The History of Type

Typography 1

Birth of Type & Print

It was not in Europe as you may have heard, but in **East Asia**:

The earliest printed book in existence is a copy is a copy of the Buddhist Text, *The Diamond Sutra*. It was printed in 868 A.D. in China

凡欲讀經先念淨口業真言遍

唵唎　摩訶唵唎　娑婆訶

奉請除災金剛　唵唵唎　奉請黃隨求金剛

奉請白淨水金剛　奉請定除厄金剛

Movable Type

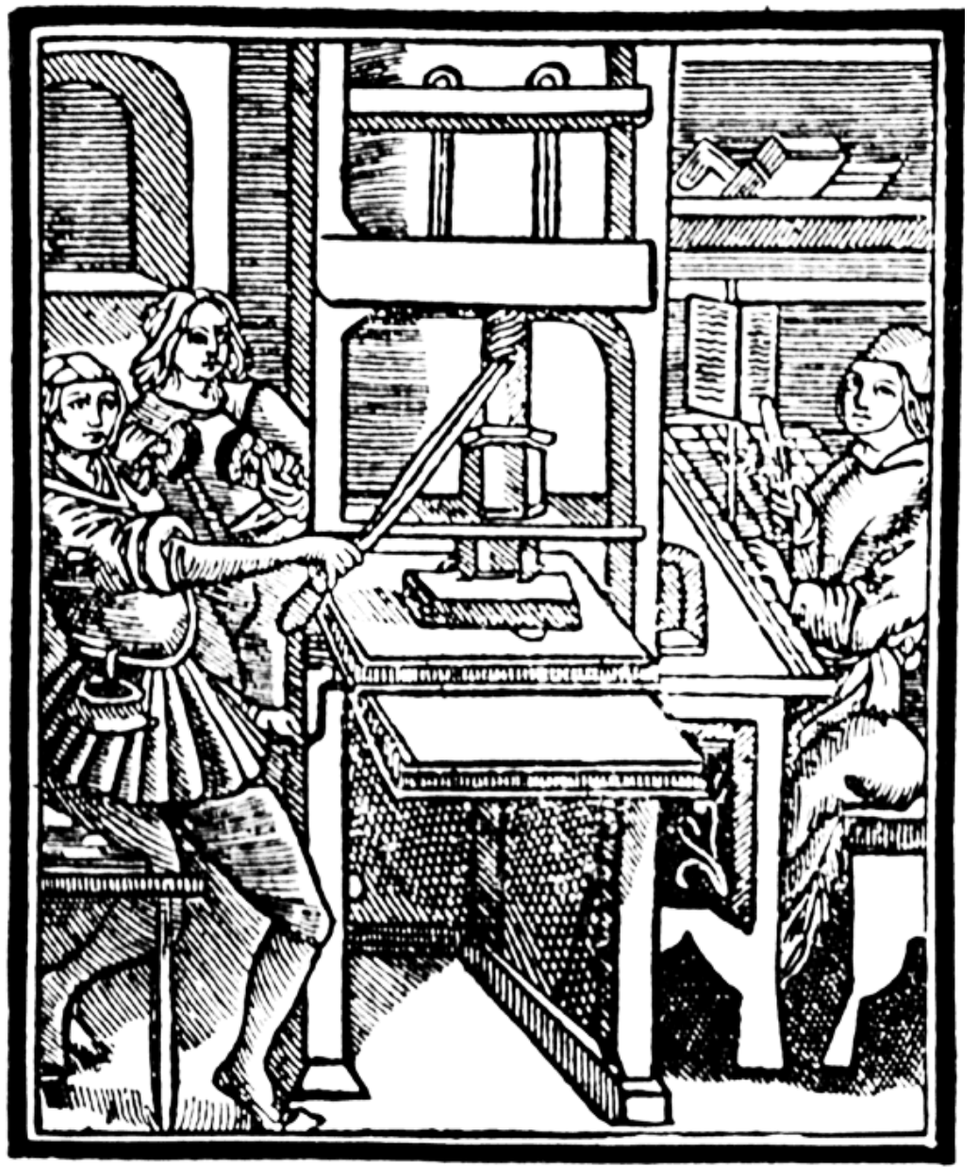
- created in the 1000's A.D. by a man named Bi Sheng
- he used wood and clay to create his reusable letters
- 1230's: books printed in Korea using metal movable type

Europe Catches On

1440's German goldsmith Johann Gutenberg made several improvements to the process that already existed in Europe

Gutenberg's Innovations

- He designed a printing press based on a vinter's press
- He came up with an easily workable alloy for the metal type, meaning that it was much easier to create the type



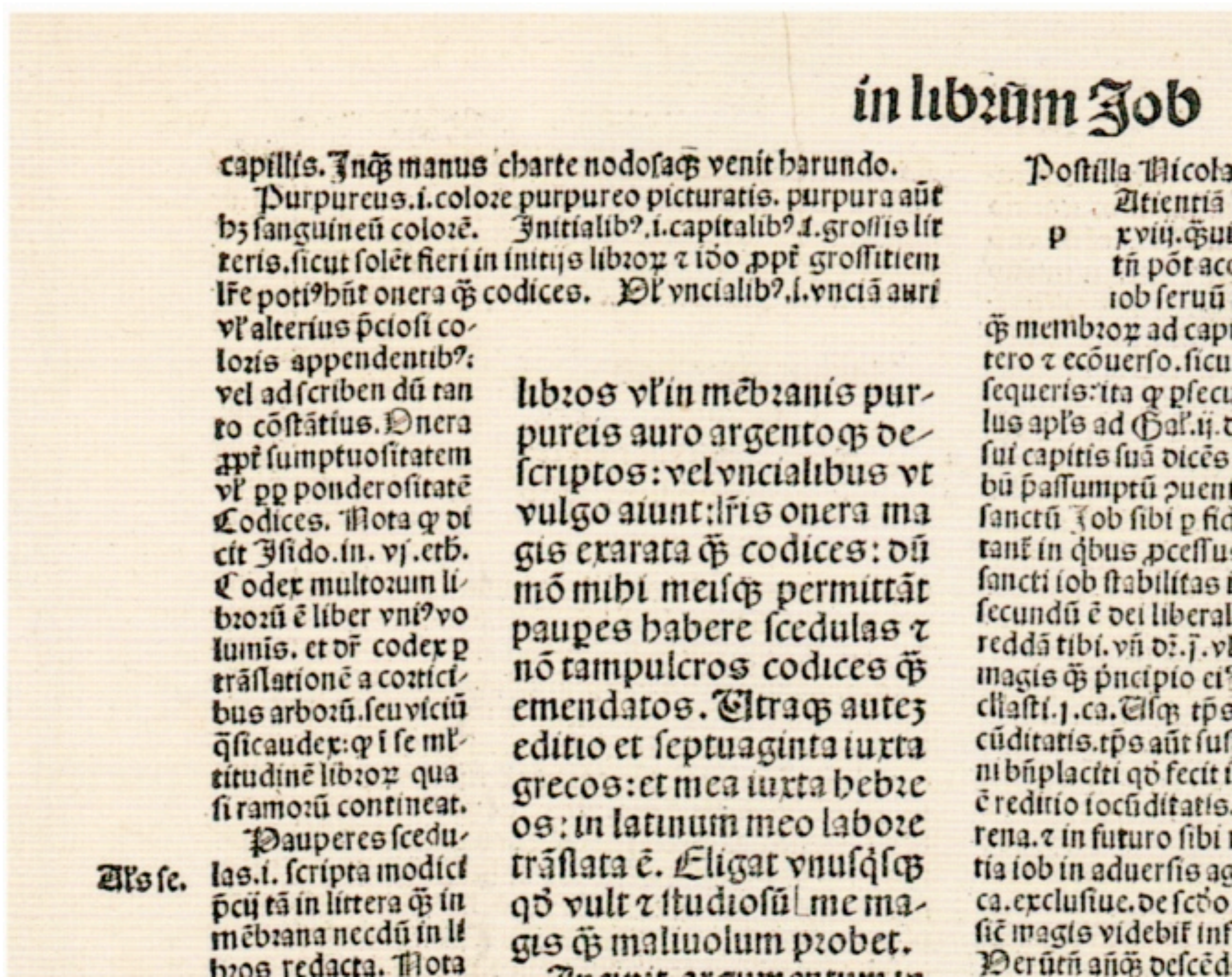
Each letter was cast individually as a piece of lead-based metal, then hand-arranged to form sentences & text, then inked and printed page by page.

