

# New Typography in Scandinavia: Domesticating theory and practice amongst the graphic trades, 1927–43

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements of the Royal College of Art  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Royal College of Art / Victoria and Albert Museum  
22 December 2017

79,976 words

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# Abstract

This work provides the first extended account of New Typography's path in Scandinavian countries, a topic which has yet to receive attention beyond a handful of articles and book chapters. Based on an exhaustive study of graphic trade journals published in Denmark, Norway and Sweden between the years of 1927 and 1943, it charts debate on New Typography and discusses the journals' changing designs. Additional visual material has been sourced from a number of Scandinavian archives. In discussing the spread of New Typography's theory and aesthetic from elsewhere in Europe, and then primarily from Germany, the thesis uses the concepts of domestication and networks, rather than those of diffusion or influence and centre-periphery.

Dealing with a period in which the graphic designer had yet to appear as a professional figure, New Typography's impact on a range of professional groups — all of which held responsibility for the design of graphic materials — is considered. Particular attention is paid to how the printing trade took up New Typography in its educational efforts to 'heighten the trade'. However, the differing cultural, organisational and technological factors informing not only the practice of printers, but also that of architects, avant-garde artists, commercial artists, intellectuals and lay-out men, is detailed in order to understand how and why New Typography achieved different levels of penetration amongst these groups. Rather than facilitating an exchange of ideas across professional boundaries, the Scandinavian trade journals serving these various practitioner types formed parts of discreet

international networks, more likely to report on developments within their particular trade or profession abroad, than on those occurring in related trades or professions at home.

The last two chapters deal with how New Typography related to two major cultural and political forces in 1930s Scandinavia: Functionalism and Social Democracy. Commonly perceived as closely related, not only to one another, but to Scandinavian architecture and design of the period, the discussion of these two forces is used to relate typography to the wider design field. It will be argued that whilst initially separate strands, New Typography and Functionalism were quickly conflated, shifting the focus of debate from aesthetic matters to those of function. Taken up as a domestication strategy, this shift paradoxically allowed traditionalist views of typography to be put forward as more progressive than the teachings of Tschichold or the practices of the avant-garde.

The use of photomontage was limited in a commercial context. This particular aspect of New Typography was thereby able to retain its radical political associations, and found prominent use in the discreet zones formed by the publications of Clartéist publishing house Mondes Forlag, publications associated with Functionalist architects and the graphic materials created for the Social Democratic parties' youth and women's groups. A clear organisational commitment to both Functionalism and New Typography was made by the Swedish cooperative society, Kooperativa Förbundet. It not only made pioneering use of Functionalism in architecture, but established a house style based on New Typography for its 'konsum' stores.

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# Acknowledgements

Over the five years spent working on this doctoral thesis I have been fortunate to receive the input, help and support of a number of individuals without whom its completion would not have been possible. First, I would like to thank my supervisors Jane Pavitt, Rick Poynor and Jeremy Aynsley. They have provided guidance through what was for me unknown territory, all the time challenging and encouraging me in equal measure. I would also like to thank my external examiners Kjetil Fallan and Linda King for suggesting ways in which to improve my thesis. Gratitude should also be expressed to Hamish Muir and Paul McNeil, my former tutors at the London College of Communication, for writing nurturing my interest in graphic design and writing the references needed to get on to the PhD in the first place.

I would like to acknowledge the generous and crucial support received in the form of grants and bursaries from the following institutions and organisations: Birgit och Gad Rausings Stiftelse för Humanistisk Forskning, Grafill, Letterstedska Föreningen, The Photographic History Research Centre (De Montfort University), The Sir Richard Stapely Educational Trust, and the Royal College of Art.

I am grateful to the staff and students at the RCA for their comments and questions during work-in-progress presentations, interim examinations and meetings of the Humanities Research Forum. Thanks also goes to all those willing to share their time

and knowledge by discussing my project with me, commenting on conference papers, helping me access materials, or providing other kinds of assistance: Arndis S. Árnadóttir, Morten Biehl, Marie-Louise Bowallius, Carina Broman, Line Hjort Christensen, Steen Ejlers, Torbjørn Eng, Robin Fuller, Magdalena Gram, Denise Hagströmer, Birgitte Haj, Jeppe Lycke Hansen, Theo Honohan, Jan Jönsson, Jesper Jørgensen, Steffen Knak-Nielsen, Håkan Lindström, Irene Amanti Lund, Ole Lund, Robert Lzicar, Victor Margolin, Niall McCormack, Margaret Rynning, Aslak Gurholt, Thale Sørliie and Målfrid Voll.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for their support, particularly my partner Luanne and my son Julian. It would not have been possible without you.

**Author's declaration**

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trond Klevgaard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Trond Klevgaard, 22 December 2017

**Note on translation and transcription**

Unless otherwise stated, all the translations used in this thesis are my own. I have executed them in the faithful tradition as far as possible. In each case the quote is also reproduced in its original (source) language in the corresponding footnote.

Efforts have been made to preserve the formatting of the texts quoted, whether this be the use of upper or lower case letters, or italic or bold for emphasis. In the rare cases where I have chosen to emphasize part of a quote, it has been clearly stated that I have done so.





# Introduction

This is the first extended account of New Typography in Scandinavia. Its narrative of New Typography differs to that commonly proposed in graphic design histories, not only in terms of geographical focus, but in terms of the kind of work and practitioner featured. Based on an exhaustive study of trade journals published by the graphic and advertising trades in Denmark, Norway and Sweden during the 1920s, 30s and 40s, it concerns itself with how and why practitioners in these trades, and then particularly master printers and compositors, chose to engage with this direction in typography. In writing the thesis, I have paid close attention to issues surrounding professional context, and have considered the involvement of master printers and compositors in relation to other types of practitioner involved in print design: avant-garde artists, commercial artists, lay-out men, architects, political activists and intellectuals. By adopting this approach, I propose expanding conventional understanding of what New Typography was in order to discuss its relevance to a wider community of people.

In thinking about how the graphic trades modified the ‘wild’ New Typography of the avant-garde in order to use it in their commercial contexts I have made use of domestication. This is a concept conceived in media and technology studies as an alternative to diffusion,<sup>1</sup> and which previously has been used

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1 Roger Silverstone et al. ‘Information and Communication Technologies and the

in the design histories of Kjetil Fallan and Julia Meer.<sup>2</sup> Titled *New Typography in Scandinavia*, the thesis is not framed using the established parameter of the nation,<sup>3</sup> nor indeed in terms of the relationship between the national category and the local, regional and global.<sup>4</sup> Rather, it is framed by language and culture. The thesis considers the journals surveyed to comprise Scandinavian subsets of larger international networks. These allowed ideas and styles to be exchanged across the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish borders, albeit within the confines of each trade or profession's professional culture. It will be argued that this exchange created a set of discreet Scandinavian communities of knowledge, through which members of each different trade or profession was presented with opinion on New Typography coloured by that trade or profession's culture.

This thesis is a response to calls made by design historians for more globally inclusive histories. It agrees with Sarah Teasley, Giorgio Riello and Glenn Adamson, who write:

to be concerned with the global is in some ways to think independently of geography... it demands that all design be understood as implicated in a network of mutually relevant, geographically expansive connections.<sup>5</sup>

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Moral of the Household'. In *Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces*, eds. Roger Silverstone and Eric Hirsch. (London and New York: Routledge, 1992). See the section **Writing from the periphery**, later in this chapter, for further detail on this concept and its history.

- 2 Kjetil Fallan. 'Modern Transformed. The Domestication of Industrial Design Culture in Norway, ca. 1940–1970'. (PhD thesis, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2007); Julia Meer. *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie: Die Rezeption Der Avantgarde in Der Fachwelt Der 1920er Jahre*. (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2015).
- 3 Defended in: Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei, eds. *Designing Worlds: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization*. (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016).
- 4 The categories put forward in the following much cited perspective: Anna Calvera. 'Local, Regional, National, Global and Feedback: Several Issues to Be Faced With Constructing Regional Narratives'. *Journal of Design History* 18, no. 4 (2005): 371–83.
- 5 Sarah Teasley et al. 'Introduction: Towards Global Design History.' In *Global Design*

The Scandinavian journal networks were connected to larger international structures, which in turn often mapped onto pre-existing international organisational frameworks. In light of this, the thesis also follows Jonathan Woodham's suggestion, made in the *Journal of Design History's* special issue on 'The Global Future of Design History' (2005), to make international design organisations objects of study for a global design history.<sup>6</sup> Whilst it does little to shift focus away from sites of industrial production, as called for by Victor Margolin in the same issue,<sup>7</sup> the use of domestication allows the historian to recognise the agency of practitioners situated in the periphery and to treat their modifications as creative acts on an equal footing with the innovations of the centre. As such, the combination of the domestication and networks approaches may help overcome the simplistic "first the West, and then the rest" notion, identified by D.J. Huppertz as a diffusionist model deeply engrained into early texts on Modernist design like Nikolaus Pevnsner's (1902–83) *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936)<sup>8</sup> — and which therefore presents a particular challenge to global design histories of Modernism.<sup>9</sup>

## New Typography

New Typography is conventionally portrayed as a new type of visual communication, pioneered by a small group of avant-garde

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History, eds. Sarah Teasley et al. (Routledge, 2011), 6

6 Jonathan M. Woodham. 'Local, National and Global: Redrawing the Design Historical Map'. *Journal of Design History* 18, no. 3 (2005): 257–67.

7 Victor Margolin. 'A World History of Design and the History of the World'. *Journal of Design History* 18, no. 3: 'The Global Future of Design History' (2005): 235–43.

8 Nikolaus Pevnsner. *Pioneers of the Modern Movement from William Morris to Walter Gropius*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1936).

9 D.J. Huppertz. 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History'. *Journal of Design History* 28, no. 2 (2015): 188.

artists and poets who, in their pursuit of a new utopian society, saw it necessary to decisively break with the aesthetics, concerns and values which had gone before. According to Robin Kinross, it was “the manifestation in the sphere of printed communication of the modern movement in art, in design and — at least this was its aspiration — in life as a whole”.<sup>10</sup> As its name suggests, New Typography can be seen as the counterpart in typography of Modernist expression in other fields, like architecture (*neues Bauen*, or New Building) or photography (*neues Sehen*, or New Vision). Although the term ‘*neue Typographie*’ is perhaps most commonly associated with Jan Tschichold’s (1902–74) 1928 book of the same name,<sup>11</sup> it was introduced by László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946) five years earlier, in the catalogue for the first Bauhaus exhibition.<sup>12</sup> As will be explained in **chapter 1**, this exhibition had a powerful impact on Tschichold and caused him to abandon traditional typography. In 1925 he published ‘*elementare typographie* [elemental typography]’, a special issue of the German printing journal *Typographische Mitteilungen* [Typographic Messages] containing a ten-point manifesto of principles also entitled ‘*elementare typographie*’.<sup>13</sup> This exerted a substantial influence on printing over the following years, first in Germany, later in Scandinavia and elsewhere. For Scandinavian printers, it

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10 Robin Kinross. ‘Introduction to the English-Language Edition’. In *The New Typography*, by Jan Tschichold (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2006): xv

11 Tschichold, Jan. *Die Neue Typographie: Ein Handbuch für Zeitgemäss Schaffende*. Berlin: Verlag des Bildungsverbandes der Deutschen Buchdrucker, 1928.

12 Moholy-Nagy, László. ‘Die Neue Typografie’. In *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar, 1919-1923*. München & Weimar: Bauhausverlag, 1923.

13 The manifesto is discussed in detail in **Chapter 1**, and is available in English translation as: Iwan Tschichold. ‘Elemental Typography’. In *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography*, by Christopher Burke, 311. (London: Hyphen Press, 2007).

was the key document by which New Typography was understood. Only occasionally were other non-Scandinavian accounts of New Typography discussed, and then reference would primarily be made to *Die neue Typographie*, or occasionally to Paul Renner's (1878–1956) *mechanisierte grafik* [Mechanised Graphics, 1931]. In other words, Scandinavian printers primarily derived their understanding of New Typography from printing trade sources. They did not, as a rule, look to the writings of Moholy-Nagy or other members of the avant-garde.<sup>14</sup> The exception here is Karel Teige's six-point definition of Constructivist typography, included in his

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14 Willi Baumeister, Henryk Berlewi, Max Burchartz, Walter Dexel, Theo van Doesburg, Lajos Kassák, El Lissitzky, Johannes Molzahn and Kurt Schwitters all provided definitions, or wrote on the topic of New Typography: Willi Baumeister. 'Neue Typographie'. *Die Form* 1, no.10 (1925): 215-217; Henryk Berlewi. 'Mechano-Faktur'. *Der Sturm* 15, no. 3 (1924): 155–59. English translation: 'Mechano-Facture'. In *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910-1930*, eds. Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács (The MIT Press, 2002); Max Burchartz. 'Gestaltung Der Reklame'. *Merz*, no. 11 (1924): front cover.; Burchartz. 'Neuzeitliche Werbung' *Die Form* 1, no.7 (1926): 136-140; Walter Dexel. 'Was Ist Neue Typografie?' *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Feb. 5, 1927; Theo van Doesburg. 'Das Buch und seine Gestaltung'. *Die Form* 4, no.21 (1929): 566-71. English translation: 'The Book and Its Design'. *Design Issues* 9, no. 2 (1993): 80–82; Lajos Kassák. 'Die Reklame'. *Das Werk* 13, no.7 (1926): 226-228; Kassák. 'A Plakát És Az Új Festészet'. *MA* 1, no. 1 (1916): 2–4; Kassák. 'Reklám És Modern Tipográfia'. *Reklámélet* 1, no. 3 (1928): 1–3. English translations of these three Kassák articles, under the titles of 'The Advertisement', 'On the Road to Elementary Typography' and 'The Advertisement and Modern Typography' respectively can be found in: Ferenc Csaplár, ed. *Lajos Kassák: The Advertisement and Modern Typography* (Budapest: Kassák Museum, 1999): 10-14; El Lissitzky. 'Topographie Der Typographie - Einige Thesen Aus Dem Demnächst Erscheinenden Buche von El Lissitzky'. *Merz*, no. 4 (1923): 47. English translation: 'Topography of Typography'. In *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design*, eds. Michael Beirut et al. (New York: Allworth Press, 1999): 23; Lissitzky. 'Typographische Tatsachen'. In *Gutenberg Festschrift 1925*, ed. Alois Ruppel (Mainz, 1925). English translation: 'Typographical Facts'. In El Lissitzky. *Life • Letters • Texts*, ed. Sophie Lissitsky-Küppers (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980); Lissitzky. 'Unser Buch'. In *Gutenberg Jahrbuch 1927*, edited by Alois Ruppel. Mainz: Gutenberg-Gesellschaft, 1927. English translation: 'The Future of the Book'. *New Left Review* 41 (February 1967): 39–44; Johannes Molzahn. 'Ökonomie der Reklame-Mechane' *Die Form* 1, no.7 (1926): 141-145; Kurt Schwitters. 'Thesen Über Typographie'. *Merz*, no.11 (1924): unpaginated; Schwitters. 'Gestaltende Typographie'. *Der Sturm* 19, no.6: Sonderheft Typographie (1928): 265–79. English translation: 'Designed Typography'. *Design Issues* 9, no. 2 (1993): 66–68; Schwitters. *Moderne Werbung, Typographische Mitteilungen* 25, no.10, (1928): 239f. English translation: 'Modern Advertising'. *Design Issues* 9, no. 2 (1993): 69–71.

essay 'Moderní typó' (1927),<sup>15</sup> and reproduced in Tschichold's *Eine Stunde Druckgestaltung* (1930).<sup>16</sup>

This thesis will discuss a number of different interpretations of New Typography created by the Scandinavian printing trade. However, the New Typography of avant-garde was varied too, and not as uniform as Tschichold's writings can make it seem. For instance, Kurt Schwitters placed emphasis on individuality, claiming the most important aspect of typography was to never do what anyone had done before.<sup>17</sup> Like many Scandinavian tradesmen, avant-garde figures like Herbert Bayer (1900–85) and Piet Zwart (1885–1977) found Tschichold's guidelines "too narrow" and "doctrinaire".<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the formal characteristics laid down in the 'elementare typographie' manifesto were those which practitioners in the graphic trades sought either to emulate, negotiate with, or position themselves against. The New Typography discussed in this thesis can therefore be seen as belonging to three kinds. The first is the 'wild', undomesticated New Typography of the avant-garde. The second is that described by Tschichold, and interpreted faithfully by typesetters and others. The third is that which takes issue with Tschichold's guidelines and which seeks to reinterpret them in order to bring them closer to the values and aesthetics of traditional printing. Both the second and third kinds may be considered domesticated forms.

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15 Teige, Karel. 'Moderní Typo'. *Typografie*, no. 34 (1927): 189–98. English translation: 'Modern Typography (1927)'. In *Karel Teige / 1900–1951. L'enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde*, eds. Eric Dluhosch and Rostislav Švácha (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1999).

16 Tschichold, Jan. *Eine Stunde Druckgestaltung: Grundbegriffe Der Neuen Typografie in Bildbeispielen Für Setzer, Werbefachleute, Drucksachenverbraucher Und Bibliotheken*. (Stuttgart: Wedekind, 1930).

17 Schwitters. 'Thesen Über Typographie'.

18 In relation to the 'elementare typographie' special issue and *Eine Stunde Druckgestaltung* respectively: Burke. *Active Literature*: 14, 93

A crucial aspect of domestication is its reciprocity.<sup>19</sup> So, was the New Typography of the avant-garde affected by its encounters with printing culture? Christopher Burke and others have noted that the production of key works like Schwitters' *Die Scheuche* (1925) or Fortunato Depero's (1892–1960) *Depero Futurista* (1927) depended on the collaboration of “friendly” or “sympathetic” printers.<sup>20</sup> However, more than that — and as discussed in **chapter 5** — printers like Hugo Lagerström (1873–1956) in Sweden and C. Volmer Nordlunde (1888–1970) in Denmark, used their knowledge and experience of New Typography and traditional printing alike to create designs for avant-garde clients who lacked in typographic expertise, like Josef Riwkin (1909–65) or Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen (1909–57). The resulting designs, Riwkin's journal *Spektrum* [Spectrum, 1931–33] and Bjerke-Petersen's book *symboler i abstrakt kunst* [symbols in abstract art, 1933], were executed closer to a ‘Tschicholdian’ understanding of New Typography than the majority of Lagerström's and Nordlunde's modern commercial work. At the same time their assured typographic detailing cannot be attributed to Riwkin or Bjerke-Petersen, but to the trained compositors who produced these designs.

## Mapping the field

The narrative of New Typography as a decisively new form, championed by a small group of avant-garde artists, was first put forward in *Die neue Typographie*, and later reproduced in the first books to revisit the movement: Eckhard Neumann's *Functional*

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19 See, for instance: Thomas Berker et al. ‘Introduction’. In *Domestication of Media and Technology*, eds. Thomas Berker et al. (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006), 3

20 Burke. *Active Literature*: 48, 130

*Graphic Design in the 20's* (1967) and Herbert Spencer's *Pioneers of Modern Typography* (1969).<sup>21</sup> Around the same time, early histories like Karl Gerstner and Markus Kutter's *the new graphic art* (1959) and Josef Müller-Brockmann's *History of Visual Communication* (1971) positioned the avant-garde as pioneers of the newly emerged profession of 'graphic design', although they did not refer to it by name.<sup>22</sup> These narratives were then incorporated into what would long serve as graphic design history's key historical survey: Philip Meggs' *A History of Graphic Design* (1983).<sup>23</sup> Meggs' history has since been updated in a number of editions,<sup>24</sup> and rival surveys authored by Richard Hollis, Roxane Jubert, Stephen Eskilson, Johanna Drucker and Emily McVarish, and Patrick Cramsie have appeared.<sup>25</sup> Whilst these titles all pay close attention to Tschichold's efforts in codifying the writings and visual experiments of the avant-garde for a printing trade audience,<sup>26</sup> they make little of how

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21 Eckhard Neumann, *Functional Graphic Design In The 20's* (New York: Reinhold, 1967); Herbert Spencer, *Pioneers of Modern Typography* (London: Lund Humphries, 1969). In his foreword to the 2004 edition of *Pioneers of Modern Typography*, Rick Poynor emphasises the influence Spencer's book had on design students particularly in the 1970s. He also notes that *Pioneers of Modern Typography* through the large (A4) format, colour reproductions and paper choices of its 1st edition achieved a greater visual impact than *Functional Graphic Design in the 20's* and downplays the significance of the latter. See: Rick Poynor, "Foreword," in *Pioneers of Modern Typography*, by Herbert Spencer (London: Lund Humphries, 2004)

22 Karl Gerstner and Markus Kutter. *die neue Graphik. the new graphic art. le nouvel art graphique.* (Teufen AR: Arthur Niggli, 1959); Josef Müller-Brockmann, *History of Visual Communication* (Teufen: Verlag Arthur Niggli, 1971)

23 Philip B. Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design* (London: Allen Lane, 1983)

24 Currently in its sixth edition: Philip B. Meggs, and Alston W. Purvis. *Meggs' History of Graphic Design.* 6th ed. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016).

25 Richard Hollis. *Graphic Design: A Concise History.* London: Thames & Hudson, 1994; Roxane Jubert. *Typography and Graphic Design. From Antiquity to the Present.* (Flammarion, 2006); Stephen Eskilson. *Graphic Design: A New History.* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2007); Johanna Drucker and Emily McVarish. *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide.* (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008); Patrick Cramsie. *The Story of Graphic Design: From the Invention of Writing to the Birth of Digital Design.* New York: Abrams, 2010.

26 Notably through his most well-known publications: Iwan Tschichold, ed. *Typographische Mitteilungen* 22 no.10 sonderheft: 'elementare typographie' (1925); *Die Neue Typographie* and *Typographische Gestaltung* (Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co, 1935)



these ideas were actually interpreted by the trade. This is even the case for *A Machine for Communicating* (2015), the proceeding of a conference which accompanied Changing the Field of View — an exhibition held at Muzeum Sztuki in 2014, and subtitled ‘Modern Printing and the Avant-Garde’.<sup>27</sup> Critical attempts to reassess New Typography’s impact on the printing trade have only been made recently, with the publication of German design historian Julia Meer’s book *Neuer Blick auf die neue Typographie* [A New View of the New Typography, 2015].<sup>28</sup> Using the concept of domestication, she describes how the German printing trade actively adopted and modified New Typography for its own ends, and then primarily in order to gain a competitive advantage over rival trades. By adopting this perspective, Meer seeks to criticize those historical surveys of graphic design which afford the avant-garde a disproportionate amount of attention—and more damningly—which uncritically reproduce the historical narrative put forward by the avant-gardists themselves.<sup>29</sup> Whilst the work and writings of the avant-garde were certainly of great significance, Meer argues their persuasive power alone cannot explain why the German trade chose to engage with New Typography. As will be discussed throughout this thesis, this is a position I share.

Moving from New Typography in the international context to a discussion of Scandinavian graphic design’s position in the international literature, one can note that neither of the survey

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27 Paulina Kurz-Maj and Daniel Muzyczuk, eds. *Maszyna Do Komunikacji: Wokół Awangardowej Idei Nowej Typografii. A Machine for Communicating: Around the Avant-Garde Idea of New Typography* (Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki, 2015).

28 Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*.

29 Besides Meggs’ *A History of Design* and Hollis’ *Graphic Design: A Concise History*, Meer singles out Beat Schneider’s *Design - eine Einführung: Entwurf im sozialen, kulturellen und wirtschaftlichen Kontext* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2005). See: Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 9–11, 68–79

texts mentioned above find room for Scandinavian examples.<sup>30</sup>

Whilst it should be said that other works, claiming to be 'encyclopaedic' or 'complete' accounts, do include entries on the Swedish graphic designer Olle Eksell (1918–2007), it is nevertheless possible to argue that graphic design history has all but ignored Scandinavian developments.<sup>31</sup> As Marie-Louise Bowallius, a design historian writing on graphic design in Sweden has expressed it: "If you go out searching for literature on Swedish graphic design you will most probably come back with nothing to read".<sup>32</sup> One reason for this is simply that graphic design history, when compared to design history more widely, is a relatively young field with a relatively low level of activity. For instance, Teal Triggs has argued that graphic design has not received the same level of attention from historians as industrial design,<sup>33</sup> and that graphic design history is "less established as a discipline" and "less exploratory" than industrial design or fashion history.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Rick Poynor has claimed that discipline of graphic design history remains "in a state of becoming",<sup>35</sup> and has questioned whether it will ever achieve the maturity hoped for in the early 1990s, when the *Journal of Design History* published a special issue on graphic design history and *Visible Language* a series titled 'New Perspectives: Critical Histories of Graphic Design'.<sup>36</sup>

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30 The texts of Meggs, Hollis, Jubert, Eskilson, Drucker and McVarish, and Cramsie.

31 The following contain entries on Eksell: Jeremy Aynsley, *Pioneers of Modern Graphic Design: A Complete History* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2004); Alan Livingston and Isabella Livingston, *Dictionary of Graphic Design and Designers*. New edition 2003. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003). The latter book even features an Eksell design, the symbol for Mazettis ögon kakao [eye cocoa, 1956], on the front cover.

32 Marie-Louise Bowallius, "The Origins and Professionalization of Swedish Graphic Design 1930-1965" (MA thesis, Royal College of Art, 1999), 2.

33 Triggs, Teal. 'Designing Graphic Design History'. *Journal of Design History* 22, no. 4 (2009): 325–326.

34 Triggs, Teal. 'Graphic Design History: Past, Present, and Future'. *Design Issues* 27, no. 1 (2011): 3

35 Poynor, Rick. 'Out of the Studio: Graphic Design History and Visual Studies'. *Design Observer*, 1 October 2011. <http://designobserver.com/article.php?id=24048>.

36 *Journal of Design History* 5, no.1 (1992); *Visible Language*, special issues guest edited by

To Poyner's examples of critical graphic design history one should add a number other contributions, made around the same time. Since its establishment as an academic discipline in the 1980s, design history more broadly had been moving away from the celebration of exceptional individuals and artefacts.<sup>37</sup>

For instance, Hazel Conway argued that an alternative to what she termed the 'heroic approach', would be to study the design of everyday life and the social and material context it was part of.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, John A. Walker criticised those design histories which presented a canon of great works where "the baton of genius or avant garde innovation passes from the hand of one great designer to the next in an endless chain of achievement".<sup>39</sup> This approach, he argued, offered only a simplistic and particular view of history. Walker also brought attention to how the heavy use of photographic reproductions promoted an understanding of "design history as the study of discrete designed objects rather than other possibilities such as designers, context and processes".<sup>40</sup> These critical notions then fed into graphic design history. A notable contribution was the polemical 'Good History / Bad History' authored by Tibor Kalman, J. Abbott Miller and Karrie Jacobs,<sup>41</sup> and presented by Kalman as speech to the symposium Modernism and Eclecticism at the School of Visual Arts (1991). This speech

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Andrew Blauvelt: "New Perspectives: Critical Histories of Graphic Design", 28, no.3 (1994); 28, no.4 (1994); 29, no.1 (1995).

37 For an overview of design history's development into an academic discipline, see: Grace Lees-Maffei, "General Introduction," in *The Design History Reader*, ed. Grace Lees-Maffei and Rebecca Houze (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010)

38 Hazel Conway, "Design History Basics," in *Design History: A Students' Handbook*, ed. Hazel Conway (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 9

39 John A. Walker, *Design History and the History of Design* (London: Pluto, 1989), 63

40 *Ibid.*, 12

41 Tibor Kalman et al, "Good History / Bad History," in *Looking Closer 2. Critical Writings on Graphic Design*, eds. Michael Bierut et al (New York: Allworth Press, 1994). Originally published in *Print*, March / April 1991

was critical of histories which portrayed graphic design as a canon of ‘rarefied’ and ‘special’ designs. In place of this, it argued for a history in which such items were not considered “as a point of perfection bound for the Museum of Modern Art but as the culmination of a process” and which therefore paid attention “to the fringes of design as well as the mainstream, and to the rejects and failures as well as the award-winning examples”.<sup>42</sup> A ‘good’ history would be “a history of ideas and therefore of culture”,<sup>43</sup> rather than “a parade of artefacts”.<sup>44</sup> Robin Kinross’ *Modern typography: an essay in critical history* (1992) applied an approach in line with the ideas expressed in this speech, by shifting his attention “away from products (and the untroubled reproduction of images of them) and towards the ideas that inform production”.<sup>45</sup> In their *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation since 1800* (1996) Paul Jobling and David Crowley abandoned the idea of a continuous narrative, opting instead to present a series of critical essays on particular themes and moments.<sup>46</sup> Whilst the discipline may be progressing slower than Poynor would like, it should nevertheless be noted that critical graphic design histories like Meer’s *Neuer Blick auf die Neue Typographie* or Robert Lzicar and Davide Fornari’s *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland* (2016) have appeared in recent years.<sup>47</sup>

Unlike graphic design histories, histories of industrial design and architecture have shown interest into Scandinavian and Nordic

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42 Ibid., 31

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., 27

45 Robin Kinross, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History*. Second edition (London: Hyphen Press, 2010), 18

46 Paul Jobling and David Crowley. *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation since 1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

47 Robert Lzicar and Davide Fornari, eds. *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*. (Zurich: Triest Verlag für Architektur, Design und Typographie, 2016).

developments for some time. A particular point of interest is how Modernism was interpreted in these countries. As Christopher Wilk notes, Modernism is a term which can be difficult to pin down.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, he describes it as term which in design covers a range of movements and styles, emanating from a number of urban centres, predominantly in central Europe. These are tied together by “an espousal of the new”, a “rejection of history and tradition”, “a utopian desire to create a better world”, “an almost messianic belief in the power and potential of the machine and industrial technology”, a rejection of ornament, an embrace of abstraction and a belief “in the unity of all the arts”.<sup>49</sup> As he writes, “all of these principles were frequently combined with social and political beliefs (largely left-leaning) which held that design and art could, and should, transform society”.<sup>50</sup> However, whilst continental examples could be judged alien or cold, Scandinavian interpretations were seen, particularly by commentators in Britain, to be putting a more “acceptable”,<sup>51</sup> or “human” face on Modernism.<sup>52</sup>

Whilst Scandinavian Modernist buildings have regularly featured in histories of architecture from the 1930s onwards,<sup>53</sup> early

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48 Christopher Wilk. ‘Introduction: What Was Modernism?’ In *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914–1939*, ed. Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006): 12

49 Ibid, 14

50 Ibid, 14

51 Gillian Naylor. ‘Swedish Grace...or the Acceptable Face of Modernism?’ In *Modernism in Design*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh. (London: Reaktion Books, 1990).

52 Jeremy Aynsley. *Nationalism and Internationalism: Design in the 20th Century*. (Victoria & Albert Museum, 1993): p42

53 See, for instance: Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. *The International Style*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1932)—features work by Swedish architects Gunnar Asplund, Sven Markelius, Eskil Sundahl and Uno Åhrén; Jürgen Joedicke. *A History of Modern Architecture*. (London: The Architectural Press, 1959)—originally published in German as *Geschichte der modernen Architektur* (Stuttgart: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1958); Leonardo Benevolo. *History of Modern Architecture*. Volume two: The modern movement. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971)—originally

histories of modern design like Pevsner's aforementioned *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* and Reyner Banham's *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960) (both of which heavily featured architecture), did not include any Scandinavian examples. From a Scandinavian point of view, the situation was not much better in Sigfried Giedion's *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948), where mentions of Swedish design reform can be found only in a couple of footnotes.<sup>54</sup> However, as Paul Greenhalgh commented in the introduction to *Modernism in Design* (1990), Post-Modernism's arrival in the 1970s created "the potential (...) for historians to assess it [Modernism] more closely than ever before, since apparently we could see where it started and finished and what it had achieved".<sup>55</sup> As part of the resulting critical reassessment of Modernism, international interest was taken in the expression of a regional aesthetic in the Scandinavian and Nordic countries. Gillian Naylor revisited contemporaneous British opinion on the Stockholm Exhibition 1930,<sup>56</sup> and David Crowley's 'National Modernisms' discussed how Modernism was interpreted differently in a number of nations — among them the Soviet Union, Sweden, Italy and Germany.<sup>57</sup>

The survey accompanying Crowley's text contains information on two Swedish posters. Still, it can be argued that Scandinavian

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published in Italian as *Storia dell'architettura moderna* (Bari: Laterza & Figli, 1960).

54 Reyner Banham. *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (London: Architectural Press, 1960); Sigfried Giedion. *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 509, 526. Additionally, two pieces of furniture by Aalto are discussed on pages 430, 432 and 504–506.

55 Paul Greenhalgh. 'Introduction'. In *Modernism in Design*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh, (London: Reaktion Books, 1990): 2

56 Naylor. 'Swedish Grace...or the Acceptable Face of Modernism?'

57 David Crowley. 'National Modernisms'. In *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914–1939*, ed. Christopher Wilk. (London: V&A Publications, 2006).

graphic design has proved a persistent blind spot for design history. Although titles on industrial design have included Scandinavian developments from John Heskett's *Industrial Design* (1980) onwards,<sup>58</sup> it is notable that more recent histories such as Jonathan Woodham's *Twentieth-Century Design* (1997) and David Raizman's *History of Modern Design* (2003), both of which discuss the graphic as well as industrial design and architecture of other geographies, feature no examples of Scandinavian graphic design.<sup>59</sup> It was only with the publication of Victor Margolin's wide-ranging *World History of Design* (2015) that this omission was addressed.<sup>60</sup> However, given the scarcity of English language sources on New Typography in Scandinavia, Margolin is not able to shed much light on New Typography's position in the wider field of Scandinavian graphic design in the interwar years. In the field of typography, these consist of Erik Dal's *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century* (1968),<sup>61</sup> a handful of articles from Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen's *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* (1991–2005),<sup>62</sup> and Bowallius's chapter on 'Tradition and Innovation in Swedish Graphic Design 1910–1950' from the exhibition catalogue *Utopia and Reality* (2002).<sup>63</sup>

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58 John Heskett. *Industrial Design* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980).

59 Jonathan M. Woodham. *Twentieth Century Design*. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

60 Victor Margolin. 'Scandinavian Graphic Design: Advertising and the Book Arts'. In *World History of Design, 2: World War I to World War II*. (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

61 Erik Dal. *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century*. (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1968).

62 Magdalena Gram. 'The Art Journal as an Artistic Gesture: An Experiment Named Flamman'. *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 3 (1993): 85–108; Magdalena Gram. 'National Typography as Exemplified by Akke Kumlien'. *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 5 (1995): 121–132; Steen Ejlers. 'Architects in Danish Graphic Design'. *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 7 (1997): 58–73.

63 Marie-Louise Bowallius, "Tradition and Innovation in Swedish Graphic Design 1910-1950," in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002). This catalogue also contains a number of other valuable texts on Modernism in Swedish architecture, film, painting, photography and culture.

Admittedly, several design histories written within the national parameters of Denmark, Norway and Sweden do include considerations of graphic design. However, the examples featured often relate to design exhibitions, the covers of key historical texts, advertisements for industrial design products discussed in their narratives, or are examples of forays by key figures from other fields of design into typography or illustration.<sup>64</sup> This being said, titles which treat graphic design equally with other fields of design do exist. Most notable in this regard are Lasse Brunnström's *Svensk designhistoria* [Swedish Design History, 2010],<sup>65</sup> Lars Dybdahl's dual-volume *Dansk Design* [Danish Design, 1994 & 2002],<sup>66</sup> Thomas Dickson's *Dansk Design* (2006),<sup>67</sup> and Fredrik Wildhagen's *Norge i Form* [Norway in Form, 1988].<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, other than a short section in Brunnström's book the topic of New Typography is not addressed.<sup>69</sup>

In 2012, Kjetil Fallan introduced the book *Scandinavian Design: Alternative Histories* with the words: "Scandinavian design is not all it is cracked up to be—but then again, it is also so much more".<sup>70</sup> Indeed, the book presented a number of alternatives to

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64 Kjetil Fallan. *Designing Modern Norway: A History of Design Discourse* (New York: Routledge, 2017); Denise Hagströmer. *Swedish Design* (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute, 2001); Hedvig Hedqvist. *1900-2002: Svensk Form, Internationell Design* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget DN, 2002).

65 Lasse Brunnström. *Svensk Designhistoria*. Stockholm: Raster, 2010.

66 Lars Dybdahl. *Dansk Design 1910-1945: Art Deco & Funktionalisme* (København: Muséet, 1997); *Dansk Design 1945-1975: Produktdesign, Grafisk Design, Møbel-design* (København: Borgen, 2006).

67 Thomas Dickson. *Dansk Design*. (København: Gyldendal, 2006).

68 Fredrik Wildhagen. *Norge i Form: Kunsthåndverk Og Design under Industrikulturen*. (Oslo: J.M. Stenersens Forlag, 1988). Reissued with further and re-photographed examples in colour as well as a new afterword by Leena Mannila: Fredrik Wildhagen. *Formgitt i Norge*. (Unipub, 2012).

69 Brunnström. *Svensk Designhistoria*. 121-123. Brunnström's primary source for this section is Magdalena Gram's 2006 article 'När Typografen Blev "modern"', discussed elsewhere in this literature review.

70 Kjetil Fallan et al. 'Introduction'. In *Scandinavian Design: Alternative Histories*, ed. Kjetil Fallan (London and New York: Berg, 2012).



the objects and episodes to those commonly found in literature on Scandinavian industrial design. However, it did not take Brunnström's, Dybdahl's and Wildhagen's inclusion of inclusion of graphic artefacts in their surveys as an invitation to further examine graphic design's relation to wider Scandinavian design culture. Nor have other recent contributions to Scandinavian design history taken up this challenge. Instead, efforts have centred on debunking myths associated with mid-century Scandinavian Design, and on replacing these with a critical understanding of its success. The travelling exhibition and catalogue *Scandinavian Design Beyond the Myth* (2003) was an early effort in this regard,<sup>71</sup> and a notable recent one is the special issue of *Design and Culture* titled 'The Influence of Scandinavian Design' (2015), edited by Bobby Tigerman.

The research project 'Poul Henningsen and Danish Cultural Heritage', which ran from 2006 to 2009 at the University of Southern Denmark, resulted in three monographs which enhance understanding of attitudes towards modernism held by Henningsen and the circle around *Kritisk Revy*.<sup>72</sup> Likewise, Anders V. Munch's work on the Self-Exoticization of Danish design, first developed with Niels Peter Skou in the *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*,<sup>73</sup> and later developed further in the *Journal of Design History*,<sup>74</sup>

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71 Widar Halén and Kerstin Wickman, eds. *Scandinavian Design beyond the Myth: Fifty Years of Design from the Nordic Countries* (Stockholm: Arvinius, 2003).

72 Carl Erik Bay and Hans-Christian Jensen, eds. *Tradition Og Modernisme: Indfaldsvinkler Til PH*. (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2008); Jørn Guldborg and Niels Peter Skou, eds. *Kritik Og Formidling: Studier I PH's Kulturkritik*. (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2008); Anne Borup and Jørn Guldborg, eds. *Kulturmoderniseringens Paradokser: Studier I PH's Kulturbegeber, Kritik Og Praxis*. (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2009).

73 Niels Peter Skou and Anders V. Munch. 'New Nordic and Scandinavian Retro: Reassessment of Values and Aesthetics in Contemporary Nordic Design'. *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 8, no. 1 (2016): unpaginated.

74 Anders V. Munch. 'On the Outskirts: The Geography of Design and the Self-

offers convincing new perspectives on how the modified approach to Functionalism which in 1950 was named the Functional Tradition was, and still is, used by Nordic designers for marketing purposes.<sup>75</sup>

Whilst the various design histories described above have little to say about New Typography in Scandinavia, a number of more specialized sources written from the perspectives of the graphic trades active in the three countries during the 1920s and 30s exist. In reviewing this literature, the modernist bias of graphic design history immediately becomes apparent. Whereas graphic design histories tend to treat the avant-garde as pioneers of their profession, typographic histories have, as Robin Kinross has identified, tended to treat modernist typography as an “eccentricity”, “an incursion of artists blundering into the quiet preserves of book-printing and there violating the wisdom of tradition and convention”.<sup>76</sup> The differences between the two types of history can be explained by looking at the differences between their respective audiences and the professional identities held by these audiences. The first histories of graphic design were written for a young profession searching for its historical roots and absorbed an occasionally extensive pre-history of developments occurring before its appearance.<sup>77</sup> On the other

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Exoticization of Danish Design'. *Journal of Design History* 30, no. 1 (2017): 50–67.

75 This term was originally used in: 'The Discipline of Functionalism'. *Architectural Review* 107, A special number of the architectural review for January 1950: The Functional Tradition (January 1950): 6–8. It was popularised in Denmark through Kay Fisker's article: 'Den Funktionelle Tradition: Spredte Indtryk Af Amerikansk Arkitektur'. *Arkitekten. Månedshæfte*. 52 (1950): 69–100.

76 Kinross. *Modern Typography*, 18

77 The term graphic design was coined by W. A. Dwiggins as early as 1922. However, Richard Hollis has argued that the graphic designer did not appear as a professional figure until around “the middle of the twentieth century”. Moreover, Johanna Drucker has claimed the term had only recently achieved widespread

hand, master printers and compositors could, at least until the arrival of phototypesetting in the 1950s, trace their history and working practices directly back to Gutenberg's introduction of movable type to Europe. Such histories therefore tend to privilege the category of the book and the typography associated with it.<sup>78</sup> Whilst exceptions to this trend can of course be found, for instance in Michael Twyman's *Printing 1770–1970* (1970),<sup>79</sup> it is therefore not surprising to find that New Typography is only given slight consideration in a major Scandinavian typographic history like Lauritz Nielsen's *Den Danske Bog* [The Danish Book, 1941],<sup>80</sup> even less so in Sten G. Lindberg's concise *Svenska Böcker* [Swedish Books, 1983],<sup>81</sup> and none whatsoever in Gunnar Jacobsen's *Norske boktrykkere og trykkerier gjennom fire århundrer* [Norwegian Printers and Printing Houses Through Four Centuries, 1983].<sup>82</sup> New Typography has, however, received attention in more specialised works. The first historical overview of New Typography's relation to the printing trade in Denmark was an article by Eli Reimer

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recognition at the time Philip Meggs' *A History of Graphic Design* (1983) was first published. See: W.A. Dwiggins, 'New Kind of Printing Calls for a New Design', eds. Michael Bierut et al, *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design* (New York: Allworth Press, 1999); Hollis, *Graphic Design*, 8; Johanna Drucker, "Reconsidering Philip Meggs and Richard Hollis: Models of Graphic Design History," *Design and Culture* 1, no. 1 (2009): 52–53, 72

78 Kinross, *Modern Typography*, 18

79 This title, which followed on from John Lewis' *Printed Ephemera* (Ipswich, Suffolk: W.S. Cowell, 1962) in particular, made the conscious decision to propose an alternative kind of typographic history by focusing solely on job printing or "non-book printing" as Twyman tellingly calls it. Michael Twyman, *Printing 1770–1970: An Illustrated History of Its Development and Uses in England*. (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970), vii

80 Lauritz Nielsen, *Den Danske Bog: Forsøg Til En Dansk Boghistorie Fra Den Ældste Tid Til Nutiden* (København: Gyldendal, 1941)

81 Sten G Lindberg, *Svenska Böcker 1483–1983. Bokhistoria I Fågelperspektiv*. (Stockholm: Bokbranschens Marknadsinstitut, 1983). An abridged English-language translation of this text was published as: Sten G. Lindberg *The Art of the Book in Sweden: Five Centuries of Printing* (Stockholm: Swedish Institute, 1983)

82 Gunnar Jacobsen, *Norske Boktrykkere Og Trykkerier Gjennom Fire Århundrer, 1640-1940* (Oslo: Mercurtrykk, 1983)

published in the 1951 edition of *Grafisk Aarbog* [Graphic Annual],<sup>83</sup> and the first pan-Scandinavian account can be found in Erik Dal's *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century* (1968).<sup>84</sup> In 1980 a special issue of the Danish Forening for Boghaandværk's [Association for Book Crafts] annual publication *Bogvennen* [The Bibliophile] appeared with the title 'Bogen i tredverne' [The Book in the Thirties]. This volume contained useful articles discussing modernist influences on the design of *Bogvennen* itself, of Danish books of the period, and of Danish leftist journals.<sup>85</sup> Jan Gauguin's exhibition catalogue *Ord symbol bilde – Grafisk design i norsk miljø* [Word Symbol Image – Graphic Design in Norwegian Environment, 1978] presented the work of Norwegian compositors and commercial artists, alongside that of figures familiar to established narratives of New Typography like Tschichold and Zwart, all of them positioned as precursors of graphic design in Norway.<sup>86</sup>

More recently, New Typography's relation to the Norwegian and Swedish printing trades was treated in the articles 'Den nye typografiens gjennombrudd Norge' [New Typography's Breakthrough in Norway, 1998] and 'När typografen blev 'modern'' [When Typography Became 'Modern', 2006], written by Torbjørn Eng and Magdalena Gram respectively.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Lena

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83 Eli Reimer, "Asymmetrisk Typografi: Lidt Om Udviklingen Af Den Asymmetriske Formlære," in *Grafisk Aarbog*, eds. Charles Moegreen et al (København: Dansk Typograf-Forbund, 1951)

84 Erik Dal, "The Scene About 1930: Architects and Functionalism," in *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century* (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1968)

85 Paul Philippe Peronard, "Bogvennen i 1930'erne," *Bogvennen*, 1980: 5–16; Erik Dal, "Bogen i 30'ernes Danmark," *Bogvennen*, 1980: 28–56; Carl Erik Bay, "30'ernes venstreorienterede tidsskrifter," *Bogvennen*, 1980: 76–86

86 Jan Gauguin, *Ord Symbol Bilde. Grafisk Design I Norsk Miljø. Utstilling I Kunstindustrimuseet, Oslo 1.–26. September 1978* (Oslo: Kunstindustrimuseet i Oslo, 1978).

87 Torbjørn Eng "«Den Nye Typografiens» Gjennombrudd i Norge." *Norsk Grafia* 123, nos. 2, 3 & 4 (1998); Magdalena Gram, "När Typografen Blev 'modern': Om

Johannesson's book chapter 'Funkis utan hus' [Funkis Without Houses] discusses what she terms the Graphic Functionalism of the Swedish labour movement's publications—and then predominately its trade journals.<sup>88</sup> Political graphics are otherwise most frequently discussed in relation to the posters of political parties, or the publications of independent leftist groups.

Of individual printing trade figures associated with New Typography and its local variations, the Swedish book designer Anders Billow (1890–1964) has received the most detailed attention. Shortly after his retirement, a large volume of facsimile reprints was published with the title *Mellan kast och press hos Nordisk Rotogravyr* [Between Case and Press at Nordisk Rotogravyr, 1960].<sup>89</sup> He is also the subject of Jan Jönsson's PhD thesis *Läsmaskinen* [The Reading Machine] from 2008.<sup>90</sup> Another celebrated Swede is Karl-Erik Forsberg (1914–95). He is best known as a calligrapher and type designer in a traditionalist vein, but as he wrote in *Bokstaven i mitt liv* [The Letterform in My Life, 1982], he was influenced by New Typography early in his career.<sup>91</sup> Of Norwegian printing trade figures positively inclined towards New Typography only one account exists, namely Eng's two-part article on the printer Arthur Nelson (2005).<sup>92</sup> The compositor and educator Henry Thejls (1905–

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Modernismens Genombrott I Svensk Typografi." *Biblis* 34 (2006): 51–63

88 Lena Johannesson, "Funkis Utan Hus. Om Den Grafiska Funktionalismen Och Arbetarrörelsens Publicistiska Formspråk," in *Arbetarrörelse Och Arbetarkultur. Bild Och Självbild*, eds. Lena Johannesson, et al (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2007)

89 Sten G. Lindberg, *Anders Billow: Mellan Kast Och Press Hos Nordisk Rotogravyr 1923-1959* (Stockholm: Nordisk Rotogravyr, 1960)

90 Jan Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen: Aspekter På Bild Och Bok Med Utgångspunkt I Anders Billows Verksamhet 1923-1953" (PhD thesis, Lunds Universitet, 2008)

91 Karl Erik Forsberg, *Bokstaven i mitt liv* (Stockholm: Föreningen för Bokhantverk, 1982). Forsberg's early interest in New Typography is acknowledged also in later accounts of his work, such as: Sten G. Lindberg *Karl-Erik Forsberg: Med Bokstaven under 7 Decennier* (Norstedt, 1994); Åsa Henningson, ed. *Bokstavs Konst. Karl-Erik Forsberg 100 År*. (Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek, 2014)

92 Torbjørn Eng, "Boktrykker Arthur Nelsons Vei Gjennom Stilhistorien – 1. Fra

81) was an important proponent of New Typography in Denmark, and in 1980 he received a *Festschrift* containing articles detailing aspects of his contribution to Danish typography.<sup>93</sup> More recently, Jan Eskilsen published a biography on C. Volmer Nordlunde (2004).<sup>94</sup> However, this makes no mention of Nordlunde's role in the debates around New Typography, to which he contributed with many thoughtfully balanced articles. These texts are better covered in Gram's article on his influence on Swedish typography,<sup>95</sup> and can be gauged through his collected writings—*Eftertryk* [Reprint, 1963].<sup>96</sup> *Active Literature* (2007), Christopher Burke's monograph on Tschichold should also be mentioned, as it contains details of an important lecture visit Tschichold made to Copenhagen, and on the Danish and Swedish editions of his 1935 book *Typographische Gestaltung* [Typographic Design] — later published in English with the title *Asymmetric Typography* (1967).<sup>97</sup>

If one looks at histories of individual media, the poster is clearly the category of Scandinavian graphic design which has received the greatest amount of attention—at least in the period prior to 1945. In addition to surveys conducted within a national parameter,<sup>98</sup> books

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«den Frie Retning» Til Klassisk Typografi". *Norsk Grafia* 130, no. 5 (2005): 14–17; — . "Arthur Nelson: Den Første Modernist I Norsk Grafisk Bransje. Del 2." *Norsk Grafia* 130, no. 6 (2005): 16–19.

93 Poul Jeppesen et al, eds. *Typografen, Bogtrykkeren, Læreren Henry Thejls Sådan Som Hans Venner Oplever Ham* (Herning: Poul Kristensens Forlag, 1980)

94 Jan Eskildsen, C. Volmer Nordlunde, *Danmarks Store Bogtrykker*. (København: Forlaget Grafisk Litteratur & Forening for Boghaandværk, 2004)

95 Magdalena Gram, "C. Volmer Nordlunde – Vår typografiske onkel." *Biblis* (1993–94): 9–88.

96 C. Volmer Nordlunde, *Eftertryk: Udsendt Paa 75-Aars Dagen Den 15. Juni 1963 Af En Kreds Af Venner* (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1963)

97 Burke, *Active Literature*; Jan Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi* (København: Berlingske Bogtrykkeri, 1937); — *Typografisk Gestaltning* (Stockholm: Skolan för bokhantverk, 1937); —, *Asymmetric Typography* (London and Toronto: Faber and Faber, Cooper & Beatty, 1967)

98 The best of these are: Lars Dybdahl, *Den Danske Plakat* (Valby: Borgen, 1994); Olof Halldin, *Svenska Affischer. Affischkonst 1895-1960* (Ordalaget Bokförlag, 2012); Lisbet

on individual poster and commercial artists,<sup>99</sup> there have been a number of accounts written on political posters—often focusing on a particular political party.<sup>100</sup> However, the majority of posters reproduced in these sources from the period between the two World Wars belong to a modern commercial art tradition which relied mainly on stylised illustration and hand lettering. Examples of photographic or typographic posters are few and far between, but as this thesis shows, they were perhaps more common than such histories suggest.

For **chapter 1**'s discussion of a network of avant-garde journals and **chapter 5**'s considerations of New Typography's political associations, I have looked at cultural, artistic and political

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Svengren, *Svenska Reklamaffischer: En Bilderbok Om Den Svenska Reklamaffischens Historia* (Stockholm: Affischeringsföretagens Förening, 1986); Jorunn Veiteberg, *Den Norske Plakaten* (Oslo: Pax, 1998)

99 Of those working in a modern commercial art tradition between the wars, the following have received attention in the form of monographs. In Sweden, Anders Beckman (1907–67); in Norway, Harald Damsleth (1906–71) and Alf Ellingsen (1902–84); and in Denmark, Ib Andersen (1907–69) and Arne Ungermann (1902–81). See: Sten Lagerström and Bertil Nydahl, eds. *Design Anders Beckman* (Stockholm: Forum, 1957); Einar Økland, *Damsleth. Han Teikna for Norge* (Bergen: Vigmostad & Bjørke, 2008); Jorunn Veiteberg, *Reklamekunstnaren Alf Ellingsen* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1988); Steen Ejlers et al, eds. *Tegneren Ib Andersen* (København: Vandkunsten, 2008); Lars Dybdahl et al, *Ungermann* (København: Gyldendal, 2002). The Danish Plakatmuseum has also published a series of small books individual poster artists comprised mainly of reproductions.

100 For the posters of the Swedish Conservatives see: Johan Westrin, *Den Moderata Bilden* (Stockholm: Ekerlids förlag, 2008). Exhaustive documentation of the Swedish Social Democrats posters can be found in: Sven Bodin et al, *Affischernas Kamp. Socialdemokraterna 90 År* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarpartiet, 1979). For the posters of the Fascist Norwegian National Unity Party, see: Tom B. Jensen and Hans Fredrik Dahl, eds. *Parti Og Plakat. NS 1933–1945. Ny Forøket utgave* (Oslo: Historisk forlag, 2005). The Norwegian Labour Party's visual materials are discussed in: Lill-Ann Jensen, ed. *Bildet Som Våpen: Norsk Arbeiderbevegelses Bruk Av Bildet I Kamp Og Agitasjon* (Oslo: Tiden, 1984). The following comparative study looks most closely on the Labour Party's posters in its discussion of Norwegian materials: Daniela Büchten, ed. *Propaganda! Russian and Norwegian Posters 1920-1939* (Oslo: Nasjonalbiblioteket & Press, 2013). For a Danish survey of both Social Democratic and Communist posters see: Margit Bech Larsen, ed. *Et Råb Fra Muren. 100 Års Politiske Plakater*. (Arbejdermuseet & Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv, 2012)

journals such as the Danish *Pressen* [The Press, 1923–24], *Kritisk Revy* [Critical Revue, 1926–28], *Forsøgsscenen* [The Experimental Stage, 1929–31], *Plan* (1932–35), *linien* [the line, 1934–35] and *konkretion* [concretion, 1935–36], the Norwegian *PLAN* (1933–36), and the Swedish *flamman* [the flame, 1917–21], *kontakt* [contact, 1931] and *Spektrum* [Spectrum, 1931–33]. Largely ignored by the printing trade at the time, these journals have subsequently been taken up in a canon of little magazines—a useful English-language introduction to which can be found in the first part of the third volume of *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (2013). Its section on Scandinavia contains excellent introductory surveys on each country, with that on Sweden also taking into account Finnish journals written in the Swedish language.<sup>101</sup> These journals have previously been described in literature concerned with their role in Scandinavian political life,<sup>102</sup> and their place in the tradition known as ‘cultural radicalism’.<sup>103</sup> This is a term, popularised in 1955, used to describe a series of cultural reform movements originating in the 1870s with ‘the modern breakthrough’ and the influential lectures of Danish literary critic Georg Brandes (1842–1927) at the University of Copenhagen.<sup>104</sup> Whilst some of the literature on these

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101 See the sections: ‘Introduction: Scandinavia’ by Peter Brooker, ‘Copenhagen: From the Ivory Tower to Street Activism’ by Bjarne Søndergaard Bendtsen, ‘Norway: The Province and its Metropolis’ by Eirik Vassenden and ‘Crossing Borders: Modernism in Sweden and the Swedish Speaking Part of Finland’ by Mats Jansson in: Peter Brooker et al, eds. *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines. Volume III, Europe 1880–1940. Part I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 613–690

102 Elias Bredsdorff, *Revolutionær Humanisme: En Introduktion Til 1930ernes Venstreorienterede Kulturtidsskrifter* (København: Gyldendal, 1982); Olav Harsløf, *Kulturdebat i 20’rne* (Medusa, 1976)

103 Claes-Göran Holmberg *Upprorets Tradition. Den Unglitterära Tidskriften i Sverige* (Stockholm & Lund: Symposion, 1987)

104 Early uses of the term have been traced to 1910 in Sweden and 1923 in Norway: Haakon Flemmen, “Kulturradikalismens Tidlige Begrephistorie.” *Arr - Idéhistorisk Tidsskrift*, no. 3–4 (2012). However, it is considered to have gained common usage following the publication of the two articles: Sigurd Hoel, “Modstand Mod... Kulturradikalismens Fremtidsproblemer – i Revisionens Tegn”, *Politiken*, May 15,



journals and groups, like Morten Thing's *Kommunismens kultur* [The Culture of Communism, 1993], Olav Harsløf's *Mondegruppen* [The Monde Group, 1997] and Johan Svedjedal's *Spektrum – Den svenska drømmen* [Spektrum – The Swedish Dream, 2011] contain a great amount of visual documentation, they tend to engage tentatively with the visual material at hand. An exception can be found in the writing of Torbjørn Jelsbak, who as part of his investigation of the avant-garde's use of language has paid close attention to typography's role in the poetic expression of Danish, as well as international, groups and journals (2008).<sup>105</sup> Particularly useful is his work on the publications associated with D.N.S.S., which has been developed into a conference paper and a chapter in the Danish annual *Bogvennen*.<sup>106</sup> Magdalena Gram's article on *flamman*, also deserves mention as an authoritative account of this journal's design and production.<sup>107</sup> Alongside these little magazines, **chapter 5** draws upon literature on more mainstream politically oriented journals, such as *Morgonbris* [Morning Breeze, 1904–92, 1998–ongoing], the journal of the Swedish Social Democrats' women's movement, which made extensive use of photomontage.<sup>108</sup> Another point of entry to this material is through the monographs published on prominent personalities involved, such as Kaj

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1955; Elias Bredsdorff, "Om at Fodre Sine Karusser", *Politiken*, June 11, 1955

105 Torben Jelsbak, "Avantgardefilologi Og Teksttransmission. Den Historiske Avantgardelitteratur Som Udfordring Til Moderne Filologi Og Litteraturforskning" (PhD thesis, Københavns Universitet, 2008)

106 Torben Jelsbak, "Punkt Og Linje På Flade. Grafisk Totaldesign Og Typografiske Punkt-virkninger I Dansk Ekspressionisme," in *Bogvennen 2001-03*, eds. Sören Möller Christensen and C-H Zakrisson (Malmö: Forening for boghaandværk, 2006); — "Avant-Garde and Politics: The Case of the New Student Society in Copenhagen 1922–24" (paper presented at NORLIT 2011, Roskilde, Denmark, August 4–6, 2011)

107 Magdalena Gram, "The Art Journal as an Artistic Gesture: An Experiment Named *Flamman*," *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 3 (1993): 85–108

108 Eva Åsén Ekstrand "Fotomontaget Som Politiskt Vapen: Kaj Andersson I trettioalets 'Morgonbris,'" in *Nya Röster: Svenska Kvinnotidskrifter under 150 År* ed. Anna Nordenstam (Möklinta: Gidlund, 2014)

Andersson, Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, Rudolf Broby-Johansen, Edvard Heiberg and Poul Henningsen.<sup>109</sup>

## Sources and methodology

The primary sources used consist of a number of Danish, Norwegian and Swedish trade journals published in the fields of printing, advertising and commercial art between the years of 1925 and 1950. This choice of materials was made early in the research process and for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the lack of secondary literature available on modernist typography and graphic design in Scandinavia made it necessary to turn to contemporaneous sources at an early stage. Secondly, as oral sources would necessarily be second-hand, reading articles written at the time offers one of few ways of gaining insight into what practitioners thought of the New Typography. The other possible way of assessing practitioners' thoughts relates to the third reason for the choice of trade journals, namely that they contain visual examples and that they themselves are visual artefacts. A fourth reason is that these journals have been collected and catalogued by the respective countries' national libraries, which makes them relatively easy to track down and access. Moreover, their dates of publication are important pieces of evidence which are helpful for the construction of a narrative. In addition to the research into trade journals, a limited amount of additional primary research

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109 Per Schwanbom, *Hon Gjorde Tidningar Med Själ: Publicisten Kaj Andersson: En Biografi* (Stockholm: Per Schwanbom, 2003); Gitte Tandrup *Zigzag Mod Solen. Udviklingslinjer I Vilhelm Bjerke Petersens Billeder Og Skrifter* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1998); Olav Harsløf, ed. *Broby – En Central Outsider* (København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2000); Sørensen, *Edvard Heiberg Og Dansk Funktionalisme*; Hertel, *PH - En Biografi*

has been undertaken in archives, in order to gain an appreciation of visual materials referred to in the primary and secondary literature. A full list of the journals surveyed and archives used can be found in the bibliography.

In his seminal article ‘The State of Design History’ (1984), Clive Dilnot identified trade journals as potential source materials for design historical research, citing them as sources through which one could gain insight into the attitudes and beliefs held by a particular trade or profession. As he wrote, trade journals can be used “to map the changing values, ideas, and beliefs expressed or communicated in text and graphic layout could, in a sense, map the history of the professions”.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Ellen Mazur Thomson, who used trade journals as source material for her 1997 book *Origin of Graphic Design in America, 1870–1920*, stated that:

trade magazines function as professional communication networks, defining professions to themselves and to others. Over time, by their choice of subjects and presentation, they reveal either explicitly or implicitly the history of a profession, its changing practices and its relation to the larger culture.<sup>111</sup>

The points made by Dilnot and Thomson have informed the development of this thesis. Like Dilnot, it assumes that the graphic layout of a journal indeed speaks of the values, beliefs and ideas of its creators, and in the analysis of these journals will pay particular attention to changes or continuities in the design as indicators of changes or continuity of such values, beliefs and

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110 Clive Dilnot, “The State of Design History, Part II: Problems and Possibilities.” *Design Issues* 1, no. 2 (1984): 19

111 Ellen Mazur Thomson, *Origin of Graphic Design in America, 1870–1920* (Yale University Press, 1997), 37

ideas.<sup>112</sup> Like Thomson, it subscribes to the idea of trade journals forming communication networks. It argues the Scandinavian journals formed sets of discreet networks of knowledge, based on similarities of language and shared professional identities. Moreover, it understands the reference to ‘explicit’ and ‘implicit’ to be in recognition of journals potentially revealing as much about their attitudes by what they withhold as from what they say or show. This problem has been addressed through the study of secondary accounts of literary modernism, the artistic avant-garde, modernist architecture and political propaganda in Scandinavia, as well as those of New Typography in continental Europe.

## Scandinavia as a unit of study

The choice of Scandinavia as a unit for study, rather than any of the individual nations Denmark, Norway or Sweden, requires a certain degree of justification. After all, as Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan write in the introduction to the anthology *Designing Worlds* (2016), “the national has been a dominant category for understanding culture and identity, as well as politics and economics and a host of other factors” since the nineteenth century.<sup>113</sup> Not only that, with specific reference to the literature on Scandinavian Design, Fallan has remarked that the literature “with higher academic ambitions has tended to be more national

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112 The importance of being attentive to change and continuity in a magazine's design to the design historian is outlined in: Jeremy Aynsley and Kate Forde, eds. *Design and the Modern Magazine* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 13

113 Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei. ‘National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization’. In *Designing Worlds: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization*, eds Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016) 1

than pan-Scandinavian in scope” and that pan-Scandinavian literature, on the other hand, is largely made up of coffee table books and exhibition catalogues with a promotional, uncritical or mythologising character.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, one may note that the uncritical use of the label ‘Scandinavian Design’ has been criticised by Kevin Davies. Davies has argued that although ‘Scandinavian Design’ to a certain degree reflected political initiatives to increase political cooperation between the Nordic Countries after the Second World War, the label Scandinavian Design was largely one which created a useful image of Scandinavian unity for marketing purposes, but which did not describe an actual unified design culture. Whilst such factors should not be downplayed or ignored, scholarship on Scandinavian Design arguably also reflects a dynamic observed by Francis G. Castles in the political sciences. In his book *The Social Democratic Image of Society* (1978), he wrote that “there are two sorts of scholars in the Scandinavian field: those who seek to compare one Scandinavian field with another and those who attempt to contrast Scandinavia with the rest of the world”.<sup>115</sup> According to Castles, the first group was made up of ‘insiders’ — Scandinavian nationals whose writing was informed by their experiences of their own countries. The second were the ‘outsiders’ who looked at Scandinavia and wished to compare the three countries collectively with other geographies. However, he saw no reason why these two approaches should be seen as contradictory. Indeed, he found that they are better understood as complementing one another “once it is realised that they differ

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114 Kjetil Fallan et al, “A Historiography of Scandinavian Design,” in *Scandinavian Design: Alternative Histories*, ed. Kjetil Fallan (London and New York: Berg, 2012), 16

115 Francis G. Castles, *The Social Democratic Image of Society: A Study of the Achievements and Origins of Scandinavian Social Democracy in Comparative Perspective* (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), xii

less in their depiction of reality than in the perspective from which it is viewed”.<sup>116</sup> Whilst the ‘outsider’ approach may as yet have received less academically rigorous treatment as Fallan suggests, and whilst the use of ‘Scandinavia’ as a unit should not be invoked uncritically, I think its use can be just as valid in design history as in the political sciences.

In the case of this thesis, the choice of a Scandinavian parameter has been made for two closely related reasons: those of language and identity. Amongst typographic histories, the choice of a Scandinavia as a unit of study on the basis of shared language has precedence with Erik Dal’s *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century*.<sup>117</sup> Because the Scandinavian languages are mutually intelligible, literature published in any of the three languages Danish, Norwegian or Swedish could be read and understood by Danes, Norwegians and Swedes alike. This in turn allowed for the creation of what Ellen Mazur Thompson called ‘professional communication networks’, through trade journals and other initiatives. This series of networks, defined by profession rather than nationality, enabled ideas and knowledge to be shared amongst practitioners from each of the Scandinavian countries in each of the fields this thesis touches upon—printing, advertising, commercial art, avant-garde art, and political activism. A particularly good example of how this worked in practice is the pan-Scandinavian compositors’ journal *Grafisk revy* [Graphic Revue, 1930–36] in which articles were published in all three languages, without translation.

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116 Ibid.

117 Dal, *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century*, 16

*Grafisk revy* was published jointly by the three Scandinavian composers' unions, and its choice to publish in all three languages reflected the roots key contributors like L. Chr. Nielsen (Ludvig Christian, 1861–1946) and editor Nils Wessel (1866–1940) had in the 'Workers Scandinavianism' of the 1890s. 'Scandinavianism', more broadly, describes a number of distinct movements, all based on the perceived notion that the Scandinavian peoples made up a unique community resulting from similarities in language, culture and history, which from the 1830s onwards sought to strengthen this community and create a greater awareness of its existence.<sup>118</sup> Workers' Scandinavianism was a term coined in 1934 to describe a particular form of Scandinavian cooperation forged during the early years of the trade union movement and rooted in a desire to counteract the trafficking of strikebreakers from neighbouring Scandinavian countries.<sup>119</sup> As one might expect from the first trade to organise in each of the three countries, composers were early participants in this wider movement.<sup>120</sup> In response to the trafficking of strikebreakers during 1889's particularly bitter compositor's strike in Kristiania,<sup>121</sup> Nielsen proposed creating a Scandinavian

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118 Ruth Hemstad, *Fra Indian Summer til Nordisk Vinter: Skandinavisk Samarbeid, Skandinavisme og Unionsoppløsningen* (Oslo: Akademisk Publiserings, 2008), 15–22

119 This term originated in a speech given by Swedish Social Democratic prime minister Per Albin Hansson (1885–1946), published in a collection of his speeches entitled *Demokrati: Tal Och Uppsatser* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1935). The same year it was used in Norwegian Labour politician Kaare Fostervoll's (1891–1981) book *Arbeiderskandinavismen i grunnleggningstida* (Oslo: Det Norske Arbeiderpartis Forlag, 1935).

120 The names of the unions and their dates of founding are, in Denmark, Norway and Sweden respectively: Typografisk Forening [Typographic Association, 1869] – from 1903 Dansk Typograf-Forbund [Danish Compositors' Union], Norsk Centralreiskasse for Boktrykkere [Norwegian Central Travel Fund for Printers, 1882] – from 1884 Norsk Centralforening for Boktrykkere [Norwegian Central Association for Printers] and Svenska Typografförbundet [Swedish Compositor's Union, 1886]

121 The strike is described in: Edvard Bull, *Norsk Fagbevegelse. Oversikt over fagbevegelsens historie*. 2nd ed. (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1968), 46–47

compositors' union.<sup>122</sup> Although the union was never formed,<sup>123</sup> cooperation between the Scandinavian composers' unions continued through conferences, the first of which was held in 1891.<sup>124</sup> From 1922 onwards these became regular occurrences, held throughout the 20s and 30s.<sup>125</sup> From 1918 onwards, master printers held similar meetings of representatives, from Finland as well as the Scandinavian countries, under the name of the Nordic Master Printers' Congress.<sup>126</sup>

However, privately published journals established during the 1890s, like Waldemar Zachrisson's (1861–1924) *Boktryckeri-kalender* [Printing Calendar, 1893–1921] and Carl (1869–1925) and Hugo Lagerström's (1873–1956) *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* [Nordic Printing Art, 1900–61] also promoted ideas of Nordic collaboration.<sup>127</sup> The first volume of the latter featured separate Danish, Norwegian and Finnish sections where the latter catered to Finland's Swedish-speaking minority.

Complications around language were an important reason why Finland was not a fully integrated part of the Scandinavian

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122 L. Chr. Nielsen *Finnas f. n. Några Utsigter För Ett Skandinaviskt Typografförbund? Några Beträktelser*. Malmö, 1890.

123 At the Scandinavian Labour Congresses, which were held from 1886 onwards, discussions were also held around the creation of a single Scandinavian trade union central. These talks were also ultimately unsuccessful, with the fifth Scandinavian Labour Congress in Stockholm in 1897 instead deciding a union central with the name Landsorganisasjonen [The National Organisation], or LO for short, should be established in each of the three countries. See: Fostervoll, *Arbeiderskandinavismen i grunnleggningstida*, 8–13

124 Nils Wessel, *Svenska Typografförbundet 1887-1936 - Ett Svenskt Fackförbunds Historia* (Oskarhalmsbladets tryckeri, 1937), 556

125 *Ibid.*, 585–587

126 "Nordisk Boktrykkerråd," *Nordisk Trykkeritidende. Organ for de Grafiske Fag Og Papirindustrien*. 38, no. 6 (1929): 45

127 Each issue of *Boktryckeri-Kalender* contained a list over graphic establishments in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. See: Gustaf Bondeson, *Waldemar Zachrisson. Boktryckare. En Biografi* (Göteborg: Tre Böcker, 1994), 89



printing community during the interwar years. Swedish had historically been Finland's official language of government and was spoken by a sizable minority located mainly in the coastal areas and cities. This was a consequence of Finland having been part of Sweden from around the middle of the 12th century until 1809, when it became incorporated into the Russian Empire as a Grand Duchy. Whilst Finland would not declare itself independent until 1917, Finnish gained parity with Swedish as an official language under Russian rule in 1902, and shortly thereafter it established itself as the nation's main language.<sup>128</sup>

Whilst Finnish composers took part in the Scandinavian composers' conferences from 1935 onwards,<sup>129</sup> they did not contribute to *Grafisk revy*. Finnish journals like *Kirjapainotaito* [Printing, 1906–69] and *Graafikko* [The Graphic Artist, 1935–69] were printed in Finnish and were consequentially opaque to their Danish-, Swedish- and Norwegian-speaking colleagues. Even when Finland took part in an event such as 1930's Den interskandinaviske Vandredstilling i Bogtryk [The Pan-Scandinavian Travelling Exhibition of Printing], organised by Nordlunde and others in relation to a meeting of the Nordic Master Printers' Council in Copenhagen, its contribution was seen as something of an unknown quantity. As Nordlunde commented

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128 As a percentage of the total 'Finnish' population it has been estimated that Swedish was spoken by 17-18% in 1610, 14.6% in 1815, 13.9% in 1865, 14.3% in 1880 and 12.9% in 1900. See: Ann-Marie Ivars, "Swedish in Finland in the 19th Century," in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, ed. Oskar Bandle (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 1476; Mikael Reuter, "Swedish in Finland in the 20th Century." In *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, ed. Oskar Bandle (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 1647–1649

129 Wessel, *Svenska Typografförbundet 1887-1936*, 586-587; "Skandinavisk Konferanse I Oslo," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 62 (1937): 147; E.T. "Skandinavisk Typografkonferanse I Helsingfors," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 63, no. 24 (1938): 190–91

in his opening speech, “it is only a little one generally knows of Finnish printing”.<sup>130</sup>

## Periodisation

Whilst **chapter 1** also discusses earlier developments as part of an investigation into New Typography’s origins, the bulk of this thesis concerns itself with the period between the years of 1927 and 1943. This period corresponds to that often used in texts on Functionalism in Scandinavia,<sup>131</sup> but has been arrived at by identifying two key events in my primary materials. 1927 is when Hugo Lagerström published the first article on New Typography to appear in a Scandinavian trade journal,<sup>132</sup> and 1943 is when Henry Thejls’ textbook *Asymmetri i Typografi* [Asymmetry in Typography] was issued.<sup>133</sup> Appearing during the German occupation of Denmark, Thejls’ book was the last major effort made to promote

130 “Det er jo kun lidt, man i Almindelighed kender til finsk Bogtryk”. C. Volmer Nordlunde, “De Fire Nordiske Landes Bogtryk,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnes Principalforening* 26, no. 4 (1930): 61. The exhibition opened in det danske Kunstindustrimuseum [The Danish Museum of Decorative Art] on the 7th of May 1930

131 According to the Norwegian encyclopedia *Store Norske Leksikon* and the book *Modern Movement Scandinavia* Functionalism lasted from 1920–1940. See: Hege Blom, “Funksjonalisme: arkitektur,” in *Store norske leksikon*. <http://snl.no/funksjonalisme/arkitektur> (Accessed August 11, 2013); Nils-Ole Lund, “Modernism as a Vehicle for Social Change in the Nordic Welfare-States,” in *Modern Movement Scandinavia: Vision and Reality* (Fonden til udgivelse af arkitekturtidsskrift, 1998), 7. Other similar periodisations have been set to 1910-1945, 1925-1950 and 1925-1940: Lars Dybdahl, *Dansk Design 1910-1945: Art Deco & Funktionalisme* (København: Muséet, 1997); Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen, ed. *Nordisk funktionalisme 1925-1950: 15 foredrag fra det nordiske seminar afholdt juni 1985 på det Danske kunstindustrimuseum* (København: Nordisk forum for formgivningshistorie, 1986); Lars Emil Hansen, “Oslofunkis: En Utstilling Om Arkitektur Og Livsstil i Oslo 1925–1940,” *Byminner* no. 4 (2012): 2–33

132 Hugo Lagerström, “‘Elementär typografi’ — ‘Den nya gestaltningen’ — ‘Den nya typografien’ — ‘Den nya stilen’.” En Kort redogörelse om en aktuell rörelse och några varningsord,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 28, no. 4 (1927): 131–136

133 Henry Thejls, *Asymmetri i Typografi* (København: Dansk Typograf-Forbund, 1943)

New Typography in Scandinavia. However, rather than proposing anything new, it presented New Typography as it had come to be understood in Denmark by the late 1930s. It can therefore be seen as the end of a line of development rather than the start of a new one. Indeed, Thejls had himself declared asymmetric and symmetric approaches equally valid the previous year, claiming that “a one-sided interpretation of the profession to one of these positions is false and harmful towards a natural development”.<sup>134</sup> That the end point for this thesis should nevertheless be set during the Second World War is supported by Reimer’s 1951 account. There he claimed that “asymmetry was the preferred typographic form – but during the Second World War this changed, and symmetry slowly gained terrain”.<sup>135</sup>

The Nazis are well known to have repressed modernism in art, including New Typography, as expressions of ‘Cultural Bolshevism’. As a result of their repression and persecution, important figures like John Heartfield (1891–1968), Moholy-Nagy, Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), Tschichold amongst others fled into exile. Those who remained, like Renner and Willi Baumeister (1889–1955), were prevented from carrying on with their work and entered a state of “inner emigration”.<sup>136</sup> Given this knowledge, the date of Thejls’ book may seem surprising. However, that it could appear when

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134 “En eensidig Fortolkning af Faget til en af disse Sider er fejlagtig og til Skade for en naturlig Udvikling”. Henry Thejls, “Symmetri / Asymmetri,” in *Grafisk Aarbog*, eds. Svend Johansen et al (København: Dansk Typograf-Forbund, 1942), 128

135 “Asymmetrien var dog stadig den foretrukne typografiske form — men under den 2den verdenskrig ændrede dette sig, og symmetrien vandt langsomt terræn”. Reimer, “Asymmetrisk Typografi”, 78

136 Christopher Burke. *Paul Renner: The Art of Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2008), 151; Stephanie Barron. “European Artists in Exile: A Reading between the Lines,” in *Exiles Emigres: The Flight of European Artists from Hitler*, ed. Stephanie Barron (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1997), 14.

it did can be understood by taking three factors into account.

Firstly, it is possible that the version of New Typography promoted in *Asymmetri i Typografi* was so far removed from its origins, both aesthetically and politically, and so ingrained in printing trade practices, that the occupying forces did not view it as threatening. Secondly, it is now accepted that the National Socialists' opposition to modernism was not absolute, even in Germany.<sup>137</sup> Elements of modernism survived, and the National Socialists themselves even used it in their own propaganda, especially that which was geared towards an international audience. One of the clearest examples of this can be found in the work Herbert Bayer carried out for a number of National Socialist exhibitions.<sup>138</sup> Thirdly, the nature of German occupation differed from country to country. From the invasion on the 9 April 1940 until the 29 August 1943, Denmark was placed under a protectorate rule during which its institutions were able to function with relatively little interference from the Germans. This extended to the arts. Although immediate sanctions were imposed upon those who openly criticised the Nazis, there was according to the exhibition catalogue *Kunst under krigen* [Art During the War, 1995], no comparison between the treatment artists received in Germany and in Denmark.<sup>139</sup> Modernist painters

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137 Jeremy Aynsley lists Barbara Miller Lane's *Architecture and Politics in Germany* (1968) and Robert R. Taylor's *The Word in Stone* (1974) as the first accounts to put forward this view. See: Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 179. Recently even histories of the Bauhaus include considerations around the relationship between National Socialism and forms of 'Bauhaus modern'. See Paul Betts, "The Bauhaus and National Socialism – A Dark Chapter of Modernism," in *Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler (Könemann, 2006)

138 For a case study of Bayer's work during this period, see: Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 198–211

139 Eva Friis, "Kunst under Krigen," in *Kunst under Krigen. En Udstilling I Anledning Af 50-Året for Danmarks Befrielse*, ed. Eva Friis (København: Statens Museum for Kunst, 1995), 12. More detail on abstract art in Denmark during the war can be found in: Erik Steffensen, "De Abstrakte," in *Kunst under Krigen. En Udstilling I Anledning Af 50-Året for Danmarks Befrielse*, ed. Eva Friis (København: Statens Museum for Kunst, 1995)

like Richard Mortensen (1910–93), who pursued primitivist and abstract modes of expression were free to paint and exhibit. Even after martial law was imposed in 1943, *Helhesten* [The Hell Horse, 1941–44], the art journal associated with Asger Jorn (1914–73) and others, was able to continue its publication. On the other hand, the Danish government had already from 1934 onwards restricted the criticism of Nazism and fascism in the press, fearful of upsetting “the good relationship with our southerly neighbour”.<sup>140</sup>

Occupation in Denmark differed greatly to that in Norway,<sup>141</sup> where the puppet-regime of Vidkun Quisling’s (1887–1945) fascist party Nasjonal Samling [National Unity] imposed a *gleichschaltung*-like process known in Norway as Nazification. A number of cultural institutions had new leaders appointed and were actively used to promote Nazi ideals.<sup>142</sup> For instance, in 1942 the National Gallery in Oslo held the exhibition Kunst og Ukunst [Art and Un-Art], modelled on 1937’s notorious Entartete Kunst [Degenerate Art] exhibition in Munich. Newspapers were taken over, shut down or made subject to censorship.<sup>143</sup> Trade unions also came under attack. Many of them were dissolved and replaced with Nazified versions known as *rikslaug* [national guilds].

140 “det gode Forhold til vor sydlige Nabo”, quoted in: Hans Hertel, “Det Belejrede Og Det Besatte Åndsliv. Kulturkampen Omkring Fascisme Og Nazisme I Dansk Litteratur, Presse Og Kulturdebatt 1920-45,” in *Fra Mellemløstid Til Efterkrigstid. Festskrift Til Hans Kirchoff Og Henrik S. Nissen På 65-Årsdagen Oktober 1998*, ed. Henrik Dethlefsen and Henrik Lundbak (København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag & Københavns Universitet, 1998), 42

141 For an English account of the different experiences of the Nordic countries, see: Henrik S. Nissen, “Adjusting to German Domination,” in *Scandinavia during the Second World War*, ed. Henrik S. Nissen (Minneapolis, Oslo, Bergen & Tromsø: The University of Minnesota Press & Universitetsforlaget, 1983)

142 Hans Fredrik Dahl, “Kulturpolitikken I Norge under NS-Staten,” in *Proceedings*, ed. Anders Frenander and Inga Lalloo (Borås: Högskolan i Borås & Centrum för kulturpolitisk forskning, 2005)

143 Hans Luihn, *De Illegale Avisene: Den Frie, Hemmelige Pressen I Norge under Okkupasjonen* (Oslo & Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1960), 6–8

With borders closed and postal connections under strain, foreign journals became increasingly difficult to acquire in all the Scandinavian countries, even in neutral Sweden.<sup>144</sup> Thus the international exchange of ideas, information and styles through the various trade journal networks was brought to a halt. The journals that did make it through were mostly German, and clearly affected by rationing.<sup>145</sup> Paper rationing was also imposed on newspapers and journals in Norway and had an observable effect on the design of printed materials. From 1 March 1942 the amount of paper used was to be reduced by half. From September 1942, it was reduced by a further third for journals. This led to a reduction in page count and print run. Seeking to maintain the amount of content offered to the reader, text was set in small type sizes, set solid, with margins reduced. Ads were reduced in size. The country's largest paper, *Aftenposten* [The Evening Post], banned the use of eye-catchers and bold frames, associated with the popularised form of Functionalism known as *funkis*.<sup>146</sup>

## Writing from the periphery

The research undertaken for this project has been concerned with the documentation and interpretation of primary sources—predominantly texts. In writing the thesis, these have assumed primacy over received notions from typographic and graphic design histories. In doing so, the thesis has come to align itself

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144 For Denmark, see: "Impulser Fra En Rejse," *Grafisk Teknik* 7, no. 5 (October 1942): 122; That a similar situation applied in Sweden is evident from: "Aktuell tysk typografi," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokkonst, bokindustri, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 43, no. 5 (1942): 179

145 "Aktuell tysk typografi", 179

146 B. Fagerström, "Tidningstypografi i krigstid," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokkonst, bokindustri, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 43, no. 8 (1942): 299–301

with a number of approaches seeking to reform various aspects of how design history traditionally has been written. Over the following pages I will outline how this thesis is positioned in regards to concerns such as centre-periphery relations, the concept of domestication, and the place of New Typography in the canons of typographic and graphic design histories.<sup>147</sup>

By charting New Typography's path in Scandinavia, I have come into contact with debates conducted in design historical scholarship around the relationship between the countries, individuals, or institutions of the centre and those of the periphery or province. As international interest in design history as an academic discipline has increased,<sup>148</sup> calls have been made to reform or revise "the dominant, lopsided representation of the history of design [as] occurring primarily in Western Europe and the United States, particularly in the modern period".<sup>149</sup> Applied to histories of graphic design and typography in 'neglected' parts of Europe this sentiment has resulted in the slow appearance of English-language doctoral theses of its history in Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain.<sup>150</sup>

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147 That these concerns are tightly interrelated has been noted by D. J. Huppatz. He argues that design history's preoccupation with modernism and its reliance on a canon of great designers and 'design icons' is a "significant hurdle in conceptualizing a global design history", in that it is connected with a diffusionist view of design innovation, in which "modernism begins in Western Europe and diffuses outwards". See: "Globalizing Design History and Global Design History": 188

148 Woodham, "Local, National and Global": 257–258

149 Sarah Teasley et al. "Introduction: Towards Global Design History", 2

150 Alessandro Colizzi, "Bruno Munari and the Birth of Modern Graphic Design in Italy, 1928-1945" (PhD thesis, Universiteit Leiden, 2011); Patricia Córdoba, "Typography and Graphic Design in Spain: From Gothic Revival to Avant-Garde" (PhD thesis, University of Reading, 2003); Marina Emmanouil, "Graphic Design and Modernisation in Greece, 1945–1970" (PhD thesis, Royal College of Art, 2012); Robin Fior, "Sebastião Rodrigues and the Development of Modern Graphic Design in Portugal" (PhD thesis, University of Reading, 2005)

The centre-periphery model has been seen as unsatisfactory by several writers working on subjects located in the so-called periphery. For instance, the Swedish art historian Jeff Werner has questioned the usefulness of transposing international narratives to Swedish art history—and then particularly those relating to modernist practices—arguing that a centre-periphery model tracing the effects of developments originating at the centre on the periphery will always leave the latter looking “like a pale cousin from the countryside”.<sup>151</sup> Faced with a strict centre-periphery model’s inability to construct more nuanced regional narratives, the Spanish design historian Anna Calvera has identified Guy Julier’s idea of a ‘semi-periphery’—in which countries may interact with or create its own centres—as a first step toward breaking down the binary relationship of centre and periphery.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, she borrows the idea of polycentric narratives from the field of cultural geography—proposing a structure where “the geography of design becomes a crossroads, a puzzle of relationships and exchanges”.<sup>153</sup>

Similarly, it has been argued in the field of avant-garde studies that the practice of writing art history within national frameworks has hindered the understanding the avant-garde’s ‘supernational’ nature,<sup>154</sup> which enabled the rapid exchange of styles, texts and

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151 Jeff Werner, “Turnpikes and Blind Alleys. Modernism from the Perspective of the Provinces,” in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 99

152 Guy Julier. ‘Re-Drawing the Geography of European Design: The Case of Transitional Countries’. *Design Culture*. <http://designculture.info/reviews/ArticleStash/GJReDrawing1997.pdf>. (accessed September 6, 2017)

153 Calvera, “Local, Regional, National, Global and Feedback”: 373, 375

154 Hubert van den Berg has seized on Kurt Schwitter’s use of the term “übernationalität”. Unlike ‘internationality’ this term implies a total disregard for and transcendence of nationality: Hubert van den Berg, “‘Übernationalität’ Der Avantgarde — (Inter-)Nationalität Der Forschung. Hinweis Auf Den Internationalen Konstruktivismus in Der Europäischen Literatur Und Die Problematik Ihrer



ideas across borders.<sup>155</sup> Drawing upon the image of the rhizome introduced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari as an image of thought by which to understand the complex structure of their book *Mille plateaux* [*A Thousand Plateaus*, 1980, tr. 1987], Hubert van der Berg has proposed that the avant-garde should be considered as a fluctuating, omni-directional, self-organising, non-hierarchical malleable structure without an organised point of entry or exit.<sup>156</sup> As opposed to the often-used model of centre and periphery, such a network is characterised by flow rather than hierarchy. In my opinion, this model is useful in that it allows the historian to decisively depart from the centre-periphery relationship, and its emphasis on a lack of hierarchy offers a way of thinking about international connections which affords a higher degree of agency to protagonists in sites traditionally seen as belonging to the periphery. Noting that certain parts of the network may be said to be tightly linked, whilst others may “barely [be] connected to others” as a result of their different outlooks or long communication lines, van der Berg demonstrates that he does not reject the importance of artistic hubs or that practitioners or groups outside these may have experienced a certain degree of isolation — this is not the purpose of the network model, rather it is to find a different way of thinking about how these groups and practitioners in their different circumstances related and interacted with one another.<sup>157</sup>

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Literaturwissenschaftlichen Erfassung,” in *Der Blick Vom Wolkenkratzer: Avantgarde – Avantgardekritik – Avantgardeforschung*, ed. Wolfgang Asholt and Walter Fähnders (Brill & Rodopi, 2000)

155 Malte Hagener, “Mushrooms, Ant Paths and Tactics: The Topography of the European Film Avant-Garde,” in *Decentering the Avant-Garde*, eds. Per Bäckström and Benedikt Hjartarson (Amsterdam and New York: Editions Rodopi, 2014)

156 For the description of the rhizome see: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), 7–13, 21–25

157 Hubert van den Berg, “Mapping Old Traces of the New. Towards a Historical

The question of agency is also central to the concept of ‘domestication’. This term, which in media and technology studies is used to describe how ‘wild’ technologies are ‘tamed’—that is, how they are taken up and integrated into the structures and daily routines of users and their environments—has been taken up by design history where it can be seen to replace notions like ‘influence’.<sup>158</sup> As domestication has yet to find widespread use in design historical writing, a brief history of the term is perhaps in order here. It was originally developed as an alternative, not to influence, but to what in the history of technology is known as ‘diffusion’.<sup>159</sup> Theorised by Everett M. Rogers in *The Diffusion of Innovations* (1962),<sup>160</sup> this concept describes how innovations are communicated over time to participants of a social system composed of five different ‘adopter types’, who as part of an ‘innovation-decision process’ have the choice between adopting or rejecting the innovation. The adopter types, which are named innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards are classified on a sliding scale of ‘innovativeness’ in which innovators are described as “venturesome” and laggards “traditional”.<sup>161</sup>

Domestication was conceived as an alternative to this linear and deterministic view of how technologies spread. Taking its cue from

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Topography of Early Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde(s) in the European Cultural Field(s),” *Arcadia – International Journal for Literary Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 349

158 ‘Influence’ is described as old-fashioned concept and art-historical hobby-horse in: Teasley et al. “Introduction: Towards Global Design History”, 4

159 The term ‘domestication’ was introduced in: Roger Silverstone et al, “Information and Communication Technologies and the Moral of the Household,” in *Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces*, eds Roger Silverstone and Eric Hirsch (London and New York: Routledge, 1992)

160 Everett M. Rogers *The Diffusion of Innovations* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962)

161 Everett M. Rogers *Diffusion of Innovations*. Fifth Edition (New York, London, Toronto & Sydney: Free Press, 2003), 282–285

Bruno Latour's call to look inside the black box of technology,<sup>162</sup> it builds on theories of consumption and everyday life, as well as on anthropological studies.<sup>163</sup> It makes use of observation, and focuses on use rather than innovation. Moreover, it pays close attention to "the complexity of everyday life and technology's place within its dynamics, rituals, rules, routines and patterns".<sup>164</sup> Drawing on the metaphor of taming wild animals, it proposes that consumption is not passive, but an active and creative process, in which users adapt and modify technologies in accordance with their abilities, needs and desires—whether these be practical, social or emotional. At the same time, the user's own behaviour, feelings and attitudes are also changed by the product or technology in question. As Roger Silverstone, one of the theory's originators, puts it:

Wild animals then, wild technologies now: what's the difference? In both cases, unconstrained, they pose threats and challenges. In both cases, brought within the fold, they become sources of power and sustenance. Domestication is practice. It involves human agency. It requires effort and culture, and leaves nothing as it is.<sup>165</sup>

The use of domestication as design historical concept has been advocated by Norwegian design historian Kjetil Fallan. He has

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162 Bruno Latour, *Science in Action* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987)

163 For domestication's theoretical roots, see: Leslie Haddon, "Domestication Analysis, Objects of Study, and the Centrality of Technologies in Everyday Life," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 36, no. 2 (2011): 311–23; Roger Silverstone, "Domesticating Domestication. Reflections of the Life of a Concept," in *Domestication of Media and Technology*, eds Thomas Berker et al. (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006), 231. Key points of departure include: Jean Baudrillard, "Consumer Society," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1984); Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980); Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987)

164 Thomas Berker et al, "Introduction", 1

165 Silverstone, "Domesticating Domestication", 231

argued that it can be used, not only to describe products, objects and technologies, but also theories, systems, beliefs and ideas.<sup>166</sup> Later published in the book *Design History: Understanding Theory and Method* (2010),<sup>167</sup> his thoughts on domestication were first developed in his PhD thesis *Modern Transformed: The Domestication of Industrial Design Culture in Norway, ca. 1940–1970* (2007). Here they informed a discussion of how the mid-century Norwegian design community domesticated ideologies inherited from both the Norwegian traditional applied art movement and international Modernism, as well as to how this related to practice.<sup>168</sup> For instance, Fallan argued that the editorial line of the magazine *Bonytt* [Dwelling News, 1941–67], showed one such domestication process in action. Rather than either accepting or rejecting the international Modernism it regarded as cold, stark and inhuman, it criticised these qualities and instead worked “to put a human face on Modernism”.<sup>169</sup> Indeed, this idea of a humanised or ‘softened’ Modernism, familiar from many texts on Scandinavian design, is remarkably similar to the description of a successful domestication process. As Thomas Berker, Maren Hartmann, Yves Punie and Katie J. Ward write in the introduction to the book *Domestication of Media and Technology*:

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166 Kjetil Fallan, “Modern Transformed”, 132–133. The scope for what term ‘domestication’ can be used to describe had by this point already been significantly revised from its first appearance in Silverstone et al’s “Information and Communication Technologies and the Moral of the Household”. Initially referring specifically to the use of media in the context of the ‘moral economy’ of the household, it had in the interim been reformulated by Knut H. Sørensen and Merete Lie to refer to the use of technology in everyday life: Merete Lie and Knut H. Sørensen, “Making Technology Our Own? Domesticating Technology into Everyday Life,” in *Making Technology Our Own? Domesticating Technology into Everyday Life*, eds. Merete Lie and Knut Sørensen (Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oxford & Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1996), 13

167 Kjetil Fallan, *Design History: Understanding Theory and Method* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010)

168 Fallan, “Modern Transformed”, 138

169 *Ibid.*, 178

When the domestication of technologies has been ‘successful’, the technologies are not regarded as cold, lifeless, problematic and challenging consumer goods at the root of family arguments and/or work-related stress, but as comfortable, useful tools - functional and/or symbolic - that are reliable and trustworthy.<sup>170</sup>

The concrete ways in which users negotiate with a particular technology, whether individually or in groups, in order to tame them and make them meaningful, are termed ‘domestication strategies’.<sup>171</sup> The shape each such strategy takes will necessarily vary from situation to situation, depending on the technology and individual or group in question. However, the American cultural historian Jeffrey L. Meikle has proposed three modes in which modernity was domesticated in the United States. It should here be noted that Meikle’s use of the term domestication is not supported by the same theoretical framework as Fallan’s, informed instead by particular histories of architecture and advertising design.<sup>172</sup> However, as the process he describes is similar enough in nature to Fallan’s I will argue it warrants inclusion here. The first ‘mode’ observed by Meikle was placing modernity “in a historical continuum linking past, present, and future”, something which allowed it to be seen as part of a gradual evolution rather than a violent rupture.<sup>173</sup> The second was to limit modernity to

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170 Berker et al, “Introduction”, 3

171 Tove Håpnes, “Not in Their Machines: How Hackers Transform Computers into Subcultural Artefacts,” in *Making Technology Our Own? Domesticating Technology into Everyday Life*, ed. Merete Lie and Knut H. Sørensen (Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oxford & Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1996), 128

172 Meikle lists the following sources as having informed his use of the term ‘domestication’: William H. Jordy, “The Domestication of Modern: Marcel Breuer’s Ferry Cooperative Dormitory at Vassar College,” in *American Buildings and Their Architects*. vol.5: The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century (New York: Doubleday, 1972); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream. Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); John Hewitt, “The ‘Nature’ and ‘Art’ of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s,” *Journal of Design History* 5, no. 2 (1992): 121–39

173 Jeffrey L. Meikle, “Domesticating Modernity: Ambivalence and Appropriation,

discrete zones, such as the modern city — outside which the world would remain “timelessly whole and reassuringly traditional”.<sup>174</sup> The third was to incorporate icons of modernism into one’s own environment and thereby neutralise its threatening, unfamiliar aspects. The first mode, in particular, but also the second, can be said to describe positions adopted by practitioners discussed in this thesis. Through the use of the term ‘Functionalism’, discussed in **chapter 4**, New Typography became seen as part of a historical continuum which in Denmark stretched back to Knud V. Engelhardt’s first typographic works of 1909 or Aage Rafn’s book on *Liselund* (1918). In Sweden, Anders Billow emphasized the 19th century origins of the sans serif, and the similarity between the asymmetric compositions of Artistic Printing and New Typography were repeatedly commented upon all over Scandinavia. Use of the second mode can be observed in the argument put forward by Viggo Hasnæs and others, that New Typography was a style intended for jobbing print and not books. Moreover, it can be seen in the prolific use of photomontage in the political graphics of the left, discussed in **chapter 5**, and the hesitant usage of the same in mainstream advertising, book cover and poster design, described in **chapter 3**.

