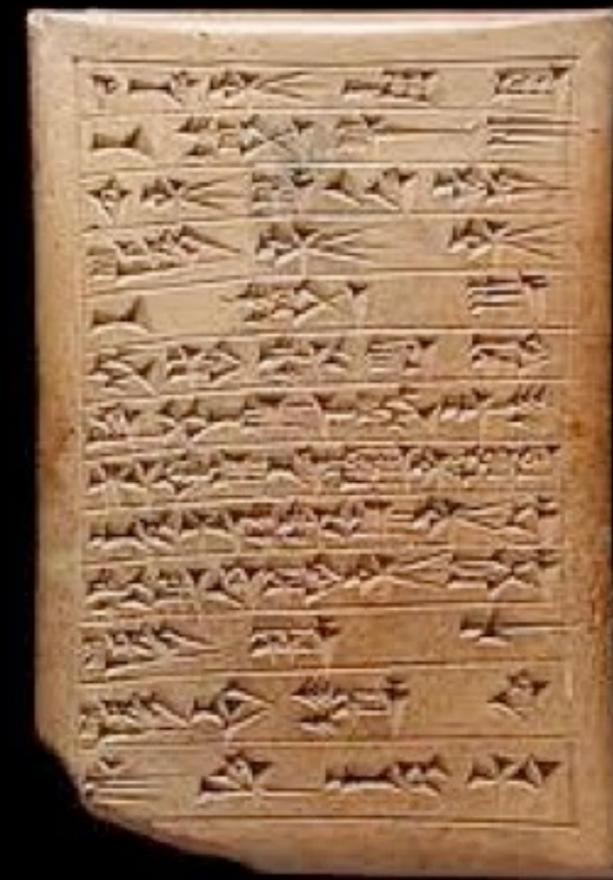


The Semitic Background of Our Alphabet

LATIN SEMILOG	ORIGINAL NAME	GRAPHIC PICTURE	PHOENICIAN	ARABIC
A	'ālf	ox-head	𐤀	أ
B	bēt	house	𐤁	ب
C, G	gaml	throw-stick	𐤂	ج
D	dāg	fish	𐤃	د
E	hē	man calling	𐤄	ه
U, V, W	waw	mace	𐤅	و
Z	zēn	?	𐤆	ز
H	hēt	fence	𐤇	ح
I, J, Y	ṣad	hand w/loose fist	𐤈	س
K	kapp	palm	𐤉	ك
L	lamd	ox-goad (whip)	𐤊	ل
M	maṣm	water (waves)	𐤋	م
N	naḥās	snake	𐤌	ن
O	'ayin	eye	𐤍	ع
F, P	pēh	mouth/corner	𐤎	ف
Q	qu (p-)	?	𐤏	ق
R	ra's	head	𐤐	ر
S, X	tann	composite bow	𐤑	س
T	taw	cross-marker	𐤒	ت



BOOKS!!

ECL 596: Professor Jessica Pressman
Fall 2025

Day 10: Borsuk. Ch. 2— The Book as
Content

ADMIN

- More extra credit: podcasting workshops
- Grad students— meeting?
- CATEGORIES for posts

ADMIN

- Blog: don't jump to huge speculations— stay with the text, close read, DEVELOP claims. MORE ANALYSIS.
- First assignment— let's look at thesis and close reading

Discussion

From your blogs- print leads to standardization

- DAKOTA: The printing press allowed for faster production, standardized grammar, and the rise of credited authors, along with many other developments. With this, we see the emergence of the Book as a product and as a companion. More and more people are reading and collecting books, and so thus creates the start of the feverish book community.
- MYLES: As the needs of the reader changed, the form of the book did as well. The printing press allowed for books to be standardized, mass produced, and more accessible for a widening audience of readers. However, this also made books products to be designed and sold, rather than rare, sacred objects only found in monasteries and universities. The new commercialized market for books, shaped by consumer demand “played a key role in the commodification of the book and in our changing perception of it as content rather than object” (Borsuk, 109).

From your blogs- print leads to standardization

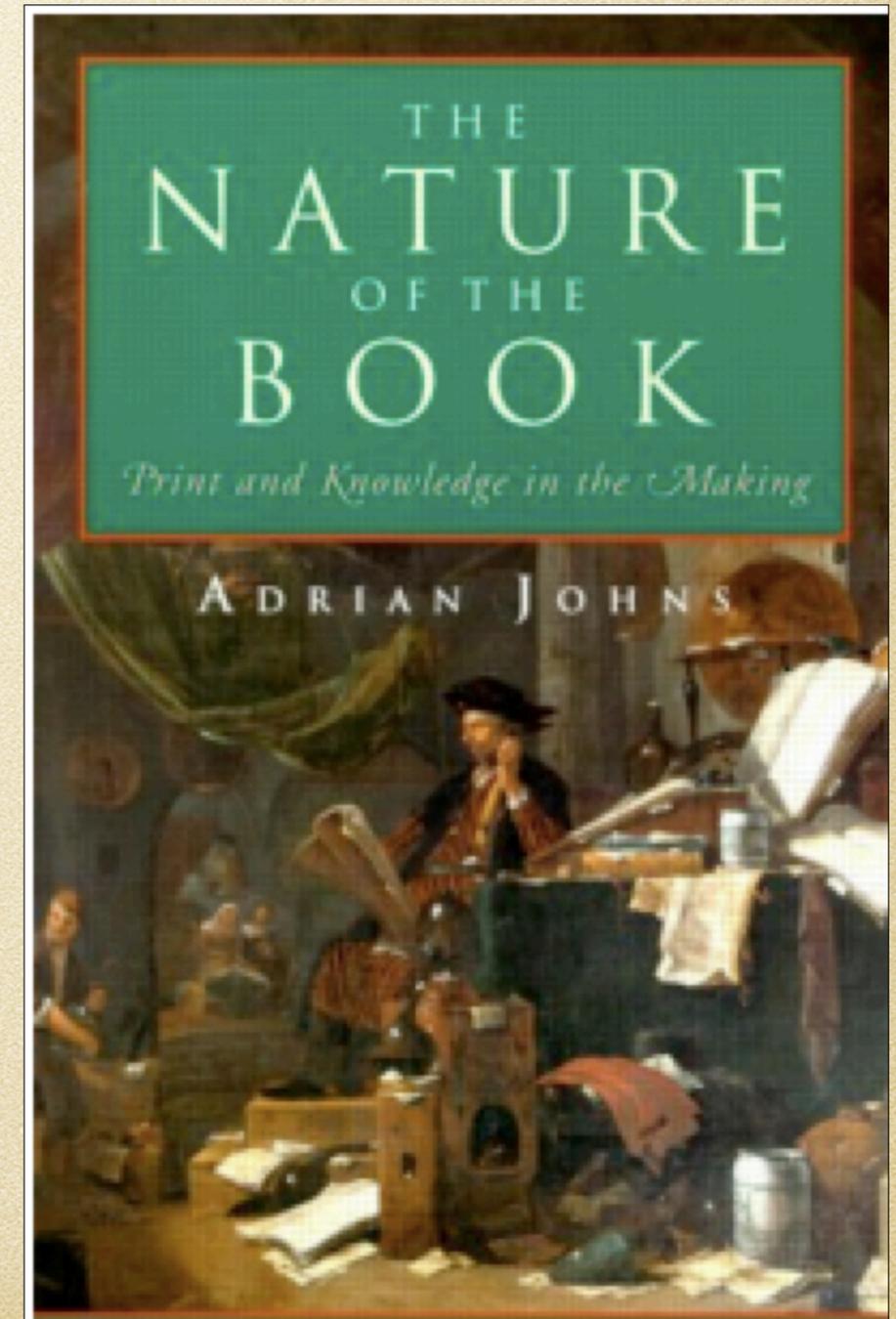
- JACOB: Today, when a new book is published, we have mass printings of it, and each one is identical in terms of content and binding. Even more so after ISBNs were created, any two copies became interchangeable. This is the main idea in this chapter: today, the book, as a physical object, is just a uniform, mass-produced text. During the incunable period, printing was still very much in its unrefined, rudimentary form: “Scholars of early modern books make a distinction between a ‘book’ and a ‘book copy,’ since each codex produced from a given print run will be unique in its circulation, history, and materiality.”(Borsuk 74).

