

## Vlad Butucariu Chapters 7,8 Modern typography.

### 7. Cultures of printing: Germany

The private press movement in Britain and the USA may have acted as a stimulus for the circles in Germany, but indigenous elements played their part too. Over the earlier part of the twentieth century, rapid industrialization and economic and political developments gave German typography a particular character. Although in USA and Britain art nouveau had a marginal nature, in Germany and other German language countries it enjoyed a significant life and had acquired the label "Jugendstil".

The main passage out of Jugendstil was through a simpler, less decorated approach that would meet the requirements of the new age and especially those demands posed by industrial production. The more significant way out of the stylistic cul de sac of Jugendstil was found by those who accepted the Arts and Crafts impulse from Britain and transformed it in an application to the domain of mass production. This approach was given concrete embodiment in the Deutscher Werkbund, the association of designers and manufacturers that was founded in Munich in 1907. Among the founding members were the publisher Eugen Diederichs and the architect Peter Behrens, both of whom contributed to the revival of German Typography. Werkbund values were centered on the idea of quality. The organization stood for the application of the highest craft standards to industrial production. The virtues it prized were those of good workmanship, good materials, solidity.

Between 1902 and 1914 Peter Behrens designed four typefaces for the Klingspor typefoundry at Offenbach, which in sequence seem to constitute a series of steps away from the phase of Jugendstil, in which he participated fully - towards some classical standard. He took the technical principle of gothic script and implemented it in the new fonts. Comparing Behrens with the Eckmann Schrift you can see the difference in styles. One is closer to blackletters and the other to the Art Nouveau style.

Having no real tradition of roman letterforms the situation in Germany was a more open one comparing with the English language countries. German calligraphy was developed above all by a number of practitioners who did not write manuals but spread the art through personal teaching, and through the example of their work.

### 8. Cultures of printing: the Low Countries

A dominant figure in Belgium was Henry van der Velde. His career provides a link between several of the central preceding phenomena of modernist design: Art Nouveau, Jugendstil and Werkbund. In 1925 after being in Switzerland and Germany he returned to Belgium to set up the Institut Supérieur des Arts Décoratifs, on the model of reformed art school he directed at Weimar.

The Dutch revival of printing was stronger and based more broadly in the trade than that of Belgium. In book production Kelmscott typography provided the point of departure for what would become Dutch new traditionalist typography. The leading figure here was S. H. de Roos, who followed the path from drawing and illustration into text typography. The first book designed by him was an edition of essays by William Morris (1903) though its appearance showed Art Nouveau rather than Kelmscott allegiances. The first font he was responsible for was the Hollandse Medieval (1912): it became the standard roman typeface of quality for Dutch printing.

Another important figure is Jan van Krimpen, whose work lay in the attempt to resolve the split between industrial and private production. He had become noticed as the designer of lettering on a stamp which Enschede had printed. The success of this typeface - Lutetia, issued in 1925 - led to the lifelong association between Enschede and Zonen typefounders and Van Krimpen. The typefaces for Enschede were on a level of sophistication some way above those of De Roos, though both worked on variations within the same genre. Three of the four principal typefaces from this collaboration (Lutetia, Romulus, Spectrum) were adapted for the Monotype machine.

The other Dutch tradition, of modernism, existed largely outside book typography, and was developed rather by people from architecture and industrial design. Though the two approaches might occasionally coexist, there was no contact or exchange between them.