## Structure

The thesis is divided into the following five thematically based chapters, each of which also considers the relation between the printing trade and one of the other groups previously

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1920-40,” in *Designing Modernity: The Arts of Reform and Persuasion 1885–1945*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (Thames & Hudson, 1995), 143–144

174 *Ibid.*, 143–144

mentioned: avant-garde artists, commercial artists and lay-out men, architects, political activists and intellectuals. Whilst the first three chapters look at the degree to which New Typography exerted a transformative effect within the professional cultures of the graphic trades, the last two examine how New Typography was used in the Scandinavian societies to further cultural and political aims.

Chapter 1: 'Origins and networks' describes how New Typography, from its origins in the avant-garde came to the attention of the Scandinavian printing trade. It will argue that early examples of the kind of typographic experimentation that would later become known as New Typography were initially introduced to Scandinavia in the early 1920s, through an international network of avant-garde journals. In Scandinavia, this included titles like *flamman* [the flame, 1917–21] and *Pressen* [The Press, 1923–24]. However, these journals failed to make an impact on the trade. Whilst senior printing trade figures would undoubtedly have been aware of Tschichold's highly influential 'elementare typographie' [elemental typography] special issue of *Typographische Mitteilungen* [Typographic Messages] in 1925, it was not until 1927 that New Typography came under debate in the Scandinavian printing trade. By then, it had been domesticated by the German printing trade, and the promotional materials sent out by German type foundries made it impossible to ignore.

Chapter 2: 'Heightening the trade' argues that Scandinavian printers, following the example set by the *Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker* [Educational Union of German Printers],

integrated New Typography into their educational activities with a dual aim. The first was to secure a competitive advantage over rival graphic trades, and the second to ensure the employability of individual compositors in an increasingly mechanised workplace by teaching them new skills. These activities, which furthered the domestication process New Typography had undergone in the German printing trade, included the arrangement of formal education in trade schools, the formation of independent educational societies, and the publication of trade journals in which the aesthetic aspects of typography were discussed alongside other questions relating to the trade. In these journals, the Scandinavian printers made theoretical contributions to New Typography by publishing articles exploring how to integrate it with existing printing practice.

Chapter 3: 'Cultures and practices of advertising' describes how attitudes to New Typography differed between the different types of graphic practitioner in the pre-graphic designer context of 1930s Scandinavia. The categories examined are jobbing printers, commercial artists and lay-out men. It will be argued each practitioner type's ability and need to engage with New Typography depended on their investment in, and dependence upon, particular skills and reproduction technologies. Their level of interest also differed according to what ideas were held within each trade as to what good advertising was and how it should look. The different viewpoints were reflected by the respective set of trade journals servicing each practitioner type. These show little evidence of ideas and styles being exchanged across professional boundaries. Instead, they were part of a discreet set of networks



which were more likely to report on developments occurring within a particular trade abroad than on those occurring within a related trade in their immediate geographic vicinity. In closing, the chapter pays particular attention to the conflict arising from the rise of the lay-out man. From his position within the American-style full-service advertising agency, this new professional figure was able to take an increasing amount of design work out of the hands of the compositor. The loss of creative autonomy to the lay-out man puts the success of the printing trade's domestication project in doubt, as increased creative opportunity and competitive advantage over rival trades were cited as two important reasons for choosing to engage with New Typography in the first place.

Chapter 4: 'Style, reform and resistance' looks at how Functionalism, the dominant modernist current in 1930s Scandinavia, related to New Typography. Whilst initially perceived as separate strands, Functionalism and New Typography soon meshed together, resulting in the label 'Functionalist typography'. The creation of this new term had a significant effect on the further development of New Typography. Employed as a domestication strategy, it enabled debaters to evaluate New Typography's merits against commonsensical notions of what functionality in typography was. They were no longer bound by the theoretical writings of Tschichold and others. This shift favoured the traditionalist view because it became possible to criticise New Typography's aesthetic by claiming it was not functional, whilst traditional practices could be positioned as more functional, and thereby also progressive.

Chapter 5: 'The Future-people and the Middle Way' examines the political associations of New Typography and photomontage in Scandinavia. Taking issue with the popular link between the 'Middle Way' of Social Democratic politics and a 'softened' or 'humanised' Functionalist aesthetic in design, it offers a discussion of how New Typography and photomontage related to a number of specific political cultures on the left. It begins with a discussion of the different attitudes to New Typography exhibited by poets, artists and intellectuals on the political left. The chapter then turns to the Swedish cooperative society Kooperativa Förbundet's graphic materials, arguing that the link between Functionalism in architecture, New Typography and Social Democracy was particularly strongly evidenced there. It argues that whilst New Typography became depoliticised in its domesticated form, the use of photomontage was to a greater extent limited to the political sphere, and therefore able to retain its radical associations. Photomontage found use in the publications of Functionalist architects and in the publications of the Clartéist group Monde. Whilst the Social Democratic parties in general were wary of alienating their expanding electorate and preferred to communicate with them in a modern commercial art style, photomontage was taken up by their youth and women's groups in a strategic way to appeal to these two demographics which held more positive views of the Soviet Union than the population at large.

# Origins and networks: the New Typography of the avant-garde, its domestication by German printers and first contacts in Scandinavia

This opening chapter details early contacts with New Typography in Scandinavia. In order to gain an appreciation of the movement's original aims and purposes, it also traces New Typography's roots as they are commonly perceived. It argues that New Typography was spread around Europe and beyond through a network of journals used by avant-garde groups to communicate their ideas with one another. Although there were only few nodes to this network in Scandinavia, they were nevertheless present in the shape of the Swedish artist Georg Pauli's journal *flamman* [the flame, 1917–21] and the Danish group D.N.S.S.'s broadsheet *Pressen* [The Press, 1922–24]. As will be demonstrated, New Typography therefore had a presence in Scandinavia before Jan Tschichold published his special issue of *Typographische Mitteilungen* [Typographic Messages] entitled 'elementare typographie' [elemental typography] in 1925. However, this presence was not acknowledged by the Scandinavian printing trade. New Typography only came to the attention of Scandinavian master printers and compositors after it was taken up by the German trade.

This thesis acknowledges the importance of Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue. However, it takes issue with the idea that printers came to 'accept' the views and styles promoted there in a passive way. As set out in the **introduction**, it argues that practitioners actively domesticated it to suit their own needs, abilities and desires, through debate and practice. Whilst the following chapter explores how New Typography was taken up by the Scandinavian printing trade's educational efforts as part of this process, this chapter looks at how it transpired in Germany. Particular attention will be paid to the work undertaken by trade journals such as *Typographische Mitteilungen*, but it will also be argued that type samples played an active role. A number of type samples were issued by German foundries in the style of New Typography following its commercialisation. It was these which first forced the initially dismissive Scandinavian trade press to take notice.

## A Scandinavian precursor?

Following the narrative provided in Tschichold's *Die neue Typographie* [*The New Typography*, 1928, tr. 1995], graphic design histories commonly trace New Typography's origins back to the Italian Futurist Filippo Tommasi Marinetti's (1876–1944) manifesto 'Destruction of Syntax — Imagination without Strings — Words-in-Freedom' (1913). However, it could be argued, as Erik Ellegaard Frederiksen has, that a Scandinavian precursor existed in the work of Knud V. Engelhardt (1882–1931).<sup>1</sup> Whilst Engelhardt himself used the title 'architect and master printer', he is now considered

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1 Erik Ellegaard Frederiksen, *Knud V. Engelhardt. Arkitekt & Bogtrykker. 1882-1931.* (København: Forening for boghaandværk / Arkitektens Forlag, 1965), 85

Denmark's first industrial designer. He stood for an approach to design which combined a concern for functionality with a strong aesthetic sensibility and an interest in working on a wide range of often humble objects.

An early demonstration of his versatility and meticulous attention to detail can be found in his work for Copenhagen Tramways (1910), a job for which he specified all aspects of the exterior and interior of a tram carriage. Observing that any sharp corners used in the tram's wooden interior would soon be worn down and rounded through frequent use, he decided that the use of rounded corners should inform all aspects of the carriage's design. Although this was in part informed by Engelhardt's aesthetic preferences, it also had practical advantages — notably by making the carriage easier to clean. Practical considerations also informed the tram's colour scheme. The undercarriage received a light grey coat of paint, matched to the colour of the dirt from the street, to ensure that this would not easily show up. The rounded aesthetic also informed the lettering devised for the tram's signage, such as its destination boards.<sup>2</sup> The scope of the job even extended to the design of tickets and brochures. Amongst these was a redesigned transfer ticket (1913), which offered a dramatic improvement in clarity from that previously used.

Although he also designed letter forms, such as those developed for the Baltic Exhibition in Malmö (1914) and the street signage for Copenhagen's northern suburb of Gentofte (1927), Engelhardt's typographic interests centred on what would today be considered

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2 For detail on the design of the tram carriage see, for instance: Thomas Dickson, *Dansk Design* (København: Gyldendal, 2006), 408–411

aspects of information design: the layout of forms, tables and signage.<sup>3</sup> According to Frederiksen, such work appealed to Engelhardt because his sense of order meant he was fascinated by schematic arrangements. A notable result of this desire to impose order in, and through, typography can be found in Engelhardt's design for the introductory pages to the 1909 edition of Copenhagen's telephone directory. Whilst its cover drew upon the *skønvirke* [beautiful work] style of Thorvald Bindsbøll (1846–1908),<sup>4</sup> the page containing the telephone company's contact details received a radically different treatment.<sup>5</sup> Engelhardt organized the content by using typefaces of contrasting form and size, thereby creating a page where the relevant pieces of information could be quickly and easily scanned. The company's various departments were placed under headings set in a sans serif type which was far larger than the body text. The body text itself was set in Plantin. This contained the names, titles and telephone details of individual employees. Names were emphasized in italic, and repetition was avoided by using square brackets to group individuals sharing a telephone.

Upon his death in 1931 Engelhardt was heralded as “Denmark's first Functionalist”.<sup>6</sup> Of his typography, Johan Olsen (1886–1946),

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3 Although the term ‘information design’ is recent, the practice of designing diagrams, charts and forms is not. This is evident in the books of Edward Tufte, where a host of historical examples are given. See, for instance: Edward R. Tufte, *Envisioning Information* (Graphics Press, 1990)

4 ‘Skønvirke’, after the journal of the same name (1914–27), is the term used for the Danish equivalent of Jugend or Art Nouveau

5 Bindsbøll is Engelhardt's senior in a line of architect-graphic designers identified by Steen Ejlers as coming out of the School of Architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Ejlers' list, which is a selective one, is comprised of Thorvald Bindsbøll (1846–1908), Knud V. Engelhardt (1882–1931), Gunnar Biilman Petersen (1897–1968), Ib Andersen (1907–69) and Claus Achton Friis (1917–99). See: Steen Ejlers, “Architects in Danish Graphic Design.” *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 7 (1997)

6 “Danmarks Første Funktionalist.” *Epoke* 1, no. 5 (1930–31): 8

master printer at Det Berlingske Bogtrykkeri in Copenhagen made the following statement:

Long before what is currently called modern typography gained a foothold, Knud V. Engelhardt had developed his own style which was founded precisely on the functional in typography. And I am not insulting any of the practitioners of the new style, when I claim that Engelhardt did it better than it, as a whole, is done today. His typographic work is clear and logical without seeming cold. The materials, whether paper or covers, are chosen with assured taste and a fertile imagination. And the best thing about his works: they are so pleasantly free from the contrived and artificial.<sup>7</sup>

Despite Olsen's glowing assessment, and the connection made between Engelhardt's work and the 'modern' or 'functional' typography of 1931, none of the numerous articles on New Typography published in Denmark up until that point had made any mention of Engelhardt or his work. It is therefore questionable whether it exerted any direct influence on the Danish printing trade, or informed its views on New Typography. Nor did his style, which at times was so reminiscent of what was to come, give rise to imitators either in Denmark or abroad. This being said, his approach to design undoubtedly informed the work of a younger generation of Danish architects. Poul Henningsen (1894–1967) and Steen Eiler Rasmussen (1898–1990) would both come to advocate

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7 "Længe før den nu saakaldte moderne Typografi fandt Indpas, havde Knud V. Engelhardt opbygget sin egen Stil, som netop hvilede paa det hensigtsmæssige i Typografien. Og jeg fortrædiger ingen af den nye Stils Udøvere, naar jeg paastaar, at Engelhardt gjorde det bedre, den det gennemgaaende sker i Dag. Hans typografiske Arbejder er klare og logiske uden at virke kolde. Materialerne, om det er Papir eller Omslag, er valgt med sikker Smag og frodig Fantasi. Og hvad der er det bedste ved hans Arbejder: de er saa rart fri for det skabagtige og affekterede". Johan Olsen, "Arkitekt Knud V. Engelhardt Død," *De Grafiske Fag* 27, no. 3 (1931–32): 45

interpretations of Functionalism which from different angles opposed what they regarded as the aesthetic approach associated with the Bauhaus — precisely the kind of work described by Olsen as ‘contrived and artificial’. Although Engelhardt did not receive any mention in Poul Henningsen’s journal *Kritisk Revy* [Critical Revue, 1926–28],<sup>8</sup> Henningsen would in 1930 hold up Engelhardt’s tram carriage as an exemplary, pioneering example of the self-effacing and functional approach to design this journal had sought to advocate.<sup>9</sup> These views on Functionalism and their impact on Danish typography in particular, will be returned to in **chapter 4**.

## Origins and spread

Like Engelhardt, a number of New Typographers received training in architecture. A list would include names such as El Lissitzky (1890–1941), Ladislav Sutnar (1897–1976), Karel Teige (1900–51), Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart (1899–1962) and Piet Zwart. However, according to Tschichold’s history of the movement, its origins lay not in architecture, but in the poetry and art of the avant-garde. As mentioned, Marinetti had published the manifesto ‘Destruction of Syntax — Imagination without Strings — Words-in-Freedom’ in 1913.<sup>10</sup> Seeking to distance himself from the

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8 Lars Dybdahl, “»Ansigtet imod den lykkeligere fremtid« Tidsskriftet *Kritisk Revy* (1926-28),” in *Nordisk funktionalisme 1925-1950: 15 foredrag fra det nordiske seminar afholdt juni 1985 på det Danske kunstindustrimuseum*, ed. Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen (København: Nordisk forum for formgivningshistorie, 1986), 33

9 Poul Henningsen, “Sporvognen Som Kunst. Betragtninger over Type Og Smag, Kunst Og Mode,” *Nyt Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri* 3, no. 4 (1930)

10 Although Words-in-Freedom remains the best known, Maurizio Scudiero has pointed out that it was in fact the last of four consecutive manifestos published by Marinetti and his co-signatories. See: Maurizio Scudiero. “A Transverse Reading of Typography and the Graphic Avant-Gardes,” in *The Avant-Garde Applied (1890–1950)*, (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 2012), 168



Symbolist poetry he had previously been associated with,<sup>11</sup> this text proposed a programme which decisively and radically broke with typographic convention in its pursuit of a liberated linguistic expression:

My revolution is aimed at the so-called typographical harmony of the page, which is contrary to the flux and reflux, the leaps and bursts of style that run through the page. On the same page, therefore, we will use *three or four colors of ink*, or even twenty different typefaces if necessary. For example: italics for a series of similar or swift sensations, boldface for the violent onomatopoeia, and so on. With this typographical revolution and this multicolored variety in the letters I mean to redouble the expressive force of words.<sup>12</sup>

That Marinetti subsequently put these ideas into practice, can be seen in his book *Zang Tumb Tumb* (1914) and collected poems *Les mots en liberté futuristes* [Futurist Words in Freedom, 1919]. Marinetti had a significant impact on avant-garde artists and poets all over Europe. For instance, one strand of influence ran to Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), who in Paris wrote poetry which appropriated words and phrases in the spirit of Cubist collage, and whose *Calligrammes* made a contribution to poetry’s graphic form by resurrecting the ancient art of the picture poem.<sup>13</sup>

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11 Johanna Drucker has emphasized that Marinetti particularly was at pains to distance himself from the work of Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898) whose *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolire le hasard* [A throw of the dice will never abolish chance], first published in the British journal *Cosmopolis* in 1897 and later reconfigured as a book in 1914, she sees as “the single most striking precedent for avant-garde experiment with the visual form of poetic language”. Johanna Drucker, *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909–1923* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 50

12 F. T. Marinetti, “Destruction of Syntax—Imagination Without Strings—Words-in-Freedom,” in *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design* (New York: Allworth Press, 1999), 10. Originally published in *Lacerba*, Florence, 15 Jun. 1913. Emphasis in original

13 These were collected and published posthumously as: Guillaume Apollinaire,

A second strand led to Zurich where it influenced Tristan Tzara's (1896–1963) designs for the Dadaists' graphic materials, including that of their self-titled journal. Reflecting Tzara's call for a literature in which in "every page must explode",<sup>14</sup> these designs made use of a mix of typefaces and sizes — giving them the appearance of being assembled from multiple sources.<sup>15</sup> In Germany, Dada found expression in the work of Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948) in Hanover and in the politically charged work of Berlin Dadaists like Raoul Hausmann (1886–1971) and John Heartfield (1891–1968).

New Typography was also informed by typographic practices relating to advances in abstract and non-figurative art. In contrast to the expressive, often onomatopoeic, approach associated with 'Words-in-Freedom', this approach strived for an objective, universal language of form. The Dutch De Stijl [The Style] group used sans serif typefaces and asymmetric layouts in their graphic materials from the end of 1920 onwards, notably in Theo Van Doesburg (1883–1931) and Piet Mondrian's (1872–1944) design of the group's self-titled journal.<sup>16</sup> In Russia, Suprematism, the extreme form of abstraction introduced by Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935) in 1915 with works such as *Black Square* and *Aeroplane Flying*, informed the active use of abstract graphic shapes in designs like Lissitzky's propaganda poster *Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge* (1919) and children's book *About Two Squares* (1922).<sup>17</sup>

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*Calligrammes: Poèmes de La Paix et de La Guerre* (1913–1916) (Paris: Mercure de France, 1918)

14 Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," in *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey. New Edition (Malden, Mass., Oxford & Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 481 Originally published as: Tristan Tzara, "Manifest Dada 1918," *Dada*, no. 3 (1918): unpaginated

15 Drucker, *The Visible Word*, 200–204

16 Alston W. Purvis *Dutch Graphic Design, 1918–1945* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992), 27

17 Although an original Russian version and a Dutch translation were both published

Another Russian movement with a particularly strong impact on New Typography was Constructivism. Given its importance, it merits closer investigation. Its formal language can be said to originate around 1914 with Vladimir Tatlin's (1885–1953) 'counter reliefs',<sup>18</sup> but the term itself arose much later with The First Working Group of Constructivists. This group was founded in March 1921 by artists Alexander Rodchenko (1891–1956), Varvara Stepanova (1894–1958), Konstantin Medunetsky (1899–1935), Karl Ioganson, the brothers Georgii (1900–33) and Vladimir Stenberg (1899–1992) and the writer and critic Alexei Gan (1887–1942).<sup>19</sup> The Revolution of 1917 had led the Russian avant-garde to call for all aspects of life—including morals, philosophy, and art—to be recreated according to Communist principles.<sup>20</sup> The resulting utopian society would in turn would help bring about the New Human Being.<sup>21</sup> Following such sentiments, the group declared that their task was to find "*the communistic expression of material structures*".<sup>22</sup> They opposed the bourgeois distinction between

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in 1922, *About Two Squares* was designed and written in 1920. The Russian edition was published on Verlag "Skythen" in Berlin, and the Dutch appeared as issue no. 10–11 of *De Stijl*'s fifth volume, and as a limited edition of 50 copies

- 18 At the 'First Exhibition of Painterly Reliefs', held in Tatlin's studio from the 10th to 14th of May 1914
- 19 Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 94. As Lodder writes, the core group consisting of Gan, Rodchenko and Stepanova, was set up earlier, in December 1920
- 20 Boris Kuschner, "Kommunisty-futuristy," *Iskusstvo kommyny* no. 9 (1919): 3, quoted in Christina Lodder, "Constructivism and Productivism in the 1920s," in *Art into Life: Russian Constructivism, 1914–1932* (Seattle and New York: The Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington and Rizzoli, 1990), 99
- 21 In English the term most often used is New Man, or New Soviet Man, but in Scandinavia and in Germany it was not gender specific. For a discussion tracing the roots of the Soviet New Human Being from its Enlightenment origins New Human Beings, see: Yinghong Cheng. *Creating the "New Man": From Enlightenment Ideals to Socialist Realities*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 8–47.
- 22 Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, "Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists," in *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, New Edition, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 341. Emphasis in original

artistic and industrial production and therefore called for a move away from “experimental activity ‘removed from life’ towards real experimentation”,<sup>23</sup> that is away from purely artistic ‘laboratory work’ to the manufacture of useful objects in industry. In time, this move would lead a number of the group’s members —Rodchenko, the Stenberg brothers, Gan— to make important contributions to typography, photomontage and poster design.

Lissitzky was instrumental in introducing Constructivism to Europe. Towards the end of 1921 he arrived in Berlin, and over the course of 1922 he would position himself as Constructivism’s primary spokesman in Germany.<sup>24</sup> He published the journal *Veshch / Objèt / Gegenstand* [Object, 1922] along with Ilya Ehrenburg (1891–1967),<sup>25</sup> and participated in important gatherings of avant-garde artists, like the Congress of International Progressive Artists — held in Düsseldorf that May, and the International Congress of Constructivists and Dadaists — held in Weimar in September. At the former, Lissitzky, van Doesburg and the abstract film-maker Hans Richter (1888–1976) founded the International Faction of Constructivists, and at the latter they signed the ‘Manifesto of the International Constructive Union’ along with Belgian and German artists Karel Maes (1900–74) and Max Burchartz (1887–1961).<sup>26</sup>

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23 Ibid., 342

24 Christina Lodder, “Art into Life: International Constructivism in Central and Eastern Europe” in *Central European Avant-Gardes: Exchange and Transformation, 1910-1930*, ed. Timothy O. Benson (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and The MIT Press, 2002), 178–179

25 Only two issues ever appeared of this journal, which primarily sought to inform a Russian-speaking readership of developments in Western art, but which nevertheless has been seen as “seminal in bringing new ideas of post-revolutionary Russian art to the West”. Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 229

26 van Doesburg et al. “International Constructivist Creative Union,” in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930*, ed. Timothy O. Benson and Éva Forgács (The MIT Press, 2002). Originally published as: “Manifest der K.I. (Konstruktivistische Internationale schöpferische Arbeitsgemeinschaft),”

Given the name and make-up of the group and its manifesto, the version of Constructivism promoted by Lissitzky is usually referred to as International Constructivism.<sup>27</sup> It differed from Russian Constructivism in a number of important respects. Whilst Lissitzky is said to have brought with him a copy of the 'Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists' and photographs of their work, he retained his close affinity with Suprematism.<sup>28</sup> His Constructivism was a hybrid form which combined aspects of both directions' visual language, but in which Russian Constructivism's political fervour and utilitarian ethos was replaced by a more vaguely utopian Socialist ideal.<sup>29</sup>

Another important figure in New Typography's development was the Hungarian artist László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946). He arrived in Berlin via Vienna in 1920, and became acquainted with Constructivism during his stay in the German capital. In the spring of 1923 he was appointed director of the Vorkurs [Preliminary Course] at the Bauhaus. There he proved a driving force behind the school's change of focus from Expressionism and Arts and Crafts to a Constructivist-informed modern design approach. One of the areas where Moholy-Nagy's influence was most immediately felt was in the school's graphic materials. Leading up to the First Bauhaus Exhibition, held between July and September that year, he oversaw the design of the exhibition's publicity materials. Here he introduced formal features such as sans serif typography and

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*De Stijl* 5, no.8 (1922)

27 Victor Margolin has proposed the term 'German Constructivism' to further distinguish what he sees as "distinct" and "separate" movement from Constructivism as it manifested itself in either Russia or the West. See note 5 in: Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917–1946* (University of Chicago Press, 1997), 45–46

28 Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, 227

29 Lodder, "Art into Life", 178–179

asymmetric composition, informed by demands for dynamism, directness and rationalisation.

The exhibition's catalogue featured a text which introduced the term 'New Typography' and sought to define its principles as Moholy-Nagy saw them.<sup>30</sup> He emphasised clarity and legibility as fundamental concerns, and stressed that the form of the text must never be forced into a preconceived framework, "communication must never be impaired by an *a priori* aesthetics".<sup>31</sup> He also encouraged the use of all typefaces, sizes, geometric forms and colours—to be printed uninhibitedly in all linear directions—in order to arrive at "a new language of typography whose elasticity, variability and freshness of typographical composition is exclusively dictated by the inner law of expression and the optical effect".<sup>32</sup> Like many other Constructivists, notably Rodchenko, Moholy-Nagy was deeply interested in photography and stressed the importance of this "new storytelling device of civilization" to typographic practice.<sup>33</sup> In books, photography as an objective medium had the potential to replace written text. It thereby liberated the reader from "the crutches of the author's personal idiosyncrasies" and allowed him or her to form their independent opinions of the contents. In poster design, a free use of photographic techniques and processes could be used to create work with a greater ability to impact the viewer's "psychological receptacles" than that created by the traditional method of poster

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30 For an English translation see: László Moholy-Nagy. "The New Typography," in *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design*, ed. by Michael Bierut et al (New York: Allworth Press, 1999). Originally published as: "Die Neue Typografie," in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar, 1919-1923* (München & Weimar: Bauhausverlag, 1923)

31 Moholy-Nagy, "The New Typography", 21. Emphasis in original

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 22

painting.<sup>34</sup> He would later develop these themes further in the Bauhaus book *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* [*Painting, Photography, Film*, 1925, tr. 1969].<sup>35</sup> Here Moholy-Nagy introduced the term ‘typophoto’ to describe the close integration of photography and typography, stating:

Typography is communication composed in type. Photography is the visual presentation of what can be optically apprehended. **Typophoto is the visually most exact rendering of communication.**<sup>36</sup>

The last pages of the book contained the layout for a screenplay titled ‘Dynamik der Gross-Stadt’ [Dynamic of the Metropolis], which showed how typography, and photography and graphic elements could be combined to create a new kind of non-linear narrative sequence which in this instance was employed to convey the frenetic pace and sensory assault experienced by living in the great city.<sup>37</sup>

### The avant-garde journal network

In 1925 the ideas and formal innovations described above were introduced the German printing trade through a special issue of the compositors’ trade journal *Typographische Mitteilungen*. It was titled ‘elementare typographie’ and had been put together by Jan Tschichold. Tschichold had visited the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition

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34 Ibid.

35 László Moholy-Nagy, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* (München: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925). An English translation is available as: László Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film* (London: Lund Humphries, 1969)

36 Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film*, 39. Emphasis (bold) in original

37 For a more detailed reading, see: Andrea Nelson, “László Moholy-Nagy and Painting Photography Film: A Guide to Narrative Montage,” *History of Photography* 30, no. 3 (2006): 258–69

and been moved to question the traditionalist training he was receiving in calligraphy and book art at the Staatliche Akademie für graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe in Leipzig. As is often cited, a sign of his subsequent 'conversion' is that he, from around the end of 1923 or the beginning of 1924, began using 'Iwan' in place of his given name Johannes.<sup>38</sup> 'Jan' came later, and was arrived at in order to secure a teaching position at the Meisterschule für Deutschlands Buchdrucker [Master School for Germany's Printers] where the Communist associations of 'Iwan' made the leadership uneasy.

Tschichold's writings and impact of this publication will be discussed later in this chapter. The following section deals instead with the network of avant-garde journals Tschichold drew upon. It is of course true that Tschichold, in his preparations, also drew on personal contacts. It is well known, for instance, that he made contact with Moholy-Nagy soon after his visit to the Bauhaus exhibition,<sup>39</sup> and that Moholy-Nagy put him in touch with Lissitzky.<sup>40</sup> However, it is also clear that Tschichold was familiar with a network of avant-garde journals. The special issue contained a number of texts reprinted from such sources: 'Typo-photo' from Moholy-Nagy's *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, 'Die Reklame' [Advertising] taken from the Swiss architectural journal *ABC* and co-written by Lissitzky and Dutch architect Mart Stam (1899–1986),<sup>41</sup> 'elementare Gesichtspunkte' [elemental viewpoints] taken

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38 See, for instance: Robin Kinross, "Introduction to the English-Language Edition," in *The New Typography*, by Jan Tschichold (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2006), XVI

39 Christopher Burke. *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography*. (London: Hyphen Press, 2007), 25

40 Robin Kinross, "Introduction to the English-Language Edition", XVI

41 El Lissitzky and Mart Stam, "Die Reklame." *ABC: Beiträge Zum Bauen* 1, no. 2 (1924): unpaginated



from the German Constructivist journal *G □* and written by the Russian painter and sculptor Nathan Altman (1899–1970),<sup>42</sup> and finally a version of the ‘Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists’, which had first appeared in the Soviet journal *Ermitazh*, and later in the first issue of *LEF*, the journal of the Soviet Constructivist Left Front of the Arts.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, *De Stijl*, *MA*, *Merz* and *Veshch / Objèt / Gegenstand* were listed in a bibliography titled “Journals which fight for the idea this issue is dedicated to”.<sup>44</sup> To be able to tap into such a network would have been important to Tschichold, who was not part of Berlin’s vibrant cultural scene, or a progressive institution such as the Bauhaus. Rather, he was based in a traditional printing town which clearly left him feeling somewhat isolated intellectually. When he wrote to Lissitzky to ask for materials to reproduce, he confided: “I am the only typographic Constructivist in Leipzig”.<sup>45</sup>

Whilst the idea of a network may seem a modern one, it was actually also used by those involved at the time. For instance, the Polish Constructivist and New Typographer Henryk Berlewi (1894–1967) wrote, in a review of the Congress of International Progressive Artists, that “a worldwide network of periodicals has appeared, propagating and arguing for new ideas and new forms”.<sup>46</sup> This had in turn had helped bring about what he termed

42 For an English-language facsimile translation, see: Nathan Altman, “Elemental Viewpoints.” ed. Hans Richter, *G □. Material for Elemental Form-Creation*, no. 3 (June 1924): 137–38. Reprinted in: Detlef Mertins et al, eds. *G. An Avant-Garde Journal of Art, Architecture, Design, and Film. 1923-1926* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010)

43 *Ermitazh*, no.13 (1922): 3–4; *LEF*, no.1 (1923)

44 “Zeitschriften die für die Idee, der dieses Heft gewidmet ist, kämpfen”. Iwan Tschichold, ed. *Typographische Mitteilungen* 22, no.10 sonderheft: ‘elementare typographie’ (1925), 192

45 Burke, *Active Literature*, 41–42

46 Henryk Berlewi, “The International Exhibition in Düsseldorf.” in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910-1930*, ed. Timothy O. Benson and

“the so-called ‘new art’”.<sup>47</sup> The idea of the network was reinforced by its visual articulation, which first featured on the back of Lajos Kassák’s (1887–1967) journal *MA* in October 1922 (**fig.1.01**). Subsequently, variations of this page started appearing in like-minded journals across Europe and beyond. When the Belgian avant-garde journal *Het Overzicht* [Overview, 1921–25] presented a list of journals published as far apart as Antwerp and Brazil, New York and Berlin these were presented under the title “het netwerk” — ‘the network’.<sup>48</sup>

As the Italian art historian Maurizio Scudiero has written, the journals of the avant-garde were drawn to each other by the need to exchange resources such as texts and stereotypes. This exchange, he argues, was instrumental in expanding the geography of the avant-garde from metropolises like Berlin, Moscow, Paris and Vienna to a number of smaller towns and centres around Europe. Whilst Scudiero particularly emphasizes its spread to Southern Europe and the newly independent nations of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, it also extended to Scandinavia.<sup>49</sup>

### **Scandinavian nodes in the avant-garde journal network**

Prior the publication of Tschichold’s ‘elementare typographie’ special issue in 1925, New Typography found its use amongst avant-garde poets and artists. Poets were interested in the

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Éva Forgács (The MIT Press, 2002), 399

47 Ibid.

48 Hubert van den Berg, “The Early Twentieth Century Avant-Garde and the Nordic Countries. An Introductory Tour d’Horizon.” in *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries 1900–1925*, ed. Hubert van der Berg et al (Rodopi, 2013), 33

49 Scudiero, “A Transverse Reading of Typography and the Graphic Avant-Gardes”, 165–166



Fig. 1.01

Back cover of MA, October 1922.

potential it held for the creation of new modes of linguistic expression. Artists initially used it in the design of their own journals and graphic materials. Later they also used it in the commercial projects they worked on after having been galvanised by Constructivism's call for the artist to enter the factory. Only a few examples of the former 'poetic' category can be found in Scandinavia. Most notable were the Swedish painter Georg Pauli's (1855–1935) journal *flamman* [the flame] and the polemical newspaper *Pressen* [The Press], published by Det Ny Studentersamfund [D.N.S.S., The New Student Society] in Copenhagen. In Norway, no publications took an interest in such issues. However, the Norwegian painter Per Krogh (1889–1965), who spent large parts of his life in Paris, published pieces which experimented with the typographic form in other Scandinavian journals: the Italian Futurist Arturo Ciacelli's (1883–1966) Swedish journal *Ny konst* [New Art, 1915],<sup>50</sup> *flamman*,<sup>51</sup> and the Danish journal *Klingen* [The Blade, 1917–20].<sup>52</sup> However, his most vibrant piece of expressive lettering was not published in any journal. Instead, *Schous Öl er Godt* [Schous Beer is [tastes] Good], was the winning entry of a poster design competition held by the Oslo brewery Schous in 1917.

Pauli's *flamman* is known as "the Swedish avant-garde's first mouthpiece".<sup>53</sup> Regarded as instrumental in bringing developments

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50 Per Krogh, "Futuristisk Manifest — Ideogram I Rødt Og Guld," *Ny Konst. Internationell Månatligt Konsthäfte* 1, no. 1 (1915)

51 Per Krogh, "Der Sidder En Dame I Skoven," *flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 6 (1917): unpaginated

52 Per Krogh, "Nervøsitet eller en stille Nat ved Fronten. Skuespil I 1 Akt," *Klingen* 1, no. 8 (1918): 6–7

53 Magdalena Gram, "The Art Journal as an Artistic Gesture: An Experiment Named *Flamman*," *Scandinavian Journal of Design History* 3 (1993): 85–108, 86

of the Parisian avant-garde to the attention of a Swedish readership, it was also important for providing Swedish artists like GAN (Gösta Adrian Nilsson, 1884–1965), Isaac Grünewald and Einar Jolin (1890–1976) with a platform. It was not only for sale in Sweden, but from the book shop run by Herwarth Walden (1878–1941) in conjunction with his Der Sturm gallery and stage in Berlin, from Neue Kunst in Munich, and from André Lhote (1885–1962) in Paris.<sup>54</sup> According to Pauli, the journal proved such a success amongst Parisian artists that some of them called for a French edition. Whilst the level of interest cannot be verified, and although the expense of creating a French edition was in any case beyond Pauli's means, he nevertheless enthusiastically pronounced: "*flamman* is becoming a journal of the world!"<sup>55</sup>

The design of *flamman* was closely and consciously modelled on that of French artist Amadée Ozenfant's (1886–1966) *l'élan* (1915–16). In 1916 Pauli wrote that his then future journal would be of "a size like that of *l'élan*, paper or printing more or less the same".<sup>56</sup> The format would indeed be the same as that of *l'élan* (330x250mm), and *flamman* also adopted the lower case spelling of its name from its French counterpart. Moreover, Pauli received permission from Ozenfant, whom he had met in Paris in January 1916, to reprint *l'élan*'s texts and to re-use its old stereotypes.<sup>57</sup>

54 According to a note on the back of *flamman* no.7, 1917

55 "Flamman Flamman Flamman." *flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 3 (1917): unpaginated

56 In correspondence to count Fredrik Ulrik Wrangel (1853–1929), dated "probably July 6, 1916": Gram, "The Art Journal as an Artistic Gesture", 93, 107

57 Bengt Lärkner, "Det Internationella Avantgardet Och Sverige, 1914–1925" (PhD Thesis, Lunds Universitet, 1984), 93. That stereotypes were re-used is explicitly stated in: Fauconnet, "Marmara-Sjön," *flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 2 (1917): unpaginated

Pauli's motto for *flamman* was that "the art journal should be an artistic gesture".<sup>58</sup> This extended to typography, where he proposed not to commit himself to any one style, but "present new tendencies (...), mixed with styles that are already part of the public consciousness".<sup>59</sup> He argued that because *flamman* was not "a book of average type" with its uniformly designed smooth grey pages, its typography should be judged using "completely different measures".<sup>60</sup> Again, Pauli looked to *l'élan* for inspiration. Whilst Ozenfant was aware of the Futurists' typographic experiments, he largely avoided the tactics advocated by Marinetti such as mixing type faces and sizes. In Paris, these ideas found far more fertile ground with *l'élan's* contemporary *SIC* (1916-19), which was edited by Pierre Albert-Birot (1876-1967).<sup>61</sup> Ozenfant preferred to use Didot throughout, and restricted changes in type sizes to elements such as headings and emphasis without breaking with the harmony of the page.

Ozenfant was also aware of Apollinaire's calligrammes. He may have encountered 'Lettre-Ocean' or other examples in *Les Soirées de Paris* [Paris Evenings, 1912- 14],<sup>62</sup> the journal Apollinaire and

58 "Konsttidskrift bör vara konstnärlig gest", *flamman* (1917, no.7); "Konsttidskrift skall vara konstnärlig gest", *flamman* (1918).

59 "presentera nya tendenser (...), omväxlande med stilar och tryck hvilka redan ingått i det allmänna medvetandet". "flamman." *flamman. Tidskrift för modern konst* 1, no. 2 (1917): unpaginated

60 "en bok av genomsnittstyp", "helt annat mått". "flamman." *flamman. Tidskrift för modern konst* 1, no. 4 (1917): unpaginated

61 *SIC's* title was an acronym of the words 'Sons, Idées, Couleur' — 'Sounds, Ideas, Colours'. For more on *l'élan's* relationship to *SIC* and other journals of the Parisian avant-garde, see: Susan L. Ball *Ozenfant and Purism: The Evolution of a Style, 1915-30* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981), 19-25

62 'Lettre-Ocean' was the first calligram, and indeed the first typographic experiment of any sort to be published in *Les Soirées de Paris*: vol.3, no.15, 15 June 1914.

Further examples were printed in the following issue. For a facsimile reprint see: Guillaume Apollinaire and Jean Cérusse eds. *Les Soirées de Paris: Revue Littéraire et Artistique* (Éditions de Conti, 2010), 488-489. For analysis of 'Lettre-Ocean' and on *Les Soirées de Paris'* place amongst early avant-garde periodicals, see: Drucker, *The*

others had founded in 1912.<sup>63</sup> In any case, he began experimenting with what he called ‘psychotype’ [psychotypie] and ‘typometrics’ [typométrie] towards the end of *l’élán*’s run. As he explained by quoting André Billy (1882–1971), one of *Les Soirées de Paris*’ five co-founders, psychotype was:

an art that consists in making the typographical characters participate in the expression of thought and painting of various moods, NO LONGER AS CONVENTIONAL SIGNS, BUT AS SIGNS HAVING SIGNIFICANCE IN THEMSELVES.<sup>64</sup>

In other words, as Ozenfant would later explain in his *Mémoires* (1968), the art of psychotype consisted of choosing typefaces which through their “form and dimensions [were] able to confirm or strengthen the meaning” of a text.<sup>65</sup> Although he saw psychotype as continuation of work previously undertaken by the Rétif de la Bretonne (Nicolas-Edme Rétif, 1734–1806), Mallarmé and Apollinaire,<sup>66</sup> he considered his approach to be “more ambitious” than that of Apollinaire, whose work he dismissed for having mixed typefaces purely to achieve “amusing or bizarre effects”.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, as shown by Ozenfant’s first attempt ‘Le Panégyrique du vicomte Cyprien...’ [The Pangyric of Viscount Cyprien..., 1916]

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*Visible Word*, 146–166

63 The other founders were André Billy, René Dalize, André Salmon and André Tudesq

64 “art qui consiste à faire participer les caractères typographique à l’expression de la pensée & à la peinture des états d’âme, NON PLUS A TITRE DE SIGNES CONVENTIONNELS, MAIS COMME DES SIGNS AYANT UNE SIGNIFICATION EN SOI.” “Psychotypie & Typométrie.” *L’élán*, no. 9 (1916): unpaginated. Here Ozenfant claimed he sourced the quote from an article by Billy appearing in *Le Siècle*, *Paris-Midi* & *L’Action*. Later, in his *Mémoires*, he mentions only *Le Siècle*. Emphasis (capitalisation) in original

65 “de formes et de dimensions aptes à confirmer ou renforcer le sens”. Amadée Ozenfant, *Mémoires: 1886–1962* (Paris: Éditions Seghers, 1968), 87

66 “Psychotypie & Typométrie”, unpaginated

67 “plus ambitieuse”, “des effets amusants ou bizarres”. Ozenfant. *Mémoires*, 87

(**fig.1.02**), psychotype clearly owed a debt to Apollinaire in visual terms, with its use of a range of different typefaces and sizes. The later ‘Ô Mânes de Gentle Man’ [Oh Shades of Gentleman, 1916] (**fig.1.03**), featured what Ozenfant termed ‘typometrics’ in addition to psychotype. Typometrics was his own invention, a method which though its “precise and plastic punctuation” allowed “poets to depict silences and cadences of their poems: the time being proportional to the length of lines”.<sup>68</sup>

Both psychotype and typometrics found their way to *flamman*. The piece ‘Kolonner vad gör ni’ [Columns What Are You Doing],<sup>69</sup> was captioned “psychotypographic attempt after French example” and was clearly closely modelled on ‘Le Panegyrique du vicomte Cyprien’.<sup>70</sup> It was designed by artist Yngve Berg (1887–1963), who had agreed to assist Pauli with *flamman* in exchange for lessons in al secco fresco painting.<sup>71</sup> An interview with Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) was set in a number of different typefaces and sizes, arranged in such a way as to emphasise key parts of the text. As Pauli would later explain:

The more unimportant picturesque [passages] were printed in *brevier* to even more powerfully emphasize the leading principle in the chief cubist’s art: ‘The artist is nature’s master, not slave’.<sup>72</sup>

68 “ponctuation précise & plastique”. “Psychotypie & Typométrie”, unpaginated; “poètes de figurer les silences et les cadences de leurs poèmes: les temps étant proportionnels à la longueur des lignes”. Ibid., 87

69 The title is a phrase taken from the section on Berlin in Carl August Ehrensvärd’s (1745–1800) *Resa til Italien* (1786), where he expressed his surprise on seeing more (neo)classical columns there than in Rome. It has since become a Swedish idiom

70 “Psykotypografiskt försök efter fransk förebild”. Yngve Berg, “Kolonner Vad Gör Ni?” *Flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 3 (1917): unpaginated.

71 For more detail on Berg’s role see: Lärkner, “Det Internationella Avantgardet Och Sverige”, 99

72 “det mera oväsentliga pittoreska trycktes med petit-stil för att desto kraftigare betona den ledande principen i kubistchefens konst: »Konstnären är naturens



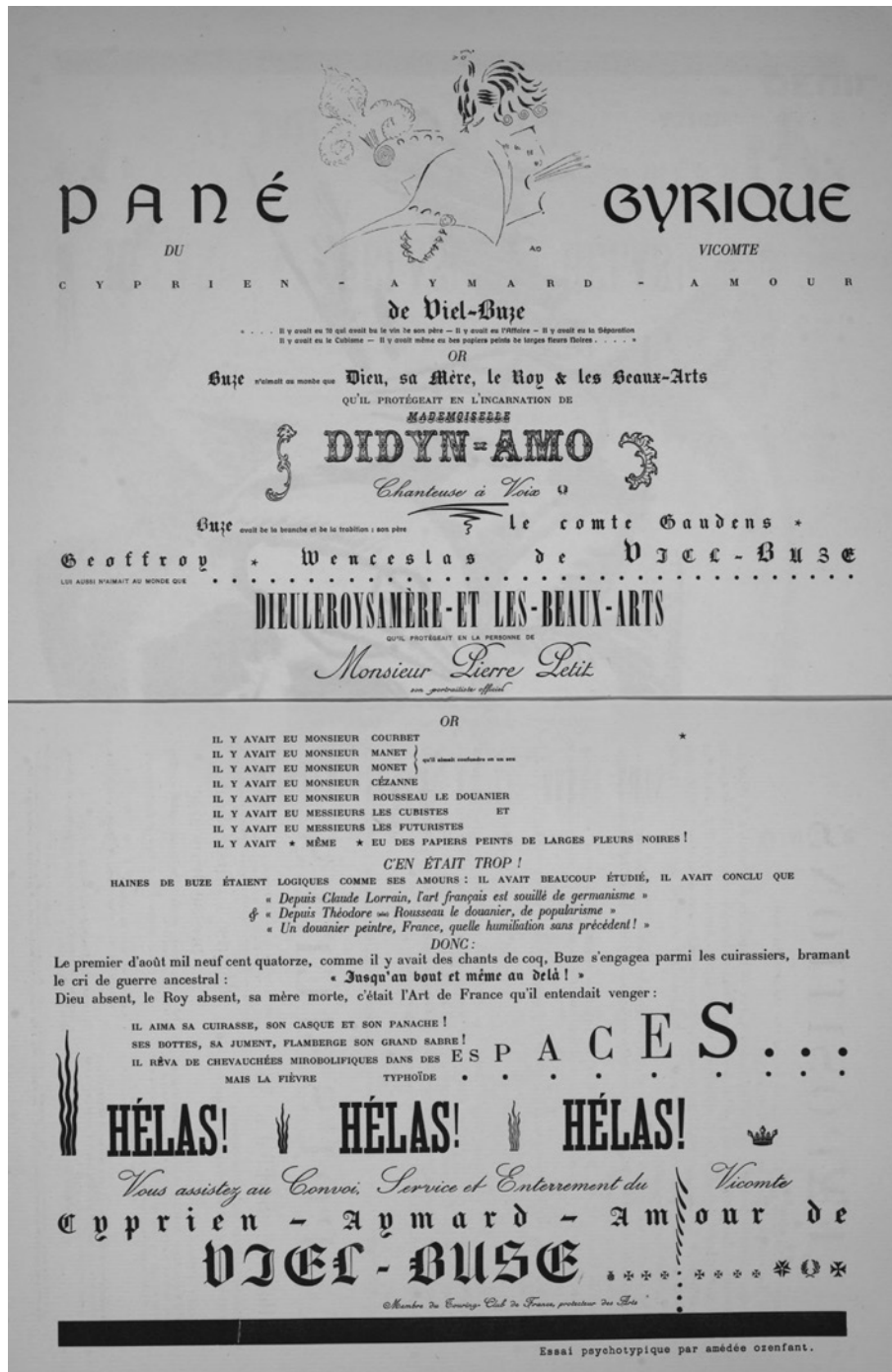


Fig. 1.02

'Le Panégyrique du vicomte Cyprien...'  
 (l'élan, no.8, 1916).

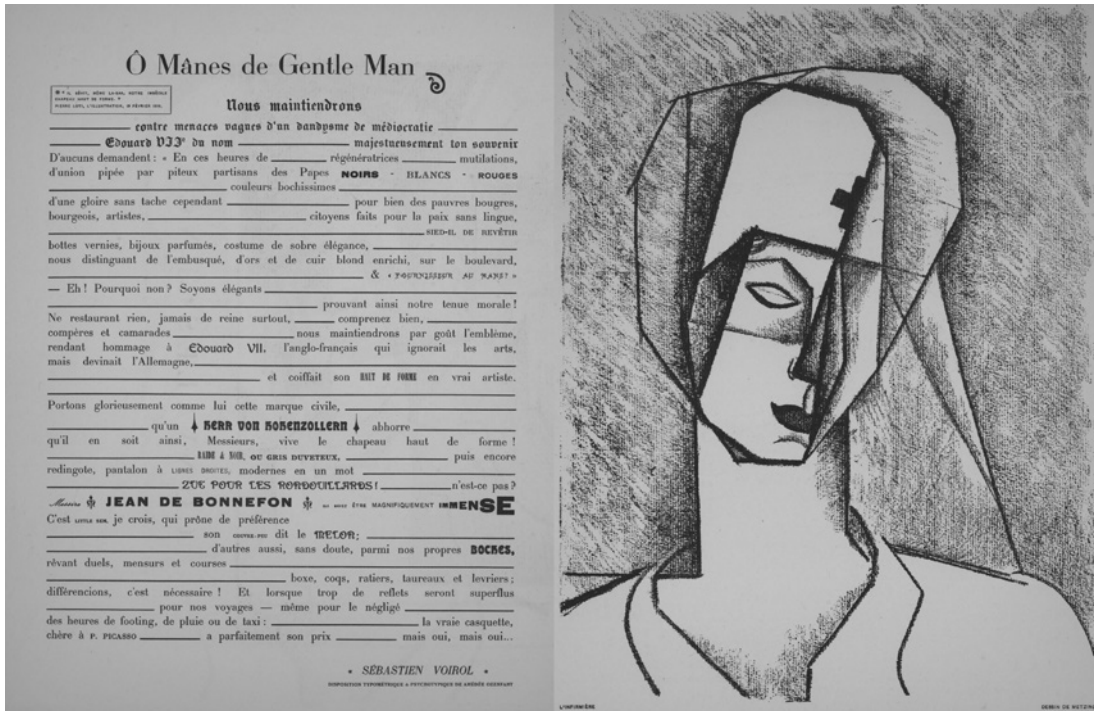


Fig. 1.03

Above:

'Ô Mânes de Gentle Man'. (l'Élan, no.9, 1916).

The latter phrase was a quote which Pauli set in large bold type. The composition also made a ‘typometric’ use of rules, although the plain thin rules of ‘Ô Mânes de Gentle Man’, had been replaced by a mixture of double, dashed and dotted rules. Whether the different rules were intended to form part of a particular grammar to connote aspects like the speed of speech or variations in pitch is uncertain. All that is known is that Pauli intended that the arrangement of typography, rules, photography and illustration as a whole were to suggest an affinity with “the nature of Picasso’s own art”.<sup>73</sup>

In keeping with Pauli’s commitment to exploring a range of typographic styles, *flamman* also featured “reposes” — pages composed in a calm, traditional manner on which the eye could rest, but set in Mediæval rather than Didot. For instance, Gregor Paulsson’s article ‘Rifva ned – bygga’ [Tear Down – Build],<sup>74</sup> was set in this style. Pauli also made use of pastiches of historical styles, like the mock-prayer ‘Åkallan’ [Invocation].<sup>75</sup>

Whilst *flamman*’s most adventurous pieces of typography may be judged derivative, as they clearly took their cues from its French counterpart, it should be noted that the majority of *l’élán*’s as well as *Les Soirées de Paris*’ issues were set in a conventional manner. It was only towards the end of their print runs that they took to publishing calligrammes, psychotype and typometrics. Because it was published a few years later, *flamman* was able to make use

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herre, ej slav«. “flamman.” *flamman* 1, no. 4 (1917): unpaginated. My emphasis. Brevier corresponds to a typesize of 8 pt.

73 “arten av Picassos egen konst”. Ibid.

74 “repos”, “flamman”, *flamman* 1, no. 4 (1917): unpaginated; Gregor Paulsson, “Rifva Ner - Bygga,” *flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 3 (1917): unpaginated

75 “Åkallan.” *flamman. Tidskrift För Modern Konst* 1, no. 4 (1917): unpaginated

of these typographic developments from the start. As a result, the pages of its first volume at least,<sup>76</sup> were much more varied and adventurous than those of the two better-known French journals.

The group known as D.N.S.S., or Det ny Studentersamfund [The New Student Society], was another Scandinavian node of the avant-garde network. It was comprised of around 20 left-wing students and intellectuals associated with the University of Copenhagen, where it was founded in 1922 as an alternative to the university's existing student societies.<sup>77</sup> Led by poets Rud Broby (Rudolf Broby-Johansen, 1900–87) and Harald Landt Momberg (1896–1975), its publications included the political paper *Pressen* [The Press, 1923–24], Momberg's and Broby's debut collections *Parole* [Speech, 1922] and *BLOD* [BLOOD, 1922], Broby's book *Kunst* [Art, 1924], and a number of smaller pamphlets and flyers.

Broby travelled widely and established a number of international contacts. For instance, Olav Harsløf has claimed Broby met with Marinetti in Venice and Herwarth Walden in Berlin in 1923,

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76 After 8 issues appeared with regular intervals in its first year, *flamman's* publication rate dropped drastically. For the remaining 4 years of its existence it would only come out as an annual, apart from in 1920 when it did not appear at all. For all the typographic experimentation of its first volume, *flamman's* appearance in 1918 and 1921 was not far removed from the resembled the grey and homogeneous books it had positioned itself against. According to Magdalena Gram the reasons for this were largely financial. See: Gram, "The Art Journal as an Artistic Gesture", 86. Pauli himself was of the opinion that "*flamman's* first volume was the only one that really counted [*flamman's* första årgång var den enda som egentligen räknades]". Lärkner, "Det Internationella Avantgardet Och Sverige", 101

77 In May 1922 members of the group had unsuccessfully tried to have themselves voted onto the board of one of the two student societies associated with, but independent from, the University of Copenhagen – Studentersamfundet [The Student Society], the "social democratic–radical alternative to the conservative–liberal Studentforening [Student Association]". When this failed they decided to form their own organisation. Olav Harsløf, "Pressen. Periodisk Flyveskrift." *Leksikon for Det 21. Århundrede*, November 26, 2003. <http://www.leksikon.org/art.php?n=4965>. (accessed August 12, 2014)

and that he in 1924 travelled to Moscow to meet “the Russian Futurists”.<sup>78</sup> Broby would himself later emphasize contacts made through the post, remarking that “we sent our publications to like-minded groups all over Europe and got theirs in return”.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, it is known that Momberg sent Marinetti a copy of *Parole*.<sup>80</sup> Broby claimed to have received items such as Lissitzky’s letterhead and the book *Die Kunstisten* — or *The Isms of Art* (1925), Kurt Schwitters’ *Die Scheuche* [The Scarecrow, 1925], an issue of LEF (1 March 1923), and a catalogue for a Diego Rivera exhibition designed by Wilmos Huzar (1884–1960) of the De Stijl group, all from “the creators themselves”.<sup>81</sup> D.N.S.S. was certainly in touch with the Yugoslav Zenit group, as can be seen from its journal’s inclusion of *Pressen* in a list of “revues”. Tschichold too was aware of D.N.S.S.’ work. The pamphlet *Aktiv Reklame* [Active Advertising, 1924] is listed in *Die neue Typographie*’s bibliography, and Momberg’s name can be found alongside that of *Pressen*’s editor Torben Hansen and “others” in his list of New Typographers known to be working across Europe.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, as can be seen from a typewritten list of recipients located by Christopher Burke, it would seem Tschichold sent, or at least intended to send, Momberg a copy of his own ‘noch eine neue schrift’ [yet a new script] in 1930.<sup>83</sup> D.N.S.S. were firmly embedded in the network of the avant-garde.

78 “de russiske futurister”. Harsløf, “Pressen. Periodisk Flyveskrift”

79 “Vi sendte vore tryksager til ligesindede grupper over hele Europa og fik deres til gengæld”. Rudolf Broby-Johansen, *Sort Og Rødt: 64 Grafiske Glimt*. (København: Gyldendal, 1982), 90

80 Olav Harsløf, “Myten Om Broby.” in *Broby – En Central Outsider*, ed. Olav Harsløf (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2000), 34

81 “ophavsmænderne selv”. Broby-Johansen, *Sort Og Rødt*, 90

82 Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2006), 230, 60.

83 Burke, *Active Literature*, 130

Momberg's and Broby's debut collections were amongst the group's first publications. Both appeared in November 1922. Momberg's *Parole* contained a number of poems which drew on non-representational painting to make use of abstract sounds, and which sought to break with meaning and syntax — “the poem's worst enemies”.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, *Parole's* title can be seen as a nod to Marinetti's ‘Words-in-Freedom’, or, ‘parole in libertà’. However, they were largely ignored by the press and public, and would remain so until they were ‘rediscovered’ in 1968.<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, Broby's *BLOD*, with its confrontational violent and sexual themes, caused an immediate scandal. Within a week of its publication the police raided D.N.S.S.'s offices and confiscated all the copies they could find — unaware that many had already been smuggled away to Norway.<sup>86</sup> The trial which followed became a theatrical media event where Broby's name was made known to the Danish public.<sup>87</sup>

*BLOD* was set in upper case throughout, and its titles — which had been justified to fill the width of the type area, were underlined with a double rule. No punctuation was used other than forward slashes. It has been suggested by Anne-Marie Mai its typography

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84 “Digtets værste fjender er betydningen og syntaxen”. Quoted from an unpublished manuscript in: Hans Henrik Schwab, “Efterskrift: Mombergs Metode.” in *Parole*. 33 *Expressionistiske Digte*, by Harald Landt Momberg (København: Politisk Revy, 1998), 77

85 *Ibid.*, 74–75

86 Only 79 of 700 copies were found by the police when they searched D.N.S.S.' publishing house. Nini Haslund Gleditsch (1908–96), member of the Norwegian political group Mot Dag [Towards Day] member later claimed that the majority of copies had been smuggled to Norway where they were hidden under fellow Mot Dag member Trygve Bull's (1905–99) parents bed. See Harsløf, “Myten Om Broby”, 34

87 For detail on the trial and Broby's speech in his defence, see: Morten Thing, “Den Blodige Civilisation. Et Efterskrift Om Blod.” in *Blod Og Forsvarstale for Blod* by Rud Broby (København: Politisk Revy, 1988)

was informed by Walden's *Der Sturm*, where titles for regular features were arranged in a similar fashion.<sup>88</sup> However, given that Broby was heavily influenced by the Expressionist 'telegram style' of poetry used by August Stramm (1874–1915) and others, another possibility is that it attempted a literal interpretation of this term by approximating the visual language of the telegram. Whatever the reason, the effect was unprecedented, and the crudeness of the typography aptly reflected that of the poems language and subject matter. The poem 'NATLIG PLADS' [NIGHTLY SQUARE] contained a further innovation in that illustrations by fellow D.N.S.S.-member and artist Gunnar Hesselbo, were integrated into the text (**fig.1.04**). These depicted various pieces of street lighting which in the poem were compared to "FLATCAP-PIMPS", "PASTY FAT HOOKERS", a "FRIGHT-FACED JAPAN-GIRL", "MUSKY WHORES", "BOURGEOIS HAGS" and a "COLLOSAL PHALLUS". These phrases were examples of what The City Court of Copenhagen in its judgement declared to be: "sexual and perverse topics [described] with the use of such crude expressions that they are found capable of causing offence".<sup>89</sup>

Whilst this scandal secured Broby's and D.N.S.S.' reputations, it would be through the newspaper *Pressen* that the group would make its most important contribution to Danish typography. *Pressen* was the product of another scandal, namely that resulting from the collapse of Denmark's largest bank, Landmandsbanken [The Farmer's Bank].<sup>90</sup> The collapse resulted in "a national fiscal

88 In her *Danske digtere i det 20. århundrede* (2002). However, one should note that the body text of *Der Sturm* was set in a conventional sentence case. See: Torben Jelsbak "Punkt Og Linje På Flade. Grafisk Totaldesign Og Typografiske Punktvirkninger I Dansk Ekspressionisme," in *Bogvennen 2001-03* eds. Sören Möller Christensen and C-H Zakrisson (Malmö: Forening for boghaandværk, 2006), 118

89 "kønslige og perverse Emner med Anvendelse af så raa Udtryk, at de findes egnede til at vække Forargelse". Thing, "Den Blodige Civilisation", 67

90 For detail on the Landmandsbanken crash, see: Søren Mørch, *Det Store Bankkrak*.



Fig. 1.04

The poem 'NATLIG PLADS', from Rud Broby's  
BLOD (1922).



crisis” with far-reaching political implications. It emerged that leading members of Danish economic and political life, including the Royal House, had been involved in dubious *hausse-speculations* and insider trading.<sup>91</sup> In addition to a criminal trial, an inquest known as *Bankkommissionen* [The Bank Commission] was set up by the Danish parliament. In August 1923 *Højesteret* [The Danish Supreme Court] found the bank’s director Emil Glückstad (1875–1923), who had died during the trial, posthumously guilty of fraud. H.P. Prior (Hans Peter, 1866–1936), director of *NKT* [Nordisk Elektrisk Ledningstraad- og Kabel-Fabrik, Nordic Electric Wire and Cable Factory] was also found guilty of fraud, whilst 12 of the bank’s executives and board members all received large fines, but avoided criminal liability. However, for reasons of “national safety and stability” *Bankkommissionen*’s report was to be kept secret.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, the report was leaked to *DKP*’s [Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti, Denmark’s Communist Party] newspaper *Arbejderbladet* [The Worker’s Paper] which began publishing excerpts.<sup>93</sup> When the authorities banned the paper from publishing any further details the report was passed on to *D.N.S.S.*. The group published further excerpts in the pamphlet *Bankkommisionens hemmelige Beretninger* [The Bank Commissions Secret Report] and set up *Pressen* to report on future developments.

*Pressen*’s design drew upon Dada and Constructivism. That the latter held particular interest for *D.N.S.S.* can be seen in Momberg’s *Aktiv Reklame*, which was published as a serial in *Pressen*, and later as the pamphlet included in *Die neue Typographie*’s

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*Landmandsbankens Sammenbrud 1922-23* (København: Gyldendal, 1986)

91 Jelsbak, “Avant-Garde and Politics”, unpaginated

92 Ibid.

93 Harsløf, “*Pressen*. Periodisk Flyveskrift”

bibliography.<sup>94</sup> With reference to Lissitzky's short text 'Topography of Typography', published in *Merz* shortly before the first issue of *Pressten* appeared,<sup>95</sup> Momberg wrote:

PRESSTEN's editorial office professes the new direction in art, which is named Constructivism, and the goal of which is to create beauty, order and harmony in all visible things, and which works with all material not least the typographic. Typography also has its topography, which means to say an intensive use of the material and a harmonically regulated arrangement of the page.<sup>96</sup>

The most striking feature of *Pressten*'s design was its headlines. Here the "intensive use of material" described by Momberg came into force. They frequently made use of heavy rules, mixtures of type faces and sizes and oversized punctuation. This was not done merely for visual effect, but in order to create puns and other word play. Alliteration was a popular device. For instance, the heading of *Pressten* 25 (**fig.1.05**), "Ødsel Korruption og Kapitalflugt" [Waste Corruption and Capital flight] does not make double use of the alliterative large 'K' as a purely visual device. 'ØK' was the commonly used acronym for Østasiatisk Kompagni [East Asian Company] something which would have stood out and been apparent to anyone reading the headline at the time. The headline would therefore be re-read as 'ØK: Waste Corruption and Capital flight'. ØK's director, H.N. Andersen (Hans Niels, 1852–1937), was

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94 Harald Landt Momberg, *Aktiv Reklame. Nye Principer I Annonceringens Kunst* (Köbenhavn, Kristiania & Berlin: Det Ny Studentersamfunds Forlag, 1924)

95 For an English translation, see: El Lissitzky. "Topography of Typography," in *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design* eds. Michael Bierut et al (New York: Allworth Press, 1999)

96 "PRESSTENs Redaktion bekender sig til den ny Kunstretning, der hedder Konstruktivisme, og hvis Formål er at skabe Skønhed, Orden og Harmoni i alle synlige Ting, og som arbejder med alt Materiale, ikke mindst med det typografiske. Typografi har også sin Topografi, det vil sige en intensiv Benyttelse av Materialet og en harmonisk lovbundet Opstilling av Bladet". Momberg, *Aktiv Reklame*, 8-9



Fig. 1.05  
Front page of Presse (no.24, 1924).

one of Denmark's most powerful men and was targeted repeatedly by *Pressen* for his role in the Landmandsbanken scandal where he had used his influence to try to limit and stop Bankkommissionen's investigation.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, the black disc placed one third down the page's far left column is actually to be read as a gigantic 'full stop'. As part of an article that commenced with a reference to a group of seven people accused of burglary the sentence reads "Having got to that point the other accused along with their friends and family demanded that a ● was to be placed on the investigation".<sup>98</sup> The article's argument was that just as the trial of these 'petty criminals' did not stop on their own request, so coverage of the Landmandsbank trial should not be stopped just because the accused and their affiliates in the mainstream press would "shout at or plead with us to put a full stop to the revelations in the Landmandsbank case".<sup>99</sup>

The ties to *Der Sturm* and the commitment to constructivism were reiterated in one of D.N.S.S.' last publications. Broby's small book *Kunst* was subtitled 'the foreign artworks from S-T-U-R-M, Paris – Berlin – New York', and contained lino-cut reproductions of works by Kassak, Moholy-Nagy, van Doesburg and others alongside D.N.S.S.' Eugène de Sala (1899–1987), Gunnar Hansen and Gunnar Hesselbo.<sup>100</sup> In his manifesto-like foreword, Momberg wrote of the relationship between art and play, between Communism and

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97 "H.N. Andersen." *Den Store Danske*. [http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Bil,\\_båd,\\_fly\\_m.m./Søfart/Rederifolk/Hans\\_Niels\\_Andersen](http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Bil,_båd,_fly_m.m./Søfart/Rederifolk/Hans_Niels_Andersen) (accessed November 29, 2014)

98 "Da man var kommet saa langt, krævede de øvrige tiltalte og med dem deres Venner og Familie at der skulde sættes • for undersøkelsen". "ØK Ødsel Korruption Og Kapitalflugt." *Pressen. Periodisk Flyveskrift*, no. 25 (1924), unpaginated

99 "raaber eller bønfalder oss, at der skal sættes Punktum for Afslørningerne i Landmandsbanksagen". *Ibid.*

100 Rud Broby, *Kunst. En Introduktion. De Udenlandske Kunstværker Fra S-T-U-R-M.* (København: D.N.S.S, 1924)

Constructivism, and of the youth's task in building a new society. To judge by his use of the term 'elemental', and the reproduction of illustrations by van Doesburg which had appeared there, the group was by this point also aware of Richter's Constructivist journal *G* □.

Communist society must be built by the revolutionary youth. To build is to play according to rules. The new artists play with building blocks. As of yet, the new art is a little clumsy, but elemental. It constructs according to simple rules. It is Constructivist as Communist society is.  
 (...)  
 Young Communists must be Constructivists.  
 Communism is order and planning in life.  
 Constructivism is order and planning in art.  
 They are both beauty.<sup>101</sup>

The commitment to Constructivism was reflected in *Kunst's* design. Printed in black on bright orange card, the typography was arranged so as to create the image of the elemental form of the square. Held together at top and bottom by two heavy rules, Broby's name and the title *Kunst*, were arranged against the top rule, set in a bold condensed sans serif and letterspaced in order to align with the rule's length. The remaining text elements were arranged in smaller squares and aligned to each their end of the bottom rule. The book opened 90°. According to Broby, this was to make it more comfortable to read whilst lying down.<sup>102</sup> Text was set in two

101 "Kommunismens samfund må bygges av den revolusjonære ungdom. At bygge er lovbundet spil. De ny kunstnere spiller med byggeklodser. Endnu er den ny kunst lidt klodset, men elementær. Den konstruerer efter simple love. Den er konstruktivistisk som det kommunistiske samfund. (...) Unge kommunister må være konstruktivister. Kommunisme er orden og plan i livet. Konstruktivisme er orden og plan i kunsten. De er begge skønhed". H.L.M. "[Untitled foreword]" in *Kunst. En Introduktion. De Udenlandske Kunstværker Fra S-T-U-R-M*, by Rud Broby (København: D.N.S.S., 1924)

102 Broby-Johansen, *Sort Og Rødt*, 90

columns across the spread and separated by an arrangement of heavy horizontal and vertical rules which was meant to show the reader how the book should be read.

As this section has demonstrated, the avant-garde network of journals extended to Scandinavia. *Flamman*, *Pressen*, and the other work of D.N.S.S. ensured that the kinds of work and ideas which would give rise to the term New Typography were present in Sweden and Denmark prior to the publication of Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue of 1925. However, trade journals published at the time show no evidence of master printers or compositors taking a professional interest in the work of Pauli, Momberg and Broby. This was not the result of ignorance. In the case of *flamman*, it was printed by Bröderna Lagerström [The Brothers Lagerström], the Stockholm printing house run by Carl (1869–1925) and Hugo Lagerström (1873–1956) who were also responsible for publishing the leading printing journal *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* [Nordic Printing Art, 1900–61]. When it comes to *Pressen*, its circulation reportedly reached as high as 20,000 copies.<sup>103</sup> This high print run, combined with press coverage of events like Rud Broby's trial, ensured that D.N.S.S. and *Pressen* were known far outside Denmark's community of artists and poets. Because they did not publish on the matter, what master printers and compositors thought of *flamman's* and *Pressen's* typography cannot be stated decisively. However, their silence can hardly be interpreted as a glowing endorsement. The printing trade did not develop, or take an interest in, New Typography

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103 The figure of 20.000 is taken from: Torben Jelsbak, "Avant-Garde and Politics: The Case of the New Student Society in Copenhagen 1922–24" (paper presented at NORLIT 2011, Roskilde, Denmark, August 4–6, 2011), unpaginated.

as a result of being exposed to these ‘domestic’ examples. Rather, its engagement came about as a result of its breakthrough in the German printing trade. The following section will therefore return to developments ‘abroad’ in order to determine the circumstances and reasons which enabled its uptake in German-speaking countries.

## **The German printing trade domesticates**

### **New Typography**

Whereas the Scandinavian printing trade ignored the typographic experiments of Pauli and D.N.S.S., Tschichold’s ‘elementare typographie’ special issue made an immediate impact on the German printing trade. Its importance was that it was both a publication of the avant-garde, and a publication of the trade, all at once. That it was considered an avant-garde publication is illustrated by a photograph of ‘contemporary journals’ published in a special issue of the Swiss architectural journal *Das Werk* [Work], edited by the then future Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer (1889–1954) (**fig.1.06**). Here, the ‘elementare typographie’ special issue features alongside a number of avant-garde journals.

However, the accompanying text is careful to list ‘elementare typographie’ under the heading ‘special issues’ [sonderhefte].<sup>104</sup> Presumably, this was done to avoid the reader thinking that it was *Typographische Mitteilungen* itself which had been accepted into this rarefied company. ‘Elementare typographie’ aside, *Typographische Mitteilungen* was not an avant-garde journal, but the official mouthpiece of the *Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker*

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<sup>104</sup> Hannes Meyer, “Zeitgemässe Zeitschriften.” *Das Werk: Schweizer Monatsschrift Für Architektur, Kunstgewerbe, Freie Kunst* 13, no. 7: Sonderheft die neue Welt (July 1926): 235–36



Fig. 1.06

The photograph of 'Contemporary journals' from Hannes Meyer's special issue of *Das Werk* (no.7 1926).



[Educational Union of German Printers. By being published as an issue of *Typographische Mitteilungen*, ‘elementare typographie’ differed from the avant garde journals surrounding it also in other ways. It was printed in an edition of around 20,000 copies,<sup>105</sup> whereas the editions of avant-garde journals typically did not exceed the low hundreds. *Pressen* was in this sense an anomaly. Moreover, *Typographische Mitteilungen* was distributed to members of the Bildungsverband, printing trade professionals, rather than to small groups of individuals and cultural institutions.<sup>106</sup> Combined with its contentious content, these factors ensured that ‘elementare typographie’ had an immense impact on the German trade. Unlike the avant-garde journals, it provoked widespread criticism and debate.

Over its twenty-four pages, Tschichold introduced his audience to typographic work by himself, Lissitzky, Schwitters, Moholy-Nagy, Herbert Bayer (1900–85), Burchartz, the Hungarian architect Farkas Molnár (1897–1945) and the German artist Johannes Molzahn (1892–1965). Included was also Swiss poster artist Otto Baumberger’s (1899–1961) highly realistically rendered poster for the clothing store PKZ (1923). This poster was lauded by many avant-gardists in the mistaken belief that it was a colour photograph.<sup>107</sup>

105 Estimates of the number of copies printed range between 20,000 and 28,000. See note 41: Burke, *Active Literature*, 44

106 According to Werner Gräff, G □, which had a print run of around 2000 copies, only had a few dozen subscribers, but “though we had only a handful of paying subscribers, we nevertheless sometimes sent as many as a thousand copies to artists, critics, art libraries, collectors, manufacturers”. Quoted in: Peter Brooker, “General Introduction: Modernity, Modernisms, Magazines.” in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines. Volume III, Europe 1880–1940. Part I.*, eds. Sacha Bru et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 18

107 Baumberger later recalled being approached repeatedly by journals that wanted to reproduce the poster, but that their enthusiasm “evaporated” when they learnt the poster was “only drawn” and not photographic. See: Bruno Margadant, *Das Schweizer Plakat. The Swiss Poster. L'affiche Suisse. 1900–1983.* (Basel, Boston & Stuttgart: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1983), 63

As mentioned previously, 'elementare typographie' also included a number of articles reproduced from other sources, in addition to two texts written by Tschichold specifically for the occasion. The first of these was 'Die neue Gestaltung' [The New Design]. This introductory essay traced New Typography's roots in abstract and non-figurative art, explaining that it "is founded on the knowledge imparted by the logically consistent work of Russian Suprematism, Dutch Neo-Plasticism and especially Constructivism".<sup>108</sup> The second was a manifesto titled, like the special issue itself, 'elementare typographie'. Here Tschichold drew upon his education and experience as a printing trade professional to turn his knowledge of avant-garde typography into clear, intelligible guidelines which could be taken up and used by master printers and compositors. He began by stating that "New Typography is oriented toward purpose", and that it should therefore seek the form which communicated in the briefest, simplest, most urgent manner possible. Breaking with the typographic conventions of book printing — with its symmetrical arrangements, ideal of the smooth grey printed surface, and its predilection for the use of initials, vignettes and other ornaments — Tschichold argued for compositions based on logical relationships between parts made visually perceptible through contrasts in size, form, and the active use of the white paper surface. These compositions should be restricted to what he termed typography's elemental means. These means included letters, numbers, signs and the photographic image. Plain rules and geometric shapes could also be used, but only if they were "convincingly grounded in the total construction" — not as ornamentation. The sans serif was defined as the elemental letterform, in all its variations. However, Tschichold

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108 Burke, *Active Literature*, 193

conceded that as none of the sans serifs available at the time were sufficiently legible for setting extended passages of text, the use of the old style roman face *Mediäval-Antiqua* was permitted until a fully satisfactory sans serif could be developed. As detailed in **chapter 2**, this would have implications for how New Typography was domesticated in Scandinavia. Tschichold also argued for the uptake of two rationalising reforms originally championed by Walter Porstmann (1886–1959), an engineer and government specialist in measurement systems. The first was that items of print should be planned according to the recently created standard DIN [Deutsche Industrienorm] paper formats.<sup>109</sup> The second was that an ambitious and radical German orthographic reform known as *kleinschreibung* [writing small], in which upper case letters would be abolished in favour of an exclusive use of lower case should be implemented.

The nature of the criticisms levelled at the ‘elementare typographie’ special issue varied. Although Tschichold had removed the overt reference to ‘scientific communism’ in his translation of the ‘Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists’,<sup>110</sup> the implicit association was nevertheless, as Christopher Burke has put it, “a red rag to a bull”.<sup>111</sup> This was particularly the case amongst master printers, who were considered members of the Bourgeoisie. However, most criticisms related to the sense of professional identity held by practitioners in the trade. As Julia Meer has argued in her *Neuer Blick auf die neue Typographie* [A New Perspective on New Typography, 2015], they

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109 Porstmann’s paper series was introduced in 1922 as DIN 476.

110 Burke, *Active Literature*, 38

111 *Ibid.*, 44

vehemently opposed the call to break with tradition, as this for them had deeper significance than how typography was arranged on a page. Being able to trace their profession back to figures such as Gutenberg was an integral part of their professional self image, and one that was regularly celebrated through historical articles printed in trade journals.<sup>112</sup> With a sense of professional pride rooted in the extensive training required to work as a compositor, they dismissed much of the New Typography practiced by the avant-garde for the lack of technical expertise and understanding of typographic detailing that it displayed. The demands for rationality and calls for typography to be expressed in its briefest, simplest, most urgent form were dismissed as empty phrases and platitudes, which showed the avant-garde's lack of historical understanding. Rationality was held to be a self-evident quality possessed by any good piece of print, and it was argued that there had been a move away from ornamentation ever since the work of William Morris. The standardisation of paper formats had been a long-running discussion, which had last raised itself five years previously.<sup>113</sup>

On the other hand, New Typography was criticised for how its values of clarity, rationality, and standardisation were implemented formally. This line of criticism is illustrated well by comments made by Paul Renner (1878–1956) in context of the much later Bill-Tschichold dispute. Here he sarcastically claimed that it required “a healthy optimism to expect a typographic renewal of the book from the Bauhaus, which published the golden words of

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112 Julia Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie: Die Rezeption Der Avantgarde in Der Fachwelt Der 1920er Jahre* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2015), 95

113 *Ibid.*, 95–96

Moholy 'Legibility – communication must never be impaired by an *a priori* aesthetics', in a book with lines of 52 picas in length".<sup>114</sup> Such comments were also made at the time. Heinrich Wieyneck (1874–1931), head of the Staatliche Kunstgewerbebibliothek and teacher at the Staatlichen Akademie für Kunstgewerbe in Dresden, satirised Tschichold's manifesto, writing: "A piece of print is oriented toward purpose when its message can only be read with difficulty" and "The latest development in the formal expression of elemental typography is the unprinted, but entirely functional, piece of paper in appropriate DIN-format".<sup>115</sup> Another problem associated with New Typography's formal expression was that its means were considered too limited, and that the style therefore had limited longevity. These sentiments were expressed by Konrad F. Bauer (1903–1970) of Bauersche Giesserei:<sup>116</sup>

With the dictatorial demand for sans serif type and bold rules, it has not only set a limit for its means of expression, but also for its lifespan. It will be a short-lived fashion, of which one soon will become tired. The hangers-on who confuse inanity with objectivity will make sure of this".<sup>117</sup>

In spite of the many and varied criticisms, master printers and

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114 Paul Renner, "On Modern Typography," *Typography Papers*, no. 4 (2000), 89. Originally published as: Paul Renner, 'Über moderne Typografie'. *Die Schweizer Graphischen Mitteilungen* 67, no.3 (1948): 119-120.

115 "»Eine Drucksache ist zweckbetont, wenn ihre Mitteilung nur unter Schwierigkeit gelesen werden kann [...] [Die] letzte Steigerung formalen Ausdrucks in der elementaren Typographie [sei] das unbedruckte, aber zweckbetonte Blatt Papier im geeigneten DIN-format". Quoted in: Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 92

116 Bauer had no relation to the foundry's founder Johann Christian Bauer (1802–1867)

117 "Mit der diktatorischen Festlegung auf Grotesk-schrift und fette Linien hat sie nicht nur ihren Ausdrucksmitteln, sondern auch ihrer Lebensdauer eine feste Grenze gesetzt. Es wird eine kurze Mode werden, deren man bald überdrüssig sein wird. Dafür sorgen schon die Mitläufer, die proletenhafte Geistlosigkeit und Sachlichkeit verwechseln". Konrad F. Bauer *Klimschs allgemein Anzeiger für Druckereien*, November 1925. Quoted in: Friedrich Friedl "Echo Und Reaktionen Auf Das Sonderheft »Elementare Typographie«,“ in Iwan Tschichold, ed. *Typographische Mitteilungen* 22, no.10 sonderheft: 'elementare typographie' (1925); reprint (Mainz: Hermann Schmidt, 1986), 8

compositors ultimately saw opportunities in New Typography. It afforded the compositor a degree of creative freedom, and it was seen to provide the letterpress industry with a competitive advantage in their battle for work against commercial artists [gebrauchsgrafiker]. The desire amongst individual printing firms to stay on top of aesthetic developments, and thereby stay competitive also within the same sector of the industry also played a part.<sup>118</sup> One influential individual expressing such views was Bruno Dreßler (1879-1952), chairman [Vorsitzende] of the Bildungsverband, and editor of *Typographische Mitteilungen*. As he expressed in the lecture, ‘Warum fördert der Bildungsverband die neue Typographie?’ [Why does the Bildungsverband promote the New Typography?]: “the master printers’ assistants themselves can once again be creatively active, it is no longer the graphic artist alone who decides”.<sup>119</sup> Because New Typography could offer the master printers and compositors such competitive advantages, Dreßler argued it should be included as part of the Bildungsverband’s education efforts.

The ‘elementare typographie’ special issue was undoubtedly responsible for introducing New Typography to the wide masses of master printers and compositors in Germany. However, it does not follow that these practitioners therefore had to “resign themselves to accepting it”,<sup>120</sup> as Tschichold claimed in *Die neue Typographie*. As detailed in the **introduction**, Julia Meer has taken issue with this version of events. Her book *Neuer Blick auf die Neue*

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118 Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 179–181

119 “der Buchdruckergehilfe können nun wieder selbst schöpferisch tätig werden, es entscheide nicht mehr der Grafiker allein”. Quoted in: Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 181–182

120 Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 7

*Typographie* makes use of domestication as a concept to describe how the ‘wild’ New Typography of the avant-garde was actively taken up and ‘tamed’ by the German printing trade to further their own interests. According to Meer, the trade press played a key part in creating a version of New Typography which better suited the trade’s aesthetic preferences, their concern for typographic detail, and was able to cope with the technical limitations imposed by printing technology.

*Typographische Mitteilungen* played a particularly important role in this process, by “persistently and consistently” arguing for New Typography to a higher degree than any other trade journal.<sup>121</sup> Although the number of visual examples set in a “modern style” did not increase significantly until 1927, from when nearly every issue would feature an article on New Typography,<sup>122</sup> the first instance of an article calling for an engagement with modern principles of form was published already in 1924 — in other words, pre-dating even Tschichold’s ‘elementare typographie’ special issue.<sup>123</sup> *Typographische Mitteilungen* would continue to devote attention to the topic until the journal folded in 1933 when the *Bildungsverband* fell victim to the policy of *gleichschaltung* [cultural alignment] and was integrated into the Nazi trade union, the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* [German Labour Front].<sup>124</sup>

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121 “ausdauernd und konsequent”. Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 187

122 “modernen Stil”. *Ibid.*, 11

123 The 1924 article was: Wilhelm Wanko’s ‘Der Einfluss der modernen graphischen Kunst auf den Akzidenzatz’ [The Influence of Modern Graphic Art on Job Setting], which according to Meer lamented the slow pace with which modern graphics were being implemented into jobbing print. Wanko was a Budapest-based printer. *Ibid.*, 187

124 Meer refers to an article printed in *Typographische Mitteilungen*’s first issue of 1933, which summarised the contents and gave the number of articles published on New Typography since 1924. Unfortunately, Meer does not pursue her study past 1933, so does not give any insights as to developments in the German trade under

Other journals also played a part. For instance, *Der graphische Betrieb* [The Graphic Industry], another of the Bildungsverband's journals, had a stated aim of keeping its readers up-to-date and stressed the need for constant development.<sup>125</sup> *Offset-, Buch- und Werbekunst* [Offset-, Book- and Advertising Art] regularly informed on new developments in technology and worked against traditionalism and a resistance of technology.<sup>126</sup> In 1926 it published an influential *Bauhausheft* [Bauhaus issue]. This presented innovations from across the school, including architecture, furniture design, textiles and stage design to an audience of printers, advertising men and publishers.

Included was also Herbert Bayer's presentation of his *Universal* script, an article by Josef Albers (1888–1976) featuring his stencil type face, and two articles by Moholy-Nagy – one on typography and another on the use of photomontage in advertising.<sup>127</sup> Even conservative journals like *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Buchdrucker* [Journal for Germany's Printers], supported efforts to standardise paper formats, and whilst stopping short of endorsing it, reported on New Typography as part of a wider remit to keep readers up-to-date with contemporary developments.<sup>128</sup> As a whole, Meer argues that the printing trade pursued New Typography for the competitive advantages it brought its members, and not as part of a utopian political project.<sup>129</sup>

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the Nazis. *Ibid.*, 189

125 *Ibid.*, 181

126 *Ibid.*, 181–182

127 *Offset-, Buch- Und Werbekunst: Das Blatt Für Drucker, Werbefachleute Und Verleger*, no. 7 'Bauhausheft' (1926).

128 Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 181

129 *Ibid.*, 183



## Type samples as proponents of New Typography

Another factor which encouraged the uptake of New Typography in the German printing trade was its promotion by type foundries. Recognising its commercial potential, foundries seized on New Typography's use of geometric forms and sans serif type. They began to market series of geometric ornaments. Over the course of 1927 alone they released: *Futura Schmuck* [Futura Ornaments], *Blickfang Schmuck* [Eye-catcher Ornaments] and *Elementare Schmuckformen* [Elemental Forms of Ornament].<sup>130</sup> They also started reissuing older sans serifs like *Koralle* (1915), *Reform Grotesk* (1908), *Splendid Grotesk* (1913), and *Venus Grotesk* (1907), advertising them as essential for the construction of New or Elemental Typography. On occasion ornaments and typefaces would be advertised together, in the same type sample, as products which complemented each other. The role played by type samples in aiding New Typography's uptake by the German trade and subsequent international spread was acknowledged at the time.<sup>131</sup> However, it has not received much attention since. This is perhaps due to Tschichold criticising the kind of New Typography they spread as being of the 'misunderstood' version he described as "pseudo-constructivism".<sup>132</sup> In Scandinavia, this would be labelled *funkis*, and is discussed in **chapter 4**.

130 *Futura Schmuck* was released by Bauersche Giesserei, *Blickfang Schmuck*. by Schriftguss A.-G. vorm. Brüder Butter, and *Elementare Schmuckformen* by Schriftgiesserei D. Stempel AG.

131 For instance, Bertram Evans argued a few years later that the transformation which had taken place in the German trade could be attributed to four factors: the relatively small size of German printing firms, which made it easier for them to take up new ideas than bigger British firms; the role played by the German trade press; the high quality of German education in the graphic arts and lastly; "the remarkable specimen books issued by German typefounders". Bertram Evans, "Modern Typography on the Continent. Lecture III." *Journal of the Royal Society of Art* 86, no. 4484 (1938), 1175. Although it is claimed that the first encounters with New Typography came through trade journals, the role played by type samples in the spread of New Typography to the United States is acknowledged in: Frederic Ehrlich, *The New Typography & Modern Layouts* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1934), 35

132 Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 82

A particularly good example of how New Typography was used for marketing purposes, and how this was sometimes linked back to the avant-garde, was Bauersche Giesserei's *Futura Schmuck*. Whilst this series of geometric ornaments in primary shapes and segments shared its name with Paul Renner's well-known geometric sans-serif Futura, which would be issued by the same foundry later that year,<sup>133</sup> the sample book was used to advertise the older sans-serif Venus Grotesk (1907). Venus was used for nearly all the examples featured, and as the back cover proclaimed, it had recently having been singled out as the typeface best suited "for the elementary typography" by "the well-known and famous Bauhaus master L. Moholy-Nagy" in *Offset's* special 'Bauhaus-heft'.<sup>134</sup> Moreover, the design, of the back cover at least, was by Max Burchartz.<sup>135</sup> This shows that the type foundries not only paid attention to what was being said in the trade press, and made use of the formal language of New Typography in their marketing, but would also commission avant-garde typographers to design their publicity. What would have been the supreme example of this policy unfortunately never made it past planning stages: a sample book for Futura, comprised of one page designed by each member of the ring 'neue werbegestalter' [circle of 'new advertising

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133 That Futura was released in "late" 1927 is claimed by Christopher Burke, and as Lagerström's article was published in April that year, *Futura Schmuck* must have preceded Futura. See: Christopher Burke, *Paul Renner: The Art of Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2008), 88

134 "FÜR DIE ELEMENTARE TYPOGRAPHIE", "Der bekannte und berühmte Bauhausmeister L. MOHOLY-NAGY". *Futura Schmuck*. Frankfurt am Main: Bauersche Giesserei, 1927. The original article was first published in *Gutenberg-Festschrift* (1925), then reprinted as: L. Moholy-Nagy, "Zeitgemässe Typografie: Ziele, Praxis, Kritik." *Offset-, Buch- Und Werbekunst: Das Blatt Für Drucker, Werbefachleute Und Verleger*, no. 7 (1926): 375–85. An English translation is available: László Moholy-Nagy, "Contemporary Typography — Aims, Practice, Criticism." in *Moholy-Nagy*, by Krisztina Passuth (London: Thames & Hudson, 1985)

135 Credited to Burchartz in: Friedrich Friedl et al, "Elementare Typographie," *Typography – When Who How* (Könemann Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), 40

designers’], the group of leading German and Dutch graphic designers founded on Schwitters’ initiative in 1927.<sup>136</sup>

## New Typography’s reception in Scandinavia

The reception of New Typography in the Scandinavian printing trade followed a different path to that in the German-speaking countries. For reasons which will be explained, the trade press was neither inclined nor able to promote New Typography at the time Tschichold published his special issue on ‘elementare typographie’. However, following New Typography’s uptake as an advertising strategy by the German type foundries it became impossible for the growing number of Scandinavian trade journals to ignore developments. A number of articles were therefore published to warn of the dangers associated with ‘the new style’.