Before Movable Type came to Europe

Scribes copied books by hands in monasteries and universities

First European Movable Type

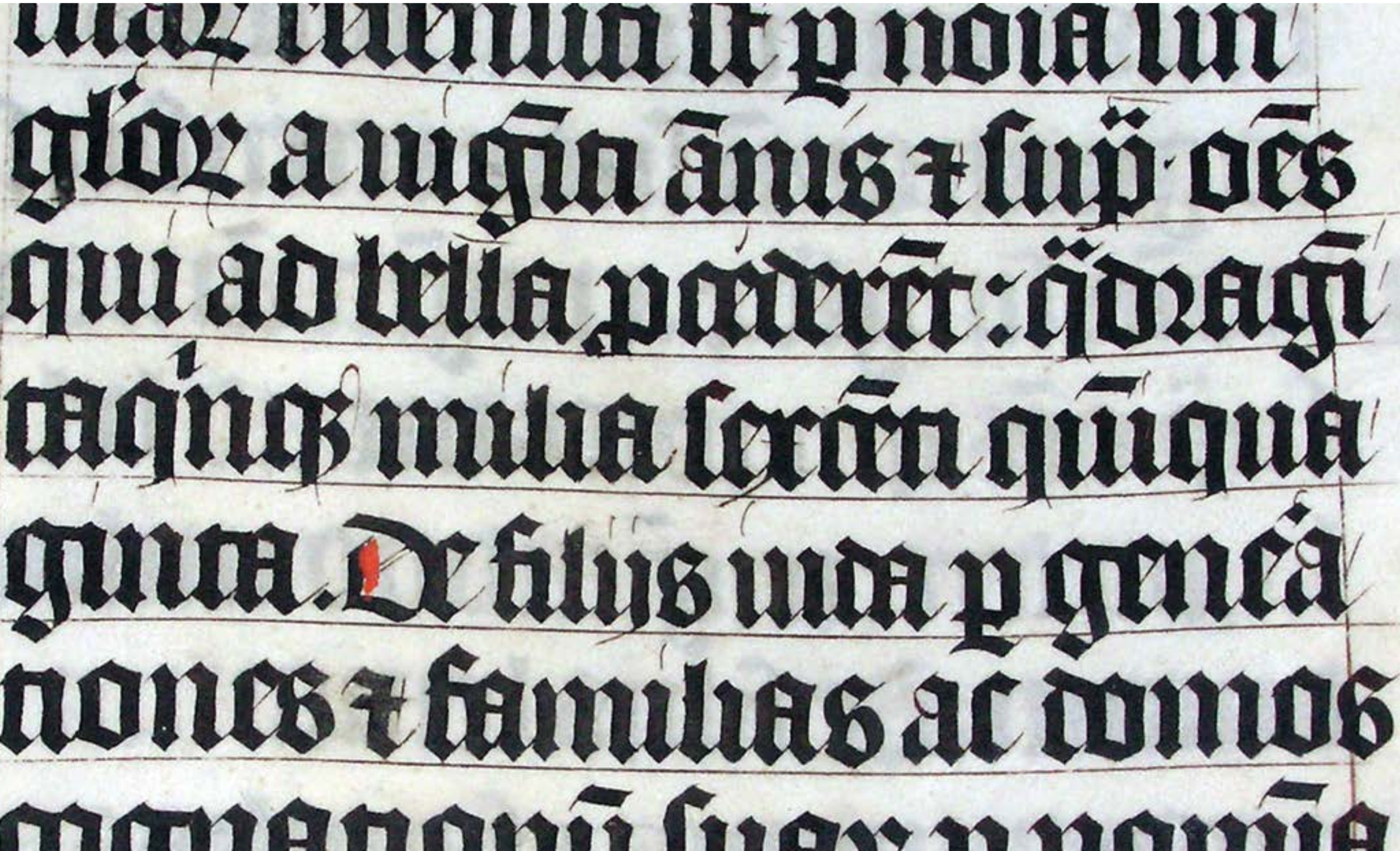
It was based on **Blackletter**, which was the type of calligraphic lettering popular in Germany


in librum Job

capillis. Inq; manus charte nodosaq; venit harundo.
Purpureus. i. colore purpureo picturatis. purpura aūt
hz sanguineū colorē. Initialib9. i. capitalib9. i. grossis lit
teris. sicut solēt fieri in initijs libroꝝ & ido ppt grossitiem
lr̄e poti9 hūt onera q̄ codices. Vl' vncialib9. i. vnciā auri

libros vl' in mēbranis pur-
pureis auro argentoq; de-
scriptos: vel vncialibus vt
vulgo aiunt: lr̄is onera ma
gis exarata q̄ codices: dū
mō mihi meisq; permittāt
paupes habere scedulas &
nō tampulcros codices q̄
emendatos. Utraq; autē
editio et septuaginta iuxta
grecos: et mea iuxta hebre
os: in latinum meo labore
trāslata ē. Eligat vnusq̄sq;
qd vult & studiosū me ma-
gis q̄ maliuolum probet.

