A GUIDE TO
EARLY PRINTED BOOKS
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A GUIDE TO
EARLY PRINTED BOOKS
AND
MANUSCRIPTS

MARK BLAND
To the memories

of

Don McKenzie
(1931–99)

&

Julia Briggs
(1943–2007)

and for my parents

Fred & Phillippa
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Acknowledgments

This book began with a light-hearted remark: late in 2003, over coffee with Tiffany Stern, I suggested for some amusement that we write a book on literary methodology; she, to my surprise, suggested that I write a book about the practice of bibliography as it pertains to early printed books and manuscripts. On our way back to the Bodleian, she urged me to think about it more seriously. A few days later, I saw Andrew McNeillie, who at that time was still at Blackwell. I mentioned the conversation to him; at an astonishing speed, he agreed, a proposal was written, readers’ reports came in, and a contract was issued. Alas, I must confess, progress since then has been rather slower than anticipated. To Tiffany and Andrew, unintended godparents of this book, who were there at its inception, I owe my heartfelt thanks.

I dislike extended litanies of obligation, but there are some debts that need to be acknowledged, both professional and personal. If I was to mention every library, record office, and archive I have visited, the list would be very long, so I hope it is sufficient to say to those who have helped me in ways both minor, and more extensively that my debt is deeply felt. Similarly, I have had conversations, not all of which can be remembered, that made me reflect on an idea or issue that was on my mind at the time: for every suggestion that was made to me, or anything I had to explain, I owe those who were interested my gratitude.

There are some libraries, and their staff, to whom I owe a more particular debt. The Alexander Turnbull Library was the first nursery of my studies, and it has been a pleasure to engage with its collections, and to benefit from the gift as it was first intended and conceived. Similarly, at Duke Humfrey’s, the staff have unfailingly catered to my requests for almost 20 years, and have quietly taught me more than they realized. Similarly, the staff of the relevant collections at Cambridge University Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, the National Library of Scotland, the Houghton Library at Harvard, the Beinecke Library at Yale, the Newberry Library and the University of Chicago, the Folger Shakespeare Library and Library of Congress, the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, and the Huntington Library have helped with my understanding of these matters in ways that are largely beyond recall, although the debts are no less real. To my employer, De Montfort University, I am grateful for the patience and support that have been shown. To Emma Bennett, and the production staff at Blackwell, I hope this book has justified the wait: they have been enormously tolerant.
A number of colleagues and friends have been kind beyond duty or friendship, and have provided me with both support and advice: to David McKitterick, Laurie Maguire, John Pitcher, Tiffany Stern, Andrew McNeillie, Paul Eggert, Steven May, Peter Lindenbaum, Marta Werner, Randall McLeod, Stephen Orgel, and Gary Day, I am indebted for the support and kindness they have shown. On a more personal level, I would like to thank Marcus Quiren, Karl Davies, Tim Myatt, Jeff and Jessica Staniland, Tim Brown and Gael Webster, Felicity Gifford, Tim O’Brien, Olika Kortiyeva, Neil Sewell-Rutter and Emilia Markot: at one stage or another of this journey, they have all made things possible.

To Peter Shillington, the debt is both more serious and specific: to him I owe the wisdom of his company, his engagement with everything that I have done in recent years, his sometimes acerbic but always astute comments on what I have written, his patience with my foibles, his discussions of textual scholarship and bibliographical history beyond the call of professional kindness, his generosity and companionship, and his profound sense of decency. I could not have asked for a better colleague, or friend, in my first four years at De Montfort.

Bright lights cast deep shadows. It was on my return from London to New Zealand in 1979 that I found myself, aged 17, at Victoria University sitting alongside Mary McCallum in the second row on the left-hand side of Easterfield 006. In the course of the next hour, my life changed, although it took longer perhaps to realize the full significance of what that class had meant. Over the next few years, I was privileged to be taught by Don McKenzie on several occasions and, in 1983, he not only supervised my ‘dissertation’ on the late plays of Jonson; Alexandra Lutyens, Jan Moore, and I were the last students to take his literary scholarship class before he left for Oxford. A few years later, he was my supervisor in Oxford, and I last saw him in the Bodleian a day or two before I went out to New Zealand in 1999, three weeks before his death. This book would have been immensely better for his oversight and advice: I hope it does some justice to the debt I owe him.