In 1925, only a few Scandinavian printing publications dealt with the visual aspects of typography. Instead, the trade press, which consisted almost exclusively of publications controlled by trade unions or employers’ associations, focused largely on organisational matters. It reported on meetings, negotiations and disputes. To a lesser extent it also covered developments in printing technology, reviewed trade literature, noted the arrival of new type samples and published historical articles on typography.<sup>137</sup>

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136 Volker Rattemeyer et al, eds. *Ring “neue werbegestalter”*: Amsterdamer Ausstellung von 1931. “Typografie kann unter Umständen Kunst sein” (Museum Wiesbaden, 1990), 126

137 The trade union press was organised in the following way: Compositors were served by the long-running papers *Svensk Typograftidning* [Swedish Typographer’s Paper, 1888–1959] published by Svenska Typografförbundet [The Swedish Typographers’ Association], *Typografiske Meddelelser* [Typographic News, 1876–1966] published by Norsk Centralforening for Boktrykkere [Norwegian Central

The only journal focusing on visual aspects of typography to appear with any real frequency was *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*. This monthly was the first journal to cater to all the different professions within the graphic trades, and was read in all the Nordic countries. Other, less frequently appearing publications were *Norsk boktrykk kalender* [Norwegian Printing Calendar, 1918–70], published annually by Oslo Typografiske Forening [Oslo Typographic Association], *Svensk grafisk årsbok* [Swedish Graphic Annual, 1924–72], published by Bröderna Lagerström once every two years, and the Fabritius printing house in Oslo's publication *Fabritiana* (1918–64). *Fabritiana* had started out as an annual publication, but from the mid 1920s it started appearing increasingly irregularly and infrequently.<sup>138</sup>

Thanks to its privileged position, *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* was able to suppress any would-be debate following the publication of Tschichold's special issue. Certainly, Hugo Lagerström's sympathies did not lie with New Typography at this point in time.

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Association for Printers], and *Typograf-Tidende* [Typographer's Times, 1874–1974] published by Dansk Typograf-Forbund [Danish Typographers' Union]. In Sweden and Norway the foremen were represented by separate unions. Sveriges Grafiska Faktorsförbund [Swedish Graphic Foreman's Association] published *Grafisk Faktors-tidning* [Graphic Foreman's-Paper, 1914–95], in Norway Oslo Faktorforening [Oslo Foreman Association] published *Norsk Faktor-tidende* [Norwegian Foreman-Times, 1924–89]. Finally, the employers' associations also published papers, Svenska boktryckareföreningen [The Swedish Master Printer's Association] published *Svenska boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden* [Swedish Master Printers' Association's News, 1895-1934] and Oslo boktrykkerforening [Oslo Master Printer's Association] published *Nordisk trykkeritidende* [Nordic Printing Times, 1891–1948]. In Denmark Københavns bogtrykkerforening [Copenhagen's Master Printers Association] published *De Grafiske Fag* [The Graphic Trades, 1918–2012] and Dansk Provins-bogtrykkerforening [Danish Province Master Printer's Association] published *Bogtrykkerbladet* [The Master Printer's Paper]. Additionally, Københavns Bogtrykkerlaug [Copenhagens Master Printers Guild] published *Bogtrykkeren* [The Master Printer, 1922–42].

138 14 issues were published in total, appearing in the years: 1918, '19, '21, '22, '23, '25, '29, '31, '38, '39 and '64

As mentioned in the **introduction**, *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* had in 1900 declared its aim to be the development of “a genuine Nordic graphic art– and style”.<sup>139</sup> Over the following years it succeeded in creating what was termed the ‘Nordic Printing Art Style’ [Nordisk Boktryckarekonsts Stil]. This style was characterised by a simplicity of design, a lack of ornament, and the use of heavy roman typefaces such as Nordisk Antikva.<sup>140</sup> From 1922 *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* was set in the lighter Mediæval Antikva,<sup>141</sup> judged by Lagerström as the type face best suited to the Swedish language.<sup>142</sup> Bröderna Lagerström also played a part in the great Swedish success at 1925’s International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts [L’Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes] in Paris. The style of the Swedish contribution later gained the label “Swedish Grace”.<sup>143</sup> Best remembered are perhaps Simon Gate’s (1883–1945) and Edward Hald’s (1883–1980) designs for Orrefors glass works. However, Sweden was awarded prizes in a number of categories, amongst

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139 “förmåligast utvecklandet af en äkta nordisk grafisk konst– och smaksriktning”. “Anmälan.” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst. Skandinavisk Tidskrift För de Grafiska Yrkena*. 1, no. 1 (1900), 8. Emphasis in original

140 This typeface is known outside of Scandinavia as Genszch Antiqua, and was drawn by Friedrich Bauer (1863–1943) of the Genszsch & Heyse type foundry in Hamburg in consultation with Waldemar Zachrisson. The aim was to create a typeface ‘to suit Swedish taste and temperament’. See: Valter Falk, *Bokstausformer Och Typsnitt Genom Tiderna* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Prisma, 1975), 139

141 Mediæval Antikva was introduced to Sweden by Genszsch & Heyse in 1868. It was an updated version of Caslon, originally designed by Alexander Phemister (1829–94) for the Miller & Richard type foundry in Edinburgh, and released in 1852 under the name Old Style. See: Hugo Lagerström, *En Svensk Boktryckstyp. Några Synpunkter Ur Historiskt, Estetiskt Och Praktiskt Hänseende Vid Införandet Av En Svensk Boktryckstyp I Svenskt Boktryck* (Stockholm: Skolan för bokhantverk, 1913), 14; Neil Macmillan, *An A–Z of Type Designers* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Laurence King Publishing, 2006), 146

142 For Lagerström’s study of readability in Swedish, see: Hugo Lagerström, *Svensk Bokstausform. Försök till Klarlägganda Av Förutsättningar Och Möjligheter För En Svensk Boktryckstyp* (Stockholm: Skolan för bokhantverk, 1918), 15–20.

143 P. Morton Shand “Stockholm, 1930.” *The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration* LXVIII, no. 405 (1930), 70

them printing. Grand prix was awarded to the printing house Malmö Grafiska Anstalt for Erik Wettergren's (1883–1961) *L'art décoratif moderne en Suède* [*The Modern Decorative Arts of Sweden*, 1925, tr. 1927], produced especially for the exposition. Grands prix were also awarded to the publishing house P.A. Norstedt & Söner and its artistic advisor [konstnärlig rådgivare] Akke Kumlien (1884–1949). Gold medals were awarded to books exhibited by the Gothenburg-based printer Oscar L. Isacson (1874–1942), the Uppsala printing house Almqvist & Wiksell and Bröderna Lagerström.<sup>144</sup> Although Bröderna Lagerström did not succeed in winning the highest prize, the success of Swedish typography at the exhibition was seen as an acknowledgement of the efforts made to heighten the trade in Sweden ever since the turn of the century, a project to which *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* had contributed in no small measure.<sup>145</sup> When Tschichold's special issue was published, *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*'s attentions and concerns therefore lay elsewhere. Instead of being met by a furore, as in Germany, in Scandinavia 'elementare typographie' was greeted with silence.

## **A Scandinavian network of printing journals and the appearance of New Typography in type samples**

From 1927 onwards *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* ceased to be the sole Scandinavian journal covering visual aspects of typography.

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144 "Den Officiella Pristlistan För de Svenska Deltagarna I Parisutställningen." *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift. Organ För Konstindustri Hantverk Och Hemslojd* 21 (1925), 122

145 That Lagerström saw it this way can be inferred from his first article on New Typography, which he warned against out of a duty of care to "our Swedish typography which has been acknowledge abroad as good [vår svenska och i utlandet erkänt goda typografi]". Hugo Lagerström, "'Elementär typografi' — 'Den nya gestaltningen' — 'Den nya typografien' — 'Den nya stilen'. En Kort redogörelse om en aktuell rörelse och några varningsord," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 28, no. 4 (1927), 136

*De grafiske Fag* [The Graphic Trades], the paper of the employers' association Københavns Bogtrykkeriforening, was expanded into a journal focusing more closely on visual matters. Erik Levison, a Copenhagen-based retailer of printing equipment, machinery and type, launched the house organ *EL* —presented as “a reliable guide to all technical questions which has or could have practical significance for domestic book craft”.<sup>146</sup> Towards the end of the year, *Nelsons magasin for grafisk kunst* [Nelson's Magazine for Graphic Art] appeared in Norway. Published by master printer Arthur Nelson (1878–1957) this was the first issue of the journal which would soon to be retitled *Norsk trykk* [Norwegian Printing]. Influenced by these developments, the three Scandinavian countries' compositors' unions decided to pool their resources and publish their own journal on visual matters. This was launched in 1930 and given the name *Grafisk revy* [Graphic Revue]. These additions to the trade press meant its ability to support a greater variety of opinions had grown significantly since 1925. As part of the Scandinavian and Nordic programmes of cooperation between trade unions and between employers' association described in the **introduction**, journals were exchanged between central offices offered to members at discounted rates. This created a network of knowledge which master printers and compositors all over Scandinavia could draw upon. Additionally, Scandinavian journals formed part of a wider international network of printing journals from which they would quote, translate articles and with whom they would exchange stereotypes.

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<sup>146</sup> “en paalidelig Vejleder i alle fagtekniske Spørgsmaal, som har eller kan faa praktisk Betydning for det hjemlige Boghaandværk”. “Benevolo Lectori Salutem!” *EL. Teknisk Tidsskrift for de Grafiske Fag*. 1, no. 1 (1927): unpaginated

Unlike the malleable, non-hierarchical networks of the avant-garde, the printing trade's international links followed formal organisational networks such as those of the International Congress of Master Printers and the International Secretariat of Printers [Internationale Buchdrucker-Sekretariat]. This was particularly evident in *Grafisk revy*'s case. Although it primarily modelled itself on *Typographische Mitteilungen*, its choice of name showed it was also self-consciously aligning with similar journals published by other compositors' unions from Austria, Holland and Yugoslavia, all of which were affiliated with the International Secretariat of Printers, and all of which were named the equivalent of 'Graphic Revue' in their respective languages.<sup>147</sup> However, the connection with foreign journals was just as important for the privately published titles. *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, *EL* and *Nelsons magasin for grafisk kunst* (later *Norsk trykk*) all stated, in the lead editorials of their first issues, that reporting on developments in foreign trade press for their domestic audiences would be a key task for their respective journals.<sup>148</sup> Both Scandinavian and international journals were available to view at reading rooms and borrow from libraries hosted by trade unions, employers organisations and educational societies.<sup>149</sup>

147 As stated in: Redaktionen. "Till de Skandinaviska Kollegerna!" *Grafisk Revy*. *Teknisk tidskrift för de typografiska förbunden i Skandinavien* 1, no. 1 (1930): 1. Other 'graphic revues' were: *Graphische Revue*. Wien: Wiener Graphische Gesellschaft, 1899–1933; *Grafische Revue*. Amsterdam: Bond von Typografische Studiegezelschappen, 1920–36; *Grafička Revija*. Zagreb: Savez grafičkih radnika Jugoslavije, 1924–40.

Practical considerations also likely played a part in the choice of name. Unlike the equivalents of *Typographische Mitteilungen*, 'Graphic Revue' is spelled identically in all three Scandinavian languages. Moreover, the Norwegian compositors' union had long published the paper *Typografiske Meddelelser*.

148 "Anmälan", 7; "Benevolo Lectori Salutem!", unpaginated; Arthur Nelson "Norsk Trykk," *Nelsons Magasin for Grafisk Kunst* 1, no. 1 (1927), 2

149 Aside from the Scandinavian ones these were predominantly German of origin. The most widely held were the German *Archiv für Buchgewerbe und Gebrauchsgraphik*, *Deutscher Drucker, Offset-, Buch- und Werbekunst* [Offset-, Book and Advertising Art] — from 1930 known simply as *Buch- und Werbekunst*, *Typographische Mitteilungen*



Whilst a much larger selection was now available, the new journals were no more positively inclined to New Typography than *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* — a publication they held highly and sought to emulate.<sup>150</sup> Instead, most compositors first encountered New Typography through type samples.<sup>151</sup> Compositors generally lacked the language skills to read foreign journals, and although they could be seen (if not read) in libraries, one imagines that the cost and impregnable language would dissuade many from subscribing. As one Danish compositor commented: “there really are limits to how many one can hold of those”.<sup>152</sup> Type samples, which were sent out as marketing pieces, had the potential to reach a wider audience. Although they were primarily sent out to those with the power to decide whether a new face would be purchased or not,

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[*Typographic News*], *Graphische Jahrbücher*, *Klimschs Druckerei-Anzeiger*, *Zeitschrift für Deutschlands Buchdrucker und verwandte Gewerbe* and *Die Reklame*. Non-German journals included the Austrian *Graphische Revue* [*Graphic Revue*], the French *Arts et Métiers Graphiques* [*Graphic Arts and Crafts*], the British *Commercial Art* and *The British Printer* and the American *Printers' Ink* and *The Inland Printer*. The Finnish *Kirjapainotaito* [*Printing*] was also held by most libraries, though it was seldom quoted in the Scandinavian press — its physical presence a testament to Nordic cooperation, and its lack of impact to insularity of the Finnish language. The titles listed above are the most frequently mentioned in the following sources: List over Dansk Typograf-Forbund's library holdings: “Biblioteket.” *Grafisk Teknik* 1, no. 9 (1936): 127–28. List over journals available in the offices of Svenska Boktryckareföreningen: “Utlandets Fackpress.” *Grafiskt Forum*. Svenska Boktryckareföreningens *Meddelanden* 42, no. 5 (1937): 162–163. List of journals available at the offices of Københavns Bogtrykkerforening: “Nedenstaaende Blade Og Tidsskrifter Er Tilgængelige I Københavns Bogtrykkerforenings Medlems-Lokale.” *De Grafiske Fag*. *Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 27, no. 5 (32 1931): 82. List over foreign trade literature, including journals: “Utländska facktidsskrifter, årsböcker och yrkeslitteratur.” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 32, no. 8 (1931): 303–10. Article on foreign trade journals: Sten Lagerström, “Utländsk Fackpress.” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 34, no. 8 (1933): unpaginated. List over trade literature: “Grafisk litteratur.” *Norsk Trykk* 7, no. 4 (August 1933): 118–21.

150 See for instance: Nelson, “Norsk Trykk”, 2

151 That this was the case is stated in: C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Den Elementære Typografi,” *Nyt Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri* 3, no. 4 (1930), 56

152 “der er virkelig Grænser for, hvor mange man kan holde af den Slags”. C. Marhauer, “Er »Typograf-Tidende« et Rigtigt Fagblad?” *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 56, no. 44 (1929): unpaginated (front page)

i.e. the master printer, or in certain cases perhaps the foreman, they could also be procured by compositors on request.<sup>153</sup> When German type samples making use of New Typography started appearing 18 months after the publication of Tschichold's special issue, Hugo Lagerström found it necessary to publish the first article on New Typography in a Scandinavian trade journal. He decided he needed to speak up in defence of the neoclassical 'Swedish' typography he had long promoted, and to issue what he called "some words of warning" against the arriving type samples which he found "strange and highly impersonal and lacking in tradition".<sup>154</sup> Before writing his article Lagerström had familiarised himself with Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue,= which he used as a basis for explaining 'the new style' to his readers. Lagerström even included a translation of Tschichold's 10-point manifesto, and went so far as to acknowledge that certain aspects, such as its concern for simplicity, clarity, readability and the rejection of ornament were "all (...) good typographic rules".<sup>155</sup> However, he was also careful to emphasize that he did "not at all" consider New Typography to be a good model for Swedish typography.<sup>156</sup> It was the product of artists, not tradesmen, and the result of "theoretical constructions disconnected from tradition".<sup>157</sup>

Other early articles on New Typography followed the pattern Lagerström had established. Their authors tended to be well-established printing trade figures who were trying to limit

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153 Jan Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi* (København: Berlingske Bogtrykkeri, 1937), 52

154 "underliga och högst opersonliga och tradition saknande". Lagerström, "Elementär typografi" — 'Den nya gestaltningen' — 'Den nya typografien' — 'Den nya stilen', 136

155 "allt (...) goda typografiska regler". Ibid., 135

156 "ej alls". Ibid.

157 "teoretiska konstruktioner lösryckta från traditionen". Ibid., 134

New Typography's influence. The articles were therefore full of warnings against potential 'excesses' and 'misunderstandings'. That New Typography was encountered primarily through type samples, and secondarily through the German trade press — rather through the work of the avant-garde, also explains the selection of visual examples which accompanied these articles. For instance, the vast majority of illustrations accompanying Lagerström's article were taken from various type samples and trade journals.<sup>158</sup> The only examples of avant-garde origin were taken from the 'elementare typographie' special issue, whereby they had already entered into the discourse of the printing trade.<sup>159</sup> L. Chr. Nielsen's 'En ny typografisk Stil' [A New Typographic Style], which was written as a direct response to Lagerström's article, was illustrated with title pages and invitation cards produced by various branches of the Verband der deutschen Buchdrucker [Union of German Printers] on occasion of its 60th anniversary in 1926.<sup>160</sup> Like Lagerström, Nielsen noted that New Typographers were largely artists and admitted that his examples were "not of the most 'bona fide'",<sup>161</sup> but claimed he had selected them nevertheless in order to illustrate how "this movement is spread over all of Germany and has to no small extent gained friends amongst compositors".<sup>162</sup> Emil Selmar's (1854–1934) damning 'De vekslende typografiske Moder' [The Changing Typographic Fashions], was also predominantly

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158 Four are competition entries for a cover design of *Der Graphische Betrieb*, and three are taken from *Futura Schmuck*.

159 Among those featured are: the opening spread of Lissitzky's design for Vladimir Mayokovski's (1893–1930) 'For the voice' (1923), and two ads by Herbert Bayer (1900–85).

160 L. Chr. Nielsen, "En Ny Typografisk Stil." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstalternes Principalforening* 23, no. 9 (1927–28): 193–99

161 "ikke er af de mest »vaskægte«". *Ibid.*, 198

162 "denne Bevægelse er udbredt over hele Tyskland og i ikke saa ringe Grad har faaet Typografer til Venner". *Ibid.*, 198

illustrated with examples taken from type samples. Again, the only examples of avant-garde origin stemmed from the 'elementare typographie' special issue.<sup>163</sup> In Norway, an important early lecture on New Typography, given by Harald Clausen to Det grafiske selskap i Oslo [The Graphic Society of Oslo], was accompanied by a display of new year's cards from German educational societies and a selection type samples from German foundries — all of them reportedly executed in "the new direction".<sup>164</sup>

Given the limited interaction between avant-garde and printing trade journal networks, the reason for the selections discussed above may have had practical reasons. Avant-garde examples may simply been more difficult to acquire than examples which were created by the printing trade or were already circulating within its network of journals. However, if one accepts Nielsen's justification for choosing to represent New Typography through the selection of invitation cards, the printing trade also saw their own interpretations of New Typography as more relevant to their own practice and circumstances. In this regard it may be seen as significant that the first trade journal cover in Scandinavia to be executed in elemental typography was not created by any member of the avant-garde, but was specially commissioned for *De grafiske Fag* from the Genzsch & Heyse type foundry in Hamburg).<sup>165</sup>

The Scandinavian printing industry was heavily dependent on foreign foundries for the development of new type faces. Although

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163 Emil Selmar, "De Vekslende Typografiske Moder," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 23, no. 20 (1927–28): 403–16

164 "den nye retning". O. Bjørge, "Det Grafiske Selskap – Den Nye Typografi." *Typografiske Meddelelser* 55 (1930), 107

165 See the editorial committee's foreword to: Selmar, "De Vekslende Typografiske Moder", 403

domestic type foundries like the Swedish Berlingska Stilgjuteriet, the Danish William Simmelkiærs Skriftstøberi, and the Norwegian Olaf Gulowsen sold type, these were clones of foreign faces. For instance, Berlingska's Saxo Grotesk was a clone of Schriftgiesserei J. John Söhne's Polar Grotesk (1930) and William Simmelkiærs' Blackburn was a clone of Morris Fuller Benton's (1872–1948) Stymie (1931), originally designed for American Type Founders.<sup>166</sup> It would not be until the end of the 1930s that Karl-Erik Forsberg's Lunda (1938) and Kai Pelt's Stafet (1937) would be released as the first original designs issued by Berlingska and Simmelkiærs respectively.

Scandinavian foundries followed the lead of their German counterparts by advertising their products in the style of New Typography. In the case of Berlingska, this can clearly be seen in its type samples of the period. The smaller Olaf Gulowsen, also issued type samples which made use of modern elements such as geometric lettering and metallic papers. Simmelkiærs, although slower to react, would eventually go a step further by launching its own house organ *Grafisk Nyt* [Graphic News, 1935–43], edited and designed by Henry Thejls. Each issue featured a different typeface, and most featured an article by Thejls on a different aspects of modern job setting.

Whilst Scandinavia was certainly dependent on foreign type, German type samples even had an effect on countries like the United States, where a strong domestic type–founding industry

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<sup>166</sup> Polar Grotesk was in turn based on the Universal typeface used by the Prague state printing press, for which there is no exact date – nor is the designer known. See: Philipp Bertheau, *Buchdruckerschriften Im 20. Jahrhundert. Atlas Zur Geschichte Der Schrift* (Darmstadt: Technische Hochschule, 1995), 191

was present. In an early study of New Typography's reception in the American printing trade, *The New Typography & Modern Layouts* (1934), the author Frederic Ehrlich writes that it was through looking at type samples, and to a lesser extent through reading trade journal articles, "that the general printing industry came to know 'what it was all about'".<sup>167</sup> Ehrlich, who worked as a teacher at the New York Printers Association Mechanics' Institute and Cooper Union, also reproduced several examples from *Futura Schmuck*, reinforcing the sense that this type sample was particularly influential one — also internationally.<sup>168</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has charted early Scandinavian contacts with New Typography. As it has demonstrated, this approach to typography originated amongst avant-garde poets and artists searching for new forms and new modes of linguistic expression. The styles and ideas associated with these experiments circulated through an international network of journals which can be said to extend to Scandinavia with *flamman* and *Pressen*. The former had ties to Paris, Cubism, and the work of Apollinaire and Ozenfant — and considered its typography an integral part of its artistic programme. The latter drew upon movements such as Dada and Constructivism — and had an extensive international network which included Herwarth Walden in Berlin as one of its more important nodes. Its politically motivated publishers, D.N.S.S., embraced New Typography as a means through which a new

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<sup>167</sup> Ehrlich, *The New Typography & Modern Layouts*, 35

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 60–61

utopian society could be created — a purpose it had gained through its contact with the Russian Constructivists. That such connections ran both ways can be seen from Tschichold's recognition of D.N.S.S. work in *Die neue Typographie* and the interest in a French edition of *flamman* in Paris.

Whilst *Pressen's* high print run and public profile would have made it difficult to ignore, and whilst *flamman's* printers were also the publishers of *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, interest in New Typography remained the preserve of the avant-garde in Scandinavia prior to the publication of Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue. This publication initiated a fierce debate over New Typography's merits amongst German master printers and compositors. Identified by Bruno Dreßler as constituting a potential competitive advantage for letterpress printers, it was taken up and promoted by the *Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker* in its educational efforts. As Julia Meer has argued, New Typography was domesticated by the German printing trade. They were not somehow 'converted', nor did they simply 'adopt' it — to use the diffusionist term. Rather, they actively chose to engage with it in order to pursue their own agenda of competitiveness, and modified it to suit their needs, abilities and preferences in order to make it usable in their professional context.

Although the following chapter will argue that New Typography would undergo a similar domestication process in Scandinavia, the way in which New Typography was introduced to master printers and compositors in Denmark, Norway and Sweden differed to how it was introduced in Germany. *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, the only journal to focus on the visual aspects of typography to appeared

in these countries when Tschichold's special issue was published, was committed to Neoclassical typography and Swedish Grace.

In the meantime, German type foundries had understood that New Typography could be used to advertise their products. They set about repackaging older typefaces and creating new ranges of geometric ornaments, marketing both as essential for the creation of 'elemental typography'. Whilst the use of such ornaments was often at odds with Tschichold's teachings, as will be returned to in **chapter 4**, these type samples nevertheless contributed to New Typography's popularisation amongst compositors. Whilst this was happening, other journals focusing on visual matters started appearing in the Scandinavian countries. 1927 witnessed the launch of the reconfigured *De grafiske Fag*, the journals *EL* and *Norsk trykk* and later also *Grafisk revy*. With the silence broken on New Typography in the trade press, *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* and these new journals began to look to their German counterparts for information, opinion and visual examples.

As will be explored further in **chapter 3's** discussion of different types of advertising designer, the divides between different professions and their cultures were sharp, and the communication over the professional boundaries was limited. That such divides existed also between the avant-garde and the printing trade is evident from Lagerström's dismissal of New Typography as the 'theoretical' work of artists, and in L. Chr. Nielsen's judgement that the invitations for the Verband der deutschen Buchdrucker's 60th anniversary celebrations were of greater interest to Scandinavian printers than the more 'bona fide' examples of the avant-garde. Tschichold, with his printing trade background and links to the



avant-garde can be seen to straddle this divide. However, graphic design history tends to present him in the context of the avant-garde, as a rare figure amongst artists who due to his training was able to formulate intelligible guidelines for a printing trade audience. However, as will be explored further in the following chapter, master printers and compositors did not consider him a member of the avant-garde, but one of their own — however radical and divisive. He published articles in trade journals and books through trade union publishing houses. As such, his work and ideas could not be shrugged off as easily as those of a non-tradesman. Indeed, when Tschichold in 1935 arrived in Copenhagen to give a series of lectures as part of the efforts made by Scandinavian printers to include New Typography in to their educational activities, he was greeted: “Welcome to Denmark, colleague”.<sup>169</sup>

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169 In Danish and German: “Velkommen til Danmark, Kollega; Willkommen nach Dänemark, Kollege”. “Jan Tschichold.” *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 2*, no. 1 (1935), 1



# 'Heightening the trade': New Typography's inclusion into the Scandinavian printing trade's educational efforts

This chapter details the role afforded to New Typography by Scandinavian trade journals, text books, trade schools and educational societies. These were all considered components of the educational effort referred to by master printers and compositors in Scandinavia as the 'heightening of the trade'.<sup>1</sup> By this term they understood the work undertaken to improve the standing of the trade, the quality of its products and the skills and education of its workforce. Much of it was carried out in the name of the trade's overall competitiveness, but it was rooted in a sense of professional pride and had a clear interest in the aesthetics and quality of print. This chapter will argue that education in New Typography

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1 This was a phrase used particularly by those seeking to improve educational efforts by reforming or starting new journals and founding educational societies. Occasionally, variations on this phrase would be used, such as 'heightening professional standards' or 'heightening the trade's culture'. See, for instance, the discussions on founding a Danish compositor's journal in *Dansk Typograf-Tidende*, the statutes of *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* as recounted by K.A. Jørgensen in *Grafisk Revy*, Jul. Schrøder's lead editorial of the first issue of *Grafisk Teknik*, and the debates around the revival of *Norsk boktrykk kalender* and the foundation of *Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo* in *Typografiske Meddelelser*: Hugo Sørensen. "Faglig Interesse," *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 56, no. 48 (1929): unpaginated [front page]; L. Chr. Nielsen. "Om et Dansk Grafisk Fagblad," *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 57, no. 2 (1930): 6; K.A. Jørgensen. "Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidsskrift For de Typografiska Förbunden i Skandinavien*. 4, no. 1 (1934): 34; B. Fagerström. "Norsk Boktrykkalendar," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 51 (1926): 12; "Faglig Dyktighet," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 56, no. 4 (1931): 29.

formed an important part of this movement during the 1930s, as the previous chapter has argued was the case in Germany. In Scandinavia as in Germany, New Typography was not simply adopted, but modified to suit the needs, abilities and preferences of the printing trade.

The origins of the movement to heighten the trade can be traced back to the late 19th century and the typographic revival. In Scandinavia the typographic revival was shaped by the work of Frederik Hendriksen (1847–1938) and Emil Selmar in Denmark, Waldemar Zachrisson and Hugo Lagerström in Sweden, and Hermann Scheibler (1854–1929) in Norway. It can be traced back to Hendriksen’s article ‘Vore bøggers udstyrelse’ [The Design of Our Books], published on the front page of the social-liberal newspaper *Politiken* in 1884.<sup>2</sup> Whilst this occurred four years before the first exhibition of The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society where Emery Walker (1851–1896) gave his talk on ‘Letterpress Printing and Illustration’, and seven years before William Morris (1834–1896) published *The Story of the Glittering Plain* as the first title to appear on his Kelmscott Press, it was nevertheless informed by English developments. Hendriksen worked as a xylographer in London in the period 1967–70, where he came in touch with the “antiquarian winds which had been stirring the bibliographical waters” ever since the Chiswick Press had revived old-style Caslon type in 1844.<sup>3</sup> His important article provided the impetus for founding Forening for Boghaandværk [Society for Book Craft] four years later and Fagskolen for Boghaandværk [The Trade School for Book Crafts]

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2 A reprint is available: F. Hendriksen, “Vore Bøggers Udstyrelse.” eds. Christian Ejlers et al, *Bogvennen*, (1988): 9–14.

3 William S. Peterson *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris’s Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 26

in 1893. Both of them were led by Hendriksen. Emil Selmar was a teacher in typesetting at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk for many years, but is best remembered for authoring a comprehensive textbook on typography much used throughout Scandinavia.<sup>4</sup> The first edition of 'Selmars typografi', as it was known, appeared in 1891 and a second "reworked and significantly expanded" edition followed in 1913.<sup>5</sup> In Sweden, Zachrisson started publishing his annual *Boktryckeri-kalender* [*Printing Calendar*] in 1896. Six years later, the first issue of the Lagerström brothers' *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* appeared, and the first instalment of *Nordisk Boktryckarekonsts Fackbibliotek*, a series of small books on specific aspects of printing, followed in 1903. Zachrisson and Hugo Lagerström were also both founders of trade schools. Zachrisson founded *Skolan för Bokindustri* [The School for Book Industry] in Gothenburg and Lagerström *Skolan för Bokhantverk i Stockholm* [The School for Book Craft in Stockholm]. Both opened their doors in 1907.<sup>6</sup> In Norway, Scheibler founded *Grafisk-Teknisk Forening* [Graphic-Technical Association] in 1888,<sup>7</sup> was a co-founder of *Forening*

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4 Selmar held his position at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk from 1893 to 1919. See: Johan Olsen, "Emil Selmar," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 30, no. 2 (1934): 35–36.

5 Emil Sørensen, *Vejledning I Praktisk Typografi for Yngre Sættere. Udarbejdet Med Sagkyndig Bistand Af Fagfæller Og Andre* (København: Ny Typografisk Forenings Forlag, 1891); Emil Selmar, *Typografi for Sættere, Korrektører, Forfattere Og Forlæggere*. 2. omarb. og betydelig forøgede udg. (København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1913)

6 *Skolan för Bokhantverk* acquired its own premises in 1907 upon which it was able to offer apprentices practical training in printing and typesetting. However, as a theoretical course had in fact been offered in association with *Tekniska Skolan* since 1903, *Skolan för Bokhantverk* therefore counted this as its founding year. Hugo Lagerström, "Skolan för Bokhantverk i Stockholm 25 år," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 29, no. 5 (1928): 181–83

7 *Grafisk-Teknisk Forening* was founded 25 March 1888 with Scheibler as chairman. See: W. P. Sommerfeldt, *Boktrykker Hermann August Scheiblers Forfatterskap*. Oslo: Fabritius & Sønners Forlag, 1953, 8

for Norsk Bokkunst [Association for Norwegian Book Art]<sup>8</sup> and authored several books on typography.<sup>9</sup>

The late 1920s saw a renewed interest in heightening the trade. Letterpress printers considered themselves under threat from a number of rival professions — commercial artists, photographers, lithographers and advertisers. If it was to maintain its position in the marketplace, or indeed win back work it had already lost to these competing trades, the letterpress industry would need to heighten its professional standards and ensure its practitioners were as skilled and capable as they could be.<sup>10</sup> Increased mechanisation was considered a danger both to the livelihood and creative autonomy of the hand setter. Realising they could not compete with the speed in which typesetting machines could set continuous pieces of text, they considered it vital to become more skilled at setting complicated items —like tables, ads and other pieces of jobbing print— if they were to ensure their continued employability.<sup>11</sup> This was all the more necessary as the majority of orders were now made up of job rather than book work.<sup>12</sup>

8 Alongside Henrik Grosch (1848–1929), Thorolf Holmboe (1866–1935), Gerhard Munthe (1849–1929), William Nygaard (1865–1952), Hans Reusch (1852–1922) and Erik Werenskiold (1855–1938). See: Arne Nygård Nilsen, *Forening for Norsk Bokkunst: 1900–1950* (Oslo: Forening for norsk bokkunst, 1950), unpaginated

9 Scheibler, Hermann. *Lære- Og Mønsterbog for Typografer: Efter de Nyeste Kilder Bearbejdet Og Med Bidrag Fra Flere Inden- Og Udenlandske Bogtrykkerier*. (Christiania, 1896); — *Haandbog I Det Moderne Reklamevæsen: Særlig Med Hensyn Til Merkantile Reklametryksager Og Specielt Annoncevæsenet* (Kristiania, 1898); — *Om Udstyret Af Illustrerede Kataloger, Priskuranter Og Prospekter* (Kristiania, 1903); — *Haandbog for Enhver Som Har Brug for Tryksager: Raad Og Vink Ved Bestillinger Af Tryksager* (Kristiania, 1912); — *Reklamen: Med Særlig Hensyn Til Annoncering I Aviser Og Tidsskrifter* (Kristiania, 1915)

10 “Den Fagl. Dygtiggørelse,” *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 58, no. 28 (1931): unpaginated (front page).

11 F.P.S. “Forening for Videre Utdannelse I de Grafiske Fag,” *Typografiske Meddelelser* 50, no. 44 (1925), 354

12 C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Fra Morris til den Elementære Typografi” *Bogvennen* (1930), 49

Moreover, increased mechanisation was considered a threat not only to printing's status as an applied art, but to the individual compositor's scope for self-expression.<sup>13</sup>

These concerns were similar to those voiced by German master printers and compositors. Like in Germany, Scandinavian master printers and compositors identified New Typography as an answer to the challenges they were facing. By demanding that compositors be able to plan, sketch out and visually judge their work, it offered the prospect of a more highly skilled workforce. To be able to set text the manner of the future was seen as a way of securing one's long-term employability.<sup>14</sup> For employers, it was important to employ staff capable of working in the new style. This was necessary in order to secure commissions from clients who wanted their printed materials to have a modern appearance. Young compositors, in particular, were drawn to New Typography because of the increased creative autonomy it promised.<sup>15</sup> Lastly, the excitement generated by New Typography's emergence was in itself a motivation to engage with the educational project more widely. According to Charles Moegreen, teacher at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, it "roused the individual to work more intensively with the available [typographic] material and thus did its part to heighten the interest for the purely trade-technical".<sup>16</sup> It is as

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13 S.G. "Forening for Videre Utdannelse I de Grafiske Fag," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 50, no. 47 (1925), 377

14 See, for instance, the following early classified ad: "Akcidens- Og Annonce-Sætter, 26 Aar, Fortrolig Med Elementær Typografi," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 23, no. 19 (1927)

15 C. Volmer Nordlunde, "Elementær Bogtypografi." in *Eftertryk: Udsendt Paa 75-Aars Dagen Den 15. Juni 1963 Af En Kreds Af Venner* (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1963), 46

16 "opildnet den Enkelte til at arbejde mere intensivt med det forhaandenværende Materiale og saaledes gjort sit til at højne Interessen for det rent faglig-tekniske". Charles Moegreen, "Nogle Tanker Om Den Nye Typografi," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk*

part of this renewed engagement with the movement to heighten the trade the founding of the new journals described in the previous chapter should be understood. So too, the founding of the educational societies Det grafiske Selskap i Oslo [The Graphic Society in Oslo] and Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke [The Compositors' Trade-Technical Cooperative] in Copenhagen whose activities will be described later in this chapter.<sup>17</sup>

## New Typography in the Scandinavian trade press

New Typography was never taken up by any one journal and promoted single-mindedly at the expense of all other styles. Nevertheless, it managed to gain significant penetration in the Scandinavian trade press, both in terms of editorial content and in terms of design. The degree to which it did so varied from journal to journal, and was dependent on the views of the editor or organisation responsible for its publication.

As very few formal education opportunities existed for compositors once they had passed their apprentice exam, journals were seen as important educational vehicle. As part of this chapter's investigation into the role played by New Typography in Scandinavian education efforts, the following will therefore

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*tidskrift för de typografiska förbunden i Skandinavien* 2, no. 1 (1931), 16

17 Torbjørn Eng has claimed that "it is highly likely that the founding of Det grafiske selskap was borne out of the renewed enthusiasm for the profession that 'The New Typography' had created [stiftelsen av Det grafiske selskap sprang nok mye ut av den fornyede interessen for faget som «den nye typografien» hadde skapt]": Torbjørn Eng, "Grafiske Møteinvitasjoner På 1930-Tallet." *Typografi I Norge*. [http://www.typografi.org/dokum/dgs/dgs\\_invitasjoner.html](http://www.typografi.org/dokum/dgs/dgs_invitasjoner.html). (accessed July 11, 2015)



establish the extent to which it was engaged with by the various Scandinavian printing journals. It will first turn its attention to *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, not only because it remained the leading trade journal in Scandinavia, but because it was the first to engage with New Typography. Subsequently, the role New Typography played in *Norsk trykk*, *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, *De grafiske Fag*, *EL* and *Grafisk revy* will be detailed.

### **Sweden: *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* and *Svensk grafisk årsbok***

As the previous chapter has shown, Hugo Lagerström was, in 1927, provoked by German type samples to break his silence on New Typography and issue 'some words of warning'. That he should later be the first to act against his own advice and come out in favour of the new style therefore surprised many. Consequentially, his 'conversion' has become one of the best known aspects of New Typography's reception in Sweden.<sup>18</sup> Important to this story is a series of articles on Elemental Typography published by Lagerström between 1927 and 1929.<sup>19</sup> These are usually interpreted

18 This narrative was first identified by the Danish typographer Viggo Hasnæs who claimed Lagerström's change of view as typical of the process that took place in the Scandinavian trade press in general (Viggo Hansen, "Elementær Typografi — Den Nye Variation." *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk tidskrift för de typografiska förbunden i Skandinavien* 1, no. 1 (1930): 13–17). It was later reinforced by Lagerström himself when he published an anthology of his articles (Hugo Lagerström, ed. *Den Nya Stilens Genombrott: En Samling Uttalanden Om Den Nya Stilen Och Dess Införande I Svenskt Tytryck* (Stockholm: Skolan för bokhantverk, 1933)). Since then it has been taken up by a number of writers, perhaps most notably by Sten Lindberg in his introduction to Anders Billow's (1890–1963) festschrift (Sten G. Lindberg, "Anders Billow. Typograf Och Ekonom." in *Anders Billow: Mellan Kast Och Press Hos Nordisk Rotogravyr 1923-1959* (Stockholm: Nordisk Rotogravyr, 1960)), Erik Dal in his book about Scandinavian book design (Erik Dal, *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century* (Christian Ejlers, 1968)) and Magdalena Gram in her article on modernism's introduction into Swedish typography (Magdalena Gram, "När Typografen Blev 'modern': Om Modernismens Genombrott I Svensk Typografi." *Biblis* 34 (2006): 51–63).

19 The articles are: Hugo Lagerström, "'Elementär typografi' — 'Den nya

as evidence of Lagerström's change of outlook being a smooth gradual process.<sup>20</sup> However, a close reading actually points to a rather sudden change. In November 1928 he begins one of the aforementioned articles:

It is undeniable that at the moment, in all of the applied arts, new ideas on form and colour are moving in a certain direction, that is, towards application after the new age's demands.<sup>21</sup>

The wording and tone is significant. Lagerström had not previously highlighted New Typography's relation to a wider movement in the applied arts, nor had he previously evocatively written about the demands of a new age. No reason is given for the change, so why did it come about? One likely reason is that Lagerström had been influenced by Gregor Paulsson (1889–1977). Paulsson was chairman of Svenska Slöjdföreningen, general commissary of the Stockholm Exhibition, and had recently publicly declared himself in favour of Functionalism. As detailed in **chapter 4**, Paulsson had commissioned Bröderna Lagerström to design the first items for the Stockholm Exhibition. These were also the first commercial items of New Typography to be produced in Scandinavia. However, Lagerström could also have been swayed by his recent visit to

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gestaltningen' — 'Den nya typografien' — 'Den nya stilen'. En kort redogörelse om en aktuell rörelse och några varningsord." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 28, no. 4 (1927): 131–36; — "Elementär typografi." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 28, no. 11 (1927): 408–10; — "Elementär typografi." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 29, no. 7 (1928): 284; — "Elementär typografi." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 29, no. 11 (1928): 432–35; — "Elementär typografi — Den nya stilen." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 30, no. 1 (1929): 16–17

20 See, for instance: Dal, *Scandinavian Bookmaking in the Twentieth Century*, 60; Jan Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen : Aspekter På Bild Och Bok Med Utgångspunkt I Anders Billows Verksamhet 1923-1953." (PhD thesis, Lunds Universitet, 2008), 115

21 "Det är ostridigt att f. n. inom hela konstindustrien nya tankar om form och färg rör sig i en viss riktning, nämligen mot anpassningen efter den nya tidens krav." Lagerström, "Elementär typografi," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 29, no. 11 (1928), 433

the International Press Exhibition Pressa, where he had attended the Second International Conference of Master Printers.<sup>22</sup> Held in Cologne between May and October 1928, Pressa featured a range of exhibits in different styles, but is best known in the literature on graphic design for the Lissitzky-designed immersive montage environment of its Russian pavilion.<sup>23</sup> Although not part of the official Swedish contingent, Einar Lenning, the newly appointed head of advertising for the Stockholm Exhibition, also made the trip to Cologne. Upon his return he wrote a review of Pressa for *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*. He did not mention Lissitzky, but touched on his encounters with New Typography elsewhere in the exhibition, notably in the exhibitions of the German trade schools. From his experience Lenning concluded that it could:

no longer be regarded as an isolated few extreme flights of fancy, but instead already captured almost the entire trade world, this is shown very clearly in the exhibition which the German trade school system has arranged at Pressa. (...) Even the most conservative tradesman must admit, that this new movement in Germany has become too powerful to allow itself to be stopped in its course.<sup>24</sup>

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22 The Congress was held from the 4th to 8th of September 1928, and the other official participants were Bo Löfgren, Harald Nyholm and Bruno Zachrisson. Hugo Lagerström, "Andra Internationella Boktryckarekongressen i Köln 4-8 September 1928," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 29, no. 10 (1928), 387

23 Although this is the case the exhibition's exhibits were many and stylistically diverse. See: Jeremy Aynsley, "Pressa Cologne, 1928: Exhibitions and Publication Design in the Weimar Period." *Design Issues* 10, no. 3 (1994): 52-76

24 "icke längre betraktas som ett isolerat fåtals extrema hugskott utan i stället redan hunnit gripa omkring sig inom snart sagt hela fackvärlden, det visas med all tydlighet i den utställning, som det tyska fackskoleväsendet anordnat på Pressa. (...) Även den mest konservativa yrkesmann måste medge, att denna nya strömning i Tyskland blivit för mäktig för att låta sig hejdas i sitt lopp". Einar Lenning. "Pressa – en kulturell världsutställning. Iakttagelser och anteckningar på den internationella pressutställningen i Köln 1928," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 29, no. 10 (1928), 411

Whether Lagerström agreed with Lenning's assessment, and whether this influenced his decision to engage with New Typography cannot be determined. However, it is clear that New Typography's use by the German printing trade was becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

In addition to its change of outlook, Lagerström's article of November 1928 contained four proposals for a redesign of *Nordisk boktryckarekonst's* cover. They all represented a radical departure from the centred Neoclassical compositions used since the beginning of the decade. Each of the four proposals featured asymmetrical compositions. These were supported, or as in the case of the two shown in the bottom row opposite, overpowered, by the use of rectangles and squares. All were printed in solid black and bright red on white paper. Each was also set in a different typeface. Whereas one of these, Mager Grotesk, was a sans serif the other three were serif faces: Caslon Antikva, Mediæval Antikva and Bodoni Antikva. That three out of the four featured serif faces shows Lagerström was still resisting New Typography's stated preference for sans serif type. Seizing on the fact that Tschichold, in his 'elementare typographie' manifesto, had condoned the use of Mediæval Antikva for setting continuous text in the absence of a sans serif fully suited to this purpose,<sup>25</sup> Lagerström proposed that typefaces such as Baskerville, Walbaum and Bodoni should also be allowed as they, like Mediæval and the sans serif were "impersonal" and "more constructed than 'written by hand'".<sup>26</sup>

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25 See point 4: Iwan Tschichold, "Elemental Typography." in *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography*, by Christopher Burke (London: Hyphen Press, 2007)

26 "opersonlig", "mera konstruerade än "med hand skrivna"". Lagerström, "Elementär typografi," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 29, no. 11 (1928), 435. In effect, Lagerström seems to be expressing a preference for what in the Vox-ATypI classification system are described as transitional and didone typefaces.

The cover proposals aside, Lagerström remained hesitant to fully commit *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* to New Typography. As late as March 1929 he would write: "I am (...) still doubtful and for this reason have not decided to apply the 'new style' to NB's design".<sup>27</sup> However, he would soon apply it to another of his publications in a "modified form".<sup>28</sup> The publication in question was *Svensk grafisk årsbok*, and what was meant by 'modified form' was explained in one of the book's articles: 'Bokstavsformen och den nya stilen' [The Letterform and the New Style]. This was a transcript of Lagerström's contribution to a recent evening of discussions on New Typography which was hosted by Svenska Boktryckareföreningen [The Swedish Association of Master Printers], and to which Gregor Paulsson, Oscar L. Isacson and Carl Z. Hægström (1884–1944) also contributed.<sup>29</sup> In the lively debate, which was reported on with interest by *De grafiske Fag* and *Norsk trykk*, Lagerström repeated his previous arguments and clarified his current position on New Typography. He was of the opinion that, because the 'Swedish' style he had helped cultivate over the past twenty years was so deeply rooted amongst practitioners, New Typography was unlikely to gain a foothold in Sweden "in its most extreme form".<sup>30</sup> However, he did not think that tradition should be held on to for its own sake, and acknowledged that formal innovation had been at a "standstill" for a decade.<sup>31</sup> He

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27 "Jag är emellertid allt fortfarande tveksam och har fördenskull icke i N.B.:s utstyrsel gått in för tillämpningen av den 'nya stilen'". Reply by Hugo Lagerström in: Oscar Isacson, "Nya Vindar Blåsa," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 30, no. 3 (1929), 100

28 "modifierad form". Hugo Lagerström, "Förtal". *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok* 1929, 4 (1929), unpaginated

29 The evening of discussions was held on the 4th of April 1929.

30 "i sin extremaste form". Hugo Lagerström, "Bokstavsformen Och Den Nya Stilen". *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok* 1929 4 (1929), 41

31 "stillestånd". *Ibid.*, 42

therefore declared that “it is now time to go ahead and try the new phenomenon, ‘the new style of our times’, and *retain the good but reject the bad*”.<sup>32</sup> As he had stated as early as in his first article on the subject, he found simplicity and readability to be praiseworthy values shared by the Swedish style and New Typography alike. However, like his colleagues in Germany before him, he found that New Typography could be “illogical” in its choice of formal means in that:

the emphasized pursuit of clarity and fitness-for-purpose seems contrary to the placement of lines of type both vertically and diagonally, and the use of heavy lines and points, sharp colours closely placed together etc. often complicates and dissolves the logical context of the text to achieve the desired forceful effect. A heavy rule, a square or a segment of a circle, an obliquely set line of type becomes the main aspect of the composition and the text, the word forms, become a sideshow.<sup>33</sup>

Whilst Lagerström here criticised these formal strategies on the basis of readability, he somewhat paradoxically also criticised the exclusive emphasis on the sans serif on the grounds of its lack of decorative potential. He then restated his call for Baskerville, Walbaum and Bodoni to be taken up as acceptable alternatives to the sans serif alongside Mediæval, this time adding Garamond and Caslon to the list. Books could be brought into line with New Typography by refraining from all use of ornament, by

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32 “det gäller nu att gå vidare och pröva den nya företeelsen, ‘den nya tidsstilen’ och taga vara på det goda men förkasta det dåliga”. Ibid. Emphasis in original

33 “ologisk”, “den framhävda strävan till överskådlighet och ändamålsenlighet synes strida emot placerandet av raderna såväl vertikalt som diagonalt, och användandet av kraftiga linjer och punkter, skarpa och tätt intill varandra ställda färger o.s.v. tillkrånglar och upplöser mången gång det logiska sammanhanget i satsen för att uppnå en eftersträvad krafteffekt. En kraftig linje, en kvadrat eller ett cirkel-segment, en snett ställd kraftig rad blir i satsbilden ofta huvudsak och texten, ordbilderna, bli en bisak”. Ibid., 39-40

discontinuing the practice of dropping capitals down into the text body at the beginning of chapters, and by arranging headings and page numbers asymmetrically.

Lagerström's descriptions fit *Svensk grafisk årsbok 1929*'s design perfectly. It made use of DIN A5 format, its headings were ranged left and set in bold Bodoni, with the body text set in Mediæval. The cover design was overtly asymmetric and also set in bold Bodoni. When the time came to design the next volume of *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, Lagerström applied the same 'modified form' of New Typography, declaring that "the new style doubtlessly contains new forms of typographic expression worth studying and testing" and that the journal's task for the coming year was to work on the "refinement" of its modes of expression.<sup>34</sup> Over the next few years the covers of *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* would in fact move closer to an orthodox understanding of New Typography. A notable element of these was the inclusion of the abbreviation 'NB', the journal's colloquial name, set prominently at large scale in either a sans or slab serif face. Here was clearly an attempt to communicate in the briefest, simplest, most urgent manner possible. However, the typography of *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*'s interior pages was slower to change. Headings continued to be centred until 1932. The use of capitals was never abandoned altogether, although from 1932 onwards it followed the precepts of the 'modified form' of New Typography by setting these on the baseline of the first line of text — rather than dropping them down. The benefit of this method was likely the time it saved the compositor during composition.

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34 "Den nya stilen innehåller otvivelaktig nya typografiska uttrycksmöjligheter, som äro våra att studeras och prövas", "renodling". Hugo Lagerström, "Efter trettio år," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 12 (1929), 457

On rare occasions this approach to page design would be abandoned for image-driven articles such as the one featured above — an example that is doubly rare for its use of a sans serif headline.

### **Norway: Norsk trykk and Norsk boktrykk kalender**

In Norway, *Norsk trykk* played an important role in spreading ideas of stylistic and professional developments, including New Typography. Due to a lapse in *Norsk boktrykk kalender*'s publication between 1926 and 1928 due to poor finances, *Norsk trykk* was all the more important during its first years as it was the only Norwegian publication focusing on visual matters. A regular feature was editor Arthur Nelson's 'Moderne typografi' [Modern Typography], which alternated between opinion pieces on current developments and critiques of specific pieces of typography. Nelson commented cautiously on New Typography already in his journal's second issue, published in March 1928,<sup>35</sup> but it would take until June 1929 for his interest to increase to the point where he requested "those who are reading this and who are trying out the new style in practice to send Norsk Trykk some words on their experiences, preferably accompanied by copies".<sup>36</sup> The Modern Typography column subsequently started filling up with examples showing typographic interpretations of the new ideas from all over the country.<sup>37</sup> Shortly thereafter, the committee in charge of *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, which was about to resume publication, arranged a competition for the design of the 1930 edition. When a traditionalist design was chosen

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35 See: Arthur Nelson, "En norsk typografi," *Nelsons Magasin for Grafisk Kunst* 2, no. 1 (1928): 10–11.

36 "de som leser dette og som prøver den nye stil i praksis, sender Norsk Trykk noen ord om sine erfaringer, helst ledsaget av avtrykk". Arthur Nelson, "Moderne Typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 3 (1929): 60.

37 A number of these examples, along with others featured in *Norsk Trykk*, were reprinted in the book: Arthur Nelson, *Typografiske Mønstre* (Oslo: Norsk Trykk, 1930)



as the winning entry, Nelson was for the first time compelled to explicitly position himself in favour of New Typography. Criticising the committee's choice, he wrote:

It is a fact that the old classic typography no longer answers the needs of the present; it is not capable of expressing modern peoples' ways of feeling and thinking. I therefore recommend those of our readers who are interested in typography to study the new style and practice using it. They will find ideas in the new architecture, modern paintings and illustrations and not least in the lines of a modern machine.<sup>38</sup>

However, Nelson's positive statements on New Typography were never reflected in *Norsk trykk*'s design. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Nelson was inspired by the then still neoclassical *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* when founding his journal. He had also spent a total of sixteen years working in the United States.<sup>39</sup> For seven of these years he worked at The Oswald Press in New York City which published *The American Printer*, another journal set in a neoclassical style. During this period Nelson became particularly fond of Caslon, to the extent that when he founded his printing house in 1923, he purchased this type and became the only printing house in Norway to hold a complete set.<sup>40</sup> That his typography was marked by his stay in the United States was noted by reviewers who described

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38 "Det er et faktum at den gamle klassiske typografi ikke lenger svarer til nutidens behov; den makter ikke å gi utrykk for moderne menneskers føle- og tenkesett. Jeg anbefaler derfor de av våre lesere som er interessert i typografi, å studere den nye stil og øve sig i den. De vil finne idéer i den nye arkitektur, moderne malerier og illustrasjoner og ikke minst i en moderne maskins linjer". Arthur Nelson, "Livet begynner imorgen," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 4 (1929), 74

39 The sixteen years were divided between two stays, dating to 1902–04 and 1906–20. See: Torbjørn Eng. "Boktrykker Arthur Nelsons Vei Gjennom Stilhistorien – 1. Fra «den Frie Retning» Til Klassisk Typografi". *Norsk Grafia* 130, no. 5 (2005): 14–15.

40 Ibid.

Norsk trykk's design as "typically American".<sup>41</sup>

The closest *Norsk trykk* would come to embracing New Typography was when one of Nelson's employees, the compositor Ivar S. Olsen, worked up a cover design proposal and submitted this to the Modern Typography column.<sup>42</sup> Nelson commented positively on the design, but seemingly left the decision of whether to implement the change to his readers, asking: "Shall we give our journal a 'funkis' cover, or keep the old one?".<sup>43</sup> Whilst I suspect it may have been a convenient excuse, he later claimed the existing design was retained because he received "many compliments" for it.<sup>44</sup> So, although *Norsk trykk* played an important role in spreading interest in New Typography in Norway through its editorial content, its design never underwent any significant design changes over its eight-and-a-half year run. Instead it remained faithful to Caslon and neoclassicism.<sup>45</sup>

New Typography would, however, be taken up by *Norsk boktrykk kalender* — the very publication Nelson previously had criticised

41 "typisk amerikansk". H.C. [Harald Clausen] "Nytt Fagtidsskrift," *Norsk Faktor-Tidende* 8, no. 1 (1928), 3. Similarly described as American by Max. Rich. Kirste in an article in *Norges Haandverk*

42 Olsen is listed as an employee of Nelson's in: "Tidsskriftkonkurransen." *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 6 (1930): 203. Little is otherwise known about him other than that he founded the printing house 'Reclamo' in 1935. The name suggests a specialisation in advertising graphics: "Reclamo." *Industrimuseum*. <http://www.industrimuseum.no/bedrifter/reclamo> (accessed July 28, 2015)

43 "Skal vi gi vårt blad "funkis-" omslag eller beholde det gamle?". Arthur Nelson, "Moderne typografi." *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 5 (1930), 166

44 "mange komplimenter", Arthur Nelson, "Moderne typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 5, no. 1 (1931), 16

45 *Norsk Trykk* ran from November 1927 to March 1935 (the first and last volumes consisted of one issue each only). The only changes made to its typography over this period was the adoption of various different display types, such as Futura Black in 1931. Although the overall cover design remained the same throughout, portraits of Norwegian printing trade figures executed in pictorial typography were used from 1934 onwards.

for sticking to 'the old classic typography'. The foreword to its 1931 edition declared the annual was breaking with the past and "entering a new epoch".<sup>46</sup> The issue contained a number of articles on different aspects of New Typography. A particularly important one was Harald Clausen's (1880–1952) 'Den nye typografi' [The New Typography] which had been adapted from a talk Clausen had given at Det grafiske selskap i Oslo. There he had presented a Norwegian translation of the 'elementare typographie' manifesto before entering into a discussion of how this had been interpreted by the trade.<sup>47</sup> However, for his article in *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, he merged the two parts of his talk into a single seven-point description:

1. Type should be of an elemental shape: sans serif is therefore usable in all variations: light, semibold, bold etc. (This demand is incidentally well underway to being disregarded.)
2. Greatly differing type sizes and type forms without regard to the hitherto reigning aesthetic views.
3. Asymmetric (i.e. non-symmetric) arrangement on the paper surface. But text and title groupings should be in harmony with the unprinted paper surface.
4. Logical hierarchy and cohesion between the different parts of the composition (title and text groups).
5. In addition to type, only elementary, geometric shapes are used, such as rules, squares, circles and

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46 "går (...) inn i en ny epoke". Den typografiske forenings fagkomité. "Forord". *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1931* 11 (1930): unpaginated

47 Clausen's talk, given on the 10th March 1930, was first printed in *Norsk Faktor-Tidende*, of which he was the editor, and later in *Nordisk Trykkeritidende*. See: Harald Clausen, "Den Nye Typografi," *Norsk Faktor-Tidende* 10, no. 3 (March 1930): 23–26; — "Den Nye Typografi," *Norsk Faktor-Tidende* no. 4 (April 1930): 36–38; — "Den Nye Typografi," *Nordisk Trykkeritidende. Organ for de Grafiske Fag Og Papirindustrien*. 39, no. 5 (1930): 77; — "Den Nye Typografi," *Nordisk Trykkeritidende*. 39, no. 6 (1930): 91; — "Den Nye Typografi," *Nordisk Trykkeritidende*. 39, no. 7 (1930): 107–8; — "Den Nye Typografi," *Nordisk Trykkeritidende*. 39, no. 8 (1930): 121.

triangles with solid surfaces.

6. Illustrations should preferably be of a rectangular format.
7. Strong, garish colours: orange, red, green, blue.<sup>48</sup>

Many of Clausen's points were recognisably derived from Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto: the preference for sans serif type, the use of contrasting sizes of type, the preference for asymmetrical composition, the call for the text to be organised according to a logical hierarchy, and the exclusion of any ornament other than rules or elementary geometric shapes. However, other principles had been modified in one way or another. The demand for sans serif type was tempered by the statement that this was in the process of being discarded. Clausen argued in favour of asymmetric compositions, but he thought that printed and non-printed areas of the page should be arranged in a harmonious manner, whereas Tschichold advocated the creation of contrast between these two elements. Several aspects of Tschichold's manifesto were missing altogether. This included the basic, but highly important opening statement that "The New Typography is oriented towards purpose", and the following clarification that this purpose is for communication to "appear in the briefest, simplest, most urgent form".<sup>49</sup> Missing were also the calls for *kleinschreibung*

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48 "1. Skriften bør være elementær av form: derfor er grotesk anvendelig i alle avskygninger: mager, halvfet, fet o.s.v. (Denne fordring er man for øvrig allerede allerede på god vei bort fra.) 2. Sterkt forskjellige skriftgrader og skriftformer uten hensyn til de hittil gjeldende estetiske synsmåter. 3. Asymmetrisk (d.v.s. ikke-symmetrisk) plasering på papirflaten. Men tekst- og tittelgrupper skal virke harmonisk sammen med papirets ubetrykte flater. 4. Logisk følgeorden og samhörighet mellom de forskjellige satsdeler (tittel- og tekstgrupper). 5. Som utstyr, ved siden av skrift, anvendes bare elementære, geometriske former, såsom streker, kvadrater, sirkler og triangler med hele, dekkende flater. 6. Illustrasjonene skal fortrinnsvis ha en rektangulær billedflate. 7. Sterke, grelle farver: orange, rødt, grønt, blått". Harald Clausen. "Den Nye Typografi". *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1931* 11 (1930), 51–52

49 Tschichold, "Elemental Typography", 311

and the commitment to DIN paper formats. The latter can be explained by the fact that these had already been taken up and been successfully promoted by Norges Standardiseringsforbund [Norwegian Standards Association], making Norway one of the first countries to implement Porstmann's system after Germany.<sup>50</sup> The last two of Clausen's points, describing the image format and type of printing colours used, were of his own creation. The former was likely informed by a Functionalist concern for expediency derived from the horizontal-vertical nature of typography. The latter emphasized that New Typography was associated with a shift in the use of colour. As Arthur Nelson had noted a couple of years earlier, the practice of using muted and harmonious tints and shades associated with neoclassicism had been abandoned. Text was now printed in solid black ink on pure white paper and widespread use was made of unmixed primary and secondary colours, as well as metallic gold and silver inks.<sup>51</sup>

In its foreword, *Norsk boktrykk kalender's* committee stated that they wanted to move the annual closer to prevailing typographic fashions and to satisfy the new age's demands for simplicity and functionality. At the same time they did not want invite criticism.<sup>52</sup> This rather tentative stance to the annual's design can perhaps be attributed to a sense of responsibility on the committee's behalf. Norwegian compositors considered the regular publication of *Norsk boktrykk kalender* a proud achievement and testament to their

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50 According to Goethe-Institut, the first three countries outside of Germany to implement DIN 476 were Belgium (1924), Netherlands (1925) and Norway (1926). Sweden followed as the fifth in 1930, and Denmark as the sixteenth in 1953. "A Format. A German Invention and Its Use in Everyday Live". Goethe-Institut. <http://www.goethe.de/ins/se/prj/afo/fac/su2/enindex.htm>. (accessed May 2, 2016)

51 Arthur Nelson. "Moderne Typografi og Trykk," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 2 (1929), 38

52 Den typografiske forenings fagkomité. "Forord". *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1931*, unpaginated.

interest in improving their professional skills and knowledge.<sup>53</sup> So, although the design of the 1931 edition clearly represented a break with the past, the formal features applied were not at this point in time considered particularly controversial. The book was designed to a B6 standard format,<sup>54</sup> used the sans serif Erbar Grotesk for the cover and chapter headings and omitted paragraph indents. Geometric ornaments, in the form of a heavy rule and solid red disks, were employed on the cover, end papers and at the beginning of each chapter.<sup>55</sup> The text face was the serif Verona, possibly preferred to a sans serif in a deliberate attempt to stave off criticism.<sup>56</sup> As it transpired, criticism was indeed mild. The only quarrels raised concerned themselves with the use of rules and disks. Both by Arthur Nelson and *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* were of the opinion that these belonged to a past stage in New Typography's development, as they did not contribute to the function of the piece.<sup>57</sup>

Despite the hesitant start, the 1931 edition proved to be a watershed in terms of *Norsk boktrykk kalender's* designs. Emboldened, the committee were the following year prepared to

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53 This sentiment was voiced repeatedly between the years of 1925 and 1928 in articles calling for *Norsk boktrykk kalender* to resume publication. See, for instance: Per. "Norsk Boktrykkalender," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 50 (1925): 228; Fagerström, "Norsk Boktrykkalender", 12; N. Jul-Larsen, "Norsk Boktrykkalender," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 53, no. 24 (1928): 187–88.

54 Not B5 as the foreword mistakenly states. Den typografiske forenings fagkomité. "Forord". *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1931*, unpaginated.

55 The design is uncredited, but may have been carried out by Arbeidernes Aktietrykkeri [The Workers' Printing House Ltd.], the printers of this edition of the annual.

56 Verona was a copy of Robert Wiebking (1870–1927)'s *Engraver's Roman* issued by Stephenson and Blake in 1923. *Engraver's Roman* was originally issued by Barnhart Bros & Spindler in 1899. See: Macmillan, *An A-Z of Type Designers*, 184.

57 Arthur Nelson, "Er boktrykk-kalenderen for 1931 et plagiat?" *Norsk Trykk* 5, no. 1 (1931), 8 ; I. Johansson "Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1931," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 32, no. 3 (1931): 119

take “a step beyond what has so far been dared”.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the 1932 edition was that which would come closest to New Typography as it had been defined in Tschichold’s ‘elementare typographie’ manifesto. Lars A. Olausen’s design featured the use of Berthold Grotesk throughout, with the cover, title page and headings set in lower case. Other notable aspects of *Norsk boktrykk kalender*’s designs from the 1930s include the 1934 edition’s use of Memphis—the first geometric slab serif—<sup>59</sup> throughout; compositor Heinrich Wolff’s (1889–1956) use of photomontage for the front and back cover for the 1938 edition; and the use of distinctive sans serif lettering on the silver card of the 1939 edition, courtesy of the artist Albert Jærn (1893–1949).

### **Denmark: *De grafiske Fag*, *EL* and *Grafisk revy***

Although *De grafiske Fag* had been the first Scandinavian trade journal to feature a cover set in New Typography in 1928, this proved to be largely an isolated incident. The most notable exceptions were the few covers executed in photomontage by Steen Hinrichsen (1897–1955), a former fine printer who had turned his hand to photography.<sup>60</sup> Editorially, New Typography featured as one topic amongst many. An important article was Viggo Hasnæs’ ‘Elementær Typografi og dens Anvendelse’ [Elemental Typography and its application]. This was the first positively worded text to be

58 “et skritt utover det tidligere vågede”. Den typografiske forenings fagkomité. “Forord”. *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1932 12* (1931), unpaginated

59 Designed by Rudolf Wolf (1895–1942), released 1930.

60 Earlier in his career Hinrichsen had published the small artistic magazine *The Wave – A Journal of Art & Letters* (1922–25), first in Chicago, then in Copenhagen. For detail on *The Wave*, see: Charles L. P. Silet and Kay H. Silet, “Vincent Starrett and ‘The Wave’: A Little Magazine of Chicago in the 1920s.” *The Great Lakes Review* 4, no. 2 (1978): 1–18. For a brief description of his later working practices, see the obituary: EP. “Steen Hinrichsen,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening, Kemigrafilaugget I Danmark, Dansk Papæskefabrikant-Forening Og Dansk Litograflaug*, no. 12 (1955): 430

published on New Typography in Denmark, and contained some of Hasnæs' own first fledgling examples.<sup>61</sup> *De grafiske Fag* was also where C. Volmer Nordlunde published the majority of his articles. Although Nordlunde was an adherent of the English reform of printing movement,<sup>62</sup> whose typography would later earn him an honorary membership of the Double Crown Club,<sup>63</sup> he wrote a number of balanced articles on New Typography and its impact on Danish printing.

The most hostile criticisms of New Typography in Scandinavia were, as discussed in the previous chapter, voiced by *EL*'s editor Emil Selmar. He was concerned that New Typography would drag typography back to what he viewed as "confusion" of the Artistic Printing period, and objected to its ahistorical stance.<sup>64</sup> Selmar was particularly disturbed by the inclusion of the 'Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists' in the 'elementare typographie' special issue and its call for a "ruthless war of extinction against the old artistic culture".<sup>65</sup> New Typography, Constructivism and Suprematism were for Selmar 'dysmorphic' art forms, in that they revelled in "the glorification of the

61 Viggo Hansen, "Elementær Typografi Og Dens Anvendelse." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 25, no. 15 Dec (1928): 307–11.

62 See the chapter on 'New traditionalism': Robin Kinross, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History* (London: Hyphen Press, 2010), 64–81

63 Nordlunde received his membership in 1947. See: *The Double Crown Club: Register of Past and Present Members* (Privately printed for members of the Club in celebration of the hundredth meeting, 1949), 87–88

64 "forvirring". Emil Selmar, "De Vekslende Typografiske Moder." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 23, no. 20 (1927–28), 404

65 "hensynsløs uttryddelseskrieg mod den gamle kunstneriske kultur". *Ibid.*, 405. Selmar was actually embellishing somewhat. Tschichold's translation read: "rücksichtlosen Krieg gegen alle Kunst [ruthless war on all art]". "Programm Der Konstruktivisten". *Typographische Mitteilungen* 22, no.10 Sonderheft: Elementare Typographie, 1925, 197



deformed".<sup>66</sup> This term 'dysmorphic' originated from an infamous episode in Danish art history,<sup>67</sup> when the bacteriologist Carl Julius Salomonsen (1847–1924) coined it to describe the Cubist collages shown by Vilhelm Lundstrøm (1893–1950) at the 1928 edition of the annual *Kunstnernes Efterårsudstilling* [The Artists' Autumn Exhibition].<sup>68</sup> According to Salomonsen, these and other examples of modern art were the result of a contagious mental illness which could be understood from the point of view of pathology.<sup>69</sup> Given Selmar's views it is unsurprising that he should oppose any use of New Typography in *EL*. However, in October 1930 even this journal published an issue where both cover and interior spreads were executed in New Typography. Although the editorial made it clear that the design was intended "only [as] an example", the issue went ahead without Selmar, who was replaced as editor by C.M. Kampmann.<sup>70</sup> However, no further engagement with New Typography would take place until the end of 1933 when Erik Levison took on the role of editor himself. By this time the journal was evidently experiencing some difficulties and had started to appear more irregularly. Nevertheless, each of the remaining five issues received a different modern typographic treatment, with the front cover of 1935's issue exhibiting the arguably most refined of these solutions.

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66 "det vanskabtes Forherligelse". Selmar, "De Vekslede Typografiske Moder", 415

67 For a discussion, see: Hanne Abildgaard, "Dysmorfismedebatten: En Diskussion Om Sundhed Og Sygdom I Den Modernistiske Bevægelse Omkring Første Verdenskrig," *Fund Og Forskning* 27 (1984–1985): 131–58

68 Jens Jørgen Thorsen, *Modernisme I Dansk Malerkunst* (København: Forlaget Palle Fogdtal, 1987), 8

69 Carl Julius Salomonsen, *De Nyeste Kunstretninger Og Smitsomme Sindslidelser*, 2. oplag. (København: Levin & Munkgaards Forlag, 1919)

70 "kun et Eksempel". Redaktionen, "E.L. Tidsskriftet Og Den Ny Retning," *EL. Teknisk Tidsskrift for de Grafiske Fag*, 4, no. 15 (1930): 8.

In the pan-Scandinavian composers' journal *Grafisk revy* it was Danish composers who made themselves most noticeable. The journal was modelled on *Typographische Mitteilungen*, which as Julia Meer has shown, played a key role in promoting New Typography to the German trade. As part of its efforts to educate composers, New Typography was also an important topic for *Grafisk revy*, but it did not adopt the same overtly promotional stance as its German counterpart. The journal's editor Nils Wessel (1866–1940) defended the 'excesses' of the avant-garde by recalling the famous line spoken by Gert the Printer in August Strindberg's (1849–1912) *Mäster Olof* [Master Olof, 1872, tr. 1915]: "One has to aim at the sky if one wants to hit the forest's edge".<sup>71</sup> However, many articles called for some level of constraint or compromise. Viggo Hasnæs restated his view that New Typography could be used as a variation alongside traditional typography,<sup>72</sup> and Charles Moegreen argued that "much points towards a compromise between new and old typography to the benefit of both directions" as he considered New Typography not to be static, but still in development.

In keeping with *Grafisk revy*'s Scandinavian profile no more than two issues were designed and produced by any one union before responsibilities were passed on to the next in turn. The journal's place of publication thus rotated between the Scandinavian

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71 "Man måste ju sikta mot skyn, om man vill träffa skogsbrynet". Nils Wessel, "Den Nya Riktningen Inom Typografien," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidskrift För de Typografiska Förbunden I Skandinavien* 1, no. 1 (1930), 5. The line was spoken by Gert when accused of going too far with his heretical rhetoric. Wessel's wording departs slightly from the original, which reads: "Sikta mot skyn, och du skall träffa skogsbrynet! [Aim at the clouds and you shall hit the forest's edge!]. August Strindberg, *Mäster Olof. Skådespel I Fem Akter. Samlade Skrifter Av August Strindberg, Andra delen* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1912), 23

72 Viggo Hansen, "Elementær Typografi — Den Nye Variation," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidskrift För de Typografiska Förbunden I Skandinavien* 1, no. 1 (1930): 13–17

capitals. Each issue featured a unique cover, and the internal text pages were redesigned with each hand-over. Most page designs showed only a moderate application of Tschichold's ideas. In terms of page design, the article which went the furthest in embracing a modern language of form was the German-born, Copenhagen-based compositor Paul Schmidt's 'Fotografi i moderne Typografi' [Photography in modern typography].<sup>73</sup> In his text Schmidt made use of Moholy-Nagy's term 'typophoto' in a discussion how to best use the photograph in typographic composition — albeit in strictly practical terms, and seen from the position of the compositor. It is likely Schmidt was also responsible for the article's page design. It was markedly different to the more conventional one used for the rest of the issue, and notable for its use of sans serif for the running text. A personal involvement from Tschichold came in 1936 with the journal's final pan-Scandinavian issue. In addition to specifying parts of its design, he authored the issue's lead article. This concluded:

The design of this issue, the examples in this article and most of the ads serve as illustrations to my explanations. May they contribute to spreading the New Typography even further in the Nordic countries.<sup>74</sup>

It is interesting to note that Tschichold's elegant, but austere solution —markedly different to *Grafisk revy's* other often cruder, but arguably more impactful designs — was not necessarily

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73 Paul Schmidt, "Fotografi I Moderne Typografi." Edited by Wessel, Nils. *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidsskrift För de Typografiska Förbunden I Skandinavien* 2, no. 3 (1931): 23–30

74 "Udformningen af dette Hefte, Eksemplerne i denne Artikel og de fleste af Annoncerne tjener som Illustration paa mine Forklaringer. Maatte de bidrage til at utbrede den nye Typografi endnu mere i de nordiske Lande". Jan Tschichold, "Proportionerne I Den Ny Typografi," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidsskrift För de Typografiska Förbunden I Skandinavien* 6, no. 4 (1936), 16

regarded as a superior by his Scandinavian audience. For instance, the Norwegian compositor Rolf Torp (1889–?), a teacher at Oslo Tekniske Aftenskole [Oslo Technical Evening School], characterised it as “bloodless”.<sup>75</sup>

Whilst Tschichold’s issue may nevertheless be said to constitute the highpoint in *Grafisk revy*’s engagement with New Typography, it was also to be the last published as a pan-Scandinavian journal. A motion was passed in the Danish typographers’ union to abandon support of *Grafisk revy* in favour of turning *Grafisk teknik*, the bulletin of the educational society *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* [The Compositors’ Trade-technical Cooperative] into a new monthly journal serving all members of *Dansk Typograf-Forbund*.<sup>76</sup> With the Danes withdrawing, the Norwegian compositors followed suit by creating *Grafisk kringsjå* [Graphic Overview], and Wessel was left to resume publication of a purely Swedish *Grafisk revy* from 1937 until his death in 1940. However, both *Grafisk kringsjå*, which was published as an eight-page monthly supplement to *Typografiske meddelelser*, and the Swedish *Grafisk revy* suffered a noticeable loss of momentum deprived of input from the Danish contingent. For reasons which will be explained in the following section, the Danish compositors were especially engaged and theoretically strong. Although the Swedish *Grafisk revy* featured some attractive and elegant examples of New Typography, particularly in terms of cover designs, the journal seemed rather listless editorially compared to its predecessor. In contrast, the team publishing *Grafisk teknik* were strengthened by the addition of

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75 “blodfattig”. Rolf Torp, “Grafisk Revy,” *Typografiske Meddelelser* 61 (1936): 206

76 Nils Wessel, *Svenska Typografförbundet 1887-1936 – Ett Svenskt Fackförbunds Historia* (Oskarhalmsbladets tryckeri, 1937), 734–735

new co-workers taken from the unions of stereotypists, machine setters and machine operators.<sup>77</sup> To judge by the page count and frequency of publication it was evidently also better financed. It was also more editorially and visually pluralistic than either its predecessor or its two new counterparts in Norway and Sweden.

This section has shown that New Typography was widely debated in the Scandinavian trade press and that this interest was reflected in the design of a number of titles: such as *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, *Svensk grafisk årsbok*, *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, *EL* and *Grafisk revy*. That the resulting printed materials were not simply 'misunderstandings' or 'watered-down' copies of avant-garde models, but the results of active and knowing efforts to domesticate this 'wild' typography and bring it closer to established printing practice, is apparent from the presence of theoretical contributions such as Lagerström's 'modified form' and Clausen's reworked manifesto. Whilst some of the results may be judged as crude seen against Tschichold's arguably more elegant work, the criticism of his *Grafisk revy* cover shows such assessments were not necessarily shared by practitioners in the trade at the time, and that their own adaptations were thought to be more successful.

## Early engagement with New Typography in the trade schools

Education in the printing trade followed the apprenticeship system. Would-be apprentices were taken on by a master printer, with

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77 "Oplysningsarbejdet," *Grafisk Teknik* 1, no. 1 (1936): 2

whom they would stay for a period of five years. During this period they received training in the craft of printing in exchange for their labour. They would also take classes at a trade school, usually in the evening after work.<sup>78</sup> The education apprentices received there was intended as a supplement to their on-the-job training, and to ensure they had the necessary reading, writing and arithmetic skills. Skolan för Bokhantverk in Stockholm also taught German and English.<sup>79</sup> The trade schools served to safeguard apprentice compositors against unscrupulous employers who instead of training them properly only used them to perform menial tasks. They also reassured future employers those who had gone through the apprenticeship programme were capable workers.<sup>80</sup>

Whilst New Typography was present at Skolan för Bokindustri [The School for Book Industry] in Gothenburg and Oslo Tekniske Aftenskole [Oslo Technical Evening School], the following will

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- 78 Many would-be typesetting apprentices in Oslo first attended a 5-month preparatory course at Forskolen for Boktrykkere, without which it was difficult to secure an apprenticeship. One apprenticed they were contractually obliged to attend Oslo Tekniske Aftenskole each evening after work for three years. A fourth year for those wishing instruction in machine setting was optional. See: B. F-m. "Fackskolorna i Oslo Och Köpenhamn," *Svensk Typograf-Tidning*, 1931, 14. At Skolan för Bokhantverk apprentices attended one of two modules, either 2 years of evening classes or 3 years of training for one whole day a week. In 1937 this changed so that all apprentices first attended a 1-year preparatory evening course followed by a 2-year course of classes for half a day a week. See: Fredric Bagge, *Skolan För Bokhantverk 1936-1942*. (Skolan för bokhantverk, 1942), 13–15. Apprentices at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk in Copenhagen attended the school in the evenings up until 1938 when all classes were given during the day following a change in the Danish law regulating the training of apprentices, *Lærlingeloven af 7 Maj 1937*. See: C. Volmer Nordlunde, *Fagskolen for Boghaandværk Gennem Halvtreds Aar 1893-1943*. (København: Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, 1943), 143
- 79 Hugo Lagerström, ed. *Den Nya Stilens Genombrott: En Samling Uttalanden Om Den Nya Stilen Och Dess Införande I Svenskt Tytryck* (Stockholm: Skolan för bokhantverk, 1933), 14
- 80 That employers took advantage of the cheap labour apprentices represented was a recurring issue in *Typografiske Meddelelser*. See, for instance: "Bør Det Ikke Nu Innføres Tvungen Svenneprøve?" *Typografiske Meddelelser* 51 (1926): 91–92; "Lærlingspørsmålet." *Typografiske Meddelelser* 55, no. 44 (1930): 345–46.

focus on two other schools, Skolan för Bokhantverk i Stockholm [The School for Book Craft in Stockholm] and Fagskolen for Boghaandværk [The Trade School for Book Craft] in Copenhagen. These were considered the more important schools at the time, they engaged more significantly with New Typography, and their activities were also better documented for posterity.<sup>81</sup>

### **Skolan för Bokhantverk i Stockholm**

Skolan för Bokhantverk's founder, Hugo Lagerström, the person responsible for introducing Tschichold's ideas to Scandinavia, remained interested in the education of compositors, and maintained close ties with the school through his position as superintendent [inspektör]. Although he did not have regular contact with students, he was able to share his interest in New Typography with them at events such as end of year celebrations, where he gave talks on the subject on more than one occasion.<sup>82</sup> Lagerström's presence was undoubtedly felt at the school. On the cover of a promotional brochure from 1931 his disembodied head can be seen floating protectively over a montage constructed from images of various tools of the trade, students working in their class rooms, the school's display at the Stockholm Exhibition, and a statue of Lars Johan Hierta (1801–1872). Hierta's significance was that his memorial foundation, Stiftelsen Lars Hiertas Minne, had provided funds required to found the school in 1903.

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81 Reports of New Typography's presence at Oslo Tekniske Aftenskole's end of year shows were first made in 1930: "Oslo Tekniske Aftenskoles Utstilling Av Elevarbeider." *Typografiske Meddelelser* 55 (1930): 162

82 The first of these was a talk on 'The new style and Swedish typography' [Den nya stilen och svensk typografi], given at the end of year event in 1929. He also gave a talk on New Typography in Swedish printing in 1931.

A more direct influence on students was the illustrator Berta Svensson (1892–1963),<sup>83</sup> who lectured in lettering and typographic sketching.<sup>84</sup> Best known for her calligraphic Nobel Prize diplomas, she also worked in a modern sans serif lettering style during the 1930s. At Skolan för Bokhantverk she taught both forms. Her affinity with the latter can be seen in the design for an advertising card she used during this time. Her name is drawn in a geometric sans serif featuring the elongated ascenders which were fashionable at the time,<sup>85</sup> and a ‘ball-and-stick’ ‘r’ like the one found in the early version of Paul Renner’s Futura.<sup>86</sup> According to Geith Forsberg, it was under her leadership that students at Skolan för Bokhantverk created work “in the new typography’s spirit”.<sup>87</sup>

One of Skolan för Bokhantverk’s students during this period was Karl-Erik Forsberg. Although he later became well-known as a traditionalist calligrapher and type designer, his early work was carried out in a modernist vein. Apprenticed to the publisher Bonnier’s printing house in 1929, he started evening classes at the school that same year. When he much later looked back upon his early career in an interview, Forsberg recalled he would borrow pieces of German and English trade literature from the school for study at home, and through these being exposed to “beautiful

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83 That Svensson, later known as Berta Svensson-Piehl, played a central role is claimed in: Geith Forsberg, “Ett Liv Med Bokstavskonst.” in *Bokstavskonst. Karl-Erik Forsberg 100 år*, ed. Åsa Henningson (Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek, 2014), 15

84 Svensson’s subjects were “texting” and “typografisk skissering”. Lagerström, ed. *Den Nya Stilens Genombrott*, 14

85 Elongated ascenders and descenders were a characteristic of the *funkis* typography popular during the first years of the 1930s. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

86 The “ball-and-stick r” was included in the first Futura type specimen issued towards the end of 1927. See: Christopher Burke, *Paul Renner: The Art of Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2008), 102

87 “i den nya typografins anda”. Geith Forsberg, *Bokstaven & Boken. Typsnitt, Formgivare Och Boktryckare Genom Sexhundra år* (Stockholm: Verbum, 2004), 242



things, things that did not exist in Sweden".<sup>88</sup> He then started sketching typefaces on his free evenings. Fascinated with Paul Renner's stencil face Futura Black (1929), he set out to achieve "a similar startling and challenging effect using only geometric but thick [and] entirely black ascenders and counters".<sup>89</sup> The result was Ballong [Balloon, 1931]. It was offered to Berlingska Stilgjuteriet [Berlingska Type Foundry],<sup>90</sup> but the type foundry rejected the proposal. However, the rejection letter also encouraged Forsberg to send any future designs — thus initiating what was to become a long relationship between designer and foundry.<sup>91</sup>

In the spring of 1931 students had a unique opportunity to see a selection of cutting edge graphic design at first hand when former student Iwan Waloddi Fischerström (1906–94) returned to arrange an exhibition of the ring 'neue werbegestalter' [circle of 'new advertising designers'].<sup>92</sup> Open for four days only, from the 3rd to the 6th of April, the display including the work created for Bochumer Verein by Max Burchartz, Berkel by Paul Schuitema (1897–1973) and Dutch Lufthansa by Piet Zwart. Featured were also a number of type samples designed by Georg Trump (1896–1985) for Berthold, presumably including those made for Berthold Grotesk (1928) and own geometric slab-serif City (1930).<sup>93</sup> Jan Tschichold

88 "vackra saker, saker som inte fanns i Sverige". "Äntligen En Komplet och Äkta Berling För Mac Och PC-Produktion," *DTP: Design, Typografi, Produktion* 1, no. 1 (1992), 3

89 "en liknande uppseendeväckande och utmanande effekt med enbart geometriska men breda och helsvarta staplar och rundlar". Sten G. Lindberg, *Karl-Erik Forsberg : Med Bokstaven under 7 Decennier*. (Norstedt, 1994), 20

90 Forsberg intended for Ballong to be produced as a wooden poster type. See: "Äntligen En Komplet och Äkta Berling För Mac Och PC-Produktion", 3

91 Ballong has never been put into production, although a digitised version was produced by Swedish graphic designer Nils Jarlsbo in 2010.

92 Listed as an official ring exhibition in: Volker Rattemeyer et al, eds. *Ring "neue werbegestalter": Amsterdamer Ausstellung von 1931*. "Typografie kann unter Umständen Kunst sein." (Museum Wiesbaden, 1990), 141

93 Well-known type samples for these faces, all of them designed by Trump are:

was represented by several of his film posters for the Phoebus Palast cinema as well as other work. The exhibition also featured work by designers who were not members of the ring, but with whom it had an affinity. Included were posters by Otto Baumberger and Max Bill (1908–94), book covers by Lissitzky and Moholy-Nagy, and some work by Ladislav Sutnar. Advertising material for the French cosmetics company Bourjois was also on display.<sup>94</sup>

Fischerström had become familiar with the ring's work whilst studying at the Meisterschule für Deutschlands Buchdrucker [Master School for Germany's Printers] in Munich. The Meisterschule had been set up to provide advanced education for prospective leaders of printing establishments, and as such had no parallel in Scandinavia.<sup>95</sup> The only official provisions for further education there was provided by Skolan för Bokhantverk's short, irregular and infrequent master courses,<sup>96</sup> and courses for unemployed compositors held at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk.<sup>97</sup>

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3 Garnituren Berthold-Grotesk, *Probendruck Nr.262* (Berlin: H. Berthold AG, 1929); *Berthold-Grotesk, Probe Nr.272* (Berlin: H. Berthold AG, 1930); *City, Eine Neue Schrift Der H. Berthold A.G. Berlin, Probe Nr. 266.* (Berlin: H. Berthold AG, 1930).

94 Details on the exhibition are taken from: "Utställning Av Modernt Reklamtryck," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 32, no. 4 (1931): 142

95 Whilst he recognised that there was also a Meisterschule in Leipzig, Fischerström claimed the Munich Meisterschule to be the only school in Europe to 'methodically educate leaders of printing houses'. Iwan-Waloddi Fischerström, "Den moderna yrkesutbildningen inom de grafiska hantverken i Tyskland," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 32, no. 2 (1931), 60

96 Two-week summer courses held 1919, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1927, 1930 & 1936. See: Hugo Lagerström, "Skolan för Bokhantverk i Stockholm 25 år," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 29, no. 5 (1928), 183; "Mästarekursen för boktryckare i Stockholm." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 31, no. 7 (1930): 283–84.; Edvin Gill, "Sjunde Mästarekursen För Boktryckare Och Faktorer," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 37, no. 10 (1936): 349–50

97 Two-year courses held from 1931 onwards with the first year consisting of 10 weeks of theoretical education and the second year of "some additional hours

The Meisterschule was led by Paul Renner, and during the period Fischerström was a student (1928–30), counted Georg Trump and Jan Tschichold amongst its staff. Teaching did not focus exclusively on New Typography, as Renner did not believe it provided the best solution for each and every job. However, the student work produced owed a clear debt to Trump's and Tschichold's views, and the school is considered to have played an important role in spreading New Typography into the printing trade. As Christopher Burke has written in his biography on Renner, New Typography was given its impetus by the Bauhaus, but it was at the Meisterschule and the related Munich Graphische Berufsschule [Graphic Trade School] it was developed into a widely applicable approach.<sup>98</sup> Through his education in Munich, Fischerström gained a closer exposure to continental modernism than other members of the Scandinavian printing trade. During the course of 1931 he made further efforts to share his knowledge of modernist graphic design with his colleagues. He gave a lecture to Svenska Boktryckareföreningen's annual meeting and published a handful of articles illustrated with the work of leading international designers.<sup>99</sup>

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of practical work [nogle flere Timer i praktisk Arbejde]". Nordlunde, *Fagskolen for Boghaandværk Gennem Halvtreds Aar*, 119

98 For information on the Meisterschule für Deutschlands Buchdrucker, including images of student work and a consideration of its importance in the story of modernist typography vis-à-vis the Bauhaus, see: Burke, *Paul Renner*, 58–65

99 Fischerström's lecture, given 18 May 1931, later appeared in print as: Iwan-Waloddi Fischerström, "Reklamen Och Den Moderna Typografien." *Svenska Boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden* 36 (1931): 353–55. His articles carried reproductions of work by Otto Baumberger, Max Burchartz, Johannes Canis, Walter Dexel, László Moholy-Nagy, Paul Schuitema, Ladislav Sutnar and Jan Tschichold: Iwan-Waloddi Fischerström "Fotografiet I Reklamens Tjänst." *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok* 1931 5 (1931): 49–62; — "Hur Se Våra Affischer Ut? Några Iakttagelser För Och Emot Den Nya Stilen," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 32, no. 5 (1931): 179–83; — "Tidsenlig Annonssats. Några Klargörande Begrepp över Den Moderna Typografiens Stora Verkningsmöjligheter För Tidningsannonser." *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 32, no. 6 (1931): 220–22

It was customary for Skolan för Bokhantverk's students to collectively produce two books for the end of year of show. One of these was given to the staff as a gift and the other sold to fund the annual school trip. However, for the end of year 1933 it was decided instead to produce a single, larger book to commemorate the school's 30th anniversary. It was a collection of Hugo Lagerström's writings on New Typography, titled *Den nya stilens genombrott* [The New Style's Breakthrough] (**fig.2.01**). The title's triumphant declaration referred to the acceptance New Typography had gained within the Swedish printing trade. However, as it was produced at Skolan för Bokhantverk by its students, it can also be seen to reflect on the position New Typography had gained within the school itself. Indeed, Lagerström's introductory essay claimed Skolan för Bokhantverk had played its part in the development of New Typography in Sweden by showing a particularly strong interest in both theoretical and practical aspects of 'the new style'.<sup>100</sup> As examples of this interest Lagerström only referenced his own talks, but as this section has shown, the school's engagement with New Typography was conducted on a wider basis. However, the design of the book goes some way to undermine this assertion. Whilst it is safe to assume that the cover was intended as an example of New Typography given the subject matter, the use of Futura and the fashionable metallic silver ink, its static composition, set predominantly in upper case, lacks the dynamism and asymmetry normally associated with New Typography. Although New Typography was clearly a concern at Skolan för Bokhantverk, the absence of these features raises questions as to the rigour with which its principles were taught there. Indeed, it will be argued later in this chapter that whilst engagement with New Typography

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100 Lagerström, *Den Nya Stilens Genombrott*, 27

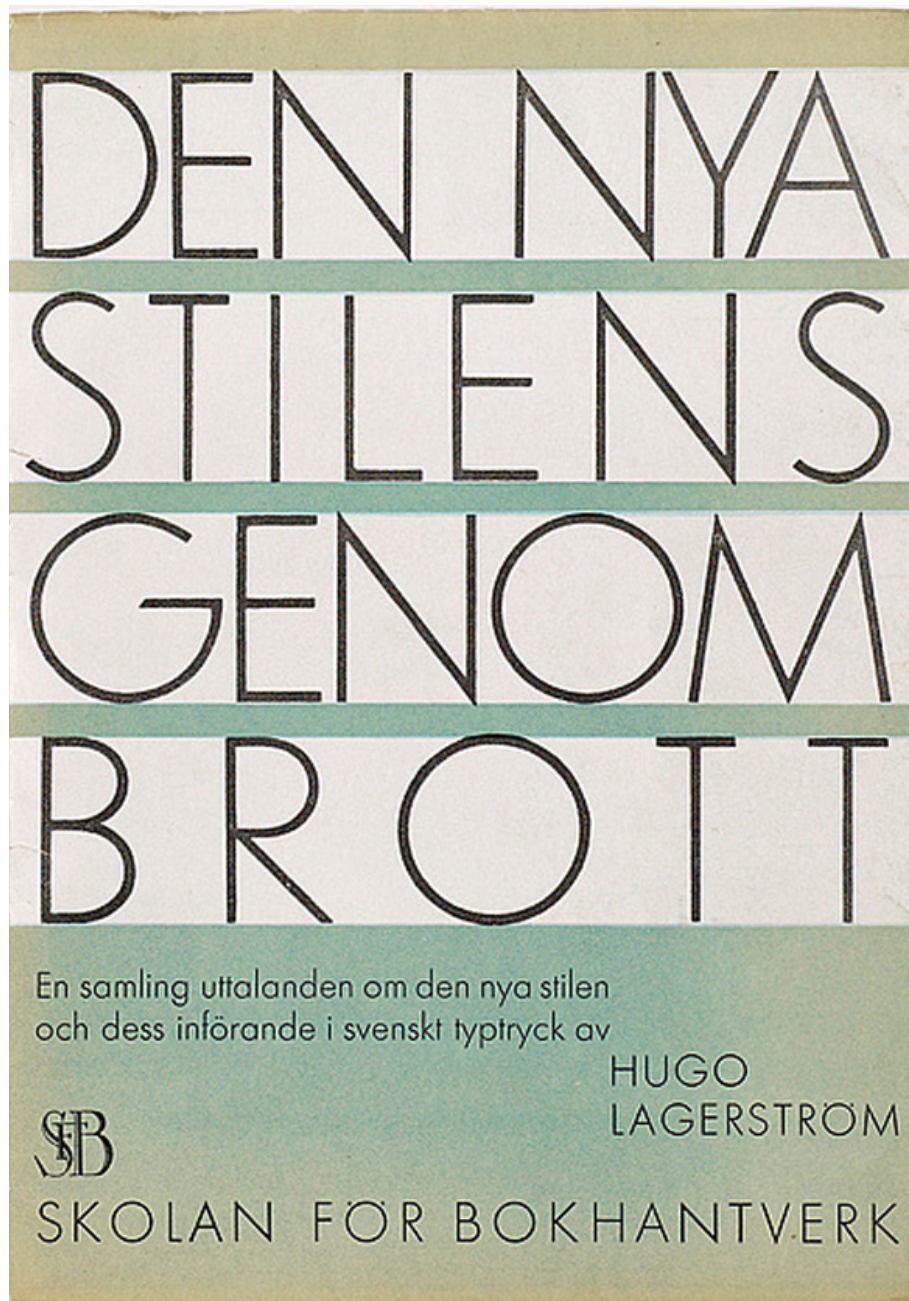


Fig. 2.01

Cover of *Den nya stilens genombrott*, Skolan för Bokhantverk's annual publication for 1933.

deepened at the Danish Fagskolen for Boghaandværk after 1935, interest at Skolan för Bokhantverk would subside.