Blackletter Type Up Close

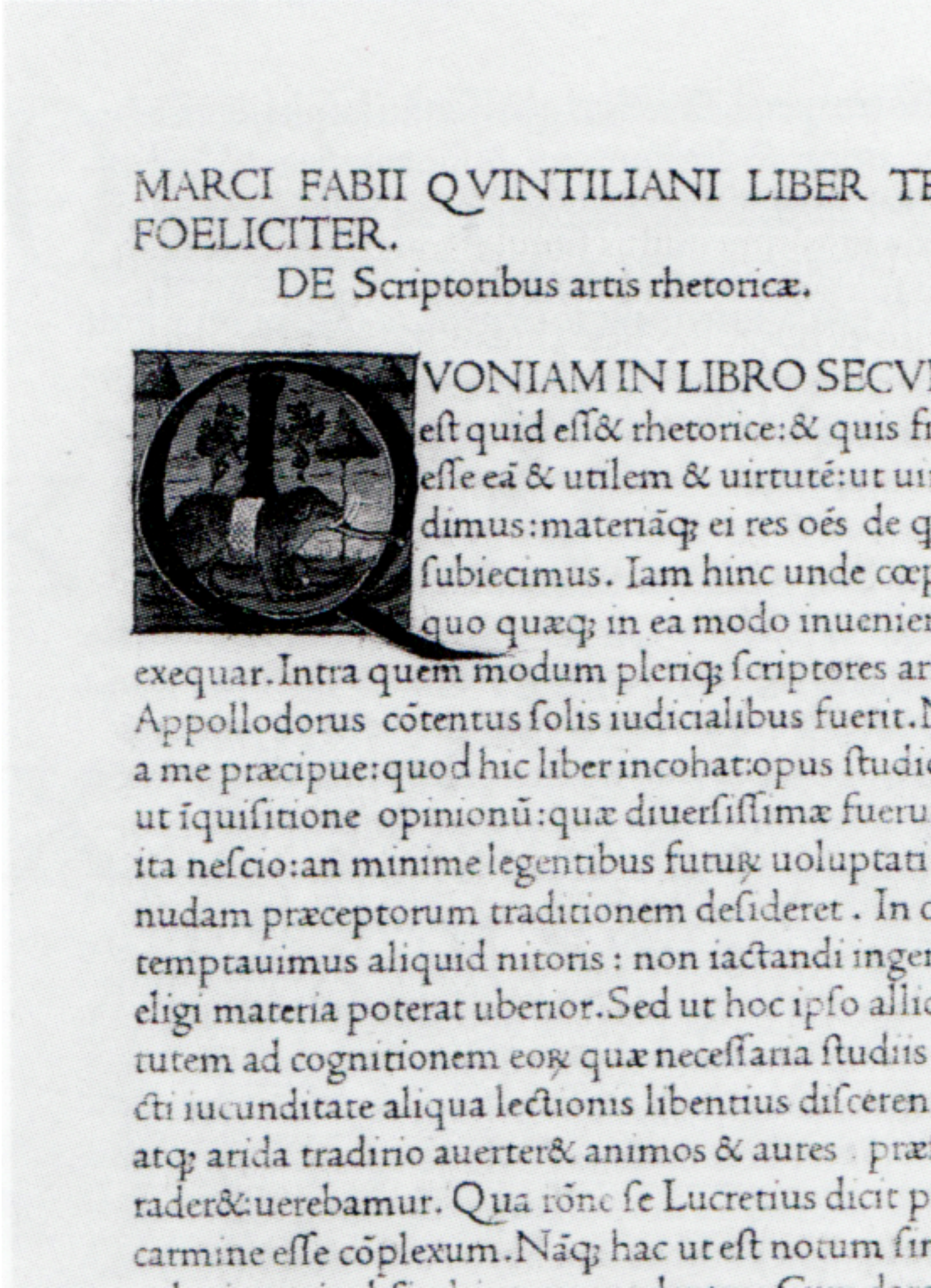


First Evolution

1460-70's Humanist typefaces appeared

These were based in the calligraphic style preferred in Italy.

Modern day equivalents: Jensen, Kennerly, Centaur, Stemple Schneider, Verona, Lutetia, Jersey, Lynton


MARCI FABII QVINTILIANI LIBER TE
FOELICITER.

DE Scriptonbus artis rhetoricæ.

QVONIAM IN LIBRO SECV
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ſubiecimus. Iam hinc unde cœp
quo quæq; in ea modo inuenien
exequar. Intra quem modum pleriq; ſcriptores ar
Appollodorus cõtentus ſolis iudicialibus fuerit.
a me præcipue:quod hic liber incohat:opus ſtudi
ut ſquiſitione opinionũ:quæ diuerſiſſimæ fueru
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nudam præceptorum traditionem deſideret. In
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eligi materia poterat uberior. Sed ut hoc ipſo alli
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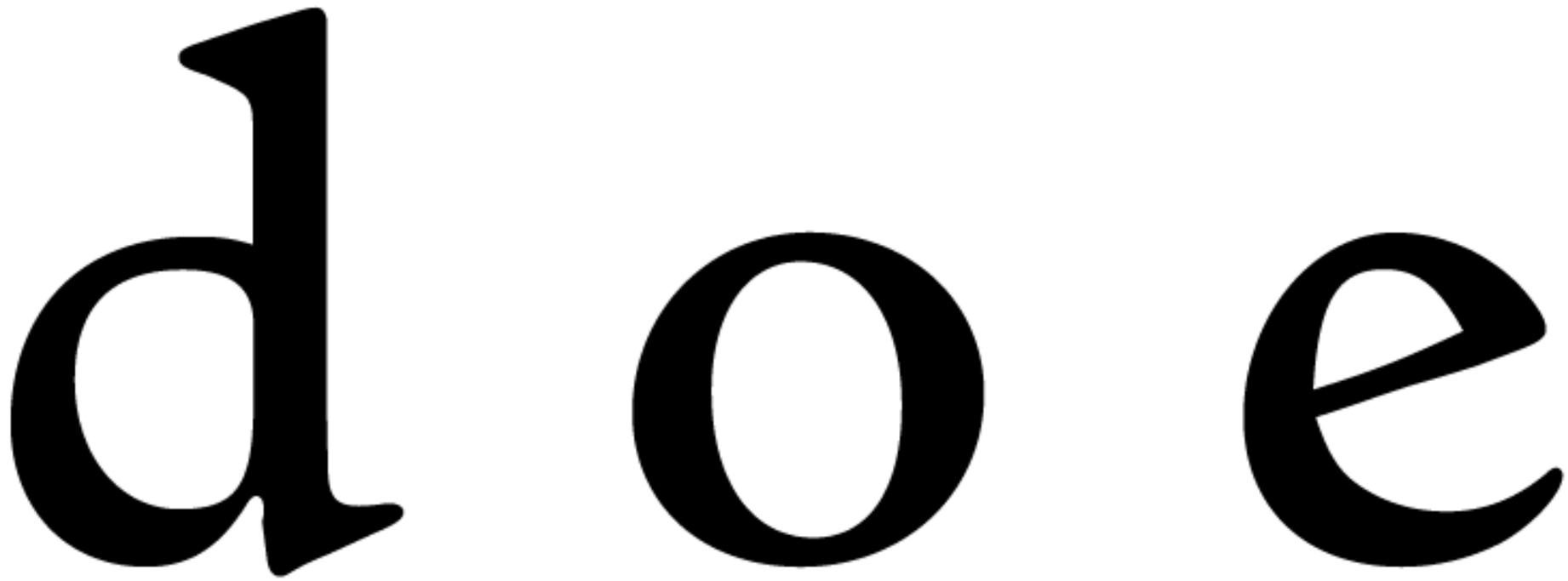
rader&:uerebamur. Qua rõne ſe Lucretius dicit p
carmine eſſe cõplexum. Nãq; hac ut eſt notum ſi

