

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The printers' marks found in books represent a whole pictorial world, and the earliest examples date from the first decade of printing (1450).<sup>1</sup> They symbolize the work of a particular editor/publisher, serving as a warranty of the reliability of the recension, and they also draw attention to distinctive features of the typography and the techniques used in the typesetting and printing generally. In the early years of typography these devices were designs that framed or supplemented the colophon, thus carrying on the manuscript tradition of codices: the identity of the book continued to be defined by the colophon, the list of publication particulars at the end of the book naming the author, the title, place of publication, printer and date of completion of the printing. Gradually, however, from 1500 on, it became normal for these particulars and the printer's mark to be printed on the page that came to be known as the title page, though this did not mean that the colophon was necessarily dispensed with.<sup>2</sup> The earliest complete title page in a Greek book appears in an edition of Pindar's *Odes* edited and published by Zacharias Kalliergis in collaboration with Cornelio Benigni at Rome in 1515.<sup>3</sup>

There is no record of any statement giving the specific reasons for making it standard practice to include a printer's mark. It simply made it easier for the reader to recognize the publishing house at a glance and symbolized the full identity of the book, reflecting the amicable collaboration of a large number of scholars, craftsmen and those operatives of the new technology for reproducing books, the typesetters. The devices served as identification labels for printing and publishing houses and also for bookshops, which often worked with one particular publisher and sold only his books.

**The design of the mark.** Printers' marks vary greatly in their design and artistic merit. As time went on, the original heraldic devices and monograms evolved into elaborate compositions on a wide variety of themes, taking as their 'heroes' mythological beings symbolizing particular attributes: strength, stability, keen vision and so on. Sometimes the artists framed the compositions with Greek or Latin quotations which they found in humanistic collections of proverbs and sayings, to advertise the authenticity of their editions and emphasize their distinctive characteristics. Besides the printer's mark, a certain number of editions were adorned with a portrait of the editor/publisher or the patron who had sponsored the publication:

for example, Aldus Manutius, Henri Estienne (Henricus Stephanus), Alexios Rartourios and Zacharias Skordylis.<sup>4</sup>

Most printers' marks are unsigned and their value as works of art varies widely, though a few are signed or can safely be attributed to a particular artist. Most probably they were designed by engravers and painters who were either employed by the printing house or accepted commissions from printing and publishing firms. We should not forget that most of the early printers had previously worked as goldsmiths or silversmiths or in some similar trade; in other words, they were skilled in the use of the chisel and graver and had experience in designing, cutting, chasing and assembling metal artefacts. The first was Johann Gutenberg<sup>5</sup> himself, who was a famous metalworker, followed by his close associates Johann Fust and Peter Schoeffer<sup>6</sup> as well as Anton Koberger<sup>7</sup> and many others. The pioneering French printer Nicolas Jenson,<sup>8</sup> who set up the first print shop in Venice, had previously worked as an engraver at the court of Tours. The man who introduced the art of typography into Italy in 1465, Konrad Sweynheim, having failed to make his printing house in Rome into a going concern, engraved the maps for Ptolemy's *Cosmography* (*Κοσμογραφία*), which were printed and published in 1478, after his death.<sup>9</sup>

It should also be mentioned here that a number of printing houses – such as those of Aldus Manutius in Venice, Johann Amerbach in Basel and Robert Estienne (Robertus Stephanus) in Paris – developed into small private academies<sup>10</sup> offering work to scholars and craftsmen in many different fields: textual scholars and grammarians selected and copied manuscripts and corrected the proofs of the printed texts, calligraphers designed original founts and ornamental initials and artists enriched the books with headpieces, other decorative designs and illustrations appropriate to the text. Meanwhile specialist craftsmen cut and cast the types, others composed them and assembled the formes and yet others printed the books one page at a time. Finally, each book was sent to the binder, who sewed the leaves together and produced bound volumes ready to be sold.

**The first printers' marks.** The first printer's mark in the history of the printed book is to be found in the *Psalterium* (*Ψαλτήριον*) printed at Mainz by Johann Fust and Peter Schoeffer on 14th August 1457,<sup>11</sup> which is also the first printed work with a colophon giving the full publishing particulars: title, place of publication, printer's name and date. The design chosen by the two pioneering printers was a composition incorporating the armorial bearings of the Fust and Schoeffer families: in fact the device adorning the colophon of the *Psalterium* is a sort of 'colophon' of the colophon. It was printed in red ink.

Starting in the 1470s, other printers started ornamenting their editions with similar devices, both in Italy and in northern Europe. At first most of them were sim-

ple monograms on a black or red ground, often with a cross crowning the whole composition. The frame – or rather the margin – surrounding the device was also simple and linear, as in the printers' marks of Laurentius de Rubeis de Valentia (Ferrara, 1482), Thomas de Blavis (Venice, 1483), Antonius Zarotus (Milan, 1495) and Fridericus Meynberger (Tübingen, 1499), to name only a few.