From your blogs- print leads to Science

- JJ: For example, Borsuk mentions how “the publication of scientific treatises allowed scholars to engage in dialogue and debate with thinkers far removed, directly facilitating the spread of ideas that would flourish with the Renaissance” (84). In other words, the fact that science was being written down as opposed to being passed down orally allowed it to be spread much further and faster, thus leading to the Renaissance. New technology plays a strong role in creating and molding a certain type of society—whether that be through the accessibility of information or the way in which it is transmitted.

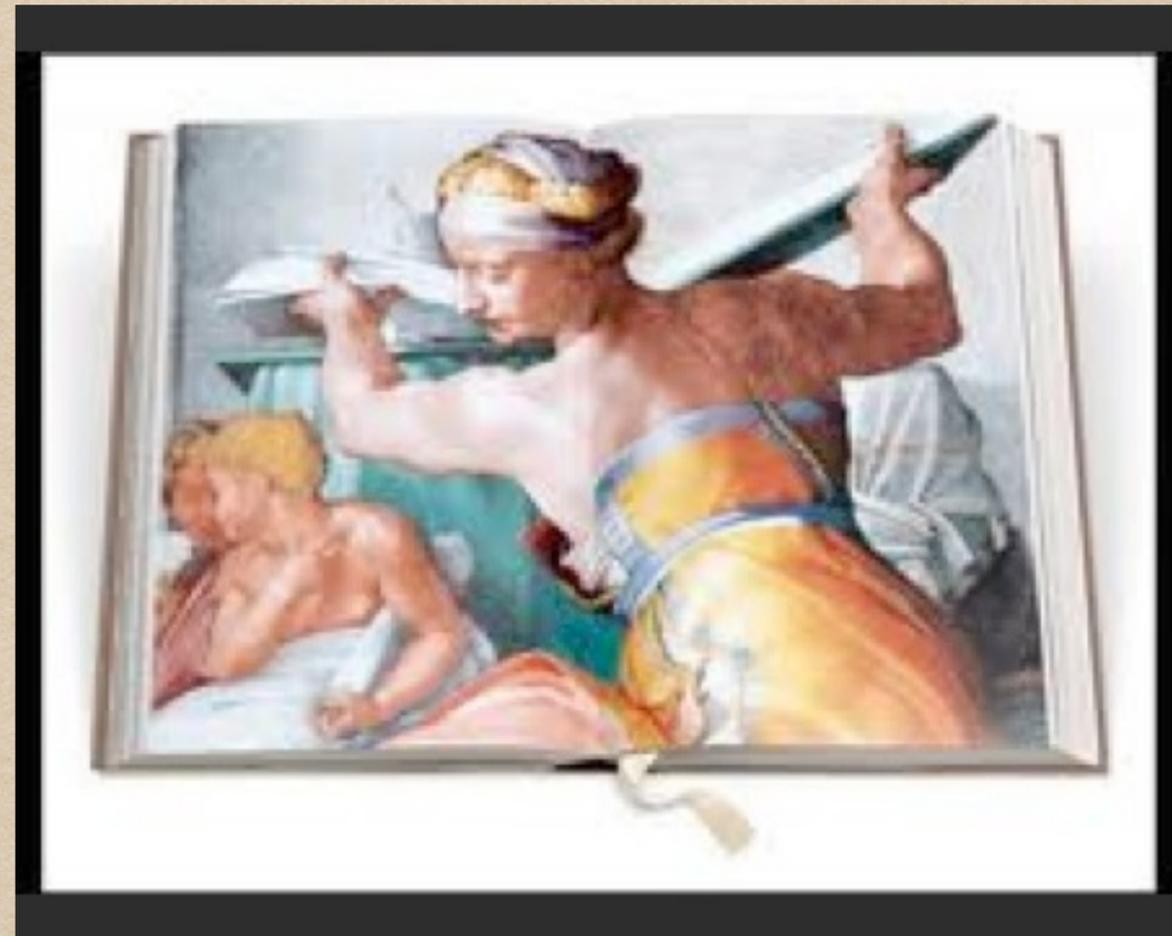
Print has to become “Fixed and True”

- “the very identity of print itself has had to be *made*” (60)
- “Veracity” of the book as technology is “extrinsic to the press itself, and has had to be grafted onto it” (60)
- “Out of them came recognized authorship and, ultimately, public knowledge” (126)
- “Living in a world where printed materials could not necessarily be trusted, contemporaries developed a wide range of techniques, social, material, and literary, to affirm and define what they claimed to be knowledge” (378)
- -Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago University Press, 1998)