Julia Briggs had been at Oxford with Don, and when I moved to De Montfort we shared an office together for several years: at idle hours, our conversation would often turn to the debt we both felt towards his inspiration and kindness. Julia had a knack of reminding me of my better instincts: whatever Don had left brick, she made marble.

The debt to my parents ought not to require any further explanation: I have been graced by their support, generosity, and love.

Oxford
10 May 2009
I A Guide for the Perplexed

This is a book about how to look at written and printed words, not as texts, but as processes of communication in which meaning is made through the relationship between signs, structures, and materials. It has been written to complement the use of Gaskell, and to expand on those areas that were not covered in his book.¹ In the following pages, the intention is both to explain the methods and processes that are used to describe and study early printed books and manuscripts, and to situate that understanding in a scholarly context in order that the insights so derived might be fruitfully employed. The focus will shift from broader narratives about the methods and ideas employed in bibliographical study to specific details and examples that serve to make a more general point. The illustrations have been chosen, where possible, with an eye to freshness. The hope is that those who wish to read this will be able to look at a book or manuscript and study the way in which it was made, the processes through which it may have evolved, and its history as reflected through the archival records as well as the evidence of its use.

When we look at the handwriting of someone that we do not know, we form an impression of their personality from their ‘character’. We may not do so consciously, but we sense handwriting to be unique and revealing. We perceive whether the script is open or tight; whether the forms are regular and disciplined, or whether majuscules and miniscules are mixed together. We notice whether the hand slopes in one direction, or whether there is a lack of consistency. The size of the letters may be large, small, or so cramped as to require magnification (and perhaps psychoanalysis) to be read. There is an immediate sense of whether a hand looks ‘normal’, even highly educated; or whether it shows the tremor and difficulty of age. Sometimes a script will reveal illiteracy (that the person has difficulty co-ordinating the letter forms), or it may convey a visceral sense of some deeper kind of personal disturbance. At a glance, we make all these assessments, and usually know whether it was written by a man or a woman, and perhaps the approximate age of the person concerned (owing to a period style, or immaturity), without reading a word.

Except amongst forensic specialists and palaeographers, no-one trains a person to read handwriting: rather, it is a judgment that is made from

experience: difference alerts us either to patterns that have been seen before, or to strangeness. Looking at early printed books and manuscripts requires the same kind of visual, tactile, and historical discrimination: memory, comparative analysis, and sensory perception are fundamental skills that are as much applied as they are theoretical. If the thoughts ‘I have seen that elsewhere’ or ‘that looks odd’ occur when handling a document, then the instinct should not be ignored. All early modern documents were subject to variation from one copy to another: there is, even for the same printed edition, no such thing as a duplicate copy in all its physical and textual details. As McKitterick remarks, books ‘ostensibly offering shared knowledge on the basis of standardised text and image, in fact provided only partial standardisation’.2

To understand why some things may be unusual, it is necessary to have a feeling for what is conventional, and the only way to do this is to handle the original items, and a lot of them: microfilm or digital images may provide easy access and magnification, but they obscure information about the internal structure of a document; they impede descriptive methods, and they do not (beyond the image supplied) afford details about provenance or use, or give any indication about paper or bindings. To the scholar who has not seen a physical copy, they may be misleading about dimensions as well as type, and they cannot be structurally examined to determine what changes, if any, have been made. Textually, digital and print facsimile resources facilitate rapid access to an image of the original, but the limitations of simulacra need to be understood.

It is always helpful to look at multiple copies (if possible), to take detailed notes (including physical dimensions and shelfmarks—or call numbers as they are sometimes known), and to be aware not only of the history of the document, but of the libraries in which copies are found. It is not unusual to find that one copy of a printed book may have details about its earliest price or date of publication; another, a gift binding; a third may have marginalia, or an interesting provenance: cumulatively, copy-specific details build up a more complex picture than that which any one volume might present. Further, all copies (whether manuscript or printed) will differ from one another owing to either the practices of a particular intermediary, or as a result of proof correction.

