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Papers-1

Considerations on the Size of a Character in Typography

Taro Yamamoto

Abstract

This study's objectives were to clearly understand key characteristics and technical limitations of the type body as the reference guide for measuring and specifying type or character sizes, and hence to see what perspectives in type-face design we can gain from the understanding.

Achievements in the modernization, rationalization and standardization of type sizes in history were examined. Also discussed were how technological changes in typography have influenced the basic characteristics of the type body, and how the extinction of physical metal type bodies due to the advent of photocomposition should be interpreted relative to the historical process of standardization of type sizes.

This study's conclusions indicate that today's digital font technologies have less restrictions on typeface designs, but this does not necessitate abolition of the traditional method of measuring the type body.

Key Words: measurement unit, point, point system, body, body size

Papers-2

The Relationship Between the Type used in Gutenberg's 42-line Bible and Manuscript Letters

Michio Ishibashi

Abstract

It is said that Gutenberg tried to publish the 42-line bible as a copycat edition, including the binding, of the manuscript bibles. The shapes of the types are also said to closely resemble those of the scribe letters. In this paper, we present our analysis of the type shapes used by Gutenberg; the aim of our analysis is to find out whether or not shapes similar to those are found in the manuscripts. And if similar shapes are not found in the manuscripts, we will discuss whether or not the type shapes are the result of some sort of original ingenuity. If they are indeed an expression of Gutenberg's own ingenuity, we will discuss what this means. We will also take into consideration the possibility that he might have failed to imitate the manuscript bibles due to mere carelessness or faulty technique.

The perspectives for our comparison of Gutenberg's 42-line bible with the manuscript bibles are as follows. First, in the manuscripts, the thickness of the vertical strokes depends on the pen angle, but for the types (for which no pens were used), it should be examined whether or not a close relationship exists between both, as in the manuscripts. The meaning of the change in pen angle halfway down the letter must be elucidated. The various diamond shapes, such as squares, rectangles and parallelograms, as well as their functions, must be explained; so too must the shapes of the letters without protrusions and their use, as well as the relationship between the letters without protrusions and the ligatures or letter spacings. The various shapes of the protrusions at the four corners of the letters, the tips of the ascenders, descenders, etc., and how the pen was used in writing must be clarified. The difficulty in casting the hair-lines must be investigated, as well as the presence of hairlines which have the function of connecting the letters in the manuscripts, and the real nature of hairlines in the types. By comparing the Gutenberg bible and the manuscripts from these perspectives, we aim to clarify the similarities and differences between the types used for the 42-line bible and the manuscript letters, and the characteristics of the types.