**Greek scholars in the service of humanistic learning.** The Greeks were the only ones of the Ottoman Empire's enslaved subjects who practised the art of printing from the very earliest years after its invention and the only ones who, from the first decades of the sixteenth century, regularly sent large consignments of printed books to Greece and the Levant.<sup>12</sup> In the dawn of Greek printing in Italy and northern Europe, Greek scholars and calligraphers not only practised the new art of typography but also helped to further the humanist movement by giving lessons in Greek language and literature (mainly classical) to Western scholars. In this way they created the nucleus of the Renaissance Greek book publishing philosophy, in which the most prominent figure was Cardinal Bessarion, the greatest scholarly book collector in the Renaissance, together with Ianos Laskaris, Dimitrios Chalkokondylis, Markos Mousouros, Ioannes Grigoropoulos and many others.<sup>13</sup> It was not long before these scholars had acquired a following of worthy pupils who carried on their good work, building up a company of Hellenists that included some of the most famous names in Italian Renaissance scholarship such as Leonardo Bruni, Francesco Filelfo, Ermolao Barbaro and Angelo Poliziano. The last of these never made any attempt to conceal his debt to his Greek teachers, as attested by one of the three epigrams he wrote to commemorate the arrival of Chalkokondylis in Florence in 1475:<sup>14</sup>

ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΣΠΟΥΔΑΙΟΥΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ

*Φεύγετε Πιερίδων ἄδινοὶ θεράποντες ἄρουραν,  
πᾶς Ἐλικωνιάδων ἦλθε πόλινδε χορός.  
Εἰ δέ τις αὖ κείνου θαλάμους καὶ δώματ' ἐρευνᾷ,  
Χαλκεοκονδύλου στήθεα ναιετάει.*

**Greek printing houses in the incunabular period.** For many decades before and after the incunabular period, Greek and Italian scholars worked together in the great printing houses of Italy (Venice, Milan, Florence), editing classical writings for publication in the original Greek. From 1495 the centre of all this editing, printing and publishing activity was the print shop of Aldus Manutius in Venice, which evolved into a printing and publishing house functioning along the lines of a small academy whose leading members were Markos Mousouros, Ianos Laskaris, Dim-

itrios Doukas, Ioustinos Dekadyos and Ioannes Grigoropoulos, with collaborators who included Nicolò Leonicens, Battista Egnazio, Paolo Canal, Francesco Rosetto and other men of letters from northern Europe, such as Antonio Urceo and Erasmus.<sup>15</sup> However, none of the houses printing Greek books put printers' marks on any of their editions other than those edited by Dimitrios Chalkokondylis.

In the course of time, once the Greeks of Venice had started opening presses of their own to meet the cultural and religious needs of their fellow-countrymen, the situation changed. As early as 1486 two Cretan priests, Laonikos the Cretan and Alexandros of Candia, set up a press in Venice<sup>16</sup> to print books for an exclusively Greek readership. Their venture was short-lived and the only two books they published were the *Batrachomyomachia* and a *Psalterium*. Some ten years later Zacharias Kalliergis and Nikolaos Vlastos, with financial assistance from Anna Notara (the daughter of Loukas Notaras, the last Grand Duke of Constantinople), set up a fully-organized printing house generally acknowledged to have been the most illustrious Greek press of all time. Theirs was the establishment that initiated the tradition of Greek printers' marks.<sup>17</sup> Neither the editorial policy nor the clientele of this press knew any geographical bounds: the firm set its sights on both the international market and the Greeks of the diaspora, and its overriding aim was to maintain a standard of printing consonant with the Byzantine grandeur of the Greek manuscript tradition: see the *Etymologicum Magnum* (Μέγα Ἑτυμολογικόν, 1499) and Galen's *Therapeutica* (Θεραπευτική, 1500).

This second enterprise, like the first, lost the battle for survival, and the financial blow delivered to its sponsors by the failure of Tommaso Lippomano's bank in Venice forced Vlastos out of business at the end of 1500.<sup>18</sup> In 1509 Zacharias Kalliergis went back into business as a printer, again in Venice, and this time he also informed the Greek public of his new orientation as a publisher:<sup>19</sup> his intention was to publish books directed specifically at the Greeks under the Ottoman yoke, to ensure that their language would not degenerate and their Orthodox faith would remain unimpaired.

**Western presses printing Greek books.** Several large and important incunabular publishing houses went on producing editions of Greek works from the first decades of the sixteenth century onwards, while more and more printing presses began to take an interest in Greek books, not least because new and more reliable manuscripts – many of them rare, some unique – were brought to light by the extensive travels of agents sent out by kings and princes.<sup>20</sup> In Italy at that time the biggest players in the market for editions of classical books were: in Venice, Aldus's heirs and his father-in-law Andrea Torresani,<sup>21</sup> in Florence the Giunta family,<sup>22</sup> while in Rome the market was dominated by Antonio Blado.<sup>23</sup> But the fame of

the Italians, especially Aldus, soon aroused jealous rivalry in northern Europe, and the star of Robert Estienne soon rose into the ascendant with the backing of King François I. Estienne won universal recognition with his ornate fount which he called ‘Grecs du Roi’, the whole of which – letters, initials and headpieces – was based on the handwriting of the illustrious Greek calligrapher Angelos Vergikios.<sup>24</sup> Further centres of Greek printing developed in Germany and German-speaking areas (Strasbourg, Erfurt, Frankfurt, Basel and elsewhere) as the growth of the German humanist movement attracted inspirational teachers of Greek to the universities and printing houses there: these included such scholars as Johann Reuchlin, Melanchthon, Beatus Rhenanus and, most notably, Erasmus.