Very deliberately, the emphasis in this Guide is on both manuscript and print, which are viewed as parts of a larger whole rather than as being separate fields of study. There are certain technical terms, methods of description, and conventions that are used. Thus a printer was fallible

2 D. J. McKitterick, Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450–1830 (Cambridge, 2003), 80.
flesh and blood, not a machine linked to a computer, whilst a book that is *slightly foxed* is not in a state of (inanimate) confusion but has paper that is discoloured owing to the conditions in which it has been kept. Other words, such as *felt* and *revise* have a specific technical meaning.3

When we look at books as books, we are conscious of more than simply shape, colour, and weight. Imagine, for instance, that on the table is a copy of an early eighteenth-century poem, printed in folio and set in large type with obvious spaces between the lines. If a literary person was asked ‘What is the most obvious thing about what you are looking at?’, their first reply might be something like ‘It is a poem.’ To the extent that a poem involves the layout of type on a page in a way that distinguishes it from prose, the answer would have some cunning, but to distinguish the text as ‘a poem’ is to invite a literary reading of the words as *words*. The most obvious thing about the page (before anything had been ‘read’) is, in fact, the size of the type and the space between the lines, and that is the step that is often overlooked: large type and extra space meant more paper was used, more paper meant more expense, and someone had to pay the bill—quite possibly not the printer, or publisher. The difference between looking at a page and seeing ‘a poem’, or seeing a relationship between type, paper, and space is the difference between ‘being literary’, and thinking like a bibliographer. The physical aspects of a text are always determined by the economics of book production (‘Who paid for this?’ is a useful question, if one not always possible to answer), as well as the materials and methods combined to create the document.

There is a second point to the example as well, and it has to do with the relationship between form and meaning. To recognize that the text is ‘a poem’ is to recognize something about its form, its conventions, and its readership.4 In the first instance, the text does not matter. If, to make the point clear, we were to discover that the text was, in act, a prayer, we would want to know why the conventions of one textual form had been applied to another; and we would want to know who made that decision, why, and whether the text was, in some way, verse. What the text actually said would still be of secondary importance, and would only come into play once we had understood the way in which the formal criteria had been reapplied. Over time, this is how the conventions of textual design evolve: slight adjustments are made to the formal aspects of presentation

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4 See, N. Barker, *Things Not Revealed* (London, 2001, in offprint); these Panizzi Lectures were given out at the end of the final lecture but have yet to be finally published.
that cumulatively affect the appearance of the page in quite radical ways. Furthermore, texts get presented in new ways to reflect the changing history of their use: an early edition of Shakespeare was printed according to the conventions of seventeenth-century casual reading; a modern edition is usually designed for the classroom with its accompanying introduction, illustrations, notes, and list of textual variants.

An awareness of how the formal aspects of books affect their transmission, and of how the material evidence speaks not of the text but of its own history, lies behind the assertion by Greg that ‘with these signs [the bibliographer] is concerned merely as arbitrary marks; their meaning is no business of his’, although he allowed that ‘we all involuntarily pay attention to the sense of the texts we are studying’. In more recent times, Greg’s comment has been ridiculed, and his obvious literary interests pointed up, but that criticism is mistaken in its understanding of the distinction that he was trying to make. Greg believed ‘that bibliography necessarily includes, as its most distinctive branch, the study of textual transmission’, and he argued for the need to take account of physical processes when establishing the history of a text.

One of the most obvious ways to trace the evolution of a text is to study its typography, or its manuscript equivalent, script. The history of letterforms, and the way in which they are laid out on a page reflect social conventions as well as individual choice. This is why it is possible, simply by looking at a document, to estimate when it was made to within a period of five or ten years. Bindings similarly reveal periods and tastes, as do the apparently incidental features of format, ornament stocks, and the use of ruled borders. Each of these elements has required a conscious decision by someone at some time, and for this reason it is as necessary to see the text as to read it. Indeed, sometimes it helps not to read the text at all—certainly it helps to read the text only after these other aspects of the book have been taken into consideration.