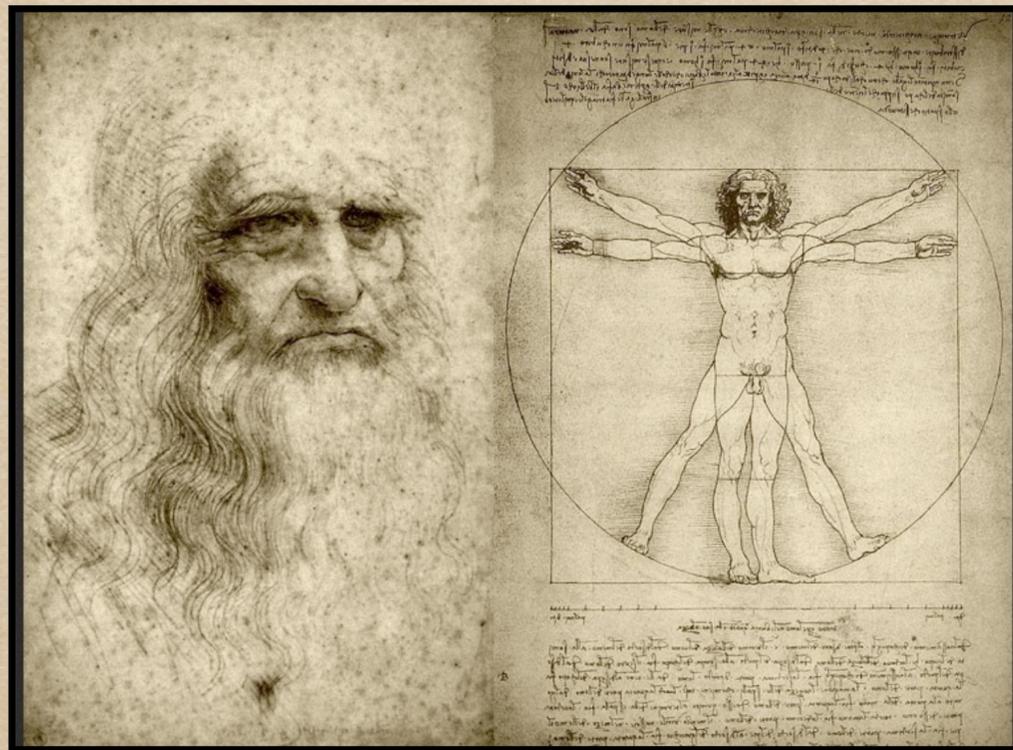


The Book as Symbol

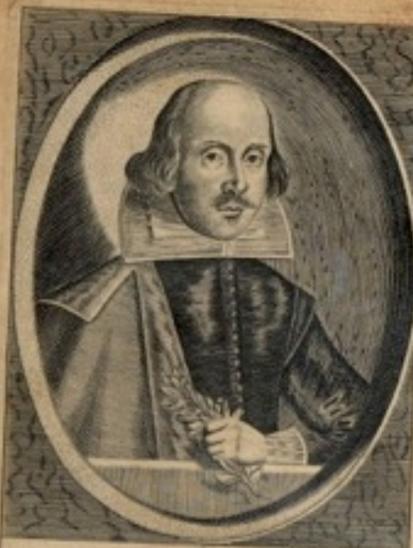
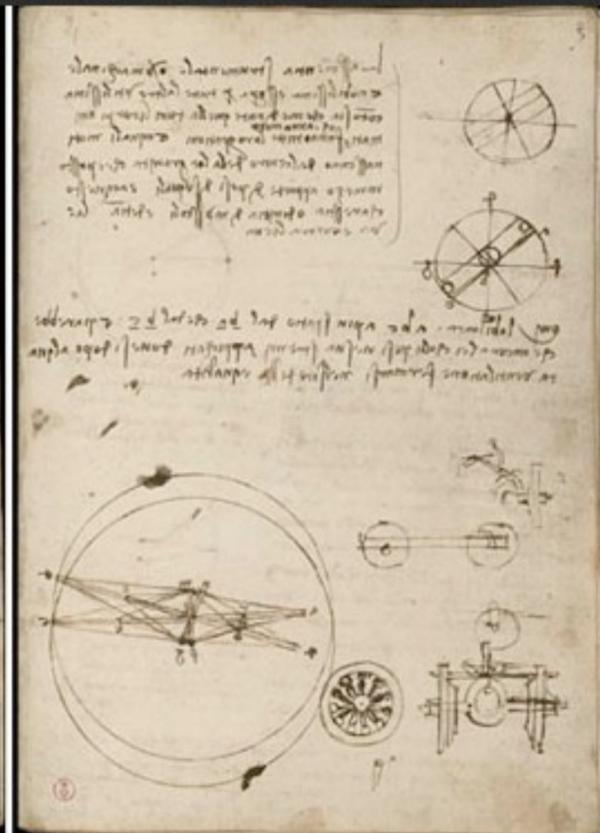
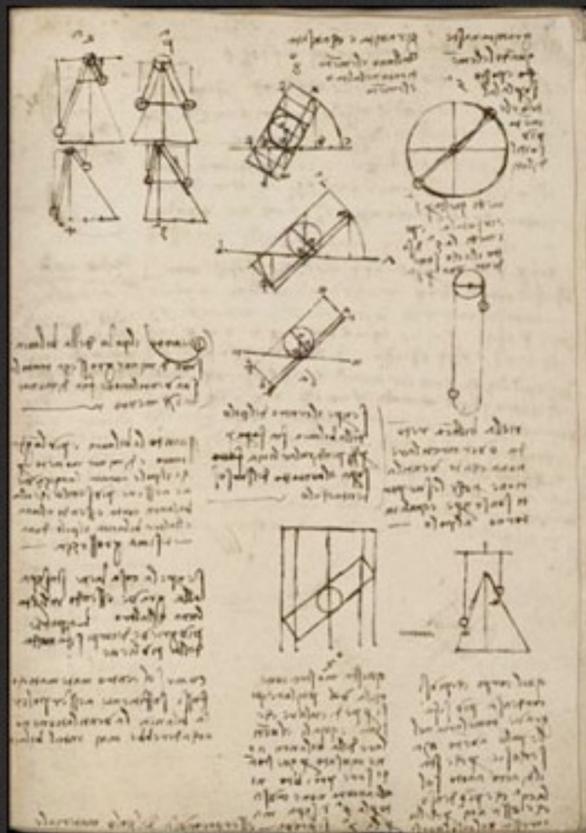
- ◆ “The exponentially increasing demand for books points to a growing literate audience: educated men-- and in some cases women-- who had **adopted the ideals of Renaissance humanism and sought books to fulfill their needs**” (Nicole Howard, *The Book* 56)



Book as Symbol for/of Enlightenment



- ◆ “The leading ideology of the Renaissance, then, was humanism, and **its icon was the book**” (Nicole Howard, *The Book*, 24)



*This Shakes is renowned Shakespear's: Soule of th' age
 The applause: delight: the wonder of the Stage.
 Nature her selfe, was proud of his designs
 And joy'd to weare the dressing of his lines;
 The learned will Confesse, his works are such,
 As neither man, nor Muse, can prayse to much.
 For ever live thy fame, the world to tell,
 Thy like, no age, shall ever paralell*

POEMS:
VVRITTEN
 BY
WIL. SHAKE-SPEARE,
 Gent.