Humanist Type Up Close



Heavy serifs

slanted cross bar

What Movable Type Meant for Europe

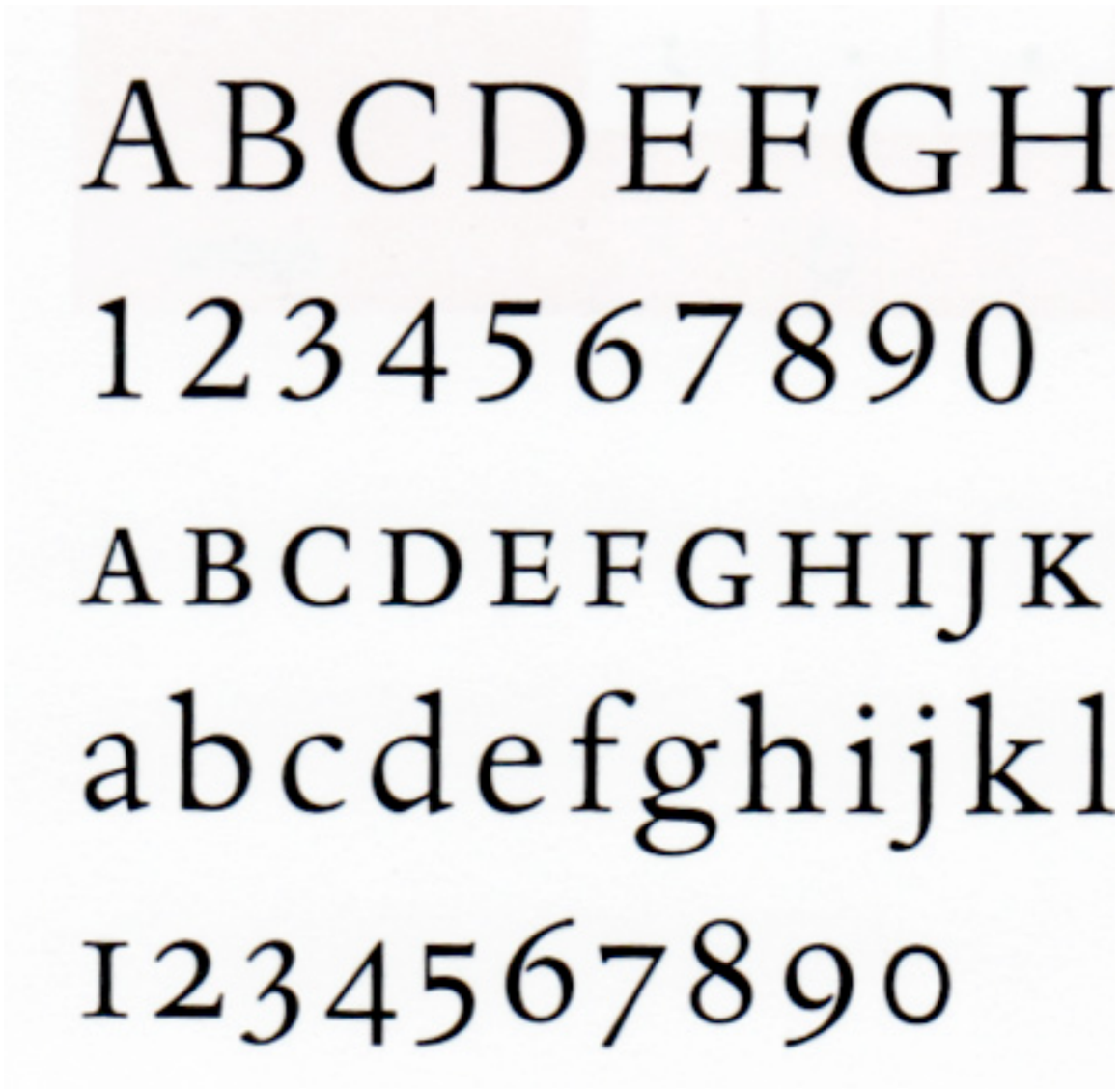
- The first real mass media movement.
- Allowed for the free spread of ideas like never before, such as Martin Luther's *99 Thesis* which helped start the Protestant Revolution

Old Style Typography

- Showed a marked departure from handwriting conventions
- Showed a greater refinement, due to a large extent on better punchcutting
- Extremely popular, these fonts held sway for 2 centuries
- Some modern equivalents: Bembo, Janson, Palatino, Sabon, Antiqua, Caslon, Stemple Garamond

Old Style Characteristics

- Wedge shaped serifs
- more upright serifs
- horizontal cross-bar on the lowercase e
- greater contrast between thick & thin strokes
- sharper appearance than the first wave of humanist fonts