Bibliography is a historical and analytical discipline concerned with literature in the broadest meaning of that word. Hence, it is an appreciation of literary texts and historical facts that usually shapes a desire to recover more accurately the history of a text through the processes of its making and the ways in which it was read. The point,

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7 Greg was unashamedly frank about this connection, to his later detriment at the hands of scholars who ought to have admitted as much: ‘At any rate I freely confess that my own interest in bibliography is by no means purely bibliographical. It is literary... It was the results of bibliography that I wanted but my search led me to the far greater discovery of the importance of the subject itself’: ‘What Is Bibliography?’, Collected Papers, 82.
however, is that in order to understand printed books and manuscripts, the approach to literary documents cannot be limited to ‘high’ literature. A printing-house produced more than play quartos or sermons, a scrivener copied more than verse (in fact, more often a scrivener copied political and financial documents), whilst those private individuals who copied poems also wrote letters and wrote or copied other documents. Unless the full range of evidence is taken into account, crucial details will be overlooked that may affect our understanding of such basic matters as attribution, date, or the identity of the person responsible for copying or producing a document. Almost certainly, a limited perspective will deny to any text its proper context, and thus obscure the purpose that it first served. There is nothing difficult about being thorough; the problem with thoroughness is that not all the evidence will survive, and that it is time-consuming and, sometimes, wearying.

Perhaps the most basic concept that needs to be borne in mind when studying early books and manuscripts is that repetition reveals process, identity, and expectation; difference describes history. The information so derived may be of two kinds: physical or cultural. For instance, the shift from black-letter to roman, the setting of text within rules and the subsequent disappearance of such rules, the shift from sidenotes to footnotes, and from single-volume folio collections to multi-volume octavo sets, are all defining moments in the evolution of the early printed book, but they can only be perceived to be so because of their difference from past practices. Individual traits may equally be recognized: both Bacon and Jonson preferred (and had access to) fine Italian and Spanish papers rather than the coarser but more commonly available imports from northern France. Whilst the vanity of Margaret Cavendish is revealed in her choice of double pica type for the printing her books—a size larger than even the Works of King James, and matched as a text font in the period only by royal proclamations and other broadsides of that ilk. Some authors paid to have their books printed, or paid for special work to be done, but Cavendish is the first clear example among English authors of someone who simply had her work printed in a type of a very large size.

II

As a discipline, bibliography has always allowed itself a very broad scope, even if at times the practice has been rather narrower. All bibliographers, or historians of the book, are interested in the methods

and mechanisms of human communication and record. Yet defining what this involves succinctly, and how it differs from other disciplines that are broadly interested in the same texts and materials, has provoked considerable debate. In their respective ways, such issues as the role of memory in the transmission of the past, and the instabilities of the digital archive, extend the discipline beyond what is written, printed, or inscribed on a durable surface.9 With some prescience, almost a century ago, Sir Walter Greg defined the subject as the study of ‘the transmission of all symbolic representation of speech or other ordered sound or even of logical thought’, and he described what he called ‘critical bibliography’ as ‘the science of the material transmission of literary texts’—the word ‘literary’ having the meaning ‘written’ rather than narrowly ‘of aesthetic interest’ although, even by Greg, this is how it came to be applied.10

In some ways, Greg was his own worst enemy. When he first set out his ideas, he was careful not to limit the scope of the subject to printed books (a restriction that he termed ‘a very foolish one’); but, in practice, the study of manuscripts, and of memorial, and inscribed texts remained limited to those scholars who had to establish a relationship between non-printed texts in order to study a particular author (Donne is the obvious early modern example). The study of English printed books and early printing-houses, on the other hand, was largely driven by the editing of Shakespeare and the Renaissance drama. Continental book production, and the editing of humanist authors became a separate area of interest, as did the novels and verse of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Gaskell sought to find some common ground between these various fields of research; but, as a consequence, the focus of his account is deliberately on the production and description of printed books.11 By the 1970s, medieval and early modern manuscript studies had become, almost, separate disciplines unto themselves.

