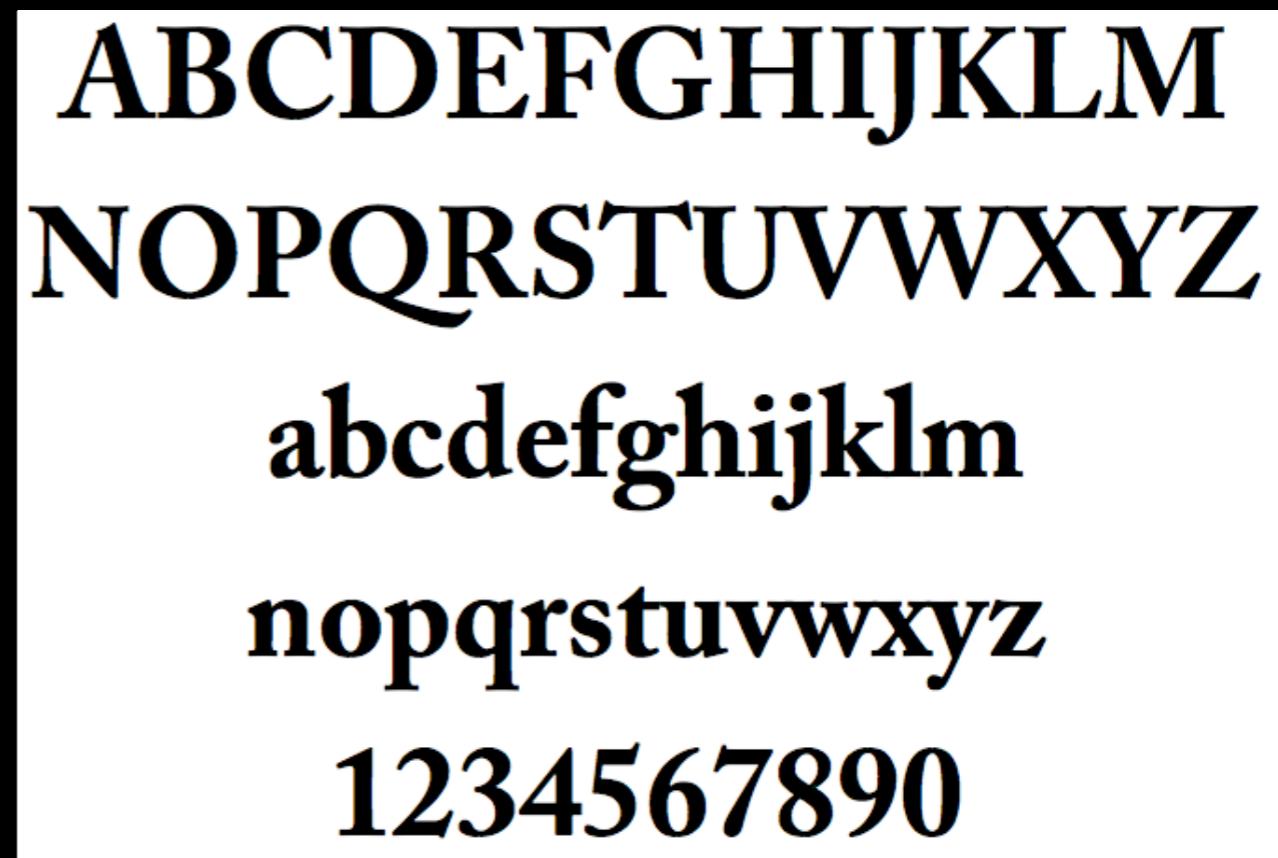
A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z &
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z

Century Old Style

A B C D E F G H I J K
O P Q R S T U V W Z
Å É Í Ó Ø a b c d e f g h

Baskerville

William Caslon of England, was a notable engraver, and type designer who's font, **Caslon Old Style** was an instant hit. While not very fashionable or innovative, his typeface had outstanding legibility and a sturdy texture that made it "friendly to the eye." Caslon increased the contrast between thick and thin strokes by making the former slightly heavier. The Caslon foundry continued under his heirs and was in operation until the 1960s.



Adobe Caslon Bold

John Baskerville, also from England, was involved in all facets of the bookmaking process. He designed, cast and set type, improved the printing press, conceived new papers, and designed and published the books he printed. His type designs, which are popular with designers today, represent the zenith of the transitional style bridging the gap between old style and modern type. He made a fortune manufacturing and selling jappanned ware—a heavily lacquered metal popular at the time.