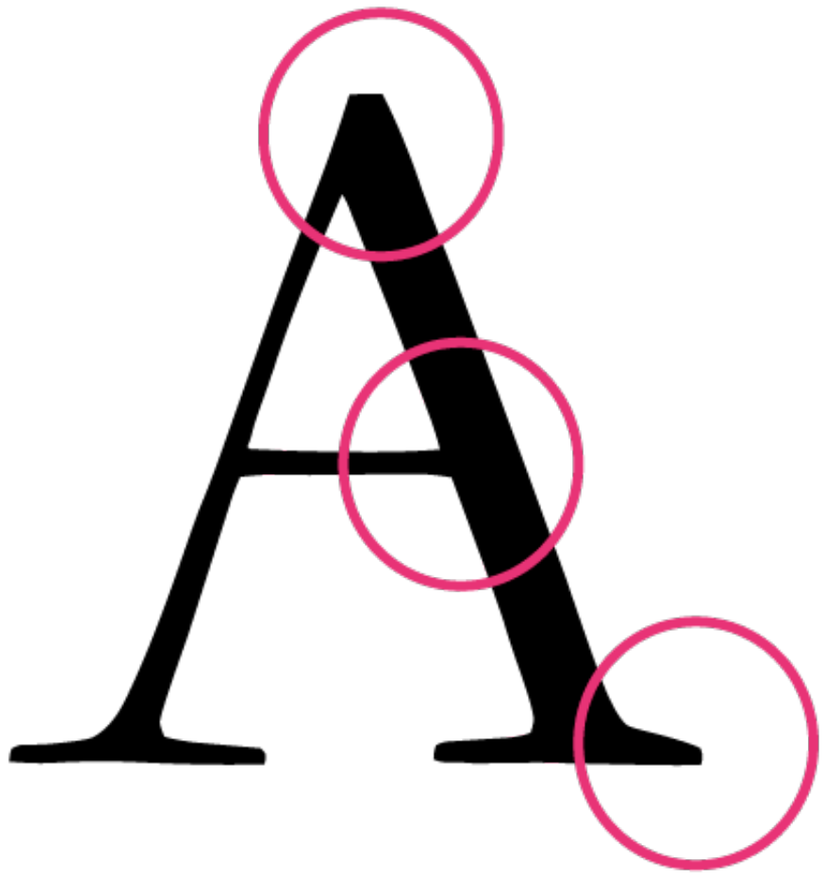


Old Style: Garamond

- designed in France in 1615 by Jean Jannon (Claude Garamond was given credit originally)

- designed in a time when inks and paper were coarse and type technology was still rather rough

- relatively thick strokes and heavily bracketed or curved serifs

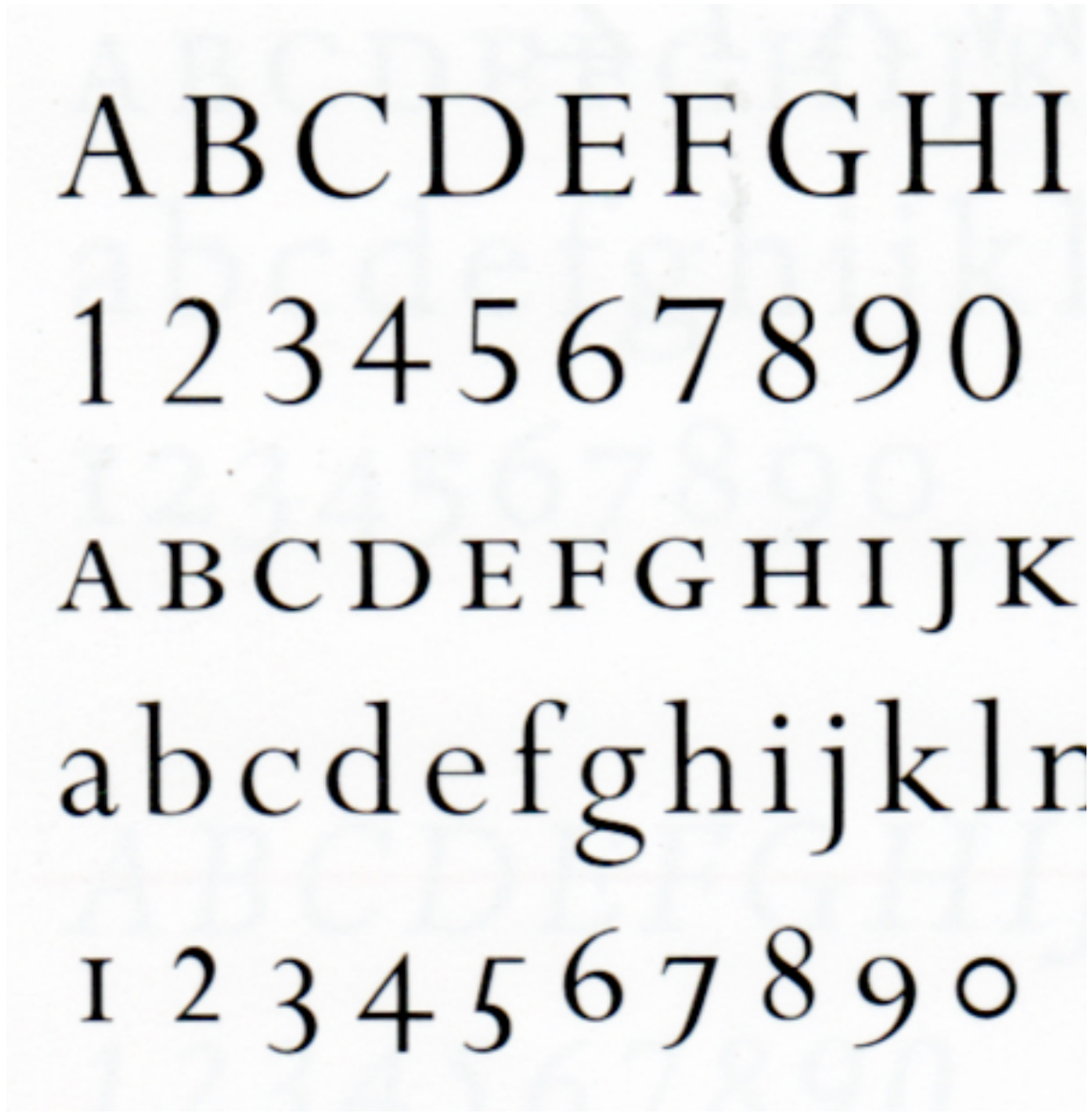


Transitional Typefaces

- 1690's time of the Enlightenment
- Calligraphic influence has all but disappeared
- Modern equivalents: Baskerville, Bookman, Cheltenham, Times Roman

Transitional Characteristics

- Less calligraphic flow
- vertical or almost vertical stress on bowls of lower case letters
- greater stress between thick & thin strokes
- Head serifs generally more horizontal