The important moment of change in bibliographical studies, though delayed in its reception, was laid out in the 1957 Lyell Lectures of the great typographer Stanley Morison (best known for the design of Times Roman). These lectures, which are magnificent for their sheer generosity of scope and richness of detail, went largely unnoticed through the 1960s,

10 Greg, ‘What Is Bibliography?’, 75–88 esp. 78 and 83; Greg’s paper was first published in The Library in 1914.
11 Gaskell, New Introduction, 1.
as they were not published until 1972.\textsuperscript{12} Whilst some have criticized aspects of Morison’s argument,\textsuperscript{13} the lectures exemplify in their scale of vision the principle that was established on the first page of the introduction: it is not only, he observed, that without bibliography ‘the accurate description of anything written, engraved, or printed for the purpose of being read cannot be complete’ (something that is necessary for the comparison and analysis of artefacts as witnesses to the texts they record), and thus ‘It is the task . . . of the bibliographer to control documentation’; he claimed that the ‘grammatically or philologically accurate transcription of a set of alphabetical signs may not always exhaust the suggestions of the text’. What then followed was a statement that Morison modestly suggested was ‘for the future’:

The bibliographer may be able, by his study of the physical form of an inscription, manuscript, book, newspaper, or other medium of record, to reveal considerations that appertain to the history of something distinct from religion, politics, and literature, namely: the history of the use of the intellect. So far, that is, as intellect has made its record in script, inscription, or type.\textsuperscript{14}

In New Zealand, the first person to borrow Morison’s \textit{Politics and Script}, on its arrival at Victoria University of Wellington Library, was D. F. McKenzie.\textsuperscript{15} During the 1960s, McKenzie used his detailed knowledge of the Cambridge University Press at the end of the seventeenth-century to overturn prevailing assumptions about early modern printing-houses, most notably in the landmark article ‘Printers of the Mind’.\textsuperscript{16} Morison offered McKenzie the next step in his argument, one that shifted the study of printing-houses in a positive direction towards an engagement with all the methods of textual transmission in their full complexity.


\textsuperscript{14} Morison, \textit{Politics and Script}, 1. The comment is also a critique of Greg’s claim that the ‘real aim and value’ of type is that ‘it enables us to assign an undated and unlocated book to a particular place and date’ (Greg, ‘Bibliography—An Apologia’, 242).

\textsuperscript{15} Shelfmark Z40 M861 P: The issue card has been removed, but the date stamp remains.

Starting from his Sandars Lectures in 1976, then at Wolfenbüttel the following year, again in his presidential address to the Bibliographical Society in 1982, and finally in the inaugural Panizzi Lectures at the British Library in 1985, McKenzie outlined an agenda that moved bibliography away from Greg’s positivism towards ‘a sociology of texts’. In doing so, he sought to reassert the view of Greg and Morison that the discipline involved more than the study of printed books, and that a text was more than words. He was less concerned to critique Greg’s intention, than to address the ways in which Greg had emphasized text over artefact.

McKenzie’s career demonstrates that he understood the sociology of texts to be a product of the archaeology of texts as documents. He had perceived both that the material forms of documents might reveal (in Morison’s phrase) ‘the history of the use of the human intellect’, and that they revealed, as French scholarship described, the history of a society as manifest in its uses of texts as a means of record. It is this dual insight that can serve to show that printed books and manuscripts are always witnesses to a history that is separate from the texts that they preserve. As he put it in the Panizzi Lectures: ‘In its ubiquity and variety of evidence, bibliography as a sociology of texts has an unrivalled power to resurrect authors in their own time, and their readers at any time.’ That view has subsequently been developed in various ways, most notably for early modern studies by such scholars as Roger Chartier, Mirjam Foot, Harold Love, David McKitterick, Randall McLeod, and Henry Woudhuysen.

The most potent aspect of McKenzie’s reformulation of the discipline (and this is something that has not always been properly understood) was that he reunited the study of books and manuscripts as artefacts with a broader awareness of the history of books and texts in their malleable and unstable forms. Further, he suggested that bibliography would have to deal with the role of memory in the transmission of texts, especially in non-literate societies, as well as more recent technologies such as film, music, and digital encryption. Language, he remarked, ‘knows no social


or educational boundaries, but saturates society in all its complexity, it serves indifferently the canonical and the marginal, the classical and the vulgar, the serious and the trivial’. It is the fusion of the social and the material that can be used to show that printed books and manuscripts are always witnesses to something other than the texts that they preserve.