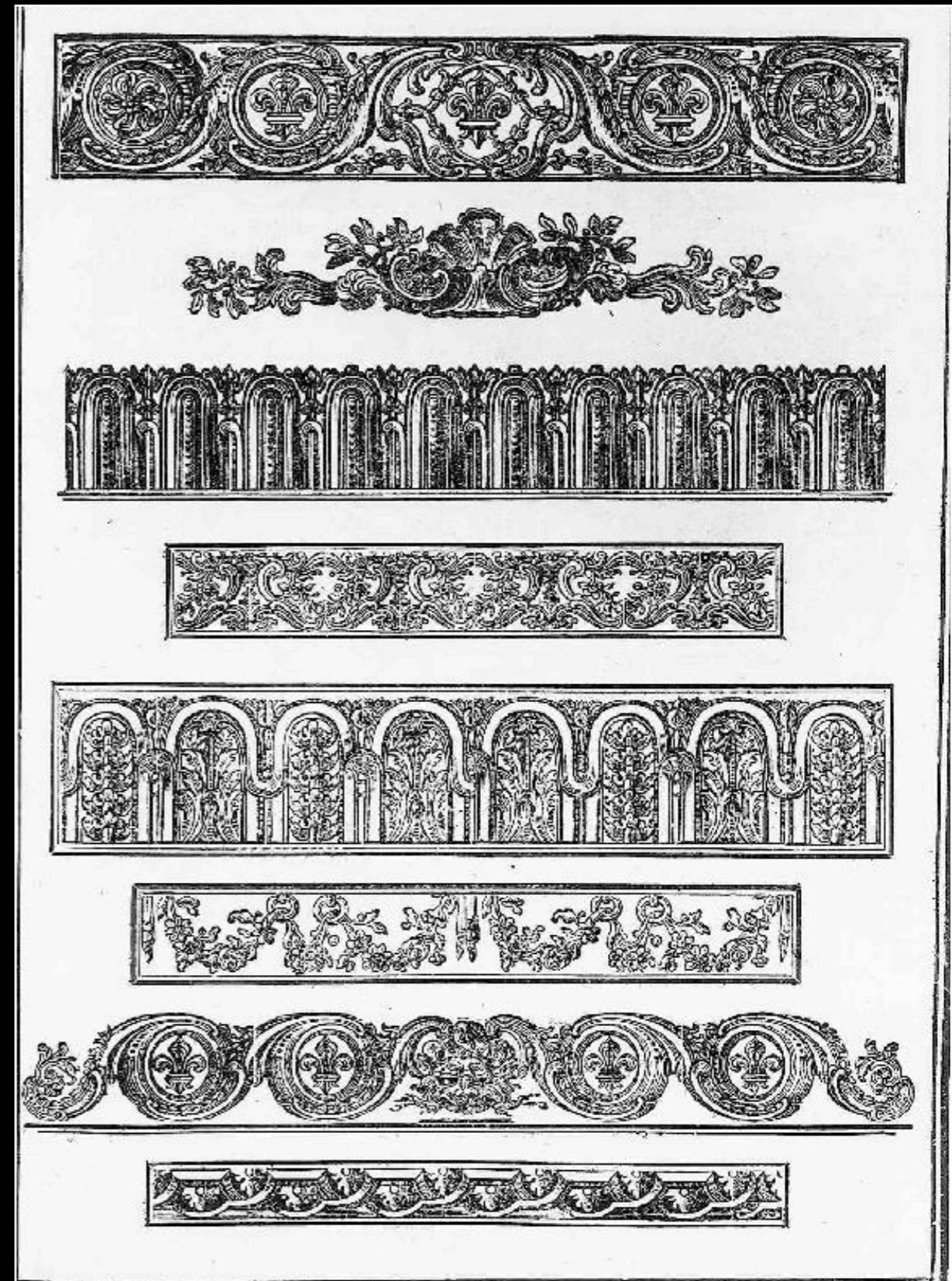


A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Baskerville



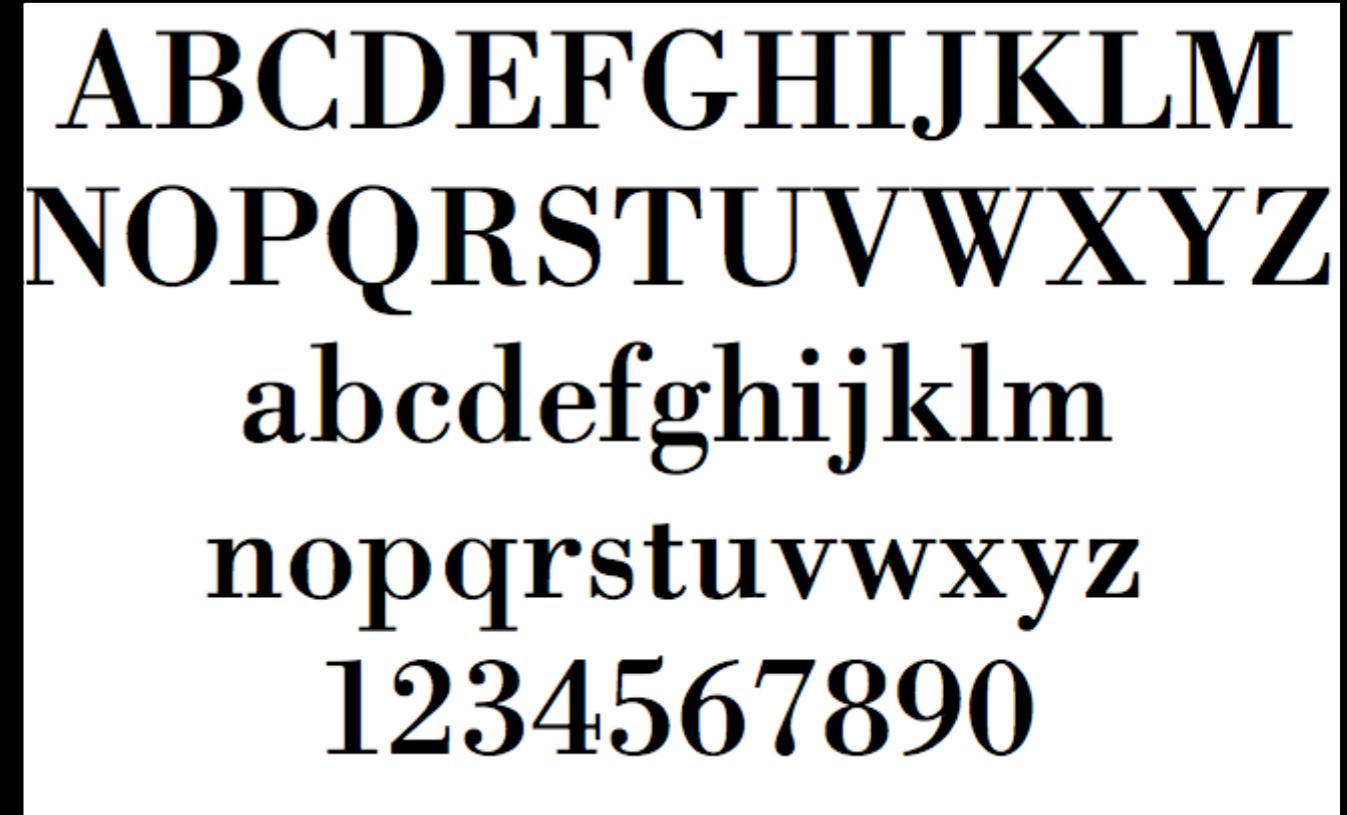
In addition to remarkable advances in typographic design, engraved borders and embellishments were designed to enhance the printed page. Louis René Luce created a large series of letterpress borders, ornaments, trophies and other elements designed with perfection.



In the latter part of the 1700s,

Giambattista Bodoni of Italy, became the official private printer to the court of Ferdinand, Duke of Parma. Despite an offer to move to Rome and design and print the classics for the Vatican, Ferdinand