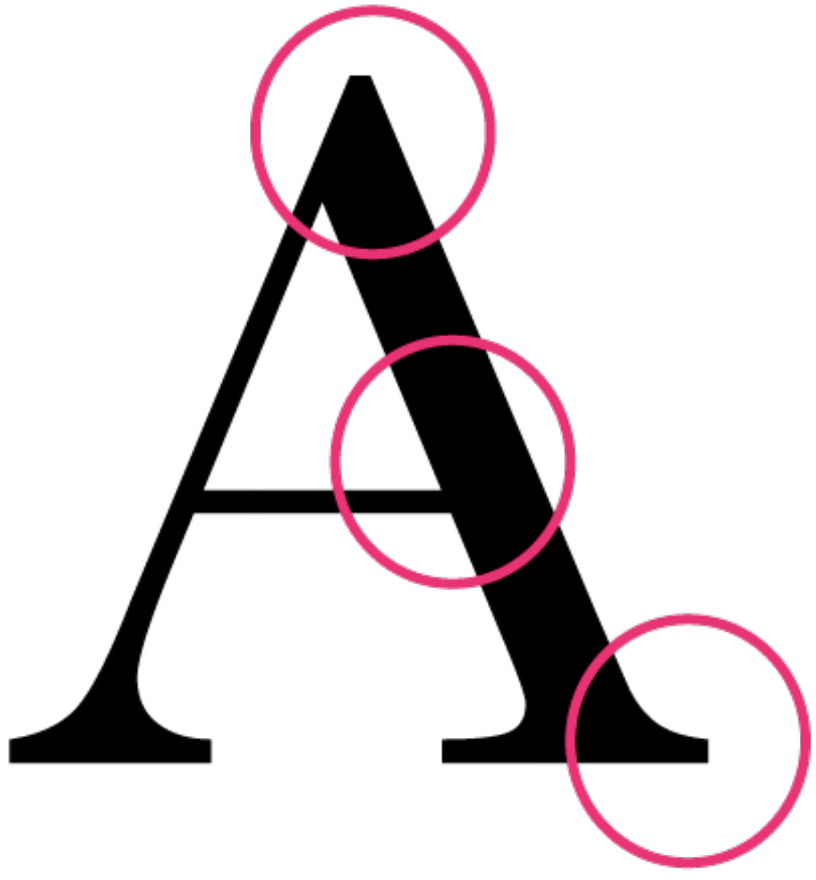


Transitional: Baskerville

- designed in England in 1757 by John Baskerville

- designed in a time when inks and paper were considerably smoother and type technology was refined

- increased contrast between thick and thin strokes and the serifs are more sculpted

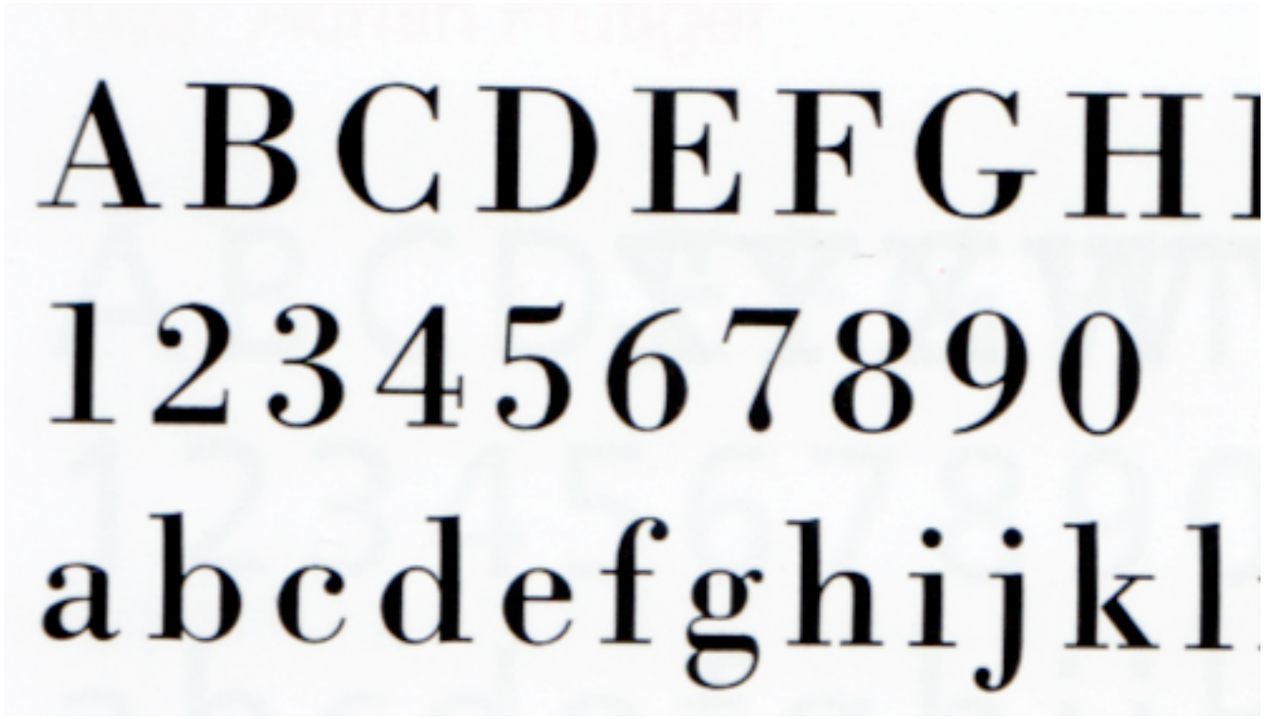


Modern Typefaces

- 1780s: influenced by technological advancements
- Paper, printing, and ink technologies were all much improved
- Bodoni

Modern Characteristics

- High and abrupt contrast between thick & thin strokes (just about as high as you can take it and still have legibility)
- unbracketed hairline serifs
- vertical axis
- horizontal stress
- small apertures