### **Fagskolen for Boghaandværk in Copenhagen**

During the early 1930s New Typography also made inroads at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk. There, its presence was first noticed at 1931's end of year show.<sup>101</sup> This was the first to be held following a major expansion of the school undertaken in order to take on a higher number of apprentices. As part of this process the school had moved into new premises where the letterpress workshop was furnished with new modern cases equipped with new sets of typefaces: Bodoni, Caslon and Futura.<sup>102</sup> Due to the increased student numbers additional teachers were needed and amongst the newly appointed were "a host of new teachers with completely modern attitudes".<sup>103</sup> Over the next few years names such as Viktor Peterson (?–1945), Viggo Naae (1899–1973), Aage Wantzin, Charles Moegreen, Hugo Sørensen and Henry Thejls would all start working at the school.<sup>104</sup>

Several former students would later speak of the permissive atmosphere at the new Fagskolen for Boghaandværk as a factor which allowed them to explore New Typography more freely than the commercial environment of their masters' workshops would allow. For instance, the apprentice Tage Poulsen, who started

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101 B.F. "Oslo Tekniske Aftenskoles Utstilling Av Elevarbeider," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 55 (1930): 162; C. R. "Den Aarlige Udstilling Paa Fagskolen," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 27, no. 6 (32 1931): 110–11, p.110

102 Nordlunde, *Fagskolen for Boghaandværk Gennem Halvtreds Aar*, 123

103 Louis Andersen et al, eds. "Typograf-Tidende Går Tæt På Uddannelsen," in *Typograf-Tidende 100 år: 1874-1974* (København: Dansk Typograf-Forbund, 1974), 49

104 Ibid.

his studies at the school in 1930, would later recall his teacher Christian Petersen giving him “the feeling of having free hands”.<sup>105</sup> He therefore saved up “all the more daring ‘funkis’ designs I usually didn’t dare offer up to the foreman at my place of training for Fagskolen”.<sup>106</sup> Eli Reimer, later known as a type historian and educator at Den Grafiske Højskole, recalled a similar experience. The compositors at the small printing house he was apprenticed to wanted to experiment with the typography they had been exposed to through *Grafisk revy* and other trade literature. When the printing house received an order for a catalogue containing a large number of ads, they saw their chance to set these in the new style. The client, however, was not impressed with the result and complained to the master printer about the “extraordinary” typographic treatment his ads had received.<sup>107</sup> As he did not want to lose business, the master printer promptly cracked down on any further such experimentation, threatening his staff by declaring: “the next who sets modern will be sacked!”.<sup>108</sup> As a consequence, Reimer would not start working with New Typography until he started attending Fagskolen for Boghaandværk’s evening classes in 1934.

## Educational societies

In Scandinavia compositors had next to no formal educational

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105 “Følelsen af at have frie Hænder”. Nordlunde, *Fagskolen for Boghaandværk Gennem Halvtreds Aar*, 195-196

106 “Alle de mere dristige “Funkis”-Opsætninger, som jeg til daglig ikke turde byde Faktoren paa mit Lærested, gemte jeg nu til Fagskolen”. Ibid.

107 “usædvanlige”. Eli Reimer, “Lærling i Trediverne.” in *Typografen, Bogtrykkeren, Læreren Henry Thejls Sådan Som Hans Venner Oplever Ham* (Herning: Poul Kristensens Forlag, 1980), 60

108 “den næste som sætter moderne, bliver afskediget!”. Ibid.

opportunities once their trade school education had been completed. Printing trade professionals therefore organised themselves in educational societies where they held lectures, organised exhibitions and published technical journals. The first professional groups within the trade to set up such societies were the machine operators and machine setters, for whom it was vital to up to date on technological developments.<sup>109</sup> During the 1920s and early 1930s, compositors became interested in joining this educational movement, and reached out to the machine operators and machine setters with the aim of setting up new multi-disciplinary societies which would serve all the professional groups within the printing trade. This led to the founding of Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo [The Graphic Society of Oslo] in 1929 and Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke [The Typographers' Trade-Technical Cooperative] in Copenhagen, in 1931. In Sweden further education of compositors took place as part of the wider labour movement project of educating the working classes coordinated through Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund [ABF, The Workers' Educational Association]. Study circles were set up around the country, but these did not assume the same importance to the Swedish trade as Det Grafiske Selskap and Typografernes

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109 In Norway, Oslo Maskinmesterforening claimed to have been holding lectures on technical aspects of their profession from 1900 onwards, though there seems to have been an upsurge of activity from 1926. Norsk Trykkerforbund published *Tekniske meddelelser for trykkere* (1920), but only two issues appeared. See: L.S. "Faglige Foredrag," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 51 (1926): 163; Birger Sønstevold and Bertil Fagerstrøm, *Oslo Maskinmesterforening 1898–1938* (Oslo, 1938), 48–49. In Denmark, machine operators founded Københavns Trykkerklub in 1917, which in 1920 published *Trykkeren*, a journal dealing with the technical aspects of their profession. 1921–1936 this was published by Landssammenslutningen for typografiske Trykkere, and co-published with Norsk Trykkerforbund from 1 October 1932 onwards. Machine setters published *Maskinsætteren. Faglig-teknisk Medlemsblad for Landssammenslutningen af Maskinsættere*, published by Maskinsætter-Sekretariatet, 1921–1923. This was continued by *Maskinsætter-bladet. Central-organ for Danmarks maskinsættere*, 1924–1936.



fagtekniske Samvirke did to the Norwegian and Danish trades.<sup>110</sup>

### **Det grafiske selskap i Oslo**

Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo's stated purpose was "to awaken the interest for occupational information amongst its members and champion the reputation and interests of the graphic trades externally".<sup>111</sup> Open to members of all graphic professions, and employers and employees alike, it was funded by membership fees and could therefore be politically neutral. This was reflected in the make-up of its leadership committee, which was representative of the membership.<sup>112</sup> In its efforts to heighten the printing trade's professional interest, the society arranged numerous activities: it hosted lectures, reading groups and exhibitions, it arranged practical courses and it set up a lending library. Although it was based in Oslo, Det Grafiske Selskap also influenced developments in other parts of Norway. In the years following its founding several similar 'graphic societies' were formed elsewhere, to which Det Grafiske Selskap would send slides or arrange lecture visits upon request.<sup>113</sup>

110 For detail on the Swedish compositors' educational project up to 1916, see: Nils Wessel, *Svenska Typografernas Historia: Minnesskrift Utg. Med Anledning Av Svenska Typografförbundets 30-årsjubileum* (Stockholm: Svenska Typografförbundet, 1916–1917), 457–466

111 "å vekke interessen for faglig opplysning blandt medlemmene og utad hevde de grafiske fags anseelse og interesser". From D.G.S.' statutes, as reproduced in: B. Fagerstrøm, "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 34, no. 11 (1933): 400–401, p.401

112 Fagerstrøm writes that the society was funded by membership fees: Fagerstrøm, "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo", 401. By 1936, membership had reached 140 and by 1938 170. See: B. F-m. "Facknytt från Norge," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 38, no. 3 (1937): 176–77; B. F-m. "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo 1938," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 40, no. 4 (1939): 143–44. The first leadership committee, elected at the society's inaugural meeting, 13 December 1929, consisted of master printer Rolf Hjort Johansen, foremen Ths. Bonde and Alfr. Petersen, compositor Reidar Solaas, machine operator Bertil Fagerström and works manager Edw. R. Gyve. See: Rolf Heiestad, *Tyve År I Det Grafiske Fags Tjeneste: Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo 1929-1949* (1949), 10

113 Fagerstrøm, "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo", 401

Det Grafiske Selskap modelled itself on the Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker [Educational Union of German Printers], which as described in **chapter 1** played an important role in promoting New Typography in Germany.<sup>114</sup> By the end of 1931 it was even officially affiliated with its German counterpart.<sup>115</sup> As a result, materials could be borrowed from the Bildungsverband for use in the society's educational work.<sup>116</sup> Members of Det Grafiske Selskap also became eligible to subscribe to the journals *Typographische Mitteilungen*, *Der Graphische Betrieb* and *Archiv für Buchgewerbe* at reduced rates.<sup>117</sup> The former two journals were also available to borrow from the society's lending library, alongside *Graphische Nachrichten*, *The Inland Printer*, *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* and *futurum*.<sup>118</sup>

That New Typography commanded a high level of interest at Det grafiske selskap is evident from the talks it hosted. As mentioned earlier, in relation to *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, a particularly important one was that given by Harald Clausen in March 1930. Master printers Arthur Nelson and Max Rich. Kirste (Max Richard, 1873–1948) both also held talks on New Typography, engineer Kaare Heiberg specifically addressed the issue of standardised paper formats, and compositor Heinrich Wolff gave a talk on the

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114 "Grafisk Samarbeide," *Norsk Faktor-Tidende* 9, no. 5 (1929): 40

115 Styret. "Det Grafiske Selskap I Oslo," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 56 (1931): 387

116 The society did make use of this opportunity. For instance, a talk on binding by Johan Asp Refsum was "supported by excellent and conveniently collated demonstration material borrowed from the Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker in Berlin [understøttet av et fremragende godt og hendig istandbragt demonstrasjonsmateriell utlånt fra Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker i Berlin]". Agki, "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo," *Typografiske Meddelelser* 57 (1932): 109. Likewise, a talk by Edw. R. Gyve on the evolution of the printing press was supported by "slides borrowed from Bildungsverband in Berlin [lysbilder utlånt fra Bildungsverband i Berlin]". Heiestad, *Tyve År I Det Grafiske Fags Tjeneste*, 31

117 Styret, "Det Grafiske Selskap I Oslo", 387

118 These titles are mentioned in the following: Fagerstrøm, "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo", 401; B. F-m. "Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo 1938", 143

Bildungsverband and the Büchergilde Gutenberg.<sup>119</sup> Many talks were subsequently published in one or more trade journals. The ideas discussed at Det grafiske selskap were thereby spread to a wider audience.<sup>120</sup> The interest in New Typography was also reflected in the design of the invitation cards sent out ahead of each meeting. In most cases it is not known who was responsible for their design, but it is known that they were printed “free of charge at various different printing houses”.<sup>121</sup> The cards featured asymmetric compositions, more often than not set in sans serif type, and were usually printed in one colour on buff card. A particularly successful example was that created for a talk given by compositor Ivar S. Olsen on the work completed at a German applied arts school by two of its teachers (**fig.2.02**). Unfortunately, neither the name of the school, or of the teachers is provided on the card. However, it is stated that Olsen brought this work back with him from a study trip made during the summer of 1933. The finely balanced composition is constructed from groups

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119 Titles of all talks between 1929 and 1949 are included in the list of meetings compiled by Øyvind Mørch Smith in: Heiestad, *Tyve År I Det Grafiske Fags Tjeneste*, 28–47

120 As mentioned in relation to Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1930, Clausen's talk was reprinted in both Norsk Faktor-Tidende and Nordisk Trykkeritidende. His translation of Tschichold's elementare typographie manifesto was also published in: “Det Grafiske Selskap – Den Nye Typografi,” *Typografiske Meddelelser* 55 (1930): 106–7. Max Rich. Kirste's talk on New Typography in newspaper ads was given to the general meeting of Norsk Bladeierforening in October 1931 before it was presented to DGS on the 3rd November. Although it was accompanied by an exhibition of 100 examples from the world press, none of these feature in either of the publications the talk was subsequently printed in: Max Rich. Kirste, “Den Nye Typografi i Vore Aviser.” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 27, no. 21 (1932): 373–77; — “Den Nye Typografi i Våre Aviser.” *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1932* 12 (1931): 49–60. Although it is not explicitly stated to be the same, an article with the same subject matter was printed in *Norsk Trykk*. Arthur Nelson, “Vår tid og dens smak,” *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 2 (April 1930): 37–42. An article by Heiberg with the same title as his talk in Det grafiske selskap i Oslo on 7th November 1930 appeared far earlier: Kaare Heiberg, “Standardisering av papirformater,” *Nelsons Magasin for Grafisk Kunst* 1, no. 1 (1927): 3–5, 9.

121 “gratis i forskjellige trykkerier”. Heiestad, *Tyve År I Det Grafiske Fags Tjeneste*, 16

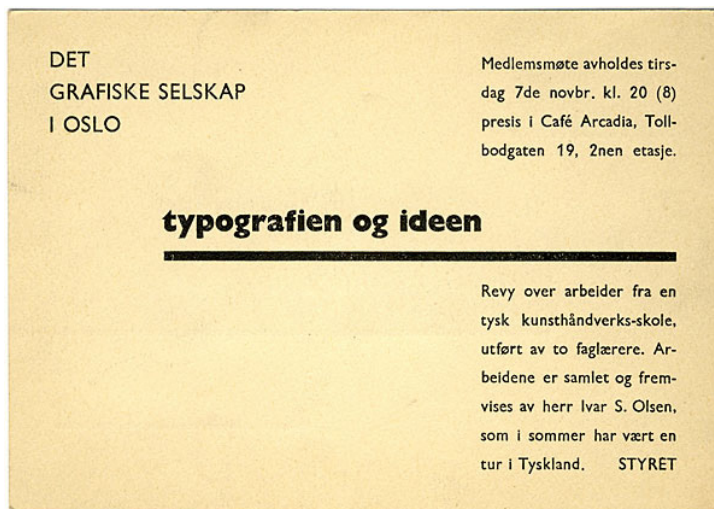


Fig. 2.02

Invitation card for Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo advertising Ivar S. Olsen's 'typografien og ideen' [typography and ideas], 7 November 1933

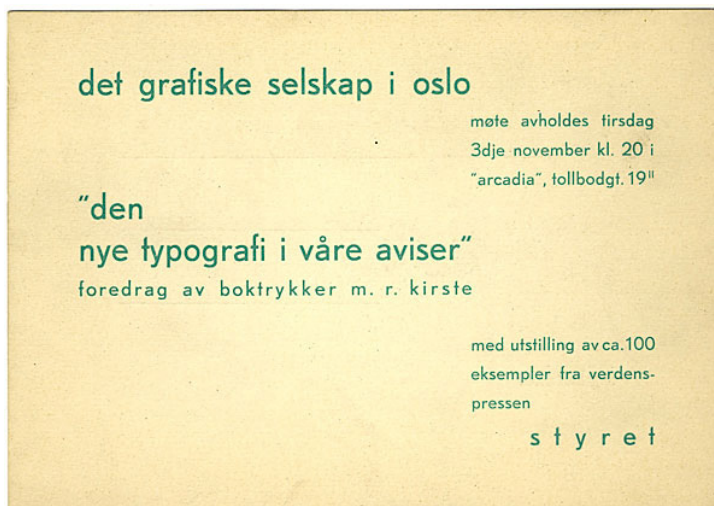


Fig. 2.03

Invitation cards for Det Grafiske Selskap i Oslo advertising Max Rich. Kirste's 'den nye typografi i våre aviser' [new typography in our newspapers], 3 November 1931

of text which have been assigned visual weight in a hierarchy of importance. This shows that the card's designer had a solid understanding of the principles of 'elemental typography', and was not merely engaging in stylistic copying. In contrast one can consider the card for Kirste's talk (**fig.2.03**). Whilst this also corresponds to the formal characteristics of New Typography, it is marred by an awkward line break in the title. It is likely the result of the compositor responsible for this card being more concerned with making the text fit a preconceived geometrical pattern than in working from the sense of the text upwards. Whilst it is not known who designed Olsen's card, it is tempting to think that he designed it himself. If so, it shows Olsen had clearly developed his skills and understanding of New Typography in the three years since submitting his cover design proposal to *Norsk trykk*.

### **Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke**

The Danish Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke [The Compositors' Trade-Technical Cooperative] was founded in 1931. It was initially conceived as an initiative to increase cooperation between the existing educational societies which were run by, and for, the three distinct professional groups organised within the Copenhagen branch of Dansk Typograf-Forbund [Danish Compositor's Association], and to further develop the educational work these had been undertaking.<sup>122</sup> Two years later, in June 1933, it was decided to expand this initiative to a national organisation, which was "to work for a heightening of the professional standards through the guided and supportive education of the trade's

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122 The three societies, or clubs, were: Trykkerklubben, Maskinsætterklubben and Bog- og Akcidenssætter-Klubben. For a contemporaneous report on the first efforts to found TFS see: "Den Fagl. Dygtiggørelse." *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 58, no. 28 (1931): unpaginated (front page).

practitioners, as well as to keep its members informed on technical developments in the printing trade”.<sup>123</sup> It was also decided it should be politically neutral, funded by membership fees. The cooperative arranged practical courses, reading groups, set up a lending library, and also embarked on a modest publishing activity. Like Det Grafiske Selskap, Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke modelled itself on the Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker, and it too became an official affiliate.

The most important publication issued by Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke’s publications was *Typografisk årbog 1935* [Typographic Annual 1935]. This was a prestigious affair, intended to be the first in a series which would rival *Norsk boktrykk kalender* and *Svensk grafisk årsbok*. It is therefore significant that the editorial committee in their introduction went some way in aligning the annual’s design, and by extension Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke itself, closely to New Typography:

Just as Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke itself is a new creation, a new face in our domestic graphic world, so the annual appears in a design which at several significant points departs from the familiar. Without going to extremes, or letting principal reign supreme, we have sought to let the new typography’s views and rules shape the design of the book, as far as circumstances would allow.<sup>124</sup>

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123 “gennem et vejledende og støttende Oplysningsarbejde for Fagets Udøvere at virke for en Højnelse af den faglige Standard, samt at holde sine Medlemmer underrettet om den tekniske Udvikling indenfor Bogtrykfaget”. Jørgensen, “Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke”, 34.

124 “Likesom Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke selv er en nydannelse, et nyt ansigt indenfor vor hjemlige grafiske verden, således fremtræder årbogen også i et udstyr, der på flere væsentlige punkter skiller sig fra det tilvante. Uden at gå over i det ekstreme eller lade princippet være det enerådende, har vi søgt i det omfang, som forholdene tillod, at lade den nye typografis synspunkter og grundregler præge bogens udstyr”. Redaktionsudvalget, “Forord.” in *Typografisk Årbog 1935*

The cover and title page was designed by Viktor Peterson as examples of what he termed “constructive design” (**fig.2.04**).<sup>125</sup> By this he referred to a particular theory of layout which he taught on a two-year long evening course arranged by Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke.<sup>126</sup> Rooted in New Typography, it favoured asymmetrical composition, emphasised clarity of presentation and made use of typographic hierarchies. However, it also relied on a number of formal principles derived from Rudolf Engel-Hardt’s (1886–1968) *Der goldene Schnitt im Buchgewerbe* [The Golden Section in the Book Trade, 1919]. This book detailed how the golden section could be used to create harmonious relationships of scale, colour and form and described how these relationships could be applied to the craft of book design. However, Engel-Hardt was no adherent of New Typography, and even considered his approach directly opposed to that of Tschichold.<sup>127</sup> How then did Peterson reconcile the two?

In Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke’s bulletin *Grafisk teknik* [Graphic Technique, 1934–35],<sup>128</sup> Peterson explained his design decisions: The title page was made up of two planes: a rectangle (the book’s B6 format, itself based on the golden section) and a parallelogram (the lines of text). The parallelogram shape was

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(København: Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke, 1934), 8

125 “konstruktiv Formgivning”. Viktor Peterson, “Typografien i Aarbogen,” *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 1*, no. 7 (1934): 54–56, p.55

126 For detail on Peterson’s course see: “Kursus i Konstruktiv Formgivning.” *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 2*, no. 1 (1935): 2–3; Emanuel Jensen, “Typografiens Grundlag. Indtryk Fra et Kursus,” *Grafisk Teknik 1*, no. 5 (1936): 54–60.

127 Friedrich Friedl. “Echo Und Reaktionen Auf Das Sonderheft »Elementare Typographie«,” in Iwan Tschichold, ed. *Typographische Mitteilungen 22*, no.10 sonderheft: ‘elementare typographie’ (1925); reprint (Mainz: Hermann Schmidt, 1986), 10–11

128 Peterson, “Typografien i Aarbogen”

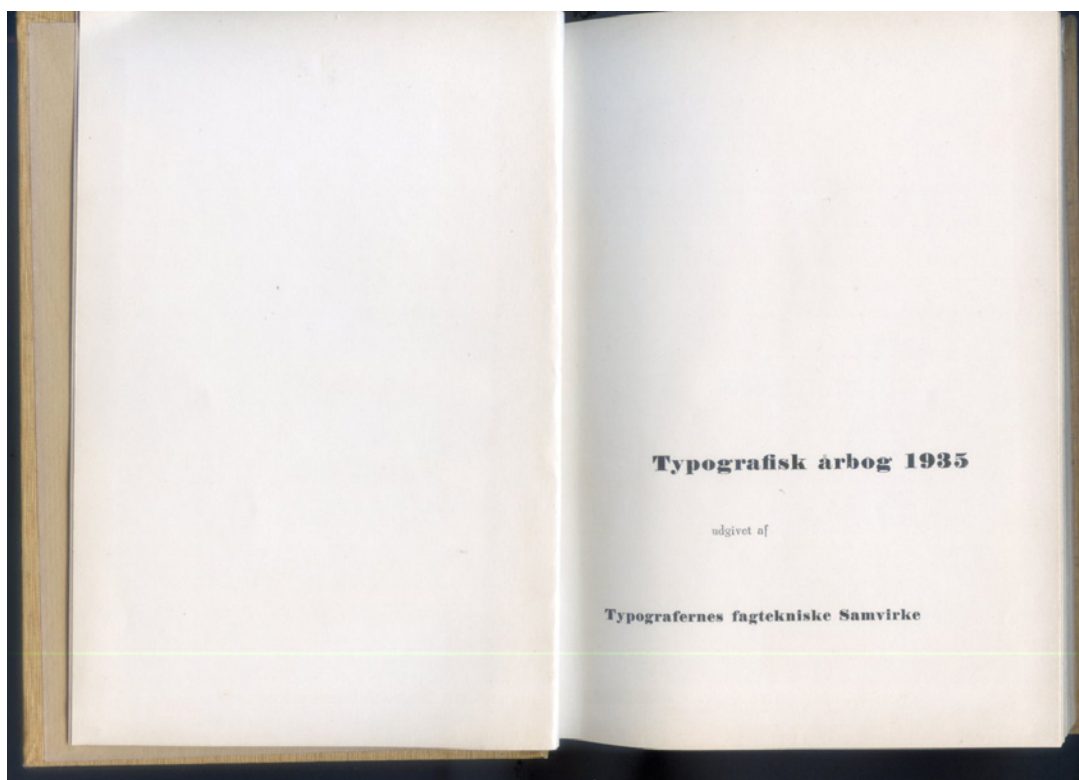
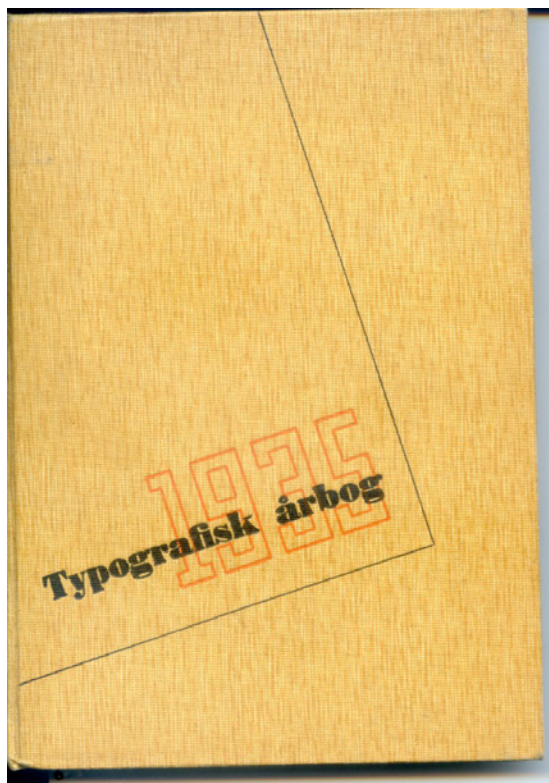


Fig. 2.04

*Typografisk årbog 1935*, front cover and title page designed by Viktor Peterson (1934).



chosen to lend a sense of movement to the page. The three lines of text making up this shape had been arranged so as to first draw the eye to the title 'Typografisk årbog 1935' at the top, then to 'Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke' at the bottom of the page, before finally arriving at the short line in the centre, which read: 'utgivet af' [published by]. The three different type sizes used corresponded to the relationship 5 – 8 – 13 of the Fibonacci sequence. Similarly, the spaces between the lines of type were set to 5 units between top and centre, and 8 from the centre to the bottom. The preoccupation with proportions was directly influenced by Engel-Hardt, whose book provided a handy table of type sizes arranged in harmonious sequences. A range of alternatives for groups of two, three or four different sizes was included. A 1936 article on Peterson's course included a Danish translation of this table, suggesting Peterson used it in his teaching.<sup>129</sup>

A number of visual balancing acts were also in play.<sup>130</sup> The short line in the centre, printed in the same black ink as the rest of the composition, was intended to appear grey optically. This meant it sat harmoniously mid-way in tone between the white paper surface and the black of the other two lines of type. Moreover,

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129 Jensen, "Typografiens Grundlag. Indtryk Fra et Kursus", 57

130 These were influenced by Engel-Hardt and Tschichold in different measures.

Tschichold would advocate the use of colour contrast in *Typographische Gestaltung*, but the harmonious scale used here adapted from the chapter 'Der Goldene Schnitt und die Tonverhältnisse im Druckwerk [The Golden Section and tonal ratios in printed matter] in: Rudolf Engel-hardt, *Der Goldene Schnitt Im Buchgewerbe - Ein Regelwerk Für Buchdrucker Und Buchgewerbler*. 2. vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage. Sammlung: Harmonie Und Schönheit Im Druckwerk, Band 1. (Leipzig: Verlag von Julius Mäser, 1922), 212–239. Engel-Hardt wrote largely of symmetrical composition, but Tschichold had in *Die neue Typographie* allowed for asymmetric compositions to be balanced out using geometric figures. See: Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 170, 173

the visual weight of the parallelogram was intended to optically balance with the rest of the spread.<sup>131</sup> The cover was designed according to similar considerations of proportion. The typeface used throughout the book, Fransk Antikva, was overprinted onto numerals created from brass lines. Unusually for a Scandinavian context, the arrangement was set at an angle to instil a sense of urgency.

The choice of a Didot was, according to Peterson, not a result of aesthetic or ideological objections to sans serif faces, but rather as a result of economic considerations. He thought sans serif and slab serif typefaces required an overly generous amount of leading in order to be sufficiently legible. In turn this would have necessitated a wasteful increase in the number of pages needed for the book.<sup>132</sup> However, whilst Peterson's 'constructive design' organised text according to hierarchies of meaning, and based its preference of serif over sans serif faces for running text on arguments of economy, it was a highly aestheticised interpretation of New Typography. It concerned itself as much with how the formal relationship of elements on the page related to Engel-Hardt's ideals of harmony and beauty as with expressing the meaning of the text.

Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke's commitment to New Typography was reflected also in the content of the annual's articles. The most obvious example is the inclusion of Jan Tschichold's text 'Hvad er og hvad vil den nye typografi?' [What is New Typography and What Are Its Aims?], originally published as the introduction to his book *Eine Stunde Druckgestaltung* (1930).<sup>133</sup>

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131 Peterson, "Typografien i Aarbogen", 55

132 Ibid.

133 This text was widely translated and appeared in a number of European

However, Tschichold's article did not receive pride of place in the running order. This was reserved for a survey of expert opinion on a proposal for orthographic reform put forward by Danmarks Lærerforening [Danish Union of Teachers]. It called for the capitalisation of common nouns to be scrapped and the digraph 'aa' replaced with the letter 'å'. These were both existing features of Swedish and Norwegian orthography. Discussions around their implementation had long roots, and can be traced back to the Scandinavian Orthographic Conference held in Stockholm in 1869.<sup>134</sup> They would eventually be brought into force immediately after the Second World War, fuelled by a desire to distance Danish from such 'German' features.

Where *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* stood on the matter was obvious from a single glance at *Typografisk årbog 1935*'s cover and its lower-case letter 'å'. The proposed reform was also adopted for the book's articles. By adopting Danmarks Lærerforening's proposed reform, *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* can also be seen to have partially fulfilled New Typography's demand for *kleinschreibung* — the exclusive use of lower case letters. *Kleinschreibung* had originally been put forward in Walter Porstmann's *Sprache und Schrift* [Speech and Writing, 1920], alongside a range of other measures including more phonetically

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trade journals. A Swedish translation had previously appeared in *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst*: Jan Tschichold, "Vad är och vad vill 'den nya typografien'?" *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 31, no. 8 (1930): 305–9. For a recent English translation, see: Jan Tschichold, "What Is New Typography and What Are Its Aims?" in *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography*, by Christopher Burke (London: Hyphen Press, 2007)

<sup>134</sup> Arne Torp, "The Nordic Languages in the 19th Century I: Phonology and Orthography," in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, ed. Oskar Bandle, Volume 2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 1429–1431

accurate orthography and modifications to rules of punctuation.<sup>135</sup> Porstmann's ideas were introduced to the Bauhaus by Moholy-Nagy,<sup>136</sup> and the use of *kleinschreibung* was adopted there for official documents towards the end of 1925.<sup>137</sup> The same year, Tschichold incorporated *kleinschreibung* into ideas into his 'elementare typographie' manifesto. With reference to *Sprache und Schrift* he wrote:

our script loses nothing through writing in small letters only – but becomes, rather, more legible, easier to learn, essentially more economical. for one sound, for example 'a', why two signs: A and a? one sound, one sign. why two alphabets for one word, why double the quantity of signs when a half achieves the same?.<sup>138</sup>

In Denmark, the use of *kleinschreibung* was associated with Communist intellectuals like Broby and Momberg.<sup>139</sup> The following observation was made by the Social Democratic Folketingsmand [Member of Parliament] Hartvig Frisch (1893–1950) in an article titled 'Bogstavkommunisme' [Letter-Communism, 1931]:

When I receive letters from fairly young people, I can see already from the envelope, if they are convinced revolutionaries. Then they write not only nouns but also names small, such as this:  
/ hr. hartvig frisch, socialdemokraten, copenhagen.<sup>140</sup>

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135 Robin Kinross, "Large and Small Letters: Authority and Democracy" in *Unjustified Texts: Perspectives on Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2011), 137

136 Burke, *Paul Renner*, 117

137 This informed informing typesetting and typewriting practice at the school well as the creation of Herbert Bayer's single case Universal alphabet (1926). Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus: 1919 – 1933* (Köln, London, Madrid, New York, Paris & Tokyo: Taschen, 2002), 139

138 Tschichold, "Elemental Typography", 311

139 For a brief discussion of the relation between Communism and orthography in Denmark, see: Morten Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur: DKP Og de Intellektuelle 1918-1960* (København: Tiderne skifter, 1993), 514–516

140 "Naar jeg faar Breve fra ganske unge Mennesker, kan jeg allerede paa Konvolutten

Indeed, Broby, whose letterheads featured the same slogan as those of the Bauhaus, "jeg sparer tid ved at skrive alt smaatt [I save time by writing everything small]",<sup>141</sup> wrote to Frisch in this manner. However, the rest of his letterhead was, like *BLOD*, set in capitals. Momberg's letterhead, on the other hand, was set entirely in lower case.

Whilst *kleinschreibung* was quickly adopted at the Bauhaus, it continued to be debated by the German printing trade long after the publication of Tschichold's 'elementare typographie'. In May 1931 *Typographische Mitteilungen* published a special issue of *kleinschreibung*, where members were asked to vote for which of the following three options they supported: "(1) capitals for sentence openings and proper names; (2) complete abolition of capitals; (3) continuation of the present rules".<sup>142</sup> When clear majority favoured the first option, it was adopted by *Typographische Mitteilungen's* publishers, the Bildungsverband der deutschen Buchdrucker, as a campaigning policy.<sup>143</sup> As *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* modelled itself on the Bildungsverband, it may well have been aware of this policy. It was certainly strikingly similar to the one they adopted for the setting of *Typografisk årbog 1935*.

*Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* regularly arranged lectures.

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se, om de er overbevisningstro revolutionære. Saa skriver de nemlig ikke blot Navneord, men ogsaa Navnene med lille, saadan:/ hr. hartvig frisch, socialdemokraten, københavn". Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur*, 515

141 Jelsbak, "Punkt Og Linje På Flade", 123

142 Kinross, "Large and Small Letters", 138

143 According to Kinross, 53.5% of the 26.876 members who voted favoured option 1, 23.5% option 2 and 23% option 3. Kinross, "Large and Small Letters", 138. Tschichold claimed he approached the Bildungsverband to issue the questionnaire. See: Jan Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi* (København: Berlingske Bogtrykkeri, 1937), 29

Many of them were held by individuals who were not members of the trade, but who had interests in typography or related matters. For instance, Broby gave a talk on photomontage accompanied by a small exhibition of examples.<sup>144</sup> Presumably, it included his own work for Mondes Forlag, detailed in **chapter 5**. The advertising man V.J. Clausen gave two talks on how approaches to typography differed between the printing and advertising trades, and Steen Eiler Rasmussen gave a talk on the design of his book *Britisk Brugskunst*. This book will be discussed in **chapter 4**.<sup>145</sup> However, in 1935 these were all eclipsed in popularity and significance by a series of three talks given by Jan Tschichold. Titled ‘Den ny Typografi’s Maal’ [New Typography’s Aims], ‘Typografiens Form som Udtryk for dens Teknik’ [Typography’s Form as an Expression of its Technology] and ‘Typografisk Formgivning’ [Typographic Design], the talks were held on the 9th, 12th and 14th of August respectively. As the title of the third talk suggests, their content was taken from Tschichold’s forthcoming book *Typographische Gestaltung* (1935). In other words, the audience was given an insight into his latest thinking on New Typography. Tschichold began with a critical overview of typography’s development since Morris before restating the benefits of New Typography – claiming it better suited to address key concerns of clarity and readability.<sup>146</sup> Various facets of typographic detailing and layout were then discussed in detail, including that which *Typographische Gestaltung* is best known for — the mixing of type forms for emphasis and contrast.

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144 Broby’s talk was given on the 28.Nov.1934: “Foto-Montage.” *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 1*, no. 4 (1934): 27

145 Given on the 23.Oct.1935. See ad: *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 2*, no. 3 (1935): 31

146 “Tschicholds Tre Foredrag.” *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds 2*, no. 2 (1935): 24–26

The talks were accompanied by a small exhibition of Tschichold's own work and were given in German with V.J. Clausen acting as translator. Each talk was attended by between 400 and 500 people, most of them young composers.<sup>147</sup> The talks had an immediate impact on Danish typography where type contrasts in particular soon came into use.

Whilst in Copenhagen, Tschichold kept a busy schedule. In addition to being taken on tours of various printing establishments, he found time to make a number of deals with editors and publishers which ensured he would remain an influence on Danish typography for years to come. Particularly important in this respect was the sale of Scandinavian translation rights for *Typographische Gestaltung* to Det Berlingske Bogtrykkeri, from which a Danish edition would eventually appear in 1937 under the name *Funktionel Typografi* [Functional Typography]. Important was also the deal made with Wessel to design an issue of *Grafisk revy*. As it was printed in high print run of up to 10.000 copies,<sup>148</sup> and distributed to composers throughout Scandinavia, Tschichold's issue would have provided a great number of them with a rare opportunity to experience his work first-hand. Additionally, Tschichold sold a number of articles to *Bogtrykkerbladet*,<sup>149</sup> and a translation of the chapter 'The New Art'

147 N. W. "Jan Tschichold i Köpenhamn," *Grafisk Revy. Teknisk Tidsskrift För de Typografiska Förbunden i Skandinavien*, 5, no. 2 (1935): 40.

148 "Faglig Dyktighet." *Typografiske Meddelelser* 56, no. 4 (1931): 29–30

149 *Bogtrykkerbladet* was the journal for master printers in the Danish 'province' which in 1934 undergone a change like that its Copenhagen counterpart *De grafiske Fag* had in 1927. Tschichold's articles were: "Typografiske Grundspørgsmaal," *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 14, no. 8 (1935): 169–77; "Harmoni i Bogens Opsætning Og Udstyr," *Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 14, no. 9 (1935): 193–96; "God Og Slet Reklametypografi," *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 14, no. 10 (1935): 213–16; "Europæiske Skrifter Gennem 2000 Aar," *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 14, no. 11 (1935): 226–44; "Skitsering Af Akcidenser,"

appeared in *Grafisk teknik*.<sup>150</sup> Tschichold also agreed to design a typeface for the foundry Grafisk Compagni. However, although he did complete at least some work on this commission, the finished typeface never materialised.<sup>151</sup>

Shortly after Tschichold's lectures, a meeting of Dansk Typograf-Forbund's delegates decided to centralise the work carried out by educational societies under the newly created post of Education Secretary [Oplysnings-Sekretær].<sup>152</sup> It was also decided to publish a new monthly journal, which was to be named *Grafisk teknik* (1936–49) and edited by the new Education Secretary. The name

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*Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 14, no. 12 (1935): 260–61; "Den Typografiske Fornyelse I Nutiden," *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 15, no. 1 (1936): 7–9

150 This was likely an unauthorised translation as the images of the original had been substituted for ones of a 'social art' nature, most likely sourced through Harald Rue. See: Jan Tschichold, "Den Ny Kunst," *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds* 2, no. 3 (1935): 32–36; — "Den Ny Kunst," *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds* 2 no. 4 (1935): 40–42; no. 4 (1935): — "Den Ny Kunst," *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds* 2 no. 5 (1935): 48–51. The chapter directly prefacing this in *Die neue Typography*, "The Old Typography 1450–1914), had already been published in Viktor Peterson's translation: "De Typografiske Stilepoker 1450–1914," *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds* 1, no. 10 (1934–35): 76–78; — "De Typografiske Stilepoker 1450–1914," *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds* 2, no. 1 (1935): 4–6.

151 Though the typeface never reached market, it seems Tschichold did work on it. In the collection 'Arbeitsmaterial Jan Tschichold' kept in the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek in Leipzig / Deutsches Buch- und Schriftmuseum there is a sketch which seems a likely candidate. It is reproduced in Burke, *Active Literature*, 240. Burke speculates it may have been intended for Uhertype as it is dated the 4th of October 1935, when Tschichold was in the midst of an intensive period of work for that company. However, the date could arguably just as well point to Grafisk Compagni. The fact that the sketch contains the words "grafisk compagni" and "KØBENHAVN" (not KOPENHAGEN), strongly imply this to be the case. For detail on Tschichold's visit to Grafisk Compagni and the proposed typeface commission see: "Jan Tschichold Paa Besøg I Grafisk Compagni," *Grafisk Nyt. Tekniske Meddelelser for de Grafiske Fag*, 1, no. 1 (36 1935): 6.

152 See the special issue created in support of Johansen's candidacy: Viktor Peterson and Henrik Eriksen, eds. *Grafisk Teknik: Meddelelsesblad for Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke, Københavns Kreds*, 2, Særunummer. Copenhagen: Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke, September 1935.



of the new journal was of course the same as *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke's* bulletin. Moreover, it was Svend Johansen, the bulletin's editor and chairman of the cooperative's Copenhagen branch, who proved the successful candidate for the new post. It is not likely he faced much competition, as the Tschichold lectures had been a major coup. The union's members would have known about them from the advertising cards that were sent out, and reports were published, not only in trade journals, but even the mainstream press. In arranging the lectures, Johansen had succeeded in creating a temporary "front of unity" by reaching out to *Dansk Typograf-Forbund* nationally, both Danish employers' associations as well the organisations of illustrators and architects for support.<sup>153</sup> He thus appeared a skilled organiser, and the right man to lead the educational effort on a national stage.

Although these changes spelled the end for *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* as an organisation, its work would continue in new forms. Educating practitioners in all corners of the country now became the focus. This was done through lecturing activity and correspondence courses.<sup>154</sup> In both instances Henry Thejls, teacher at *Fagskolen for Boghaandværk*, was the one who was responsible for educating the compositors. He was deeply interested in both education and New Typography. Thejls had been part of the delegation showing Tschichold around Copenhagen during his visit, and this had given the two a chance to get to know one another and discuss their mutual interests. In 1936

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153 It was Nils Wessel who termed the collaboration between *Dansk Typograf-Forbund*, *Københavns Bogtrykkerforening*, *Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, *Akademisk Arkitektforening* and *Tegnerforbundet* an "enhetsfront". N. W. "Jan Tschichold i Köpenhamn," *Svensk Typograf-Tidning*, no. 33 (1935): 293.

154 Andersen, "Typograf-Tidende Går Tæt På Uddannelsen", 48–49

Thejls received a travel grant to visit Tschichold in Basel in order to further discuss how New Typography could be codified for use in trade school teaching.<sup>155</sup> Indeed, as will be seen in **chapter 4**, Thejls would under the name ‘plastic typography’ formulate his own theoretical variation based on Viktor Peterson’s constructive design and the New Typography advocated by Tschichold in *Typographische Gestaltung*. From an unpublished article by Tschichold on ‘the development of New Typography in Central-European countries’, it transpires that he was pleased with his visit to Denmark. He wrote that his three lectures had “proved fruitful, as the Danish trade journal *Grafisk teknik*, with its articles and well-thought-out advertisements attests to”.<sup>156</sup> The article was intended to contain an example of a Danish ad, taken from *Grafisk teknik*’s third issue 1936. It may well be that Thejls brought this issue with him to Basel to show Tschichold how the Danish compositors’ work and educational activities were developing since his visit to Copenhagen.

## Engagement with New Typography deepens at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk

In the autumn following Tschichold’s visit, Kai Pelt, who was a student in Henry Thejls’ second year typesetting class (2 C) at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk — as well as his apprentice at

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155 “Et Par Ord Om et Rejsestipendium, Jan Tschichold Og Fagskoleundervisning”, *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 32, no. 8 (1936): 184–85

156 “fruchtbar gewirkt, wuvon die dänische Fachzeitschrift »Grafisk Teknik« mit ihren Artikeln und ihren gutdurchdachten Inseraten Zeugnis ablegt”. From the unpublished article ‘Die Entwicklung der neuen Typographie in den mitteleuropäischen Ländern’, (ca. 1937-38). Reproduced in: Burke, *Active Literature*, 287

Gutenberghus, produced a piece showing the extent to which New Typography was now being engaged with at the school.<sup>157</sup> Titled *Die neue Typografie*, it was in fact a condensed Danish translation of Tschichold's *Typographische Entwurfstechnik* [Typographic Layout Technique, 1932]. Published much later in English translation as *How to Draw Layouts* (1991), this was a short practical guide on how to draw layouts aimed at young job setters, covering the topics composition, typographic sketching and letter spacing.<sup>158</sup> Notably, Pelt used Bodoni for running text and Futura for headings, thereby making use of the type contrasts Tschichold had advocated in his talks only months earlier. The original edition of *Typographische Entwurfstechnik*, had been set entirely in sans serif. Pelt's book was printed in a short run by one of Fagskolen's machine operator classes, and a special individualised edition was made for the typesetting class. This special edition contained blank sheets of card onto which Thejls pasted each student's best work.<sup>159</sup>

In the spring of 1936 it was time for Pelt to take his apprenticeship exam. The practical part of the exam required three different items to be typeset: an 8-page 'book' comprised of a half-title, a title page and four pages of text with three or four images inserted, a ruled table three or four stories high and a jobbing print assignment.

The brief for the latter changed from year to year, but it was

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157 If the dates in the literature are correct, the book must have been created in the autumn or winter of 1935: Reimer dates the book to 1935, claims it was created in the second year class he was part of, and that he started his first year at the school in 1934. Moreover, Henrik Sejerkilde claims Pelt completed his apprenticeship exam in the spring of 1936. See: Reimer, "Lærling i Trediverne"; Henrik Sejerkilde, "For at Højne Den Faglige Kultur..." En Biografisk Bogmosaik Om Grafisk Cirkel," in *Bogvennen 2003-04*, eds Søren Hansen et al (København: Forening for boghaandværk, 2005), 12

158 An English translation is available: Jan Tschichold, *How to Draw Layouts* (Edinburgh: Merchiston Publishing, 1991)

159 Reimer, "Lærling i Trediverne", 62–64

always stylistically free.<sup>160</sup> Although it was not stipulated, it was expected that the apprentice would set the book section of the exam in a traditional style — especially that most conservative of its components, the title page. However, Pelt set his exam in New Typography throughout. This was controversial, and would have lasting consequences for teaching at the school. The guidelines used by the awarding body, Svendeprøvekommissionen [The Apprentice Exam Commission],<sup>161</sup> had been worded prior to New Typography's appearance and could not be used to judge the quality of Pelt's work. Although there was a "mood" in favour of failing Pelt for not having set a traditional title page, the rules didn't allow for this either. He was therefore grudgingly allowed to pass.<sup>162</sup> However, the commission subsequently revised the guidelines to ensure future candidates would set their title pages symmetrically. Any candidates submitting asymmetric title pages would be failed. As Thejls would later argue, this draconian response led to title pages assuming a particular conservative "apprentice exam aesthetic".<sup>163</sup> Apprentices were afraid of failing and therefore reluctant to produce work outside the norm, and Fagskolen for Boghaandværk felt obliged to teach the particular "formula" it knew would result in a pass.<sup>164</sup>

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160 The details on the elements of the exam are taken from: "Foraarets Svendeprøver," *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejders Interesser*. 58, no. 27 (1931): unpaginated (front page)

161 Its full name was: Boktryksfagets Svendeprøvekommission for København og Fredriksberg samt Gentofte Kommune [The Printing Profession's Apprentice Exam Commission for Copenhagen and Fredriksberg in addition to Gentofte Council].

162 "stemning", Reimer, "Lærling i Trediverne", 64

163 "Svendeprøveopfattelse". Henry Thejls, "Titelsats Og Standardiserede Svendeprøver..." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Kemigraflauget I Danmark* 37, no. 8 (1941): 226–30, p.226

164 "Formel". *Ibid.*

## Selmars Typografi

In the autumn of 1938, Fagskolen for Boghaandværk underwent its second major reorganisation of the decade when it changed from being an evening school to a day school. To coincide with the change, a new text book was developed for use in teaching. *Selmars Typografi* (1938) was named in honour of Emil Selmar. Just as his textbooks had done decades earlier, the 'new Selmar' sought to deal comprehensively with all aspects of the compositor's profession. However, whilst Selmar's own books had been the efforts of a single individual, the new textbook was authored by a group of leading figures in the Danish printing trade under the leadership of master printer C. Volmer Nordlunde.<sup>165</sup>

The reason a new text book was needed, Nordlunde explained in his foreword, was that New Typography had significantly changed the practice of printing. Twenty-five years earlier, when the second edition of Selmar's *Typografi* (1913) was published, typesetting machines were not yet in widespread use, photographic reproduction had not completely replaced xylography and typography was still set following historical, symmetrical models. Faced with this situation, asymmetric typography had proved its worth. It had introduced a new design approach which concerned itself solely with making the text as easily intelligible as possible, with the economically beneficial practice of setting type on machines, and by making use of the photographic reproduction in composition. Although Jan Tschichold's views had initially been controversial, and though New Typography's outward appearance

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<sup>165</sup> The principal of Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, Holger Meyer, was the one who initially took the initiative to create a new text book. Charles Moegreen, Christian Petersen, C. Volmer Nordlunde, Harald C. Andersen, Viggo Hasnæs and S.V. Rasmussen all contributed to one or more chapters.

had changed since the publication of *Die neue Typographie* (1928), the developments of the past decade had, according to Nordlunde, proved the viability of its underlying principles. It had also changed the demands made of the compositor. Whilst he was now afforded a higher degree of freedom when it came to shaping his designs, he needed to be able to work with a higher degree of independence, have a greater familiarity with “rules of harmony” and possess a greater knowledge of typographic material than was the case in the past.<sup>166</sup> *Selmars Typografi* was intended to equip compositors with the knowledge needed to meet these heightened demands.

Viggo Hasnæs, who in 1928 had penned the first positively worded article on New Typography in Denmark, played an important role in the creation of *Selmars Typografi*. Not only was he one of five editors, he also authored two chapters on jobbing print, and was responsible for the book’s design. The first of Hasnæs’ chapters was wide-ranging, covering topics such as the history of jobbing print with particular emphasis on New Typography, the jobbing printer’s work environment and equipment and lastly rules for how to set type and create layouts.<sup>167</sup> The second provided a detailed guide of how to approach a number of different categories of jobbing print – like ads, letterheads, brochures, and advertising cards – but also stock certificates, songs, engagement cards and wine lists.<sup>168</sup> The book’s design was clearly informed by New Typography. The

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166 “Regler for Harmoni”. C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Forord,” in *Selmars Typografi. Haandbok i Satsteknik*, eds. Holger Meyer et al. (København: Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, 1938), unpaginated

167 Viggo Hasnæs, “Akcidenssætningens Teori Og Praksis,” in *Selmars Typografi. Haandbok I Satsteknik*, eds. Holger Meyer et al (København: Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, 1938)

168 Viggo Hasnæs, “Almindelige Brugsformer I Akcidenser,” in *Selmars Typografi. Haandbok I Satsteknik*, eds. Holger Meyer et al (København: Fagskolen for Boghaandværk, 1938)

title page was a variation of those Tschichold had designed for *Typographische Gestaltung* and *Funktionel Typografi* (**fig.2.05**). Making use of the by this point familiar scheme of type contrasts, Hasnæs set the title in Futura Bold, the subheading 'haandbog i satsteknik' [manual in typesetting] in Baskerville italic and the footer in Baskerville roman. Chapter and section headings of the inner pages were set in Futura bold and running text in Baskerville.

As late as 1943, Thejls would publish a textbook entirely devoted to *Asymmetri i Typografi* [Asymmetry in Typography]. However, rather than a new development of New Typography, this book can be regarded as a summary of the past decade's work. Divided into five sections it covered typographic detailing, Thejls' own 'plastic typography', Rudolf Engel-Hardt's ideas of harmony, type contrasts, and Wilhelm Ostwald's colour theory — the latter of which had been taught at *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke's* evening classes from the outset. A final section contained a series of examples designed by Paul Schmidt. However, a change in attitude was evident even in the choice of title. The previous year Thejls had declared symmetrical and asymmetrical solutions equally valid, and the book therefore lacked the zeal of Tschichold's publications or even of *Selmars Typografi*. A further notable change can be seen in the attitude toward type faces. Whereas Tschichold had advocated mixing certain "impersonal" faces for emphasis and contrast,<sup>169</sup> they should now also be chosen for their connotative values, or as Thejls put it, because they were "psychologically correct".<sup>170</sup> Apart from one or two of Schmidt's examples, the book made no use

169 "upersonligt". Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi.*, 27

170 "Psykologisk rigtig". Henry Thejls, *Asymmetri i Typografi*. (København: Dansk Typograf-Forbund, 1943), 31

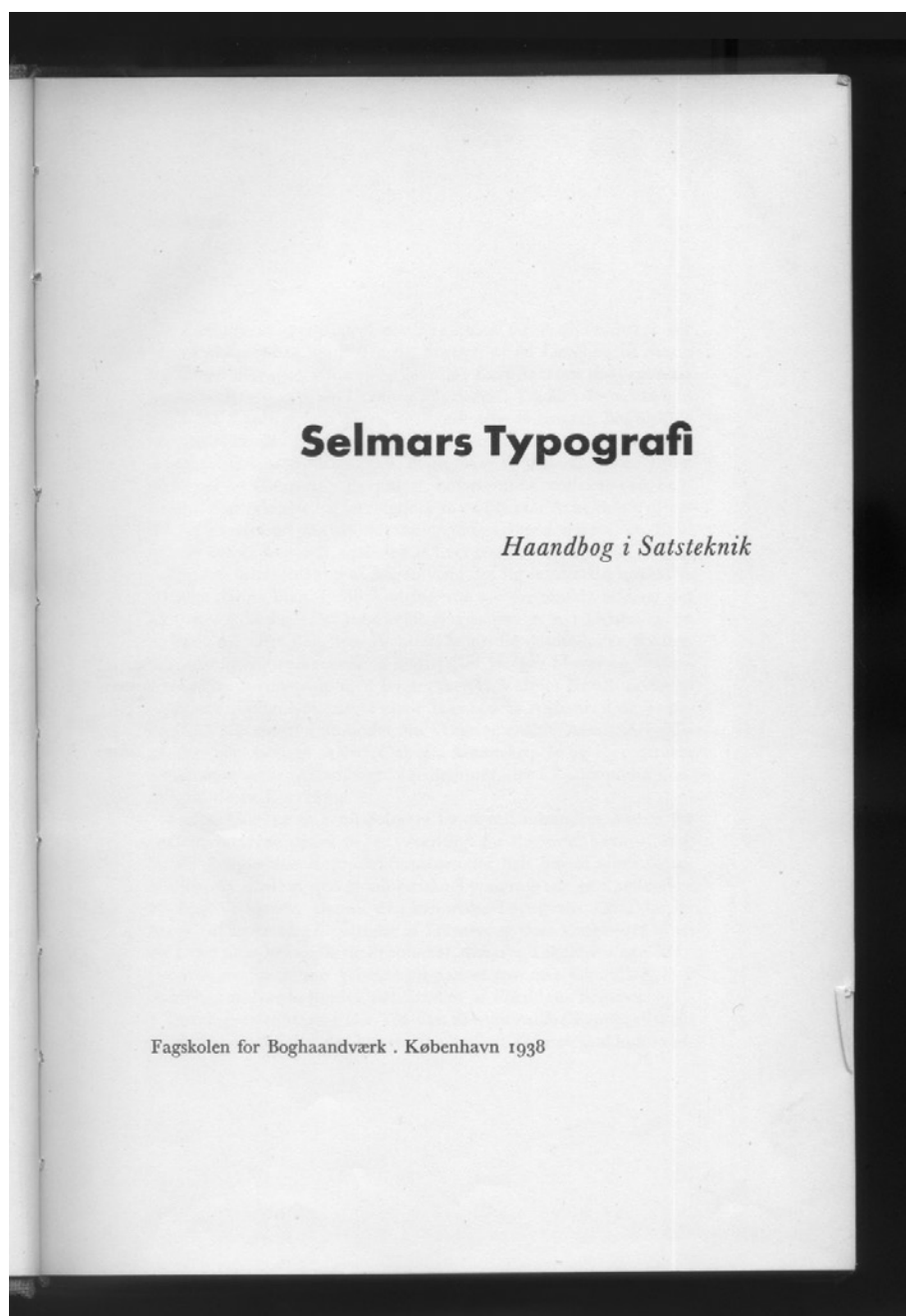


Fig. 2.05

Title page for *Selmars Typografi* (1938),  
designed by Viggo Hasnæs.



of sans serif type whatsoever. Instead the asymmetric title page made use of serif, slab serif and script faces, and the headings and initials were set in the script face *Legende* [Legend, 1937] (**fig.2.06**).<sup>171</sup> Of course, one reason for these changes in attitude may be that the intellectual climate of occupation did not permit it to be otherwise. However, another may be that Danish typography was experiencing a turn towards a stronger concern with calligraphy and historical letter forms. This was certainly the case in Sweden, as the following section argues.

## A turn towards a typography based on historical and calligraphic letterforms in Sweden

Whilst Tschichold's lectures in Copenhagen had spurred a small but enthusiastic group of practitioners on to engage more deeply with New Typography, interest in Sweden dampened during the second half of the 1930s. Instead, a new style of typography, characterised by a concern for historical and calligraphic letterforms replaced it as the printing trade's new central concern. The ideas behind this 'new typography' ultimately stemmed from the calligraphic revival at the turn of the century, and the teachings of Edward Johnston (1872–1944) — as conveyed through German publications,<sup>172</sup> and as experienced in an exhibition of

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171 Designed by F.H. Ernst Schneidler (1882–1956) and issued by Bauersche Giesserei.

172 The then recently deceased Rudolf Koch (1876–1934) was commemorated with a book on his work and an anthology of articles set in his own *Peter Jessen Schrift*. Moreover, a new edition of Anna Simons' (1871–1951) German translation of Edward Johnston's *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering* (1906), which had first been released in 1910, appeared in 1936 — followed the year after by Simons' book on Johnston, *Edward Johnston and English Lettering*. In 1938, *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* published an article by Simons on Johnston in Iwan Waloddi Fischerström's

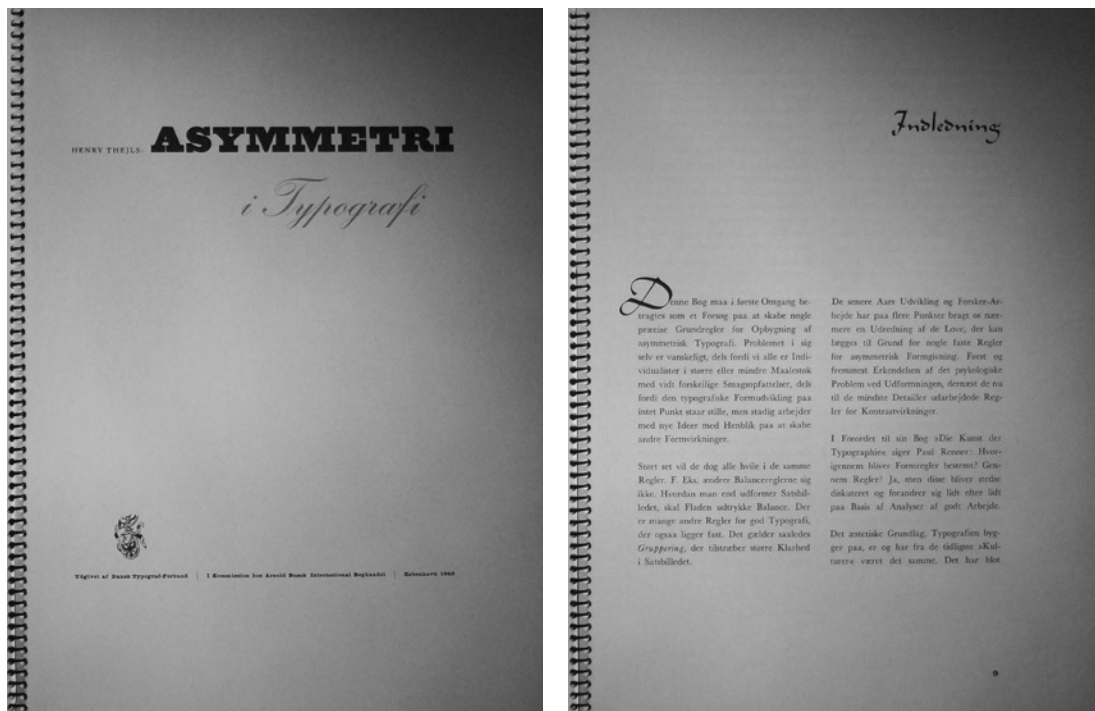


Fig 2.06

**Asymmetri i Typografi (1943). Title and text pages.  
Design: Henry Thejls.**

English art and design held at Liljevalchs Konsthall in 1939.<sup>173</sup> Most important was perhaps the appearance of Czech book artist Hugo Steiner-Prag (1880–1945) in Sweden. Following a display of his work at Nationalmuseum in 1938 he was invited to lead the newly formed Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst. This was a small elite institution where young practitioners received private tuition, in German, from its sole teacher Steiner-Prag.<sup>174</sup> Both lettering and calligraphy were on its curriculum.<sup>175</sup> Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst was modelled on the Officina Pragensis, the small school Steiner-Prag ran in his home town of Prague where he had returned after being forced out of his position at the Königliche Akademie für Graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe [Royal Academy of Graphic Arts and Book Trade] in Leipzig on account of his Jewish heritage. Upon seeing the work displayed at school's first end of year show in 1940, Hugo Lagerström commented that

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translation, and in 1939, Fischerström followed this with an article on lettering techniques illustrated with images taken from the German edition of *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering*. See: Georg Haupt, *Rudolf Koch Der Schreiber* (Leipzig: Insel, 1936); Rudolf Koch, *Rudolf Koch. Ein Deutscher Meister* (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1938); Edward Johnston, *Schreibschrift, Zierschrift & Angewandte Schrift* 4. dt. Aufl. (Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1936); Anna Simons, *Edward Johnston Und Die Englische Schriftkunst, Edward Johnston and English Lettering* (Berlin, Leipzig: Heintze & Blanckertz, 1937); Anna Simons, "Den textade bokstaven i bokkonsten," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 39, no. 7 (1938): 250–56; Iwan Fischerström, "Om konsten att texta: Några randanteckningar," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 41, no. 9 (1940): 322–30

173 The exhibition included a generous typography section where the journals *Signature* and *Typography* were on display in addition to examples of work from Penguin books, the Nonesuch Press, the Curwen Press, and Lund Humphries, and notably for this context, the Society of Scribes and Illuminators. See: Bror Zachrisson, "Engelsk Typografi. Utställning I Liljevalchs Konsthall Av Engelsk Konst Och Konsthantverk," *Grafiskt Forum. Svenska Boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden* 44, no. 5 (1939): 131–36

174 Olle Eksell, who was a student at the school, claimed those educated there belonged to "a highly skilled elite". Marie-Louise Bowallius, "The Origins and Professionalisation of Swedish Graphic Design 1930-1965" (MA thesis, Royal College of Art, 1999), 30

175 *Skolan För Bok- Och Reklamkonst i Stockholm*. (Stockholm: Victor Pettersons Bokindustriaktiebolag, 1939)

its focus on the letterform was a “particularly striking” feature, suggesting what the students had produced under Steiner-Prag’s tutelage represented a stylistic departure.<sup>176</sup>

Although New Typography had been a strong influence at Skolan för Bokhantverk during the early years of the decade, its influence wavered from the mid-1930s onwards. Examples of work influenced by New Typography steadily became fewer, and by 1941 they had disappeared altogether, with students showing more interest in following in the aesthetic promoted by Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst. Similarly, the school’s annual publications abandoned any adherence to New Typography after a second collection of Hugo Lagerström’s writings on New Typography was produced in 1934.<sup>177</sup> The notable exception was *Typografisk Gestaltning*, a Swedish edition of Tschichold’s *Typographische Gestaltung*, produced as 1937’s annual publication. However, it was neither designed nor printed by the students. Instead the design, which closely resembled the Swiss original, followed Tschichold’s “detailed and meticulous instructions”, and due to the scale of the job the text was set by machine at Tidningarnas maskinsätterskola [The Newspapers’ Machine Setter School].<sup>178</sup>

The focus away from New Typography also took place outside of the schools, as Hugo Lagerström in 1942 could conclude with some bemusement:

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176 “Särskilt i ögonenfallande är i denna skolas elevarbeten den omvårdnad bokstavsformen fått. Alla bokstäver äro känsligt, stilenligt och väl tecknade”. H. L. “Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 41, no. 5 (1940): 194

177 Hugo Lagerström, *Ny Tid. Trenne Företeelser* (Stockholm: Skolan för Bokhantverk, 1934)

178 “detaljerade och minutiösa anvisningar”. Sten Lagerström, “Skolan för bokhantverk Årsskrift,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 38, no. 6 (1937): 215

It is amazing that one after a mere fifteen years really can begin to talk of a somewhat new typography, but that a new typography is emerging is beyond doubt.<sup>179</sup>

Lagerström attributed the change to a generational shift in Swedish printing houses. The new generation was “tending to the book with youthful enthusiasm”, focusing their efforts on issues of production and detailing — with particular emphasis on the letterform.<sup>180</sup> The change of focus could be seen clearly in book covers, but also in the type used for setting the book itself:

this newly awakened interest for the historical letterform has meant that even text types now are chosen with greater care and better suited to the book’s content, format and purpose.<sup>181</sup>

Through the study of historical models this new generation had been influenced to return to symmetrical compositions with page designs featuring traditionally designed margins and text areas. Rather than making use of type contrasts they preferred to work with a single type face —preferably a roman— and the variations offered by the use of different type sizes, upper and lower case letters, and a suitable italic. Despite these traditional features, Lagerström did not consider this newly emerged “new typography” a reversion to the neoclassical typography of the 1910s and 20s. Historical models were used as a source of inspiration with a far greater freedom than it had back then, and the typography was

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179 “Det är förunderligt att man redan efter knappa femton år verkligen åter kan börja tala om en i viss mån ny typografi, Men at en ny typografi håller på att växa fram är otvivelaktigt”. Hugo Lagerström, “Den nya typografien. Iakttagelser och reflexioner,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokkonst, bokindustri, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 43, no. 3 (1942): 85–87, 85

180 “arbetas med ungdomlig entusiasm för boken ans”. *Ibid.*, 85

181 “Detta nyvaknade intresse för den historiska bokstavsformen har medfört att även texttyperna numera väljas med större omsorg och bättre anpassning till bokens innehåll, format och ändamål”. *Ibid.*, 86

planned with a better understanding of functional concerns.

The lessons learnt though fifteen years of engagement with New Typography had not been forgotten. In fact, Lagerström argued that the ‘new typography’ of the late 1930s and early 1940s was the result of a developmental process in which the best features of New Typography had been extracted and amalgamated with those of traditional printing practice. By comparing the typographic style of 1930 with that of 1942, one could see “an example of a new style’s development from its first breakthrough to a form well thought out and crystallized by practice”.<sup>182</sup>

Whilst the changes outlined above also applied to jobbing print,<sup>183</sup> it is clear that new-found interest in letterforms related to an increased interest in the category of the book. This is particularly evident in *Nordisk boktryckarekonst*’s cover for 1941. Iwan Waloddi Fischerström’s hand lettered design reflects the prevailing interest in calligraphic letterforms, and the return to symmetrical composition. Declared as an example of how the roman majuscule (square capital) could be used for a modern piece of print, its most conspicuous element of the design is the massive emphasis given to ‘BOK’ [BOOK]: the first compound of the word ‘boktryckarekonst’ [printing, or literally: ‘book printing art’].<sup>184</sup> This treatment leaves little doubt as to which category of print was now considered of highest concern to the trade.<sup>185</sup>

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182 “ett exempel på en ny stils utveckling från sitt första genombrott till en genomtänkt och av praktiken utkristalliserad form”. Ibid., 87

183 According to *Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst*’s prospectus, it offered training in “Reklam och accidens [Advertising and jobbing print]” as well as “Bokkonst [Book Art]”. Lagerström claimed that jobbing print was executed according to a “betydligt lugnare utformning [significantly calmer design]” See, respectively: *Skolan För Bok- Och Reklamkonst i Stockholm*, 3; Lagerström “Den nya typografien. Iakttagelser och reflexioner”, 87

184 Fischerström, “Om konsten att texta”, 326

185 This was subtly reinforced by a change to the order of the items included in

Many articles published in the Scandinavian trade press during this period pointed to Jan Tschichold's famous volte face from around 1938 as confirmation that New Typography was a spent force.<sup>186</sup> Like Tschichold, several Scandinavian practitioners would distance themselves from their previous interests in New Typography, turning instead to a seemingly more traditional mode of expression. Fischerström was able to put his new-found interest in the calligraphic letterforms into practice on a number of book covers for the Bonniers publishing house, where he became artistic director in 1941. Karl-Erik Forsberg started work on what would become his best known type face, the roman Berling Antikva (1951) whilst engaged in further studies at Skolan för Bok- och Reklamkonst (1939–41). In 1942 he started working as artistic director at Almqvist & Wiksell, for whom he designed several calligraphic book covers, leaving in 1950 to become artistic advisor to P. A. Norstedts publishing house.<sup>187</sup> Even Henry Thejls in Denmark would eventually fully re-embrace symmetry, as can be seen in a 1946 cover design for *De grafiske Fag*.<sup>188</sup>

## Conclusion

Although New Typography was a central concern for

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journal's subtitle. Since 1920 this had read, "Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen", but from 1941–44 the order was changed to read "Tidsskrift för bokkonst, bokindustri, bokhistoria och reklamväsen", indicating an increased focus on book art.

186 1938 is the date given by Tschichold himself: Reminiscor, "Jan Tschichold: Praeceptor Typographiae." in *Leben Und Werk Des Typographen Jan Tschicholds*, 11–29. (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1977), 24. Originally published in a special edition of *Typographische Monatsblätter*, February 1972.

187 Forsberg, "Ett Liv Med Bokstavskonst", 16–18

188 Thejls won the competition to design the cover with the entry "Claude Garamond": Charles Moegreen, "Omslags Konkurrencen," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening, Kemigrafilaugget I Danmark, Dansk Papæskefabrikant-Forening Og Dansk Litograflaug* 42, no. 1 (1946): 7–12

Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke in particular, it was never single-mindedly promoted by any one journal, trade school or educational society. Nevertheless it achieved significant penetration in all three of these educational ventures. In the face of sometimes significant resistance, it was discussed in trade journals and taken up in their designs. It had a notable presence in trade schools, and then particularly at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk. There, the work of Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke — which culminated with Tschichold's three lectures, informed the deeper engagement taking place after 1935. Despite the resistance of the conservative Svendepøvekommissionen, New Typography was with the publication of *Selmars Typografi* made part of the curriculum. That Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke's work and contact with Tschichold was crucial for Danish developments is illustrated through comparison to Swedish developments. Here, the arrival of Hugo Steiner-Prag was instrumental in shifting the direction of typographic development to one with an increased interest in historical letterforms, calligraphic modes of expression and the book.

Whilst it may be tempting to regard this change of priorities a 'reversion' to past styles, it is important to note it was not seen this way by the printing trade. For instance, Lagerström considered it the result of a developmental process in which the best features of New Typography had been extracted and amalgamated with those of traditional printing practice. Its aesthetic might have changed, but its underlying purpose was intact. Whether one agrees with Lagerström's assessment is of course a different matter. Whilst it is true that the 'new typography' of the 1940s did not on the whole represent a return to ornament or to the proportions of



renaissance page margins, and although it made use of revived roman typefaces and new calligraphic ones, it was nevertheless informed by a strong historicist current. That it could nevertheless still be regarded as 'modern' is best understood from seeing it in the context of other Scandinavian interpretations of Functionalism. The impact of this, the dominant current of modernism in the three countries during the 1930s, is the subject of **chapter 4**. Here it will be argued that the use of the term Functionalism provided a way made it possible to argue in favour of traditionalist practices whilst retaining a progressive stance, and that the use of this term in this way therefore can be regarded as a domestication strategy.

Following on from **chapter 1**'s discussion of how German printers domesticated New Typography, this chapter has argued that Scandinavian master printers and compositors too knowingly and actively adapted New Typography to suit their needs, abilities and preferences. This often took place through practice. As discussed in the previous chapter, type samples — featuring an already domesticated German New Typography — were a significant source of stylistic information. However, whilst stylistic copying did undoubtedly occur, as acknowledged in relation to Det grafiske selskap i Oslo's invitation cards, and as will be discussed further in the section on *funkis* in **chapter 4**, practice was also informed by Scandinavian master printers' and compositors' own theoretical considerations. Practitioners like Hugo Lagerström, Harald Clausen, Viktor Peterson and Henry Thejls all formulated guidelines or principles through which they engaged with New Typography. Whilst the 'plastic typography' of Thejls, which will receive further attention in **chapter 4**, lay close to Tschichold's teachings, the contributions discussed in this chapter are

characterised by a willingness to reconcile and integrate New Typography with existing practice. As Lagerström put it, they wished to '*retain the good but reject the bad*'.

These theoretical considerations were all published in trade journals which were connected in a pan-Scandinavian network of knowledge. As argued in the **introduction** and further emphasized in **chapter 1**, this network was based on the mutual intelligibility of the Scandinavian languages in combination with their accessibility through libraries and reading rooms hosted by trade unions, employers organisations and educational societies — as well as by subscription. Given that many lacked the language skills to read articles written languages other than the Scandinavian ones, these theoretical interpretations were all the more significant.

I would argue that the resulting designs should therefore not be understood in relation to those of the avant-garde. Scandinavian master printers and compositors did not seek to create new forms or New Human Beings. Instead, they sought, like their German colleagues, to determine how New Typography could be used to their benefit, and how it could be modified to suit their abilities, needs and preferences. Whilst their work as a consequence perhaps does not generate the same degree of visual excitement as the avant-garde's, it should not be seen as having been somehow diminished by these efforts. Instead it can be appreciated as having created an expanded vocabulary of New Typography of greater usefulness to the demands of day-to-day composition. Instead of judging it solely on the basis of form, success can be measured against whether New Typography actually helped master printers and compositors reach the goals they themselves

set for it: securing competitiveness for the trade, employability for the individual and increased creative freedom in composition. To gauge whether New Typography can be said to have been successful in these terms, the following chapter will look at what impact it had amongst different advertising professionals, and at the often competitive relationship existing between master printers and compositors and their rivals.



# Cultures and practices of advertising: Professional interests, identities and material constraints

In 1932 *Svensk reklam* [Swedish Advertising], the Swedish Advertising Association's annual publication, printed the following statement:

The name of the modern, or perhaps one should say the new, typography's creator is Advertising. Unlike the old traditional book artist, who has had his path clearly marked out for many hundred years, the new man, the advertising artist, is working according to completely new and free lines (...). He has, during the short time he has been active, done more for development and innovation in the graphic trades than what was previously achieved through more than 500 years of fastidious work.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, Oskar Dahlström, the author, was in no doubt over the role the advertising industry had played in creating and spreading New Typography. However, as previously demonstrated, it was Georg Pauli's *flamman* and the publications of D.N.S.S. which had

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1 "Den moderna, eller kanske man skall säga den nya, typografiens skapare heter Reklam. Till skillnad från den gamla traditionsbundna bokkonstnären, som under många hundra år haft sin bana klart utstakad, arbetar den nya mannen, reklamartisten (...) efter fullkomligt nya och fria linjer. Han har under den korta tid, under vilken han verkat, uträttat mer för utvecklingen och nyskapandet inom de grafiska yrkena, än vad förut mer än 500-årigt idogt arbete förmått". Oskar Dahlström, "Den Nya Typografiens Skapare." *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok 4 (1932): 77–88, p.77*

first engaged with the ideas that gave rise to New Typography in Scandinavia. Moreover, it was master printers and compositors who had first taken it up in a commercial context, not advertisers. Granted, they had not accepted its teachings or aesthetics outright or unthinkingly, but had domesticated it to suit their own needs, abilities and preferences. Whilst this entailed some level of modification of New Typography's formal principles, they were not, as Dahlström seems to suggest, entirely resistant to innovation. That Dahlström nevertheless could make such claims raises the question of how terms such as 'Advertising' and 'the advertising artist' should be understood. This chapter will argue that advertising, as a category and activity, held different connotations not only for the printing and advertising trades, but also for different traditions existing within these trades. Advertising graphics were produced and designed by a number of different practitioners, the most important being job setters, commercial artists and lay-out men. Each belonged to a particular advertising tradition, and each worked under a different set of restrictions with regards to reproduction technologies used and their place in the hierarchy of the production process. In turn, these factors influenced attitudes towards New Typography and determined to what degree each practitioner type was able and / or willing to engage with it in practice.

The first section of this chapter looks at what traditions and ideas of good advertising were associated with each type of practitioner. This facilitates a discussion of how and why printing and advertising trade journals covered New Typography differently. It argues that Scandinavian printing and advertising trade journals belonged to each their set of discreet networks which were more

likely to report on developments occurring within their particular profession or trade abroad than on developments occurring in related trades at home.

The second section details looks at the constraints under which each type of practitioner worked. It details how each type of practitioner produced printed materials and demonstrates how the working practices, cultural attitudes, and interests of professional self-preservation informed the degree to which it was desirable to engage with New Typography — and then particularly in their preferred choice of illustration method. The chapter ends with a discussion of a conflict which took place between compositors and lay-out men towards the end of the 1930s. At the basis of this conflict lay the question of whether the compositor or the newly emerged figure of the lay-out man should be responsible for designing the typography used in ads. As compositors were more heavily invested in New Typography than lay-out men, the outcome of this conflict was also significant for New Typography's further development.

## Advertising cultures

Before turning to a discussion of the different types of advertising designer mentioned above, something should be said about the role played by avant-garde artists in advertising production. After all, the 'wild' New Typography of continental Europe did not only find expression in the avant-garde journals described in **chapter 1**, but also in the commercial work of the artists associated with them. Indeed, that artists should move from the studio to the factory

was a key Constructivist idea, as has been discussed. However, Scandinavian avant-garde artists did not produce New Typography in the field of advertising.<sup>2</sup> Constructivist ideas were never central to their practice, and as a rule they turned to commercial art as a source of income — not out of conviction. Whilst they were not Constructivists, several artists were associated with Neo-Plasticism and Concrete Art, movements closely associated with the development of New Typography and Swiss Typography respectively—the latter often being considered the ‘heir’ of the former.<sup>3</sup> Although designs produced by the Scandinavian avant-garde artists could be celebrated by contemporaries as ‘dazzlingly fresh’,<sup>4</sup> they did not draw upon these artists’ most progressive ideas to push the boundaries of commercial art as was the case in Switzerland. Again, there was no “applied constructivism”.<sup>5</sup> Instead, designs were broadly executed within the existing norms for commercial art. For instance, the work carried out by Sven Jonsson and Esias Thorén of the Halmstad group under the name ‘Modern Reklam’ [Modern Advertising] from 1927 onwards, likely

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2 Although D.N.S.S. created pieces of advertising, these were executed in the context of their own publications.

3 For instance, Jobling and Crowley have stated that the Swiss Typography of the 1950s and ‘60s was “a self-conscious continuation and reaffirmation of the principles of the new typography”. Paul Jobling and David Crowley. *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation since 1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 163

4 This comment was used to describe Esaias Thorén’s book jacket design for Artur Lundkvist’s *Negerkust* [*Negro Coast*, 1933] by the jury of Sweden’s most beautiful books award 1933 “det knallande friska omslaget”. Gunnar Mascoll Silfverstolpe “Sveriges 25 vakreste bøker 1933,” *Norsk Trykk* 8, no. 1 (1934): 13–16, p.16. Much later Olaf Halldin would claim that the design attributed to Otto G. Carlsund’s for the film ‘Kärlek och bensin’ “created a stylised poster style with significance for the 1930s [skapade en stiliserad uppfräschad affischstil signifikant för 1930-talet]”. Olof Halldin, “Det Efemära Trycket.” *Biblis* 54 (2011): 45-54, pp.50–51

5 This is how Richard Paul Lohse (1902–88) described the style and approach Anton Stankowski (1906–98) brought with him to the Max Dalang advertising agency in Zurich. Hollis, Richard. *Swiss Graphic Design. The Origins and Growth of an International Style, 1920–1965* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2006), 101



had no relation to New Typography—at least to judge from the book jacket Thorén designed for Artur Lundkvist’s *Negerkust* [Negro Coast, 1933] (**fig.3.01**).<sup>6</sup> In the case of Danish painter Franciska Clausen (1899–1986) it is possible to assert this more conclusively. A member of the Cercle et Carré group, she worked in a number of modernist styles throughout her career, having studied under Hans Hofmann (Munich, 1921–22), Moholy-Nagy (Berlin 1922), Alexander Archipenko (Berlin, 1923) and Fernand Léger (Paris, 1924–25).<sup>7</sup> Whilst living in Paris she won a competition to design a poster for the Dutch ferry company Batavier Lijn (1928,<sup>8</sup> and after relocating to Copenhagen in December 1931 she tried repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, to secure further commercial art commissions in order to make a living. The long-standing interest in non-figurative art which she had pursued in her paintings from 1928 onwards, was not reflected in her commercial art proposals. The majority of these were executed in a stylized, pictorial manner. With the exception of a proposed poster which read “OMA MARGARINE I ALLE HJEM” [OMA MARGARINE IN EVERY HOME], and where the ‘A’s and ‘M’s were used to create a visual pun, lettering tended to play no more than a supportive role in her commercial art work.<sup>9</sup>

Although he himself struggled, the Scandinavian avant-garde

6 This cover formed part of the selection in 1933’s Swedish most beautiful books award. However, the nature and extent of Modern Reklam’s production has yet to receive attention from historians. The founding of the agency is mentioned in: Egon Östlund, “Halmstadgruppen.” in *Halmstadgruppen: Waldemar Lorentzon • Axel Olson • Erik Olson • Esaias Thorén • Sven Jonson • Stellan Mörner*, eds. Folke Holmér et al (Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1947), 46

7 In addition to formal art education at die Grossherzoglich sächsische Hochschule für bildende Kunst (1916–17) and the Frauenakademie in Munich (1918–19).

8 The company had a history of commissioning avant-garde artists to design its posters. A well-known example is that created by Bart van der Leck, a member the De Stijl group, in 1915.

9 The detail on Franciska Clausen in this paragraph is taken from the double volume: Finn Terman Frederiksen, *Franciska Clausen* (Randers: Buch, 1987–1988).

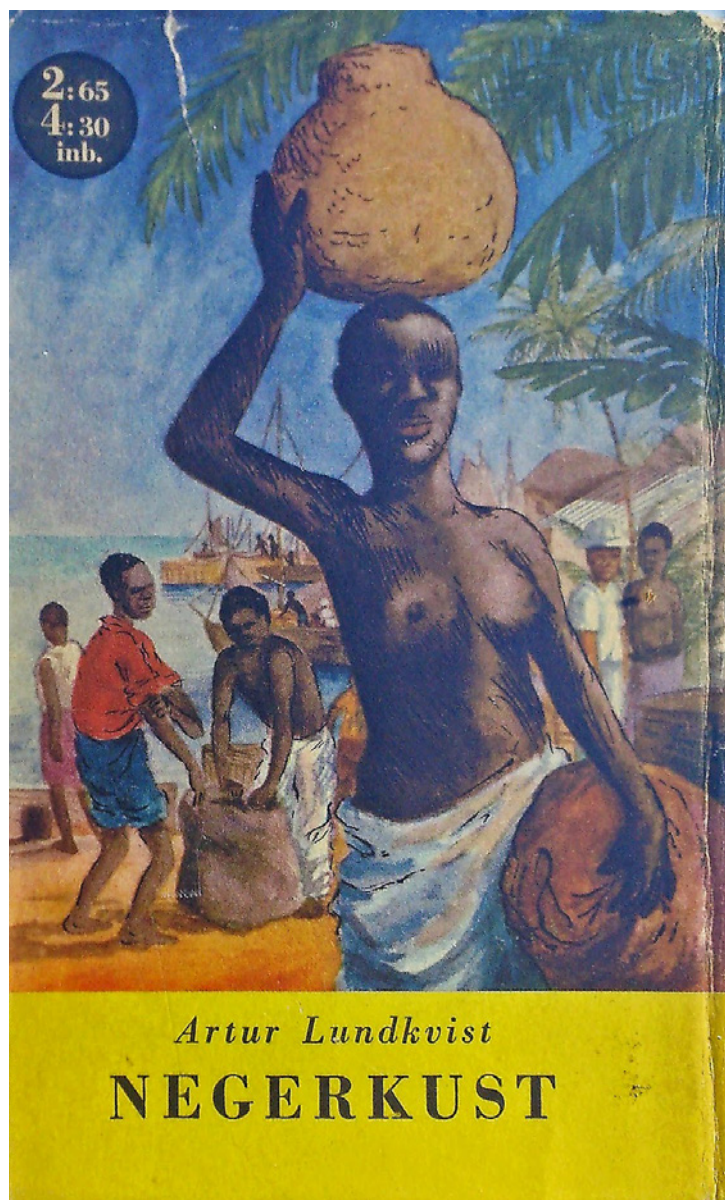


Fig. 3.01

Artur Lundkvist, *Negerkust* (1933).  
Cover illustration by Esaias Thorén.

artist with the greatest degree of success as a commercial artist was Otto G. Carlsund (1897–1948), another of Léger’s many Scandinavian students.<sup>10</sup> Like Clausen, he had since leaving the Académie Moderne moved towards non-representational art, becoming a founding member of the Art Concret group alongside Theo van Doesburg, Jean Hélion (1904–87), Léon Tutundjian (1905–68) and Marcel Wantz (dates unknown). Like Cercle et Carré, Art Concret was formed in reaction to the perceived threat of Surrealism to abstract art. However, whilst Cercle et Carré comprised a large group of artists working in a broad range of abstract styles, Art Concret consisted of a small group of absolutists arguing for a “universal” art.<sup>11</sup> This art “should not contain any natural form, sensuality or sentimentality”, and should “be constructed completely with pure plastic elements, that is to say, with planes and colours”.<sup>12</sup> In relation to this chapter’s discussion of how attitudes to New Typography varied between advertising cultures, and how it was closely related to material considerations and reproduction technologies associated with these cultures, it is noteworthy that Carlsund’s only known design for moveable type was also one of few items he ever designed in New Typography.<sup>13</sup> The item in question was the catalogue for the exhibition his name is most closely associated with, the disastrous AC, held within the grounds of the Stockholm Exhibition 1930. This

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10 Léger’s classes at the Academie Moderne were dominated by Scandinavian and Eastern European students. For Léger’s impact on Nordic artists, including a considerable amount of reproduced correspondence, see the exhibition catalogue: Christian Derouet, ed. *Léger Och Norden* (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1992)

11 Otto G. Carlsund et al, “Art Concret. The Basis of Concrete Painting,” in *Theo van Doesburg*, by Joost Baljeu (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, 1974). Originally published as: “Base de La Peinture Concrète,” *Art Concret* 1, no. 1 (1930).

12 Ibid.

13 The book covers for the series Spektrumromaner, can also be classified as items of New Typography.

exhibition, which despite its name showcased a wider selection of artists than those definable within Art Concret's narrow parameters has been widely judged by posterity as a 'failure' – with the critics, the visiting public and, tragically for Carlsund, in terms of sales.<sup>14</sup> He was responsible for financing the exhibition, but racked up debts with his suppliers in the process, as he thought he would soon make the money back in commissions and sales of the accompanying catalogue (**fig.3.02**).<sup>15</sup> Produced by Bröderna Lagerström, the catalogue's cover featured the large scale initials 'AC' in a tint of blue, over which the other elements of text were printed in brown. This idea followed the precedent set by the first (and only) issue of Art Concret's self-titled journal (**fig.3.03**). The use of Erbar Grotesk (1926), on the other hand, served to tie it in with the cover treatment used on other Stockholm Exhibition materials. The design of the inner pages also followed that used elsewhere for the Stockholm Exhibition, as detailed in **chapter 4**.

The failure of the AC exhibition and the economic troubles that ensued had a profound effect on Carlsund. He would later declare: "it was the fatal year for me and I count myself more or less dead since then".<sup>16</sup> Fearful of returning to Paris, he decided to stay in Sweden, eventually settling in Stockholm. He did not paint much

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14 See, for instance: Oscar Reutersvärd, *Otto G. Carlsund i Fjärrperspektiv* (Åhus: Kalejdoskop Förlag, 1988), 92–98. The view of the exhibition's reception with the critics has been modified in recent years. According to Anders Wahlgren, research carried out by Jan Torsten Ahstrand, director of the Museum of Sketches in Lund, shows that many critics were in fact largely positive to the exhibition. Anders Wahlgren, "Otto G. Carlsund. Life of the Artist." in *Otto G. Carlsund, 11.12 1897 - 25.7 1948: Konstnär, Kritiker Och Utställningsarrangör*, ed. Louise Fogelström (Stockholm: Arena, Liljevalchs konsthall & Norrköpings konstmuseum, 2007), 150

15 Reutersvärd, *Otto G. Carlsund*, 92

16 "C'était l'année fatale pour moi et je me compte comme plus ou moins mort depuis ce temps". Letter from Carlsund to Léger, dated 16 July 1947. Reprinted in: Derouet, *Léger Och Norden*, 102

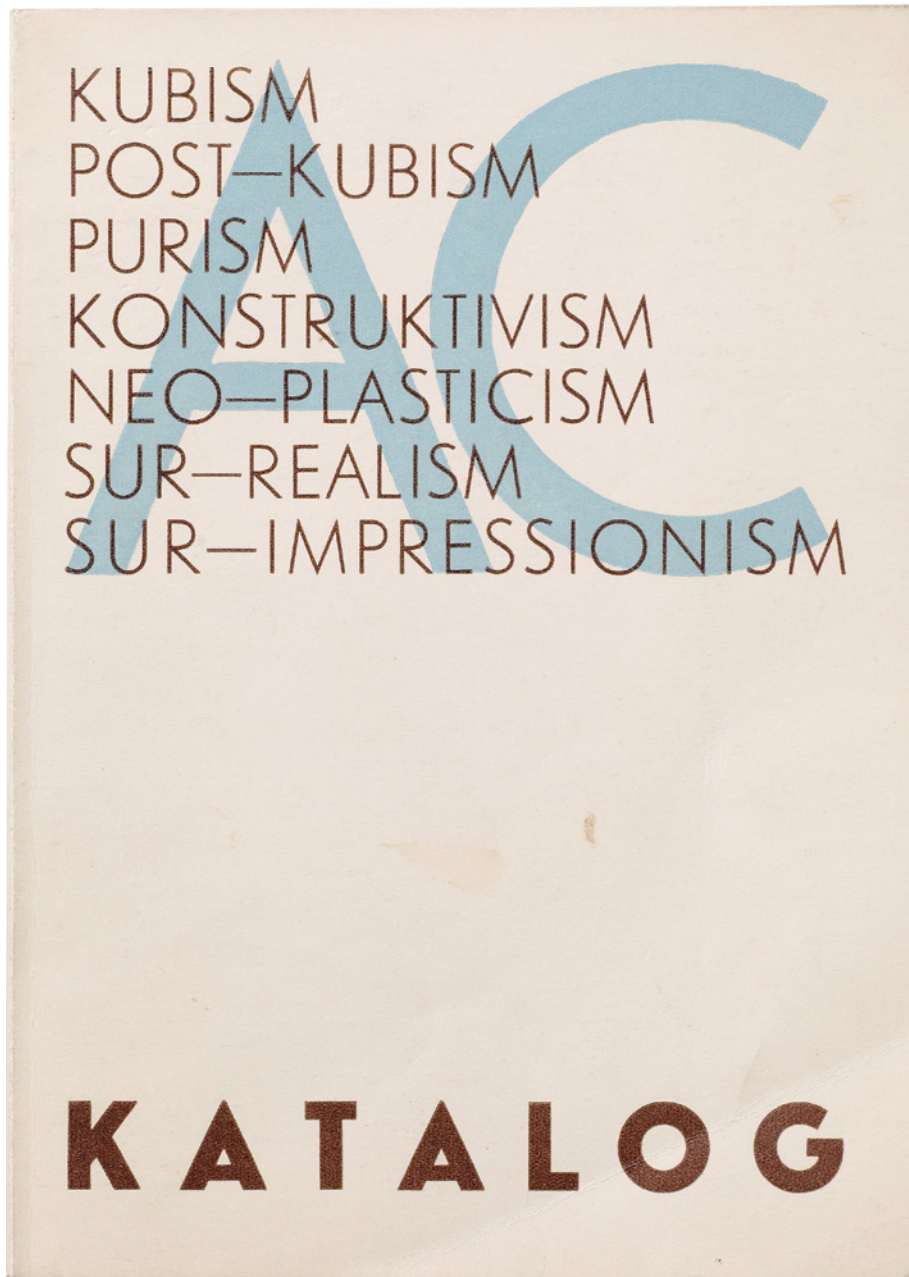


Fig. 3.02

Cover of the catalogue for the AC exhibition.  
Design: Otto G. Carlsund (1930)

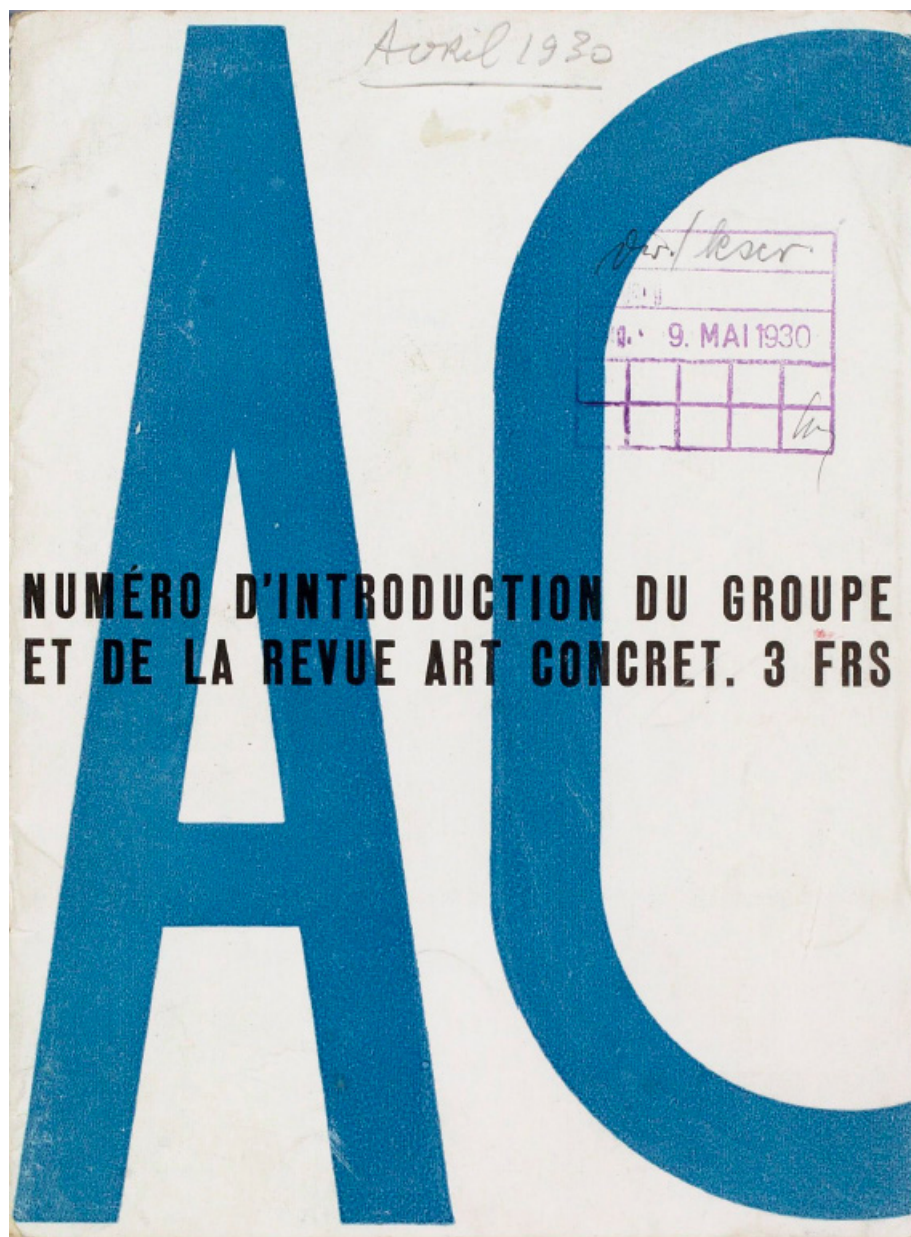


Fig. 3.03

Cover of the first and only issue of the journal  
Art Concret (1930)

and abandoned abstraction.<sup>17</sup> However, Carlsund had better luck than Clausen in finding commercial art jobs. After having received training in the subject from the Academy in Leipzig in 1921, he had worked on commissions throughout the 1920s in parallel with his painting.<sup>18</sup> He soon gained work designing film posters and decorations for Svensk Filmindustri,<sup>19</sup> and as the decade progressed would work on a number of other small projects, such as book and magazine covers. However, the work was not steady, and he primarily made his living as an art critic for the journal *Konstrevy* [Art Review].<sup>20</sup>

Like Clausen, Carlsund's shift toward non-representational art did not influence his commercial work. Whilst his poster work displayed greater skill in lettering, perhaps gained through formal training, they remained predominantly pictorial—executed like Clausen's in a style of stylised abstraction informed by Léger. In the catalogue for Léger's exhibition at Stockholm's Galerie Moderne in 1934 Carlsund expressed his admiration for his old teacher's work. "The best and most effective advertising posters" were "unmistakably" influenced by him.<sup>21</sup> So, whilst Carlsund in his AC exhibition catalogue stated that Art Concret was "Neo-plasticism,

17 See: Wahlgren, "Otto G. Carlsund", 170-171

18 Niclas Östlind, "Modernism and the Role of the Artist – Otto G. Carlsund as Entrepreneur and Society Today." in *Otto G. Carlsund, 11.12 1897 - 25.7 1948: Konstnär, Kritiker Och Utställningsarrangör*, ed. Louise Fogelström (Stockholm: Arena, Liljevalchs konsthall & Norrköpings konstmuseum, 2007), 186

19 "Otto G Carlsund (attributed to): Atlantic." *Bukowskis*. <https://www.bukowskis.com/en/lots/579924-otto-g-carlsund-attributed-to-atlantic> (accessed March 17, 2015)

20 Although Carlsund's work as a commercial artist is not one of its main themes, the best source is nonetheless the exhibition catalogue: Louise Fogelström, ed. *Otto G. Carlsund, 11.12 1897 - 25.7 1948: Konstnär, Kritiker Och Utställningsarrangör* (Stockholm: Arena, Liljevalchs konsthall & Norrköpings konstmuseum, 2007).