At Basel, which has given us specimens of printing dating back to 1476, numerous establishments were founded and built up an enviable record in the publication of Greek books: foremost among them were those of Johann Amerbach, Johann Froben, Nicolaus Episcopus and Heinrich Petri.<sup>25</sup> It is worth mentioning that Hans Holbein was in Basel from 1514 and working with Froben from 1516, giving his title pages a new style: a good example is in Theodoros Gazis’s *Grammar* (*Εἰσαγωγή τῆς Γραμματικῆς*).<sup>26</sup> Another city with a great tradition in the printing of Greek books was Geneva, thanks to the prestige enjoyed by the publications of Robert Estienne, who settled there in 1551 after being driven out by the learned doctors of the Sorbonne on account of his doubts concerning the authenticity of the Vulgate. Robert’s son Henri, a worthy successor, applied himself with conscientious scholarship to making new recensions for reissues of many Greek *editiones principes*, including the *Complete Works* of Plato.<sup>27</sup>

Two cities in the Low Countries which won great renown, Leyden and Antwerp, owed part of their fame to their output of Greek books thanks to the activity of the Elzevier<sup>28</sup> and Plantin printing houses, which were among the most productive in Europe. The Elzevier family, based in Leyden, also opened branches in other Dutch cities including The Hague and Utrecht. Christophe Plantin, who had twenty-two presses working for him in 1576, published approximately 2,000 titles, the most important being the eight-volume *Royal Antwerp Polyglot Bible* (in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, Syriac and Aramaic) which was completed in 1572.<sup>29</sup>

England had a strong tradition of classical studies at Oxford and Cambridge, which accounts for the great interest shown there in books printed in Greek.<sup>30</sup> The first Greek book printed in England (John Chrysostom’s *Homilies* [Ὁμιλίαι]) came from Reginald Wolfe’s press<sup>31</sup> in 1543, which was followed by the Oxford University Press under Joseph Barnes (1586) and, later, John Fell and Henry Aldrich.<sup>32</sup>

To round off this brief typographical tour of Europe, mention should be made of the production of Greek books in the Iberian peninsula, and more specifically at Alcalá (the ancient Complutum) in Spain, the seat of the Complutensian Universi-

CHAPTER I  
15<sup>TH</sup> - 16<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURIES

## ULRICH SCINZENZELER

1 **Ulrich Scinzenzeler:** *Isocrates, Λόγοι*, Milan [edited by Dimitrios Chalkokondylis], 1493.

**Mark:** Ulrich Scinzenzeler's mark is one of the most striking of the incunabular period and is notable for its austere draughtsmanship: it consists of a rectangular frame containing, in white on a black ground, a patriarchal cross with a circle round its foot. and the initials V[idericus] and S[cinzenzeler] to right and left of the shaft, inside the circle.

BIBL: *HC* 9312. *BMC* VI, 767 (IB. 26857). *GW* 8250. *Indice*, 5421. *Census*, I-210. Rhodes, I2. *BH* I/1, 17-18 (8). KOK, 36 (58). PAP I, 217 (2932). Manoussakas - Staikos, *The Publishing Activity*, 78-79 📌. PM: Kristeller, 34-35 (98). Davies, 487 (148). Manni (Fig. 17). Zappella II, 293. *CGP* I, 241 (Fig. 42). 📌. COLL: GL \* LDK \* LKS \* NLG.

## GIOVANNI BISSOLI & BENEDETTO MANGIO

2 **Giovanni Bissoli & Benedetto Mangio:** *Σουίδα* [edited by Dimitrios Chalkokondylis], Milan, 1499.

**Mark:** The mark of Giovanni Bissoli & Benedetto Mangio is found only in their 1499 edition of *Suidas (Souda)*. It consists of two floral sprays with the motto SUDAVIT ET ALSIT on a ribbon wound round their stems and, at the foot, the initials I[oaannes] B[issolus] on the left and B[enedictus] M[angius] on the right.

BIBL: *H* 15135. *BH* I/1, 63-66 (25). Pol. 3632. *Census*, S-829. Rhodes, S14. KOK, 65 (111). PAP I, 401 (5323). Manoussakas - Staikos, *The Publishing Activity*, 84-85 📌. PM: Kristeller, 22-23 (67). Manni (Fig. 26). Zappella II, 995. *CGP* I, 241 (Fig. 42). 📌. COLL: EMA \* GL \* KLK \* LAA \* LKS \* MLK \* MSJP \* NLG.



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