Printed at *London* by *The. Cotes*, and are
 to be sold by *John Benson*, dwelling in
St. Dunstons Church-yard. 1640.

Poor Richard, 1739.

A N

Almanack

For the Year of Christ

1 7 3 9,

Being the Third after LEAP YEAR.

And makes since the Creation

	Years
By the Account of the Eastern Greeks	7247
By the Latin Church, when \odot ent. Υ	6938
By the Computation of <i>W. W.</i>	5748
By the Roman Chronology	5688
By the Jewish Rabbies	5500

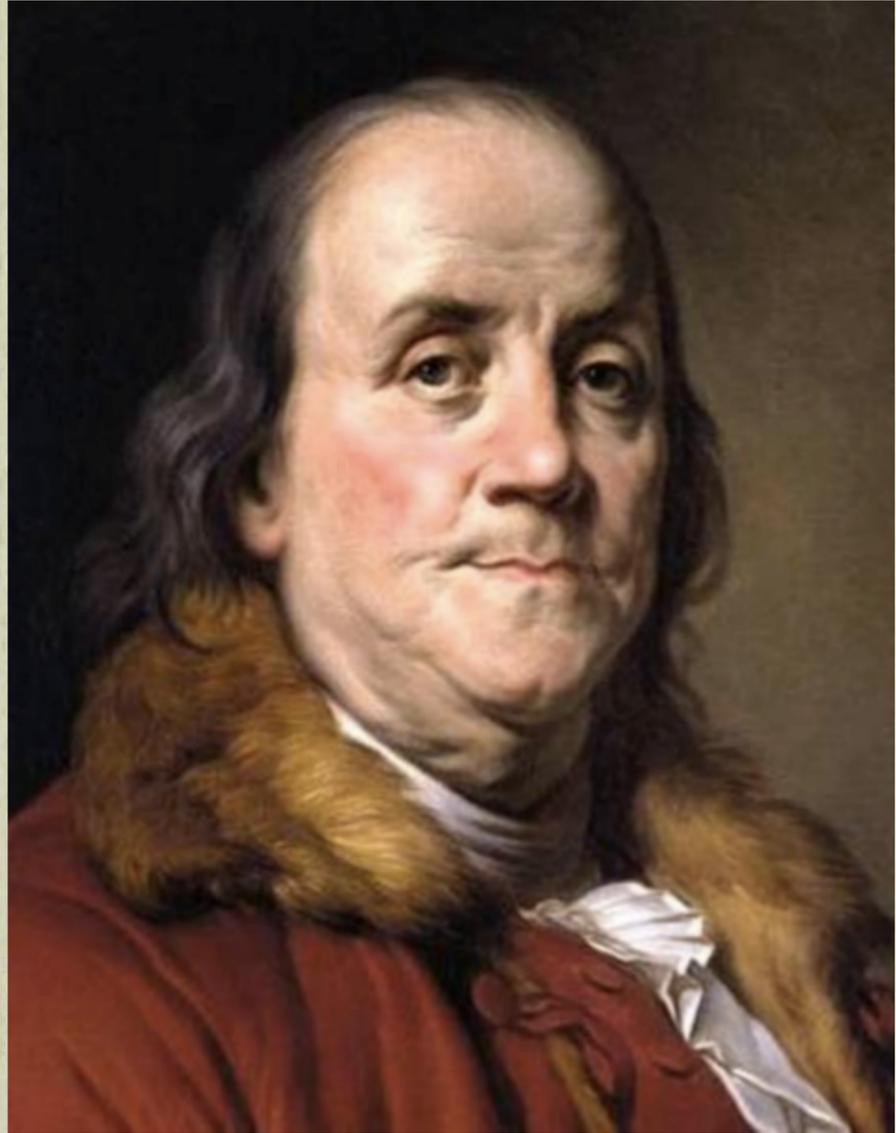
Wherem is contained,

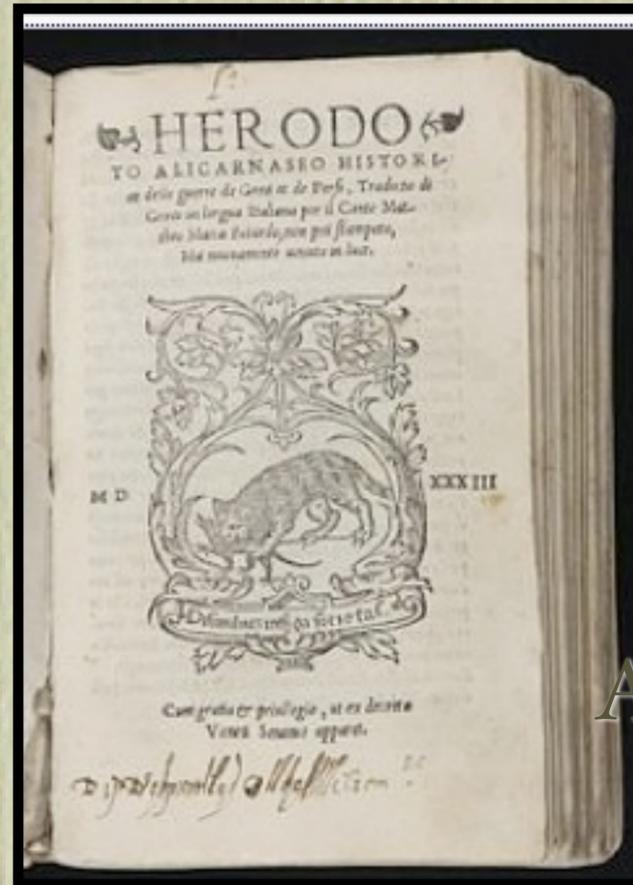
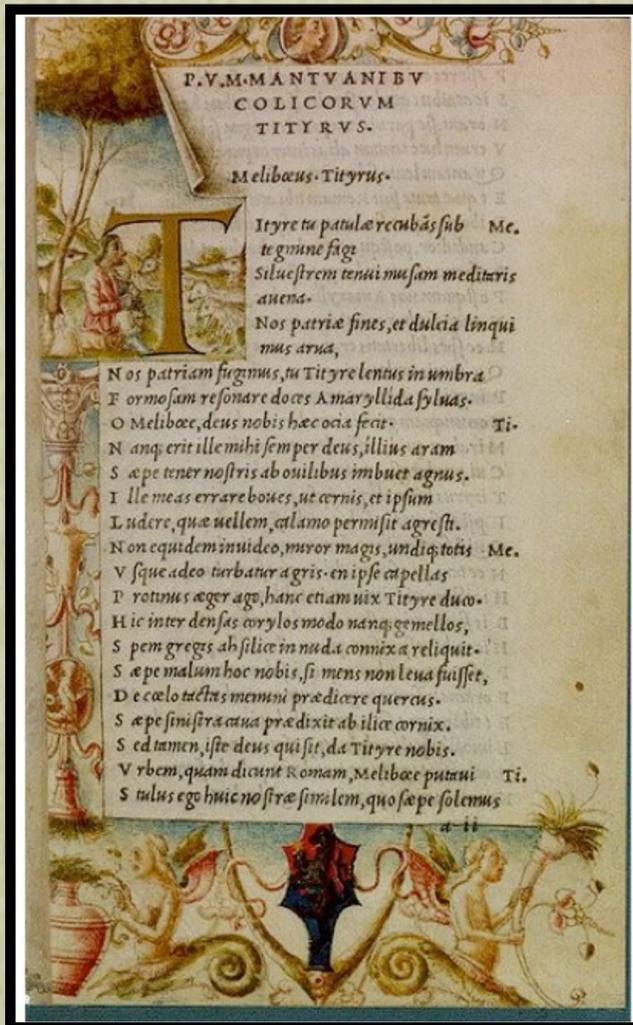
The Lunations, Eclipses, Judgment of the Weather, Spring Tides, Planets Motions & mutual Aspects, Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, Length of Days, Time of High Water, Fairs, Courts, and observable Days.

Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of Five Hours West from London, but may without sensible Error, serve all the adjacent Places, even from Newfoundland to South-Carolina.

By RICHARD SAUNDERS, Philom.

PHILADELPHIA:
Printed and sold by B. FRANKLIN, at the New Printing-Office near the Market.





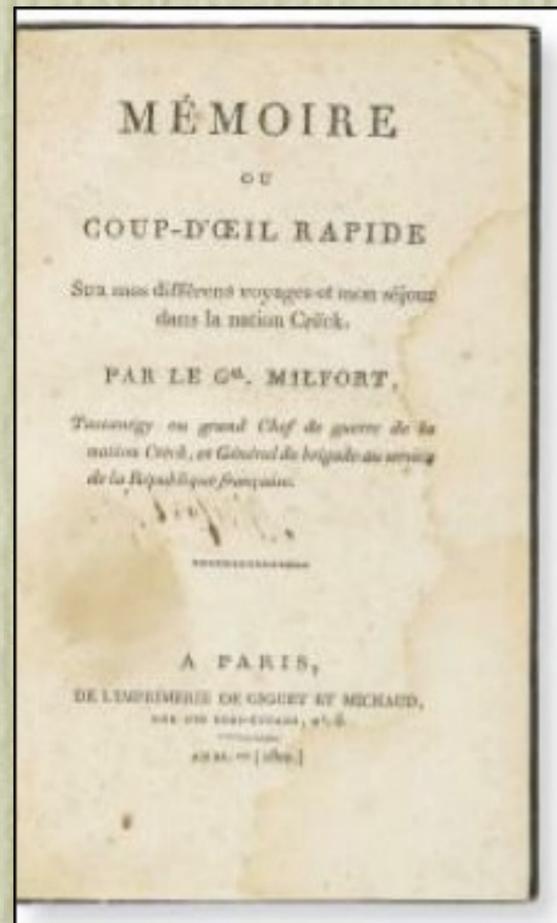
Aldus Manutius editions (Venice 1490s)

- “The Aldines did for books what laptops did for computers in the twentieth century. Scholarship became mobile and reading was no longer an activity confined to the study” (Nicole Howard, *The Book*, 62)