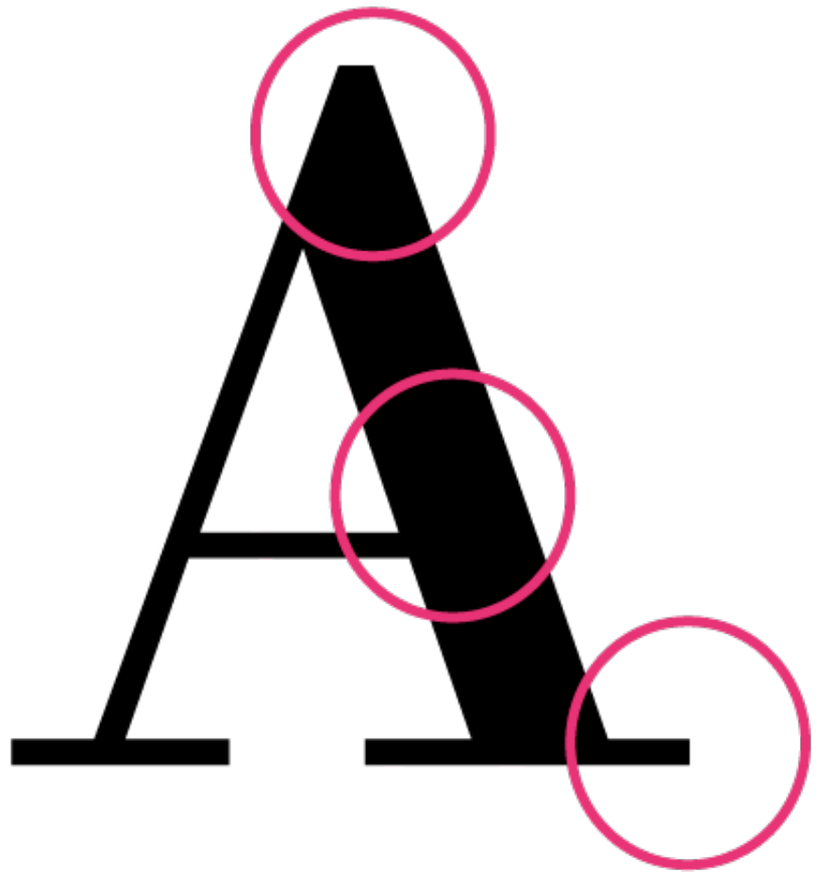
Modern: Bodoni

- designed in Italy in 1788 by Giambattista Bodoni

- designed in a time when printing technology was refined by leaps and bounds

- extreme contrast between stokes and hairlines

- brackets virtually eliminated



Egyptian or Slab-Serifs

- Early 1800's
- With the Industrial Revolution underway, printing was automated so more people were designing type
- The **Display Font** was born: really suited for advertising, which was experiencing its first boom
- Punchcutting also automated at this time

HAARLEM

N° 5168. Op 11 Augustijn.

ITALIE

N° 5031. Op 102 Punten.

GRAFT

Egyptian or Slab-Serifs

- Block-like, rectangular serifs, often the same thickness as the body strokes
- Modern-day equivalents: Clarendon, Archer, Officina, Century
- Also the age of the Fat Faces: basically obese, exaggerated versions of the Modern fonts

MOONLIGHT

EXCURSION

On the Steamer

BELLE!

To Osbrook and Watch Hill,

On Saturday Evening, July 17th,

Leaving Wharf at 7½ o'clock. Returning to Westerly at 10½ o'clock. Kenneth will be at Osbrook.

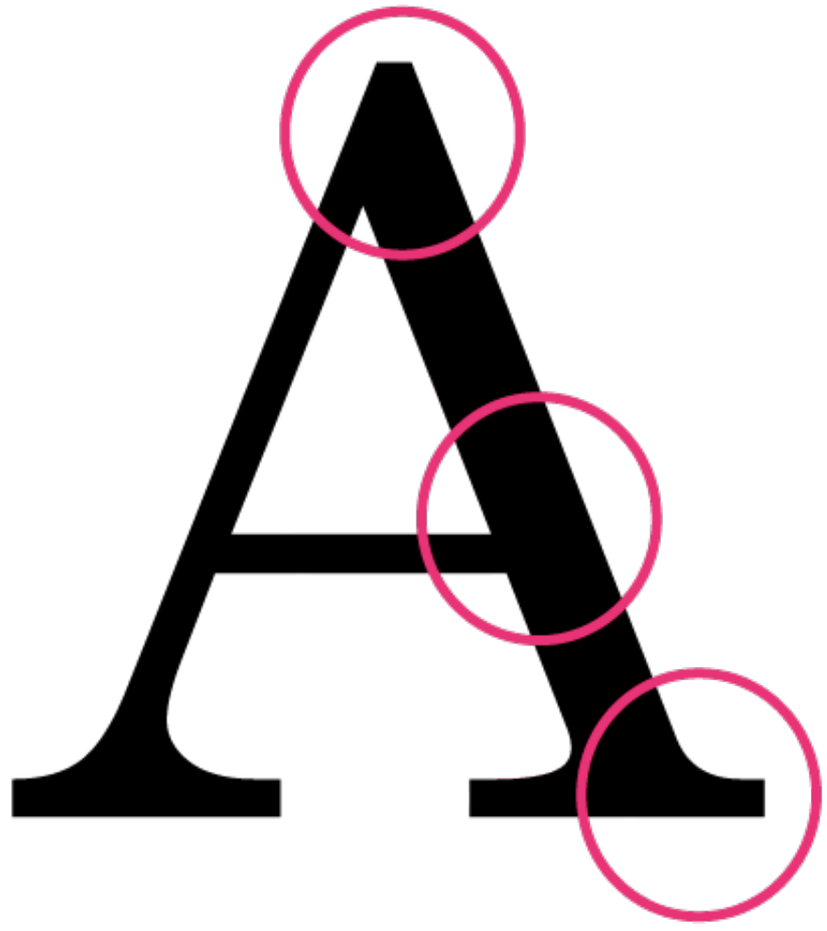
Egyptian or Slab Serif: Century Expanded

- designed in the United States in 1894 by Linn Boyd Benton

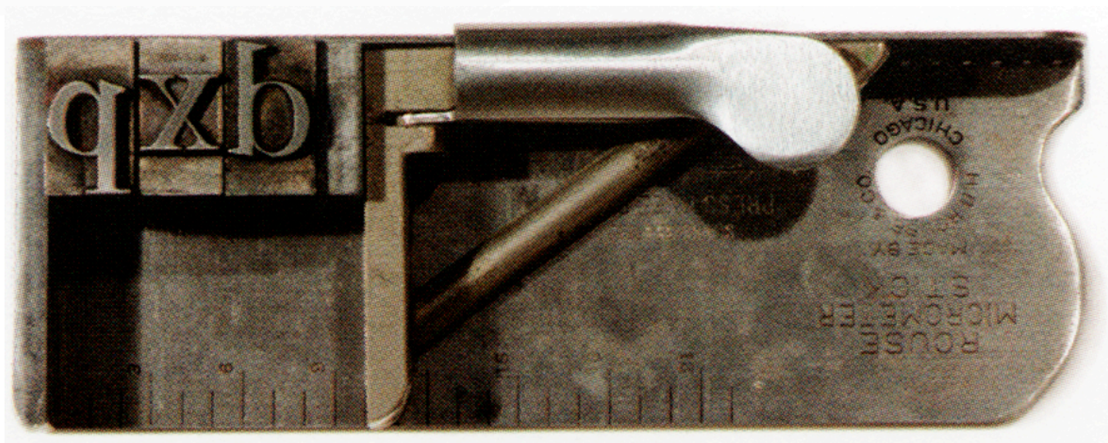
- type design, freed from technical constraints, became eclectic