In effect, McKenzie reminded bibliographers and editors that books are complex textual and social documents. Greg, and many others before him, had emphasized that authors revise, and compositors and scribes alter what is before them; in the theatre, actors transform texts through performance; and readers assume meanings that are pertinent to their understanding. None of this was new; what was different was McKenzie’s preference for pragmatism, and his engagement with rich detail of textual and physical evidence as a guiding principle, as well as his emphasis on embracing the complexity of forms and meanings over the desire for simplification. Unravelling what a text might be, and how it has changed in time, requires an engagement with all the facets of its representation.

The expansive view of bibliography put forward by McKenzie insisted that the analytical methods account for the complexity of the historical evidence. At the same time, he recognized that analytical methods could be employed in new ways to answer different questions in order that the discipline embrace all aspects of how a text communicates its history, aesthetics, context, and meaning. The result, as he perceived it, was a renewed sensitivity to ‘the book as an expressive form’. It is an approach that recognizes the ways in which books and manuscripts are not only textually meaningful, but have involved human agency (and therefore decisions) at every point of their creation and use.

Literary criticism reads the otherness of a document: the words that represent an author or editor. Few read the page for what it is: a physical composition of paper, illustration, and script or type. The art of bibliography is to let the page speak, not of its otherness, but of itself: so that it may account for all the variety of influences that gave it form. It requires that we be able to look at and describe a manuscript or printed text and read the signs of its making and, then, to explain how that information can be usefully employed in order to study the transmission and history of literary documents.

If we were to reformulate the idea of what bibliography is, not as we would now describe it, but as someone from the sixteenth or seventeenth-

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century might have approached it, then we might get closer to what Greg, Morison, and McKenzie meant by suggesting that it is the art of reading well: by which is meant the art of reading all the circumstances of a text and its history, including all the ways in which it has been designed, documented, preserved, and used. Gaskell explained how a book was put together; the emphasis here is with how to look at, and into, the object in hand and read it well: that is how to look into a book or manuscript and see not only an association of words, but what the various signs tell us of its history and existence. In this chapter, the emphasis is on how to approach the subject; later chapters will proceed step by step through the various kinds of evidence and what they represent.

III

This book has been written with reference to late sixteenth- and early–mid-seventeenth-century documents because they most precisely illustrate the ideas and concepts under discussion. With care, most of what follows can be applied a little more expansively, but the further one strays from the central period, the more likely it will be that other factors (mechanical, commercial, social, and material) need to be taken into account. Broadly speaking, the early modern period might be held to cover the history of Europe from the Black Death to the French Revolution. This book, however, would lose focus and utility if it were to address every nuance of so wide a spectrum of evidence. Rather, the period covered is one in which the printed book-trade had accepted a broad range of conventions (such as the title-page), and in which the production of manuscripts was still a vibrant aspect of private, political, and commercial life. The two forms of textual production were mutually influential and much is to be gained by treating them in conjunction with one another.

For students of the fifteenth or eighteenth centuries, this book will provide an introduction to most of the important concepts, but it needs to be stressed that there are real differences in the methods of production and the contexts of use during these periods that give shape to the evolution of the book in the two centuries between. Even during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the book was not a stable concept—textually, physically, or socially. What is apparent is that certain technical

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and historical developments gave shape and impetus to that process. For a few paragraphs, therefore, something needs to be said about the nature of the book during these outlying periods in order to contextualize the discussion that follows and supply guidance to those readers whose interests lie at the margins of its principal concern.