countered with an offer to expand his current facilities, provide greater independence and the freedom to print for other clients.

Bodoni is most noted for introducing a new category of roman type, referred to as **modern**.

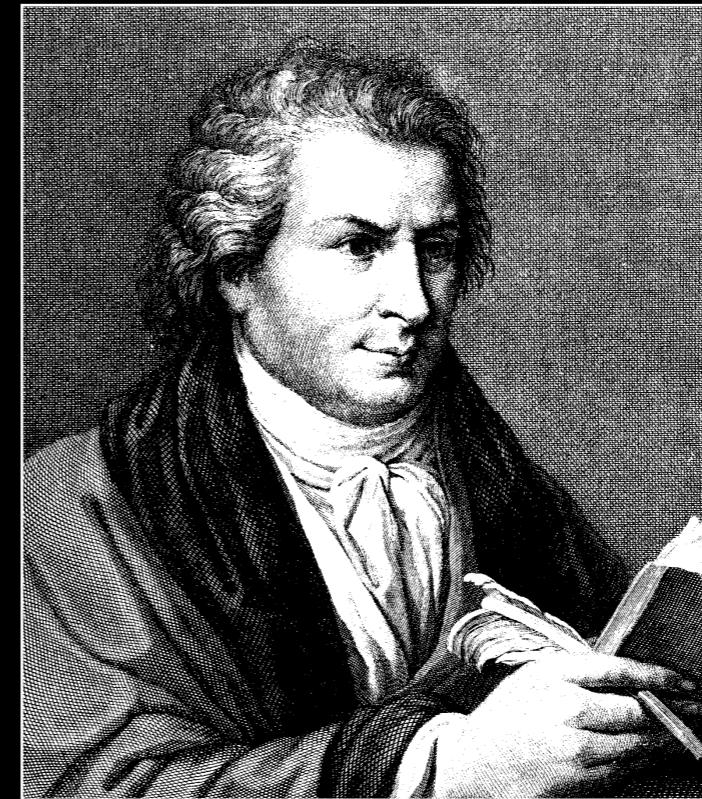


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A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Summary Terms

- Johann Gutenberg
- 42 Line Bible
- Incunabula
- Typographic styles
 - Old Style
 - Transitional
 - Modern
- Notable typographers
 - Nicholas Jensen
 - John Baskerville
 - John Caslon
 - Claude Garamond
 - Giambattista Bodoni
- Albrecht Dürer
- Copperplate engraving