- characterized by heavy serifs

- very little contrast between thin and thick strokes

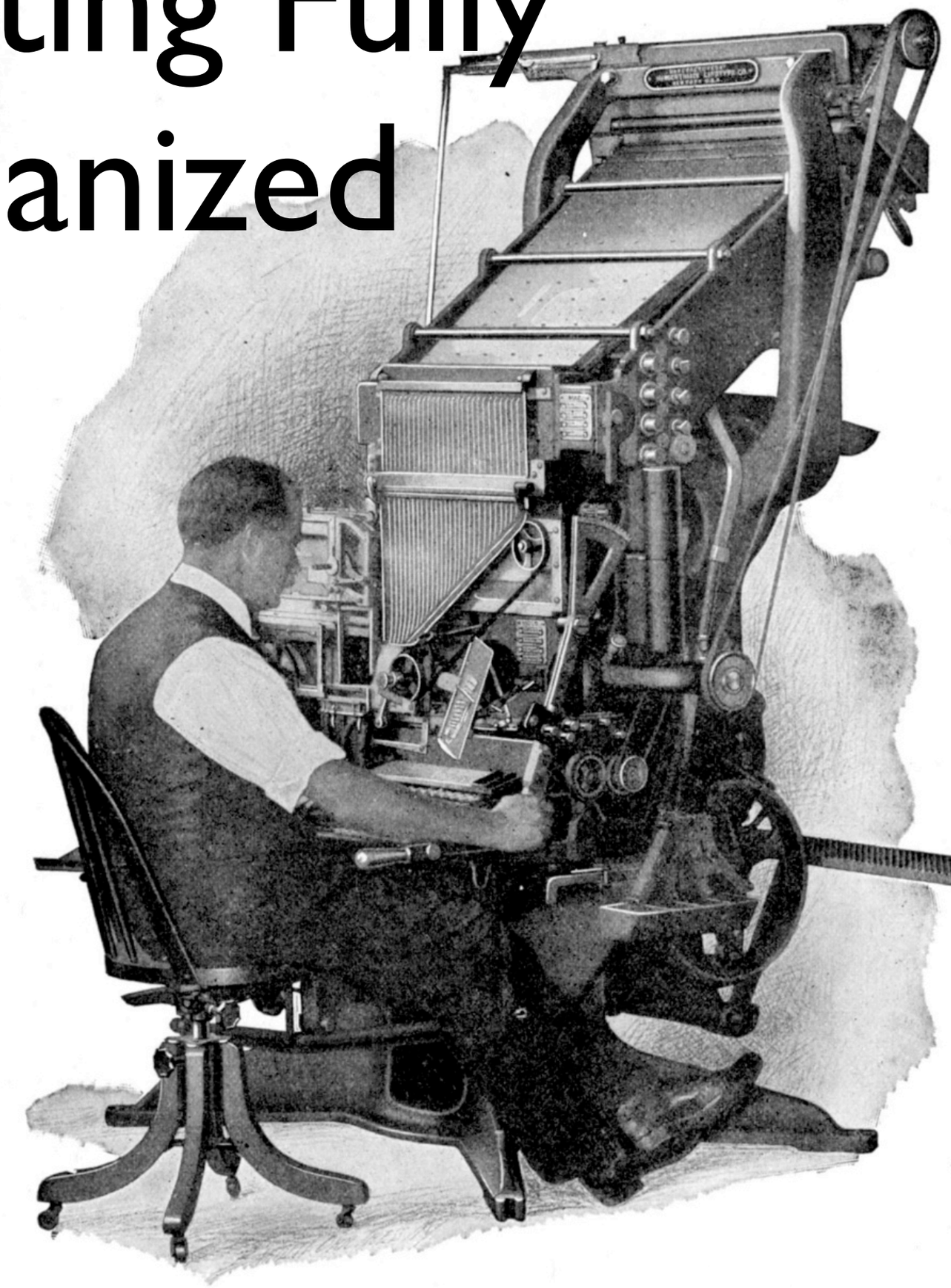



Form and Communication
Typographic Design


qxb
CHICAGO
U.S.A.

Typesetting Fully Mechanized

1880s: The linotype Machine was invented: completely mechanized typesetting. It used a keyboard device to construct lines of cast type which were then pressed into a mold & then printed. MUCH faster than handsetting



San Serifs

- Late 19th-20th Century
- Univers, Franklin Gothic, Futura, Frutiger, Helvetica
- Started out as display faces in the early 1800's

San Serif Characteristics

No Serifs

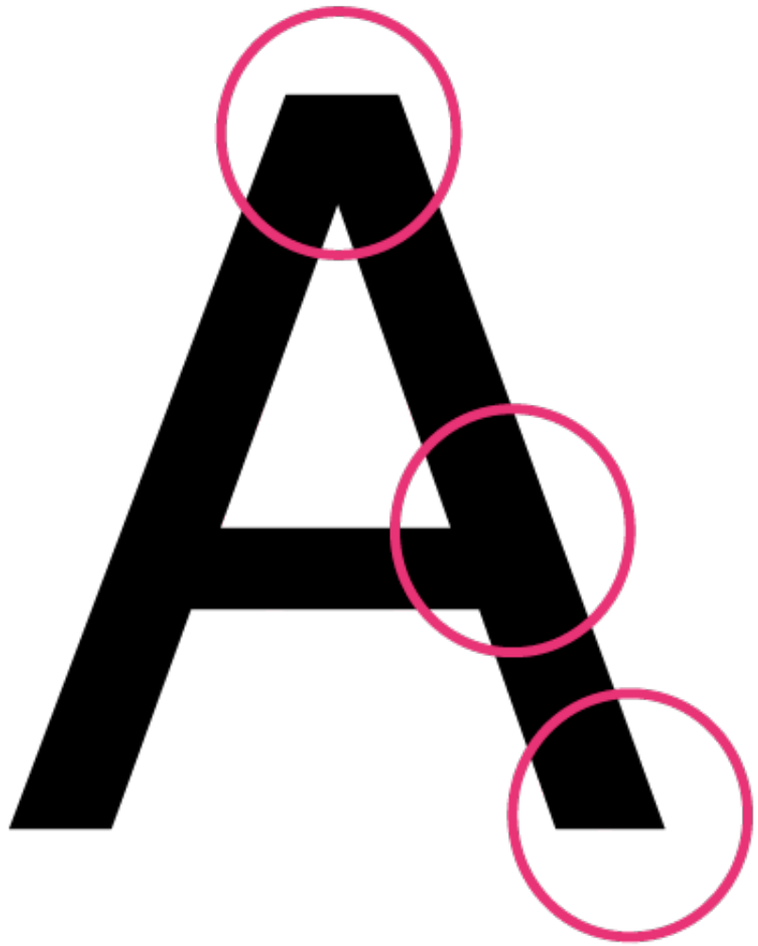
Low Contrast

Popularized by the Bauhaus and other design movements in the early 20th Century

Sans Serif: Helvetica

- designed in Switzerland in 1957 by Max Miedinger and Eduard Hoffman

- sans serif fonts were usually considered too hard to read as text, but the Swiss refined this face until it became quite balanced and legible



Type Technological Innovations

- Mechanized typesetting gives way to phototypesetting in the 1940s-50s
- Today: most if not all typesetting done by computer
- The use of high-resolution laser printers make the use of actual presses less and less a necessity

Metal type on newsprint

Metal type on coated paper

Phototype

Digital-photo type

ABCDEFGHIJK

ABCDEFGMOL

EXCESSIVE?

MetaMeta**MetaMeta**