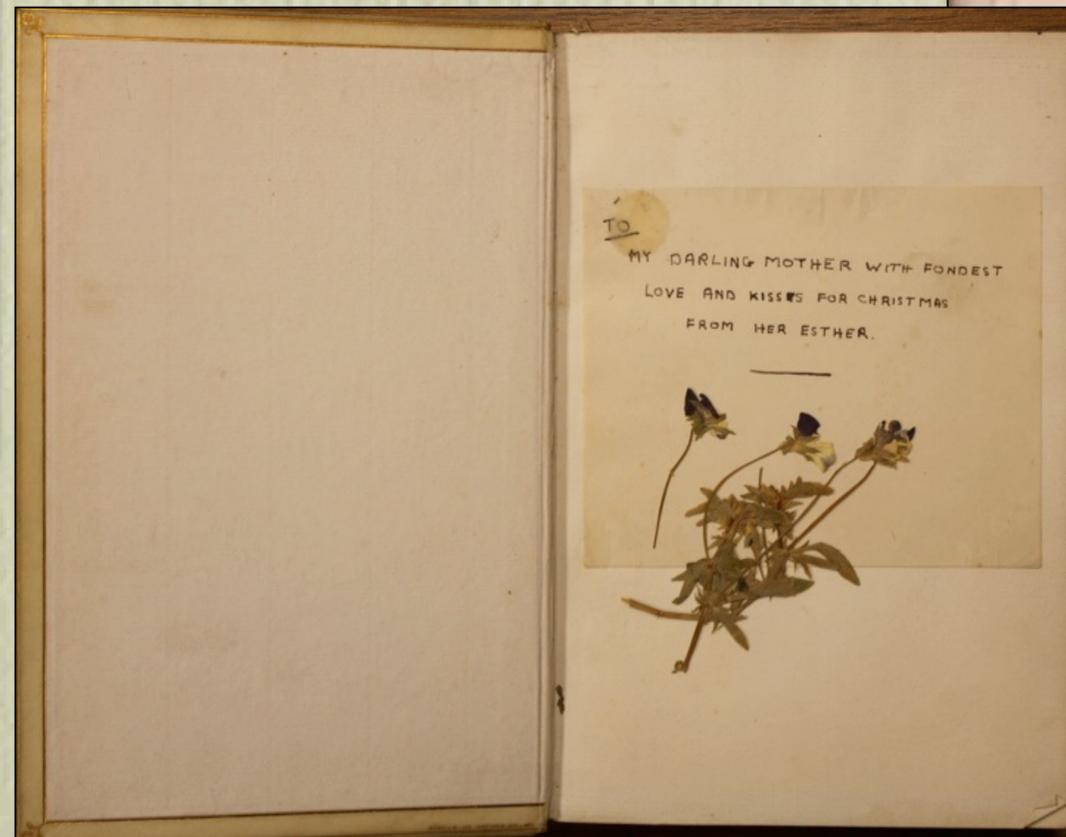
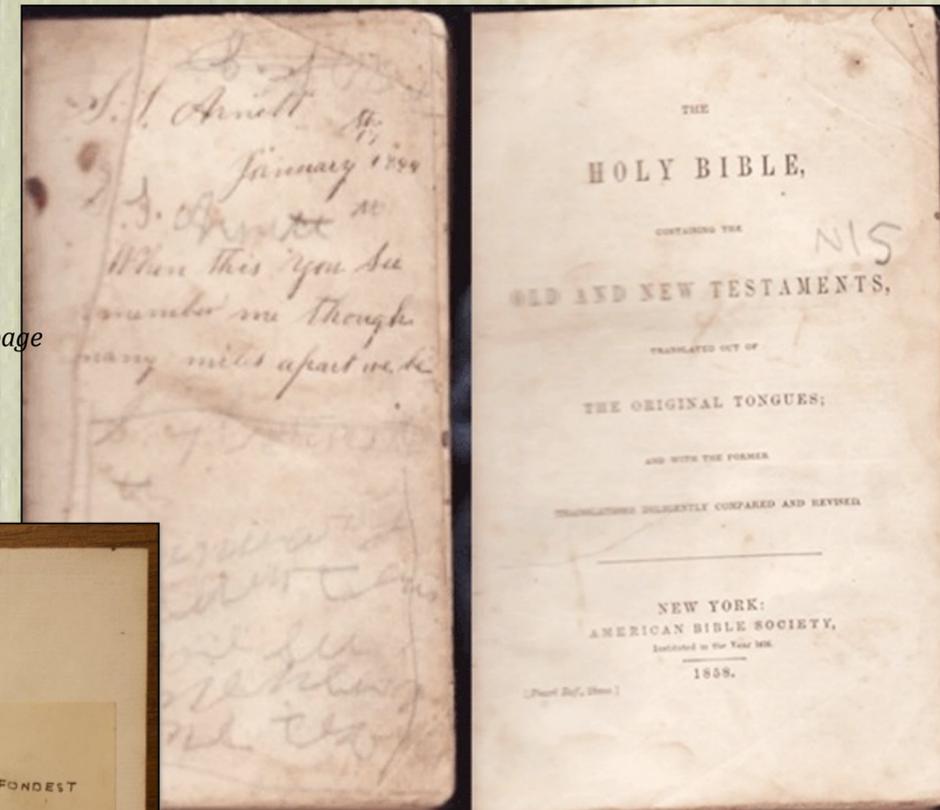
From your blogs- marginalia

- ARON: Borsuk writes, “Open margins left space for active annotation– a visible and tactile engagement of mind with page” (89). The most overlooked aspect of the mass printing availability is that it allows books to become a tool that is unique to each person that interacts with it. Print gathered content and disseminated it in an accessible manner, but more importantly it sparked the loop of thinking alongside the machine known as the book. As books became personally owned, it was the marginalia that further separated each copy that was distributed. It is the readers thoughts that work alongside the author and the book to form intuitive ideas and meaning.