21 "De bästa och slagkraftigaste reklamplakaten", "omisskännligen". Otto G. Carlsund, "Fernand Leger." in *Otto G. Carlsund Skriver Om Konst*, eds. Teddy Brunius and Ulf Thomas Moberg (Stockholm: Cinclus, 1988), 40. Originally published in: Ragnar Hoppe and Otto G. Carlsund, *Fernand Léger*. (Stockholm: Galleriet, 1934)

Purism and Constructivism unified”, it would seem Purism was the most important of these influences, when it came to poster art.<sup>22</sup> As such, he aligned himself with a tradition of *affischistes* who, as argued by Paul Jobling and David Crowley, viewed modernism as “less [of] a project than a style” and whose work whilst informed by developments in modern art like Purism and Cubism did not share the same “theoretical, systematic and political character of many Central European experiments”.<sup>23</sup>

## **Advertising in the printing trade:**

### **Jobbing print and the spectre of Artistic Printing**

For printers, advertising typography was considered a form of ‘jobbing print’. This was a large amorphous category which described any type of printing that was not book printing.

In Scandinavia, as in Germany, the term for jobbing print was rooted in the Latin ‘accidentia’ [accidental], reflecting the category’s original status as sideline business for printers.<sup>24</sup>

However, it is worth noting that job work was always a part of the trade. For instance, the first finished item to leave Gutenberg’s press was not the famous forty-two line Bible, but an indulgence.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, as is well known, jobbing typography would not

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22 “Neo-plasticismen, purismen och konstruktivismen sammanslagna”. Otto G. Carlsund, “Katalog. AC. Kubism, Post-Kubism, Purism, Konstruktivism, Neo-Plasticism, Sur-Realism, Sur-Impressionism.” in *Om Och Av Otto G. Carlsund*, eds. Teddy Brunius and Ulf Thomas Moberg (Stockholm: Cinclus, 1989), 79 (page 5 of the original catalogue)

23 Jobling and Crowley, *Graphic Design*, 147–149

24 The terms used in Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and German respectively were ‘accidenstryk’, ‘aksidenstrykk’, ‘accidenstryck’ and ‘Akzidenzdruck’.

25 That printers print sheets and binders make books is the starting point for the following essay, which also details the importance of indulgences to early printers: Peter Stallybrass, “‘Little Jobs’. Broadsides and the Printing Revolution.” in *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, eds Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al (Amherst and Boston, Washington D.C.: University of Massachusetts Press in association with The Center for the Book & Library of Congress, 2007)



take on a noticeable style of its own until the early decades of the 19th Century, when a host of new and often eccentric display types was developed in England and used for posters and handbills. This departure was followed some decades later with the emergence of Artistic Printing. According to the Norwegian master printer Hermann Scheibler this extravagant and eclectic style of typography was introduced to Scandinavia around 1860.<sup>26</sup> Figures associated with the typographic revival, like Emil Selmar would later denounce it as a confused mishmash of styles, an “ornament epidemic” which raged at the expense of a ‘good’ typography based on traditional letterforms and created with readability in mind.<sup>27</sup> Because it was primarily used in jobbing print, New Typography was seen as closely related to Artistic Printing by printers like Selmar. His concern was that New Typography, like Artistic Printing before it, would not limit itself to jobbing print—but also seek to make intrusions into book typography. Thereby, it stood in danger of jeopardising the progress made over the intervening years.<sup>28</sup>

That New Typography really was primarily used for jobbing print is evident from Tschichold’s *Die neue Typographie* (1928). Whilst

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26 Scheibler, *Lære- Og Mønsterbog for Typografer*, 3–4

27 Selmar, “De Vekslende Typografiske Moder”, 405. This view of Artistic Printing has proved remarkably widespread and persistent. As a graphic design student in Norway it was introduced to me in these terms as late as 2002. Traditionally interpreted as an attempt by letterpress printers to compete with the arrival of lithography through the use of new display types, ornaments and through the artful manipulation of typographic material, Artistic Printing was also heavily grounded in the ideas of the Aesthetic Movement as a recent re-assessment shows: Doug Clouse and Angela Voulangas, *The Handy Book of Artistic Printing: A Collection of Letterpress Examples with Specimens of Type, Ornament, Corner Fills, Borders, Twisters, Wrinklers and Other Freaks of Fancy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009)

28 Although Selmar would not have been able to know this at the time, Tschichold would later in the year express a similarly dismissive attitude to Artistic Printing: Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 21–23

roughly half its pages are filled with examples and instructions of how New Typography can be applied to nineteen different ‘principal typographic categories’, no fewer than eighteen of these are types of jobbing print.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the nineteenth, on ‘the new book’, was markedly different from the others. Whilst each of the previous contained practical advice on how to best solve the problem at hand according to the principles of New Typography, ‘the new book’ instead offered a discussion of the avant-garde’s experiments with the form, but no practical guidance. Instead there was an admission that no new form yet existed for books like novels and scientific literature. Until such a new form could be found there was, “absolutely no need for change,” as “the old book-form is perfectly suitable for this kind of book”.<sup>30</sup> Whilst the DIN-formats promoted elsewhere in *Die neue Typographie* could be used for large books, catalogues and handbooks, they were deemed unsuitable for novels and other books intended to be held in the hand as they were “too wide and therefore uncomfortable”.<sup>31</sup> Certain “moderations” could nevertheless be made, particularly in choosing sans serif or roman type instead of fraktur, and in downplaying book artists’ emphasis on material quality in favour of cheaper materials — thus creating “inexpensive books for people, not luxury books for snobs”.<sup>32</sup> Although Scandinavian master printers and compositors would in time make similar distinctions themselves, it was largely overlooked that Tschichold

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29 Tschichold’s categories are: the typographic symbol; the business letterhead; the half letterhead; envelopes without windows; window envelopes; the postcard; the postcard with flap; the business card; the visiting card; advertising matter (slips, cards, leaflets, prospectuses, catalogues); the typo-poster; the pictorial poster; labels; plates and frames; advertisements; the periodical; the newspaper; the illustrated paper; tabular matter; the new book: Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 5

30 Ibid., 224

31 Ibid., 227

32 Ibid., 224, 227

already had made such wide-ranging concessions for the book. Those who took a positive view of New Typography therefore thought it important to reassure traditionalists that ‘the new style’ harboured no such intentions. This conciliatory stance can be observed, for instance, in the first positively worded article on New Typography to appear in Denmark and *De grafiske Fag*. It was published in December 1928, around half-a-year after *Die neue Typographie*’s publication.<sup>33</sup> However, its author Viggo Hasnæs did not cite the statements made there on the category of the book. Instead, he emphasized comments made by German architect Richard Herre (1885–1956) in *Archiv für Buchgewerbe und Gebrauchsgraphik*:

We (...) think that the two directions in typography should not fight each other, but both fight the thoughtless and irresponsible traditional, the poor and irresponsible new.<sup>34</sup>

The idea that one should focus less on the opposition between the ‘old’ and the ‘new typography’ and more on the quality of the typography produced was a revelation to Hasnæs.<sup>35</sup> Referring to Herre’s comments, he wrote:

It is clear from this statement, that the adherents of the elementary typography take an exceedingly rational point

33 *Die neue Typographie* was published in June that year: Kinross, “Introduction to the English-Language Edition”, xviii

34 “Vi mener ogsaa, at begge Retninger indenfor Typografien ikke bør kæmpe mod hinanden, men begge skal bekæmpe det tankeløse og uansvarlige Traditionelle, det slette og uansvarlige Nye”. Hansen, “Elementær Typografi Og Dens Anvendelse”, 307. Hasnæs’ source is: Richard Herre, “Moderne Typographie,” *Archiv Für Buchgewerbe Und Gebrauchsgraphik* 64, no. 5–6: Sonderheft Stuttgart (1927): 29–35

35 A similar sentiment was famously expressed in: Carl Ernst Poeschel *Gegen Mechanisierung – Für Die Persönlichkeit: Ein Offener Brief*. (Leipzig: Poeschel & Trepte, 1933)

of view, contrary to what is commonly attributed to them. They do not reject the good traditional typography, but equate themselves with it, in other words wish to supplement it, because the elementary typography's proper field is *job setting* and not book setting.<sup>36</sup>

By distancing the menace of New Typography from the privileged category of the book, Hasnæs sought to alleviate the traditionalists' gravest concerns. Indeed, the divide between jobbing and book typography, and the view that New Typography could be used for the former but not the latter, would hold up until ideas of Functionalism put them under scrutiny some four years later. However, by then New Typography had already gained widespread acceptance as a jobbing print style. Already in April 1929, when the results of a competition to set a four-page folder for *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* were announced, a sizable proportion of the entries were said to be informed by New Typography.<sup>37</sup> Of these, the second-placed entry, by Herbert Skarin (1903–98) of Bröderna Lagerström, was singled out as “a typical example” of elemental typography.<sup>38</sup> However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, it would be in the setting of ads for newspapers and journals where New Typography would be most widely applied.

36 “Det fremgaar af denne Redegørelse, at Tilhængerne af den elementære Typografi indtager et særdeles fornuftigt Standpunkt i Modsætning til, hvad der almindeligvis bliver dem tillagt. De forkaster ikke den gode traditionelle Typografi, men sidestiller sig med den, ønsker altsaa at supplere den, thi den elementære Typografis rette Felt er Akcidenssatsen og ikke Bog- og Værksatsen”. Hansen, “Elementær Typografi Og Dens Anvendelse”, 307. Emphasis in original. Hasnæs was in fact misrepresenting Herre here. He had not declared job setting to be ‘elementary typography’s proper field’, but merely stated that this was the field in which it had achieved the greatest impact. See: Herre, “Moderne Typographie”, 35

37 “Resultatet av 30:de årgångens pristävlan för sättare.” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 4 (1929): 137–140

38 “Stærke Faglige Brydninger I Sverige: Elementær Typografi Kontra Svensk Stil,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 25, no. Apr 15 (1929): 148–49, p.148

## **‘American’ advertising men and ‘German’ commercial artists**

The Scandinavian advertising industry of the 1920s and '30s was split between the adherents of what was termed ‘German’ advertising ideas on the one hand, and those who subscribed to what was alternately described as ‘American’, ‘modern’ or ‘scientific’ advertising ideas on the other. The following section explores each of these two cultures in order to gain an understanding of the advertising’s industry’s attitude to New Typography. Supporters of the German approach, which was associated with the poster, the power of the iconic image, and a belief that advertising’s effectiveness was dependent on its artistic value, primarily worked as commercial artists. On the other hand, supporters of the American approach, which was associated with the ad and the emergent field of marketing, belonged to a new group of advertising men made up of strategists, copywriters and lay-out men. Although the German ideas dominated well into the 1920s,<sup>39</sup> the influence of American advertising became increasingly apparent from the 1910s onwards. This followed a wider European pattern. In her influential account of the Americanisation of European culture in the 20th century, Victoria de Grazia pinpoints 1927 as the year in which American advertising ‘truly’ arrived in Europe. This was when the leading American advertising agency J. Walter Thompson (JWT) established offices in a number of European cities, including Stockholm and Copenhagen, in fulfilment of its contract to advertise General Motors’ products outside the United States.<sup>40</sup> Other American agencies also

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39 Max Kjær-Hansen and E.W. Petersen, eds. *Reklamehaandbogen 1934* (København: Petersen & Bratvolds Bladforlag, 1934), 14; *Lite Svensk Reklam-historia*. (Sveriges arkiv för reklam och grafisk design, 2002), 8

40 Offices were also opened in Berlin and Madrid. A London office was already in

expanded into Europe during this period. The smaller Erwin, Wasey Co. (later known as Ervaco) had in fact already established a presence in Stockholm and Copenhagen two years earlier, on the back of its contract to advertise Goodyear Tires.<sup>41</sup> However, American advertising ideas had been circulating amongst Scandinavian trade figures long before these agencies opened their doors. An important figure in their introduction was Robert Millar (1878–1960), an Irishman who had settled in Trondheim.<sup>42</sup>

In 1909 he was made head of advertising [reklamesjef] for Nordenfjeldske Dampskibsselskab [NFDS, Nordenfjeldske Steamship Company], thus reputedly becoming the first individual to use this title in the Nordic countries.<sup>43</sup> In this role Millar came into contact with the Great Northern Railway's publicity manager H. J. Jewell, who introduced him to the leading American advertising journal *Printers' Ink* (1888–1967).<sup>44</sup> Subsequently Millar began publishing his own journal *Romilla Revue* (1914–18). Inspired

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operation. In 1928, offices were opened in The Hague and Paris, in 1929 an office in Warsaw followed, and in 1932 Bucharest and Barcelona. During these years, offices were also opened outside of Europe, in Alexandria (Egypt) and Port Elizabeth (South Africa): Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 231.

41 By 1929, at least, Erwin, Wasey Co. had European offices in London, Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Rotterdam, Helsinki, Milan, Zurich and Barcelona in addition to Stockholm and Copenhagen. See: de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 201, 232. The date of 1925 for Denmark is given in: Morten Bendix Andersen "Sælgere for et Amerikansk Forbrugsimperium? Studier i Amerikaniseringsprocesser I Reklamebranchen I Danmark 1920–1965" (PhD thesis, Syddansk Universitet, 2011), 51

42 For detail on Robert Millar and the Norwegian advertising trade's early years see: Amund Smidt Lysaker "The Professionalization of the Norwegian Advertising Trade, 1914–1918." (Masteroppgave, Universitet i Oslo, 2014)

43 Max Kjær–Hansen, "Træk Af Reklamens Vilkår 1920–1949." In *Reklamen I Det 20. Århundredes Danmark*, eds Max Kjær–Hansen and Peter Olufsen (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1974), 294

44 Lysaker, "The Professionalization of the Norwegian Advertising Trade", 20. Lysaker claims NFDS and The Great Northern Railway held close ties, but does not state what the precise nature of the relationship. Lysaker himself bases his assertion on an unpublished manuscript for a biography on Millar by Svein Linge Solberg.

by the American club movement he founded Reklameklubben Romilla [The Advertising Club Romilla] in Trondheim, the first in the Nordic countries.<sup>45</sup> In the United States, such advertising clubs had started appearing from the 1890s onwards, with the particularly important Sphinx Club in New York City being founded in 1896. In 1911 these clubs were consolidated into the national organisation The Associated Advertising Clubs of America (AACA).<sup>46</sup> Millar was also responsible for the first Nordic publication on modern marketing principles, the short pamphlet *Reklame-lære* [Advertising-Teachings, 1916], and was involved in the founding of the first Nordic advertising school in 1918.<sup>47</sup>

American advertising appealed to Millar and other Scandinavian advertisers for two main reasons. The first was because it made efforts to heighten the repute and status of the profession, and the second was its proclaimed effectiveness. Acknowledging that advertising had acquired a bad reputation through its willingness to promote patent medicines, false stock certificates and by making other false claims, *Printers' Ink* had already during the 1890s proposed what was termed the "rotten apple' theory'. This stated that false advertising should be avoided because the short term gains it yielded were heavily outweighed by the damage caused, not only to the reputation of the client and the advertising agency

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45 The name would change to 'Reklameklubben i Trondhjem' in 1921 and 'Trondhjems Reklameforening' in 1929.

46 Three years later, British advertising clubs joined and the organisation changed its name to The Associated Advertising Clubs of the World (AACW). In 1926 it changed its name again, to the International Advertising Association, after absorbing the Advertising Association of Great Britain and the Continental Advertising Association. For more detail on the American club movement see: Pamela Walker Laird, *Advertising Progress. American Business and the Rise of Consumer Marketing. Studies in Industry and Society* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 240–243

47 Romilla. *Reklame-Lære* (Trondhjem, 1916)

responsible for the ad, but to that of all other advertising agencies and to the industry as a whole.<sup>48</sup> These ideas were taken up in organised form from 1911 onwards in the shape of the AACA's and *Printers' Ink's* 'Truth in Advertising' campaign.<sup>49</sup>

Seeking to make the practice of advertising more effective, precise and predictable, JWT spearheaded efforts to turn it into a science, efforts which also served to further heighten the profession's standing. It set up the first agency research department, and hired academics like Paul Cherington to develop the new field of marketing, and John B. Watson to conduct studies in behavioural psychology. Agencies began commissioning and conducting interviews and surveys, compiled statistical data on the population's purchasing powers and habits, and used circulation figures and periodical profiles to determine where a particular advertisement would best be placed. Indeed, the press ad was the preferred medium of this school of advertising, and then particularly the genre known as 'salesmanship in print', or the 'reason why' ad. The idea behind this type of ad was first formulated in 1904 when freelance copywriter John E. Kennedy, in conversation with advertising executive Albert D. Lasker (1880–1952), made the assertion that advertising was 'salesmanship in print'.<sup>50</sup> Such ads, Kennedy asserted, should not merely grab consumers' attention and make them aware of the product, but stimulate their interest by explaining its distinctive characteristics and by demonstrating how the particular product in question was better than its competitors. Although the copy was frequently

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48 Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 191–192

49 For 'Truth in Advertising': *Ibid.*, 202–212

50 Lasker subsequently took up this formula to great success. The story is frequently retold in histories on advertising such as that of Pope: *Ibid.*, 238



rational or even scientific in tone, the argument did not have to appeal to reason alone. As Roland Marchand has put it, the reason-why ad “sold the benefit instead of the product: illumination instead of lighting fixtures, prestige instead of automobiles, sex appeal instead of mere soap”.<sup>51</sup>

The other main influence on Scandinavian advertising, the German approach, differed from the American in many important respects. Whereas the Americans had adopted a scientific approach to increase effectiveness and heighten the profession’s standing, these functions were in German advertising filled by the notion of artistic merit. Unlike American advertising, which sought to persuade through written argument, German advertising, both in ads and in the preferred medium of the poster, relied on the power of the image. Following on from the tradition initiated by Lucian Bernhard’s famous *Sachplakat* [Object Poster] for Priester matches (1906), text was kept to a minimum.<sup>52</sup> As Dansk Reklame-Forbund’s *Reklamehaandbogen 1934* [The Advertising Manual 1934], summarised for its intended readership of businessmen:

Where American ads are psychological-explanatory, German ads are technically suggestive. American advertising men turn their eyes towards the buyers, German advertising men concern themselves with the product.<sup>53</sup>

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51 Roland Marchand *Advertising the American Dream. Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940*. First Paperback Printing (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 10

52 The differences in approach between American and German advertising can be found laid out in: Corey Ross, “Visions of Prosperity: The Americanization of Advertising in Interwar Germany,” in *Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany*, eds. Pamela Swett (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007). For a detailed account of German advertising the best source is: Christiane Lamberty, *Reklame in Deutschland 1890–1914. Wahrnehmung, Professionalisierung Und Kritik Der Wirtschaftswerbung*. (Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 2000)

53 “Hvor amerikanske Annoncer er psykologisk-forklarende, er tyske Annoncer

Given its close ties to the poster, it is not surprising that this method of advertising appealed to commercial artists. In Scandinavia they were known simply as ‘tegnere / tecknare’ [draughtsmen], or sometimes more specifically as ‘reklametegnere / reklamtecknare’ [advertising draughtsmen]. Commercial artists were therefore foremost amongst American advertising’s critics.<sup>54</sup> However, as explored in the following section, this group had fewer opportunities to broadcast their views because the advertising trade press was largely controlled by those advocating the American approach.

### **Attitudes towards New Typography in the advertising trade press**

As a whole, the Scandinavian advertising trade press reflected the interest in American advertising principles promoted by advertising clubs and national trade associations. This was particularly true of Dansk Reklameforening’s monthly journal *Dansk reklame* [Danish Advertising, 1927–77], and the journal which had acted as its unofficial predecessor, *Gutenberghus* [Gutenberg House, 1924–27]. *Gutenberghus* was published by the advertising agency of the same name, an important proponent of American advertising in Denmark.<sup>55</sup> Norway’s *Propaganda* [1922–60], was also closely aligned with modern advertising ideas. It was initially published by Reklameforeningen but

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teknisk suggerende. Amerikanske Reklamefolk vender Øjnene mod Køberne, tyske Reklamefolk er optaget af Varen”. Kjær–Hansen and Petersen, *Reklamehaandbogen* 1934, 36

54 Andersen, “Sælgere for et Amerikansk Forbrugsimperium?”, 70

55 Gutenberghus Reklamebureau was a part of the Egmont H. Petersen company, which was also a magazine publisher and the largest printing house in the Nordic countries. The Gutenberghus advertising agency in turn took its name from the Egmont H. Petersen’s main building in Copenhagen. For more detail on the agency and journal: *Ibid.*, 63–70

became the official mouthpiece of Norges Reklameforbund [The Norwegian Advertising Association] upon that organisation's founding in 1927.<sup>56</sup> However, the official publication of Svenska Reklamförbundet, *Svensk reklam* [Swedish Advertising, 1929–44],<sup>57</sup> was more pluralistic. The freer editorial policy can perhaps be explained by its irregular and infrequent appearance. Instead it was the privately published monthly *Tidskrift för affärsekonomi* [Journal for Business Economics, 1928–74] which in Sweden worked most intensively to spread the American advertising ideas.<sup>58</sup> They were also spread through text books and manuals, many of which were authored by men holding senior positions in the national trade associations.<sup>59</sup>

An exception to this trend was the Danish journal *Elite* (1926–30). It was primarily geared towards commercial artists, and which concerned itself with issues of aesthetics and production to a higher degree than the advertising associations' journals did. *Elite's* editor was N. Norvil (originally Nicolaj Sofus Nielsen, 1880–1956),<sup>60</sup>

56 Between the years 1941–45 *Propaganda* was Nazified and published under the title *Norsk Reklame* [Norwegian Advertising].

57 Initially conceived as an annual, issues of *Svensk Reklam* appeared in: 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1934, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1942 and 1944.

58 From 1932 this journal was known simply as *Affärsekonomi*.

59 In addition to Robert Millar, whose contribution has been detailed previously and Max-Kjær Hansen, one can mention Tom Björklund and Yngve Hedvall, authors of the popular *Hur man annonserar med framgång* [How One Advertises Successfully, published in 5 editions: 1924, 1926, 1934, 1938, 1950]. Kjær-Hansen (1896–1982), an academic in business economics and management at Handelshøjskolen in Copenhagen, was editor of *Dansk Reklame* (1929–37), as well as secretary (1929–34) to Dansk Reklame-Forbund and special advisor [kommitteret] to one of its committees (1934–37). Björklund was chairman of Stockholms Reklamförening (1934–36), Svenska Reklamförbundet (1935–38) and Nordiska Reklamförbundet (1936–38). Hedvall (1887–1946), was treasurer (1921–35) and secretary (1933–36) for Svenska Reklamförbundet, editor of *Reklamnyheter* (1936–?). See: Kjær-Hansen, "Træk Af Reklamens Vilkår 1920–1949", 265–266; "Björklund, Tom." *Vem Är Det: Svensk Biografisk Handbok* 1963. (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1962) 124; "Hedvall, Alfred Yngve." *Vem Är Det: Svensk Biografisk Handbok* 1943. (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1942), 335

60 Per Sørensen, "Nicolaj Norvil." *Danske Postkortkunstnere*. [http://www.piaper.dk/postkortkunstnere/Postkortkunstnere/Nicolaj\\_Norvil/Nicolaj\\_Norvil.htm](http://www.piaper.dk/postkortkunstnere/Postkortkunstnere/Nicolaj_Norvil/Nicolaj_Norvil.htm).

a commercial artist who like many of his colleagues remained an adherent of the German advertising approach and opposed the new American ideas.<sup>61</sup> However, this German orientation did not lead to any great interest in New Typography. Indeed, the rigidity of professional barriers between advertising and the printing trade were also present in Germany. As noted by Alston W. Purvis, Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue was of marginal concern to journals such as *Die Reklame* [Advertising, 1919–33] — published by the Verband deutscher Reklamefachleute's [Association of German Advertising Professionals], and *Gebrauchsgraphik* [1924–44] — associated with the Bund Deutscher Gebrauchsgraphiker [Association of German Commercial Graphic Designers].<sup>62</sup> Likewise, it was ignored by the advertising journal *Seidels Reklame*,<sup>63</sup> and by surveys like Walter F. Schubert's *Die deutsche Werbegraphik* [German Advertising Design, 1927].<sup>64</sup> Whilst Norvil did not comment on New Typography specifically, it should be mentioned that he did report on modern typography in a wider sense. Like Hasnæs, he advocated it as a new variation.<sup>65</sup>

As a measure of how hesitant advertisers were to adopt the

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(accessed October 23, 2015)

61 Kjær-Hansen, "Træk Af Reklamens Vilkår 1920–1949", 271

62 Alston W. Purvis, "Tschichold and the New Typography," in *Jan Tschichold: Master Typographer. His Life, Work & Legacy*, ed. Cees W. de Jong (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008), 40

63 Meer, *Neuer Blick Auf Die Neue Typographie*, 12

64 Purvis, "Tschichold and the New Typography", 40

65 "Siden Sidst – Lidt Om 'den Nye Stil', I Annoncer Og Tryksager." *Elite. Tidsskrift for Industri, Handel Og Reklame*. 4, no. 9–10 (1929): 1–4. This article was reworked the following year with a different set of examples: "Den Ny Tid I Reklamen." *Elite. Tidsskrift for Industri, Handel Og Reklame*. 5, no. 1 (1930). Moreover, *Elite* had previously expressed a positive attitude toward the *Futura-Schmuck* type sample, argued that such arrangements could be used to gain the readers' attention, that its purely typographic approach could save money, and recreated a series of examples clearly influenced by it: "Kan Der Spares Paa Reklamekontoen?" *Elite. Tidsskrift for Reklameteknik Og Grafisk Virke*. 2, no. 3–4 (1927): 2–4; However, it was dismissive of Soviet advertising, which it found primitive and unsuitable to a Western, literate, population: "Reklame I Sovjet-Rusland." *Elite. Tidsskrift for Reklameteknik Og Grafisk Virke*. 3, no. 1–2 (1928): 6–7

language of New Typography, one can consider the Norwegian advertising man Thor Bjørn Schyberg's (1901–92) *Lønnsom reklame* [Profitable Advertising, 1929]. Whilst the design does not look particularly challenging to our eyes today, Schyberg evidently felt it departed sufficiently from the norm to warrant the inclusion of the following disclaimer:

The typography in the present book will possibly seem somewhat distinctive. In this event I must inform that the type and image arrangement is planned by me in every detail. Printer and publisher have followed my drawings and the responsibility for the book's typography is therefore incumbent on me.<sup>66</sup>

In the event, Schyberg's anxieties proved unfounded. Although his potentially harshest critic, the Norwegian advertising journal *Propaganda*, plainly stated that it did not approve of the book's design, it also made clear that this objection was outweighed simply by the value of having a new textbook on Norwegian advertising published — such was the dearth of literature on the subject. Any objections were therefore “but trifles compared to the fact that we now finally have a Norwegian book on modern advertising”.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps Schyberg's high standing in the profession also helped limit the severity of the criticism.

Looking back in 1947, the Danish advertising man Erik Presskorn maintained that whilst compositors “nourished a deep admiration”

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66 “Typografien i nærværende bok vil muligens virke noget særpreget. Jeg må i den anledning oplyse at sats- og billedarrangementet i alle detaljer er planlagt av mig. Trykkeri og forlag har fulgt mine uttegninger og ansvaret for bokens typografi påhviler derfor mig”. Thor Bjørn Schyberg, *Lønnsom Reklame. En Orientering for Forretningsmenn*. 2nd ed. (Oslo: Fabritius og sønners forlag, 1929), 292

67 “dog bagateller overfor det faktum at vi nu endelig har fått en norsk bok om den moderne reklame”. E.M.K. “Lønnsom Reklame. Thor Bjørn Schybergs Bok Utkommet,” *Propaganda. Organ for Norges Reklame-Forbund*. 7, no. 51 (1929): 8–9

for New Typography during the 1930s, advertising men like himself had been more sceptical.<sup>68</sup> Whilst many advertisers had initially been drawn to the possibilities New Typography offered in terms of creating new forms of expression and thereby a “new form of attention-value”, they quickly concluded its teachings were incompatible with those of the American-oriented advertising trade — particularly with regards to the text-driven reason-why ad’s demand for readability.<sup>69</sup>

There were also other reasons to be wary. In Sweden, *Tidskrift för affärsekonomi* initially applauded the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 for choosing to align itself with Functionalism, as this brought with it a sense of novelty and advertising value.<sup>70</sup> However, after the exhibition opened, and Functionalism started to popularise as a style, it urged caution. The journal now argued that although Functionalism had gained a fairly strong position, in Stockholm at least, its meaning and aesthetic was still only understood by a small elite. The broad masses of consumers, those whom the majority advertisements were aimed at, were not yet ready for Functionalist design.

[Only] when the times and life around us have become so Functionalistically imbued that the vast majority of people are disposed toward the new, only then is it advertising’s turn to take it up.<sup>71</sup>

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68 “nærede en næsegrus Beundring”. Charles Moegreen et al, “Tschicholds March over Alperne,” *Grafisk Teknik* 12, no. 2 (1947–48): 53

69 “ny Form for Opmærksomhedsværdi”. *Ibid.*, 53

70 This and the following arguments were all made in the journal’s regular feature ‘Reklamportföljen’ [The Advertising Portfolio]. Advertist. “Reklamportföljen,” *Tidskrift För Affärsekonomi* 2, no. 1 (1929): 21

71 “När tiden och livet omkring oss blivit så funktionalistiskt betonade, att det stora flertalet människor äro inställda på det nya, då först är det reklamens tur att upp taga det”. Advertist. “Reklamportföljen,” *Tidskrift För Affärsekonomi* 3, no. 4 (1930):

Until such a time, advertising should speak to the masses using "their own words" and illustration styles that were familiar to them.<sup>72</sup> These views reflected those of early American advertising psychologists like Walter Dill Scott (1869–1955), who argued that advertisements should make simple claims grounded in common experience. Basing himself on the concept of apperception, a term describing the process by which sense is made of a new experience by relating it to past experiences, he wrote:

It is very difficult (...) to get the public to think along a new line, because they cannot connect the new fact with their previous experience, i.e. they cannot apperceive it.<sup>73</sup>

The harshest criticisms of modernism were put forward in *Propaganda*. The first of a series of critical articles was published in August 1930 as a reaction to the Stockholm Exhibition. However, in terms of typography, it looked further afield for examples. It decried the British artist Sidney Hunt's (1896–1940) little-known journal *Ray* (1926–27) as an "example of hysterical typesetting", and labelled Cassandre's *Bifur* (1929) "the newest 'perverse' French typeface".<sup>74</sup> Later in the year the first volume of The Studio's new annual publication *Modern Publicity* (1930–84) was described as "the most frightening work on advertising we have ever encountered", with the majority of examples contained within it characterised as "disgusting, far-fetched and unsound".<sup>75</sup> This

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72 "deras egne ord". Ibid.

73 Walter Dill Scott, *The Theory of Advertising* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1903), 47. Quoted in: Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising*, 242

74 "Eksempel på et hysterisk satsarrangement", "den nyeste «perverse» franske type Bifur". *Observator*. "Ny-hysterikerne," *Propaganda. Reklameforeningens Fagblad*. 8, no. 61 (1930): 13

75 "det mest skremmende verk om reklame vi nogen gang har støtt på", "ekzelt, søkt

book had been designed by Crawfords (W. S. Crawford Ltd.), one of the leading agencies in Britain, and the foremost proponent of modernism in that country's advertising.<sup>76</sup> In the introduction to the English section,<sup>77</sup> William Crawford (1878–1950) explained his agency's stance:

Advertising is not concerned with people's past thoughts—it moulds the way they are going to think. Advertising must take the reader as he is at the moment of reading, and make of him what he is going to be. Advertising must be contemporary. Each campaign must be a new campaign. Like each new model of a motor-car, it must improve on the last. And it can only improve on the last by throwing away yesterday's standard of judgement and erecting a new one in its place.<sup>78</sup>

In other words, Crawford's view of how advertising should relate to the public's perceived way of thought was in diametrical opposition to the ideas promoted by Scott and through *Tidskrift för affärsökonomi*. However, seen from *Propaganda's* perspective worse was yet to come. In September 1931 The Studio published what would prove to be a highly influential book, the Parisian printer Alfred Tolmer's (1876-1957) *Mise en Page*.<sup>79</sup> The design, by Louis Caillaud, drew upon modernist influences, particularly cubism, in the purely stylistic manner which would later be labelled Art

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og usundt". D.A.T. "Hysterisk Reklame," *Propaganda. Reklameforeningens Fagblad*. 8, no. 11 (64) (1930): 16

76 For Crawfords, see: Steven Heller and Louise Fili, *Euro Deco: British Modern • French Modern • Spanish Art Deco • Dutch Modern • German Modern • Italian Art Deco*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), 435

77 The book was divided into four sections by country: England, France, Germany and America (the United States).

78 Crawford, William. "[Untitled introduction to 'Section 1: England']," in *Modern Publicity 1930*, (London: The Studio Limited, 1930), 19

79 A. Tolmer. *Mise En Page: The Theory and Practice of Layout* (London: The Studio Ltd, 1931). For detail on this book, see: Steven Heller, "First on Deco: A Parisian Printer's Opus from the '30s Contains the Origins of a Design Staple." *Print*, (May / June 2007): 88–93.



Deco.<sup>80</sup> As argued by Jeremy Aynsley, *Mise en Page*'s freeness from dogma and ideology made its stylistic devices more adaptable for use by commercial artists, who found this purely aesthetic approach less constricting.<sup>81</sup> In terms of production, it featured an unparalleled virtuoso display of different print finishes such as foil, embossing, debossing and full-cover tipped-in pages. The pages featured type set at all manner of angles closely integrated with photographs, photomontages and illustrations. Perhaps recognising, like the British printer Harold Curwen (1885–1949), that its combination of inventive layouts and technical wizardry made *Mise en Page* a seductive and “most dangerous book”, *Propaganda* published a scathing review entitled ‘Vogt Dem for smitte!’ [Beware of contagion!].<sup>82</sup> In it, the reviewer Tom Pilsen wrote:

The manner in which a man solves a lay-out problem reveals a great deal about his character and spiritual habitus. If one is to judge the author by what he has achieved in the book being reviewed here, one would be tempted to conclude that he must be stark raving mad. To flip through the book's pages is like a tour of the cells of an insane asylum (...). If anything is a result of the ‘new hysterics’ activities, then it is this work, which is a good example of how a book should not be.<sup>83</sup>

80 An abbreviation of the title of the 1925 Paris Exposition, *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, the term ‘Art Deco’ was first used in the title of *Les Années 25: Art Deco / Bauhaus / Stijl / Esprit Nouveau*, an exhibition marking the 25th anniversary of the 1925 Paris Exposition. It was subsequently popularised by: Bevis Hillier, *Art Deco of the 20s and 30s* (London: Studio Vista / Dutton Pictureback, 1968)

81 Jeremy Aynsley, “Art Deco Graphic Design and Typography.” in *Art Deco 1910–1939*, eds. Charlotte Benton et al (London: V&A Publications, 2005), 302

82 Harold Curwen, “The Art of Lay-Out.” *The Studio. An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art* 102, (December 1931): 416.

83 “Den måte en mann løser en uttegningsoppgave på, røber meget om hans karakter og åndelige habitus. Skal man nu dømme forfatteren efter hvad han har prestert i den her anmeldte bok blir man fristet til å slutte at han må være splintrende gal. Å blade sig gjennom bokens sider er som en vandring gjennom værelsene på et

Dissenting opinion within the Norwegian trade was also promptly dealt with. Commercial artist Finn Alfsen (1904–95) submitted an article in which he defended Cassandre, Crawford, Tolmer, and sarcastically thanked Pilsen for protecting “us who live up under the Arctic circle from the more southerly nations’ debauchery and degeneration”.<sup>84</sup> However, *Propaganda* had the last laugh. Alfsen’s article was equipped with the mocking section title “Propaganda’s ‘moderne’ avdeling” [Propaganda’s ‘modern’ section], and set in a parody modernist style.

Although *Propaganda*’s criticisms were initially provoked by the Stockholm Exhibition 1930, they were primarily reacting against British examples. Pilsen could not understand how a publisher like The Studio was able to publish a book like *Mise en Page*, and it is likely that the criticism against *Modern Publicity* 1930 stemmed from it being seen to represent a change in attitude toward modernism on The Studio’s behalf. Moreover, the examples included showed that modernist ideas were making intrusions into Anglo-American advertising practice, and that they were therefore becoming impossible to ignore also in Norway. This pattern could also be observed in Denmark, where *Modern Publicity* 1930 was greeted with caution, but not dismissively.<sup>85</sup> The following year V.J. Clausen would claim that Danish advertisers had initially dismissed

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sinnsykeasyl (...)Hvis noget er utslag av «ny-hysterikernes» virke så ser det dette verk, som er et godt eksempel på hvordan en bok ikke skal være”. Tom Pilsen, “Vogt Dem for Smitte!” *Propaganda. Reklameforeningens Fagblad*. 9, no. 11 (76) (1931): 268

84 “oss som lever oppe under polarsirkelen, mot de sydligere lands utskeielser og degenerasjon”. Finn Alfsen, “Propagandas «Moderne» Avdeling: Herr Tom Pilsen Og Vår Nasjonale Selvbevissthet,” *Propaganda. Reklameforeningens Fagblad*. 10, no. 1 (78) (1932): 11–12, p.11.

85 The review was heavily illustrated and ran over two-pages. This was unprecedented and indicates *Modern Publicity* 1930 was considered a particularly important publication: A. Hvene, “Modern Publicity 1930,” *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 4, no. 11 (1930): unpaginated

elemental typography as something particularly German and as “hideous” besides, but that they by 1931 had come to accept it after the American advertising industry had done the same.<sup>86</sup> However, the American advertising industry’s version of New Typography differed from the German, as it had to Clausen’s eyes been made significantly more beautiful.<sup>87</sup> In other words, Danish advertisers were prepared to accept New Typography after it had been domesticated by the American advertising trade and had been presented as acceptable through the advertising trade’s own network of journals.

For the historian this serves as a further reminder that practitioners in the graphic trades did not consider New Typography to have a singular and fixed aesthetic expression, nor did it spread in a linear fashion from centre to periphery. Rather, it found its way, independently and at different speeds, to different groups of practitioners through the discreet networks created by and for their own trades or professions. Only rarely did these networks connect. To make sense of this, it may be useful to return to the rhizomatic network used by Hubert van der Berg to describe the avant-garde, detailed in the **introduction**. Van der Berg claimed parts of this network may be tightly linked, whereas other may barely be connected to others as a result of their different outlooks or long communication lines. **Chapter 1** has already noted that unlike the malleable, non-hierarchical networks of the avant-garde, the printing trade’s journal network followed formal organisational networks such as those of the International Congress of Master

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86 “hæsligt”. V.J. Clausen, “Lidt Om Annoncetypografi,” *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 5 (1931): 11. Emphasis in original.

87 Ibid.

Printers and the International Secretariat of Printers. The networks of journals serving commercial artists and lay-out men were not defined by the same unionised framework, but as explored in this section they were still closely tied in to their particular advertising cultures and other journals which operating within these cultures. Whilst the basis of their organisational framework may differ, van der Berg's observation that certain parts may be 'barely connected' to others, as a result of different outlooks, holds true. In my view, the trade journals surveyed for this research project is that these formed discreet sets of networks. Within each trade or profession the journals were tightly linked, but the networks of different trades or professions only rarely connected with one another. It is worth noting here that Van der Berg does not consider his model of the avant-garde to be "a 'mere' historiographical projection", but a description of an entity which can be mapped using "demonstrable data", like publications, exhibitions, participation in events and memberships of organisations.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, the trade journal networks, and the connections between them and internally within each trade would be possible to map. Such a map would then be able to identify the particular nodes where connections were made between different trades and professions, and between the different trades and professions and the avant-gardes. Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue was one such node, and *Modern Publicity* 1930 would be another.

It would take until 1936 for a Scandinavian advertising journal to engage fully with these developments in commercial art.

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88 Hubert van den Berg, "Mapping Old Traces of the New. Towards a Historical Topography of Early Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde(s) in the European Cultural Field(s)," *Arcadia – International Journal for Literary Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 343

This was when the Swedish advertising man Sven Rygaard (1898–1991), formerly Ervaco’s director for Scandinavia, started publishing *futurum* (1936–39).<sup>89</sup> In addition to the articles on marketing and strategy one would expect from someone with Rygaard’s ‘American’ background to favour, this large format, heavily illustrated journal presented the work of a number of Swedish commercial artists and provided space for discussions around posters and the artistic merits. This fitted with *futurum*’s subtitle: “a journal for advertising art and advertising knowledge”.<sup>90</sup> *Futurum*’s optimistic title was supported on every cover by the slogan “advertising builds the future”,<sup>91</sup> which reflected Rygaard’s belief in advertising “as an important aide in the business world’s and in society’s service”.<sup>92</sup> The journal’s masthead, lettered in the style of a geometric sans serif, clearly signalled that this stance was aligned with a modernist aesthetic. The commitment to modernism was in the journal’s cover designs supported by the use of surrealist imagery, photographs with ‘Russian’ perspectives,<sup>93</sup> photomontage, and—in a rare instance—by a purely typographic asymmetrical composition. That *futurum* was tied in to a wider, international modern commercial art community can be seen in its regular running of ads for the Reimann school — the continuation

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89 For some brief detail on Rygaard, see: Mats Ekdahl et al. *Nedslag I Reklam-historien!* (ICA Förlaget, 1999), 74–75

90 In the original Swedish this reads “en tidskrift för reklamkonst och reklamkunskap”.

91 “Reklamen bygger framtiden”.

92 “en betydelsefull medhjälpare i affärslivets och i samhällets tjänst”. Sven Rygaard, “Reklamen Bygger Framtiden,” *Futurum. Tidskrift För Reklamkonst Och Reklamkunskap* 1, no. 1 (1936): 9. Rygaard was not alone in holding such views, the 4th Nordic Advertising Congress held in Stockholm in 1937 was titled ‘Reklamen tjänar samhället [Advertising Serves Society]’.

93 This is Rygaard’s term: Sven Rygaard, “Kameran Och Reklamen: Några Reflexioner Kring »Fotografiet I Annonsern» – Dagens Nyheters Stora Pristävlan För Fotografiska Annonser,” *Futurum. Tidskrift För Reklamkonst Och Reklamkunskap* 1 (1936): 574–81, p.579

of the Berlin-based modern commercial arts school, which opened its doors in London in January 1937.<sup>94</sup>

## Creators of advertising graphics

This section looks at the different types of practitioners responsible for shaping the visual form of advertisements. As previously mentioned, the most important of these were the job setter, who worked in the context of the printing trade, and the commercial artist and lay-out man, who worked within each their tradition in the advertising industry. It will be argued that the particular restrictions inherent to these roles, interests of professional self-preservation and cultural attitudes, informed the degree to which they were willing and able to engage with New Typography. Finally, a conflict between lay-out men and compositors regarding how type setting should be specified and by which profession will be examined in light of its implications for New Typography's further development.

### **The jobbing printer**

The divide between jobbing print and book print was not one merely of differences in aesthetics. Nor was it simply a way of separating the category of the book from other types of print. The two categories were also produced by compositors with different specialisms, book setters and job setters. Setting books was the more straight-forward task. As C. Volmer Nordlunde wrote, all it

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<sup>94</sup> Although she does not detail to what extent Scandinavians attended the Reimann school, Yasuko Suga emphasises the cosmopolitan make-up of the student body as one of its defining features. As one example she mentions the Swedish sculptor and graphic artist Erik Husberg (1913–2006). See: Yasuko Suga, *The Reimann School* (London: Artmonsky Arts, 2013), 36–37

required of the compositor was “to choose a good typeface and treat it correctly”.<sup>95</sup> Speed and accuracy were the skills master printers sought from their book setters, and since they were pieceworkers, setting quickly was also in the setter’s financial interest.<sup>96</sup> Job work was more complex, and was carried out by more highly trained, often salaried, workers. In his manual on jobbing print, published in 1935, the Norwegian master printer Max Rich. Kirste described the complexity of the task:

His work is to bear the stamp of his manual skills, his independent and assured will to, and sense of, form and beauty. An informational publication must also show signs of the compositor’s understanding of the text, whilst an advertising publication not only shows the compositor’s skill in creating opportunity for text to be *read*, but above all to be *seen*, in which the optical expression immediately catches and captures the eye. With regards to coloured publications the job printer shall show that he is a master in combining colours. In short, he must be able to create an atmosphere in a publication through the use of type and colour.<sup>97</sup>

An indication of just how demanding Kirste considered this task can be found in his proposal for a standardised training programme for Norwegian typesetting apprentices, drafted in

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95 “vælge en god skrift og behandle den rigtigt”. C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Elementær Bogtypografi,” in *Eftertryk: Udsendt Paa 75-Aars Dagen Den 15. Juni 1963 Af En Kreds Af Venner* (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1963), 46

96 “Haandsætteren.” *Grafisk Teknik* 1, no. 3 (1936): 25ff

97 “Hans arbeide skal bære preg av hans manuelle ferdigheter, hans selvstendige og sikre formvilje, formsans og skjønnhetssans. En orienterende trykksak må også vise tegn på setterens tekstforståelse, samtidig som en reklametrykksak ikke bare viser sætterens ferdighet i å skape lesemulighet, men fremfor alt semulighet, hvor det optiske uttrykk straks fanger og fengsler øiet. Ved kulørte trykksaker skal aksidenssetteren vise at han er mester i farvenes sammensetning. Kort sagt, han må kunne skaffe stemning i en trykksak ved hjelp av typer og farve”. Kirste, *Håndbok for Unge Settere. Aksidenssats*, 14. Emphasis in original

1927. This stated that apprentices should start setting continuous text already in the first year of training, but that job setting should not be introduced until the fifth and final year.<sup>98</sup> According to Kirste's 1935 manual, the job setter needed to be exact, have a logical mind, be able to draw and have a sensitivity for form, colour and the characteristics of typefaces. These qualities could all be acquired through a combination of practical experience and by educating oneself in matters of taste by "continuously studying and following the fine and applied arts through frequent visits to museum and art exhibitions as well as diligently studying trade journals and type founder's news and sample books".<sup>99</sup> Moreover, he recommended the study of architecture, and collection of inspirational pieces of print – to be kept carefully sorted by category in designated folders for future reference. That Kirste placed the onus on such further training so emphatically on the individual compositor is testament to the lack of formal training opportunities for further education in Scandinavia, as was detailed in **chapter 2**.

New Typography was often used in the setting of ads. Writing towards the end of 1930, Arthur Nelson could make the following claim:

the new typography is currently going berserk in our ad columns. The compositors gorge themselves in squares, circles and geometric ornaments. The newspapers buy the very latest in the field of type, and we are living through a renaissance (...) we have to go all the way back to the classical age to experience the like of.<sup>100</sup>

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98 "Lærlingenes Utdannelse." *Typografiske Meddelelser* 52, no. 51 (1927): 413–14; Max Richard Kirste, "Veiledning for Oplæring Av Lærlinger I Boktrykkerfaget." in *Yrkeslære for Settere* (Oslo: Yrkesopplæringsrådet for Håndverk og Industri, 1938)

99 Kirste, *Håndbok for Unge Settere*. Aksidenssats, 16

100 "Den nye typografi går for tiden berserkerang i våre annonsespalter. Typografene



Although ads in journals, and to a lesser extent newspapers, would sometimes be specified by a layout-man, or could be delivered to the printer as a single, integrated stereotype (as will be discussed later in relation to typophoto), they were most often composed by a job printer. Large newspapers, who owned their own presses, would sometimes employ specialist setters who worked solely on their ad pages. Smaller newspapers, and journals would commission a printing house to do this work for them. As the ad medium was so central to New Typography, and as the practice of job setting was considered to require a high level of skill, knowledge and creativity, compositors took particular interest in how the ads of their own periodicals were designed. This was evident in reviews of *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, *Svensk grafisk årsbok*, *Typografisk årbog 1935* and *Grafisk revy*, where particular attention was paid to how the ads had been set. For instance, when Charles Moegreen reviewed the first two issues of *Grafisk revy* produced in Denmark, these were dominated by critiques of the journal's ads.<sup>101</sup>

Valter Falk (1902–80), who worked as a specialist ad setter for the Swedish national paper *Dagens nyheter* [*Today's News*], gained a reputation as a master of the genre by participating in typesetting competitions arranged by trade journals and circulating his ads to his colleagues through Skandinaviske Typografers Faglige Ring.<sup>102</sup> During the late 1920s and early 1930s he worked in a style clearly

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fråtser med firkanter, cirkler og geometriske utsmykninger. Avisene kjøper de aller siste skrik på typenes område, og vi lever i en renessanse som det kan sies vi må helt tilbake til den klassiske tidsalder for å oppleve maken til". Arthur Nelson, "Plagiater, funkis og Aftenpostens nye ansikt," *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 6 (1930): 199

101 Charles Moegreen, "»Grafisk Revy« Som Dansk Arbejde," *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 58, no. 35 (1931): 137–38; Charles Moegreen, "Andet Danske Nummer Af »Grafisk Revy«," *Dansk Typograf-Tidende. Organ for de Typografiske Arbejderes Interesser*. 58, no. 46 (1931): 181–82

102 Arthur Nelson, "Moderne typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 5, no. 1 (1931): 16

influenced by New Typography, and he later claimed to make the first use of Futura in a Swedish daily paper. As he later recalled, the ad in question, for lingerie retailer Twilfit (1929), was “designed according to the principles of elemental typography”.<sup>103</sup> Falk’s ads were also characterised by the use of letters and words constructed from typographic material. This was a popular technique at the time, but whereas the results in the hands of less skilful compositors were often crude, Falk had the eye as well as the ability to craft letterforms which balanced with the type used elsewhere in the composition as can be seen in his ad for Arla Mejeri [Arla Dairy, ca.1931]. Working in a genre where the need to grab the viewer’s attention is essential, Falk’s ads were notable for their sense of calm and restraint. This was acknowledged by Arthur Nelson:

Falk does not strive to shout loudly with his typography, his is on the contrary calm and balanced, and his ads have the trust-inspiring air which cause them to be read with seriousness and reflection. He is a master in distributing white space, and the typographic letters he builds are used sparingly, and are placed where they should be.<sup>104</sup>

In contrast one might cite one of the ads which Nelson observed ‘going berserk’ in the pages of Norway’s largest daily, *Aftenposten* [The Evening Post], for the Trio brand of door locks. Whilst Falk’s ad for Arla Mejerier restricted itself to a single typeface, albeit in three

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103 “utformad enligt den elementära typografins principer”. Falk, *Bokstavsformer Och Typsnitt Genom Tiderna*, 99

104 “Falk streber ikke efter å opnå store skrik med sin typografi, han er tvert imot rolig og avbalansert, og hans annonser har det tillitvekkende preg som gjør at de leses med alvor og eftertanke. Han er en mester i å fordele den hvite plass, og de typografiske bokstaver han bygger brukes sparsomt, og er plasert der hvor de skal være”. Arthur Nelson, “Moderne typografi,” *Norsk Trykk* 5, no. 5–6 (1931): 122

different sizes, the Trio ad employed no fewer than five different faces. Moreover, the latter ad's use of the extremely heavy rule placed under the word 'sikkerhetslås' [safety lock] only served to compete for attention with the oversized 'T' of Trio, thus disturbing the eye's path around the various groups of text instead of purposefully guiding it. Although the Trio ad arguably demanded its viewer's attention through the use of visually heavy graphic elements in a more forceful way than Falk's ads, it was ultimately less successful as a piece of elemental typography. Its composition was not the result of a "logical and visual relation between the letters, words and text", or conceived as a piece of communication in its "briefest, simplest, most urgent form".<sup>105</sup>

### **The commercial artist**

When the first advertising agencies in Scandinavia started appearing from the mid-19th Century onwards, they acted solely as brokers of advertising space.<sup>106</sup> It was not until the 1920s that it became commonplace to offer copywriting and marketing services, a development influenced by the American concept of the full-service agency, as exemplified by JWT.<sup>107</sup> An exception was Sylvester Hvid's (1866–1928) pioneering advertising agency in Copenhagen, which had started offering services such as creation of slogans and other copy, visual design and illustration as early as 1899.<sup>108</sup> To achieve this Hvid worked with artists, most notably

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105 As prescribed in points 6 and 2 respectively: Tschichold, "Elemental Typography", 311

106 The first established in each country was August J. Wolff & Co in Denmark (1858), Gumælius Annonssbyrå in Sweden (1877) and Christiania Express-Bureau og Annonce-Expedition in Norway (1878).

107 Max Kjær-Hansen, "Den Danske Reklames Kvantitative Udvikling," in *Reklamen i Det 20. Århundredes Danmark*, eds. Max Kjær-Hansen and Peter Olufsen (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1974), 89

108 *Ibid.*

Thomas Iversen. The first generation of professional commercial artists did not appear until around 1915. From their positions as advertising agency employees, freelancers or as heads of their own studios they worked on posters, book jackets, packaging and other illustration work.<sup>109</sup> Of these the following discussion will focus on posters and book jackets, as jobbing printers also worked on these categories. As mentioned previously in this chapter, many commercial artists opposed the growing emphasis on American advertising methods. However, whilst they remained devoted to artistic advertising, those working in a modern style would during the 1930s take their visual cues not from Germany, but from Britain and France. In terms of individuals, A.M. Cassandre (Adolphe Jean-Marie Mouron, 1901–68) was undoubtedly the greatest influence. This can be seen, for instance, in the work of the most celebrated Swedish commercial artist of the time, Anders Beckman (1907–67),<sup>110</sup> the Danes Ib Andersen (1907–69), Tage Werner (1902–83) and Aage Rasmussen (1913–75),<sup>111</sup> as well as the Norwegians Alf Ellingsen (1900–68) and Otto von Hanno (1891–1956).<sup>112</sup>

As a result of the differences between production and reproduction methods used by commercial artists and jobbing printers respectively, the commercial artist stood freer to integrate text

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109 Certainly in Norway where Eyvin Ovrum (1882–1965) founded his Atelier E-O in 1916, Trygve M. Davidsen (1895–1978) began working as a freelancer in 1917, and Fabritius Reklamebyrå —led by Dagfin Tollefsen (1887–1962)— was the first in the country hire a full-time copywriter and commercial artist in 1917. See: Jorunn Veiteberg and Einar Økland, *Reklamebildet: Norske Annonser Og Plakater Frå Århundreskiftet Til I Dag* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1986), 52; Lysaker, “The Professionalization of the Norwegian Advertising Trade”, 54

110 That Cassandre was Beckman’s “idol” was claimed by Karl-Erik Forsberg in interview: Arthur Hald, “Sidor Av En Rund Person. Karl-Erik Forsberg Om Anders Beckman.” in *Anders Beckmans Skola 1939-1989*, eds Carl Fredrik Holterman and Cecilia Welin (Stockholm: Sellin & Blomquist, 1989), 15.

111 See the section ‘Cassandre-effekten’ in: Lars Dybdahl, *Den Danske Plakat*. (Valby: Borgen, 1994), 28

112 Singled out in the section ‘Reklameteiknaren som avantgardist: art deco og funksis’: Jorunn Veiteberg, *Den Norske Plakaten* (Oslo: Pax, 1998), 88–94

and image in his or her compositions. It is therefore not surprising that their work should, generally speaking, be pictorially led. Nevertheless, examples relying solely on ‘modernist’ lettering can be found, particularly on book jackets and journal covers. However, these would often revel in effects which would have been difficult or impossible to achieve with metal type, like exaggerated type forms or ones which gave the appearance of volume. Whilst it is true that jobbing printers could create illustrations in pictorial typography or by making lino cuts (as discussed in **chapter 4**), this was not the norm. They would normally only be responsible for setting the text.

The jobbing printer created his compositions directly in with the typographic material used for reproduction and was therefore constrained by the physicality of metal type and stereotypes. The commercial artist, on the other hand, produced drawn or printed originals and did not face the same restrictions when it came to reproduction. Originals were produced using a set of basic tools like those recalled by the Swede Erik Heffner: “pencils and markers, set squares, rulers, brushes and paint tubes. And of course paper and drawing board”.<sup>113</sup> To these one must also add the airbrush, favoured by those who like the “spray painter” Beckman were influenced by Cassandre.<sup>114</sup> The originals were then made ready

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113 “blyerts- och tuschpennor, vinkelhakar, linjaler, penslar och färgtuber. Och naturligvis papper och ritbräda”. Lisbet Svengren, *Svenska Reklamaffischer: En Bilderbok Om Den Svenska Reklamaffischens Historia*. (Stockholm: Affischeringsföretagens Förening, 1986), 18

114 “sprutmålaren”. Otto G. Carlsund, “Dialog Om Sprutteknik Och Diverse,” *Futurum. Tidskrift För Reklamkonst Och Reklamkunskap* 1 (1936): 226 In this article, where Beckman defends the use of airbrush, he claims the practitioners of the technique were already many and experienced — suggesting its use in Sweden was at least relatively established by 1936. In France, Cassandre had been using the technique ever since his ground-breaking poster for the newspaper *L’Intransigeant* (1925).

for print either photographically, or by a litho artist who would meticulously redraw the poster artist's original colour by colour, onto stones or zinc plates.<sup>115</sup> Copies would then be printed by either traditional lithography or offset lithography. Occasionally designs would be printed gravure, but this was less common as only few Scandinavian printing houses had this capability.

Letterpress was only rarely chosen by commercial artists as a medium. However, because having a poster produced by a poster artist was slower and more expensive process than having one produced by a job printer there was still a market for the letterpress poster — albeit at the low-end. In a rare article on the letterpress poster, the Danish compositor Karl Karlsson described the attitude held in the printing trade. He claimed that if one wanted to talk to master printers or compositors about posters one would:

in 99 of 100 occasions meet contempt, a supercilious smile and a shrug of the shoulders, and one is undoubtedly given the impression that it is a subject one considers under one's dignity to busy oneself with. A poster is something one throws together at a tremendous speed, the product is put through the machine in the shortest amount of time possible, and the paper is of the poorest quality one can find.<sup>116</sup>

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115 For a detailed discussion of the litho artist, including two case studies of individuals working in a British context, see: Graham Twemlow, "E. McKnight Kauffer: Poster Artist. An Investigation into Poster Design and Production during the Inter-War Period Using E. McKnight Kauffer's Œuvre as an Example" (PhD thesis, University of Reading, 2007), 229-262

116 "i 99 av 100 Tilfælde møde en Ringeagt, et overlegent Smil og en Trækken paa Skuldrene, og man faar absolut det Indtryk, at det er et Emne, man finder under sin Værdighed at beskæftige sig med. En Plakat er noget, man smækker sammen i en gevaldig Fart, Produktet bliver i den kortest mulige Tid kørt igennem Maskinen, og Papiret er den ringeste Kvalitet, man kan opdrive". Karl Karlsson, "Plakaten. Forsømmer Bogtrykkerne En Taknemlig Opgave?" *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 28 (1932):

Whether lithographic posters truly did dominate the market in terms of volume at the expense of letterpress posters is difficult to verify in retrospect, but this was certainly Karlsson's view.<sup>117</sup> He argued that the emergence of New Typography, which was "as created for the poster", provided the letterpress industry with an opportunity to win poster work back from the competing trades.<sup>118</sup> As it placed restrictions on the use of typefaces, Karlsson argued, such an effort needn't require any great financial investment on the part of master printers as a great range of display types was not needed. A modern poster printing workshop could be set up with nothing more than a selection of regular and bold sans and serif typefaces as well as sets of rules and geometric ornaments. These purely typographic elements could be combined with photography, line etchings or lino cuts. The setting of typographic posters was also included in Max Rich. Kirste's manual on jobbing print. Using identical copy, which advertised the screening of the film *Den geniale forbrydelse* [The Ingenious Crime] at the newly opened Saga cinema, an instructive pair of visual examples contrasted what was labelled an "antiquated, less effective type arrangement"

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117 For instance, the poster collection at Kungliga Biblioteket in Stockholm, which contains around 500.000 items dating from the 1690s to the present, is according to the former head of the collection Olof Halldin divided fairly equally between what is termed 'text posters' [textaffischer] and 'pictorial posters' [bildaffischer]. See: Olof Halldin, *I Blickfånget. Likheter Och Motsatser I Svensk Affischtradition* (Stockholm: Kungliga Biblioteket, 1999), 4. A search in the library's catalogue for the 1930s shows the two categories relatively equally represented also for this period (832 text posters and 920 pictorial posters). However, not all posters have been digitised. In addition to posters by well-known Swedish poster artists, the library has focused its efforts on the categories of political posters and silent cinema posters. Of these, the cinema posters tend to be pictorial, whilst many of the political posters are text-based notices of local talks and rallies. To complicate matters, the terms 'text' and 'pictorial' do not reflect the reproduction method, as any poster printed letterpress which includes an image, however small, is classified as a pictorial poster. However, most that are classified as text posters are printed letterpress.

118 "som skabt for Plakaten". Karlson, "Plakaten", 106

with a “modern poster with asymmetric typesetting”.<sup>119</sup> The ‘modern poster’ bore more than a passing resemblance to one of Jan Tschichold’s posters for the Phoebus-Palast cinema in Munich, reproduced in *Die neue Typographie*.<sup>120</sup> Although Kirste’s ‘posters’ were only intended as examples, it may nevertheless be noted that whilst everything from the subject matter, colour palette, the use of rectangular graphic elements, and the placement of information such as the film’s title and name of the cinema were similar, if not identical, the condensed sans serif used in Kirste’s ‘modern poster’ looks decidedly weak compared to the much bolder face used by Tschichold. This shows that although a poster-printing workshop specialising in New Typography may, as argued by Karlsson, not need to stock the variety of ‘fancy’ typefaces previously required, a good selection of more contemporary faces was nevertheless necessary to ensure the poster achieved the desired level of impact.

The use of pictorial elements in letterpress posters remained a rare practice, particularly at large sizes. Whilst lino-cuts in theory could be made by the jobbing printer himself, as Karlsson advocated, the creation of stereotypes or etchings would for all but the largest printing houses require the assistance of an external reproduction facility. Moreover, producing stereotypes large enough to cover a significant area of a poster was both expensive and technically challenging.<sup>121</sup> Just how unusual it was to make use

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119 “Foreldet, mindre virkningsfullt satsarrangement”, “Moderne plakat med asymmetrisk sats”. Kirste, *Håndbok for Unge Settere. Aksidenssats*, 80–81

120 For more on Tschichold as a poster designer, with considerable attention given to the letterpress posters for Phoebus-Palast, see: Martijn F. Le Coultre, “Tschichold and Poster Design.” in *Jan Tschichold: Master Typographer. His Life, Work & Legacy*, ed. Gees W. de Jong (London: Thames & Hudson, 2008)

121 This problem was acknowledged by Tschichold, who himself cleverly integrated relatively small photographs into larger graphic compositions. Tschichold, *The New*



of large images in a letterpress poster is evident from a two-page article in *Norsk trykk* describing a poster designed by commercial artist Knut Spange (1900–?) for the Norwegian publishing house Gyldendal.<sup>122</sup> Maurtitz Iversen, manager [disponent] of AS Cliché, the firm responsible for creating the stereotypes, claimed that photo-lithography, offset, gravure and traditional illustrated lithographic print had all been considered as alternative methods of reproduction. However, letterpress had been chosen because the client, Gyldendal, insisted on the portraits being “impeccably reproduced” as some of the authors featured on the poster might object to having their likeness redrawn. Stereotypes were considered superior to other print methods in terms of ability to reproduce fine detail and was therefore considered to offer an unparalleled crispness of image.<sup>123</sup>

In addition to the cost and technical restrictions involved, there were other reasons why photography was not used more widely by commercial artists. In her history of the Norwegian poster, Jorunn Veiteberg claims one of these was a lack of skilled advertising photographers. It is therefore no coincidence, she argues, that the most prominent early proponent of the photographic poster in Norway was Oslobryggeriene [The Oslo Breweries], as Asbjørn Andersen, their head of advertising from 1931 onwards, was

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*Typography*, 182

122 Spange seems to have been very versatile. His Atelier Spange was responsible for photography as well as poster art. Another of his companies, Spange Film, is known to have produced a short animated advert *Søndagsfiskeren Flag* [*Flag the Sunday Angler*, 1927]. Unfortunately, no written accounts on him are available.

123 For detail on this particular case, see: “Klisjéspalten: Boktrykket vant.” *Norsk Trykk* 8, no. 3 (1934): 147 ff. For a contemporaneous opinion on the pros and cons of gravure, offset lithography and letterpress, with particular reference to reproductions of photographs in letterpress, see: Max Rich. Kirste, “Dyptrykk–offset–boktrykk. En Kritisk Studie.” *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1934 14* (1933): 69–86.

himself an avid photographer who took many of the photos used in their publicity himself.<sup>124</sup>

Amongst commercial artists, an increase in the use of photography, then most often in combination with illustration or other graphic elements, would not become noticeable until the middle of the decade. An early example was *Det svage køn* [*The Weaker Sex*], a theatre poster created by Kjeld Abell (1901–61) and Helge Refn (1908–85) at Bergenholz Reklamebureau in Copenhagen in 1933.<sup>125</sup> When the exhibition *Svensk Reklam i Svenskt Tryck* [Swedish Advertising in Swedish Printing] was held at Stockholm's Nationalmuseum in September 1935, Einar Lenning noted the increased use of photography in posters as well as its combination with illustrative or graphic elements. For Lenning, it was vital for a photographic poster to include such elements, and thereby colour, for it to be able to compete for attention with the brightly coloured hand-illustrated posters.<sup>126</sup> These developments in poster design followed a wider, international pattern. By the end of the decade The Studio book *Poster Progress* (1939) could declare it a “distinct trend in poster design” that “artists assemble material, combining photography and drawn design in some novel or striking arrangement”.<sup>127</sup> However, photography was still only used for a

124 Oslobryggeriene was not the first to make use of photographic posters, however. Norwegian examples survive from as early as 1926: Veiteberg, *Den Norske Plakaten*, 100

125 For more detail on Abell and Refn, who worked as a team at Bergenholz between 1932 and 1934, see: Dybdahl, *Den Danske Plakat*, 28, 87–90. Beckman first incorporated photography into a poster design with 1934's *flyg med AEROTRANSPORT* [*fly with AEROTRANSPORT*].

126 Einar Lenning, “Reklamtryck På Museum: Några Iakttagelser Och Reflexioner På Utställningen »Svensk Reklam I Svenskt Tryck»,” *Grafiskt Forum. Svenska Boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden* 40, no. 9 (1935): 279–280

127 Tom Purvis, *Poster Progress*. eds. F.A. Mercer and W. Gaunt (London: The Studio Ltd, 1939), 92. Emphasis in original. This book was a survey of posters created between 1934 and '39. Amongst these were posters incorporating photographic elements

minority of posters. In Norway, Veiteberg claims hand-illustrated posters continued to dominate until the 1950s.<sup>128</sup>

A further explanation for photography's slow acceptance into the poster medium, was that many commercial artists thought it not only inferior to hand illustration in a technical sense, but even saw it as the less progressive option. Writing in the *Penrose Annual* of 1934, *Gebrauchsgraphik*'s editor H. K. Frenzel (1882–1937) claimed the use of photography was a retrograde step from abstraction back towards realism.<sup>129</sup> The London Underground's Frank Pick (1878–1941) objected for similar reasons. Because of its realism, the photograph offered only “a literal representation rather than a representation which has passed through the mind and heart of an artist and secured by that process something which it could not otherwise have”.<sup>130</sup> Although he made an exception for his colleague Edward McKnight Kauffer (1899–1954), the principal of the London Reimann school, Austin Cooper (1890–1964), thought the use of photography mostly resulted in posters that were “dull and often very bad indeed”, and declared himself unconvinced as to photography's role in the future development of the poster.<sup>131</sup> In Sweden, Otto G. Carlsund's take on the poster's illustrative means were in line with these views. In 1936 he published his thoughts on how various methods of illustration affected a poster's success in *futurum*. Working from the assumption that a poster should communicate its message in the blink of an eye, he considered in turn the photographic image, the naturalistically drawn (or

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from Britain, France, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland.

128 Veiteberg, *Den Norske Plakaten*, 100

129 Austin Cooper, *Making a Poster* (London: The Studio Ltd, 1938), 12

130 Quoted in: Suga, *The Reimann School*, 60

131 Cooper, *Making a Poster*, 34

painted) image and the stylised drawn (or painted) image. Whilst he considered the photograph superior to naturalistically drawn illustration, he found that they both contained too much detail, and because of this they did not result in “adequately ‘striking’” images.<sup>132</sup> He dismissed photomontage as too crass, but was positively inclined towards the photogram — in which he saw potential for advertising photographers to create “evocative and saleable” results.<sup>133</sup> However, drawn illustration of either style was preferable to photography because the use of colour could be applied more cheaply and effectively, though results were best if the composition was not too complicated. The most important virtue of this type of illustration, though, was its ability to express visual ideas better than the others. With the stylised illustrative approach, Carlsund claimed that

the whole composition is the subject of a speculation the result of which relies on the creativity and imagination of the one who has the assignment. (...) The unfettered idea can assume the same expression as a slogan and become a sort of ‘slogan image’.<sup>134</sup>

According to Carlsund, the master of this form of visual rhetoric was Cassandre, himself no adherent of photography,<sup>135</sup> and the

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132 “tillräckligt ‘slående’”. Otto G. Carlsund, “Låt Oss Se På Affischen,” *Futurum. Tidskrift För Reklamkonst Och Reklamkunskap* 1 (1936): 87

133 “verkningsfulla och säljande”. Carlsund, “Låt Oss Se På Affischen”, 88

134 “Medan i de två förut nämnda grupperna motivet är fastslaget och variationer endast kunna förekomma i detaljutformningen, blir här hela kompositionen föremål för en spekulatión, vars resultat beror på idérikedomen och fantasien hos den som har uppdraget. (...) Den icke klavbundna idén kan ta sig samma uttryck som ett slagord och bli ett slags »slagbild»”. *Ibid.*, 89

135 Although Cassandre did sporadically experiment with photography from 1928 onwards, it did not significantly inform his practice. See: Martijn F. Le Coultre, “Posters of the Avantgarde,” in *Jan Tschichold: Posters of the Avantgarde*, by Alston W. Purvis and Martijn F. Le Coultre (Basel, Boston & Berlin: Birkhäuser Verlag, 2007), 57–59

premier example of the genre his poster for *Étoile du Nord* (1927) in which the North Star is expressed through both word and image. A more prosaic reason for the resistance towards photography, was that it was seen as competition.<sup>136</sup> Whilst commercial artists were not tied to any particular reproduction method, the mentioned preference for lithography notwithstanding, their practice relied on a hard-earned mastery of hand illustration. As has been commented in relation to the book cover designs of the Norwegian Finn Havrevold, these techniques were even used in place of actual photographs to mimic the appearance of techniques such as photomontage and double exposures. For instance, the design of Kurt Siodmak's (1902–2000) *FP1 svarer ikke* (1933) was executed in pencil and watercolour.<sup>137</sup> Covers relying exclusively on lettering, such as that for Gunnar Larsen's *To mistenkelige personer* [Two Suspicious Persons, 1933], received a similar mock-photographic treatment. Only later, after its use by commercial artists became more common, would he experiment with the inclusion of actual photography—for instance in the cover for Margret Boveri's (1900–75) *Middelhavet* (1937).<sup>138</sup> However, hand-illustration would remain his preferred method.

Whilst many master printers and compositors may have displayed a dismissive attitude to posters, traditionalists were particularly hostile towards dust covers, which were seen as an intrusion of

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136 As suggested in passing: Veiteberg, *Den Norske Plakaten*, 101

137 Kjell Norvin, "Historisk Oversikt 1880–2001." in *Norske Bokomslag: Bokens Ansikt I 100 År*, eds. Peter Haars and Tor Bjerkmann (Oslo: Press, 2002), 47–48. *FP1 svarer ikke* was originally published as: *F.P.1 Antwortet Nicht* (Berlin: Scherl Verlag, 1931). It was published in English translation as: *F.P.1 Fails to Reply*. (London: Collins, 1933).

138 Originally published as: *Das Weltgeschehen am Mittelmeer* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1936). It later appeared in English translation as: *Mediterranean Cross-Currents*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1938).

advertising upon the book. Rather than being seen as part of the book itself, the dust cover was likened to a piece of packaging or ‘small poster’ created solely for the book seller’s window display.<sup>139</sup> Good taste accordingly required it to be discarded before one had one’s book bound.<sup>140</sup> Indeed, many commercial artists worked on both book covers and posters, and applied the same working method to the ‘small poster’ as they did to the large. This dominance notwithstanding, some book covers were nevertheless produced and designed by compositors, many of them working anonymously in printing houses. One such cover, for the Norwegian modernist poet Rolf Jacobsen (1907–94)’s debut *Jord og jern* [Earth and Iron, 1933], is also one of the best known examples of New Typography in Norway (**fig. 3.04**).<sup>141</sup> Chosen as one of the

139 Akke Kumlien, a traditionalist ‘book artist’ was the person to most eloquently express this view. See: Akke Kumlien, *Bokstav Och Ande*. (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1948), 64–67; — “Bokomslag Eller Affisch.” Edited by Schleibler, Hroar. *Fabritiana. Organ for Boktrykk Og Reklame*. 12 (1938): unpaginated. However, the comparison between book cover and poster was made repeatedly by authors writing in a Scandinavian context: Yngve Hedvall, “Bokomslaget Som Reklam,” *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok* 2 (1930): 45–60; Halfdan Arneberg, “Litt Om Bokutstyr Og Reklame,” *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender* 1931 11 (1930): 38; Otto G. Carlsund, “Boken Har Säsong: Kritisk Blick På Julens Bokomslag,” *Futurum. Tidskrift För Reklamkonst Och Reklamkunskap* 1 (1936): 522; Poul Carit Andersen, “Bogomslaget. Kunst Eller Reklame?,” *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 12, no. 3 (1938): 67–68; Hugo Steiner-Prag, “Svensk Bokkonst Av I Går, I Dag Och I Morgon,” *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok* 1941 10 (1941): 15–44. Stockholm: Bröderna Lagerströms Förlag, 1941, 30. In this context is interesting to note that also the Czech modernist Karel Teige made the comparison, albeit in a positive light: “I see the book cover (...) as the poster for a book; and, as any publisher will confirm, that is its true commercial impact”. Karel Teige, “Modern Typography,” in *Karel Teige / 1900–1951. L’enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde*, eds. Eric Dluhosch and Rostislav Šváchá (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1999), 104. This text was originally published as ‘Moderni typo’ in *Typografie* 34 (1927): 189–198. Tschichold also later stated, matter-of-factly, that “the dust cover is the book’s poster [Smudsomslaget er Bogens Plakat]”, in: Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi*, 83

140 “1930’erne.” *Bogvennen* (1984–1985), 30

141 It was one of three examples of typography from the 1930s reproduced in: Gauguin, *Ord Symbol Bilde*, 8. Later, it was characterised as ‘refined’ [raffinert], and reminiscent of Bauhaus typography in: Einar Økland, *Norske Bokomslag 1880-1980* (Oslo: Samlaget, 1996). More recently, it received pride of place in Peter Haars and Tor Bjerkmann, *Norske Bokomslag: Bokens Ansikt I 100 år*. (Oslo: Press, 2002). It was also commented on in Torbjørn Eng, “«Den Nye Typografiens» Gjennombrudd I

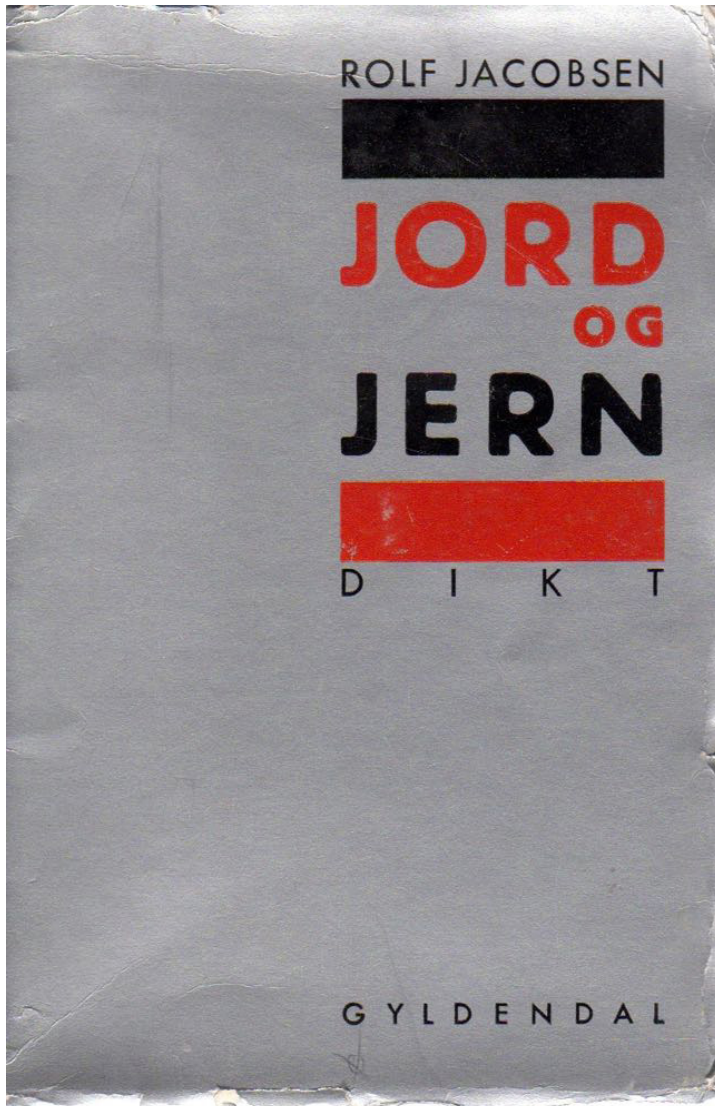


Fig. 3.04

*Jord og Jern* (1933). Book cover, designer unknown.  
Printed at Centraltrykkeriet, Oslo.

most beautiful Norwegian books of 1933, it received the following brief characterisation from the jury: “The narrow format and the powerful Bodoni provide posture for the lines of verse. Excellent cover. The title’s earth-black and minium red stand effectfully against the aluminium board”.<sup>142</sup> As the jury pointed out, the often-used combination of black and red can in this instance can be seen to symbolise the two parts of the book’s title, as red lead paint was often used to protect iron.<sup>143</sup> Although the colours seem reversed on many surviving copies, with ‘jord’ [earth] printed red and ‘jern’ [iron] black, the book was originally equipped also with a dust cover which featured the same design but with earth printed black and iron red.<sup>144</sup> By printing these two words in different colours, and setting them within two solid rectangular blocks, the compositor responsible also made explicit their symbolic value as opposing forces, representative of the conflict between nature and technology which was the book’s theme, and which was reflected in its structure. *Jord og jern* is divided into two halves, the first consisting of poems about Jacobsen’s experiences of nature and the second on his experiences of the city.

## Lay-out men and attitudes to the photograph, photomontage and typophoto

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Norge - 2. Arthur Nelson Og Bladet Norsk Trykk”. *Norsk Grafia* 123, no. 3 (1998): 15

142 “Det smale format og den kraftige Bodoni gir verslinjene holdning. Omslaget udmerket. Titelens jordsvarte og mønje-røde farver står virkningsfullt mot aluminiumskartongen”. *Årets Vakreste Bøker 1933. Aftenpostens Og Norsk Trykks Bokkunst-Bedømmelse* (Chr. Schibsteds boktrykkeri, 1934), unpaginated

143 In the poem ‘Havn’ [Harbour], Jacobsen does in fact reference “fortresses of iron, painted grey, black and red [gråmalte, svarte og røde borger av jern]”. Rolf Jacobsen, *Jord Og Jern* (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1933), 70. Of course, this does not preclude other interpretations. A less than favourable review suggested that red and black were the colours of “blood and sorrow”. Barbara Ring, “Jord Og Jern.” *Nationen*, October 23, 1933.

144 Økland, *Norske Bokomslag*, 68



Whilst photography was seen as a threat by commercial artists, advertisers were more positively inclined. During the late 1920s and early '30s, all the Scandinavian advertising journals published articles which held the medium up as a quintessentially truthful one, and which therefore, unlike the 'subjective' medium of illustration, was better equipped to reflect their ethos of Truth in Advertising.<sup>145</sup> The articles pointed to practices in America where photography had long been used by advertisers in the illustrated press, and which recently had also found use in the daily press. Improvements in the quality of newsprint used in Scandinavia meant it was becoming possible to use photography in the daily press of these countries also.<sup>146</sup> The subsequent increased presence of photography in Scandinavian ads also followed the introduction of the lay-out man.<sup>147</sup> This was a new type of creative professional originating in the United States who did not have the same vested interest in preserving hand-illustration as the dominant form of pictorial representation.

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145 This argument is presented in the following: Tom Björklund, "Kameran I Kundvärningens Tjänst," *Tidskrift För Affärsekonomi* 2, no. 4 (1929): 7–10, 27ff; Mog. "Fotografi Og Reklame," *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 4, no. 10 (1930): 7–9; Harry Ungewitter, "Fotografiet I Reklamens Tjänst." *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok* 2 (1930): 75–86; Anders Billow, "Fotografiens Reklamvärde Är Dess Sanningsvärde." *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok* 3 (1931): 117–48; "Fotografiet I Reklamen." *System. Magasin for Driftøkonomi, Handel Og Reklame*. 2, no. 8–9 (1931): 8–9; Rolf Mortensen, "Gi Fotografien En Chance," *Propaganda. Reklameforeningens Fagblad*. 10, no. 10 (87) (1932): 237ff

146 The illustrated press was largely printed gravure or offset, rather than letterpress. See: Sixten Rönnow, "Djuptryckets Utveckling Och Reklamvärde." *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok* 4 (1932): 45–76. More research is required in order to determine the extent in which photography was used in the advertisements of the Scandinavian illustrated press. See also the discussion around the relative merits of letterpress and gravure printing in relation to Anders Billow's work in chapter 4

147 That this figure was still relatively unknown in 1930 is evident from an article in *Norsk Trykk*, where Arthur Nelson has judged it necessary to explain the term 'lay-out' for his readers, writing that the English was difficult to translate, but that the term described the planning of a piece of print in all its details. Arthur Nelson, "Vår tid og dens smak," *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 2 (1930): 38

Unlike commercial artists, who might also work freelance or from his or her own studio, the lay-out man was an advertising agency employee. He was responsible not only for determining the appearance of the ad and producing a layout, but also for commissioning the photography or illustration needed, liaising with reproduction facilities and instructing the compositor as to how the text should be set. How this took place in practice was illustrated with an example in the 1934 edition of Tom Björklund and Yngve Hedvall's advertising manual *Hur man annonserar med framgång* [How one advertises successfully]. Once the copywriter had finished the ad's text, the lay-out could be created. In the case of this example, the layout would be used to commission a photographer to take the picture of the students and the packet of butter and a commercial artist would be commissioned to draw the glasses. A repro artist would make sure the image of the students and the glasses were in the correct proportion to each other and then create a single stereotype from the two, and one for the pack of butter. The stereotypes and layout would then be passed on to the compositor who would set the text according to the lay-out man's specification.<sup>148</sup> This method of production would eventually lead to conflict between lay-out men and compositors, as will be returned to later in this chapter.

Although the national advertising associations and their publications steadfastly promoted American styles and methods, some individual advertisers nevertheless drew upon continental modernism in their use of photography. Important in this regard

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148 Tom A. Björklund and Yngve Hedvall, *Hur Man Annonserar Med Framgång*. Tredje fullständigt omarbetade upplagan (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur, 1934), 141–142

was the department store MEA [Militär Ekiperings–A.B., Military Outfitters Ltd.] in Stockholm. Its advertising was directed by Harald Rosenberg (1898–1976), who had started his career with the company designing its window displays, to which he had introduced a modernist sensibility from 1925 onwards, as the first in Sweden.<sup>149</sup> A particular new form of such display was that which Rosenberg termed the “poster window”.<sup>150</sup> Recognising the “decorative” potential of lettering, they incorporated slogans, brand names and other written information as part of the display.<sup>151</sup> When Rosenberg was promoted from assistant director to associate in 1930, a shift also occurred in MEA’s printed materials. In addition to the introduction of photography, printed materials now started to reflect the manner in which wares were displayed in the store’s windows. This can be seen particularly well in the interior pages of the early photographic leaflet *Ni måste se dem* [You Must See Them, 1930]. Rosenberg’s background as a window designer could also be seen in a poster promoting the newly adopted American concept of Father’s Day, in the repeated illustrated figures and the hand-lettered sans-serif. MEA would continue to make heavy use of photography and montage in its advertising materials throughout the 1930s.

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149 Björklund claims antecedents of this type of display can be traced back to 1925: Tom Björklund, *Reklamen I Svensk Marknad 1920-1965, En Ekonomisk-Historisk Återblick På Marknadsförings- Och Reklamutvecklingen Efter Första Världskriget* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1967), 421. In style these windows are reminiscent of those of the Reimann schule, where window display was taught by Georg Fischer from 1925 onwards. Examples of displays can be seen in: Frederick Kiesler, *Contemporary Art Applied to the Store and Its Display. Painting - Sculpture - Architecture. The Store - the Front - the Window* (London, Bath, Melbourne, Toronto & New York: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1930)

150 “plakatfönstern”. Harald Rosenberg, “Våra Skyltfönster Av I Dag.” *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets Årsbok 2* (1930): 117

151 “dekorativt”. Rosenberg, “Våra Skyltfönster Av I Dag”, 117

Most of MEA's materials were produced by the large printing conglomerate Esselte [SLT, Sveriges Litografiska Tryckerier, Sweden's Lithographic Printers]. Esselte, which also ran its own advertising studio, had itself been an early exponent of photography. In the Stockholm Exhibition's book hall it had been represented by a large wall covered in posters and photomontage, a display which according to Magdalena Gram was the only contribution there influenced by "the radical language of form".<sup>152</sup> In truth, the display was not particularly radical, at least not in an international context. For instance, a commentator writing in *The Architectural Review* found "Swedish commercial printing disappointing to the visitor, because he will have seen the same sort of thing, only 'very much more so,' in Germany and elsewhere".<sup>153</sup> Nor did Esselte's display contain the only examples of photomontage in the room. The reproduction facility A.B. Grohmann & Eichelberg showed a series of photomontages presenting the company and its day-to-day work. Nine of these montages, which were arguably more 'radical' than those of Esselte, were later published in the form of a self-promotional booklet entitled *Bilder om bilder* [Images About Images, 1930].<sup>154</sup> They were also used in Grohmann & Eichelberg's print ads where they were integrated with text set in upper-case Futura in a 90° horizontal-vertical arrangement.

Photomontage and typophoto was displayed in Copenhagen too. During late October and early November Kunstindustrimuseet

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152 "det radikala formspråket". Magdalena Gram, "När Typografen Blev 'modern': Om Modernismens Genombrott I Svensk Typografi," *Biblis* 34 (2006): 57

153 Noel Carrington, "Swedish Printing and Books on Swedish Art," *The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration* LXVIII, no. 405 (August 1930): 98

154 "Bilder Om Bilder," *Svenska Boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden* 35 (1930): 122.

hosted the exhibition *Fotografi 1930* [Photography 1930].<sup>155</sup> To all intents and purposes this was the Deutscher Werkbund's travelling exhibition *Das Lichtbild* [The Photograph] under a different name.<sup>156</sup> *Das Lichtbild*, which followed on from the previous year's *Film und Foto*, was an important exhibition which showcased the work of a number of modernist photographers who were pursuing ideas associated with both the New Objectivity and New Vision.<sup>157</sup> Reviewers writing for both the advertisers of *Dansk Reklame* and the master printers of *De grafiske Fag* noted the close integration of typography and photography demonstrated by several of the exhibits. Both also commented on how this practice had not yet caught hold in Denmark and that their readers could benefit studying these items in particular. In this they followed the call, made in *Die neue Typographie*, for

every graphic professional (...) to develop creatively all the techniques of photography and reproduction as far as possible and prepare them for the highest demands that will surely be made of them in the near future.<sup>158</sup>

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155 Open from the 29th of October until approximately the 7th of November. The end date can be guessed at from *De Grafiske Fag's* review, published on the 1 November, which stated the exhibition was due to stay open for one more week. "Fotografi 1930. En Stor Og Interessant Udstilling I Kunstindustrimuseet." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 26, no. 15 (1930): 263

156 That 'Fotografi 1930' and 'Das Lichtbild' were one and the same can be understood from *Fotografi 1930's* catalogue, which states: "It is collected by the German Werkbund's division in Munich, where it was on view from June to September this year. [Den er indsamlet af det tyske Werkbunds Afdeling i München, hvor den var at se fra Juni til September i Aar]". This corresponds to the place and date for 'Das Lichtbild': Vilhelm Slomann, *Fotografi 1930: International Udstilling Samlet Af Münchener Werkbund Sommeren 1930*. København: Det Danske Kunstindustrimuseum, 1930, 5

157 For detail on both exhibitions, and for the conflicting views on photography promoted by Moholy-Nagy and Renger-Patzch, associated with the New Vision and New Objectivity respectively, see: Christopher Phillips, "Resurrecting Vision: European Photography between the World Wars," in *The New Vision: Photography between the World Wars* eds. Maria Morriss Hambourg and Christopher Phillips (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 91-95

158 Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 95

Although it is not possible to ascertain precisely what was on display from *Fotografi 1930*'s catalogue, and to what degree items of typophoto were included, the list of exhibitors certainly contains the names of a number of well-known New Typographers such as Walter Cyliax (1899–1945), Walter Dexel (1890–1973), Paul Renner, Sasha Stone (1895–1940) and Karel Teige. Additionally, it states that the Folkwangschule Essen's photography class under the leadership of Max Burchartz, the Kunsthochschule Frankfurt am Main's graphic department under the leadership of Willi Baumeister, and the Bauhaus's photography department (a subsidiary of the typography and advertising workshop) under the leadership of Walter Peterhans (1897–1960) were all represented. So too was the Soviet All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS). In addition to the items from *Das Lichtbild*, *Fotografi 1930* also contained a section showing early photography — lent to Kunstindustrimuseet from other Danish organisations.<sup>159</sup> Moreover, photographs by Herman Bente's (1881–1947) Jonals Co., the first modern advertising photographer's studio in Denmark, were also on display. It was Jonals who was responsible for the exhibition catalogue's cover in photomontage. The images used for the composition were reproduced from a selection of the around 1500 items on display in total.