With the end of the Roman empire, commercial book production, as it had been known in the ancient world, came to an end. This was not the result of a single catastrophic event, although the Fall of Rome hastened the decline, but one that had been anticipated in the changing uses of texts during late antiquity.24 There is much debate amongst scholars as to how literacy and book production evolved, as the decline in literacy amongst the secular elite was by no means universal or consistent.25 For the next 700 years, however, most book production happened within religious communities. Outside of that environment, literacy was most necessary for political administration.26

During the medieval period, six developments that were necessary preconditions for the emergence of the early modern book and book-trade took place. First, and early on, the appearance of the page was modified by the introduction of space within the text; a practice that led to the gradual development of word separation (ancient texts were written in continuous script).27 Second, at much the same time, scribes began to develop a variety of marks for punctuation and a system for their use. These two developments were concerned with legibility and the clarification of meaning, but they also represent a shift in perception from the texts being primarily oral performances to being written documents. The importance of punctuation is that it facilitates silent reading, suggesting not only logical structure but the inflection of speech: it thus enables a reader to understand the text without having to recite the text.


from memory. Word separation has a further function in relation to the advent of print, for the manipulation of space is necessary in order that each line be the same length as all the others: without it, the text could not be set as an exact rectangle (this is also true for verse and the ends of paragraphs where the apparent irregularity disguises the use of quads and other forms of spacing that justify the text to the right margin).

Third, from the Carolingian period on, there was an attempt to copy some of the classical texts from antiquity. This not only preserved a works that might otherwise have been lost (and which served as copy for the early printed editions of these authors); it meant that Carolingian minuscule served as the model for humanistic script, and thus ‘roman’ type.28 Fourth, the rise of the universities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, together with the formation of stable legal and political institutions, created a demand for scribal services and thus a commercial book-trade that was independent of the practices of the Church.29

Fifth and sixth, the universities’ interest in Aristotle, and the Arabic versions of his works, led to developments in optics and the introduction of paper to the West. Optics was important because it led to the introduction of spectacles, and because magnification ultimately enabled the kind of detailed work required for the cutting of type punches;30 whilst, the shift to paper provided a resource that freed book production from its dependency on treated animal skins as a writing surface.31

The reappearance of commercial manuscript production was an important moment in the development of the book-trade, but other forces were also shaping a new kind of document. The links that were established between the universities, the bureaucracies, and the trade encouraged the production of multiple copies and thus the specialization of tasks and the organization of work on a booklet system within the scriptoria. Illustration was a separate skill in its own right, as was binding. The books produced in this way were essentially specialized products that were intended for the political and administrative elite.32

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32 Rouse and Rouse, Manuscripts and Their Makers, 235–60.
first half of the fifteenth-century influenced practices in the book-trade after the arrival of the printing-press.33

The earliest printed books were, in their manufacture, distribution, and use, conceived of as being similar to manuscripts except that they were produced in multiple copies that were to be hand-finished according to the requirements of individual clients. They were not thought of as texts produced by a different technology. Not surprisingly, the supply of books was far greater than the auxiliary trades could cope with,34 and many purchasers spared themselves the cost of initials and borders, leaving their copies unadorned; or, conspicuously, they spent their money on the binding rather than extra internal illustration. Fifteenth-century printed books remained artisan products. If this is true for the history of book production, it is true as well for how books were used: most readers did not distinguish between manuscript and print as inherently different sources for a text: both are to be found bound together, and many sammelbände (single volumes that bound together multiple items) were only separated after the seventeenth-century.35

Further, manuscript production remained a viable alternative to print: not all texts were required in several hundred copies, and those that were commercially produced in manuscript were often intended for a select audience, to meet a private need, or for a specific patron: these items suited scribal work, and perhaps could be given the extra touches that purchasers of printed copies increasingly spared themselves. Equally, the practice of copying texts, even from printed sources, was deeply engrained. Manuscripts depend on replication for survival; the printed book-trade depends on old books being worn out, on new fashions, and on older texts being packaged in new ways.36 Those two views of book production remained in tension throughout the early modern period.

We perhaps can understand more about fifteenth-century attitudes towards manuscript and print by looking at a book called Lumen Anime. This is a preacher’s manual, or commonplace book, of natural and moral philosophy, that gathers together quotations on relevant themes from authors as diverse as Aristotle, Theophrastus, the elder Pliny, Ptolemy, Solinus, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Isidore, Hugh of St Victor, and Avicenna. It is broadly organized in three parts beginning with the birth

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