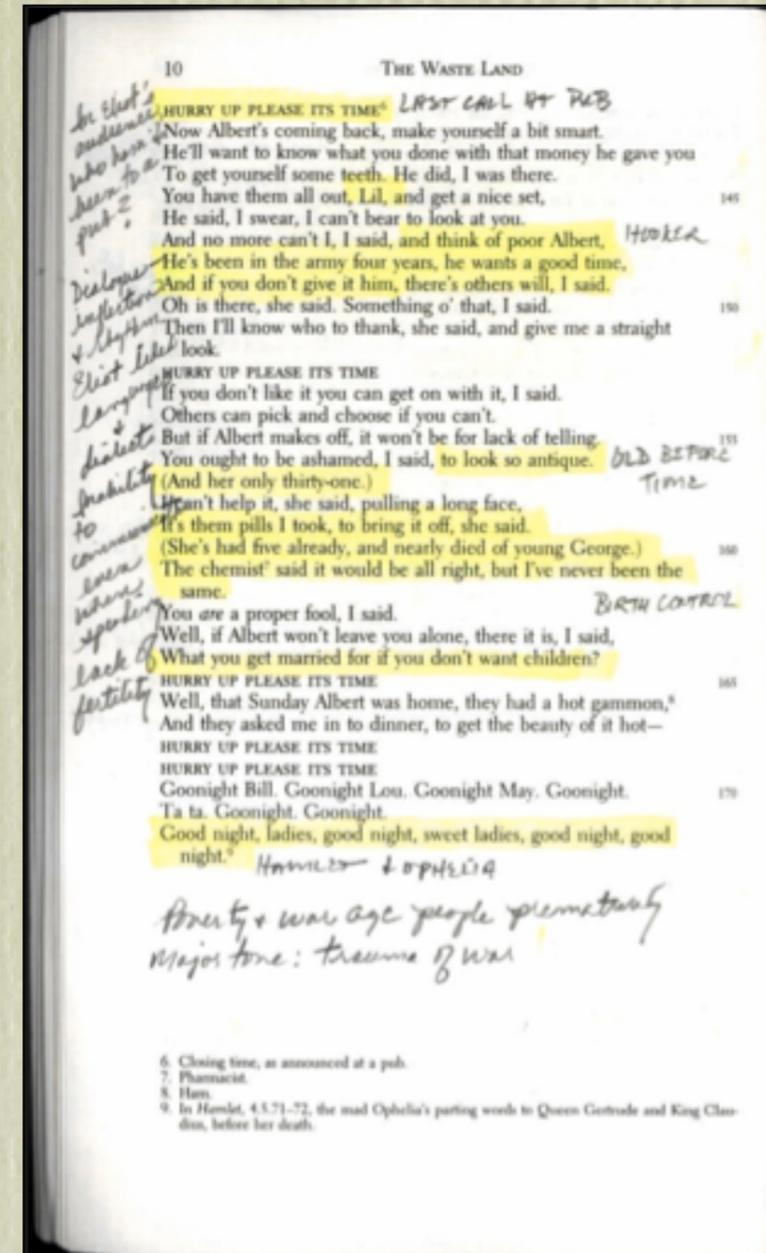
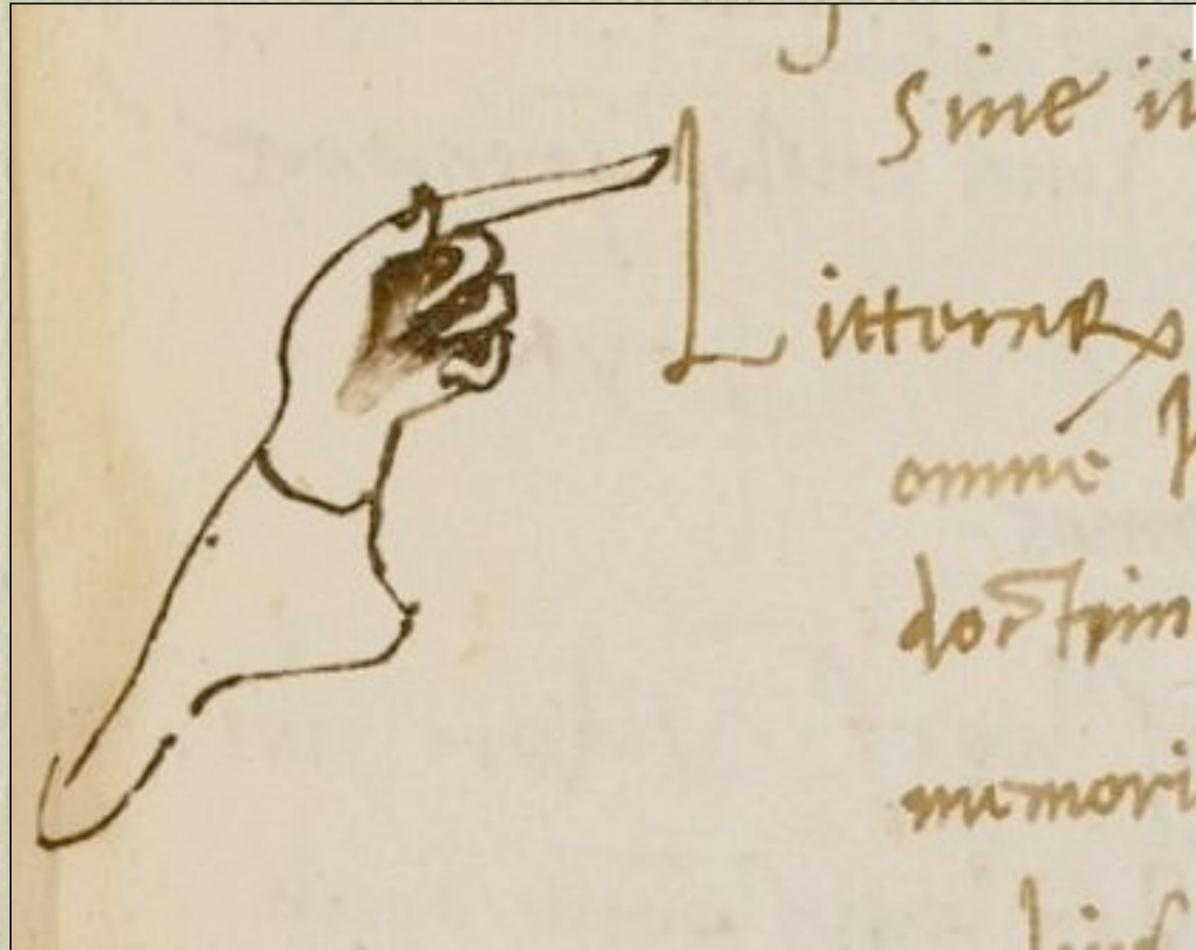
Read the Markings and Residual Matter



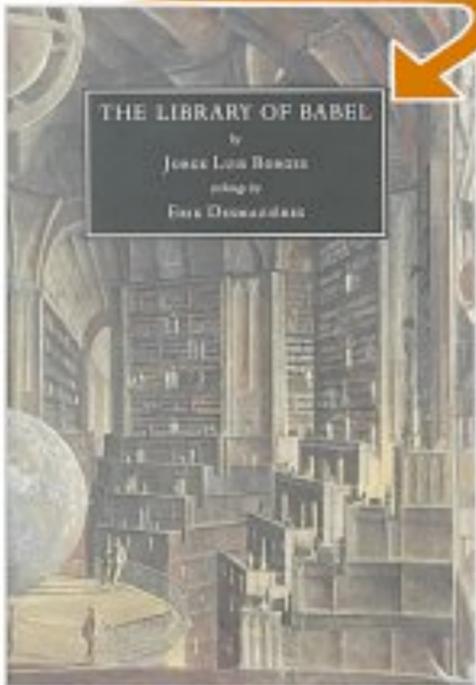
SLIDE: reading into the materiality of the page



Read for Readers



SEARCH INSIDE!™



The Library of Babel (Pocket Paragon) (Hardcover)

by [Jorge Luis Borges](#) (Author), [Erik Desmazieres](#) (Author), [Andrew Hurley](#) (Translator), [Angela Giral](#)
of an indefinite, perhaps in

★★★★★ (8 custom)

Availability: CURRENT

I return again to bookmarking Borges. Except now I have made my bookmarks public. Why do I believe in you, reading these notes. 6 April 1:10 am



Keep connected to what's happening in the world of books by signing up for Amazon.com Books Del new releases in your favorite categories, popular pre-orders and bestsellers, exclusive author interv

[Share your own customer images](#)

[Search inside this book](#)

[Search inside this book](#)

[Share your own customer images](#)

“Marginalia in the Library of Babel”
Mark C. Marino

Reading into the Materiality of the Page

- “**The markings** on the page are a part of the ‘cultural residue’ left by a battery of authors, scribes, artists, booksellers, book owners, and readers, and **can be read** as a compelling narrative about the social history of thought” (15)
- **Bonnie Mak, *How the Page Matters* (University of Toronto Press, 2012)**