Despite the positive words on typophoto in *De grafiske Fag* and *Dansk Reklame*, it would take time for this type of communication to make inroads in Scandinavia—and when it did, it did so in a very particular sense. When Hugo Lagerström's son Sten (1904–85)

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159 The lenders were Dansk fotografisk forening [Danish Photographic Association] and Historisk-teknisk samling [Historical-Technical Collection]. Historisk-Teknisk Samling was later amalgamated into what is now Danmarks Tekniske Museum [Danish Museum of Science and Technology].

wrote an article on typophoto for *Svensk grafisk årsbok*'s 1935 edition he made no reference to the term's originator Moholy-Nagy or any other member of the avant-garde. Moreover, his examples were of French and Swedish commercial advertisements far removed from *The Dynamic of the Metropolis* and the attempts to create a new kind of visual narrative discussed in **chapter 1**. Whilst the word 'typophoto' continued to describe the close integration of type and image, it was regarded by Sten Lagerström as a technical term which referred only to a particular visual genre of stereotype. His definition read:

A typophoto is (...) a combination between a photographic image and a text, which one has inserted in the image and thus have obtained a stereotype containing both image and text.<sup>160</sup>

That Sten Lagerström described typophoto in such terms is indicative of how different professional groups largely took interest only in those elements of New Typography which had implication on their own practice. Whilst the reproduction facility Grohmann & Eichelberg made early use of photomontage to demonstrate their skills and abilities, and whilst advertisers like Harald Rosenberg who did not perceive it to be a threat were prepared to use it in their materials, discussions of photomontage or typophoto in the printing trade press are conspicuous by their relative absence. One likely reason for the lack of interest was that the commissioning and production of stereotypes was outside of the compositors' control. In his text 'Typo-photo' Moholy-Nagy had envisaged a

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160 "En typofoto är (...) en kombination mellan en fotografisk bild och en text, vilken man infogat i bilden och sålunda har man erhållit en kliché upptagande såväl bild som text". Sten Lagerström, "Typofoto: En Förening Av Bild Och Bokstäver," *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok 7* (1935): 60

future where “every printing house will have its own reproduction facility”.<sup>161</sup> However, this was not the reality for Scandinavian compositors. They arguably therefore saw typophoto as having little professional interest, regardless of the positive comments made by *De grafiske Fag* and *Dansk Reklame* in relation to *Fotografi* 1930 or Tschichold’s call for all practitioners in the graphic trades to take an interest.

The arrival of the new professional figure of the lay-out man led to friction between advertising agencies and compositors. This was noticeable in all the Scandinavian countries, but nowhere more apparent than in Copenhagen. There, the educational work of *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* had created a set of highly organised, reflective and articulate practitioners, able to debate such matters in their own monthly journal, *Grafisk teknik*. Whilst the compositor Aage Wantzin had raised concerns about the lay-out men’s activities as early as 1935,<sup>162</sup> matters did not come to ahead before *Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke* arranged a large meeting between advertisers and compositors in October 1937. On the face of it, the compositors’ criticism centred on the quality of the lay-out men’s sketches. The most common problem, and that which most hampered their work, was that the text could not be set as the layout showed because it was longer or shorter than the sketch indicated. Additionally, stereotypes might be smaller or larger than specified. Depending on the design, or the greatness of the discrepancy, this might in turn affect the outcome. Because

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161 “wird jede Druckerei eine eigne Klischeeanstalt besitzen”. L. Moholy-Nagy. “Typophoto,” *Typographische Mitteilungen* 22, no.10 sonderheft: ‘elementare typographie’ (1925): 204

162 Aage Wantzin, “Tegner Og Typograf,” *Tegneren. Tegnerforbundets Maanedsmeddelelser* 3, no. 3 (1935): 27–29



it was common to begin setting the text before the stereotypes arrived from the reproduction facility, any deviation from the sketch would not be noticed until late in the process. The lay-out men evidently found these criticisms to be of little consequence. Any small deviations in the length of text or size of stereotype could be dealt with by the compositor,<sup>163</sup> and creating an overly detailed layout was seen as a waste of time.<sup>164</sup> One reason for the compositors' annoyance over the lay-out men's layouts, and the lack of attention these paid to the detail of typography, was that they themselves had turned to sketching as a way of planning their work. This had come about as a result of the more complex approach to composition demanded by New Typography. Compositors therefore felt they able to produce layouts of a better quality than those they were given by the lay-out men. To an extent, they could also create their own illustrations if needed — whether these be lino cuts or pieces of pictorial typography. However, the conflict between the two groups was more serious than a squabble over who was best capable of approximating type with a soft pencil. In essence, the argument was about which of the two groups would be responsible for designing print, and whether the jobbing setter was to remain a craftsman or to become a technician. As the Norwegian compositor K.M. Andresen expressed it:

These are our things they are busying themselves with! It should be the work of compositors also to draw type forms, illustrations, ornaments and vignettes. The compositors should decide the colours and lend the thing harmony and good arrangement. (...)

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163 Wantzin, "Tegner Og Typograf", 28

164 Erik Presskorn, "Forfuser Reklamens Folk Bogtrykarbejdet?" *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening* 16, no. 11 (1937): 265

The printing trade is not supposed to only be comprised of machine setting, the printing of machine set text, and print of the craftsmanship which has been subsumed by the commercial artist, the layout man and the book artist. (...) The text books for our trade may soon begin, like the fairy tale books, with ‘It was once upon a time — —’, when it comes to our trade as craft.<sup>165</sup>

Underlying the technical arguments was a fundamental difference in view of the compositor’s role. The compositors naturally, perhaps, viewed their own profession as central to the production of advertising print, as it historically had been prior to the arrival of lithography. However, the advertising industry took different perspective. Its representative at the meeting, Erik Presskorn, maintained that whilst typography formed an important part of an advertisement for a layout man, it was not more important than other elements. Rather, it was “just a link in the chain of elements which are present when an advertisement is to be created”.<sup>166</sup> More important than any of these was creating the right combination of elements for the job, a task which required considerations of audience, tone and what medium and style of illustration should be used. These were decisions compositors, in Presskorn’s opinion, did not have the knowledge or experience to make.

Despite their vocal protestations, compositors had few prospects of

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165 “Det er våre disse ting de holder på med! Det skulde være typografenes arbeide også det å tegne typer, illustrasjoner, ornamenten og vignetter. Typografene burde bestemme fargene og gi det hele harmoni og god plasing. Det er ikke meningen (...) at boktrykkfaget til syvende og sist skal bestå av bare maskinsetting, trykk av maskinsats, og trykk av det håndverksmessige som er overtatt av reklametegneren, layoutmannen og bokkunstneren. (...) Lærebøkene for faget kan nemlig snart begynne, likesom eventyrbøkene, med: «Det var engang — —», når det gjelder vårt fag som håndverk”. K.M. Andresen, “Hel Og Allsidig Tegneundervisning for Typografer,” *Grafisk Kringsjå. Faglig Månedlig Tillegg Til Typografiske Meddelelser* 1, no. 7 (1936): 1–4

166 “kun et Led i den Kæde af Elementer, der er Tale om, naar der skal skabes en Reklame”. Presskorn, “Forfusker Reklamens Folk Bogtrykarbejdet?”, 266

changing the situation they found themselves in. Although some printing houses established their own layout departments,<sup>167</sup> the advertising agencies were not about to change their methods to suit the compositors, and amidst the fighting talk were also voices of despondency. One of these belonged to Aage Wantzin, who had been one of the first to identify the conflict.

The agencies are, however, now a reality which we have to contend with for the foreseeable future, and to wage ‘war’ against them would be to waste our gunpowder to no avail (...) A war could perhaps have been won if it had been started a score years ago, but now we must make good the result of our slumber through the ages in a more peaceful way. Instead of seeing red when we are given a lay-out, we should put the grey glasses on, calm the mind, and look to make the best out of the commissioned task.<sup>168</sup>

Though the faults of any particular layout could still be pointed out when appropriate, Wantzin argued that this quiet dedication and commitment to the craft would bolster the compositor’s confidence and earn him the lay-out man’s respect — hopefully resulting in a better working relationship between the two.

The advertisers even managed to convince some former adherents of New Typography that their approach to typography was the

167 Amongst these “a larger Copenhagen printing house [et større københavnsk Bogtrykkeri]”. Henry Thejls, “Typografi Og Layout,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Kemigrafslauget I Danmark* 39, no. 2 (1943): 62

168 “Bureauerne er imidlertid nu et Faktum, som vi maa regne med i en uoverskuelig Fremtid, og at føre »Krig« mod dem, vilde være at spille Krudtet til Ingen Nytte (...) En Krig kunde maaske have været vundet, hvis den var blevet paabegyndt for en Snes Aar siden, men nu maa vi ad mere fredsommelig Vej søge at raade Bod paa Resultatet af vor Slummer gennem Tiderne. I Stedet for at se rødt, naar et Lay-out bliver stukket os ud, bør vi derfor tage de graa Brilller paa, berolige Sindet og se at faa det bedst mulige ud af den stillede Opgave”. Aage Wantzin, “Hvorfor Stagnere?” *Grafisk Teknik* 2, no. 10 (1937): 168

better one. Among these was Henry Thejls' former student Kai Pelt, who as the previous chapter showed, had caused a stir by setting his apprenticeship exam entirely according to the principles of New Typography. As late as March 1937 was still committed to the New Typography he had been taught at Fagskolen for Boghaandværk. In an article criticising the typography of advertising agencies he wrote: "We do not have to look further than the newspapers to see how 'the advertising experts' ruin both ads and type. Here we have [a] splendid chance to see how little knowledge and feel they have for the grouping of text, choice of type and treatment of type in general".<sup>169</sup> Pelt lectured them that "New Typography teaches us to get to the core of what the piece of print is about. That is why we omit all superfluous lines, heavy and other ornamentation".<sup>170</sup> However, seven months later Pelt published another article which coincided with the meeting in Studenterforeningen and where he made a complete volte-face. In the run-up to the meeting his earlier comments had been widely criticised by advertisers, and it seems he took heed of these criticisms. Pelt now declared that "**the world of typographic advertising is not for idealists, but for practitioners with a sense for advertising psychology**".<sup>171</sup> The design of an advertisement should not follow the principles of New Typography or conform to its ideals of beauty, but should be adapted to audience and subject

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169 Længere end til Aviserne behøver vi ikke at gaa for at se, hvorledes "Reklameeksperterne" ødelegger baade Annoncer og Skrift. Her har vi glimrende Lejlighed til ad se, hvor lidt Kendskab og Sans de har for Gruppering af Sats, Skriftvalg og Satsbehandling i det hele taget. Kai Pelt, "Hanegal Og Typografisk Skitsering," *Grafisk Teknik* 2, no. 3 (1937), unpaginated

170 "Ny Typografi lærer os, at det gælder om at komme lige til Kernen af det, hvorom Tryksagen drejer sig. Det er derfor vi stryger alle overflødige Streger, fede Klatter og anden Pynt". Ibid.

171 "**den typografiske Reklameverden er ikke for Idealister, men for Praktikere med reklame-psykologisk Sans**". Kai Pelt, "Typografisk Revy," *Grafisk Teknik* 2, no. 10 (1937): 169. Emphasis (bold) in original.

matter, guided only by the advertisement's primary aim of generating sales and the client's wishes. As he wrote:

There can hardly be any doubt that it is us, first and foremost, who must abide by the client's attitude. Not the other way around. That a small circle of composers likes something is not proof that many non-composers will like the same thing. One can perfectly well conceive the possibility of the opposite.<sup>172</sup>

Later, his views would also lead to a dispute with his old teacher.<sup>173</sup> In addition to reiterating the arguments outlined above, this debate also saw Pelt attack what he saw as Thejls' overly formulaic approach. This, he argued, undermined one of the reasons composers had chosen to engage with New Typography in the first place — that of increased creative freedom.<sup>174</sup> The dispute concluded with Pelt declaring himself the “spokesman for a typography, which serves advertising's only purpose: to sell”.<sup>175</sup> Thejls dismissed the implicit notion that one could set ‘Tschicholdian’ typography one minute and parochial [pærekøbing] the next, with the conviction that they were both correct. In turn,

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172 “For der kan vel næppe være Tvivl om, at det først og fremmest er os, der maa rette os efter Kundernes Indstilling. Ikke omvendt. At en lille Kreds af Typografer synes godt om en Ting, er ikke Bevis for, at mange Ikke-Typografer vil synes godt om det samme. Man kan udmærket godt tænke sig Muligheden af det modsatte”. Ibid.

173 This debate between the two was carried out in the following articles: Henry Thejls, “Bør Vore Dagblade Reformere Forlystelses-Annoncerne?” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Kemigraflauget I Danmark* 35, no. 8 (1939): 235–39; Kai Pelt, “Blindgade–Typografi,” *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, no. 10 (1939): 214–16; Henry Thejls, “– Og... Bum... Sa’ Det Ovenpaa: Ufuldendt Eventyr,” *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, no. 11 (1939): 232–36; Kai Pelt, “Æstetisk Rigtigt. Psykologisk Forkert,” *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, no. 12 (1939): 256–60; Henry Thejls, “Man Kan Ikke Blæse... – Og Samtidig Have Mel I Munden!” *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, no. 1 (1940): 6–11

174 Pelt, “Blindgade–Typografi”, 215

175 “Talmænd for en Typografi, der tilfredsstiller Reklamens eneste Formaal: At sælge”. Pelt, “Æstetisk Rigtigt”, 260

he therefore declared himself the “spokesman for a typography, which in addition to fulfilling its principal function: *Readability*, also seeks the greatest possible beauty, in every detail as well as in technical execution”.<sup>176</sup>

## Conclusion

The idea that New Typography was appropriate for use in advertising, but not book typography, quickly gained acceptance amongst master printers and compositors. This compromise suited both those with an interest in New Typography, who were in any event more likely to work with jobbing work, and its critics — whose main concern was to preserve the category of the book. This was advertising typography as conceived by the printing trade, a category which corresponded to that of jobbing print, and which could trace its roots back to the artistic printing movement of the 1800s. It was a distinction and agreement which applied within the confines of the trade. Despite the words of Oskar Dahlström cited in the introduction, the interest shown in New Typography by the printing trade was only shared by other creators of advertising graphics to a limited extent.

As demonstrated in **chapter 1**, printing trade journals were hesitant to discuss the New Typography of the avant-garde prior to the appearance of Tschichold’s ‘elementare typographie’ special issue, the publication which for the first time linked the journal network of the avant-garde to that of the printing

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176 ““Jeg vil gøre mig til Talsmand for en Typografi, der foruden at opfylde sin fornemste Funktion: Læselighed, tillige tilstræber den størst mulige Skønhed i alle Detailler saavel som i teknisk Udførelse”. Thejls, “Man Kan Ikke Blæse...”, 11. Emphasis in original.

trade. This chapter has expanded upon observation by arguing that professional boundaries remained an obstacle to New Typography's spread even after it had become a topic of concern to master printers and compositors. Discussions of New Typography in the journals of commercial artists, lay-out men and advertisers were also informed more by developments taking place in their respective professions abroad than those taking place amongst related professions at home. Ideas of New Typography spread through international trade journal networks rather than across professional boundaries, regardless of their geographical proximity. This was not only the case in Scandinavia. As has been demonstrated, even German advertising journals were prepared to ignore New Typography. In my view, this serves as further evidence of the problems associated with writing histories within the confines of national units and further serves to build the case for a networks-based approach.

Given that jobbing printers, commercial artists and lay-out men all performed a different set of specialised tasks, and belonged to each their distinct culture of advertising, the lack of exchange across professional boundaries is understandable. However, these distinctions may not be immediately apparent for the contemporary observer, and the lack of exchange may therefore also seem surprising. After all, the different practitioner types all created what may be termed items of graphic design. However, if 'graphic design' is applied uncritically as an umbrella term to describe and categorise work created under such different circumstances, the distinctions between them stand in danger of being downplayed or lost. In turn, this reduces the likelihood of arriving at a nuanced understanding of stylistic developments,

and this is precisely why this thesis has sought instead to maintain and emphasise the distinctions between trades and professions and between the work created by these different practitioner types. Jobbing printers, commercial artists and lay-out men all created their designs with different attitudes, through different means and were predisposed to using different methods of reproduction. They also held different positions in the advertising trade's commissioning hierarchy. Jobbing printers would work directly with typographic material and print their work letterpress. Commercial artists would create drawn or painted originals which were usually reproduced lithographically. Lay-out men would sketch out their ideas and then commission compositors, commercial artists, photographers and reproduction facilities to bring their ideas to life.

The different attitudes to photography and photomontage are particularly instructive in this regard. Whilst New Typography achieved significant penetration amongst jobbing printers, particularly for ad setting, they were not in a position to commission photographs or photomontages for their designs. It can be argued that they were less able to domesticate this aspect of New Typography than others because of the restrictions associated with their role. Because master printers and compositors were more concerned with what they could achieved with typographic material alone, discussions of photography and photomontage played no more than a minor role in printing trade publications.

Like jobbing printers, commercial artists were positive toward the use of modern styles. Although this occasionally resulted in pieces of lettering which approached the appearance of New Typography,



it was more commonly expressed through the use of a stylised illustration style. Commercial artists were hesitant to incorporate photography and photomontage into their designs, as it was seen as a threat to their illustrative skills and went against their sense of professional identity as *affischists*. Commercial artists only took up photography after it made inroads into trade publications specific to their profession, like *Modern Publicity* and *Mise en Page*.

In contrast, lay-out men expressed positive attitudes towards photography particularly of the kind that supported their work for 'truth in advertising'. However, whilst they also showed some initial interest in New Typography, primarily for its novelty value, they quickly found it to be incompatible with their preferred text-heavy format of 'salesmanship in print'.

The conflict between lay-out men and compositors and ensuing debate between Thejls and Pelt highlights a number of ways in which New Typography by the late 1930s was failing to do for the printing trade what its proponents had promised when including it into their movement to heighten the trade. Despite the calls made for New Typography to reinvigorate design of the letterpress poster, the trade had not won back areas of work from lithographers and commercial artists. Nor had it prevented the trade losing further responsibilities to the new profession of the lay-out man. Whilst Pelt argued the creative freedom of the compositor was threatened by the very manner in which New Typography was codified in formal terms by theorists like Tschichold and Thejls, compositors like K.M. Andresen though the very profession of the lay-out man the main threat to such freedom. According to Andresen, the lay-out man's appearance had resulted in the compositor's role being reduced from that of a craftsman with creative input

to a technician faithfully following the designs of others. In this respect New Typography can be said to have been a failure for the printing trade. It did not succeed in bringing them the competitive advantage they had hoped it would when they domesticated it and included it in their movement to heighten the trade. Nevertheless, as seen in **chapter 2**, Hugo Lagerström was able to claim that the ‘new typography’ which emerged in Sweden around 1940 could be regarded as ‘an example of a new style’s development from its first breakthrough to a form well thought out and crystallized by practice’. That he was able to do so was the result of a particular line of argument resulting from New Typography’s close relationship to the ideology of Functionalism, which in Scandinavia was the dominant modernist current of the 1930s. The relationship between these two movements and its impact on the further development of New Typography is the topic of the next chapter.

# Style, reform and resistance: New Typography's relationship to Functionalism

This chapter examines Functionalism's impact on New Typography's development in Scandinavia. Although the first point of Tschichold's 1925 'elementare typographie' manifesto stated that "The New Typography is oriented towards purpose",<sup>1</sup> and that the notion of *Gestaltung* [Design, Form-Creation] itself entailed that items should be designed according to their functions,<sup>2</sup> debate in Scandinavian printing journals had since the introduction of Tschichold's manifesto by Hugo Lagerström in 1927 centred on the merits of New Typography's formal rather than its functional aspects. This only changed when New Typography became seen as part of the wider Functionalist movement, and gained the name 'Functionalist Typography'.

Functionalism was the dominant modernist current in Scandinavia during the 1930s, so much so that it and modernism are often considered one and the same.<sup>3</sup> That Functionalism was

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1 Tschichold, "Elemental Typography", 311

2 Detlef Mertins and Michael W. Jennings, "Introduction: The G-Group and the European Avant-Garde," in *G. An Avant-Garde Journal of Art, Architecture, Design, and Film. 1923-1926*, eds Detlef Mertins and Michael W. Jennings (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010), 6

3 The following explicitly state Functionalism and Modernism to be one and the same: Eva Eriksson, "The Roots of Modernism in Swedish Architecture," in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 140; Eva Rudberg, "Utopia of the Everyday. Swedish and

able to achieve such a high degree of penetration in Scandinavia can in no small part be attributed to the great popular success of the Stockholm Exhibition 1930. Commonly regarded as Functionalism's breakthrough moment in Scandinavia,<sup>4</sup> it drew as many as 4,000,000 visitors. Although repeat visits must be accounted for, the number is remarkably high. Stockholm's population counted just over 500,000 at the time, and Sweden's just over 6,000,000.<sup>5</sup> In terms of typography, Sigurd Lewerentz' (1885–1975) graphic profile, described in Per Råberg's seminal account as a “magnificent propaganda for the new typography”,<sup>6</sup> would have represented a first encounter with New Typography for many ordinary Swedes. It was through the creation of materials for the Stockholm Exhibition that New Typography ceased to be merely the subject of debate, or of exercises published only in printing journals, and was taken up in a commercial context for the first time.

In typography, Functionalism was interpreted in a number of sometimes conflicting ways. As the Swedish printer and academic Bror Zachrisson (1906–1983) wrote in 1940:

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Un-Swedish in the Architecture of Functionalism,” in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 150; Jørgen Sestoft, “Den nye ånd,” in *Nordisk funktionalism* ed. Gunilla Lundahl (Stockholm: Arkitektur förlag, 1980), 26

- 4 This is reflected in the title of the key text on the exhibition, which translates to ‘Functionalist Breakthrough’: Per Göran Råberg, *Funktionalistisk Genombrott. Radikal Miljö Och Miljödebatt I Sverige 1925–1931*. 2nd ed. (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners förlag and Sveriges Arkitekturmuseum, 1972)
- 5 The figure for visitor numbers is taken from: Eva Rudberg, *The Stockholm Exhibition 1930: Modernism's Breakthrough in Swedish Architecture* (Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag, 1999), 15. The population figures are taken from the official statistics, according to which the city of Stockholm had a population of 502.203 and Sweden 6.142.191 in 1930. “Folkmängd. Översikt. (Tabell 2.1.xls).” *Utrednings- och statistikkontoret (USK)*, May 12, 2005. <http://www.stockholmskallan.se/Soksida/Post/?nid=5746>.
- 6 “En storartad propaganda för den nya typografien”. Råberg, *Funktionalistisk Genombrott*, 171

The year 1930 marks the breakthrough of the functional outlook. So far we are agreed. But when it comes to a definition of the nature of function — its aims, in different areas, opinions divide.<sup>7</sup>

In typography, as in other areas of design, Functionalism gave rise to *funkis*, a fashion which adopted Functionalism's external stylistic attributes, but not its underlying principles. Amongst those ideologically invested in Functionalism the 'misunderstandings' of *funkis* were objectionable and dangerous as they had the potential to undermine the Functionalist project in the public mind. In typography, *funkis* found its expression through the use of series of visual tropes which had little to do with New Typography as had been codified by Jan Tschichold. Whilst much of the job and advertising setting created in Scandinavia during the early 1930s can be characterised as *funkis*, Tschichold's ideas gained further resonance following his lecture visit in 1935. The ideas he promoted there were taken up, interpreted and promoted by Henry Thejls, who argued for their validity on functional grounds. As will be shown, Functionalism also had an impact in the field of book design. In the hands of book designer Anders Billow, architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen, and through the work of the Danish Forening for Boghaandværk [Society of Book Craft] it gave rise to various interpretations which not only diverged greatly in style from the New Typography promoted by Tschichold, but which could seem directly opposed to it. This chapter will argue that the introduction of the term Functionalism freed practitioners with a

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7 "År 1930 markerar genombrottet av det funktionella betraktelsessättet. Så lång äro vi överens. Men när det kommer till en definition av det funktionellas art — dess mål, inom olika områden, skiljas meningarna". Bror Zachrisson. "Det Var Alltså Inte Genom Exempel Inom Det Grafiska Området, Som Stockholmsutställningen Berikade Dettas Former," *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift. Organ För Konstindustri, Konsthantverk Och Hemslojd*. 36, no. 5 (1940): 99.

preference for traditional typography from having to defend the 'old' typography against the new, and enabled them instead to recast elements of their practice as positive contributions towards a modern and 'truly' functional typography. The use of terms like functional and Functionalist in this way can therefore be regarded to constitute a domestication strategy.

The first use of the term Functionalism can be traced back to the Swedish architect Uno Åhrén's (1897–1977) article 'Brytningar' [Ruptures], published in the 1925 edition of *Svenska slöjdförenings årsbok* [The Swedish Society for Crafts and Design's Annual].<sup>8</sup> 'Brytningar' was primarily a review of the architecture at the *International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts* [L'Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes], in which Åhrén held up Le Corbusier (1887–1965) and Pierre Jeanneret's (1896–1967) *Pavilion de l'Esprit Nouveau* as the "real highpoint", and "the only display of any awareness of the new age" on display.<sup>9</sup> A key theme in Åhrén's review was the opposition between function and ornament. This theme was carried through to the extent that the article can also be considered a manifesto for functional design. Åhrén wrote:

Where free form creation is involved in the design of an object, we want it to endeavour to proceed directly in the functional

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8 Uno Åhrén, "Brytningar," in *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Årsbok 1925: Moderna Strömningar Inom Europas Konstindustri* ed. Gregor Paulsson (Stockholm: Svenska Slöjdföreningen, 1925), 11. That this was the first use of the term "funktionalistisk [functionalistic]" in Sweden is claimed in: Rudberg, *The Stockholm Exhibition 1930*, 27. The title of Åhrén's article is often translated rather literally as 'Breaks', but I find 'Ruptures' to be both a more accurate and a more pleasing translation. An English translation, with the title 'Turning Points', can be found in the anthology: *Nordic Architects Write: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. Michael Asgaard Andersen (Routledge, 2009)

9 Åhrén, "Turning Points", 319

spirit. It should render form as if it were the self-evident expression of the object's purpose and function.<sup>10</sup>

The interest in Functionalism was driven forth by architects like Åhrén, with applied artists and printers following suit. This change of outlook was reflected visually by the journals of their professional associations, all of which underwent changes in style between the late 1920s and mid 1930s. However, they first found fertile ground in Poul Henningsen's *Kritisk Revy* [Critical Revue, 1926–28], a Danish publication which would prove influential across the Nordic countries.<sup>11</sup> *Kritisk Revy* was conceived as an alternative to *Architekten*, the rather staid official journal of Akademisk Arkitektforening [the Danish Association of Architects], which it routinely criticised in an irreverent, often sarcastic, tone. However, the journal did not promote Corbusier's ideas unthinkingly. It positioned itself as independent of either traditionalism or modernism, not placed somewhere between the two, but above.<sup>12</sup> So whilst Henningsen enthusiastically introduced Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* [Towards a New Architecture, 1923] in *Kritisk Revy*'s first issue,<sup>13</sup> he was from the outset also critical of those modernists who occupied themselves more with aesthetic and technological concerns than social

10 Ibid., 313

11 As Lars Dybdahl has pointed out, *Kritisk Revy* actually stated the ambition of becoming a pan-Nordic journal, but over its three years only a small minority of articles were written by those based outside of Denmark: Lars Dybdahl, "»Ansigtet imod den lykkeligere fremtid« Tidsskriftet *Kritisk Revy* (1926–28)," in *Nordisk funktionalisme 1925-1950: 15 foredrag fra det nordiske seminar afholdt juni 1985 på det Danske kunstindustrimuseum*, ed. Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen, Mirjam (København: Nordisk forum for formgivningshistorie, 1986), 35–36

12 Poul Henningsen, "Tradition Og Modernisme," *Kritisk Revy. Moderne Bybygning, Social Bygningskunst, Økonomisk Teknik, Reel Industrikunst* 2, no. 3 (1927): 31

13 Poul Henningsen, "Le Corbusier," *Kritisk Revy. Moderne Bybygning, Social Bygningskunst, Økonomisk Teknik, Reel Industrikunst* 1, no. 1 (1926): 50-55

issues or functional needs. An illustrative instance of this position was the placement of one of *Kritisk Revy*'s many aphorisms: "Traditionalism is the hereditary enemy, Modernism is the false friend",<sup>14</sup> directly after 'die neue welt' [The New World] — a concrete poem eulogising modern life by soon-to-be Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer (1889–1954).<sup>15</sup>

Visually *Kritisk Revy* had little to do with Functionalism, if by Functionalism one understands New Typography. It was printed in a distinctive tall format proportioned according to the golden section,<sup>16</sup> and its page typography was largely pedestrian. However, at select instances the pages received a more playful treatment which showed a moderate Dadaist influence,<sup>17</sup> and which was in keeping with the tone of the editorial. Text was set at right angles, and headings were stacked vertically and around images (**fig.4.01**). Covers used heavy rules for emphasis and made innovative use of over-printing. Another Dadaist trait were the satirical photomontages (**fig.4.02**), a medium which had not previously been used in an artistic context in Scandinavia.<sup>18</sup>

14 "Der Traditionismus ist der Erbfeind, der Modernismus ist der falsche Freund". Inserted directly after: hannes meyer, "die neue welt," *Kritisk Revy* 3, no. 1 (1928): 14–20, p.20. The aphorism was written in German as was the case when *Kritisk Revy* sought to directly criticise colleagues south of the border. See, for instance, also: Poul Henningsen, "Til de Triste Modernister," *Kritisk Revy* 3, no. 3 (1928): 6–7

15 Hannes Meyer took office as director of the Bauhaus on the 1 April 1928. The issue of *Kritisk Revy* featuring 'die neue welt' appeared in March.

16 *Kritisk Revy* measured 350×210mm.

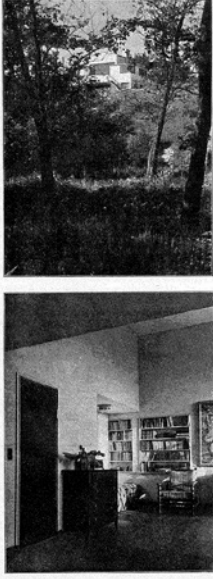
17 Parallels can be drawn to the early editions of Kurt Schwitters' *Merz* [1923–32], for instance. Perhaps Henningsen was also influenced by the work of D.N.S.S., which also drew on Dada, and Schwitters in particular. In 1923 he gave a talk to this society on 'Byen som Kunstværk' [The City as a Work of Art] in 1923. See: Morten Thing, "Poul Henningsen – Den Danske Kulturradikalismes Pædagog," in *Kulturradikalismen: Det Moderna Genombrottets Andra Fas*, ed. Bertil Nolin (Stockholm & Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 1993), 224

18 Jelsbak claims *Kritisk Revy* was the first to make "artistic use [kunstnerisk udnyttelse]" of photomontage in Denmark, from its second issue 1926 onwards. I have not found any previous uses in Norwegian or Swedish journals, and



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Huset ligger i Lyngby ved Primæstaven med pragtfuldt Udsigt over Lyngby og Bagsværd Sø. Det består af: En stor Stue, 4 sove- og Løstet, m. Kamin, Tegestue, Sovestue, Børneværelse, Lukarieret udstyret, stort Baderum med bordskåret Bader, Døstovet, Spisebænk og Køkken, stort Lofarum og gode, meget lyse Kieleser (uddelt over Terras), stor Balkon med Markise. Høve ca. 3500 Kvadrat med Fragtræs.

Huset er saa praktisk indrettet, at Hushjælp bliver overflødig. Der er selvstændig Centralvarme, 2 W. C'er, Gas og varmt Vand. I alle Værelser er der indbygget Skabe og Bøger, også afsæst efter det Indhold, de skal have: Bøger, Papirer, Porcellæn, Ska, Høje, Fliser og s. s. Der er indbygget Strøglænde, Skald til Svoveldamp fra Sovestuen til Vækketøler, og Kjøkkenet er planlagt saaledes, at man ikke gaar et usædligt Skridt.

Huset er bygget nærliggende varmeværelse og med fantastisk Staalruder og dobbelte Glas. Gulvbelægning: Fliser, Kerkærker og Gummil. Se løvligt Kritisk Revy, Marts 1927.

Pris 35.000 Kr. Der indtaar 11.500 Kr. i 1ste Prioritet og 4000 Kr. i 2den Prioritet. Brandtakst: 37.800 Kr. Henvendelse til Arkitekt Høberg, Produktionsvej 47, Tlf. Lyngby 691 og C. 500. Huset kan bestes efter den 15de April.

Fig. 4.01

The typography of Kritisk Revy:

Above:


A page advertising the sale of 'The house that runs itself': Edvard Heiberg's own house erected in 1924 as the first Functionalist building in Scandinavia (no.1 1928).

Above right:

A page featuring a series of humorous comments on current architectural and cultural matters, set in different directions. (no.1 1928)

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**Tunnel eller Hymen.**



G. Almqvist

Vil staa overfor en ny Kælder, hvis Soveværelsesværelse, den Oudvalgte den kære Udgivelsen, som en kære læser, set Tilgængeligheden. I alle er Forklaringen, at det er det nye Tegne ved mere end Halvdobbelten end Kællens sammentagne Magt.

Soveværelsesværelset, som har Sovebænk hver Dag, staaer Billedt ved at ryste paa Næsen.

Kællens Høje staaer at være tegnet for et stort Seng, uanset altsaa staae for et virkelig Kællens.

Det lader til, at de stidende Partier endelig er blevet enige om at bygge en Bane og en stor Vids i Skovene og indrette Værelset der. Men sønderke i disse Funktionære ikke ejendommeligt Panskytning, der i Løbet af en Afsættelse trækkener mellem de udførelseske Indsig i den ældre, for — Skovene, som i sig Tid var den Glæde, der ryddede og dannede med i hele Næringsværelse, Bøger er praktisk helt helt vilde.

Kan Nationalismen overbevædet beende?  
Hvorfor brænder det Museum dog ikke? Var det bare taals Retline?

**Ne vil vi snart se det Museum brænde! Eller ogsaa maa Bidragyderne have deres Penge tilbage!**

**Udviklingens Konsekvens.**  
David Laugel-Lauri, Mønt og Skulptur. Fra 1748. Medlem af Konventionen under Revolutionen. Fra 1795. Medlem af den Kongelige Akademi. Han har skrevet mange Bøger om Kunst og Litteratur. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Mønter og de gamle Skulpturer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Bøger og de gamle Papirer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Huse og de gamle Gader. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Tøj og de gamle Sko. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Musik og de gamle Dans. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Sprog og de gamle Skrifter. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Videnskaber og de gamle Kunster. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Hæder og de gamle Ærer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Myter og de gamle Legender. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Sædvaner og de gamle Brug. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Lov og de gamle Ret. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Historier og de gamle Fortællinger. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Digt og de gamle Prosa. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Malerier og de gamle Tegninger. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Billeder og de gamle Skulpturer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Bøger og de gamle Papirer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Huse og de gamle Gader. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Tøj og de gamle Sko. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Musik og de gamle Dans. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Sprog og de gamle Skrifter. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Videnskaber og de gamle Kunster. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Hæder og de gamle Ærer. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Myter og de gamle Legender. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Sædvaner og de gamle Brug. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Lov og de gamle Ret. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Historier og de gamle Fortællinger. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Digt og de gamle Prosa. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Malerier og de gamle Tegninger. Han har ogsaa skrevet om de gamle Billeder og de gamle Skulpturer.

1. April 1928 blev det franske Udstilling zahnt i København. En fransk General kastede i det republikanske Glas over Made de Louvain Skæbneslyg. Dansk Svobardi udførelse Kællens Hæder i Kællens Underkastet omkring et med Krone pyntet Skilders. Ordnet og Guldrammer tænkte under Forærets gamle Solsk. Davids, Daughters og Caribets Bølle sprak yderligere som en hylde Procent under den tykke sløvske Ferat.

Stogens Lorentzen.

Samladrt udsætteligg Individets færlige Fødselsdagstøtningen gennem Vand, Brød og Rødder.

Udsætteliggstøtningen vil med Odmær og koncentrationens Færdig. Min Røddeligen er ikke ligegyldig.

P. T. Parnsson

Malormester P. T. Parnsson

Bygningsarkitekt

Tilf. Ansvær 837



Fig. 4.02

Photomontage in *Kritisk Revy*:

Cover featuring the photo-montage 'It is not America we despise, but the United States of Barbarity', a reference to the cause célèbre which was the recent executions in the United States of the anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti (no.3 1927).

The first journal cover of a professional architectural association to be executed according to the principles of New Typography was the Norwegian *Byggekunst* [Architecture, lit. Building Art], which abandoned symmetry and serif type in 1927.

It was followed the next year by the Swedish architects' *Byggmästaren* [The Master Builder], the redesign of which was accompanied by a declaration in favour of "the new constructivism" by editor Wolter Gahn (1890–1985).<sup>19</sup> In Denmark changes to *Architekten* came about slower. When Steen Eiler Rasmussen took over as editor from Kay Fisker (1893–1965) in 1927 he made only subtle changes to its typographic styling. It was only in 1933, when editorship was passed on to Willy Hansen (1899–1979), that *Arkitekten* (as it had become known in 1928) embraced asymmetry and sans serif type.

Similar changes occurred to the journals of the national applied arts organisations. Here it was Sweden that led the way when its rather prosaically titled *Svenska slöjdföreningens tidskrift* [The Journal of the Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts] in 1929 adopted a design highly reminiscent of that used by the French journal *Arts et métiers graphiques* [Graphic Arts and Crafts, 1927–39].<sup>20</sup> In 1932 the journal took the name *Form* and underwent a second design change. In Norway, the recently started *Prydkunst* [Decorative Art, 1929–31] changed its name to *Brukskunst* [Applied art, lit. Art for use, 1931–34] in 1931, upon which it received a temporary anonymously designed cover executed in New

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believe this to be true for all of Scandinavia. See: Jelsbak, "Avantgardefilologi Og Teksttransmission", 225–226

19 "den nya konstruktivismen". W. G., "En Programpunkt," *Byggmästaren. Tidskrift För Arkitektur Och Byggnadsteknik*. 7 (Arkitektupplagan), no.1 (1928): 1

20 *Arts et métiers graphiques* used the cover design in question from its first issue up until its September issue 1931 (no.25).

Typography. A permanent design was introduced in 1932 as the result of a competition amongst the association's book art group.<sup>21</sup> The winning entry had been composed by Ruth Arnestad (1902–81) and Nora Gulbrandsen (1894–1978), the former a versatile designer working in textiles, glass and ceramics, and the latter artistic director at porcelain manufacturer Porsgrunn Porselen. Change once again came last to Denmark. Viggo Steen Møller (1897–1990) introduced a new design when he took over as editor of *Nyt Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri* [New Journal for Industrial Art] from Sigurd Schultz in 1932.<sup>22</sup> Here too a second redesign was undertaken the very next year before *Nyt Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri* settled on a form that would last until 1943. The only subsequent change would be the replacement of sans with slab serif in 1934.

## Functionalism becomes a concern of the printing trade

When Hugo Lagerström issued his 'words of warning' in 1927, he used no fewer than four different terms to describe New Typography: 'elemental typography', 'the new design', 'the new style' and 'new typography'.<sup>23</sup> Apart from 'the new design', these would all gain widespread usage in the trade. The first mention of Functionalism in relation to typography was made in 1928 by the Stockholm Exhibition's newly appointed head of advertising, Einar Lenning.<sup>24</sup> In his article on *Pressa*, mentioned in **chapter 2**, he

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21 "Fra Og Til Redaktøren," *Brukskunst* 3, no. 1 (1932): 4

22 The 'old' *Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri* was published 1885–1899.

23 Lagerström, "Elementär typografi" — 'Den nya gestaltningen' — 'Den nya typografien' — 'Den nya stilen', 131–36

24 According to his own account, Lenning began working in this capacity from 1 July 1928 onwards. Einar Lenning, "Bil, 10.: Berättelse över Reklamarbetet För Stockholmsutställningen 1930," in *Redogörelse För Stockholmsutställningen 1930*, by

commented on the state of German book art and typography.

To his mind it was experiencing:

a new developmental crisis, the visible expression of which is the so-called elemental typography, a sort of parallel phenomenon to the modern 'functionalism' in architecture.<sup>25</sup>

These comments supports the view that Functionalism was initially seen as an architectural movement.

### **The Stockholm Exhibition's Programme**

On the 25th of October 1928 Gregor Paulsson, chairman [ordförande] of Svenska Slöjdföreningen [The Swedish Society of Crafts and Design] and the Stockholm Exhibition's commissary-general, made the first public declaration of the exhibition's programme. He also made his own position on Functionalism clear, exclaiming that he had "made its acquaintance with joy and appreciation, because it signifies an intellectually and morally honest relation to artistic problems".<sup>26</sup> For typography, Paulsson's talk was important because it was published in pamphlet-form as the first piece of print commissioned by the Stockholm Exhibition. The commitment to Functionalism contained within the pages of Paulsson's text was matched by the application of New Typography to the cover design. *Stockholmsutställningens program* was printed by Bröderna Lagerström around the same time Hugo Lagerström was working on his first cover design experiments for

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Gregor Paulsson (Stockholm, 1937), 1

25 "en ny utvecklingskris, vars synbara uttryck är den s. k. elementära typografien, ett slags parallel-företeelse till den moderna "funktionalismen" inom arkitekturen". Lenning, "Pressa – en kulturell världsutställning", 411

26 "med glädje och uppskattning gjort bekantskap med densamma, därför att den betyder ett intellektuellt och moraliskt renhårigt förhållande till de konstnärliga problemen". Gregor Paulsson, "Stockholmsutställningens Program. Föredrag I Svenska Slöjdföreningen 25 Oktober 1928," *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift. Organ För Konstindustri, Hantverk Och Hemslojd*. 24 (1928): 115

*Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, which as described in **chapter 2** coincided with a noticeable change in attitude towards New Typography in his writing. Lagerström now accepted that the typographic composition should be derived from the “function of the text”, and that it should therefore be arranged logically through contrasts in size, positioning and colour in an asymmetric arrangement which made use of the white paper surface.<sup>27</sup> He was also positive to the use of standard formats.<sup>28</sup> However, as stated previously, he was still reluctant to condone the use of sans serif, preferring other ‘impersonal’ type faces such as Baskerville, Walbaum and Bodoni. The cover design of *Stockholmsutställningens program*, reflected these views. The text was divided into groups and set in two sizes of Bodoni, arranged asymmetrically on a standard B5 format. When Bröderna Lagerström produced the next piece of print for the Stockholm Exhibition a short time later,<sup>29</sup> the eye-catcher was substituted for the exhibition’s newly unveiled symbol — a stylised pair of wings designed by the architect Sigurd Lewerentz. The typographic arrangement was also altered, but the two sizes of Bodoni retained. The design for this second piece, *Program och bestämmelser* [Programme and Regulations], would act as a template for many of the exhibition’s subsequent small publications. That it was Gregor Paulsson, in his role as client, who influenced Lagerström to embrace New Typography was argued by the

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27 “textens funktion”. Lagerström, “Elementär typografi,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* 29, no. 11 (1928), 434

28 *Ibid.*, 435

29 Probably published in November 1928. In an article published in *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst* in December 1928, the Exhibition’s head of advertising Einar Lenning claimed *Program och bestämmelser* had been published ‘recently’. The article also showed the Exhibition’s symbol, the first time this appeared in a printing journal. Einar Lenning, “Reklam, Böcker och Grafisk Industri på Stockholmsutställningen 1930,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 29, no. 12 (1928): 475–476

Gothenburg-based master printer Oscar Isacson (1874–1942).<sup>30</sup> He pointed out the irony of it being Lagerström, the very person who had repeatedly warned others against engaging with the style, who was now the first to act against his own advice. Although the two Stockholm Exhibition pamphlets, in Isacson’s view, represented a “capitulation to ‘the new style’, ‘the elementary typography’, ‘functionalism’ or whatever we want to call it”, he did not reprimand Lagerström.<sup>31</sup> Rather, he seemed resigned to client power, stating that “the master printer has no other option, if he wants to keep his people and his machines running, than to accept his clients’ wishes”.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Isacson’s printing house would only a few months later publish a promotional leaflet which read: “The ‘[new] style’ can be obtained without additional cost and is subject to the constant *professional supervision we devote to all our work*”.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Bröderna Lagerström’s advertisements promoted their proficiency in New Typography with the following lines:

Whenever you want a piece of print –a catalogue, a letterhead, brochures, etc– executed in *the new style*, turn with confidence to BRÖDERNA LAGERSTRÖM (...) who will guarantee you a rigorous and expert piece of work.<sup>34</sup>

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30 Arthur Nelson made the same observation, that it was Paulsson’s “personal artistic view (...) which is reflected in these pieces of print [ personlige kunstneriske opfatning (...) som avspeiler sig i disse trykksaker]”. Arthur Nelson, “Vi Har Mottatt.” *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 3 (1929): 54

31 “kapitulation för den nya stilen, den elementära typografien, funktionalismen eller vad vi nu vilja kalla den”. Oscar Isacson, “Nya Vindar Blåsa,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 30, no. 3 (1929): 97

32 “boktryckaren har intet annat att göra, om han önskar hålla sitt folk och sina maskiner i gång, än att finna sig i sina kunders önskingar”. *Ibid.*

33 “Den “[nya] stilen” erhålles utan extra kostnad och är beroende på det ständiga *fackmannaöverinseende*, som ägnas *alla våra arbeten*”. Hugo Lagerström, “Den nya stilen,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 7 (1929): 271–72. Emphasis in original.

34 “Närhelst Ni önskar ett tryckalster – en katalog, ett brevpapper, prospekt etc – utfört i *den nya stilen*, vänd Eder då med förtroende till BRÖDERNA LAGERSTRÖM

That even Bröderna Lagerström took a pragmatic approach and continued to also produce work in a traditionalist style can be seen from an advertisement which appeared a few years later, with the headline: “Traditional or modern. Always the same good quality print” (**fig.4.08**).<sup>35</sup> The text of the latter ad further supports the argument made in this thesis so far, that master printers and compositors domesticated New Typography primarily to gain a competitive advantage. In its domesticated form it was no longer viewed as part of the avant-garde’s utopian project.

Paulsson certainly made his views on the exhibition’s architecture known to its chief architect Gunnar Asplund (1885–1940). Although he did not believe it was for the commissariat to make detailed decisions on the exhibition’s appearance,<sup>36</sup> he was nevertheless prepared to go to great lengths to ensure the architecture followed his Functionalist sympathies. When Asplund presented him with a playful proposal for the exhibition’s architecture he refused to support it, and took Asplund on a European tour of Functionalist architecture.<sup>37</sup> When Asplund toward the end of the year produced a definitive sketch, Paulsson could note with satisfaction that it was “more clearly Functionalist”.<sup>38</sup> Paulsson may well have taken

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(...) som garanterar Eder ett sorgfälligt och sakkunnigt arbete”. “Den Nya Stilen [Advertisement].” *Tidskrift För Affärsekonomi*, no. 12 (1929): 23. Emphasis in original.

35 “Traditionsbundet eller modernt. Alltid samma goda kvalitetstryck”.

“Traditionsbundet Eller Modernt [Advertisement].” *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets årsbok 4* (1932): unpaginated.

36 Paulsson, “Stockholmsutställningens Program. Föredrag I Svenska Slöjdföreningen 25 Oktober 1928”, 115

37 The two visited the *Exhibition of Contemporary Culture [Výstavy soudobé kultury]* in Brno, the remains of the 1927 *Die Wohnung [The Dwelling]* exhibition in Stuttgart (presumably referring to the Weissenhof Estate), and saw the plans for *Pressa*. They also met with Josef Hoffman (1870–1956) in Vienna, Sigfried Giedion (1888–1968) in Stuttgart and had hoped to meet Le Corbusier in Paris but had to “settle for [nöje oss med]” his cousin and colleague Pierre Jeanneret as Le Corbusier was out of town. See: Gregor Paulsson, *Upplevt*. (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1974), 121

38 “klarare funktionalistiskt”. *Ibid.*



a similar approach to the exhibition's graphic materials – urging the practitioners, in this case Lagerström, to produce something with modernist sensibilities — but leaving the exact detailing open for him to decide. That he saw typography as an integral part of the Functionalist movement is clear from his talk 'Den nya typografien och dess kultursammanhang' [The New Typography and its Cultural Context], given at the evening of debates on New Typography arranged by Svenska Boktryckareföreningen where Lagerström had presented his proposal for a 'modified form' of New Typography.<sup>39</sup> Here Paulsson claimed that:

typography has followed and been influenced by the directions of taste that have emerged in architecture. The latest of these directions, the functional, has also become exemplary for typography.<sup>40</sup>

### **The typography of the Stockholm Exhibition**

Much of the Stockholm Exhibition's graphic appearance was designed by architect Sigurd Lewerentz. The most conspicuous item he was involved with was the well-known advertising mast. It was striking in appearance, imposing in scale, and has been described by Eva Rudberg as representing "perhaps the closest that Sweden got to the spirit of Russian Constructivism".<sup>41</sup> Whilst the mast itself was designed by Asplund, Lewerentz was responsible for the arrangement of logos. However, Lewerentz also completed

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39 The talk is very briefly summarised in an article in *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst*: Kg. "Den nya stilen. Uppmärksammade diskussioner i Svenska Boktryckareföreningen och Stockholms Faktorsförening," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 4 (1929): 147–148

40 "Typografien har följt och tagit intryck av de smakriktningar som vuxit fram inom arkitekturen. Den senaste av dessa riktningar, den funktionella, har även blivit förebildlig för typografien". *Ibid.*, 147

41 Rudberg, "Utopia of the Everyday", 150

work which can more accurately be described as typographic — namely the lettering used for the exhibition’s signage and the design of its two official posters. In addition to their importance as defining features of the exhibition’s graphic appearance, Lewerentz’s designs also influenced the appearance of items that were not designed by him, such as the catalogues produced by Utställningsförlaget, a temporary collaborative venture set up between the printing houses Bröderna Lagerström and Almqvist & Wiksell.

Lewerentz’ involvement with the exhibition’s graphic materials came about after he was invited to take part in a closed competition to design its poster alongside artists Isaac Grünewald (1889–1946) and Karl Jungstedt (1895–1963).<sup>42</sup> The jury decided Lewerentz’ proposal had the most merit and asked him to develop it further. As part of this process Lewerentz came up with an additional design, and in the end both his suggestions were accepted — one as the exhibition’s main poster and the other as a “special poster” to be used in conjunction with the main one. The posters shared a colour scheme of black and white lettering which was set against a bright red background and topped by the blue and yellow of the Swedish flag. Both also featured geometric sans serif lettering, constructed with a compass and ruler.<sup>43</sup> The geometric

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42 Initially an open competition had been announced in October 1928, and around 140 entries were submitted before the deadline passed on the 1st of January 1929. However, the judging panel, which was comprised of Olle Hjortzberg and the exhibition’s working group – Paulsson, Asplund and Lagerström, decided that none could be accepted. For detail on the poster competition see: Einar Lenning, “Bil, 10.: Berättelse Över Reklamarbetet För Stockholmsutställningen 1930.” in *Redogörelse För Stockholmsutställningen 1930*, by Gregor Paulsson (Stockholm, 1937), 35-40

43 A perhaps unintended nod to tradition are the posters’ numerals, which have been drawn as old style rather than lining figures. Janne Ahlin has noted that the main poster’s composition is derived from the golden section, but this is not exclusively of Lewerentz’s doing, as the rules of the competition required the poster to be

sans serif was a new style of letter which had recently gained great popularity. The most famous of these was Futura, developed by Paul Renner as “the typeface of our time” from 1924 onwards and released in 1927.<sup>44</sup> However, Futura was only one of a number of similar typefaces appearing prior to the Stockholm Exhibition. It was pre-dated by Erbar Grotesk (1926), and was followed by Kabel (1928), Berthold Grotesk (1928), Elegant Grotesk (1928), Neuzeit Grotesk (1928), and Nobel Grotesk (1929).<sup>45</sup> Yet further examples came to market over the following years.

Whilst the main poster was a pared-back design which relied solely on the impact of its distinctive diagonal numerals, the special poster was more complex. It featured two maps. One was of the world and the other of Stockholm, with the exhibition ground marked out. Above the maps were nine line drawings representing each their section of the exhibition, labelled in lower case sans serif: furniture, interiors, housing, books, metalwork, rugs, ceramics, glass and transportation.<sup>46</sup> Over this arrangement hovered Lewerentz’s symbol for the exhibition, the stylised pair of wings. This also featured on most of the exhibition’s graphic

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of the format 1000x620mm – proportions that correspond exactly to the golden section. See: Janne Ahlin, *Sigurd Lewerentz, Architect, 1885-1975* (MIT Press, 1987), 95; Lenning, “Bil, 10.: Berättelse Över Reklamarbetet För Stockholmsutställningen 1930”, 36

44 These were the words suggested to Renner as a starting point for the typeface by Jakob Hegner, a commissioner for the type foundry Schriftgießerei AG. Later the phrase would be used in much of Futura’s advertising. See: Burke, *Paul Renner*, 86–87

45 The designers and foundries of these types were: Erbar: Jakob Erbar, Ludwig & Meyer; Futura: Paul Renner, Bauer; Kabel: Rudolf Koch, Klingspor; Berthold: Georg Trump, Berthold; Elegant: Hans Möhring, Stempel; Neuzeit: Wilhelm Pischner, Stempel; Nobel: Sjoerd de Roos and Dick Dooijes, Amsterdam. Although the release dates for these types are as the above, there is some debate as to which was the first type to actually be drawn. For a discussion: *Ibid.* 86–90

46 In the original these read: möbler, inredningar, bostäder, böcker, metallarbeten, mattor, stenarbeten, glas and samfärdsmedel, respectively.

materials, on the many banners that hung throughout its grounds, and —most prominently— at the very top of the advertising mast.<sup>47</sup>

Lewerentz, who had gained experience of designing architectural lettering by working for the illuminated signage company Stockholms Ljusreklam, was also responsible for designing the letters used for signage throughout the exhibition site.<sup>48</sup>

This too was a geometric sans serif, but of a separate design to that used for the posters. Available in upper case only, it was manufactured in wood and sold to exhibitors by the letter. It thereby not only helped standardise the exhibition's appearance, but also provided the organisers with a novel way of charging exhibitors. As P. Morton Shand (1888–1960) wrote of this arrangement in *The Architectural Review*, “the more you say the more you pay, and the result is as decorative as it is remunerative”.<sup>49</sup>

Although many of the smaller items of print continued to make use of the style developed by Bröderna Lagerström in 1928, subsequent larger catalogues and guides received cover treatments which linked them closer to the exhibition's graphic appearance as it had been defined by Lewerentz. Like his posters and signage, covers were set in a geometric sans serif, predominantly in upper case. The typeface used was Fette [bold] Erbar Grotesk. Presumably, this was considered a close enough fit to Lewerentz' custom designs. They also made innovative use of photography,

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47 The symbol was misinterpreted by many as being an image of a razor, to symbolising a break with the past where “with a rapid, cutting action, all dead flesh was to be removed from the healthy body of the future”. Ahlin, *Sigurd Lewerentz*, 94

48 *Ibid.*, 91

49 P. Morton Shand, “Stockholm, 1930,” *The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration* LXVIII, no. 405 (1930): 89

bringing their appearance even closer to the formal principles laid down in Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto. The cover of the *Vägvisare* [Official Guide] featured an aerial photo fitted into a directional arrow, and on the front of *Katalog över bostadsavdelningen*'s [Catalogue Over the Housing Section] various pieces of furniture and fittings were been cut out and arranged to indicate to the range of objects on display in this part of the exhibition.

*Acceptera* was not officially published by the Stockholm Exhibition, but is intimately linked to it. Formulated as defence of the exhibition's programme,<sup>50</sup> it was written collectively by six of the figures involved in shaping its programme and architecture. In addition to Asplund, Paulsson and Åhrén, its authors were architects Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius (1889–1972) and Eskil Sundahl (1890–1974). The book is so closely associated with the ideology of Functionalism in Sweden that it has often been referred to as its manifesto.<sup>51</sup> Its argument was most succinctly stated in its closing statement, parts of which were also printed on the front cover. It urges the reader to:

accept the reality that exists—only in that way have we any prospect of mastering it, taking it in hand, and altering it to create culture that offers an adaptable tool for life. We have no need for outworn forms from earlier cultures to sustain our self-respect. We cannot tiptoe backward from our own era. Nor can we skip past what troubles and confuses us into a utopian future. We can only look reality in the eye and accept it to be able to master it.<sup>52</sup>

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50 Both real and imagined, see: Lucy Creagh, "An Introduction to acceptera," in *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*, eds. Lucy Creagh and Helena Käberg (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 130, 133

51 Creagh, "An Introduction to Acceptera", 127

52 Gunnar Asplund et al, "acceptera." in *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts*,

According to Eva Rudberg, the book's design was largely Åhrén's work. He was responsible for designing the cover, worked on layouts, and sourced images.<sup>53</sup> The cover diligently corresponded to the formal characteristics prescribed in Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto. It employed an asymmetric layout. Photography was preferred to hand-drawn illustration. The text was set entirely in sans serif type. The block of text containing the authors' names was set at an angle for emphasis and to instil a sense of urgency. The title was set entirely in lower case, in a partial fulfilment of the call for *kleinschreibung*. Extreme variations in size were used for contrast and to create a logical visual relationship between the different groups of type: the title, the authors' names and the large block of black text containing the excerpt of the book's stirring closing statement. In light of the *acceptera*'s significance for Functionalism and its close adherence to Tschichold's principles, its cover design is the clearest expression of an alignment between the two movements in Scandinavia.<sup>54</sup>

Whilst *acceptera*'s cover was a model example of New Typography, the same cannot be said for the inner pages. Although the use of photomontage and bold type for key phrases, headings and captions to an extent can be seen "contribute to the notion of

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eds Lucy Creagh and Helena Kåberg (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 338

53 Eva Rudberg, *Uno Åhrén: En Foregangsman Inom 1900-Talets Arkitektur Och Samhallsplanering* (Stockholm: Byggnadsnämnden, 1981), 75

54 In the previously most detailed reading of *acceptera*'s design available, Lena Johannesson references many of these formal attributes. However, she does so without specific reference to New (or elemental) Typography. Instead she states that it fulfilled all the demands that could be put on a radical publication in the early 1930s – both in an aesthetic and a political sense. See: Lena Johannesson, "Funkis Utan Hus. Om Den Grafiska Funktionalismen Och Arbetarrörelsens Publicistiska Formspråk." in *Arbetarrörelse Och Arbetarkultur. Bild Och Självbild*, eds Lena Johannesson et al (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2007), 240

*acceptera* as a radical manifesto”, as suggested by Lucy Creagh in her introduction to the English translation,<sup>55</sup> the use of montage was limited, and that the sans serif of the cover was substituted for the Bodoni used elsewhere for the Stockholm Exhibition’s materials. In a review of *acceptera*, Hugo Lagerström pointed to further traditionalist elements. Its large margins were proportioned “according to an older sensibility” and the format did not follow DIN standards, but was a traditional large octavo.<sup>56</sup> With reference to the book’s margins, the Swedish book designer Anders Billow would years later go so far as to describe *acceptera* as “a wholly traditional book with large margins, where only one or two stereotypes dared point out from the type area”.<sup>57</sup> These comments must be seen in the context of Billow’s own practice, which is discussed later in this chapter. For him, the placement of the photographic image and the implications this had for marginal proportions was a key concern.

That *acceptera* did not make use of a DIN-format puzzled Lagerström, as standardisation was one of its major themes. Apart from its posters, all of the Stockholm Exhibition’s printed materials made use of DIN-formats. This was Einar Lenning’s achievement. He was the exhibition’s head of advertising and an enthusiastic proponent of standard formats. He authored several texts on the subject culminating with his textbook *Normalformaten* [Standard

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55 Creagh, “An Introduction to *acceptera*”, 127

56 “enligt äldre mening”. Hugo Lagerström, “Funktionalistisk Litteratur,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 32, no. 7 (1931): 278

57 “en fullt traditionell bok med stora marginaler, där bara en och annan kliché vågat peka utanför satsytan”. Anders Billow, “Den Nya Bilderbokstypografien. Återblick På Ett Decennium,” *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok 1941 10* (1941): 116

Formats, 1931].<sup>58</sup> During the exhibition's planning stages he stated that he was not content merely with setting a "good example" by having the exhibition's materials created according to DIN standards, but was writing to each exhibitor in order to persuade them also to design their materials for the exhibition according to these standards.<sup>59</sup> For Lenning, the use of standard formats was entirely in line with the exhibition's programme — or, as he formulated it, their use was "in accord with the practical and economic principles for goods production which it [the exhibition] wants to represent".<sup>60</sup>

## Funkis and functional typography

In the wake of the Stockholm Exhibition a popularised form of New Typography took hold, primarily in the field of jobbing print. Labelled *funkis*, it was a Scandinavian version of a popular modern form practiced also by compositors elsewhere, under the influence of type foundries' promotional materials. Those committed to Functionalism or New Typography objected to *funkis*, as it showed only a superficial understanding of the principles which informed the aesthetic associated with Functionalism. Following Jan Tschichold's lectures in Copenhagen, the Danish compositor and trade school teacher Henry Thejls began promoting what he called 'plastic typography'. Positioned against what he perceived to be the

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58 Einar Lenning, *Normalformaten: System, Användning, Fördelar* (Stockholm: Bröderna Lagerströms Förlag, 1931)

59 Lenning, "Reklam, Böcker och Grafisk Industri på Stockholmsutställningen 1930", 476

60 "i enlighet med de praktiska och ekonomiska principer för varuproduktion, som den vill företräda". Einar Lenning, "Moderna tryckalster på Stockholmsutställningen 1930," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 11 (1929): 425



formalism of *funkis*, and concerning itself instead with questions of readability and organisation, this typography was essentially a lightly modified version of the style promoted by Tschichold in his Copenhagen lectures and shortly after in his book *Typographische Gestaltung* (1935). In line with its aims, this approach also gained the label ‘functional typography’.

### **The term ‘funkis’ and its changing connotations**

The word *funkis* was derived from the Swedish for Functionalism, *funktionalism*. This method of shortening a word or phrase and adding the suffix ‘-is’ was, and still is, a common feature of Swedish slang which serves the purpose of making long words and phrases sound less formal and more familiar.<sup>61</sup> The first use of *funkis* can, according to Eva Rudberg, be traced back to 1925 when it was coined in response to Uno Åhrén’s article ‘Brytningar’. As discussed above, this article had introduced the term Functionalism to Scandinavia.<sup>62</sup> However, it was only after the Stockholm Exhibition’s opened in May 1930 that *funkis* gained massive popularity as a buzzword describing both Functionalism and the exhibition itself. This sudden popularity was likely aided by the fact that the restaurant in the exhibition’s amusement area was named Funkis. Over the course of the summer the use of the word *funkis* spread to the rest of Scandinavia.<sup>63</sup> In August it was introduced to Norwegian printing discourse with the following anonymously penned poem:

61 For a discussion of the ‘-is’ suffix and its connotations see: Ulla-Britt Kotsinas, *En Bok Om Slang, Typ.* (Stockholm: Norstedts ordbok, 2003), 223–227, 244–245

62 Rudberg attributes the creation of the word *funkis* to “the columnist Barco”. Rudberg, *The Stockholm Exhibition 1930*, 27

63 Wenche Findal has credited the short text: P. “FUNKIS 1930,” *Byggkunst. Norske Arkitekters Tidsskrift for Arkitektur Og Andvendt Kunst*. 12, no. 7 (1930): 122–23, as the first to use the term in Norway. See: Wenche Findal, *Norsk Modernistisk Arkitektur. Om Funksjonalismen* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1996), 58

It is a word, a completely new word  
 which now is the word-of-today  
 From Stockholm it has come to us  
 and become the latest slogan, —  
 well, not only in sound and such,  
 but in furniture, houses, decorations and such, —  
 for everything the same technical term  
 that is 'Funkis'! <sup>64</sup>

Although *funkis* was initially nothing more an informal and popular way of describing Functionalism, it soon took on negative connotations, particularly amongst those ideologically invested.<sup>65</sup> The first to articulate such opinions in detail was Knut Greve (1904–53), who in 1932 labelled *funkis* Functionalism's "distorted image".<sup>66</sup> Greve was a key proponent of Functionalism within the Norwegian *brukskunst* movement. He served as secretary of Foreningen Brukskunst [The Association Applied Art] and was editor of its journal *Brukskunst*. For Greve, Functionalism represented a new spiritual attitude, a break with historicism and the emergence of a constructive and logical design approach. *Funkis*, on the other hand, retained all the bad practices of the past, thinly concealed under a veneer of geometric or stylised decor. Such practice was of great concern because it threatened to undermine the public's understanding of the 'true' nature of Functionalism:

64 "Det er et ord, — et splitternytt / som altså nå er dag-ord. / Fra Stockholm har til oss det flytt / og blitt siste slagord, — / ja ikke bare lyd og sånn, / men møbler, hus og pryd og sånn, — / for alt det samme fagord / altså "Funkis"!." "Funkis." *Nordisk Trykkeritidende. Organ for de Grafiske Fag Og Papirindustrien*. 39, no. 8 (August 1930): 118. *Funkis* was also used in *Norsk Trykk* in August 1930: Bertil Fagerstrøm, "IV. Stockholm," *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 4 (1930): 129.

65 For a consideration of stylistic terms and their use, see: Randi Gausdal, "Noen Betragtninger Om Stilbegreper," in *Art Deco, Funkis, Scandinavian Design*, ed. Widar Halén (Oslo: Orfeus, 1996)

66 "vrengebilde". Knut Greve, "Funksjonalisme Og Funkis," *Brukskunst* 3, no. 5 (1932):

The clarity which characterises functionalism is about to be lost amongst the plagiary-products of the imitators. It must be clearly and expressly stated that ‘funkis’ is a term of abuse describing that which functionalism is struggling against. ‘Funkis’ is the new advertising-slogan under which shops, factories and tasteless designers foist their goods upon a gullible audience.<sup>67</sup>

Greve’s comments were made in the context of applied art, but similar opinions were also expressed in the printing trade. As early as July 1930, the art historian Nils G. Wollin (1892–1964), speaking at a meeting of Svenska Boktryckareföreningen [The Swedish Association of Master Printers], stated that “far from everything which these days is labelled ‘Funkis’ deserves the name”.<sup>68</sup> More in-depth terminological considerations came later, notably with the Danish illustrator and advertising writer Nicolaj Norvil’s articles ‘Funkis-forvirring: “Moderne” Typografi i rigtig og fejlfri Anvendelse’ [Funkis-confusion: Correct and Faultless Uses of “Modern” Typography] and ‘Hvad er funkis?’ [What is funkis?].<sup>69</sup> Here he claimed *funkis* had taken Functionalism “to its diametric opposition” and turned it into an empty style.<sup>70</sup>

67 “Den klarhet som preger funktionalismen holder på å forsvinne efterligernes plagiatprodukter. Det må klar og tydelig holdes frem at «funkis» er et skjellsord på det som funksjonalismen bekjemper. «Funkis» er det nys avertissements-slagord hvorunder forretninger, fabrikker og smakløse brukskunstnere prakker sine varer på et godtroende publikum”. Ibid., 70

68 “långt ifrån alt, som i dessa dagar stämplas som “Funkis” förtjänar denna benämning”. “Nordiska Boktryckaremötet.” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 31, no. 8 (1930): 320

69 The article ‘Funkis-forvirring’ appeared in two near-identical versions: Norvil, “Funkis-Forvirring. ‘Moderne’ Typografi I Rigtig Og Fejlfri Anvendelse,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 30, no. 9 (1934): 97–100; “Funkis-Forvirring. ‘Moderne’ Typografi.” *System. Magasin for Driftsøkonomi, Moderne Belysning, Moderne Vinduespyntning, Handel, Reklame*. 5, no. 15 (1934): 357–60. The second article, ‘Hvad er Funkis?’ repeated many of the same arguments: Striks, “Hvad Er Funkis?” *System: Magasin for Driftsøkonomi, Handel, Reklame, Belysning, Vinduespyntning*. 6, no. 3 (1935): 56

70 “ført ud i sin diametrale Modsætning”. Striks. “Hvad Er Funkis?” *System: Magasin for*

Visually, *funkis* typography relied on any of a number of characteristics. These included the use of geometric elements and rules for decorative purposes, images and letterforms created from typographic material, geometric or otherwise eccentric display type, and the setting of text in justified blocks for geometric effect. To a lesser extent, the use of full bleed images, framed ads, and the practice of setting text in lower case were also considered to be *funkis*.<sup>71</sup> These practices, adopted from German printing journals and type samples, were criticised for being either time consuming, economically unsound, unfounded, or executed at the expense of readability or a combination of all four. That their use therefore constituted ‘un-functional’ practice was argued most comprehensively by the Danish compositor Ole Chr. Sørensen. His detailed and passionate description of *funkis* typography and its faults is worth quoting at length:

It goes without saying that the first attempts in the functionalist style here at home yielded highly misunderstood results. Geometric shapes abounded, set at the most gratuitous places under the name *Blickfang* [eye-catcher]. That which was, is and will be the primary element of a good piece of print: the type, was squeezed into square and oblong groups the readability of which was nil. — The emergence of the so-called *Bausteine* [building blocks] put wind in the sails of the wild ideas (...) Another and much-used means of achieving ‘impact’ was and is those letters and words, often entire lines, constructed from rules and ornaments. The result in only in a minority of cases an easily readable product, and as such completely contrary to the idea of our age. (...) Letterforms and words constructed from rules, *Bausteine* and suchlike should be banned. The effect is created at the expense of readability. It is time-wasting work.<sup>72</sup>

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*Driftsøkonomi, Handel, Reklame, Belysning, Vinduespyntning*. 6, no. 3 (1935): 56

71 Arthur Nelson, “Plagiater, funkis og Aftenpostens nye ansikt,” *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 6 (1930): 199–201

72 “Det siger sig selv, at de første Forsøg herhjemme med den funktionalistiske Stil

As will be shown later in this section, Henry Thejls would position his 'plastic typography' precisely against the kind of *funkis* typography described by Sørensen. Like Sørensen, Thejls regarded it not only as 'un-functional', but also as being of poor taste.

Even though leading figures in the printing trade were vocally opposed, much of the jobbing typography of the 1930s can be classified as *funkis*. This variation of New Typography was never codified into a holistic approach and promoted in the manner of elemental typography. However, certain aspects, like the use of pictorial typography and block setting, were promoted in the trade press by practitioners like Oscar Isacson, Karl Karlsson and Arthur Nelson. Their contributions offer insight into how the merits of *funkis* were perceived, and why certain composers chose to engage with it. Even the products of this most disparaged interpretation of New Typography were not misunderstandings unthinkingly made.

An early example of *funkis*, created in the summer of 1929, is a brochure for Svenska Amerikalinjen [The Swedish America Line] by Oscar Isacson's printing house in Gothenburg. It is of particular interest because it initiated an exchange with Hugo

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gav de mest misforstaaede Resultater. Det vrimlede med geometriske Figurer, placeret paa de mest umotiverede Steder under Navnet Blickfang. Det, som var, er og bliver Hovedsagen i en god Tryksag: Skriften, klemtes inde i kvadratiske og aflange Grupper, hvis Læselighed var lig Nul. – Fremkomsten af de saakaldte Bausteine gav de vilde Ideer ny Vind i Sejlene (...) Et andet og meget anvendt Middel til Opnaaelse af «Effekt» var og er de Streger og Røskener konstruerede Bogstaver og Ord ofte sammensat til hele Linier. Kun i de færreste Tilfælde bliver Resultatet et letlæseligt Produkt, følgelig stik modsat vor Tids Idé. (...) Bogstaver of Ord, konstrueret af Streger, Bausteine og lignende, bør bandlyses. Effekten skabes paa Bekostning af Læseligheden. Tidsspildende Arbejde". O. Chr. Sørensen, "Typografisk Funktionalisme Og Dens Misforstaaelser," *Grafisk Revy* 5, no. 1 (1934): 23–24

Lagerström which shows it was possible to argue in favour of *funkis* practices using rhetoric borrowed from Functionalism. The disagreement between the two master printers began when Isacson sent Lagerström a copy of the brochure, claiming it had been “executed in so-called functionalist typography”.<sup>73</sup> However, the symmetrical composition with its decorative use of ‘fancy’ rules and geometric ornaments clearly did not conform to Lagerström’s understanding of New Typography. He published an article in *Nordisk boktryckarekonst* where he wrote that “what the new style means in formal terms is not yet fully clear for all practitioners”, and used Isacson’s design as his starting point for an example intended to show what constituted “a misunderstanding of the new style”.<sup>74</sup> Alongside this he showed his own “model example of how we understand the new style’s meaning and purpose”.<sup>75</sup> Lagerström did not mention Isacson’s name, but instead attributed the design to the fictitious Stiernstens Boktryckeri. However, there could be little doubt over its true origins. Isacson had sent his brochure to others besides Lagerström, and it had even been reproduced by Svenska Boktryckareföreningen’s journal *Meddelanden* [Messages] in its unaltered state.<sup>76</sup>

Isacson’s understandably tetchy response was prefaced by two quotes by Uno Åhrén, in which he had emphasised the parts

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73 “utfört i s. k. funktionalistisk typografi”. From Hugo Lagerström’s reply in: Oscar L. Isacson, “Stiernstens Boktryckeri,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 9 (1929): 346

74 “Vad den nya stilen i form innebär är icke för alla utövare ännu fullt klart”, “ett missförstånd av den nya stilen”, Hugo Lagerström, “Den nya stilen,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 7 (1929): 271

75 “skolexempel på huru vi uppfatta den nya stilens innebörd och mening”. From Hugo Lagerström’s reply in: Isacson, “Stiernstens Boktryckeri”, 346

76 “Den Nya Stilen’ i Praktiken,” *Svenska Boktryckareföreningens Meddelanden*, 34 (1929):

most important to his defence: “Functionalism is *not a style*, but a method with which to attack reality” and “Even a hand basin or a railway bridge leaves *a broad margin open for creative ability*”.<sup>77</sup> As Functionalism was not a style, Isacson argued, Lagerström should not criticise the formal aspects of his printing house’s leaflet. Rather than relying on New Typography’s overly theoretical rules and explanations, he thought master printers and compositors should use their own creative faculties when composing a piece of print. Once again, Isacson held up client relations as a significant factor in determining the appearance of any particular job, and claimed his approach better suited to real-life practice than Lagerström’s. He claimed the client was interested in a product which:

diverges from the mass, from other things, but *looks good* in a comfortable way. How this corresponds to those rules and guidelines which our trade writers formulate, that our clients ask little or scantily about.<sup>78</sup>

In Denmark the use of pictorial typography was promoted by Karl Karlsson, who based his argument on efficiency and economics. Contrary to the criticism levelled against it by the likes of Ole Chr. Sørensen, he claimed such compositions could be created in a short amount of time. Because the method allowed the compositor to construct images at his work station, and therefore negated the need to involve an external reproduction facility in order

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77 “Funktionalismen är icke en stil men en metod att angripa verkligheten”, “Till och med ett tvättställ eller en järnvägsbro lämnar en bred marginal öppen för den gestaltande förmågan”. Isacson, “Stiernstens Boktryckeri”, 344

78 “viker av från massan, från annat, men gör sig på ett behagligt sätt. Huru detta stämmer överens med de regler och rättesnoren, som våra yrkesskribenter uppställa, det fråga våra kunder litet eller ringa efter”. Ibid., 345

to create stereotypes, Karlsson argued it could save the master printer costs. Moreover, he thought their “primitive, distinctive and concise appearance” provided the master printer with a selling point because this aesthetic could not be achieved through other methods of illustration.<sup>79</sup> Although Tschichold was no friend of pictorial typography, Karlsson’s arguments around cost and production lay close to those made on behalf on the ‘typo-symbol’ in *Die neue Typographie*. The typo-symbol was a kind of logo made entirely out of typographic material, of which Piet Zwart’s personal marque, composed of an upper case sans serif P followed by a solid square, is perhaps the best known. Tschichold wrote:

the advantage of such ‘typo-symbols’ are: no block costs, the facility for reduction and enlargement, and the strength inherent in all things whose appearance comes from a technical manufacturing process.<sup>80</sup>

Tschichold did not concede that items of ‘pseudo-constructivism’, as he termed the German equivalent of *funkis*, held any functional virtues. Instead he criticised it as a misunderstanding made on purely formal grounds.<sup>81</sup>

These criticisms were more accurate when it came to the approach advocated by Arthur Nelson in Norway. Nelson promoted an eccentric understanding of elemental typography, based entirely and unashamedly on aesthetic concerns. Although the precise

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79 “primitive, egenartede og koncise Udseende”. Karl Karlsson, “Bausteine Og Billedsats,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 28, no. 9 (1932): 125

80 Jan Tschichold. *The New Typography* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2006), 109

81 See the section ‘Mistakes often met’: *Ibid.*, 81–86.



meaning of Elementarism in the wider field of art and design was elusive and subject to a host of interpretations,<sup>82</sup> they had in Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto been defined as consisting of letters, numbers, signs, rules and photography.<sup>83</sup> However, according to Nelson's interpretation, 'elemental' referred either to the "primordial" or "the ancient geometric system".<sup>84</sup> The latter was presumably a reference to Euclid's *Elements*. Visually, Nelson's elemental typography relied on the *funkis* practice of setting text in justified blocks to achieve geometric effects.<sup>85</sup> Placing these on the page was, for Nelson, an aesthetic exercise which demanded taste, experience and which took the façades of Functionalist architecture as its source of inspiration:

It is the material in combination with the arrangement on the plane which constitute the decorative effects. Just as the architect makes his effects out of concrete, steel and glass, places them together in surfaces that appeal to the eye and thereafter paints them in appealing colours, so must the compositor treat his

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82 The use of the term 'elemental' is often traced back to the manifesto 'Aufruf zur elementaren Kunst' [A Call for elemental art], which was authored by Raoul Hausmann, Hans Arp, Ivan Puni and László Moholy-Nagy and appeared in *De Stijl* no. 10 (1921): 156. However, Joost Baljeu has traced Theo van Doesburg's first use of the term 'elemental' to 1915, and suggests he adopted it from Heinrich Wölfflin's *Principles of Art History* which was first published that year. See: Joost Baljeu, *Theo van Doesburg* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, 1974), 27. For a text containing a detailed consideration of the multiple connotations of the word 'elemental' in the journal *G* and beyond, see: Detlef Mertins, "Architecture, Worldview and World Image in *G*," in *G. An Avant-Garde Journal of Art, Architecture, Design, and Film. 1923-1926*, eds. Detlef Mertins and Michael W. Jennings (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010)

83 See point 4: Tschichold, "Elemental Typography", 311

84 "det oprinnelige". Arthur Nelson, "Moderne Typografi og Trykk," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 2 (1929), 37; "det gamle geometriske system". Arthur Nelson, "Livet begynner imorgen," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 4 (1929): 74

85 The centrality of block-set text is emphasised repeatedly: Arthur Nelson, "En norsk typografi," *Nelsons Magasin for Grafisk Kunst* 2, no. 1 (1928): 10–11; — "Moderne Typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 3, no. 1 (1929): 12; — "Livet begynner imorgen", 74; — "Vår tid og dens smak," *Norsk Trykk* 4, no. 2 (1930): 41–42; — "Moderne typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 7, no. 4 (1933): 122

material — choose the type which suits the character of the job at hand, and thereafter piece it together in beautiful planes. And this is not easy. Good taste and assured experience are needed in order to place groups of text on the paper without other rules than to make it beautiful.<sup>86</sup>

To arrive at his desired geometric text blocks, Nelson was happy to pad out his lines with additional punctuation, or to make use of uneven word and letter spacing. This can be seen in an advertising card produced for the print industry supplier Grafisk Kompani [Graphic Company].<sup>87</sup> The card also makes use of a silhouette illustration which was either cut from linoleum or constructed from typographic material.

Pictorial typography was another *funkis* trope favoured by Nelson. *Norsk trykk* regularly featured small items of pictorial typography or geometric ornaments on covers and internal pages alike, and examples of both pictorial typography and block set type flourished in Nelson's 'Modern Typography' column.<sup>88</sup> However, the most ambitious examples of pictorial typography to appear in *Norsk trykk* were a series of covers published between 1934 and 1935. They featured portraits of prominent members of the

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86 "Det er materiellet i forbindelse med flatearrangementet som er de dekorative effekter. Akkurat som arkitekten lager sine effekter av betong, jern og glass, plaserer det sammen i flater som tiltaler øiet og derefter maler det i tiltalende farver, slik må typografen behandle sitt materiell — velge skriften til å passe det foreliggende arbeides karakter, derefter sette det sammen i vakre flater. Og dette er ikke lett. Det kreves god smak og sikker erfaring i å kunne plasere satsgrupper på papiret uten andre regler enn å få det vakkert". Nelson, "Moderne typografi," *Norsk Trykk* 7, no. 4 (1933): 122

87 Nelson's use of punctuation and word spacing has previously been noted in Torbjørn Eng. "Arthur Nelson: Den Første Modernist I Norsk Grafisk Bransje. Del 2." *Norsk Grafia* 130, no. 6 (2005): 18

88 A number of these collated and reproduced as a book: Arthur Nelson, *Typografiske Mønstre*. Oslo: Norsk Trykk, 1930.

Norwegian printing trade, and were composed by Kai Møller.<sup>89</sup>

Though funkis predominantly found use in ad and job setting, it also influenced the design of number of high-profile Norwegian publications in the fields of typography and applied art. This included the landmark 1931 edition of *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, which as noted in **chapter 2**, made use of heavy rules and a circular ornaments on its cover, endpapers, and at the beginning of each chapter. Nora Gulbrandsen's lettering for the cover of *Brukskunst* featured elongated ascenders and a decorative ball and stick 'r'. Other examples include the covers of Kunstindustrimuseet i Oslo's [The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design in Oslo] annuals for the years 1930–31 and 1931–32. These had been designed and printed by printing houses Emil Moestue A/S and Grøndahl & Sønns Boktrykkeri respectively, as part of a scheme set up in 1930 by the museum's director Thor B. Kielland (1894–1963). Kielland, who nurtured an interest in book art and printing, wanted to create a closer bond between Norwegian book artists, "book craftsmen" and the museum.<sup>90</sup> As part of this effort he commissioned Oslo's leading printing houses to print and design its annuals, in turn. He allowed them to freely "experiment with those type faces and other material which were of interest to the respective printing houses at the moment" and to "try new methods if it is desired".<sup>91</sup> By offering the printing houses this creative freedom,

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89 In *Norsk Trykk*, Kai Møller is listed as working for Ekspresstrykkeriet in Oslo. A Kai Møller (1907–1995) is later recorded as the owner of a printing house in Drammen, established during the 1930s, which during WWII produced illegal newspapers. Whether this is the same Kai Møller has not been confirmed. *Norsk Trykk* no.6 (1930): 203; POB. "Kai Møller." in *Made in Drammen: Industrihistorie Fra En Østlandsby Med Hovedvekt På Perioden 1870–1970* (Drammen: Drammen Rotary, 2011), 314,

90 "bokhåndverkere". Thor Kielland, "Forord." in *Årbok 1928–1929*, 5–7. (Oslo: Kunstindustrimuseet i Oslo, 1930), 5

91 "eksperimentere med de typer og andre utstyrsformer der i øieblikket interesserer

Kielland hoped each resulting book would prove “a characteristic representative of the different printing houses views and abilities in modern book art”.<sup>92</sup> Thus encouraged, the Emil Moestue printing house responded to the task of designing the annual for the years 1930 and '31 with a *funkis* design which took the trope of exaggerated ascenders and descenders to the extreme of applying these to an upper case ‘Å’. Of course, upper case letters have no ascenders and descenders, and although it could be argued that the resulting composition has a certain impact and decorative effect, it is difficult to see how any functional rationale could explain why a descender should be added onto a letter which has none — even if it had been printed in lower case.

### Functional Typography

When Jan Tschichold gave his three lectures on topics drawn from his forthcoming book *Typographische Gestaltung* in Copenhagen, Viggo Hasnæs was one of his audience members. Hasnæs, who by this point in time had become foreman at the Bianco Luno printing house, and who as shown in **chapter 3** had been the first to write a positively worded article on New Typography in Denmark, was impressed by what he heard and saw. He wrote in *De grafiske Fag* that what Tschichold had presented was a “genuinely functional typography” (my emphasis). Hasnæs’ choice of words implied that Tschichold’s latest version of New Typography to his mind differed both from the formalisms of *funkis* and Tschichold’s now decade-old ‘elementare typographie’.<sup>93</sup> This view was shared by

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de respektive trykkerier”, “nye metoder om så måtte ønskes”. Ibid., 6

92 “en karakteristisk representant for de forskellige trykkeriers synsmåter og evner i moderne bokkunst”. Ibid.

93 “virkelig funktionel Typografi”. Viggo Hasnæs, “Tre Foredrag Om Den Ny Typografi,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og*

others. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Charles Moegreen's translation of *Typographische Gestaltung* received the Danish title *Funktionel Typografi*. Henry Thejls also shared Hasnæs' view. From 1936 onwards he started promoting a variation of Tschichold's newest formulation of New Typography under the name 'plastic typography'. This he presented as an improvement of the New Typography that had gone before.<sup>94</sup> According to Thejls, the newly introduced principle of 'plastic mobility' allowed type itself to be used as the only decorative feature in composition. It eliminated the need for setting text in justified blocks or making use of eye-catchers. Freed from the formalism of *funkis*, typography could now focus on being clear, readable and fit for purpose. Two years after first formulating these ideas, Thejls toured Denmark with the lecture 'Hvad er det, der er nyt, i den ny Typografi?' [What is New in New Typography?] where he explained his insights to local compositors in further detail:<sup>95</sup>

Modern typography's most important doctrine is fitness to purpose. The absolute consideration of the word's importance as printed message: therefore, readability. Fitness to purpose is the prevailing zeitgeist's demand of all productions of today — be they houses, furniture, clothes or typography. The traditional

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*Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 31, no. 12 (1935): 230

- 94 Thejls' article was published under two different names: Henry Thejls, Henry. "Kært Barn Har Mange Navne... Plastisk Typografi...elementær... asymmetrisk...moderne," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 32, no. 6 (1936): 133–36; — "Plastisk Typografi," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 37, no. 8 (1936): 277–84
- 95 Thejls first gave this lecture to Dansk Typograf-Forbunds Oplysningsudvalg in Copenhagen on the 4th February 1938 and subsequently toured it to several branches around Denmark. *Bogtrykkerbladet* printed the transcript in three parts: Henry Thejls, "1. Afsnit: Kontrastvirkning," *Bogtrykkerbladet. Medlemsblad for Dansk Provins-Bogtrykkerforening*, no. 9 (1938): 168–71; — "2. Afsnit: Fladevirkning," *Bogtrykkerbladet*, no. 10 (1938): 178–81; — "Gruppedannelse... 3. Og Sidste Afsnit Af Foredraget: Hvad Er Det, Der Er Nyt Ved Den Ny Typografi?" *Bogtrykkerbladet*, no. 11 (1938): 196–200

understanding of the decorative is as much else a habit; it will be natural to seek the decorative in the purposeful instead of forcing a decorative form through illogical and unreadable treatment of text. "Readability" is, in other words, the concentration of everything new in New Typography.<sup>96</sup>

These aims could be condensed down into one single guiding principle, which Thejls claimed was applicable to all typography: "*Readability in combination with logical emphasis of meaning*".<sup>97</sup> Thejls also lay down four formal principles for the construction of plastic typography. They were:

1. *Script contrast*. Natural eye-catcher placed in the headline with a script diverging strongly from the main script used either in form or colour.
2. *Contrast derived through use of spacing and margins*, expressed through a doubling of spacings as a minimum, in order to give clarity to the three groups internal relationship to one another.
3. *Contrast derived through divisions of surface*, expressed for instance in the relationship of a text block to the format of the paper or width of the text area through a doubling as minimum, either to type area or space.
4. *All forms of groups geometrically different*, in order to achieve liveliness and movement in the composition through these contrasts.<sup>98</sup>

96 "Den moderne Typografis vigtigste Læresætning er Hensigtsmæssighed. Den absolutte Hensyntagen til Ordets Betydning som trykt Meddelelse: altsaa Læselighed. — Hensigtsmæssighed er den herskende Tidsaands Krav til alle Frembringelser i Dag — det være sig Huse, Møbler, Klæder som Typografi. Den traditionelle Opfattelse af det dekorative er som saa meget andet en Vanesag; det vil være naturligt at søge det dekorative i det hensigtsmæssige fremfor at fremtvinge en dekorativ Form gennem ulogisk og ulæselig Tekstbehandling. "Læselighed" er altsaa Koncentrationen af alt nyt i den ny Typografi". Thejls, "2. Afsnit: Fladevirkning", 178

97 "Letlæselighed i Forbindelse med en logisk Understregning af Meningen". "Henry Thejls: Moderne Typografi i Konfirmationsalderen," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Kemigrafilaug i Danmark*. 34, no. 3 (1938): 103. Emphasis in original

98 "1. Skriftkontrast. Naturligt Blikfang placeret i Slaglinien ved en fra Grundskriften

These principles were to a large extent based on the typography advocated by Tschichold in *Typographische Gestaltung* and his Copenhagen talks: the use of contrasting type forms, the active use of different sizes of white space and the arrangement of text into groups of three.<sup>99</sup> However, it also drew on Viktor Peterson's 'constructive design', described in **chapter 2**. This was particularly evident in the preoccupation with arranging the composition according to contrasting geometrical forms.

A clear illustration of how Thejls' plastic typography differed visually from the preceding *funkis* was offered in a special issue of *Grafisk teknik*, produced by a group of students attending one of Thejls' courses.<sup>100</sup> Five of them were given the task of writing an article critiquing an outmoded ad from the daily press, and then redesigning it according to their ideas of "how a contemporary ad *should* look".<sup>101</sup> The young compositors all eagerly criticised the found ad for its use of rules, its 'purposeless' eye-catcher and its too many typefaces. These features were all considered to damage the ad's readability, as did the use of upper case and block setting. However, the article's title, 'En Annonce der appellerer til daarlig Smag' [An Ad That Appeals to Bad Taste], suggests they also found

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stærkt afvigende Skrift enten formmæssig eller farvemæssig. / 2. Kontrast i *Mellemslag og Papirrande*, som udtrykkes gennem Dobling af Mellemslagene som Minimum, for derigennem at give Klarhed over de tre Grupper indbyrdes Forhold til hinanden. / 3. *Fladedelings-Kontrast* som udtrykkes i f.Eks. en Skærsats-Gruppes Bredde i Forhold til Papirets eller Sats-Formatets Bredde gennem Dobling som Minimum, enten til Satsflade eller Tomflade. / 4. *Alle Gruppeformer geometrisk forskellige*, for igennem disse Kontraster at opnaa Livlighed og Bevægelse i Satsbilledet". Thejls, "Gruppetannelse... 3", 200. Emphasis in original.

99 See the sections: 'Gradsforhold, Rubrikker og Skriftblandinger' and 'Fladedannelse' in: Tschichold, *Funktionel Typografi*, 41–44, 54–56

100 Richard Jørgensen and Magnus Pedersen, "Ti Stikker Hoderne Sammen," *Grafisk Teknik* 3, no. 2 (1938): 17–18

101 "hvorledes en tidssvarende annonce bør se ud". Ejnar Jonsson et al, "En Annonce Der Appellerer Til Daarlig Smag," *Grafisk Teknik* 3, no. 2 (1938): 27

it the ad less tasteful than the ‘plastic typography’ they all applied in their redesigns.

That New Typography was driven more by aesthetic and spiritual concerns than the utilitarianism seemingly implied by terms like ‘Functionalism’ or ‘objectivity’ [Sachlichkeit], was in fact a view openly stated in *Typographische Gestaltung*:

Fitness for purpose and usefulness are prerequisites for good work, but not our only and original purpose. The real value of a work lies in its spiritual intent. And as the new design arises from a new *beauty*, which ‘is more bound to materiality than earlier methods, but has set its goals far beyond’, a feeling for materials and proportions can lend an objective work human value firstly. This feeling can also make it a work of art.<sup>102</sup>

So, although it became labelled *Funktionel Typografi*, the typography promoted by Tschichold was not purely utilitarian. It also came with a set of aesthetic values those initiated clearly held to be more ‘tasteful’ than *funkis*. Conversely, certain *funkis* practices, like pictorial typography could be defended by practitioners like Karlsson on functional grounds.

