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ART620- Graduate Typography

22 April 2020

<p align="center">My Journey in Type Culture</p>

Throughout this course, I have been exposed to a variety of typefaces. These typefaces were created by scribes and ultra-modern software. Typefaces are all around us. Looking around we can see it in everything: book covers, driving signs, and can labels. I hope to expose the cultural impact of three typefaces that have had a significant impact on me. I will be journeying from Ireland to Germany and Japan. I am focusing on these areas because I am part German, Irish and my aunt lived in Japan for a good portion of my childhood. I remember and still have some of the letters and cards written in the Japanese typeface, kanji.

<p align="center">First Stop- Ireland</p>

Not only am I beginning chronologically in terms of the time period the typeface was developed but with a typeface I commonly use and admire often. The Celtic or Gaelic typefaces are often found in illuminated manuscripts where the entire page is a depiction of a religious event or passage. These were designed by scribes and usually monks or religious figures. The Celtic typeface assisted with literacy expansion through religious exploration. "Around 430 CE, …(Ireland) allowed Celtic manuscripts and lettering design to flourish without much outside influence" (Clair 28). This typeface was originated in Ireland and maintains its identity through the popularity of the *Book of Kells*. Celtic typefaces use uncials which developed regionally because they were easy to reproduce. "Gaelic script was known as An Cló Gaelach in Irish"

(Omniglot). Due to the wide use of Celtic or Gaelic script, that name was developed and used to culturally identify it as the language of Ireland.

Figure 1: Celtic Uncials

Source Clair, Kate, and Cynthia Busic-Snyder. A Typographic Workbook: a Primer to History, Techniques and Artistry. 2nd ed., Wiley & Sons, 2005.

Second Stop- Germany

The Fraktur typeface was designed by Weiss Fraktur. It was gothic, traditional and very German. This blackletter typeface was used by the Nazi's during World War I (Loxley 140). There was and still is a cultural impact of this typeface. In America, we see it on newspapers like the New York Times and Los Angela's Times. However many Germans still have a distaste in seeing it as it was used by the Nazis. The "traditional gothic typeface could fully express the purity of the nation…'Feel German, think German, speak German, be German, even in your script"(Garfield 190). It became difficult for the lands that Hitler and the Nazis invaded to understand them, so they banned the use of Fraktur because it was relatable to the Jews or so they say. "The regime recharacterized Fraktur as Judenletter, Jewish letters" (*Wired*). Many still speculate the primary reason the typeface was banned. Either because it was used by the Jews or because inhabitants of other countries could not read and understand the Fraktur typeface. Either way, the use of the

Fraktur typeface was to "raise the cultural level of the German people" ("Arts: Graphic Design in Nazi Germany") however 'the local officials used the typeface to further their abilities and agenda'(*It's Nice That*).

Figure 2: German script

Source: Garfield, Simon. Just My Type: a Book about Fonts. Gotham Books, 2012.

Figure 3: Modern Fraktur

Source: Dobush, Grace. "German Design: Fraktur and the Psychology of Type." Handelsblatt, © 2020 Handelsblatt GmbH - Ein Unternehmen Der Handelsblatt Media Group GmbH & Co. KG Verlags-Services Für Werbung: Iqdigital.de (Mediadaten) | Verlags-Services Für Content: Digitale Unternehmens-Lösungen Realisierung Und Hosting Der Finanzmarktinformationen: Vwd Vereinigte Wirtschaftsdienste GmbH Verzögerung Der Kursdaten: Deutsche Börse 15 Min., Nasdaq Und NYSE 20 Min. Keine Gewähr Für Die Richtigkeit Der Angaben. Bitte Beachten Sie Auch: Nutzungsbasierte Onlinewerbung Cookie Einstellungen, 28 Nov. 2018, www.handelsblatt.com/today/german-design-fraktur-and-the-psychology-of-type/23583466.html?ticket=ST-73270-OrzNT4B0Xw43bsfaV5qa-ap4. Accessed on May 1, 2020.

Last Stop- Japan

Kanji characters in Japan were first invented and designed during ancient China and the 18th century (Heisig 2). Japanese character design is supported by language and culture. Type and photosetting characters are designed in the same squares and layouts are done beforehand. "Typography in Japan at present has passed beyond the stage of assimilating Western design and Japanese designers have come to possess a unique sense of typography"(Takenobu). The typeface was introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks and the language has adapted and changed according to the culture and the times. In the Japanese school system, children begin to learn the writing system but it is so complex many adults do not know every character. Since it is so complex and is more visual, many Japanese prefer an alphabet system, but use the kanji characters as a form of artistic expression and advertising.

Figure 4: Kanji Characters

Source: Takenobu, Igarashi. "Today's Typography: A Great Leap Forward." Print (Archive : 1940-2005), vol. 38, no. 6, 1984, pp. 100-107. ProQuest,

http://proxytu.researchport.umd.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1459678374?accountid=14378. Accessed on May 1, 2020.

Conclusion

You can learn a lot about a country's culture and history by looking at the typeface being used. The Gaelic typeface originating in Ireland has become something that is still used to promote Irish-named institutions around the world. In addition, the *Book of Kells* is still a commonly visited artifact in Ireland which shows the continued popularity of the typeface. The typeface script has evolved and circulated throughout other Celtic/Gaelic nations. Similarly, the Fraktur typeface is still recognized as German because of its classification of blackletter. Its historical presence during WWI showcased the Nazi's power, the power to show the immense impact they would make in creating a world by Hitler's standards. This typeface was the essence of Germany by creating a logo typeface of and for the Nazis. Although the typeface was banned, it has seen a rebirth in newspaper publications showcasing a gothic, regal, time-centered idea. The cultural

use of kanji letters was first to teach and educate, creating a country centered around education. The impact of this typeface now is still the same but is used artistically. The kanji characters reveal the historic roots and culture of Japan through the unique strokes and layouts. The way the Japanese layout the kanji characters helped change the Western design by introducing photosetting. Although the kanji characters keep their unique look of the language first introduced by monks to educate, it can now be a form of expression and advertising in their modern cities. Each of these typefaces impacted their countries culture by expanding the knowledge of type. Many of these countries did not have prior use for user type. These created a religious culture, a purpose and meaning, and a driver to other possibilities. All three of the typefaces have helped develop and influence the world.

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