## Functionalist interpretations of the book

The Functionalist typography of the Stockholm Exhibition limited

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102 “Zweckmäßigkeit und Brauchbarkeit sind notwendige Voraussetzungen für eine ordentliche Arbeit, aber nicht unser einziges und eigentliches Ziel. Der wirkliche Wert einer Arbeit besteht in ihren geistigen Absichten. Und die der neuen Gestaltung gehen auf eine neue Schönheit aus, die zwar «mehr als frühere Methoden an das Stoffliche gebunden ist, in ihrer Zielsetzung aber weit darüber hinaus führt». Der Klang der Materialien und Verhältnisse erst macht eine «sachliche» Arbeit erst zu einer menschlich wertvollen. Dieser Klang kann sie zum Kunstwerk machen”. Jan Tschichold, *Typographische Gestaltung* (Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co, 1935), 80.



itself to posters, covers and signage, and the *funkis* and functional typography that followed both found their main area of use in the fields of ad setting and jobbing print. However, the Stockholm Exhibition and the ideology of Functionalism also had a significant impact on book typography. However, this did not primarily manifest itself in terms of style. Rather, Functionalism provoked a reassessment of the book's function as a transmitter of text and images in light of changes in the use of technology, such as the increased use of machine setting and photographic reproduction methods. Attention was also paid to the book's material qualities. With the introduction of Functionalism as a new guiding principle for book production, it finally became possible to challenge visual ideas associated with the typographic revival. In Sweden, Anders Billow, working with rotogravure technology, proposed reforms to better integrate the photographic image. In Denmark, the architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen planned several books in accordance with an approach taken by many architects and designers there, and which was later labelled 'Functional Tradition'. Einar Lenning and C. Volmer Nordlunde led calls for the simplistic divide between jobbing and book typography to give way for a differentiated approach which took the purpose of each individual book into consideration. Influenced by these debates, and by changes in attitudes to the book in England, the Danish Forening for Boghaandværk [Association for Book Craft] called for the creation of cheap, good quality books for everyday use.

### **Building books for the photographic image**

Anders Billow holds a prominent position as the foremost proponent of Functionalism in Swedish book design. He did not

train as a compositor, but studied art history at Uppsala University. For the majority of his career, between the years 1923 and 1960, he worked as artistic director of the printing and publishing house Nordisk Rotogravyr [Nordic Rotogravure]. He initially worked in a neoclassical style, but his experience of the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 led him to re-evaluate this approach.<sup>103</sup> During that summer he guided visitors around the exhibition's book hall as Svenska Boktryckareföreningen's [The Swedish Association of Master Printers] official representative.<sup>104</sup> In contrast to the exhibition's Functionalist architecture, Lewerentz' graphic profile and the catalogues produced by Utställningsförlaget, the displays here were dominated by works of fine printing.<sup>105</sup> Billow was struck by this contrast. He later recalled thinking that "Functionalism, in the true meaning of the word, was not only suitable for the building of housing", but also for books — for one now "built books with images and reproduction methods that were not invented in the days of Gutenberg".<sup>106</sup> By 'reproduction methods', he was referring specifically to the rotogravure technology his printing house specialised in, as one of only few in Scandinavia to do so.

Rotogravure had two distinct advantages over letterpress printing.

103 Billow was publicly dismissive of New Typography and Functionalism as late as February 1930. See the following for a summary and critical appraisal of Billow's position at that time: C.E. Carlsson, "Funktionalismen passar ej boktrycket," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 31, no. 2 (1930): 62–63

104 Jan Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen: Aspekter På Bild Och Bok Med Utgångspunkt I Anders Billows Verksamhet 1923-1953," (PhD thesis, Lunds Universitet, 2008), 93

105 Magdalena Gram, "När Typografin Blev 'modern': Om Modernismens Genombrott I Svensk Typografi," *Biblis* 34 (2006): 57

106 "funktionalism i ordets egentliga betydelse inte bara var på sin plats när det gällde att bygga bostäder", "byggde böcker med bilder och reproduktionsmetoder, som inte voro uppfunna på Gutenbergs tid". Anders Billow. "När Sommaren Var Slut, Visste Jag Att Funktionalism I Ordets Egentliga Betydelse Inte Bara Var På Sin Plats När Det Gällde Att Bygga Bostäder". *Form. Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidsskrift. Organ För Konstindustri, Konsthantverk Och Hemslöjd.* 36, no. 5 (1940): 98.

The first was that costs remained stable despite any variation in the size or number of images, and the second that it allowed a far greater flexibility in page design. To print images letterpress one had to order stereotypes, priced by size, from a reproduction company. Depending on the job at hand they might be ordered especially after consultation with the printer, but more often they would be ordered in advance of any page design work taking place. The client might also want to re-use stereotypes originally made for another job. The compositor would then have to set the design, which sometimes had been sketched out knowing only the measurements of the stereotype, directly in typographic material. The rotogravure process was very different. Using light tables, layouts were created on sheets of glass onto which text printed on cellophane, images on celluloid and any other graphic elements were arranged according to a predetermined grid. The finished layout was then engraved onto a copper plate which was then wrapped around a cylinder for rotary printing. Whilst the size or number of images made no difference to the cost, preparing plates was in itself expensive. Rotogravure was therefore only cost-effective for large runs.<sup>107</sup>

The creative possibilities of this technology were made obvious to Billow when he saw the first annual photography issue of *Arts et métiers graphiques*, published in March 1930.<sup>108</sup> Its pages, full of freely placed, high-quality photographs had been printed gravure, and as Billow would later remark, “one could not avoid thinking

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107 Details on rotogravure printing taken from: S.H. Steinberg. *Five Hundred Years of Printing*. New Edition, revised by John Trevitt (The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 234

108 Charles Peignot and A. François Haab, eds. *Arts et Métiers Graphiques Paris*, no. 16. Numéro spécial consacré à la photographie (March 15, 1930)

that even good photographs in completely ordinary books would be well served by the same generous and well-conceived way of placing images”.<sup>109</sup> He realised he did not have to conform to the codes of letterpress printing which in terms of reproducing images was derived from its need to accommodate the stereotype, but stood free to place these as he wished because in rotogravure printing “the whole plate, with both image and text, was so to speak one single giant stereotype”.<sup>110</sup>

However, Billow approached his new-found compositional freedom with caution. Whilst it has been argued that the flexibility of rotogravure composition was a key enabling factor behind the highly saturated and dynamic page designs of contemporaneous pictorial magazines like the German AIZ [*Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung*, Workers’ Illustrated Newspaper, 1921–38] and French VU [SEEN, 1928–40],<sup>111</sup> the primary visual influence on Billow’s layouts was the German architect Erich Mendelsohn’s (1887–1953) *Amerika: Bilderbuch eines Architekten* (1926).<sup>112</sup> Billow admired how the photographs in this book were presented. He adopted its practice of using a wide gutter and narrow outer margin, which was used to create space between the content contained on either page, and which allowed the photographs to be reproduced as large

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109 “Här kunde man absolut inte undgå reflexionen, att även goda fotografier i helt vanliga böcker skulle vara väl betjänta av samma generösa och välberäknade placeringsteknik”. Anders Billow, “Den Nya Bilderbokstypografien. Återblick På Ett Decennium,” *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok* 1941 10 (1941): 105

110 “hela tryckformen med både bild och text var ju så att säga en enda jättastor kliché”. *Ibid.*

111 For this argument, made in relation to AIZ and VU respectively, see: Andrés Mario Zervigón, “Rotogravure and the Modern Aesthetic of News Reporting.” in *Getting the Picture: The Visual Culture of the News*, eds. Jason Hill and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 201; Michel Frizot and Cédric De Veigy, *Vu: The Story of a Magazine That Made an Era* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 9–10

112 Erich Mendelsohn, *Amerika: Bilderbuch Eines Architekten* (Berlin: Rudolf Mosse Buchverlag, 1926)

as possible. He also adopted Mendelsohn's practice of setting captions at a "respectful distance" so they would not compete with the photograph for the viewer's attention.<sup>113</sup> This method of presentation was a good fit with Billow's preference for a 'truthful' photography.<sup>114</sup> His views on photography largely corresponded to those expressed by Sadakichi Hartmann (1867–1944), who in reaction to Artistic Photography issued 'A Plea for a Straight Photography' in 1904. This asked photographers to "compose the picture which you intend to take so well that the negative will be absolutely perfect and in need of no or but slight manipulation".<sup>115</sup> It also shared an affinity with the work of German photographers associated with *Neue Sachlichkeit* [New Objectivity] like Albert Renger-Patzsch (1897–1966). *Neue Sachlichkeit* was an important influence on Swedish photography of the 1920s and '30s, associated with figures such as Ture Sellman (1888–1968), Arne Wahlberg (1905–87) and Karl Sandels (1906–88) amongst others.<sup>116</sup> Given Billow's views, he had little time for "unrealistic" and "truthless" photography such as that associated with *Neues Sehen* [New Vision], with its use of extreme angles, optical distortion and techniques like photomontage and the photogram.<sup>117</sup> Billow was also opposed to other features associated with New Typography. He characterised the use of sans serif type for continuous text as

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113 "respektfullt avstånd". Billow, "Den Nya Bilderbokstypografien", 105

114 See the section 'Fotografi och åskådning' in Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen", 198–201

115 Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Plea for Straight Photography," in *Photography: Essays & Images. Illustrated Readings in the History of Photography*, ed. Beaumont Newhall (London: Secker & Warburg, 1981), 187

116 Leif Wigh, "'You've Got to Be Modernistic'. Photographers' Way to a Modernist Attitude," in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 237–239

117 "verklighetsfrämmande", "sanningslösa". Anders Billow, "Fotografiens Reklamvärde är Dess Sanningsvärde," *Svensk Reklam. Svenska Reklamförbundets årsbok* 3 (1931): 119

“a fashionable error”,<sup>118</sup> preferring instead to work with Garamond, Bodoni and, in particular, Baskerville.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, he thought the proportions of DIN-formats were unsuited to book work.<sup>120</sup>

The first book Billow designed according to his new set of principles was zoologist Carl Fries' (1895–1982) *I svenska marker* [In Swedish Fields]. This appeared already in the autumn of 1930. He continued to design books along similar lines without notable controversy for a while, but when he redesigned Svenska Turistföreningen's [The Swedish Tourist Association] annual for 1932 it met with strong protests in the printing trade. Billow's image-centric approach was alien to traditionalist master printers and compositors who thought of the book in text-centric terms. Far from appreciating his concern for the photographic image's placement on the page, it seemed to them that Billow had simply 'inverted' the time-honoured renaissance margins for the sake of novelty alone **(fig.4.03)**. Whilst such follies could be tolerated for books with a limited readership like *I svenska marker*, *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift* was sent out to the association's 127.000 members and was therefore considered to pose a far greater danger to public taste.<sup>121</sup> The debate quickly degenerated into personal attacks between Billow and his detractors in what became known as 'marginalstriden' [the margin dispute].<sup>122</sup>

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118 Anders Billow, "A Survey of Contemporary Bookmaking: For Scandinavia," in *The Dolphin. A Journal of the Making of Books*. Number 2. (New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1935), 299

119 Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen", 155–158

120 Ibid., 123

121 Yngve Hedvall, "Den Moderna Typografien Och Dess Avarter. Inledningsanförande Av Redaktör Yngve Hedvall Vid Diskussion I Boktryckarklubben Den 18 Maj 1932," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 33, no. 6 (1932): 213

122 Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen", 126–130

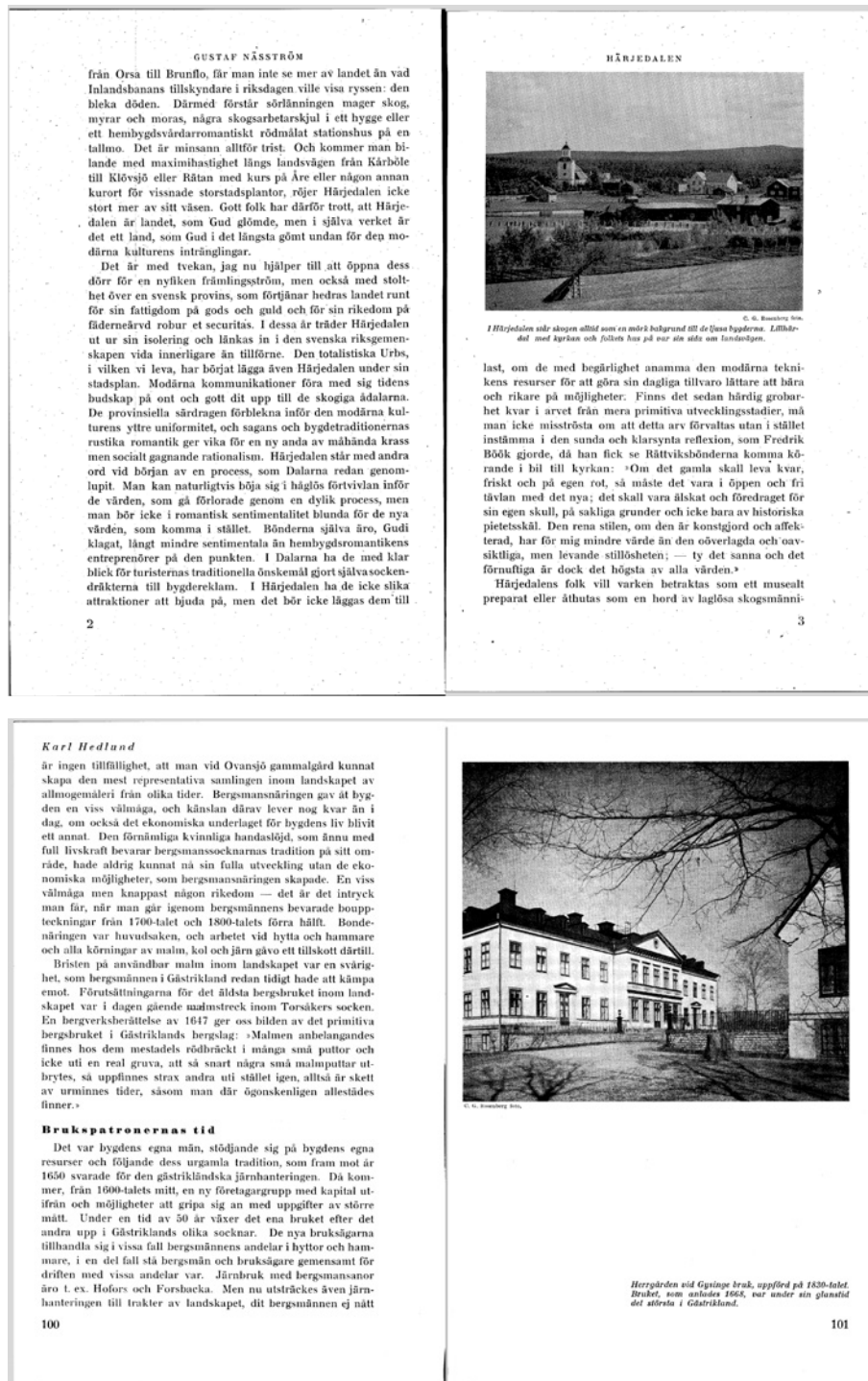


Fig. 4.03

Page design comparison: Svenska Turistföreningens Årsskrift 1931 (top) and 1932 (above)

One outcome of the margin dispute was that *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift* was ignored for many years by *Svensk Bokkonst* [Swedish Book Art], the annual award of the year's best books launched in 1933.<sup>123</sup> Although *Svensk Bokkonst* has been characterised as a conservatising influence on Swedish typography,<sup>124</sup> the jury's selections of the 1930s actually included more of Billow's books than those of any other practitioner.<sup>125</sup> This included designs with similar visual characteristics to *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift*, like the one for Carl Fries' follow-up to *I svenska marker, I skogen* [In the Woods, 1934]. Like its predecessor, this book also made use of 'inverted margins'. The Swedish Tourist Association's *Årets bilder 1933* [Pictures of the Year 1933], with its well-known cover set in Futura type, was also selected by the jury. As Jan Jönsson notes in his thesis on Billow, the reasons why it would take until 1939 for the jury to acknowledge a volume of *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift* probably had more to do with the ill-tempered margin dispute than with the books' design features.<sup>126</sup>

In 1935, Billow published an article which discussed what he believed Functionalist typography was and should be. It concluded with a nine-point programme where he crystallised his views. However, having previously criticised Tschichold for presenting his views in overly theoretical and dogmatic way,<sup>127</sup> Billow was

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123 It was not until 1939's selection was made that the editions for 1937 and 1938 were included. This was not due to a change in the books' design, as this had remained largely unchanged since the controversial 1932 edition

124 Torsten Platin, "The Swedish Style." *The Penrose Annual* 44 (1950): 26

125 Jönsson, "Läsmaskinen", 132–133.

126 *Ibid.*, 133

127 Anders Billow, "Bokkonsten På Världsutställning," *Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift. Organ För Konstindustri, Hantverk Och Hemslojd.* 24 (1928): 62–63



careful to preface this contribution with the disclaimer that they were not “Lutheran theses, only some provisional points to support professional discussion in the present time of typographic rupture”.<sup>128</sup> Published five years after *I svenska marker*, Billow’s points are in fact better seen as a clarification of his approach, and a defence against the criticism he had received, than a manifesto setting out a future direction for book design:

1. Readability and image clarity are the most important qualities in a book.
2. Handleability and durability come next.
3. Demanding reasonable costs is also a primary concern.
4. If the above have been taken into consideration, the most important prerequisites for good book art are at hand; if they have not; the book-artistic work will be in vain.
5. Reforms which significantly increase readability, image clarity, handleability and durability, or which promote the economy of book production, deserve serious consideration.
6. Aesthetic principles which obstruct rationally justified reforms lose their validity insofar they cannot be adapted to new circumstances.
7. As the type area in traditional typography does not make use of more than 40–55% of a book’s paper surface, but in a reformed one 55–75%, margin proportions based on the handwritten renaissance book can no longer be regarded as economically justifiable.
8. As photographic illustration, in order to achieve adequate clarity, often demands a larger format than that allowed for by a text column of the right width,

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128 “Det är inte fråga om några Lutherska teser, endast om några provisoriska stödjepunkter för den fackliga diskussionen i närvarande typografiska brytningstid”. Anders Billow, “Typografisk brytningstid. Relexioner inför 25 utvalda böcker 1934,” *Svensk Grafisk Årsbok 1935* 7 (1935): 109

a wider column specifically for images is justified for illustrated books when needed. Traditional margin proportions must then be waived.

9. For books featuring a reformed typographic arrangement new aesthetic principles naturally apply, the “correct” articulation of which may remain undefined for the time being, whilst, however, one may at the same time dare emphatically claim that reformed typography can be beautiful.<sup>129</sup>

In line with what he considered a Functionalist approach, Billow’s ‘provisional points’ were notably open and free from formal guidance. As has been noted, Billow distanced himself from many of the formal characteristics proposed by the likes of Tschichold. As Jan Jönsson remarks in his thesis on Billow, his was “a different functionalism than that which can commonly be associated with ‘the new typography’”.<sup>130</sup>

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129 “1. Läsbarhet och bildtydlighet äro de viktigaste egenskaperna hos en bok. / 2. Hanterlighet och hållbarhet komma därefter. / 3. Även anspråken på rimliga kostnader äro primära angelägenheter. / 4. Har ovanstående beaktats, äro de viktigaste förutsättningarna för god bokkonst för handen; varom inte; är den bokkonstnärliga verksamheten fåfång möda. / 5. Reformen, som väsentligt öka läsbarhet, bildtydlighet, hanterlighet och hållbarhet eller främja bokframställningens ekonomi, förtjäna allvarligt beaktande. / 6. Estetiska principer, som äro hindersamma för sakligt befogade reformer, förlora sin giltighet i den mån de ej kunna anpassas efter ett nytt sakläge. / 7. Då den traditionella typografiens satsyta i genomsnitt ej utnyttjar mer än 40–55 % av pappersytan i en bok, men en reformerad 55–75 %, kunna de på renässansens handskrivna böcker baserade marginalproportionerna ej längre anses ekonomiskt berättigade. / 8. Då den fotografiske illustrationen för att uppnå tillräcklig tydlighet ofta kräver större format än som rymmes inom en lagom bred textspalt, är vid behov en särskild och större satsbredd befogad för bilderna i illustrerade böcker. De traditionella marginalförhållandena måste därvid frångås. / 9. För böcker med reformerad typografisk uppställning gälla helt naturligt nya estetiska principer, om vilkas “rätta” formulerande tills vidare kan råda ovisshet, samtidigt som man dock med bestämdhet kan våga hävda att reformerad typografi kan vara vacker”. Ibid., 109–110

130 “en annan slags funktionalism än den som allmänt kan förknippas med »den nya typografien«. Jönsson, “Läsmaskinen”, 6

## The book and the Functional Tradition

Another interpretation of Functionalism was that formed in Denmark through its encounter with the strong rational craft-based design culture already present there. Danish architects and designers working in this ‘Functional Tradition’, as the architect Kay Fisker later labelled it, were critical of much of the work labelled ‘Functionalist’ — particularly that coming out of the Bauhaus.<sup>131</sup> They argued the Bauhaus’ desire to break with the past resulted in it being preoccupied with creating new forms, when it should have focused squarely on functional concerns. Such concerns, they argued, could be addressed equally well by modern and historical forms.<sup>132</sup> In book design, the Functional Tradition found an advocate in architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen, who authored and designed a series of books in the 1930s.<sup>133</sup> For Rasmussen, Functionalism represented an expression of a democratic ideal where objects were stripped of ornamentation, signifiers of class, and were shaped solely according to their function. This was true also for books. In the article ‘Bogensom industriprodukt’ [The Book as Industrial Product, 1968] he described the approach he and other like-minded Functionalists advocated during the late 1920s and early 1930s:

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131 Kay Fisker, *Den Funktionelle Tradition: Spredte Indtryk Af Amerikansk Arkitektur* (København: Arkitektens Forlag, 1950)

132 Steen Eiler Rasmussen, “Bauhaus Og Den Danske Brugskunst.” *Dansk Kunsthåndværk* 33 (1960): 142–49

133 Most notably: Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *Britisk Brugskunst* (København: Det Danske Kunstindustrimuseum, 1933); *London* (København: Gyldendal, 1934), *Billedbog fra en Kinarejse* (København: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1935); — *En Bog Om Noget Andet, Læsning Til at Falde I Søvn På* (København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1940). According to Esbjørn Hiort Rasmussen’s book designs “represented an informal continuation of the functional tradition in typography, in opposition to Tschichold’s modernism”. See: Nordhjem, Bent. “English Summaries: Danish Book-Designers by Esbjørn Hiort,” *Bogvennen* (1962), 172

A lamp was not to be a stylistic phenomenon, but provide good light. A house was not to be a representation, but a place where one could live. The book was not to be decorated with superfluous ornaments and curlicues, but attain its beauty through its printed qualities, be the good tool.<sup>134</sup>

The last phrase was a reference to the influential furniture designer Kaare Klint (1888–1954). Klint thought that furniture should not derive its value from its visual interest, but primarily be good tools, just as Rasmussen thought the book should.<sup>135</sup>

The idea of ‘the good tool’ is also one taken up in Thomas Berker, Maren Hartmann, Yves Punie and Katie J. Ward’s description of a successful domestication process. As quoted in the **introduction**, they claim that when technologies are successfully domesticated they are thought of as “comfortable, useful tools”, rather than as “cold, lifeless, problematic and challenging consumer goods”.<sup>136</sup>

Klint’s practice was informed by two separate directions of research, both of which were motivated by his interest in the functionality of objects.<sup>137</sup> The first was to study various traditions

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134 “En lampe skulle ikke være et stilfænomen, men skulle give et godt lys. En bolig skulle ikke være repræsentation, men et sted, hvor man kunne leve. Bogen skulle ikke pyntes med overflødige ornamentter og snolderter men opnå sin skønhed ved bogtrykmæssige kvaliteter, være det gode redskab”. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, “Bogen Som Industriprodukt,” in *Bogvennen* (Forening for boghaandværk, 1968), 69

135 Rasmussen, “Bauhaus Og Den Danske Brugskunst”, 145

136 Thomas Berker et al, “Introduction,” in *Domestication of Media and Technology*, eds. Thomas Berker et al (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006), 3

137 Although he showed a demonstrable interest in questions of functionality it is debatable whether Klint should be considered an early Functionalist or not, given his criticism of what he regarded as the formalism of the Bauhaus and his interest in historical forms. At the First Nordic Forum for Design History, Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen and Lis Stainforth argued against labelling him a Functionalist on these grounds. See: Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen, “Klassicismens kuber og funktionalismens blomster: En fotomontage, der kort skal belyse nogle påstande. Undertitel: et forsøg på en begrundelse for årstallet 1925 som startpunkt for dette seminar – såvel som for dansk funktionalisme,” in *Nordisk funktionalisme 1925-1950: 15 foredrag fra det nordiske seminar afholdt juni 1985 på det Danske kunstindustrimuseum*, ed. Mirjam

of furniture making. Most famously, he looked to Eighteenth Century England as exemplified by the *Red Chair* (1927). This chair draws in part on observations made of a Thomas Chippendale (1718–1779) design, and in part from an anonymous Eighteenth Century English Chair. From each Klint took the proportions and constructive details he considered functional and appropriate for a modern chair, leaving out the aspects where the ornamental had outweighed the functional.<sup>138</sup> What interested Klint was the way models in the past had solved particular furniture design problems. He considered the furniture created by such traditions as ‘standard types’ which embodied the accumulated knowledge of generations of craftsmen gained through trial and error. The second direction of research saw Klint making pioneering studies of furniture’s proportions in relation to the human body, and in the case of desks, bookshelves and buffet tables, of the objects to be stored within them. The earliest of these studies was undertaken between 1916 and 1918, from which he derived the proportions of office furniture from the sizes of standard Imperial paper formats.<sup>139</sup> The most well-known result of the method was a buffet table completed in 1929, designed on the basis of meticulous set of measurements of dinnerware, glassware, table cloths, and suchlike found in the average Danish home. The aim was for the buffet to make as efficient use of space as possible, something it also succeed in doing. Although he perhaps exaggerated a little,

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Gelfer-Jørgensen. (København: Nordisk forum for formgivningshistorie, 1986), 5–6; Lis Stainforth, “Danske Møbler 1930–1940,” in *Nordisk funktionalisme 1925-1950: 15 foredrag fra det nordiske seminar afholdt juni 1985 på det Danske kunstindustrimuseum*, ed. Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen (København: Nordisk forum for formgivningshistorie, 1986), 70

138 Kaare Klint, “Undervisningen I Møbeltegning Ved Kunstakademiet.” *Arkitekten. Maanedshæfte*. 32, no. 10 (October 1930): 193–195

139 Rigmor Andersen, *Kaare Klint: Møbler* (København: Kunstakademiet, 1979), 58

Ulf Hård af Segerstad later claimed that “it caused a sensation because it held exactly twice as much as the ordinary sideboard without being any larger”.<sup>140</sup>

In 1927 Klint proposed that Copenhagen’s Museum of Art and Design [Kunstindustrimuseet] should stage an exhibition of items “new and old, Danish and foreign” which corresponded to his idea of ‘standard types’.<sup>141</sup> Although this did not come to pass, the museum did in 1932 host the exhibition *Britisk Brugskunst* [British Applied Art], as part of the major export fair *Den britiske Udstilling* [The British Exhibition].<sup>142</sup> *Britisk Brugskunst* was arranged and curated by Rasmussen, under the influence of Klint’s ideas.<sup>143</sup> On display was an eclectic selection of objects, all of which were considered to be both “typically British” and to have reached a state of timeless perfection through a process of steady artisanal refinement which focused on the objects’ qualities rather than their decorations.<sup>144</sup> As Rasmussen described it in the exhibition’s catalogue, they were “modern without being modernist, classic without being classicist”.<sup>145</sup> Most memorable were perhaps those objects arranged over the first spreads of the subsequent *Britisk Brugskunst* book: a range of balls developed for various British games, billiards, bowls, cricket, croquet, football, golf, lawn tennis,

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140 Ulf Hård af Segerstad, *Scandinavian Design* (London: Studio Books, 1961), 97

141 “nye og gamle, danske og fremmede”. Rasmussen, *Britisk Brugskunst*, 5

142 *Den Britiske Udstilling* was arranged by the British Department of Overseas Trade and the recently founded Danish-British Association.

143 Olaf Lind claims Klint’s methods represented Rasmussen’s own ideals for the creation of applied art [brugskunst] and architecture. See: Olaf Lind, *Arkitekten Steen Eiler Rasmussen* (København: Nordisk Forlag A/S, 2008), 83

144 “typisk britiske Ting”. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, “Fører Til Udstillingen *Britisk Brugskunst*,” *Danbrit* 2, no. 7–9 (1932): i. For detail on Rasmussen’s time in London see: Lind, *Arkitekten Steen Eiler Rasmussen*, 84–85.

145 “moderne uden at være modernistiske, klassiske uden at være klassicistiske”. Rasmussen, “Fører Til Udstillingen *Britisk Brugskunst*”, i

polo, snooker, squash and table tennis – not to forget “the mighty medicine ball”.<sup>146</sup> Other objects included a wicker basket and chairs, umbrellas and canes, Pear’s soap, Wedgwood tea pots, a tweed suit, a rain coat, jars of honey from Fortnum & Mason and a Thames punt. Although the exhibition was highly successful and largely well received in the press, a recurring criticism was that the items on display were not everyday ones as Rasmussen claimed, but rather luxury objects made for the English upper classes. For instance, a review in *Arkitekten* criticised a heavy leather suit case, which by Rasmussen’s own admission was created for people with “coolies to carry their luggage”.<sup>147</sup> Most damning in this respect was perhaps the inclusion of a polo saddle, lent to the exhibition by none other than Edward, Prince of Wales (1894–1972).<sup>148</sup>

As the museum’s director Vilhelm Slomann pointed out at the time, the idea of standard types was not unique to Denmark. It had, for instance, found expression in the *Ewige Formen* [Eternal Forms] exhibition, held in the Bavarian National Gallery’s *Neue Sammlung* [New Collection] in Munich 1931.<sup>149</sup> According to Joan Campbell’s history of the German *Werkbund*, this exhibition “sought to demonstrate the existence of a ‘tradition’ of modern form by displaying functional objects from the past”.<sup>150</sup> The *Werkbund*’s interest in *Typisierung*, or the making of industrial types, can be traced back to the ‘*Werkbund* debates’ of 1914, when Hermann Muthesius (1861–1927) argued in favour of this approach in opposition to Henry van de Velde’s (1863–1957) emphasis

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146 “den mægtige Medicine Ball”. Rasmussen, *Britisk Brugskunst*, 8

147 “Kulier til at bære Bagagen”. *Ibid.*, 72

148 Rasmussen, “Fører Til Udstillingen *Britisk Brugskunst*”, vii

149 Rasmussen, *Britisk Brugskunst*, p.5

150 Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 218

on artistic individualism. Although they were argued to have achieved “maximum economy” through a process of “mechanical selection” rather than through craft tradition, another well-known expression of the idea of standard types were the mass-produced *objet-types* [object type] of the Purists Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) and Amadée Ozenfant.<sup>151</sup> Coincidentally, one of Le Corbusier’s favourite examples of an *objet-type* was a plain English briar pipe, mentioned alongside a handful of modern life’s other creations in *Vers une architecture*,<sup>152</sup> in which it is also used as its closing image.<sup>153</sup> As commented by Reyner Banham, this closing image was “offered without explanation or justification, but with the clear implication that this was the standard to which architecture should aspire”.<sup>154</sup> Whilst no briar pipes were on display at the *Britisk Brugskunst* exhibition they would certainly not have been out of place there.

Because the exhibition was a resounding popular success it was decided to commemorate it with a book. This was to be entirely of Rasmussen’s creation. He wrote the text, specified the page design, and art-directed the photography.<sup>155</sup> Having complete

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151 Le Corbusier and Amadée Ozenfant, “Purism.” in *Modern Artists on Art*, ed. Robert L. Herbert, Second, enlarged edition (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2000), 56. Originally published as: Jeanneret and Ozenfant. “Le Purism.” *L’esprit nouveau*, no. 4 (1920): 369–86

152 The other creations were modern costume (dress), the fountain pen, the eversharp pencil, the typewriter, the telephone, the “admirable” office furniture of the day, plate glass, ‘Innovation’ trunks, the safety razor, the bowler hat, the limousine, the steamship and the airplane. See: Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1986), 95

153 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, 289

154 Peter Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*. 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 213

155 Rasmussen art directed the photos taken by Herman Bente of Jonals Co., the studio responsible for introducing modern advertising photography to Denmark. These constituted the overwhelming majority of the photographs used. The remaining photographs were sourced from Witherington Studios or were Rasmussen’s own.



control, Rasmussen decided on a system where he would write one paragraph for each image included (**fig.4.04**). Every spread could therefore be set up according to the same principles: the paragraph of text was arranged on the left-hand page, and the photograph on the right. Because the lengths of each paragraph—and to a lesser extent each photograph—varied, oversized pagination and drop-caps were used in conjunction with the upper right hand corner of the photograph to create a consistent rectangular shape which held the various elements together. The typeface used was Baskerville. This was not only a suitably British choice, but one that held significance for Rasmussen as a sort of ‘standard type’ in itself. In one of his later books, *En Bog om noget andet* [A Book About Something Else] he elaborated briefly on his preference for Caslon and Baskerville. “Back then, one understood how to *culture* type – that is, not only to cultivate the individual letterform, but also their relationship to –and distance from– one another so that they created the clearest and most easily discernable word shapes”.<sup>156</sup> The cover (**fig.4.05**) was remarkably self-effacing and restrained. It consisted only of the title *Britisk Brugskunst*. This was set, as the rest of the book in Baskerville, but here in upper case and arranged more in line with a modernist sensibility, ranged left, to the extreme top of the page. The buff speckled card it was printed on was testament to Rasmussen’s interest in the materiality of paper.<sup>157</sup> Much later he would claim that many of his books did not start with the words, but with the paper and the question of

156 “Dengang havde man forstaaet at *kultivere* Skriften, det vil sige at opdyrke ikke blot hver Bogstavs Form, men ogsaa deres indbyrdes Forhold og deres Afstand fra hinanden, saa at de dannede de klareste og lettest opfattede Ordbilleder”. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, “Ogsaa et Sovemiddel.” in *En Bog Om Noget Andet, Læsning Til at Falde I Søvn På* (København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1940), 22. Emphasis in original.

157 Rasmussen’s interest was likely derived from Danish architecture’s concern with ‘material effects’ as expressed in the influential article: Carl Petersen, “Stoflige Virkninger,” *Architekten* 18 (1919): 253–57.

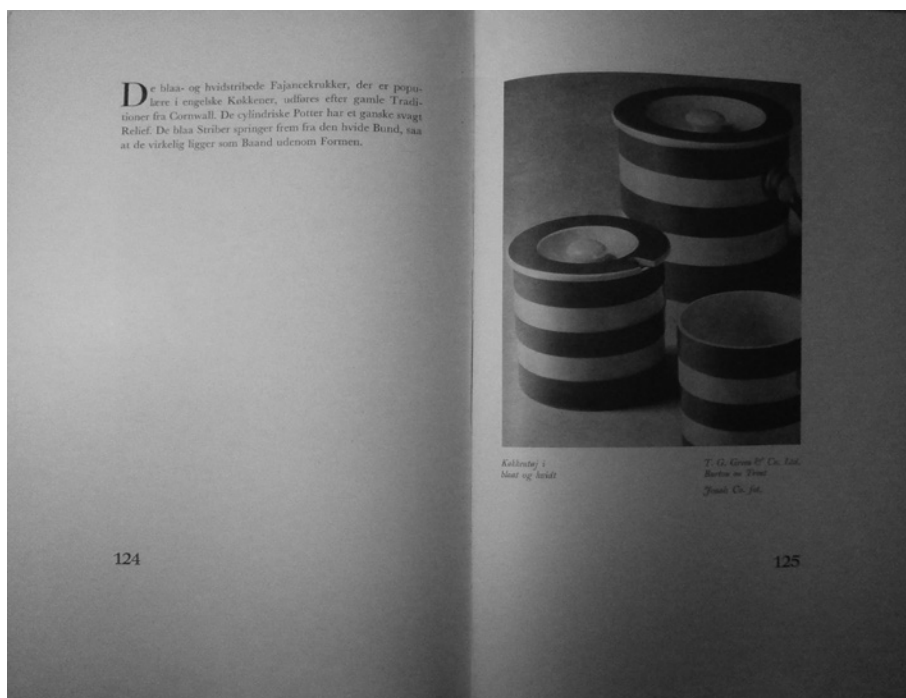
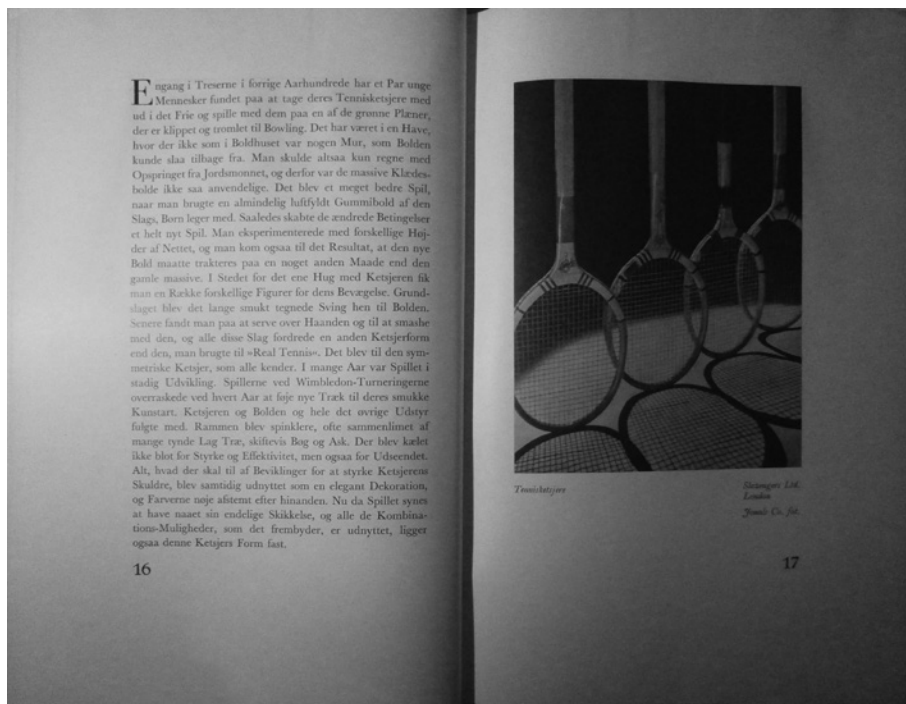
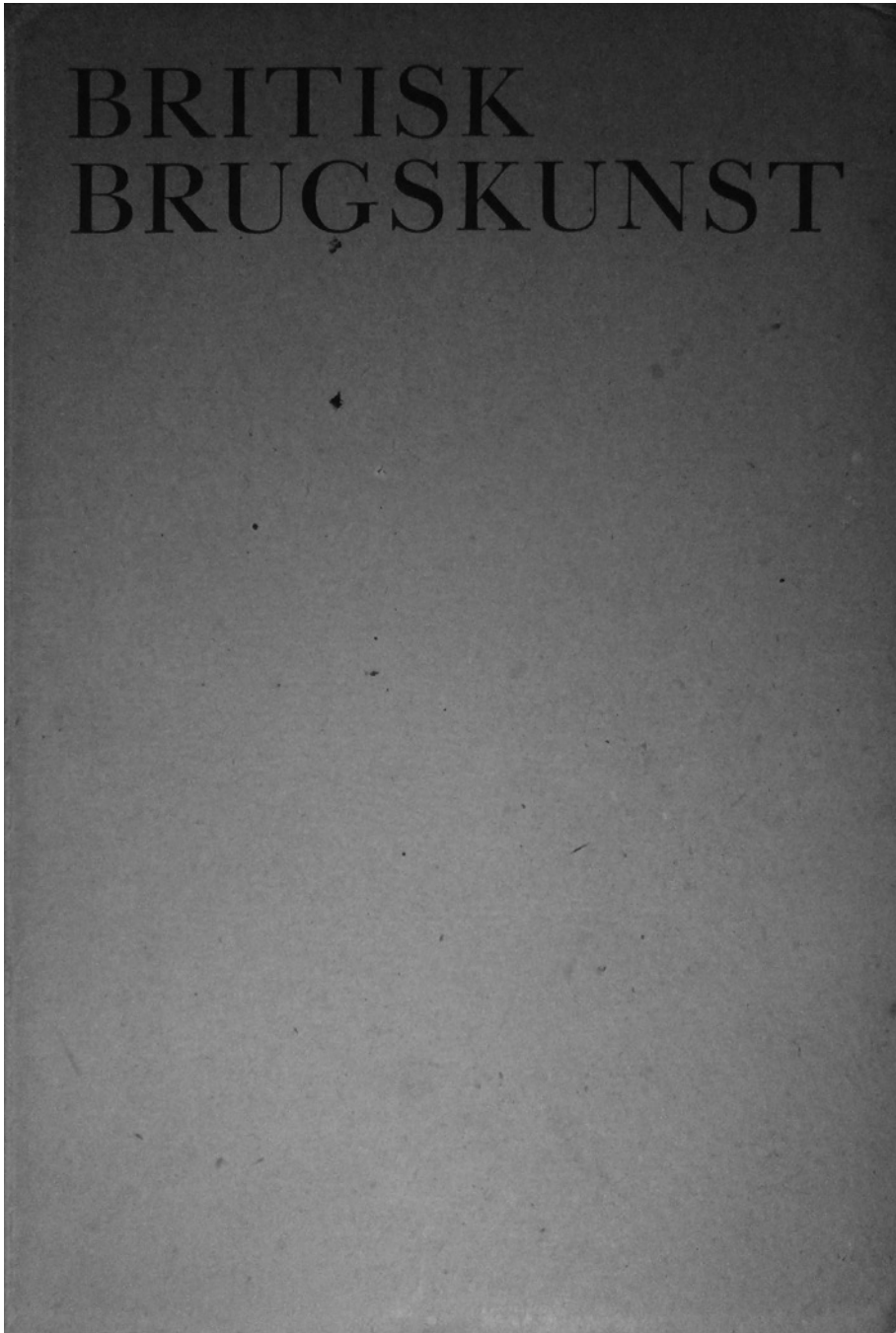


Fig. 4.04

Page designs for *Britisk Brugskunst*. Top: a spread featuring a long paragraph on tennis racquets. Above: a short paragraph on Cornishware. Design: Steen Eiler Rasmussen (1933).



**Fig. 4.05**

**British Brugskunst, cover.**

**Design: Steen Eiler Rasmussen (1933).**

what it could be used for.<sup>158</sup> With its absence of either author's or museum's names, its lack of ornamentation and its emphasis on material quality, the cover can be seen to reflect the same ideals as the anonymous artisanal 'standard types' showcased in the *Britisk Brugskunst* exhibition.

### **The novel: as reading machine and book for everyday use**

During the early 1930s voices within the trade, like Lenning's and Nordlunde's started nuancing the arguments made around New Typography's relation to the book. Lenning questioned the commonly perceived division between jobbing and book typography outlined in **chapter 3**, as he did not think it represented a "rational dividing line between different typographic problems".<sup>159</sup> He argued that a number of types of non-fiction works, like text books, reference books, statistical works, illustrated books and catalogues were all "in need of [a] new typography".<sup>160</sup> Such books would, according to Lenning, benefit from adopting strategies used in advertising—such as the active use of headings, rules and tables—to make the content as clear and comprehensible as possible. What such a typography might look like in practice can be seen in Lenning own book *Normalformaten* [Standard Formats, 1931]. Printed and published by Bröderna Lagerström, it was held up by Nordlunde as a model example of how "the *idea* behind *Elemental Typography*" should be applied to the book, precisely because it was clearly organised and used bold headings

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158 Rasmussen, "Bogen Som Industriprodukt", 68

159 "rationell gräns mellan olika typografiska problem". Lenning, Einar. "Inför Nya Typografiska Uppgifter. Forts. Och Slut Från Föreg. N:r." Edited by Lagerström, Hugo. *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 33, no. 10 (1932): 361.

160 *Ibid.*, 362

to orient the reader.<sup>161</sup> However, Lenning did not extend his calls for reform to the novel. This he considered a separate and coherent typographic category. Nordlunde made a similar argument. In an article discussing New Typography's impact on the book, he came to the conclusion that there were three basic types of book: works of fiction (or books of continuous text), illustrated books and text books. Whilst the two latter categories were open to reform, works of fiction belonged "totally and completely to the traditional typography".<sup>162</sup> The reason the novel was not in need of reform, Lenning and Nordlunde agreed, was that it was already functional and that reform was therefore not needed. In essence, they were arguing that traditional book typography was itself a sort of 'standard type'. According to Nordlunde:

elementary typography (...) was unable to touch the work of fiction, because it was already Functionalist and its form corresponded to the technical requirements to the highest possible degree.<sup>163</sup>

'Technical' in this context referred not only to the physical process of setting type, but also to the manner in which it was arranged, and the typefaces employed. Similarly, in relation to the design of a Renaissance book, Lenning commented: "These pages from

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161 "Ideen i den elementære Typografi". C. Volmer Nordlunde, "Bøger Og Elementær Typografi," *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 24, no. 21 (1933): 325. Emphasis in original.

162 "helt og holdent den traditionelle Typografi". Ibid., 323. Nordlunde's article was also published as: C. Volmer Nordlunde, "Böcker och elementär typografi," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 34, no. 11 (1933): 385–91.

163 "Den elementära typografien (...) kunde icke röra vid den skönlitterära boken, ty den var allaredan funktionalistisk och dess form motsvarade i största möjliga grad de tekniska kraven". C. Volmer. Nordlunde, "Begreppet bok," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 36, no. 12 (1935): 463

the 1500s would hardly be able to receive a more appealing and purposeful typographic design today”.<sup>164</sup>

Conversely, New Typography was in the context of the book considered to be ‘un-functional’, as it was seen to promote practices that were economically unsound and which hampered readability. In terms of economy, it was held that Functionalism in typography meant producing pieces of print in the most economical way possible,<sup>165</sup> and that to keep costs low working processes should therefore be as efficient as they could be.<sup>166</sup>

On these grounds traditionalist voices argued that a number of practices associated with the new style should be abandoned. The possibility of the type area of illustrated books, brochures and catalogues changing from page to page depending on the layout, instead of remaining a uniform rectangle throughout, was seen as a time-wasting complication.<sup>167</sup> Because the use of rules and areas of flat colour often corresponded closely to the text, these would have to be replaced by new material, which had to be cut to measure, in the event of author’s corrections, resulting in additional costs being incurred for both time and materials. Lastly, the fashion for letting images and rules bleed off the page, was criticised for requiring larger sheets of paper than otherwise necessary and thereby being uneconomical.<sup>168</sup> It was also seen as

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164 Dessa boksidor från 1500-talet skulle idag knappast hava kunnat erhålla någon mera tilltalande och ändamålsenlig typografisk gestaltning”. Einar Lenning, “Inför Nya Typografiska Uppgifter,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 33, no. 9 (1932): 333

165 Hedvall, “Den Moderna Typografien Och Dess Avarter”, 212

166 Sørensen, “Typografisk Funktionalisme Og Dens Misforstaaelser”, 22

167 G. Smith, “Den nya stilens ekonomiska konsekvenser,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 34, no. 1 (1933): 26

168 See: Oscar L. Isacson, “Utfallande Linjer Och Bilder,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 33, no. 10 (1932): 367; Smith, “Den nya stilens ekonomiska konsekvenser”, 26, 28

more technically challenging and time-consuming for the printer to print such works than those where images were kept safely within the page margins.<sup>169</sup> An additional objection was that parts of the image would necessarily be cropped off, not only in the finishing process, but also if one chose to have the book bound after purchase — as was the custom.

Readability was another key concern which became wrapped up in the debate around Functionalism. For instance, Max Rich. Kirste claimed that “the main demand made of all book-work today is readability. That — and only that — is the book’s most important function”.<sup>170</sup> Looking back upon the 1930s at the end of the decade, the Swedish printer Bror Zachrisson described the book as a “reading machine”,<sup>171</sup> thereby adopting the French poet Paul Valéry’s (1871–1945) reformulation of Le Corbusier’s famous statement “the house is a machine for living in”.<sup>172</sup> In this context, New Typography’s demand for sans serif type was criticised as it was widely considered less readable than serif type, particularly when used for setting continuous text.<sup>173</sup> According to Nordlunde,

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169 Smith, “Den nya stilens ekonomiska konsekvenser”, 27

170 “Hovedkravet til alt bokvirke er idag letleselighet. Den — og bare den — er bokens viktigste funksjon”. Max Rich Kirste, “Dyptrykk–offset–boktrykk. En Kritisk Studie.” *Norsk Boktrykk Kalender 1934* 14 (1933): 70. Emphasis in original.

171 Bror Zachrisson. “Det Var Alltså Inte Genom Exempel...”, 100.

172 From ‘Les deux vertus d’un livre’, originally published in 1926, and in 1927 reprinted in *Arts et Métiers Graphiques*, 1 (15 September 1927): 3-8. For an English translation see: Paul Valéry, “Two Virtues of a Book,” *The Living Age* 334, no. 4323 (1928): 262–64. For the original quote, see: Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*, 4

173 Both Lenning and Nordlunde were convinced that serif faces (Antikva) were more readable than both sans and slab serif faces. See: C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Skrifter Og Elementær Typografi,” *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltens Principalforening* 30, no. 1 (1934): 6; Lenning, “Inför Nya Typografiska Uppgifter”, 333. In 1939 the Norwegian printer Wilhelm Heine wrote that one had quickly tired of the sans serif in the early thirties, and although it still was used in some extent for jobbing and advertising work it had long since become “unthinkable” to use it for setting books: Wilh. Heine, “Moderne Typografi,” *Grafisk Kringsjå. Faglig Månedlig Tillegg Til Typografiske Meddelelser* 4, no. 10 (1939): 2

both Tschichold's *Die neue Typographie* (1928) and Paul Renner's *mechanisierte grafik* [Mechanised Graphics, 1931] could be held up as deterring examples in this respect.<sup>174</sup> *Mechanisierte grafik* demonstrated that even the creator of Futura himself found it necessary to counteract the typeface's poor readability with a overly generous amount of leading. The result was, according to Nordlunde, both uneconomical and monotonous.<sup>175</sup> *Die neue Typographie* was an example of how New Typography's formal requirements could overrule the functional demands of the task in hand, having been set in sans serif even though Tschichold himself, according to Nordlunde, had admitted that "there is of yet no sans serif suited to book setting".<sup>176</sup> Nordlunde was likely thinking of the passage in Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto which allowed for the use of Mediæval Antikva in anticipation of a sans serif suited for continuous text, the same passage Lagerström used to justify his selection of type faces in his 'modified form' of New Typography. However, in using a quote from an older source to criticise Tschichold's design Nordlunde is being misleading and selective as *Die neue Typographie* states that "the present book shows that sanserif can be read as easily as any other typeface",<sup>177</sup> and "the sanserif is absolutely and always better".<sup>178</sup> An unlikely proponent of Functionalist ideas was the Danish Society of Book Craft [Forening for Boghaandværk], previously closely associated with the Danish typographic revival. It had

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174 Paul Renner. *mechanisierte grafik: Schrift, Typo, Foto, Film, Farbe*. (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1930)

175 Nordlunde, "Bøger Og Elementær Typografi", 322

176 "der endnu ikke findes nogen Grotesk, der egner sig til Bogsats, og at man derfor bør holde sig til de gode, upersonlige Antikva-skrifter". Nordlunde, "Skrifter Og Elementær Typografi", 6

177 Tschichold, *The New Typography*, 227

178 *Ibid.*, 74



reassessed its aims and purposes following the death of founder Frederik Hendriksen in 1932, and devised a “new programme” which manifested itself in a series of initiatives all of which appeared over the course of 1934.<sup>179</sup> It founded the annual competition Aarets bedste Bøger [The Best Books of the Year], relaunched of the association’s journal *Bogvennen* [The Bibliophile] in a new Functionalist design courtesy of its new editor — the illustrator and ceramicist Ebbe Sadolin (1900–82), and produced an edition of Maxim Gorky’s (1868–1936) *Min Barndom* [Childhood, 1933].<sup>180</sup> *Min Barndom* was to serve as a model of the new ideal type of the *brugsbog*, or Book for Everyday Use.

Aarets bedste Bøger was modelled on the British Fifty Books of the Year competition which had been arranged by the First Edition Club since 1929. This was in turn modelled on the American competition of the same name, arranged by the Arts Club since 1906, before being taken over by the American Institute for Graphic Arts (AIGA) in 1922.<sup>181</sup> The first Danish exposure to this competition had come in 1932, when the British selections for the years 1930 and 1931 were exhibited as part of Steen Eiler Rasmussen’s *Britisk Brugskunst* exhibition. Of particular interest was the point system used to assess the entries into the British competition. It had been conceived so as to even out the field between expensive luxury editions and cheap books, allowing the jury to arrive at a selection of titles which displayed excellence in typography or other areas of book craft within the monetary constraints of the job. For Nordlunde, this represented the hitherto last stage

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179 “nye Program”. Erik Zahle, “[Untitled],” *Bogvennen* (1934): 20

180 Maxim Gorki, *Min Barndom* (København: Henrik Koppels Forlag, 1933)

181 Ellen Mazur Thomson, *Origin of Graphic Design in America, 1870–1920* (Yale University Press, 1997), 96–97

of a journey in typographic development initiated by the private presses. Beginning with the ornate page designs of William Morris at the Kelmscott Press it had been furthered by the pared-down work of Thomas Cobden-Sanderson at the Doves Press with its emphasis on readability and typeforms. In this way, it had moved “from the decorative to the purely typographic, from the unimportant to the important”.<sup>182</sup> With *The Fifty Best Books* typography had progressed yet further, “from the Sunday to the everyday, an acknowledgement of that each and every book which fulfils its purpose is beautiful”.<sup>183</sup> At the end of the decade he would make a similar evolutionary argument about New Typography, claiming it had been as “a kind of sanitation of that book work which had been forced into a form to which it did not fit”.<sup>184</sup>

The new focus on the *brugsbog* informed the production of Gorky’s *Min Barndom*. It was intended to show that it was possible to produce a good quality book at an affordable price, and also sought to address a number of functional concerns related to the materiality of the novel, as can be surmised from the lead article of the redesigned *Bogvennen*’s first issue, entitled ‘The Functional Book’ [Den funktionelle bog]. Written by literary critic Hakon Stangerup (1908–76), it criticised Danish book production for not making books suited to the practicalities of everyday life.<sup>185</sup> In the case of the novel, this should be to be easy to handle, comfortable in the hand, and easy to transport – as it was often read on the go. In contrast, a focus on the material qualities associated with fine

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182 “fra det dekorerede til det rent typografiske, fra det uvæsentlige til det væsentlige”.

C. Volmer Nordlunde, “Engelske Bøger,” *Bogvennen* (1934), 5. Emphasis in original

183 “Fra Søndagen til Hverdagen, en Tilkendegivelse af, at enhver Bog, der opfylder sit Formaal, er smuk”. Ibid.

184 Nordlunde, “Elementær Bogtypografi”, 293

185 Hakon Stangerup, “Den funktionelle bog,” *Bogvennen* (1934): 1–2

printing, and a desire to produce books considered to be ‘nice’ by the general public, had led many Danish novels to be published in large ungainly formats using heavy high-quality paper which bulked them up to an unnecessary extent.<sup>186</sup> Stangerup’s description of the functional novel fits the new edition of Gorky’s *Childhood* perfectly. Printed on light paper in a in a small format (197×126mm), it was only slightly larger than contemporaneous paperbacks.<sup>187</sup> Because it was sent out to members of Forening for Boghaandværk alongside the issue of *Bogvennen* where Stangerup’s article appeared, the similarity between his description and *Childhood* would not have been lost on his readers.

## Conclusion

This chapter began by detailing the important role the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 played in promoting Functionalism, not only amongst designers and architects, but with the wider public. It continued by describing how the exhibition’s aesthetic was shaped by its commissary-general Gregor Paulsson’s active approach to commissioning. As part of this argument, it has maintained that it was no coincidence that the first item of typography produced for the exhibition, *Stockholmsutställningens program*, was also the first commercial item of New Typography to be created in Scandinavia. Whilst subsequent printed items, following Sigurd Lewerentz’s

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186 The use of heavy paper was also criticised by the jury of ‘Aarets Bedste Bogarbejde’ [The Best Book-work of the Year]: Erik Zahle, “Aarets bedste bogarbejde: De tyve udvalgte bøger,” *Bogvennen* (1934): 30

187 For instance the Albatross series, introduced 1932 (181x111mm), subsequently taken up by Penguin in 1935. The long-running Tauchnitz Editions, launched in 1837, had a more squat format (164x118mm). Stanley Morison defined the size of a ‘pocket book’ to 4 ½ × 6 ¾ in. (197×114mm): Stanley Morison, *First Principles of Typography*. Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1967), 17. Originally published in *The Fleuron VII* (1930)

involvement in posters and signage, made increased use of features such as sans serif type and photography, they were broadly executed in the modified form of New Typography developed by Lagerström in **chapter 2**. Although these items contributed to the term ‘Functionalist Typography’ being seen as a synonym to ‘Elemental’ or ‘New’ typography, Uno Åhrén’s cover design for *acceptera* went the furthest in aligning Tschichold’s principles of 1925 with the Functionalist project in Scandinavia.

Following the Stockholm Exhibition, a popularised version of Functionalism, *funkis*, took hold in typography as in other fields of design. By those who considered themselves Functionalists, this was dismissed as the mindless copying of formal features which showed little understanding of Functionalism’s underlying principles. Certainly, much of what was described as *funkis* in typography, such as the cover of Kunstindustrimuseet’s yearbook had little value beyond the aesthetic. However, this was not always the case. In particular, pictorial typography, could be defended on the grounds that it fulfilled a function. Whilst these compositions may look clumsy or of little artistic value, it held potential as a strategy through which compositors could generate their own image material — without involving practitioners from competing trades. As **chapter 3** showed, material constraints of production had a substantial impact on the degree to which the compositional freedom of the individual practitioner could be maintained. Moreover, as **chapter 2** argued, winning back trade from competitors and protecting the creative freedom of the compositor were two reasons why the printing trade chose to engage with New Typography in the first place.

On the other hand, the shift in terminology from ‘Elemental’ to ‘Functionalist’ changed the focus of typographic debate. Taken up as a domestication strategy, the vocabulary of Functionalism made it possible to criticise Tschichold’s formal principles on the grounds of self-defined ideas of functionality. Previously, discussions of New Typography had centred on the relative merits of the formal principles put forth in the ‘elementare typographie’ manifesto, how these could be adapted to suit a local context, and the danger New Typography posed to traditional values and practices of printing. As there was no text codifying Functionalist Typography, and the term ‘Functionalism’ was seen to so clearly broadcast the word ‘function’ from within, this became the new central debating point. However, because interpretations of what was functional varied widely the debate was subject to what Tim Benton, in a discussion of English architectural criticism, labelled a “creeping inclusiveness” in the definition of function, and it became possible to criticise Tschichold’s manifesto and other aspects of New Typography on the grounds that they were ‘un-functional’, ‘exaggerations’ or ‘misunderstandings’ which failed to grasp the ‘true’ nature of Functionalism.<sup>188</sup> As a result, those with Traditionalist preferences were no longer confined to defending the ‘Old Typography’ against the new ideas, but were able to recast elements of their practice as positive contributions to a modern, functional typography. Another important aspect of this shift was that the alignment with Functionalism led to the “opaque art theories” of Elementarism being decoupled from New Typography,

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188 As seen through the lens of Larry L. Ligo’s *The Concept of Function in Twentieth-Century Architectural Criticism* (1974), with its chapter headings: structural articulation, physical function, psychological function, social function, and ‘cultural-existential’ function: Tim Benton, “The Myth of Function,” in *Modernism in Design*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), 41

making it possible to found arguments on the basis of ‘common sense’ and ‘practical experience’ — notions relying not only on observation and reasoning like that of Billow and Stangerup, but also on a sense of tradition and history such as that of Klint, Rasmussen and Nordlunde.<sup>189</sup> The change of terminology from Elemental to Functionalist can therefore be seen to have benefited those with a preference for Traditionalist aesthetics, who whilst previously on the back foot were able to gain momentum and increasingly succeed in shaping debate on their own terms.

The following, final chapter of this thesis, looks at New Typography’s place in the political sphere. It picks up on the work of artists, poets and activists discussed in **chapter 1**, offers a discussion of the particular case of the Swedish Cooperative Society, and also looks at New Typography’s use in party political materials. As will be demonstrated, practitioners working in these contexts purposefully adopted a form of New Typography which lay closer to the ‘wild’ typography of the avant garde than the domesticated forms discussed in this and the two preceding chapters.

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189 As expressed by Carl Z. Hæggström in the debate on New Typography arranged by Svenska Boktryckareföreningen [The Swedish Master Printers’ Association] on the 5th of April 1929. Kg. “Den nya stilen. Uppmärksammade diskussioner i Svenska Boktryckareforeningen och Stockholms Faktorsforening,” *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 30, no. 4 (1929): 152







# The future-people and the middle way: The political ties of New Typography and photomontage

As discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, New Typography's roots are commonly traced back to experiments in poetry and abstract painting. Through contact with Constructivism it gained strong political purpose as one of a wider set of measures intended to bring about a new society free from the influence of Bourgeois culture. However, whilst it had a significant impact in certain intellectual circles, Communism was never more than a fringe movement in Scandinavia. Instead, the period from the late 1920s onwards is that in which the Social Democratic parties of the three countries were first able to form governments: Denmark in 1929, Sweden in 1932 and Norway in 1935. Although all three countries formed national unity governments during the Second World War, Social Democrats would otherwise stay in power with few disruptions until the 1960s and '70s. In literature on Scandinavian design, a familiar argument goes that Functionalism's aesthetic was 'softened' or 'modified' by its encounter with existing craft traditions. The resulting designs are understood to be characterised by "restraint in form and decoration, embodiment

of traditional values, unity of form and function, and reliance on natural materials”.<sup>1</sup> The bent wood furniture which Alvar Aalto (1898–1976) first developed for the Paimio tuberculosis sanatorium between 1929 and 1932 is usually cited as a prime example. Here, the quintessentially modernist tubular steel furniture pioneered by Marcel Breuer (1902–81) at the Bauhaus was reinterpreted through the use of Nordic materials and technologies such as birch and a lamination technique developed for ski production.<sup>2</sup> That Functionalism was modified in this way is also sometimes also seen in light of Scandinavian political culture, and then particularly against Social Democracy’s strong standing in the three countries. It is argued that the softening of Functionalism and the ability to strike a balance between the political and economic absolutisms of Communism and Capitalism — as Marquis Childs, described it in his best-selling *Sweden: The Middle Way* (1936) — were made possible by a tendency amongst the Scandinavian peoples for pragmatism and tradition for seeking consensus and compromise.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the section on Scandinavia in Jeremy Aynsley’s *Nationalism and Internationalism: Design in the 20th Century* (1993) links “capitalism with a benign face” to “modernism with a human face”.<sup>4</sup> As mentioned in the **introduction**, such descriptions are similar to those of successful instances of domestication.

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1 David Revere McFadden, “Scandinavian Modern: A Century in Profile,” in *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880–1980*, ed. David Revere McFadden (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1982), 13-14

2 David Raizman, *History of Modern Design: Graphics and Products Since the Industrial Revolution* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2003), 202-203

3 Marquis Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936), 21. Although Childs largely focuses on Sweden, as he considered it the best example, his book also includes discussions of Danish and Norwegian developments.

4 Jeremy Aynsley, *Nationalism and Internationalism: Design in the 20th Century*. (Victoria & Albert Museum, 1993), 42

Magdalena Gram has speculated that debates on New Typography in Sweden may have been “muted by a reformist spirit and the ascent of Social Democracy”.<sup>5</sup> Whilst it is certainly true that politics were less polarised in Scandinavia than in Germany, and that this may have affected the atmosphere of typographic debate, I do not believe that New Typography was domesticated by the three countries’ graphic trades as a result of their ties to Social Democracy, or because master printers and compositors possessed any innate Scandinavian pragmatic traits. As this thesis has argued so far, New Typography was domesticated according to the professional needs, abilities and preferences of individual practitioners, groups and trades — a process which, as shown in **chapter 1**, also took place in Germany. It is also worth remembering that although trade journals like *Grafisk revy* and publications like *Norsk boktrykk kalender* were produced by trade unions who supported the Social Democratic parties, educational societies were — as described in **chapter 2** — conceived as expressly non-political entities. Moreover, the idea of a Middle Way was rejected certain Social Democratic politicians. For instance, the Norwegian Finn Moe (1902–71), claimed this American perspective was “based upon a series of illusions”, and that “socialists in Sweden, in Denmark and in Norway do not believe (...) a compromise between capitalism and socialism is possible”.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, the close ties between Social Democracy, Functionalism and New Typography merit closer scrutiny.

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5 “dämpades i hög grad av en reformistisk anda och en socialdemokrati på frammarsch”. Magdalena Gram, “När Typografin Blev ‘modern’: Om Modernismens Genombrott i Svensk Typografi,” *Biblis* 34 (2006): 60

6 Finn Moe. *Does Norwegian Labour Seek the Middle Way?* L.I.D. Pamphlet Series. (New York: The League for Industrial Democracy, 1937), 3, 10

After all, the previous chapter maintained that the closest alignment between Functionalism and the New Typography of Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto could be found in *acceptera's* cover design. This book was published on Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetareparti's [Sweden's Social Democratic Labour Party, SAP] publishing house Tiden. In other words, it was not only closely aligned to both Functionalism and New Typography, but also to Social Democracy. Another well-known book, which carried many of the same connotations, was Danish journalist and politician Arne Sørensen's (1906–78) book *Funktionalisme og Samfund* [Functionalism and Society, 1933]. Like *acceptera*, it featured a cover illustration in photomontage, and whilst its typography did not heed the call for *kleinschreibung*, it was nevertheless set at an angle to instil a sense of urgency and set in a fashionable quasi-stencil typeface. The title page, that most conservative of book design elements, was set in Futura and ranged left. Frequent use was made of bold emphasis in the running text, and it was illustrated with photography and photomontage. It was published on the Danish Social Democratic party's publishing house Fremad [Forwards]. This was a natural fit for Sørensen, whose sympathies lay with the Social Democrats at the time.<sup>7</sup> He left the reader in no doubt as to Functionalism's political purpose, proclaiming in bold type: "**Functionalism is applied socialism**".<sup>8</sup> This chapter will probe further into the political associations of

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7 Sørensen was a Social Democrat up until 1936, when he founded the anti-parliamentarian and nationalist Dansk Samling [Danish Unity]. He then distanced himself from the views expressed in *Funktionalisme og Samfund*. See: Hans Hertel, "Pionerår, Ekspansionsår, Kriseår. Fremad 1912–87: Fra Den Store Krig Til Den Kolde Krig, Fra Billigbogsrevolutionen Til Bogklub-Krigen." In *Fremad. Arbejderbevægelsens Forlag 1912-1987*, ed. Hans Hertel (København: Fremad, 1987), 22

8 "**funktionalismen er anvendt socialismen**". Arne Sørensen, *Funktionalisme og Samfund* (København: Fremad, 1933), 168. Emphasis (bold) in original.

New Typography and photomontage by examining the publications of politically minded artists, poets and intellectuals on the left, thereby drawing a line into the 1930s from **chapter 1**'s discussion of D.N.S.S.' earlier politically charged work. It will then look at the graphic materials of 'konsum', the grocery store of the Swedish Cooperative Society, Kooperativa Förbundet. This is of interest not only because cooperation is often considered the 'third pillar' of the labour movement (alongside the two pillars of trade unionism and political parties), but because it for Marquis Childs played a central role in 'controlling capitalism'. In closing, the official materials of the Social Democratic parties will be analysed, and it will be argued that these made use of photomontage in a strategic way to reach out to women and young voters.

Photomontage and photography were considered integral components of New Typography. As detailed in **chapter 1**, Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' manifesto included photography amongst its elemental means. Moreover, the special issue of *Typographische Mitteilungen* included Moholy-Nagy's text 'Typo-photo', which argued for a close integration of text and image. Tschichold later confirmed the significance of typo-photo to New Typography, calling it "one of the most significant means of graphic expression in today's typography and advertising".<sup>9</sup> He also wrote warmly about photomontage in *Die neue Typographie*, citing John Heartfield's book jackets for the Malik-Verlag and Max Burchartz's promotional literature for Bochumer Verein as the best examples to have been created in the commercial field.<sup>10</sup>

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9 Jan Tschichold. *The New Typography*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2006), 95

10 *Ibid.*, 90–91

Like New Typography more broadly, photomontage carried strong political associations as a result of the circumstances surrounding its development. Although manipulation of the photograph is as old as the photograph itself,<sup>11</sup> it was not taken up as an artistic technique until the Berlin Dadaists and Soviet Constructivists did so immediately after the First World War.<sup>12</sup> In the Soviet Union it was used in an overtly political context from the onset, in the propaganda posters of Gustaf Klutis (1895–1938).<sup>13</sup> In Germany, it was Heartfield who became seen as the principal practitioner of political photomontage through his work for the Communist weekly *AIZ* [*Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung*, Workers' Illustrated Paper, 1924–38] and the German Communist party [Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD]. In Denmark, it was Poul Henningsen's *Kritisk Revy* which first took photomontage up as an artistic medium in Denmark — as noted in **chapter 4**.<sup>14</sup> Whilst Henningsen's sympathies were certainly on the left, his views were not party-politically aligned. The petite bourgeoisie and

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11 As noted in: Dawn Ades, *Photomontage*. Revised and Enlarged Edition. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), 7. In Denmark both Kunstindustrimuseet's director Vilhelm Slomann and the leader of the Monde-group Rudolf Broby-Johansen noted the use of collage on Hans Christian Andersen's bed screen as a precursor to the montage of the 1930s. See: Vilhelm Slomann, *Fotografi 1930: International Udstilling Samlet Af Münchener Werkbund Sommeren 1930*. (København: Det Danske Kunstindustrimuseum, 1930), 7; Rudolf Broby-Johansen, *Sort Og Rødt: 64 Grafiske Glimt* (København: Gyldendal, 1982), 72–73. It was also previously used in a political context. An 1892 example from the Norwegian *Social-Demokraten* is reproduced in: Lill-Ann Jensen, ed. *Bildet Som Våpen: Norsk Arbeiderbevegelses Bruk Av Bildet I Kamp Og Agitasjon* (Oslo: Tiden, 1984), 29

12 Ades, *Photomontage*, 12

13 Whilst his first photomontage was the formal experiment *Dynamic City* (1919–20), Klutis soon put montage to political use with the poster *Electrification of the Entire Country* (1920). See: Margarita Tupitsyn, "From the Politics of Montage to the Montage of Politics: Soviet Practice 1919 through 1937," in *Art and Modern Life 1919-1942*, ed. Matthew Teitelbaum (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London & Boston: The MIT Press & The Institute of Contemporary Art, 1992), 84

14 From the second issue 1926 onwards. Torben Jelsbak, "Avantgardefilologi Og Teksttransmission. Den Historiske Avantgardelitteratur Som Udfordring Til Moderne Filologi Og Litteraturforskning" (PhD thesis, Københavns Universitet, 2008), 225

Social Democrats were both favoured targets for his often sarcastic articles,<sup>15</sup> but he also criticised the Soviet Union and repeatedly denied being a Communist.<sup>16</sup>

Maud Lavin has claimed photomontage gained widespread commercial usage in Germany by the late 1920s.<sup>17</sup> However, as discussed in **chapter 3**, it was not taken up by the printing trade's domestication efforts in Scandinavia, and was used sparingly by the advertising trade. This arguably made the medium's political associations all the more forceful in the three countries. This chapter will argue that it therefore can be seen to fall into the second of Jeffrey L. Meikle's three modes of domestication outlined in the **introduction**. To recapitulate, these consisted of: placing modernity in a historical continuum linking past, present and future; limiting modernity to discreet zones, like the modern city; and incorporating icons of modernism into one's own environment, thereby neutralising its threatening and / or unfamiliar aspects.<sup>18</sup> For photomontage in Scandinavia, such discreet zones were created by a set of particular political cultures on the left, who embraced photomontage precisely because it retained strong political and utopian associations. In a party-political context, such zones were primarily created by the Norwegian and Swedish Social Democratic youth and women's

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15 Morten Thing, "Poul Henningsen – Den Danske Kulturradikalismes Pædagog," in *Kulturradikalismen: Det Moderna Genombrottets Andra Fas*, ed. Bertil Nolin (Stockholm & Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag & Symposion, 1993), 233-242

16 Hans Hertel, *PH - En Biografi* (København: Gyldendal, 2012), 181ff

17 Maud Lavin, "Photomontage, Mass Culture and Modernity: Utopianism in the Circle of New Advertising Designers," in *Montage and Modern Life 1919-1942*, ed. Matthew Teitelbaum (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 46

18 Jeffrey L. Meikle, "Domesticating Modernity: Ambivalence and Appropriation, 1920-40," in *Designing Modernity: The Arts of Reform and Persuasion 1885-1945*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (Thames & Hudson, 1995), 143-144

groups. As the discussion of *acceptera* and *Funktionalisme og Samfund* suggests, the publications created by Functionalist architects sympathetic to the Social Democratic project formed another. A third was existed in Denmark in the shape of the book covers produced for the Clartéist publishing house Mondes Forlag.

## Artists, poets and intellectuals

This section details the use of New Typography and photomontage amongst artists, poets and intellectuals, and discusses how this use aligned with their political views. It first looks at the publications of the Danish painter and Bauhaus-student Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen (1909–57) before it moves on to the work of the Danish Monde group, associated with Rudolf Broby-Johansen and the architect Edvard Heiberg (1897–1958). After a brief discussion of the Norwegian group of intellectuals Mot Dag [Towards Day] it concludes with a section on the Swedish journals *fönstret* [the window], *Spektrum* [Spectrum, 1931–33] and *Spektrum's* successor *Arkitektur och samhälle* [Architecture and Society, 1933–40].

Although many of these individuals and groups were associated with the French novelist Henri Barbusse's (1873–1935) Clarté-movement, which on a party-politically independent basis sought to unite intellectuals of all countries in the pursuit of peace, internationalism and Communism, their particular political views differed in each of the Scandinavian countries. In Denmark, Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen and those active in the Monde group identified as Communists, although they, with the exception of Heiberg, tended not to be party members. Members of the Norwegian Mot Dag group were collectively entered as members



of Det Norske Arbeiderparti [The Norwegian Labour Party, DNA] between 1921 and 1925, and of Norges Kommunistiske Parti [Norway's Communist Party, NKP] between 1926 and 1928. From 1929 until it was disbanded in 1936 Mot Dag was not officially affiliated with any party, but its sympathies can be said to reside between the left wing of the Labour Party and the right wing of the Communist Party. Pointing precisely to the Norwegian Labour Party's problematic relationship with Mot Dag, the Swedish literary historian Tomas Forser has argued that because intellectuals from its founding onwards played a greater role in SAP, it was to a greater extent able to appreciate a group such as Clarté as an "intellectual debating society".<sup>19</sup> The discussion around the Swedish journals *fönstret*, *Spektrum* and *Arkitektur och samhälle* will argue that these journals indeed operated in an intellectual atmosphere where the ideas of Functionalism, New Typography and photomontage were more closely tied to Social Democracy than to Communism.

### **Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen's publications**

The Danish painter Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen was a rare example in the Scandinavian countries of someone who through his work actively sought to create New Human Beings.<sup>20</sup> Whilst not a member of any political party, he identified as a "fervent Communist" and maintained a steady interest in New Typography throughout the 1930s.<sup>21</sup> Bjerke-Petersen also had closer ties to

19 "intellektuell diskussionsklubb". Tomas Forser, "Oavhängiga Kulturradikaler Och Reformradikala Socialdemokrater. Utopi Och Besinning I Folkhemmet," in *Kulturradikalismen: Det Moderna Genombrottets Andra Fas*, ed. Bertil Nolin (Stockholm & Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag & Symposion, 1993), 150

20 See, for instance: Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, *surrealismen. Livsanskuelse. Livsutfoldelse. Kunst.* (København: Illums bog-afdeling, 1934), 69

21 "glødende kommunist". Gitte Tandrup, *Zigzag Mod Solen. Udviklingslinjer I Vilhelm*

central European modernism than many Scandinavians, having studied at the Bauhaus in Dessau from 1930 to 1931. He was the only Dane to do so. There he received tuition from Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) and Paul Klee (1879–1940), and though he in his paintings initially pursued an abstract path informed by his two teachers, he would soon turn to surrealism.

His first publication was *symboler i abstrakt kunst* [*symbols in abstract art*, 1933], intended as “an introduction to the new symbolic formal language”.<sup>22</sup> Its contents was largely based on the notes Bjerke-Petersen had taken in Kandinsky’s and Klee’s classes,<sup>23</sup> and reflected the approaches to abstract art put forward in their Bauhaus books *Point and Line to Plane* (1926) and *Pedagogical Sketchbook* (1925).<sup>24</sup> The design of *symboler i abstrakt kunst* did not copy those conceived by Moholy-Nagy for the Bauhaus books. It was an independently conceived composition grounded in the views on abstract art contained within — particularly with reference to the symbolism of different types of line.<sup>25</sup> The geometric sans serif lettering which has been integrated into the composition through the use of two horizontal rules shows an affinity with the other geometric shapes employed, and as has been pointed out by several writers on Bjerke-Petersen’s art, been

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*Bjerke Petersens Billeder Og Skrifter*

(Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1998), 112

22 “en introduktion til forstaaelsen af det nye billedsymbolske sprog”. Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, *symboler i abstrakt kunst* (København: Illums bog-afdeling, 1933), unpaginated (forord)

23 Marianne Barbusse and Lene Olesen, *De Konkrete. Konstruktive Tendenser I Dansk Kunst*. (København: Gyldendal, 1995), 34

24 English translations are available of both books: Wassily Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation for the Museum of Non-objective Painting, 1947); Paul Klee, *Pedagogical Sketchbook*. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1953)

25 For a reading of the symbolism of lines used in this cover, see: Tandrup, *Zigzag Mod Solen*, 49

informed by what he had seen at the Bauhaus.<sup>26</sup> This included the book's use of *kleinschreibung*, which as maintained in **Chapter 3** had strong Communist associations in Denmark through its use in the correspondence of Broby and Momberg. Like them, Bjerke-Petersen also used it in personal correspondence.<sup>27</sup> His later book *surrealismen [surrealism, 1934]* was also set in lower case throughout.

Bjerke-Petersen was undoubtedly responsible for *symboler i abstrakt kunst*'s cover, and it is safe to assume he also was responsible for directing the approach taken to the book's typography. However, it is not known to what degree he specified the finer points of its typographic detailing. The restrained design was likely conceived in collaboration with the book's printer, C. Volmer Nordlunde. The body text was set justified in a single size of serif type, with headers set in bold and ranged left. No indentation was used, and page numbers were set in with the same typeface and in the same size used elsewhere. The only elements set at a larger size was the asymmetric title page and the numbering used for the book's illustrations. The journal *Bogvennen* was in no doubt that Nordlunde had made an important contribution, and gave him the following glowing review:

He has laid the book out very simply, with an even nobility which appeals to us now in this year. Several details are extremely well thought-out and finely calculated — note the page numbers, the

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26 See, for instance: Charlotte Sabroe, "Vilhelm Bjerke Petersen - En Dansk Elev På Bauhaus," in *Vilhelm Bjerke Petersen. En Retrospektiv Udstilling*, eds. Troels Andersen et al (Silkeborg Kunstmuseums Forlag, 1986), 42; Jens Jørgen Thorsen, *Modernisme i Dansk Malerkunst* (København: Forlaget Palle Fogdtal, 1987), 24; Tandrup, *Zigzag Mod Solen*, 43

27 As can be seen in a letter to Franciska Clausen reproduced in: Finn Terman Frederiksen, *Franciska Clausen. Bind 2: I "de kolde skuldres land" 1932-1986* (Randers: Buch, 1988), 100-101

drawings' signatures and not least the image captions, crackingly well done and yet utterly unpretentious. One entertains no doubt, that this printer has learnt the best of German 'elemental typography' and of English tradition, and has then recast it all to Danish.<sup>28</sup>

In other words, the bibliophiles of *Bogvennen* thought *symboler i abstrakt kunst* had succeeded in creating a Danish interpretation of New Typography by fusing its 'wild' German expression with the 'cultured' typography of the English reform of printing movement. That even a publication directed by a genuine *Bauhäusler* like Bjerke-Petersen should make use a domesticated version of New Typography further questions diffusionist centre-periphery models which cast the avant-garde as active innovators and printers as passive adopters. As will be discussed later, in relation to the Swedish journal *Spektrum*, the avant-garde depended on the professional expertise of printers to in order to arrive at the desired design. Printers who were familiar with New Typography, and who held opinions of how it could be improved, would have been able to present such suggestions to avant-garde clients.

Whatever Nordlunde's involvement in *symboler i abstrakt kunst*, Bjerke-Petersen must have been satisfied. He would return to Nordlundes Bogtrykkeri for the majority of his publications up until 1944, when he was forced to flee Denmark for Sweden as a result of his publicly stated Communist sympathies and criticisms

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28 "Han har tilrettelagt Bogens Udstyr uhyre enkelt, med en jævn Fornemhed, som netop tiltaler os nu i dette Aar. Adskillige Detailler er særdeles velbetænkte og fint beregnede — læg Mærke til Paginatallene, Tegningernes Signaturer og ikke mindst Billedteksterne, knagende godt gjort og dog aldeles pretentionsløse. Man nærer ikke Tvivl om, at denne Bogtrykker har lært det bedste i tysk "elementær Typografi" og i engelsk Tradition og derefter omstøbt det hele til dansk". S. S-z. "Bog anmeldelser: Symbolsk og kubistisk," *Bogvennen* (1934): 16

of the Nazis. Perhaps Bjerke-Petersen approached Nordlunde because he knew the first issue of *Forsøgsscenen* [The Experimental Stage], discussed later in this section, had been printed by Nordlundes Bogtrykkeri in 1929. The film scholar Ebbe Neergaard (1901–57), one of the main forces behind *Forsøgsscenen*, was involved with Bjerke-Petersen’s next publication *linien* [the line, 1934–35] from the start. *Linien* was the eponymous journal of the group founded by Bjerke-Petersen in 1933 with fellow artists Richard Mortensen (1910–93) and Ejler Bille (1910–2004). Unlike *symboler i abstrakt kunst*, *linien*’s cover design was entirely typographic. The journal’s title is reflected visually in the shape of a heavy vertical rule. Whilst the straight line had not been mentioned in *symboler i abstrakt kunst*, Bjerke-Petersen had discussed what he termed ‘the vertical force’, “a light, upward rising, and therefore mobile, living force”.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, *linien*’s first editorial emphasised that art should be such a living force.<sup>30</sup>

As is evident from his book *surrealismen*, it was the Nazis’ rise to power in Germany which caused Bjerke-Petersen to lose faith in his previous rational and abstract approach, and to turn to the ideas of automatism André Breton (1896–1966) expressed from 1924 onward. However, although he associated his “clear and simple typography”, with Functionalism, Cubism, New Architecture and New Furniture, this change of direction did not affect his typography.<sup>31</sup> Having broken with Mortensen and Bille, he launched the new pan-Scandinavian journal *konkretion* [concretion] in 1935, and in the same year he initiated

29 “en let, opadstigende, derfor bevægelig, levende kraft”. Bjerke-Petersen, *symboler i abstrakt kunst*, 33

30 *linien*, “linien,” *linien* 1, no. 1 (1934): 1–2

31 “klar og enkel typografi”. Bjerke-Petersen, *surrealismen*, 21

the publication of a series of booklets on 'young Scandinavian artists' (**fig.5.01**). These retained the use of sans serif type, *kleinschreibung* and asymmetric compositions.

## The Monde Group and Mot Dag

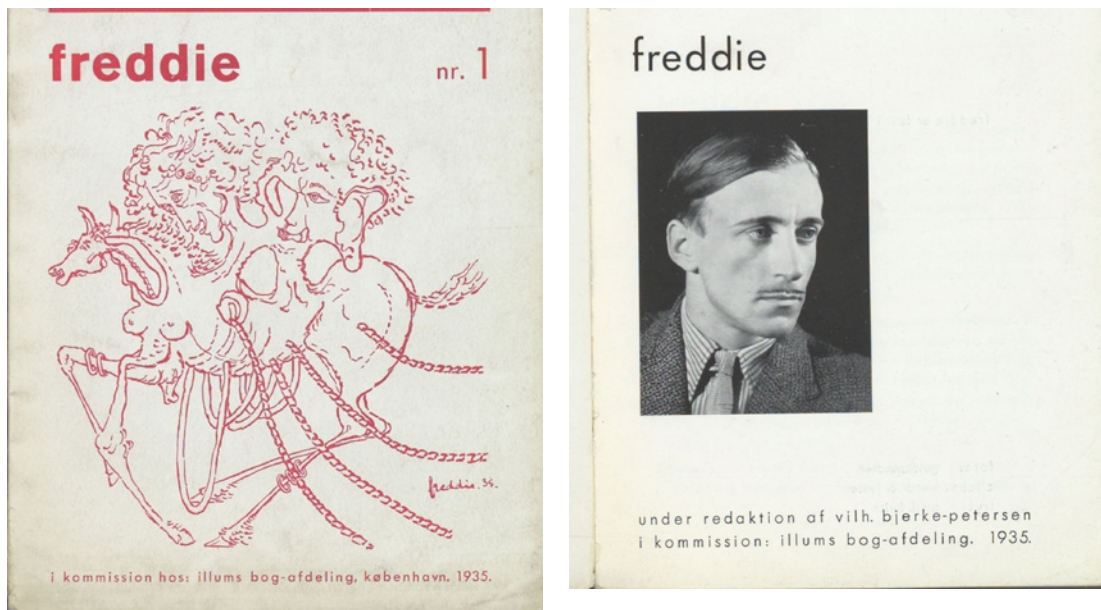
**Chapter 1** included a discussion of D.N.S.S.' publications. Rudolf Broby-Johansen, known previously as Rud Broby, remained an important figure in the sphere of art and politics in Denmark. From 1928 onwards he became the driving force of a new group of activists. Some came from his old circle at D.N.S.S., but many were once again recruited from the University of Copenhagen. The group was named *Monde*, after the monthly paper it published between 1928 to 1932. Whilst editorially independent, it was actually a Danish version of the French paper of the same name published by Henri Barbusse (1873–1935) from 1928–35. After the First World War, Barbusse founded the Clarté-movement as a party-politically independent "International of the Mind".<sup>32</sup> This worked to unite socialist intellectuals from around the world in support of "pacifism, internationalism and communism".<sup>33</sup> Whilst Barbusse did not support revolutionary action, the group and its self-titled journal became dominated by those who did. This eventually caused Barbusse to break with Clarté in 1923, and with *Monde* he sought to revive Clarté's early spirit.<sup>34</sup> Although the design of neither Danish nor French *Monde* owed much to New Typography, other publications associated with the Danish

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32 Announced by Barbusse in *Humanité*, 10 May 1919. Nicole Racine, "The Clarté Movement in France 1919-21," *Journal of Contemporary History* 2, no. 2 (1967): 200

33 Guessler Normand, "Henri Barbusse and His *Monde* (1928–35): Progeny of the Clarté Movement and the Review Clarté," *Journal of Contemporary History* 11, no. 2/3 Special Issue: Conflict and Compromise: Socialists and Socialism in the Twentieth Century (1976): 174

34 *Ibid.*



**Fig. 5.01**

**Above:**

**Cover design, *freddie: unge skandinaviske kunstnere nr.1* (1935).**

**Above right:**

**Title page, *freddie: unge skandinaviske kunstnere nr.1* (1935).**

group did. For instance, the student journals *Vi Gymnasiaster* [We High School Students, 1929–40] and *à jour* [Up-to-date, 1931–32], were far more prepared to make use of sans serif typefaces, heavy rules, and asymmetrical compositions than *Monde*. So too was *Forsøgsscenen* (1929–31), the member’s magazine of the theatre and cinema club of the same name. Moreover, the group’s publishing venture *Mondes Forlag* [Monde’s Publishing House] made significant use of photomontage.

*Forsøgsscenen*’s ambition was to “make way for modern theatre in Denmark”.<sup>35</sup> In order to achieve this three working groups were set up. The first was devoted to showing “modern artistic films”, the second marionette theatre, and the third was the ‘proper’ theatre group which was to put on both “classic and new plays in modern staging” as well as to “arrange guest performances from the best entirely modern foreign stages”.<sup>36</sup> Of the three, the film group was the most popular and the most prolific.<sup>37</sup> Led by Ebbe Neergaard,<sup>38</sup> it showed recently released avant-garde and socialist films – predominantly of Soviet and German origin.<sup>39</sup>

35 “bane Vejen for et moderne Teater i Danmark”. Oluf Rosenkrantz, “Forsøgsscenen,” *Forsøgsscenen* 1, no. 1 (1929): 1

36 “moderne, kunstneriske Film”, “klassiske og nye Skuespil i moderne iscenesættelse”, “arrangerer Gæstespil fra de bedste helt moderne udenlandske Scener”. Rosenkrantz, “Forsøgsscenen”, 1. The theatre group staged productions such as Berthold Brecht’s (1898–1956) *Drums in the Night* [*Trommeln in der Nacht*, *De – Anarkist*, first performed 1922], Friedrich Wolf’s (1888–1953) *Cyankali* [*Cyankalium*, first performed 1929] and the Norwegian communist poet Nordahl Greig’s (1902–43) *Barrabas* (first performed 1927).

37 Michael Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens Musik* (København: Det Kongelige Bibliotek & Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2013), 146

38 Neergaard worked as a lecturer at the University of Berlin 1928–33. There he was well placed to pursue his interest in experimental film and according to one former member of the *Monde*-group, Torben Gregersen, he made personal acquaintances with Richter and “a number of [other] influential people [en række indflytelsesrige mennesker]”. Olav Harsløf, *Mondegruppen. Kampen Om Kunsten Og Socialismen I Danmark 1928-32* (København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag & Københavns Universitet, 1997), 187

39 For instance, feature-length films such as Walter Ruttmann’s (1887–1941) *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* [*Berlin: Sinfonie der Großstadt*, 1927], Sergei Eisenstein’s



The stage's member's magazine featured a design, which whilst symmetrical, was considered an example of 'elemental typography'.<sup>40</sup> It was undoubtedly also intended to reflect the stage's progressive programme. The cover design, which remained consistent for the first 13 issues, featured text set in *Breite Halbfette Grotesk* arranged around the extremes of the page. The lower part of the composition is separated from the rest by two heavy horizontal rules, creating a large white space in the centre of the design. Into this space was placed a photograph or illustration relating to the current production or screening. The composition was arguably intended as a piece of pictorial typography — a stage on which the photograph or illustration could 'perform'. Internal pages featured headings set in a widely spaced sans serif, and bold oversized page numbers. One page always featured the current programme, set unlike the other pages as an asymmetrical composition.

Forsøgsscenen, and particularly its film programme, proved a popular success. After its first year in operation the stage claimed to have over 1000 members.<sup>41</sup> Its selection of modernist film differed significantly from that screened by commercial cinemas.<sup>42</sup> These were procured through organisations such as Dansk–Russisk

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(1898–1948) *The General Line* – also known as *Old and New* [*Generallinien*, 1929] and Dziga Vertov's (1896–1954) *Man with a Movie Camera* [*Manden med filmapparatet*, 1929]. Evenings of short films were also put on, for which Man Ray's (1890–1976) *Emak Bakia* [Basque for 'Leave Me Alone', 1926], Joris Ivens' (1898–1989) *The Bridge* [*De Brug, Broen*], and Hans Richter's (1888–1976) *Ghosts Before Breakfast* [*Vormiddagspuk, Flyvende Hatte*, 1928] formed part of the selection on each their occasion.

40 Captioned as such in: "108 Trykprøver." *De Grafiske Fag. Organ for Københavns Bogtrykkerforening Og Reproduktionsanstaltnernes Principalforening* 26, Jubilæumsnummer (October 1930): 48

41 "Et Aars Arbejde," *Forsøgsscenen* 2, no. 12 (1930): 6

42 Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens Musikk*, 147

Samvirke [The Association for Danish–Russian Cooperation]<sup>43</sup> and Willi Münzenberg's (1899–1940) Weltfilm [World Film] organisation.<sup>44</sup> Because Forsøgsscenen was a members-only club it was also allowed to show films in their uncut state, another factor which helped bolster its popularity.<sup>45</sup>

Paradoxically, this level of success would help spell the stage's end. Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti [Denmark's Communist Party, DKP] came to realise that film screenings had value as a propaganda tool. It therefore established a Danish subsidiary of Weltfilm, Folkefilm [People's Film] through which they gained control of Forsøgsscenen's distribution channel, and set up the competing Forening for Filmskultur [Association for Film Culture] to show the films.<sup>46</sup> This intervention, along with the arrival of talking pictures (which required equipment it could not afford to rent) conspired to disturb Forsøgsscenen's momentum. In October 1930 a number of the original artistic direction therefore left.<sup>47</sup> With their departure, the design of the magazine's covers started to change. Though around half of the subsequent designs can be said to be variations on what had gone before, the composition of the very last issue (no.19, May 1931) stands out. Its elements were precisely arranged according to a grid structure and a clear

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43 Morten Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur: DKP Og de Intellektuelle 1918-1960* (København: Tiderne skifter, 1993), 733

44 Harsløf, *Mondegruppen*, 187

45 Censorship rules only applied to public screenings: Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur*, 733

46 A/S Folkefilm, the subsidiary of Weltfilm was founded in January and Forening for Filmskultur in February 1930. Though DKP through these interventions controlled the importation and screening of Weltfilm's films they still wanted to gain access to Forsøgsscenen's members. Forsøgsscenen on the other hand needed access to films. An agreement between the two parties was therefore made in April 1930 which allowed members of either organisation could see each other's films. See: Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens Musikk*, 148; Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur*, 734

47 Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens Musikk*, 168

hierarchy of four different type sizes had been imposed to order the information and to guide the viewer's eye. To instil a sense of urgency, the entire composition had been angled 25° on the page. Moreover, several elements — including the two film strips and parts of the text — had been allowed to bleed off the page. The right angle created by the two film strips was used to frame the magazine's title, the name of the main feature *Jørgensfesten* [*The Holiday of St. Jorgen*, dir. Yakov Protazanov, 1930] and several smaller pieces of text. These were clippings from the daily press. A rare amount of interest had been shown in this Soviet film as it was based on Harald Bergstedt's (1877–1965) Danish novel of the same name, and because this 'Danish' film had initially fallen foul of the censors.

In October 1930 the Monde group established Mondes Forlag through which they sold their own publications as well as those created by the Norwegian Mot Dag group's publishing house Fram. An eight-page promotional leaflet, which seems to have been produced at some point the following year,<sup>48</sup> reveals an ambitious programme with twenty-eight titles listed over seven different categories.<sup>49</sup> Its design demonstrates that Mondes Forlag was choosing to present itself, if not all its titles, through New Typography. The design is not credited, but the presence of an opportunistic typographer with a sense of visual wit is evident. For instance, an 'L' shape found in the cover composition on a

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48 The leaflet is titled 1931 1932, but dated '1930 1931'. It can be found in Mondes Forlag's archive at Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv in Flemingsberg, Denmark: 2735 Mondes Forlag AS.

49 The categories were: Marxism, The Great Works of Marxism, Social Art, Danish Socialism's Founding Texts, Social Hygiene, The Cultural Series, and a miscellaneous category of smaller works simply titled 'Monde's booklets' [Mondes pjecer].

book about Lenin is used to form the first letter of his name.

Diagonal rules have been overprinted in red onto a spread showing the series *Social Kunst* [Social Art, 1930–32]. This was not only done to attract attention, but to separate the books that had sold out from those which cost 1,50 kroner and those available at the higher price of 2,50.

Several of Mondes Forlag's books were issued with covers in photomontage. The first of these, like Neergaard's *Hvorfor er Filmen saadan* [Why is Cinema Like That, 1931] and the anthology *Sovjetruslands 5aarsplan* [Soviet Russia's 5 Year Plan, 1931], composed by Neergaard and Broby respectively,<sup>50</sup> were constructed from a vast number of cut-out photographs and paired with expressive hand lettering. However, the Norwegian-born architect Edvard Heiberg, who had joined the Monde group during the autumn of 1930, would soon introduce a different approach. Heiberg had been on the editorial committee of *Kritisk Revy*, the journal which had introduced photomontage to Scandinavia. He had also, very briefly, held a position as Master in Architecture [Meister für Architektur] at the Bauhaus, having resigned shortly after taking up the post in protest against Hannes Meyer's removal as director.<sup>51</sup> His first contribution was to design a cover for an edition of Karl Marx's 1849 work *Wage Labour and Capital*, titled *Lønarbejde og Kapital* (1932).<sup>52</sup> Heiberg's lettering differed from Broby's and Neergaard's

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50 That Neergaard designed his own cover is stated in: Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur*, 742

51 On Hannes Meyer's invitation, Heiberg took up his post to lecture on the planning of housing estates [Siedlungsbau] in the summer term of 1930. However, Meyer's removal as director during the following summer break eventually led Heiberg to resign at the beginning of the next academic year.

52 This is the first of the series 'Socialistisk Bibliotek' [Socialist Library], presumably imagined as a Danish equivalent of the German 'Elementarbücher des Kommunismus', published by Internationaler Arbeiter-Verlag. That books in this series were sold through Mondes Forlag can be seen from the catalogue

by being measured and constructed, approximating typography. In place of their ‘horror vacui’ compositions he introduced a didactic, precise use of imagery. As can be seen on *Lønarbejde og Kapital*’s cover, the book’s title was visually mirrored by the juxtaposition of the flat-capped worker with the pay check with the suited businessman with the automobile. That the group’s understanding of photomontage was changing around this time is suggested by the publication that year of an issue on photomontage in the *Social Kunst* series. The photomontage issue contained an introductory essay which devoted particular attention to John Heartfield, who it noted made use of “only few image parts in his montages”, and who it claimed had created:

a photographic art, which not only analyses, but is dialectic, necessarily forces us to think, something the Dadaists also did, but which goes further, as it finishes the thought with a quite definitive perception.<sup>53</sup>

Heiberg’s cover for *Lønarbejde og Kapital* clearly fits this description. Heiberg was also responsible for what is arguably the most sophisticated use of montage for a *Monde*-publication in terms of narrative — the cover of his own *2 Vær. straks [1 B(ed)R(oom) immediately, 1935]*. A photograph of dilapidated working-class housing from Copenhagen’s Nørrebro area was overlaid onto type

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*Tyske Bøger* [German Books], which can be found in Mondes Forlag’s archive at Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv in Flemingsberg, Denmark: 2735 Mondes Forlag AS. Kasse 1. Folder: 01 Bogforlag - Monde - Socialistisk Bibliotek. The design of the Danish version does not reflect the German.

53 “Heartfield bruger kun få billeddele til sine montager. Han har herved skabt en fotografisk kunst, der ikke blot analyserer, men er dialektisk, nødvendigvis tvinger os til at tænke, hvad dadaisterne også gjorde, men som går videre, idet den afslutter tanken med en ganske bestemt opfattelse”. “Fotomontage Som Politisk Kunst.” in *Fotomontage, Social Kunst* 8 (Oslo & København: Fram Forlag & Mondes Forlag, 1932), unpaginated

set in the style of a classified ad, setting out some of the desired conveniences: “Central heating, Hot water. Shower. Sink. Tiles and spacious rooms” – the implication being that these modest demands were not being met by the existing housing stock. The ad’s headline, which is also the title of the book, was made to look as if it were underlined by hand – as if to indicate someone had taken note of it. Finally, a mask floats between the reader and this composition onto which was printed an image of Arne Jacobsen’s (1902–71) newly completed Bellavista complex (1934) in Gentofte, to the north of Copenhagen. As Heiberg argued in the book, which was set in sans serif throughout, only few such new developments were intended for the group most in need of housing: the working classes. Moreover, ‘funkis’ had become a style used by the upper classes to display their modern taste and as a “discreet way of showing that one has ones wallet in order”.<sup>54</sup> In other words, Heiberg’s cover argued that discussions around Functionalism’s aesthetic blinded the architectural profession (the most probable readership of this title) from engaging with social issues of housing.

From the new year of 1932 *Monde* started appearing under the new name of *Plan* (a reference to the Soviet Union’s model of five-year plans), and in a new design developed by Edvard Heiberg.<sup>55</sup> It now appeared in a magazine format around half the size of *Monde*,<sup>56</sup> which featured a two-colour offset printed cover and twice the number of interior pages. The only elements retained from *Monde* on the new cover was the old masthead — reduced in size and tone

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54 “diskret maade at vise, at De har tegnebogen i orden”, Edvard Heiberg, *2 Vær. Straks*. (København: Mondes Forlag under medvirkning af socialistisk arkitektgruppe, 1935), 6

55 Leif Leer Sørensen, *Edvard Heiberg Og Dansk Funktionalisme, En Arkitekt Og Hans Samtid* (København: Arkitektens Forlag, 2000), 159

56 *Monde* measured 385x285mm and *Plan* 285x210mm

— and the subtitle “Economics – Politics – Culture”. This was now set in typewriter script and placed within the distinctive shaded lower case letters of the new title. These letterforms echo those taught at the Bauhaus by Joost Schmidt (1893–1948), which in turn drew on Herbert Bayer’s Universal script (1926), and which Heiberg may have encountered there. The exaggerated descender of the ‘p’ was a *funkis* trope much used at the time.

From May 1932 onwards, Heiberg became the journal’s editor. Shortly thereafter, disagreements between two factions within the group came to a head. The first faction was led by Heiberg and advocated closer ties with DKP, whereas the second was led by Broby and argued for a continuation of the Clartéist line. The result was that Broby and his sympathisers were excluded.<sup>57</sup> Under Heiberg’s direction, *Plan* became a near mouthpiece for DKP, and its editorial policy followed the Executive Committee of the Communist International’s (EKKI) ‘ultraleftist’ line.<sup>58</sup> Propaganda for the Soviet Union and warnings of potential American–European military action against it featured alongside articles attacking the Social Democrats. Considerations of literature and visual art were reduced to short notes or reviews, and articles on architecture disappeared completely.<sup>59</sup> After the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, there was also an increase in antifascist articles.<sup>60</sup> Morten Thing has argued that this dogmatic

57 Broby promptly started the new journal *Frem* [Forwards 1932–35], which was closely associated with *Mot Dag*.

58 Harsløf, *Mondegruppern*, 459

59 This summary of *Plan*’s contents is paraphrased from: Harsløf, *Mondegruppern*, 459. Due an arrangement with Forsøgsscenen there was actually a brief increase in articles on film and theatre, but this also came to an end when Forsøgsscenen finally stopped operating in September 1932.

60 The covers also reflected this increase. For instance, the September issue featured John Heartfield’s montage ‘Goering the Executioner of the Third Reich’ [Goering der

adherence to the Party line made *Plan* an increasingly predictable read. As a result, *Plan* was not able to command the same level of popular interest as *Monde*, and its impact on public debate was diminished.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, with the group depleted, only five or six people remained devoted to *Plan*'s production. In 1935 Poul Henningsen and the novelist Martin Andersen Nexø (1869–1954) founded Foreningen Frisindet Kulturkamp [The Association Broadminded Culture Struggle] and its journal *Kulturkampen* (1935–39) as a “broad national association with the aim of defending freedom of speech and countering reactionary [forces]”.<sup>62</sup> The few remaining individuals associated with *Plan* then left to join the more open intellectual environment offered by the new association. Half a year later *Plan* folded. Montage played a minor role in *Kulturkampen*, where it was used primarily on certain front and back covers. This journal, which was produced at Dyva & Jeppesen, was to a greater extent defined by its many and often satirical illustrations, its calm serif typography and its high production values.

The *Monde* group was only ever a small organisation. It never numbered much more than 30 members. That it was nevertheless able to produce the many publications listed above, and through them achieve a disproportionately great influence on Danish

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Henker des Dritten Reichs], cut from the cover of the recently published *Braunbuch* (1933)

61 Thing, *Kommunismens Kultur*, 386

62 “bred landssammenslutning med det formål at forsvare ytringsfriheden og modarbejde reaktionen”. ‘Broad’ in this case meant that it was open to both Communists and Social Democrats. The united front would last until 1939, when the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Germany caused so much disagreement between the two different factions that any further publication of *Kulturkampen* proved impossible. Elias Bredsdorff, *Revolutionær Humanisme, En Introduktion Til 1930ernes Venstreorienterede Kulturtidsskrifter* (København: Gyldendal, 1982), 141, 191



cultural and intellectual life in the early 1930s was a result of its particular working method. Informed by the work of the Norwegian group of socialist intellectuals *Mot Dag* [Towards Day] *Monde* infiltrated existing organisations, or established new ones, in order to have these act out its cultural and political policies. New Typography also found some limited use in publications controlled by *Mot Dag*. It can be seen in a few cover designs created for the Norwegian edition of the journal *Clarté*, and also in those created for the journals published by *Sosialistiske legers forening* [Association of Socialist Doctors] and *Sosialistiske arkitekters forening* [Association of Socialist Architects] respectively, *Tidsskrift for seksuell opplysning* [Journal for Sexual Education, 1932–34] and *PLAN* (1933–36). *PLAN*'s spreads, with headings and page numbers set in a bold sans serif also drew upon New Typography, if only moderately so.<sup>63</sup>

The design of the Norwegian *Clarté* had until September 1930 followed the characteristic curved masthead and otherwise traditional typography of the journal's French and Swedish editions. What informed the decision to change the journal's appearance is not known. However, it is well documented that the publication of *Clarté* took place during a tumultuous period of *Mot Dag*'s history. Left without any party-political ties after the break with NKP in 1928, the group was forced to regroup and a goal was

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63 For an anthology of articles, and an interview with members of *Sosialistiske Arkitekters Forening*, see: Johan–Ditlef Martens and Ketil Moe, eds. *Plan 1933–36. Tidsskrift for Bolig– Og Byggespørsmål* (Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1983). For a consideration of the journal's Functionalist programme and its relation to the Norwegian *brukskunst* movement, see the section 'Planned luminescence: *PLAN* and the Socialist Architects' Association' in: Kjetil Fallan *Designing Modern Norway: A History of Design Discourse* (New York: Routledge, 2017), unpaginated (ebook).

set to establish itself amongst students.<sup>64</sup> As the change in design occurred just as *funkis* was becoming a buzzword in Norway, it seems plausible the change was motivated by a desire to engage and win over a young audience. Although the cover for issue no. 9 stands out as a particularly well executed composition, the application was not always as successful, and one suspects the understanding of New Typography's principles were lacking. For instance, a back page ad for a number of titles available through the group's publishing house, Fram Forlag [Forwards Publishing], with its centred composition and mish-mash of typefaces is decidedly a piece of *funkis*.

Of the publications associated with Mot Dag, it was nevertheless *PLAN* which most consistently applied New Typography. Edited by a committee of around fifteen, it positioned itself as a Norwegian continuation of the work undertaken in Denmark by *Kritisk Revy* and Sverige by *Byggmästaren*. Although critical of the mainstream German architectural press, it praised the "significant propaganda work" coming out of the Bauhaus in Dessau and Frankfurt am Main.<sup>65</sup> Whilst critical of the 'aesthetic' approach to Functionalism in architecture, which they associated with Le Corbusier, *PLAN*'s design suggests these architects were nevertheless prepared to take stylistic guidance in typography from journals like *Das neue Frankfurt* (1926–33), rather than to look to domesticated designs such as that produced by Bröderna Lagerström for *Byggmästaren*. That Functionalist architects remained committed to the principles of New Typography as Tschichold had formulated them

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64 Eva Lundgren, "Mot Dag Og Arbeiderbevegelsen," *Tidsskrift for Arbeiderbevegelsens Historie*, no. 1 (1984): 183

65 "betydelig propagandamessig arbeide". "Vårt Program," *Plan. Tidsskrift for Boligspørsmål Og Arkitektur*, no. 1 (1933): 4

in 1925 also in Sweden will be seen in the following discussion of the journal *Spektrum* and particularly in relation to its successor *Arkitektur och samhälle*.

### ***Spektrum* and *Arkitektur och samhälle***

Whilst relations between Danish and Norwegian Social Democratic parties on one hand, and intellectuals active in groups such as *Monde* and *Mot Dag* on the other, could be difficult and even hostile, the situation in Sweden was different. As argued in the introduction to this section, intellectuals had ever since its founding played a greater role in SAP than they did in DNA, particularly. The Swedish party was therefore more able to maintain ties to intellectuals. This can be observed, for instance, in the weekly left-leaning cultural paper *fönstret* [the window, 1930–36]. It was founded by journalists Kaj Andersson (1897–1991) and Bernhard Greitz, both formerly of SAP's paper *Social-demokraten* [The Social Democrat, 1885–1945]. *Fönstret* featured an innovative mix of articles on the arts with articles on social issues such as housing, sexual health and critiques of the criminal justice system. Its pages found space for contributions by modernist poets such as Artur Lundkvist (1906–91), Erik Ask Lund (1908–80) and Josef Kjellgren (1907–48). Together with Harry Martinson (1904–78) and Gustav Sandgren (1940–83) these were known as the *5 unga* [The Young 5], after the title of an collection of their work which appeared in 1929. Space was also made for the writings of Clartéist Karin Boye (1900–41) and Functionalist architects Sven Markelius and Uno Åhrén. Åhrén also sat on the editorial board. The paper's design also stood out. The masthead was lettered in a tightly spaced geometrical sans-serif, for which the 'negative' overlaps were rendered using

the unprinted surface of the newsprint. The cover illustrations were often photographic and arranged so that they bled off the page. Several of the early issues made use of a window motif. For the very first issue, for instance, portraits of the contributors were montaged into the grid structure created by the window's glazing bars. In a review of *fönstret's* first issue the paper *Dagens nyheter* described it as "a large, clear, Functionalist window facing out towards the world".<sup>66</sup> This description pointed to the significance of *fönstret's* title, in that use of the horizontal window made up one of Le Corbusier's 'Five Points Towards a New Architecture' (1926).<sup>67</sup>

Similar close relations can be observed in the journal *Spektrum*. It was launched in 1931 by Boye, fellow Clartéist Erik Mesterton (1903–2004) and the Russian-born Josef Riwkin (1909–65). Each issue covered a broad range of topics, with the main focus being on literature, philosophy, and psychoanalysis, in addition to social and political issues.<sup>68</sup> However, after five issues Boye and Mesterton left the journal and Riwkin, who in the meantime had been joined as editor by Gunnar Ekelöf, changed the editorial policy to one in which each issue focused on a specific topic. Five further issues were published under this new policy: on child-rearing, the poet Harry Martinson, architecture and society, music, and psychoanalysis and society. Although it did not come

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66 "Ett stort, klart, funktionalistisk fönster ut mot världen". Quoted in: Per Schwanbom, *Hon Gjorde Tidningar Med Själ: Publicisten Kaj Andersson: En Biografi* (Stockholm: Per Schwanbom, 2003)

67 Le Corbusier, "Five Points towards a New Architecture," in *Programs and Manifestos on 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads, First MIT Press paperback edition (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1971)

68 About of the journal's contents were translations, according to the quantitative analysis featured in: Johan Svedjedal, *Spektrum - Den Svenska Drömmen. Tidskrift Och Förlag I 1930-talets Kultur*. E-Book (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 2011), 101-104

to pass, the 5 *unga* were originally intended to play a role also in *Spektrum*.<sup>69</sup> Instead, they formed the nucleus of the group which in 1931 published a single issue of the journal *kontakt* [contact]. A thin publication of 32 pages, *kontakt* is notable for introducing Surrealism to a Swedish audience.<sup>70</sup> Its cover was executed in complete accordance with Tschichold's principles of 'elementare typographie', and composed entirely of typographic material.

According to Johan Svedjedal's book on *Spektrum*, it was Riwkin who designed the journal's first issue.<sup>71</sup> However, as was the case with the design of Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen's *symboler i abstrakt kunst*, it is clear that the journal's printers also played a role. The first two issues were printed at Reinhold Erikssons Tryckeri, after which responsibilities passed to Bröderna Lagerström. As Lena Johannesson has observed, this led to a greater consistency in the journal's design.<sup>72</sup> Whereas the first two issues appeared in each their format, the choice was now made to stay with the second, slightly larger one. Moreover, whereas the first issues had been dated 'Autumn 1931' and 'January 1932' respectively, Bröderna Lagerström's reworked design simply used the year, set in a bold widely letterspaced sans serif. Issues were now numbered, using a large numeral placed in the bottom right hand corner. Initially set in a serif face, this feature soon made use of the same sans serif used elsewhere on the cover. The typefaces used to set interior pages also changed. Headings were set in the same bold sans serif used for the cover, and text was set in Lagerström's favoured

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69 Ibid., 36–37

70 Eyvind Johnson, "Om Surrealismen," *kontakt*, 1931, 6–7

71 Svedjedal, *Spektrum*, 64

72 Lena Johannesson, "Funkis Utan Hus. Om Den Grafiska Funktionalismen Och Arbetarrörelsens Publicistiska Formspråk," in *Arbetarrörelse Och Arbetarkultur. Bild Och Självbild*, eds. Lena Johannesson et al (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2007), 302–306

Mediæval. This can be seen, for instance, in the opening spread of *Spektrum*'s major contribution to Swedish literary modernism: Boye and Mesterton's translation of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922). This, combined with a more consistent use of typographic material, resulted in more visually impactful pages.

Upon the aforementioned change in editorial direction, attempts were made to retain the purely typographic cover design developed at Bröderna Lagerström. The issue's theme, 'Uppfostran' [Child-rearing], was printed vertically up alongside the contents information, spread out so as to align with the top and bottom of that column of text. However, subsequent issues all featured different cover design variations. Moreover, the last three were not edited by Riwkin and Ekelöf, but were put together by different guest editors. Amongst these last issues was one on 'Arkitektur och samhälle' [Architecture and Society], edited by Sven Markelius. This contained contributions by leading Functionalist architects and critics. In addition to Markelius himself Gregor Paulsson, Poul Henningsen, Alvar Aalto, Sven Wallander (1890–1968) and Gotthard Johanson (1891–1968) all contributed with articles. The last contributor was Gunnar Myrdal (1898–1987), who with his wife Alva (1902–86) are considered two of the foremost Social Democratic intellectuals of the time. In a previous article, entitled 'Socialpolitikens dilemma',<sup>73</sup> Gunnar Myrdahl had argued that the Social Democrats should break with ideology in favour of a 'prophylactic social policy' which would prevent rather than address social problems.<sup>74</sup> Of this proposed policy, he wrote:

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73 The article was published in two parts in issues 3 and 4 of *Spektrum*'s second volume (1932).

74 Svedjedal, *Spektrum*, 97–99

This new social political ideology contains within it strong radical and to a certain extent revolutionary possibilities. It is intellectual and coolly rationalistic, whereas the old one, which still rules, was rather sentimental...It is to a large extent free of the brakes placed on ideas by liberalism...it is 'objective'. Its romanticism is that of the engineer.<sup>75</sup>

Given this background it seems fitting that the cover of the issue on architecture and society, which was made from Le Corbusier's Salubra wallpaper,<sup>76</sup> should be adorned with *The Constructor* (1924): Lissitzky's self-portrait in photomontage. However, it should be noted that the Myrdals' ideas of social engineering and the Functionalist faith in rationality, technology and experts also found some dark expressions. In their well-known *Kris i befolkningsfrågan* [Crisis in the Population Question, 1934], an infamous call is made for:

the radical elimination of individuals who are in a high degree unfit to live (...) by means of sterilization (...) to root out all kinds of physical and psychological inferiority in the population, including mental deficiency and mental illness, physical diseases and poor character disposition".<sup>77</sup>

As Sverker Sörlin has commented, such views represented "the shadow side of the welfare and social state".<sup>78</sup>

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75 Quoted in: Sverker Sörlin, "Prophets and Deniers. The Idea of Modernity in Swedish Tradition," in *Utopia & Reality: Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 20

76 Anders Bergström, "Treasures from the Archive: Spektrum." *KTHA*, no. 2 (2011): 22-25

77 Quoted in: Sörlin, "Prophets and Deniers", 20

78 Sörlin, "Prophets and Deniers", 20

The issue on architecture and society proved successful, and it was decided to release an expanded ring-bound version as an independent publication. This initiative in turn gave rise to a series of heavy, ring-bound books on different themes, all under the title *Arkitektur och samhälle*. Although editorially independent, the first eight issues were also furnished with the subtitle *Spektrum*.<sup>79</sup> Markelius edited one further issue, on ‘Sosiala bostadsproblem’ [Social Housing Problems], before passing responsibilities on to Viking Göransson (1900–85) who edited three issues between 1933 and 1934. The journal would continue to appear irregularly until 1940, but from the third issue 1935 onwards the use of *Spektrum* as a subtitle was dropped.<sup>80</sup>

It seems to me that Svedjedal must have experienced some difficulty in assessing *Spektrum*’s typographic design, as his writing on this topic is somewhat contradictory. In the space of a single paragraph he goes from declaring that the journal’s typography signalled modernism “by aligning itself to the Bauhaus-style”, to characterising it as “relatively bold in a Swedish context”, before concluding that it in comparison with the typographic experiments of Futurists and Dadaists was “graphically pretty tame”.<sup>81</sup> This is an instance where the concept of domestication proves useful to the historian, in that it provides a way of thinking about how the avant-garde models cited by Svedjedal: the Bauhaus, the Futurists, the Dadaists, were interpreted by local practitioners. The client-practitioner relationship between Riwkin and his printers would

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79 Svedjedal, *Spektrum*, 509

80 Ibid.

81 “genom att ansluta till Bauhausstilen”, “relativt djärv”, “grafisk ganska tam”. Svedjedal, *Spektrum*, 64–65



likely have mirrored that between Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen and C. Volmer Nordlunde described earlier in this section. Riwkin would have held ideas of what he wanted *Spektrum* to look like, but was dependent, not only on the printer's skills and resources, but also on his understanding of New Typography, to interpret these ideas successfully. It has been argued in this thesis that Scandinavian printers took a pragmatic approach to New Typography and that they viewed it as one style amongst many. As shown in **chapter 4**, Bröderna Lagerström advertised that they could produce work in both 'modern' and 'traditional' styles. It therefore stands to reason that they should be willing and capable of producing items of a domesticated New Typography which lay closer to the 'wild' originals of the avant-garde than the versions they advocated in trade journals, if prompted to do so by a client. I would argue that the contradictions in Svedjedal's analysis can be resolved if one views *Spektrum* in this light. It can be seen both as 'bold', compared to other examples of Bröderna Lagerström's commercial production, and as 'tame' (or domesticated) compared to the typography of the artistic avant-garde.

This section has discussed the use of New Typography and photomontage among artists, poets and intellectuals. In Denmark, where individuals previously associated with D.N.S.S. were now active in the Monde group, New Typography maintained its strong connection with Communist intellectuals. Whilst the designs of the Monde group were not executed with the consistency of the Bauhaus-educated Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, they nevertheless made extensive use of New Typography. This can be seen particularly well in the student journals *Vi Gymnasiaster* and *ajour*, *Førsøgsscenen's* member's magazine

and in Mondes Forlag's promotional materials. Although the typographic appearance of the group's self-titled paper *Monde* was itself relatively unremarkable, its replacement *Plan* served to further underline the group's commitment to New Typography. In the hands of the Norwegian Mot Dag group, on the other hand, New Typography was applied more haphazardly and with varying degrees of ideological investment. The design of its journal *Clarté* only changed after the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 had popularised Functionalism's aesthetic. In this instance, the group's use of New Typography was likely motivated by a desire to reach out to young audience rather than as part of wider programme to create a new society. At the same time, the design of the Mot Dag-affiliated Sosialistiske Arkitekters Forening's journal *PLAN* and of the Swedish *Arkitektur och samhälle* further confirms the view that Functionalist architects, in spite of the efforts detailed in the previous chapter of the primarily Danish architects arguing for a Functional Tradition, continued to see New Typography as Functionalism's expression in typography. It continued to form part of their larger project. In Sweden, Functionalism and Social Democracy remained more closely linked than in Denmark or Norway. As the next section will demonstrate these links remained close, not only in cultural publications, but also in the advertising materials of the cooperative movement.

## Kooperativa Förbundet and konsum's graphic identity

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the cooperative movement is often considered a third pillar of the labour movement alongside the trade unions and political parties. It

was also noted that the Swedish cooperative society Kooperativa Förbundet (KF) played a vital role in Marquis Child's thesis of Swedish society having successfully carved out a Middle Way between the extremes of Capitalism and Communism. This short section will argue that KF and its 'konsum' [consume] chain of grocery stores in the late 1920s developed a house style,<sup>82</sup> which reflected the organisation's moral purpose and rationalist ideals.<sup>83</sup> In architecture it turned to Functionalism and in graphics—press ads, posters and packaging—it turned to New Typography, which as discussed in **chapter 4** became aligned with the Functionalist movement in architecture around this time.

In his seminal account of Functionalism's 'breakthrough' in Swedish Architecture, Per G. Råberg singles out KF's architectural practice as "the leading and most influential introducer of the new ideas of form in Sweden".<sup>84</sup> This, was as a result of the industrial developments taking place from 1927 around the mill Tre Kronor [Three Crowns] on Kvarnholmen, and the construction of the Luma light bulb factory by Hammarbyleden (1929–30).<sup>85</sup> However, Råberg also points out that the practice's first large job, after its was

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82 The term 'house style' gave way to corporate identity from the 1950s onwards. See: Wibo Bakker, "Man to Manual? The Diverse Roots of Corporate Identity" (paper presented at the EBHA Annual Conference, Frankfurt, September 1–3, 2005)

83 According to Peder Aléx's intellectual history of KF, the organisation's operations were theoretically underpinned by ideas of morality, with a concern for reducing differences between the classes, for the protection of peace and democracy, and with promoting modernisation and rationalism in society: Peder Aléx, *Den Rationella Konsumenten: KF Som Folkuppföstrare 1899–1939* (Stockholm & Stehag: B. Österlings Bokförlag & Symposion, 1994), 115

84 "den ledande och mest inflytelserika introduktören av de nya formidéerna i Sverige". Per Göran Råberg, *Funktionalistisk Genombrott. Radikal Miljö Och Miljödebatt I Sverige 1925–1931*. 2nd ed. (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners forlag and Sveriges Arkitekturmuseum, 1972), 63. For detail on the practice and its work during the 1920s and '30s, see: Lisa Brunnström, *Den Rationella Fabriken: Om Funktionalismens Rötter* (Umeå: Dokuma, 1990), 185–200

85 Råberg, *Funktionalistisk Genombrott*, 62–63

founded in 1924 and placed under the leadership of Eskil Sundahl (1890–1974), was the “rationalisation” of the cooperative’s chain of stores — and then primarily the shop fittings.<sup>86</sup> Whilst the formal language used for these fittings initially followed “fairly traditional ideals”, Råberg notes a proposal for a standard shop building by Kurt von Schmalensee from 1927 as “one of the earliest radical solutions even in a formal sense”.<sup>87</sup> In *Sweden: The Middle Way* (1936), his famous account of how capitalism had become “modified” or “controlled” in Scandinavia, Marquis Childs described KF’s history and operations in detail.<sup>88</sup> His book also described the appearance of the “functional” and “smart” konsum stores.<sup>89</sup> Their “distinctive appearance”, which included the exterior signs reading ‘konsum’ “in heavy block letters”, was according to Childs standardised over no fewer than 380 stores — from Stockholm to the northern mining town of Kiruna.<sup>90</sup>

The stores’ distinctive appearance was no accident. Sundahl was acutely aware of architecture’s ability to project an image to the public. This is evident from the articles he wrote on the topic in the architectural journal *Byggmästaren*.<sup>91</sup> However, KF’s promotional efforts did not stop with its architecture and shop fittings. Because it had a large distributive network of stores, and because it did not only sell to members, KF put out a large amount of print ads and poster advertising compared to what cooperative societies did elsewhere.<sup>92</sup> These efforts were aimed at ‘the rational

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86 “rationaliseringen”. Ibid., 62

87 “ganska traditionella ideal”, “en av de tidigaste radikala lösningarna även i formalt hänseende”. Ibid.

88 Childs, *Sweden*, 18, 22

89 Ibid., 14

90 Ibid.

91 Råberg, *Funktionalistisk Genombrott*, 61

92 This is asserted by Maurtiz Bonow in the article ‘How Swedish Co-operatives Advertise — and Why’, which appeared in October 1938’s edition of *Printers’ Ink*.

consumer', who as described in Peder Aléx's book of the same name (*Den rationella konsumenten*, 1993) was an ideal member of the cooperative movement. She was a house wife who would make all her purchases on a rational basis and who did not let herself be swayed by desire. Purchases would always be paid by cash and never by credit. Credit was seen as a corruptive force on both individuals and on society as a whole.<sup>93</sup> Three individuals who played particularly important roles in the creation of these advertisements were cash manager [kassadirektör] of konsum Stockholm, Nils Willner (1890–1939), head of KF's advertising agency Annonssbyrån Svea, Knut Krantz (1891–1970), and commercial artist Harry Bernmark (1900–?).

Willner, who according to Krantz was "particularly sensitive to the new tendencies", i.e. Functionalism, was in charge, not only of commissioning ads and posters for konsum, but also frequently for writing copy.<sup>94</sup> Intending to create ads that could be read quickly and produced cheaply, he developed a characteristic style based on concise, sometimes curious or humorous, formulations such as "svensk gris är värd sitt pris" [swedish pork, worth its price], "din aptit ger bonden lön" [your appetite pays the farmer's wages], and "kom med och bygg upp" [join in and construct] — to name some of the better known examples. The style of ad which resulted became known as 'the six-line ad', as it seldom contained more than six lines of text.<sup>95</sup>

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The article is reprinted in: Knut Krantz and Gunnar Ryberger, eds. *Co-Op Reklam I Sverige under Ett Kvarts Sekel. Annonser, Affischer, Plakat, Broschyrer, Varumärken, Förpackningar, Firmanamn, Utställningar, Skyltningar M. M.* (Kooperativa Förbundet Bokförlag, 1955), 43–48

93 Aléx, *Den Rationella Konsumenten*, 143–144.

94 Krantz and Ryberger, *Co-Op Reklam i Sverige under Ett Kvarts Sekel*, 6

95 For detail on Willner and 'the six-line ad': *Ibid.*, 82–83

Like the signs on the konsum stores' shop fronts, the ads were set in a bold lower case sans serif. The text was ranged left and set at size large enough to help them stand out from the editorial content around them. This typographic treatment was so unique that ads could be run without including either konsum's or kooperativa's marques. On occasion neither would even be mentioning by name. Krantz claimed that lower case was consistently used because it was easier to read than upper case.<sup>96</sup> This argument fits with KF's guiding principle of rationalism, however it also undoubtedly helped achieve a high level of recognition. For instance, in *Nordisk boktryckarekonst's* discussions on *kleinschreibung*, konsum's ads were repeatedly cited as typical examples of the phenomenon.<sup>97</sup> In addition to its use on the konsum store fronts, print ads, and posters lower case was also used on the packaging of KF's own products — like Cirkelkaffe [Circle Coffee], the brand launched in 1932. The style developed for press ads was also used for small posters used inside the stores or in their display windows.<sup>98</sup> Whilst the press ads inevitably were printed in the same black ink as the rest of the publication they appeared in, these small posters were printed in a number of different, predominantly bright, colours. However, photographically illustrated posters were printed black.

Krantz also contributed with ideas and texts for KF's posters. To

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96 "2:dra Kvartalets Bästa Annons, Reklamtryck, Affisch." *Tidskrift För Affärsökonomi* 4, no. 12 (1931): 605

97 See, for instance: Yngve Hedvall, "Den Moderna Typografien Och Dess Avarter. Inledningsanförande Av Redaktör Yngve Hedvall Vid Diskussion I Boktryckarklubben Den 18 Maj 1932," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift För Bokindustri, Bokkonst, Bokhistoria Och Reklamväsen* 33, no. 6 (1932): 211; Hugo Lagerström, "STORA eller små bokstäver," *Nordisk Boktryckarekonst: Tidsskrift för bokindustri, bokkonst, bokhistoria och reklamväsen* 34, no. 2 (1933): 53

98 Carl Kongstad, "De Svenske Brugsforeningers Reklame," *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 10, no. 5 (1937): 14

realise his ideas he worked with commercial artists like Bernmark, but also with commercial photographic studios. The resulting posters closely conformed to the principles of New Typography. For the creation of photographic posters Krantz turned to Gunnar Sjöblom of *Kommersiell Foto* [Commercial Photography] and Herman Bergne (1899–1983) of *Ateljé Bergne*, both of whom were pioneers of advertising photography in Sweden from the late 1920s onwards.<sup>99</sup> *Kommersiell Foto* supplied the images of coins for the early photographic poster ‘*mera för dem i konsum*’ [more for you in konsum, 1932], and *Ateljé Bergne* photographed a selection of sausages which was used for ads as well as a poster titled ‘*kooperativas korv är läckerhet*’ [the cooperative’s sausages are a delicacy, 1934]. The deadpan nature of images are arguably particularly well suited to addressing the figure of ‘the rational consumer’. They also conform to the prevailing ideal for Swedish advertising photography in the 1930s: that photography should engage in objective, truthful representation rather than optical trickery, a stance previously discussed in relation to the advertising trade’s call for Truth in Advertising in **chapter 3**, and Anders Billow’s photographic books in **chapter 4**.

With Bernmark, Krantz created ‘*gör pengarna dryga – köp i konsum*’ [make the money last — buy in konsum, 1931], one of the KF’s best known early posters.<sup>100</sup> Printed in 30.000 copies it was essentially a scaled-up version of Willner’s six-line ad, but with the characteristic sans serif rendered in three dimensions, ‘lit’ from below, and laid down on a deep blue background. The colours yellow and blue bring associations to the Swedish flag, and the

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99 Pär Rittsel, “Tidens Spegel.” *FOTO*, (Jul-Aug, 1980): unpaginated

100 The poster’s reputation can be attributed to it winning *Affärsekonomi*’s prize for the best poster of the second quarter of 1931 and from being reprinting in 1954: Krantz and Ryberger, *Co-Op Reklam i Sverige under Ett Kvarts Sekel*, 7

yellow and green can be seen to refer to money — as the 5 and 50 kronor notes used at the time were printed with dark green ink on pale yellow paper.<sup>101</sup> According to Krantz, it was Bernmark's interest in Functionalism which led him to produce work characterised by a concern for clarity, conciseness and abstraction — qualities which came to influence posters created for KF also by other artists during this period.<sup>102</sup> However, by 1937 Bernmark had left Svea to become head of Esselte's advertising department, and been replaced by his former assistant there, Gunnar Orrby (1912–2003).<sup>103</sup> Over the next few years the aesthetic of KF's posters shifted towards the abstract illustrative style of mainstream commercial art in Sweden, as can be seen in Orrby's 1940 poster for Cirkelkaffe.

As has been demonstrated, KF and its chain of stores 'konsum' applied a house style based on the principles of New Typography as laid out in Tschichold's 'elementare typographie' special issue. Consistent use of a bold sans-serif typeface, *kleinschreibung* and an 'objective' photographic style alongside Functionalist architecture and shop fittings were consciously used to project an image of a moral, rational, modern, Functionalist organisation which sought to reach out to 'the rational consumer'. That this was the intention can be seen in the promotional film *Vi har melodin* [We

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101 Two colour versions exist of this poster. This version, with green shading, paler yellow writing and a darker blue background was considered less good by *Affärsekonomi's* jury, and is perhaps therefore not the one featured in *Co-Op Reklam i Sverige under Ett Kvarts Sekel*.

102 Krantz and Ryberger, *Co-Op Reklam i Sverige under Ett Kvarts Sekel*, 6-7

103 The date of Bernmark's departure is not clear, but Orrby would much later claim that he worked under Bernmark at Esselte for 'a couple of years' before leaving for Svea in 1937. See: Lisbet Svengren, *Svenska Reklamaffischer: En Bilderbok Om Den Svenska Reklamaffischens Historia* (Stockholm: Affischeringsföretagens Förening, 1986), 21-22



*Have the Melody*, 1936], where we are invited to follow Erik and Gunn, a newly married couple who along with a few other lucky KF members have won a prize to tour the cooperative's various sites by plane. Towards the end of the film they fly in over Stockholm. Erik points out the window: "Oh, look there. There's the cooperative headquarters. And the new Katarina Lift". "How funkis it all looks", Gunn replies admiringly. "Of course", says Erik, "the entire corporation is funkis".<sup>104</sup>

## Party-political graphics

This final section details the use of New Typography and particularly of photomontage in Scandinavian political graphics. Despite the close connections between Social Democracy, New Typography and photomontage demonstrated in relation *acceptera's* and *Funktionalisme og Samfund's* covers, in the designs of publication *fönstret* and *Spektrum*, and in Kooperativa Föreningen's house style, this section will argue that the use of photomontage was highly limited in Scandinavian political campaigning. The first example can be found in 1929, when the Copenhagen branch of Socialdemokratiet, the Danish Social Democratic Party, commissioned a pair of posters from the Bergenholz advertising agency for that year's local election [Borgerrepræsentationsvalg].<sup>105</sup> One featured a worker with his fist clenched, the other was

104 From 26 mins: Erik: "Å titta der ser du der är kooperativa högkvarteret. Och nya katarinahissen"; Gunn: "Vad funkis alltihop ser ur"; Erik: "Javisst, hela korporationen är jo funkis". "Vi Har Melodin", *Filmarkivet*. <http://www.filmarkivet.se/sv/Film/?movieid=599> (accessed May 25, 2016)

105 In Sweden too, the first use of photomontage in political campaign materials would be made by the Social Democrats, and for a local election. This was Ivar Starkenberg's (1886–1947) 'Spår efter 10 års arbetarestyre' [Traces of Ten Years Labour Rule], created for the 1931 *stadsfullmäktigeval* in Stockholm.

a montage of four different ‘types’ the party wanted to reach out to – the civil servant, women, the average man, and the worker.<sup>106</sup> It was part of the party’s strategy in the 1920s and ’30s to widen its electoral base from its working class origins to a wider demographic,<sup>107</sup> and as such the two posters can be seen as representing the party’s past and future electorate. However, the Social Democratic parties were hesitant to make use of photomontage to reach these new groups. With the exception of those created by women’s and youth groups, posters created for national elections were hand-illustrated according to the commercial art conventions discussed in **chapter 3**. Nevertheless, the Norwegian Labour Party and Swedish Social Democrats were those parties, which through these groups made the most prominent use of photomontage in Scandinavian campaigning. The Scandinavian Communist parties made next to no use of photomontage in their campaign materials. The Danish party DKP was the only to do so when it used images from 1931’s violent unemployment demonstrations in Nakskov on their poster for the national election of 1932 (**fig. 5.02**).<sup>108</sup> This situation was very different to that in Germany, where only the KPD had used photomontage at the time the first Danish posters appeared.<sup>109</sup>

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106 “Moderne Agitation,” *Dansk Reklame. Medlemsblad for Dansk Reklame-Forening* 3 (1929): unpaginated

107 Mariann Brandt et al, *Socialdemokratisk Agitation & Propaganda I Mellemligstiden. En Undersøgelse Af Den Fremvoksende Social-Demokratiske Agitation Og Propaganda I 20’erne Og 30’erne Med Henblik På Dens Betydning for Den Faglige, Kulturelle Og Parlamentariske Udvikling* (Århus: Forlaget Skansen, 1979), i, 50

108 Hans Uwe Petersen, “To DKP-Plakater Fra 1930’erne, Der Findes I ABA’s Plakatsamling, Rummer En Pudsigt Lille Historie.” *Arbejdmuseet*. <https://arbejdmuseet.dk/viden-samlinger/temaer/danske-kommunister/artikler-dansk-kommunisme/find-3-fejl/> (accessed February 17, 2017)

109 At least to judge by the survey: Rainer Schoch et al, *Politische Plakate Der Weimarer Republik: 1918–1933* (Darmstadt: Hessisches Landesmuseum, 1980)



Fig. 5.02

'Is this system to continue?  
NO! Against class justice.  
Vote Communist!'  
Poster by DKP for the 1932  
Danish national election.

### **Kaj Andersson: *Morgonbris***

That photomontage would gain prominent usage by SAP's women's group, Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbund (SSK), was in no small part attributable to Kaj Andersson. She was affiliated with its journal *morgonbris* [morning breeze, 1904–92, 1998–ongoing] from 1931 to 1936, from December 1932 as editor. Her stint as editor of *fönstret* proved brief, and after 9 issues she left the paper. Shortly after, she was given the opportunity to edit a special issue of the social-liberal women's paper *Tidevarvet* [The Age] entitled 'Vi kvinnor i fabriken' [We Women in the Factory].<sup>110</sup> According to Per Schwanbom's biography of Andersson, this was the first time she was able to attend to all aspects of a publication. In addition to the journalistic work of writing articles and conducting interviews, she selected her own co-workers, procured ads from trade unions and attended to the lay-out of the special issue's pages which was illustrated with large photographs. The front page was dominated by an image of a young female worker from Stockholms Tobaksfabrik [Stockholm's Tobacco Factory], behind whom was montaged an image of tall factory chimneys (**fig.5.36**).

The special issue of *Tidevarvet* was followed by a commission to edit 1931's May Day issue of *Morgonbris*, the journal of SAP's women's group, Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbund. The resulting issue decisively broke with the journal's previous designs. Andersson rejected editor Signe Vessmann's initial proposal of using a Käthe Kollwitz drawing for the front cover, choosing instead to have a group of women of all different ages photographed. Like the photographs used in *Tidevarvet*, this

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110 *Tidevarvet* 9, no. 7: Med bilaga, Vi kvinnor i fabriken (February 14, 1931)

composition clearly drew upon the heroic depictions of workers found in Soviet models. However, whilst the caption ‘Hän mot en ny tid’ [The way towards a new age] recalls some of the obligatory optimism of such works, the women have been depicted in a less triumphal manner than their Soviet counterparts. Nevertheless, Andersson would later recall her images for *Tidevarvet* as being “inspired by Russian poster art, which flourished then”,<sup>111</sup> and that her redesign of *Morgonbris* was “stimulated (...) by some avant garde films with their harshly contrasting black and white effect” as well as Anders Billow’s design of Carl Fries’ *I svenska marker*.<sup>112</sup> Whether she was aware of the Soviet women’s journals *Rabotnitsa* [Female-worker] and *Krestianka* [Female-peasant], both of which made extensive use of photography and montage, is unknown.<sup>113</sup>

Andersson’s May Day issue of *Morgonbris* was the first printed at Bröderna Lagerström, who from this issue onwards would become its regular printer.<sup>114</sup> This is likely the reason why the typography of *Morgonbris* would so closely correspond to the ‘modified form’ proposed by Lagerström in **chapter 2**. Bold upper case Bodoni is used for the masthead (from 1932 onwards set in lower case), Bodoni, Erbar Grotesk or Schelter & Giesecke’s Breite Halbfette Grotesk (1890) for article headings, and Mediæval for the running text. When asked to comment on the design, Lagerström

111 “Bildene var inspirerad av rysk affischkonst, som då blomstrade”. Quoted in: Schwanbom, *Hon Gjorde Tidningar Med Själ*, 28

112 “stimulerades (...) av några avantgardfilmer i sträng svart och vit kontrastverkan”, Eva Ekstrand, “Kaj Anderssons Morgonbris. Kvinnopress, Trettioal Och Längtan Efter Fri Tid,” (PhD thesis, Umeå University, Department of Culture and Media, 2002), 72

113 For a discussion of these two journals, see: Katerina Romanenko, “Photomontage for the Masses: The Soviet Periodical Press of the 1930s.” *Design Issues* 26, no. 1 (2010): 29–39

114 This was to the expense of *Arbeteranes Tryckeri* [The Workers’ Printing House].

emphasised the technical advances that made *Morgonbris*' production possible. It was set by machine, which allowed thinner and sharper letterforms to be used for running text. Improved presses made it easier to fill the journal with many, and large, illustrations. Moreover, improved paper stocks made it possible it possible to print images as well as text on uncoated paper.<sup>115</sup> *Morgonbris* was, in other words, not only modern in appearance, but also technically advanced.

Eva Åsén Ekstrand has identified how formal or thematic aspects of photographs and montages originating in publications such as *VU* and *A.I.Z.* was reinterpreted to suit Swedish circumstances when applied to *Morgonbris*' covers.<sup>116</sup> A particularly memorable example was that which was also used as a poster for 1932s andrakammarval — the first time photomontage was used for a poster in a Scandinavian national election. It was clearly derived from El Lissitzky's poster for the Russische Ausstellung [Russian Exhibition] held in Zurich three years earlier. Its powerful motif of a boy and girl fused together, gazing expectantly and open mouthed into the future, with the letters USSR running across their conjoined forehead, symbolised the equal roles genders were to play in the new, utopian society which was being created in Russia. The low camera angle the two are shot from is a trope of Constructivist photography originating with Alexander Rodchenko, who wanted to use the camera's 'mechanical eye' to strip away Western notions of perspective as part of a project to re-

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115 Hugo Lagerström, "Morgonbris Och Den Moderna Typografien," *Morgonbris. Tidning För Den Socialdemokratiska Kvinnorörelsen*. 30, no. 11 (1934): 23

116 Eva Åsén Ekstrand, "Fotomontaget Som Politiskt Vapen: Kaj Andersson I Trettioalets 'Morgonbris,'" in *Nya Röster: Svenska Kvinnotidskrifter under 150 År* (Möklinta: Gidlund, 2014), 113 ff

educate the socialist individual.<sup>117</sup> His argument was that “in order to accustom people to seeing from new viewpoints it is essential to take photographs of everyday, familiar subjects from completely unexpected vantage points and in completely unexpected positions”.<sup>118</sup>

However, the Swedish poster was not thoughtless copy. Rather, it sensitively appropriated the fused eye motif into a local context. Whilst Lissitzky’s poster shows the figures floating above the Russian Exhibition’s architecture in the dream-like soft tones of the gravure print, the Swedish shows them set over a Functionalist housing development. This, along with the accompanying text, sees Lissitzky’s boy and girl reconceived as a young couple situated in the realities of family life, rather than a dream of a utopian society, something their tight-lipped determination and the crisp image quality attest to.<sup>119</sup> This is entirely in accord with *acceptera*’s closing statement which, as discussed in **chapter 4**, also rejected the utopian dream in favour of ‘looking reality in the eye’.

### Renewed propaganda efforts after 1933

The events of 1933, when Adolf Hitler’s National Socialists came to power in Germany, had an immediate impact on Scandinavian politics and approaches to visual design. That year a national

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117 ‘Mechanical eye’ is a phrase borrowed from the Soviet film director Dziga Vertov. On Rodchenko’s ideas on perspective and angles in photography see: Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 202–203

118 Alexander Rodchenko, “The Paths of Modern Photography,” in *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913–1940*, ed. Christopher Phillips (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art & Aperture, 1989), 261. Originally published in *Novyi lef*, no.9 (1928): 31–39

119 That the couple’s facial expressions can be seen in this light is claimed in: Ekstrand, “Fotomontaget Som Politiskt Vapen”, 124

election was held in Norway. Following the Nazis' example, the newly founded fascist party Nasjonal Samling [National Unity, NS], introduced propaganda elements such as the sun cross (or St. Olav's cross), uniforms and salutes to Norwegian political campaigning.<sup>120</sup> A photographic poster featuring party leader Vidkun Quisling's (1887–1945) portrait also formed part of the campaign. This was the first time a party leader's portrait had been used for a poster in Scandinavia. The precedent was also here set by the Nazis, who had used Hitler's portrait on an election poster the previous year.

Although NS was only ever a marginal force in Norway during the 1930s, and failed to gain any mandates in either of the national elections they participated in (1933 and 1936), their 1933 campaign had a profound effect. The advertising journal *Propaganda* judged it to be the best of all the efforts that year, and the Norwegian Labour Party (DNA) took particular note of the methods used.<sup>121</sup> Leading members were unnerved by the Nazis rapid rise to power in Germany, a fact they largely put down to the "excellent use of propaganda".<sup>122</sup> Naturally, they didn't want the same scenario to repeat itself in Norway. Ahead of the following year's local elections [Kommunestyrevalg] DNA therefore reassessed and intensified its propaganda efforts.<sup>123</sup> Unlike NS, where the appearance of graphic materials was controlled by its head of

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120 Hans Fredrik Dahl, "Parti Og Plakat under NS-regimet." in *Parti Og Plakat. NS 1933–1945*, eds. Tom B. Jensen and Hans Fredrik Dahl, Ny forøket utgave (Oslo: Historisk forlag, 2005), 8

121 Ibid.

122 "Det kan overhode ikke benektes at nasjonalsocialistenes fremragende propagandavirksomhet gjennom bruk av slagord og symboler i høi grad har bidratt til denne bevegelses kolossale vekst". Håkon Lie, "Om Bruken Av Hammermerket," in *Håndbok I Agitasjon Og Propaganda. Agitasjon Og Propaganda – Håndbok for Tillitsmenn I de Norske Arbeider-organisasjoner* (Oslo: Arbeiderenes Oplysningsforbund, 1934), 3

123 Lill-Ann Jensen, "I Hammerens Tegn: Nye Agitasjons- Og Propagandaformer I Norsk Arbeiderbevegelse På 1930-tallet." *Arbeiderhistorie*, (2002): 107



propaganda [propagandasjef] Walter Fyrst (1901–93) in accordance with the fascist ‘leader-principle’ [førerprinsippet],<sup>124</sup> DNA relied on local groups to create their own materials. Spreading the new ideas to party members was therefore crucial. To this end the party published a special issue of its periodical *Det 20de århundre* [The 20th Century] devoted to propaganda.<sup>125</sup> Its educational division AOF [Arbeidernes Opplysningsforbund, The Workers’ Educational Society], also created a manual titled *Håndbok i agitasjon og propaganda* [Handbook in Agitation and Propaganda, 1934] which it distributed to local elected representatives.<sup>126</sup> This manual contained chapters written by senior party members on various aspects of campaigning, including a chapter on posters and printed matter by commercial artist and photographer Thor Wiborg (1903–1985).<sup>127</sup> Moreover, the manual’s editor Håkon Lie (1905–2009), who was also head of AOF, authored a small pamphlet titled ‘Om bruken av hammermerket’ [On The Use Of The Hammer Mark].<sup>128</sup> This was a brief, sixteen-page guide on how to use what was effectively DNA’s first logo. In many respects it resembled the later invention of the corporate identity manual. It contained specifications of the logo’s measurements, described how it should be constructed, stipulated that it should be oriented at a particular angle, and provided examples of how it should be positioned

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124 Propagandasjefen. “Den Nye Arbeidsdag.” *Førerbladet: Praktisk Og Teoretisk Tidsskrift for N.S. Tillidsmenn*. 2 (February 1934): 5. After the 1934 election Fyrst stepped down as head of propaganda was replaced by Gulbrand Lunde (1901–42).

125 *Det 20nde århundre*, no.6 (June 1934)

126 Håkon Lie, ed. *Håndbok I Agitasjon Og Propaganda. Agitasjon Og Propaganda – Håndbok for Tillitsmenn I de Norske Arbeiderorganisasjoner* (Oslo: Arbeiderenes Opplysningsforbund, 1934). It was republished in 1936 and 1938, and a revised edition appeared in 1946.

127 Thor Wiborg, “Plakater Og Trykksaker,” in *Håndbok I Agitasjon Og Propaganda. Agitasjon Og Propaganda – Håndbok for Tillitsmenn I de Norske Arbeiderorganisasjoner*, ed. Håkon Lie (Oslo: Arbeiderenes Opplysningsforbund, 1934)

128 The pamphlet was bound into the 1934 edition of *Håndbok i Agitasjon Og Propaganda*.

in different scenarios: on various types and size of red flag, on podiums, posters, leaflets and letters.

DNA's new approach to propaganda was informed by theories proposed in *Trepil mod Hagekors* [Three Arrows Against the Swastika, 1933]. This was a book authored by Sergej Tschachotin (1883–1973), a Russian émigré who had worked on propaganda for the Eiserne Front [Iron Front] — a militant organisation affiliated with the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD].<sup>129</sup> After the National Socialists gained power in 1933, he fled to Denmark where he briefly became a member of Socialdemokratiet.<sup>130</sup> In *Trepil mod Hagekors* he detailed his work in Germany. There he had argued that the SPD should learn from the Nazis' propaganda success and emulate their methods by focusing on emotional rather than rational appeal, and had invented the 'three arrows' symbol, a defining features of which was that it easily could be used to cross out the swastika in a 'battle of symbols' [symbolkamp].<sup>131</sup>

According to Lie, the three arrows symbol had been introduced too late because by that time “the National Socialists had already

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129 The Eiserne Front was formed between the Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold, the Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbund (ADGB), the Allgemeinen freien Angestelltenbund (Afa-Bund), the SPD, and the Arbeiter-Turn- und Sportbund (ATSB).

130 Socialdemokratiet's leadership were wary of his methods, which in Denmark only resonated amongst radical Copenhagen-based groups within the party's youth group, DSU [Danmarks Socialdemokratiske Ungdom]. He was excluded as early as 1934, after which he relocated to Paris. Here he became known as Serge Chakotin and published his best known work, *Le Viol des Foules par la Propaganda Politique* (Gallimard: 1939), translated into English as *The Rape of the Masses* (1940). For Tschachotin in Denmark, see: Brandt et al, *Socialdemokratisk Agitation & Propaganda I Mellemløbet, 189–195*

131 The book was published in Danish and German language versions: Sergei Tschachotin, *Trepil Mod Hagekors* (København: Frem-Forlag, 1933); —, *Dreipfeil Gegen Hakenkreuz* (Kopenhagen: Verlag Aktiver Sozialismus, 1933)

flooded the country with their symbol”.<sup>132</sup> Regarding DNA’s mark, he explained the hammer had been chosen because it symbolised labour on the one hand, and because it had a historical use as a weapon on the other: “The hammer mark shows our willingness to engage in struggle, our willingness to strike when needed. But more than this it shows our willingness to work and build!”.<sup>133</sup> Though this may well be true, another possible reason is put forth by Lill-Ann Jensen, a writer on the Norwegian labour movement: The Soviet Union was still highly regarded by many labour party sympathisers at this point, and the obvious similarity between ‘the hammer mark’ and ‘the hammer and sickle’ may be due to an attempt to jostle for position, and thereby votes, as the foremost communicator of Soviet ideas at the expense of NKP, which had split from DNA as late as 1923.<sup>134</sup> This points to a significant difference between the German and Norwegian political contexts. Tschachotin had refrained from using the hammer and sickle precisely because he thought its associations with Communism would lead the majority of Social Democrats to reject it.<sup>135</sup>

The desire to emotionally affect the viewer can be seen in the handbook’s recommendations for the choice of lettering. Whilst Thor Wiborg, in the chapter on posters and printed matter, recommended the use of a “modern, simple type of lettering (...) informed by steel and concrete”,<sup>136</sup> he also presented a taxonomy

132 “Nasjonalsocialistene hadde da allerede oversvømmet landet med sitt symbol”. Håkon Lie, “Om Bruken Av Hammermerket,” in *Håndbok I Agitasjon Og Propaganda. Agitasjon Og Propaganda – Håndbok for Tillitsmenn I de Norske Arbeider-organisasjoner* (Oslo: Arbeiderenes Oplysningsforbund, 1934), 2

133 “Hammermerket viser altså vår vilje til kamp, vår vilje til å slå til når det kreves! Men enda mer viser det vår vilje til arbeid og oppbygning!”. *Ibid.*, 4

134 Jensen, “I Hammerens Tegn”, 101–119

135 Tschachotin, *Trepil Mod Hagekors*, 14

136 “moderne, enkle skriftsorter (...) preget av stål og betong”. Wiborg, “Plakater Og

of lines which were paired with what he perceived to be their emotional connotations. For example “a straight line seems solid, certain and steady” (no.1), whilst a diagonal line conveys “speed” and “movement” (no.4).<sup>137</sup> This had significance also for letterforms, in that he argued they were constructed by using a “certain system of such line-effects”.<sup>138</sup> The ‘modern, simple type of lettering’ he recommended could be modified to appear “slightly reckless [and] jagged” by making it thicker at the top and bottom, effectively adding a serif of sorts — or, to use the descriptions in Wiborg’s taxonomy, thorns (no.6).<sup>139</sup> This would make the lettering appear “fresher” without compromising its “strength and stability”, the former quality being associated with near tangential, curving lines (no.8), and the latter with thick, straight shapes (nos. 11 & 12).<sup>140</sup> Wiborg made use of this type of lettering in work for the Labour Party. For instance, a 1934 cover design for *Arbeiderungdommen* [Working Class Youth], with the headline ‘Grip hammeren!’ [Seize the hammer!], featured the exact same style of ‘fresher’ lettering advocated in the handbook.

As part of the increased focus on propaganda, DNA made a concerted effort to reach out to women. Whilst some 20 years had passed since Norway granted women suffrage (1913), as the first Scandinavian country to do so, before Denmark (1915) and Sweden (1919), it was judged that a lack of participation in political life was the result of a lack of education on political matters. In 1934, AOF therefore established a women’s committee.<sup>141</sup> The committee’s

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Trykksaker”, 96

137 “En rett linje virker fast, sikker og stø”, “fart”, “bevegelse”.

Ibid., 95

138 “et bestemt system av slike linjevirkninger”. Ibid., 96

139 “litt uvørent kantete”. Ibid., 98

140 “friskere”, “styrken og støheten”. Ibid., 98

141 “Arbeiderkvinner – Fram for Frihet!” *Typografiske Meddelelser* 59 (1934): 384–85

printed materials were defined by the work of Sverre Ørn-Evensen (1905–68), a trained compositor who also worked as a journalist and illustrator and who was closely connected to the trade union movement.<sup>142</sup> His involvement began already with the committee's first publication, Johanne Reutz's *Kvinnene til socialismen!* [Women to Socialism!, 1934] (**fig.5.03**), and he also started working on Arbeiderpartiets kvindeforbund's [The Labour Party's Women's Association] journal *Arbeiderkvinnen* [The Working Class Woman, 1909–57] around this time. As can be seen on the cover of *Kvinnene til socialismen!*, Ørn-Evensen's photomontages were paired with a particular kind of expressive sans-serif lettering which shared an affinity with the 'fresh' style advocated by Wiborg for use in DNA's materials.

In 1936 national elections were held in both Norway and Sweden.<sup>143</sup> In Norway, use of photography and montage were with the exception of the photomontaged anti-war poster *Nei!* [No!] created by commercial artist Alf Ellingsen (1900–68) for DNA, restricted to Ørn-Evensen's posters and election materials for DNA's women's and youth groups. However, in Sweden where the trend towards incorporating these photographic techniques into modern commercial art practice had been most pronounced, there was an explosion of use. SAP's women's group once again produced materials. Leaflets, produced at Bröderna Lagerström, showed a city housewife and farmer's wife looking directly at the viewer. Both figures were illustrated photographically, but their

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142 In particular the union 'Handel og kontor' [Trade and Office], according to: Daniela Büchten, ed. *Propaganda! Russian and Norwegian Posters 1920-1939* (Oslo: Nasjonalbiblioteket & Press, 2013), 50

143 The Swedish andrakammarval was held on the 20 September and the Norwegian stortingsvalg on the 19th October.



Fig. 5.03

Cover of *Kvinnene til sosialismen* (1934).

Design: Sverre Ørn-Evensen.

oversized red flags were drawn in and printed in flat colour. The accompanying text was set in a sans serif. The two groups were targeted also in the pages of *Morgonbris* itself, in spreads making rare use of expressive typography calling for them to ‘unite, unite, unite!’.

Nevertheless, the majority of materials used in the Swedish campaign were designed by jobbing commercial artists without the intimate party-political affiliations of Kaj Andersson, or Ørn-Evensen in Norway. This was even the case for what was arguably the most evocative poster designed for SAP that year, ‘*framtidfolket röstar med arbetarepartiet*’ [the future-people vote with the labour party. It was created by Karin Ageman (1899–1950) and Bror Bjurberg (1902–92).<sup>144</sup> Ageman was a commercial artist who worked at the Esselte advertising agency in Stockholm between 1928 and ’36 when she left to set up her own studio. For the ’36 election she also produced posters for the main opposition party, the conservative Swedish Unity [Svensk Samling]. This party was the forebear of that currently known as Moderaterna [The Moderates].

One of these posters, *For kyrka och kristen tro* [For the Church and Christianity], was photographically based and shared many formal characteristics with the poster created for the Social Democrats. Both feature a male and female figure set against a free-flowing airbrushed area of colour and also similar styles of lettering. However, their photographic styles differed. The young figures

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144 Designed by the two and printed at Esselte according to: Tom A. Björklund “Om Konstnärer Och Reklamkonstnärer,” *Form. Svenska Slöjdföreningens Tidskrift. Organ För Konstindustri, Konsthantverk Och Hemslöjd*. XXXIII (1937): 205

in the Social Democratic poster are brightly lit, making use of the chiaroscuro of avant garde cinema which had impressed Kaj Andersson, and shot using the Constructivist trope of the low camera angle. Together with the poster's headline, the woman's smile and the man's confident expression, these elements combine to convey a sense of assured optimism in the future of the Social Democratic movement. The figures in the Swedish Unity poster on the other hand, presumably a grandmother and her grandson, representing tradition being carried forward, have been shot at eye height using naturalistic lighting. The illustrated church further serves to create a naturalistic impression by providing a sense of depth and perspective. The muted, almost resigned, expressions gives the poster a strange and somewhat disconcerting air – perhaps meant to convey the threat conservatives felt their values were under from the Social Democrats. The same trend was also played out in a number leaflets produced for Swedish Unity.<sup>145</sup> The party was attempting to reverse a decade-long decline in votes, by investing much more heavily in its propaganda efforts than it previously.<sup>146</sup> In fact, Swedish Unity commissioned the highest number of photographic leaflets of the campaign, which despite these efforts would prove another failure for them.<sup>147</sup> Svensk Samling were not the only non-socialist party to chose the new photographic commercial art aesthetic for their posters and other materials. The liberal Folkpartiet [The People's Party] had a series of slick photographic posters designed by Anders Beckman. That

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145 It is not known who designed these – but it is likely they, like the party's posters, were commissioned from a number of different commercial artists. Besides Ageman, posters for the 1936 campaign were designed by Willie Bergström (1903–68) and Nils Gustaf Granath (1896–1937). See: Johan Westrin, *Den Moderata Bilden* (Stockholm: Ekerlids förlag, 2008), 42–43

146 Westrin, *Den Moderata Bilden*, 41

147 Judging by what has been preserved in Kungliga Biblioteket's ephemera collection



conservative and liberal parties were willing to have materials produced using a photographic rhetoric originating with the radical groups within the labour movement, and ultimately in the Soviet Union, shows how integrated and depoliticised the use of photomontage and unusual camera angles had become in Swedish advertising work by 1936. As seen in **chapter 3**, photography had by this point been taken up as part of the modern style used by commercial artists.

1936 were the last national elections to be held in Norway and Sweden before the Second World War. Whilst neutral Sweden held two elections during the war, a government of national unity served throughout this period and campaigning was limited.<sup>148</sup> Denmark did hold one more election, in 1939, but unlike in Sweden there is no evidence of photography being taken up by the political parties on a large scale in this election. The most notable photographic contribution was a flyer issued by the The Conservative People's Party [Konservative Folkeparti] (**fig.5.04**). The flyer consciously adopted the verbal and visual rhetoric of the left in order to appeal to the working classes. The focus on unemployment and use of loaded terms such as 'Comrades' is matched by an asymmetric sans serif design and a young man posing with the clenched fist of labour movement struggle. This was the same clenched fist used by the Social Democrats when they introduced the photograph to Scandinavian political

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148 Elections were held in 1940 and '44. The government of national unity (Hansson III) was formed 13 December 1939 in reaction to the Winter War and dissolved 31 July 1945. Westrin, in his history of Swedish conservative posters, claims efforts were limited in 1940 because the campaign was held in the shadow of the war and all the democratic parties were in any case represented in the government of national unity: Westrin, *Den Moderata Bilden*, 47–48



Fig. 5.04

*Kammerater – lad det nu være slut! Stem for mere Arbejde! Stem konservativt. (1939).*

campaigning ten years earlier.<sup>149</sup>

The Social Democrats were able to adapt the visual language, and the associations they wanted this to evoke, to different types of audiences. This section has argued the use of photography and photomontage in Scandinavian political graphics was largely the preserve of Social Democratic women's and youth groups. Daniela Büchten has noted that the future Norwegian labour politician and diplomat Dag Bryn (1909–91) in 1934 commented that young people were an important target group for DNA. She has argued that the prevalence of young people in the party's propaganda was therefore no coincidence, as "they symbolize at once the hope for the future and the development of a new socialist human being".<sup>150</sup> To this it may be added that the prominence of women, and the willingness of women's groups to pioneer the use of photomontage in Scandinavian political graphics, was no coincidence either. In her call for women to join the socialist cause, Reutz contrasted the differing views of women held by the Nazis and Soviets. Whereas the former saw men as only soldiers and women as nothing more than breeding stock, the latter's views, which promoted complete equality in political, social and economic terms, were considered "so modern and liberated" that they would "stand as a model for all cultured states in the future".<sup>151</sup> Considering the deep admiration for the Soviet achievements and the associated hopes of achieving a similar level of gender equality held under a DNA government against the backdrop of the heightened tensions following the

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149 "Kammerater" translates literally as "friends", but is here clearly used in the Socialist sense.

150 Büchten, *Propaganda! Russian and Norwegian Posters 1920-1939*, 214

151 "så moderne og frigjort at deres opfatning i disse spørgsmål vil stå som mønster for alle kulturstater i fremtiden". Johanne Reutz, *Kvinnene Til Sosialismen!* (Arbeiderenes Oplysningsforbunds Kvinnekomité, 1934), 6, 23

Nazis rise to power in 1933, it is not surprising that it should be women's groups which turned most readily to photomontage with its Soviet associations.

## Conclusion

This chapter has in turn discussed the New Typography and photomontage work created by those who may loosely be grouped as 'artists, poets and intellectuals', by the Swedish Cooperative Society Kooperativa Förbundet, and by the Scandinavian Social Democratic Parties (and groups officially affiliated with these parties). Building on the previous chapter's claim that New Typography and Functionalism became aligned in the build-up to the Stockholm Exhibition 1930, it has taken the commonly perceived close ties between Functionalism and Social Democracy as a starting point for an examination of New Typography's complex web of political associations in Scandinavia.

Compared to previous chapters, the work of printers has received relatively little attention here. However, printers like Hugo Lagerström and C. Volmer Nordlunde were able to significantly affect designs commonly attributed to figures like Kaj Andersson, Josef Riwkin and Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen. As has been demonstrated, *Spektrum*, *Morgonbris* and Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen's publications all benefited from close collaboration between these editors or authors and their printers. As has been argued in relation to *Spektrum* in particular, the design of these publications can be regarded as a type of domesticated New Typography which purposefully lay closer to the 'wild' originals of the avant-garde

than these printers would advocate in the context of the printing trade's own periodicals.

The political associations of New Typography and photomontage varied from country to country. In Denmark they were, through the work individuals associated with Broby-Johansen's *Monde* group and the publications of Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, most closely associated with Communism. This despite its lack of use by the Danish Communist Party. In Norway and Sweden, photomontage in particular, was most closely associated with the Social Democratic youth and women's groups. Apart from the early isolated incidents where the Social Democratic parties in Denmark and Sweden using such tactics to reach the urban populations of Copenhagen (1929) and Stockholm (1931), all the Scandinavian parties consciously used a more conventional, modern poster art aesthetic to reach the broad masses in their bids to become 'parties of the people'. DNA and SAP used photomontage specifically to target women and young voters as they had more positive associations to the Soviet Union than the population at large. The success of this strategic employment of photomontage was dependent on the medium having largely been limited to this discreet zone and thereby had been able to retain its strong political associations.

Women, in the shape of the ideal 'rational consumer' were also the intended audience for the ads and graphic materials created for KF's 'konsum' grocery stores. Notable for their consistent use of *kleinschreibung* in addition to New Typography's other formal principles, these materials are particularly significant as components of KF's house style. As demonstrated, this house

style also included the application of Functionalist principles to shop fittings and to the architecture of its industrial buildings. Through its discussion of *acceptera*'s cover, **chapter 4** showed that Swedish Functionalist architects were important proponents of a New Typography which stayed true to the principles outlined in Jan Tschichold's 1925 'elementare typographie' special issue. That this was the case is further supported by materials created for konsum and the design of the book series *Arkitektur och samhälle*. The design of the Mot Dag-associated journal *PLAN* suggests it was the case also in Norway. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this thesis does not subscribe to the popular notion that Functionalism in typography was 'softened' through its encounter with Social Democratic culture. Whilst the work of Kaj Andersson shows that the aesthetic and message of the avant-garde could be modified to suit the Swedish political context, it is also notable that the graphic work associated with Functionalist architects was characterised by its lack of domestication. Given the importance given to Kooperativa Förbundet by Marquis Childs in terms of forging a Middle Way between Communism and Capitalism, it seems particularly noteworthy that this organisation did not seek to 'modify' New Typography, but on the contrary made it an integral part of its corporate identity.

## Conclusion

This has been the first full-length account of New Typography's path in Scandinavia. With it I have not aimed to trace the roots of graphic design, or to demonstrate the existence of a hitherto unknown typographic avant-garde to rival the work of a Tschichold, a Lissitzky or the Bauhaus. Rather, I have sought to determine the extent of New Typography's impact in these countries, and to gain insight into how it was interpreted by those working in the graphic trades at the time. My argument has been that New Typography did in fact succeed in achieving significant penetration in Scandinavia, if not to the degree seen in Central and Eastern Europe.

Journals published by artists, poets and activists like *flamman*, *Pressen*, *Forsøgsscenen*, *linien*, *Plan*, *kontakt* and *Spektrum* all employed versions of New Typography which lay close to the 'wild' originals of the avant-garde. This was also the case for Swedish and Norwegian publications and materials associated with Functionalism in architecture, like *acceptera*, *Arkitektur och samhälle*, the Norwegian *PLAN*, and in the house style of the Swedish Cooperative society's konsum stores. However, these publications did not act as an arena for debate. This was instead conducted in printing trade journals. Seen as part of the trade's educational movement to 'heighten the trade', many of these journals (*Nordisk boktryckarekonst*, *Svensk grafisk årsbok*, *Norsk boktrykk kalender*, *EL* and *Grafisk revy*) made use of New Typography in their designs, albeit

in a domesticated form adapted to suit the abilities, needs and preferences of printing trade practice. New Typography was, in its domesticated forms, included also in other educational activities. It was practiced in trade schools like Skolan för Bokhantverk in Stockholm and Fagskolen for Boghaandværk in Copenhagen, was the subject of attention for the educational societies Det grafiske selskap i Oslo and Typografernes fagtekniske Samvirke, and included in text books like *Selmars Typografi*.

As outlined in the **introduction**, domestication is a term originating in Media and Technology Studies. In contrast to the innovation-centric theory of diffusion, which offers its ‘adopters’ a binary choice of adoption or rejection, the use-centric domestication model argues that innovations are actively taken up and modified by users to suit the circumstances of their everyday lives. Although Julia Meer’s *Neuer Blick auf die Neue Typographie* is important for its introduction of these ideas to the study of New Typography, this book offers only a few concrete examples of the adaptations it discusses. Moreover, it does not detail what precisely makes the specific examples isolated, for instance in **(fig.1.15)**, examples of a domesticated New Typography. In contrast, I have discussed a number of specific adaptations, of both theory and practice, in detail. To summarise, the most important theoretical adaptations were Hugo Lagerström’s ‘modified form’ — presented at the evening of debates hosted by Svenska Boktryckareföreningen in April 1929 and applied to *Svensk grafisk årsbok 1929* shortly thereafter, Viktor Peterson’s ‘constructive design’ — which reconciled the opposing theories of Tschichold and Rudolf Engelhardt and which was expressed in the design of *Typografisk årbog 1935*’s cover and title page, and Anders Billow’s nine ‘provisional



points' of reformed book design — which retrospectively explained the rationale behind his rotogravure designs of *I svenska marker* and *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift 1923*. Steen Eiler Rasmussen's *Britisk Brugskunst* was also a significant intervention in that it aligned Functionalism in typography to the Functional Tradition and the idea of standard types — contributing to New Typography being decoupled from Functionalism as its chosen aesthetic, and making it possible to advocate traditional aesthetics on the grounds of their functionality. Whilst the printing trade's practitioners showed the greatest interest in domesticating New Typography, other actors also sought to make modifications. As seen in **chapter 5**, Kaj Andersson's photomontages clearly made use of formal and thematic aspects lifted from international models, such as El Lissitzky's poster for the 1929 Russische Ausstellung in Zurich. However, these aspects were not copied unthinkingly, but adapted to suit Andersson's message and context, in this case that of following *acceptera's* call to 'look reality in the eye'. On the other hand, as seen in **chapter 3**, commercial artists remained reluctant to make use of the photograph — one of New Typography's elemental means — before it was taken up by publications like *Modern Publicity 1930* and *Mise en Page*, and thereby was taken up as part of their modern commercial advertising style.

This thesis has argued that the technological and material restrictions which applied to practitioners working in the printing and advertising industries are important factors to take into account when explaining why certain adaptations were made and others were not. For instance, **chapter 3** showed that the lack of engagement with photography and photomontage amongst commercial artists and compositors can be explained

partly through the limitations of the compositor's role and the commercial artist's investment in his or her illustrative skills. Compositors were less able to domesticate this aspect of New Typography, and commercial artists who considered hand-illustrated posters superior to photographic ones arguably thought they had less need to do so. An understanding of such factors also allows for a different appreciation of pictorial typography than is the norm. Dismissed as *funkis* and 'pseudo-constructivism', pictorial typography was one of few ways in which compositors could create their own images. Rather than a 'misunderstanding' of New Typography's theory and formal principles, it can be seen as a rational effort made by compositors to gain advantage over their competitors and creative autonomy over the production process.

In offering a way of thinking about how and why New Typography was taken up by practitioners in the graphic trades, domestication offers a way of addressing one of the problems identified in the **introduction**: that work produced in the Scandinavian province — to once again use Jeff Werner's words — stands in danger of appearing as a 'pale cousin from the countryside' when compared to that of the avant-garde. If made on aesthetic grounds, comparisons between the work of the avant-garde and the variants of New Typography created in Scandinavia seem to me not only unfair, but more importantly, of limited value. Without appreciating that the printing trade's version of New Typography was created with a different purpose, under different circumstances and under different constraints, such comparisons can only offer a limited understanding of the respective works' merits. It is clear from the numerous examples cited above, that the adaptations made to New Typography by printing

trade practitioners were underpinned by rational and coherent arguments. These practitioners were certainly not bound by the binary, diffusionist choice of either ‘adopting’ or ‘rejecting’ the new ideas. Nor were the resulting adaptations ‘misunderstandings’. Whilst the aim in many cases was to reconcile New Typography with existing practice, this does not need to be interpreted as an expression of resistance on ideological grounds. It can also be read as an active effort to adapt New Typography’s theory to the practicalities of the printing trade’s working environment and the restraints of the role. To extend Werner’s metaphor, one might ask if the work of the Scandinavian printing trade appears pale because it is from the countryside (i.e. the province), or because it is a cousin (i.e. a relation, but not a direct descendent)? Judging from my own findings, from the research undertaken by Julia Meer and accounts such as *The New Typography & Modern Layouts*, Frederic Ehrlich’s contemporaneous history of New Typography in the American printing trade, I would argue the latter to be the more dominant factor.

When I began the research for this thesis, I was aware the graphic and advertising trades were home to a range of different types of practitioner. However, I was surprised to learn of the rigidity of the divides between each group and the degree to which this was mirrored by the editorial content of each group’s trade journals. Given that they were all in some way engaged in designing for print, I would have expected there to be more exchange of ideas and styles across professional boundaries. This was not the case. Trade and professional journals were more likely to report on developments within their own trade or profession abroad than on those taking place in rival trades at home. An image emerges

of a series of discreet sets of international journal networks which only rarely interacted with one another. This image underlines the importance of contributions made by key individuals such as Tschichold, who were able to move across professional boundaries and introduce ideas from one network to another — in his case disseminating ideas and styles from the avant-garde to the printing trade. In the Scandinavian context, one example of this kind of individual can be said to be Gregor Paulsson, who on behalf of the Stockholm Exhibition 1930 commissioned the first pieces of New Typography from Bröderna Lagerström. Another was Steen Eiler Rasmussen, whose work informed by ideas of the Functional Tradition was appreciated and discussed by the printing trade.

As has been shown in **chapters 2** and **4**, the work carried out under the auspices of the Functional Tradition or the symmetrical ‘new typography’ which started appearing in Sweden around 1942, was not considered a reversion to past practice, but a development enabled by New Typography. Whether judged as a reversion or a development, it was in any case not a phenomenon unique to Scandinavian. Tschichold re-embraced symmetry and serif type faces around 1938, and New Typography’s ‘heir’, the Swiss Typography of the 1950s was a revival rather than a direct continuation. In Switzerland also, the printing trade turned away from New Typography from around 1935 onwards.<sup>1</sup> To the extent mainstream graphic design histories like those of Drucker and McVarish, Eskilson, Hollis or Meggs recognise this change in the Swiss printing trade’s priorities, it is interpreted as a disruption

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1 As can be seen from looking at the designs of the Schweizerische Typographenbund’s [Swiss Compositors’ Union] journal *Typographische Monatsblätter* (1933-ongoing).

of the development leading from New Typography and the avant-garde to Swiss Typography and the emergence of the graphic designer.<sup>2</sup> As it has not sought to trace the roots of this professional figure, this thesis has been free to follow the development of New Typography in the Scandinavian printing trade in all its forms. Whilst it certainly contained historicist elements and was shaped in part by the strong sense of history held by practitioners in the printing trade, I believe the domesticated forms of New Typography in Scandinavia can indeed be regarded as developments. Granted, they are not easily recognised as such if seen against the established narrative of graphic design described above. However, if positioned against Scandinavian narratives of Functionalism more widely, their status as developments make more sense. In the fields of applied art, furniture design and architecture domesticated forms of Functionalism emerged in the post war years with names like Scandinavian Design, The Functional Tradition and The New Empiricism. These were celebrated internationally, not only as sensitive adaptations, but in The New Empiricism's case even as being "the expression of the new outlook of the *avant-garde*" — despite appearing "at first sight to be in local builder's bungalow style."<sup>3</sup> Conversely, buildings constructed according to Le Corbusier's Five Points Towards a New Architecture could now be characterised as being of "the old faith".<sup>4</sup>

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- 2 Johanna Drucker and Emily McVarish, *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide*. Second Edition. (Pearson, 2016); Stephen Eskilson, *Graphic Design: A History*. (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012); Richard Hollis, *Graphic Design: A Concise History*. 2nd revised edition (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001); Philip B. Meggs and Alston W. Purvis, *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*. 5th ed. (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2012)
  - 3 "The New Empiricism: Sweden's Latest Style." *Architectural Review* CI, no. 606 (June 1947): 200. Emphasis in original.
  - 4 "I.R.B. Building at Rio de Janeiro. Architects: Marcelo, Milton and Mauricio Roberto." *Architectural Review* CIII, no. 613 (January 1948): 7.

## Opportunities for future research

As I have been based in London for the majority of this project, accessing the primary sources has been one of its major challenges. The primary materials used were gathered over a series of trips made to each of the Scandinavian capitals between December 2012 and September 2014. A total of five weeks was spent in each city for research purposes. Fortunately, each of the archives and libraries I visited had permissive photographic policies. This enabled me to swiftly move through and document material on site. Whilst this method successfully allowed me to assess the trade journals identified as primary sources for the research, the finite amount of time available meant that a number of alternative, or complementary, avenues of research have been considered to fall outside the project's scope.

For instance, more work needs to be undertaken before the kinds political journals and campaign materials discussed in **chapter 5** can be said to have been fully mapped and documented. A much larger task would be to investigate the degree of penetration achieved by New Typography in jobbing print by exploring the large ephemera archives managed by each of the Scandinavian national libraries. Moreover, the project's focus and scope has limited the depth of investigation which has been possible to undertake into the complex web of connections between Functionalism and ideals of consumption promoted by Kooperativa Förbundet and *Morgonbris*. I believe a history of international interest could be written on this topic, taking into consideration not only product design and architecture, but New Typography and attitudes towards advertising. Nevertheless, I have gone through a vast amount of materials within the parameters set for this

study. As this material has not previously received much attention, particularly in the English language, I have chosen to present a relatively high number of examples. In turn, this has limited the level of analysis it has been possible to afford each.

In addition to closer investigation of individual objects, a number of individuals identified over the course of this project would merit attention in their own right. For instance, very little is known about individuals like Steen Hinrichsen, Ivar S. Olsen, Viktor Peterson and Heinrich Wolff. It could also prove fruitful to revisit the careers of more familiar figures who later sought to play down their youthful engagement with New Typography, such as Valter Falk, Iwan Waloddi Fischerström, perhaps even to some extent Karl-Erik Forsberg. Certainly Hugo Lagerström, who made a sustained and significant contribution to particularly Swedish, but also Scandinavian and Nordic, typography would be worthy of a monograph. None currently exists. Likewise, no single account has been written on Sverre Ørn-Evensen and his career-spanning photomontage work for the Norwegian Labour Party. There are even significant opportunities to carry out new research on a well-known figure like Rudolf Broby-Johansen thanks to the 411 boxes worth of materials he left to Det Kongelige Bibliotek [The Royal Library] in Copenhagen upon his death in 1987.

Furthermore, I believe the project's focus on issues of domestication and networks could be usefully applied to other geographies, in order to think about how phenomena like styles are spread and adapted in local contexts. As noted in the **introduction**, with reference to PhD theses on modernist typography in Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain, there is a demonstrable interest

in expanding the geographical boundaries of graphic design history. To this I may add my experiences of discussions held at conferences and other venues with other researchers interested in the rich international history of graphic design. Topics have included Belgian avant-garde journals, Egyptian photomontage, French corporate identities, Irish commercial art and Mozambiqian political posters. However, whilst my initial ambition with this project was to chart New Typography's impact in Scandinavia as graphic design history has not previously done so, I would argue that the resulting thesis has also made a contribution to its mainstream narrative by expanding the parameters commonly used to frame it. This has not only been achieved in terms of geography, but has also in terms of the nature of work, the types of practitioners featured, and the kinds of arguments discussed. The shift has not been made with the intention of dismissing the work of the avant-garde. Indeed, this thesis has made some significant effort to detail what use the avant-garde made of New Typography in Scandinavia. Rather, it seeks to broaden contemporary understanding of what New Typography was, and what purpose it fulfilled. By affording practitioners in the graphic trades an active voice, rather than casting them as passive 'adopters', it is possible to arrive at a better understanding of what significance New Typography held for these practitioners at the time.



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ABA (Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv): Mondes Forlags arkiv,

Mondegruppens arkiv

Det Kongelige Bibliotek

Det Kongelige Bibliotek: Småtrykssamlingen

Designmuseum Danmarks bibliotek

Egmont company archive

Grafisk Arbejdsgiverforening

Københavns Universitet: Det Informationsvidenskabelige Akademis bibliotek

Roskilde Universitetsbibliotek

### **Norway**

AHO (Arkitekturhøgskolen i Oslo): Bibliotek

Aslak Gurholt's private collection

BIs hovedbibliotek: Reklamehistorisk samling

Deichmanske Bibliotek: Hovedbiblioteket

KHiO (Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo): Bibliotek

Nasjonalbiblioteket

Nasjonalbiblioteket: Småtrykssamlingen

Norsk Teknisk Museum: Kirstes arkiv

Statsarkivet i Oslo: Fabritius Eiendoms arkiv

**Sweden**

ArbArk (Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek)

ArkDes (Arkitektur- och designcentrum): Bibliotek

ArkDes (Arkitektur- och designcentrum): Lewerentz' arkiv

Centrum för Näringslivshistoria: MEAs arkiv

KF Arkiv

Konstbiblioteket

Konstfacks bibliotek

Kungliga Biblioteket

Kungliga Biblioteket: Vardagstryck

Stadsarkivet (Stockholm): Stockholmsutställningen 1930, Skolan för Bokhantverk

Landsarkivet Göteborg: Wezäta Melins arkiv

**United Kingdom**

British Library

National Art Library

University of the Arts London: Camberwell Library

University of the Arts London: Central Saint Martins Library

Royal College of Art library

St. Bride Library

UCL (University College London): Main Library — Scandinavian collection

## Journals

For journals with very long print runs only the period 1925–50 has been surveyed

### Printing

Name	Translation	Place	Publisher	Date
Bogtrykkerbladet	The Master Printer's Paper	Aarhus	Dansk Provins-bogtrykkerforening	1911–1991
Bogtrykkeren	The Master Printer	Copenhagen	Københavns Bogtrykkerlaug	1922–42
De Grafiske Fag	The Graphic Trades	Copenhagen	Københavns Bogtrykkerforening	1918–2012
EL	EL	Copenhagen	Erik Levison	1927–36
Fabritiana	Fabritiana	Oslo	Fabritius	1918–64
Grafia	Graphia	Oslo	Landsorganisasjonens presseavdeling	1942–45
Grafisk Kringsjå	Graphic Panorama	Oslo	Norsk Centralforening for Boktrykkere	1936–41
Grafisk Nyt	Graphic News	Copenhagen	Grafisk Compagni	1935–43
Grafisk Revy	Graphic Revue	Copenhagen, Oslo & Stockholm	Dansk Typograf-Forbund, Norsk Centralforening for Boktrykkere & Svenska Typografförbundet	1930–36
Grafisk Teknik	Graphic Technique	Copenhagen	Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke	1934–35
Grafisk Teknik	Graphic Technique	Copenhagen	Dansk Typograf-Forbund	1936–49
Grafisk Aarbog	Graphic Annual	Copenhagen	Dansk Typograf-Forbund	1938–63
Meddelanden / Grafiskt Forum	News / Graphic Forum	Stockholm	Svenska Boktryckare-föreningen	1895–1934 / 1935–96
Nordisk Boktryckarekonst	Nordic Printing Art	Stockholm	Bröderna Lagerström	1900–61
Nordisk Trykkeritidende	Norwegian Printing Times	Oslo	Oslo Boktrykkerforening	1891–1943
Norsk Boktrykk Kalender	Norwegian Printing Calendar	Oslo	Oslo Typografiske Forening	1918–70

<b>Name</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Date</b>
Norsk Faktor-Tidende	Norwegian Foreman Times	Oslo	Oslo Faktorforening	1924–89
Norsk Trykk	Norwegian Printing	Oslo	Arthur Nelson	1927–35
Svensk Grafisk Årsbok	Swedish Graphic Annual	Stockholm	Bröderna Lagerström	1924–72
Svensk Typograf-Tidning	Swedish Typographer's Paper	Stockholm	Svenska Typografförbundet	1888–1959
Typograf-Tidende	Typographer's Times	Copenhagen	Dansk Typograf-Forbund	1874–1974
Typografisk Aarbog	Typographic Annual	Copenhagen	Typografernes Fagtekniske Samvirke	1934
Typografiske Meddelelser	Typographic News	Oslo	Norsk Centralforening for Boktrykkere	1876–1966

## Advertising

<b>Name</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Date</b>
Tidskrift för Affärs ekonomi / Affärs ekonomi	Journal for Business Economics / Business Economics	Stockholm	Förlagsaktiebolaget Affärs ekonomi	1928–32 / 1932–74
Dansk Reklame	Danish Advertising	Copenhagen	Dansk Reklame-Forening	1927–45
Elite / System	Elite / System	Copenhagen	N. Norvil / "Et interesseskab"	1926–30 / 1930–34
Futurum	Futurum	Stockholm	Sven Rygaard	1936–41
Propaganda	Propaganda	Oslo	Norges Reklameforening	1922–60
Svensk Reklam	Swedish Advertising	Stockholm	Svenska Reklamförbundet	1929–44

## Architecture

Name	Translation	Place	Publisher	Date
Architekten / Arkitekten	The Architect	Copenhagen	Akademisk Arkitektforening	1901–26 / 1927– ongoing
Byggmästaren	The Master Builder	Stockholm	Dansk Reklame- Forening	1927–45
Byggekunst	Architecture	Oslo	Norske Arkitekters Landsforening	1919–2007
Kritisk Revy	Critical Review	Copenhagen	Poul Henningsen	1926–28
Plan	Plan	Oslo	Socialistiske Arkitekters Landsforening	1933–36

## Design / Applied Art

Name	Translation	Place	Publisher	Date
Epoke	Epoch	Copenhagen	Bygningskonstruktør- og Kunsthaandværker- skolens Elevforening, København	1930–33
Nyt Tidsskrift for Kunstindustri	New Periodical for Applied Art	Copenhagen	Forening for Kunsthåndværk	1928–47
Prydkunst / Brukskunst	Decorative Art / Applied Art	Oslo	Norsk Prydkunstnerlag / Foreningen Brukskunst	1929–31 / 1931–34
Skønvirke	Beautiful Work	Copenhagen	Selskabet for dekorativ Kunst	1914–1927
Tidskrift / Form	Journal / Form	Stockholm	Svenska Slöjdföreningen	1905–31 / 1932– ongoing

## Art, Literature, Politics – ‘Cultural Radicalism’

Name	Translation	Place	Publisher	Date
Clarté	Clarity	Oslo	Norges Clartéforbund	1929–31
Forsøgsscenen	The Experimental Stage	Copenhagen	Forsøgsscenen	1929–31
Fönstret	The Window	Stockholm	Fönstret	1930–35
Imorgen	Tomorrow	Copenhagen	Rud Broby	1925–27
Karavan	Caravan	Stockholm	Bonniers	1934–35
Kontakt	Contact	Stockholm	Brand	1931
Konkretion	Concretion	Copenhagen, Oslo & Stockholm	illum's bog-afdeling	1935–36
Kulturkampen	The Culture Struggle	Copenhagen	Dyva & Jeppesen	1935–39
Linien	The Line	Copenhagen	Linien	1934–35
Monde	Monde (The World)	Copenhagen	Mondegruppen	1928–31
Morgonbris	Morning Breeze	Stockholm	Kvinnornas Fackförbund	1904–92
Mot Dag	Towards Day	Oslo	Mot Dag / Fram Forlag	1922–36
Nordeuropa	Northern Europe	Lund	Bokförlaget Nordeuropa	1938–39
Plan	Plan	Copenhagen	Plangruppen	1932–35

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