HOW THE PAGE MATTERS

BONNIE MAK

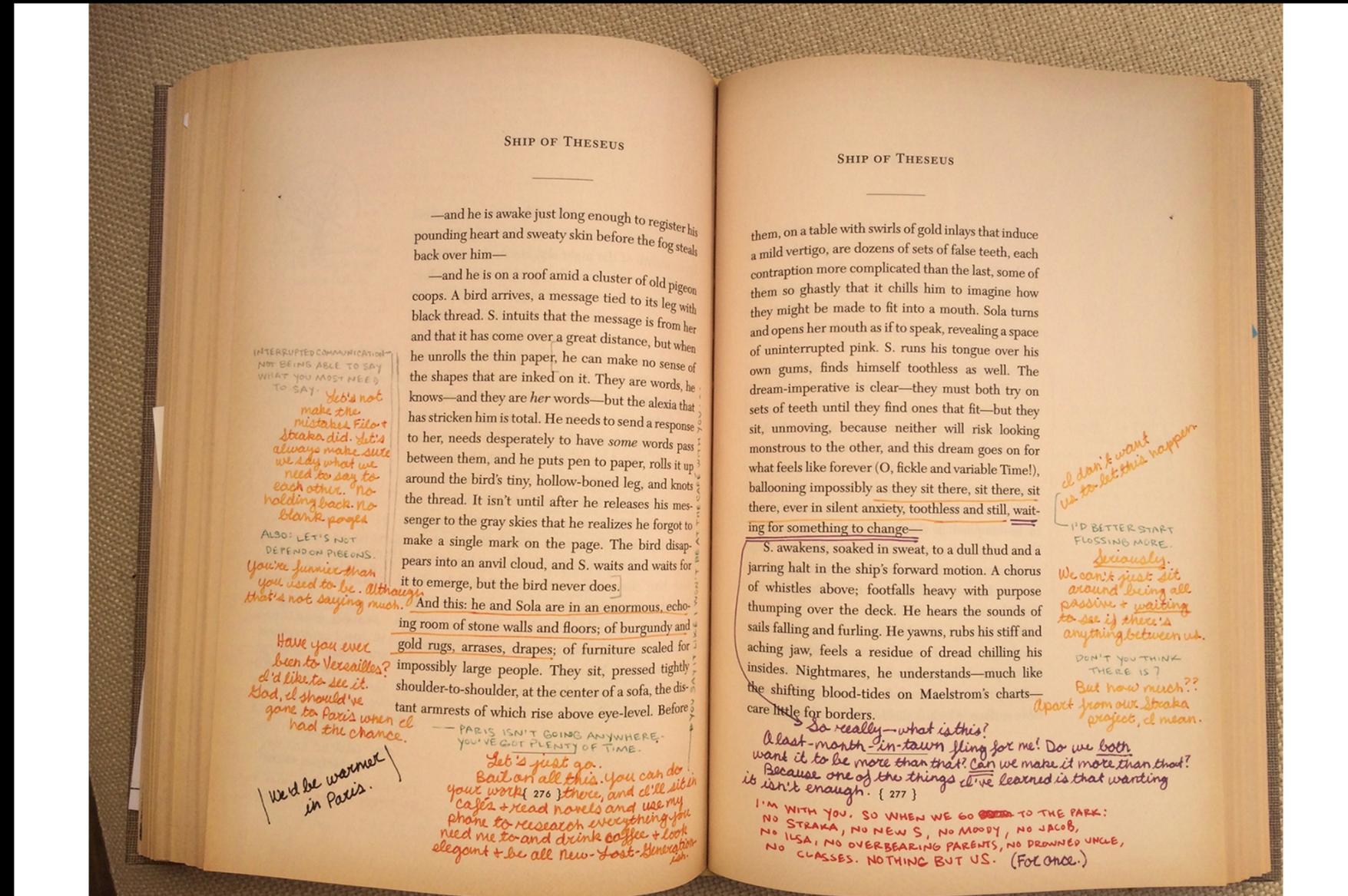
The Page as Interface

- “The page is an expressive space for text, space, and image; it is a cultural artifact; it is a technological device” (18)
- “**The markings** on the page are a part of the ‘cultural residue’ left by a battery of authors, scribes, artists, booksellers, book owners, and readers, and **can be read** as a compelling narrative about the social history of thought” (15)
- **Bonnie Mak, How the Page Matters (University of Toronto Press, 2012)**

HOW THE PAGE MATTERS

BONNIE MAK

Fake marginalia

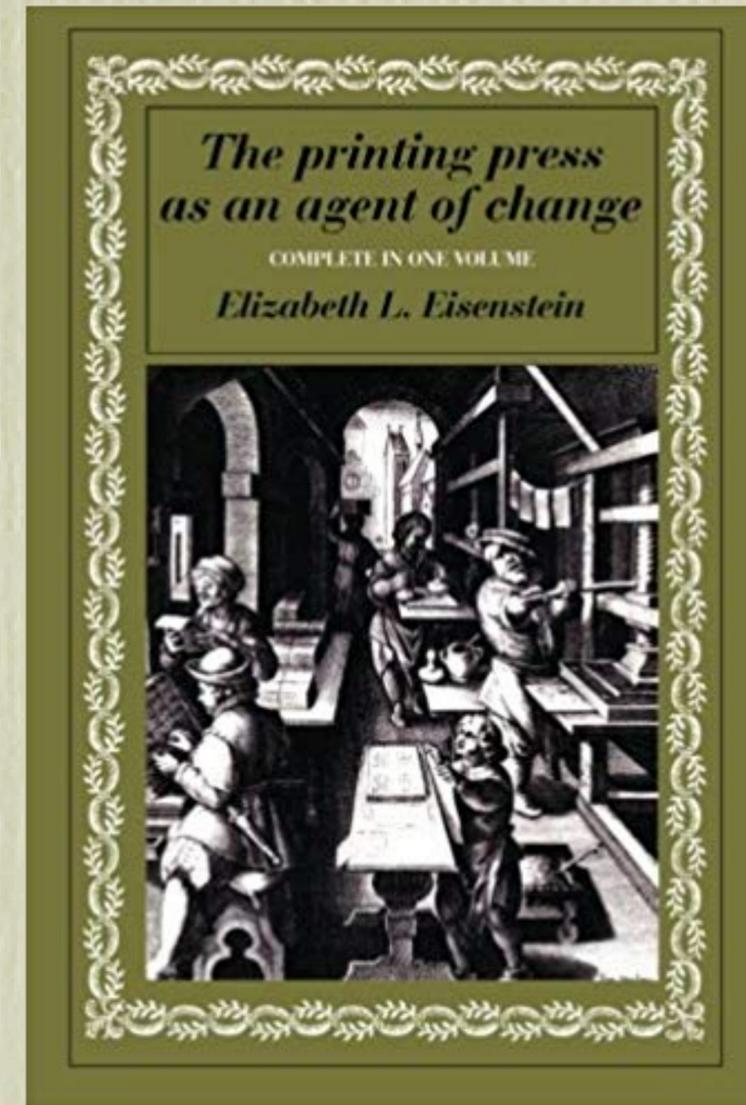


- Doug Dorst and J. J. Abrams, *S.* (2013)

The Printing Press as an Agent of Change

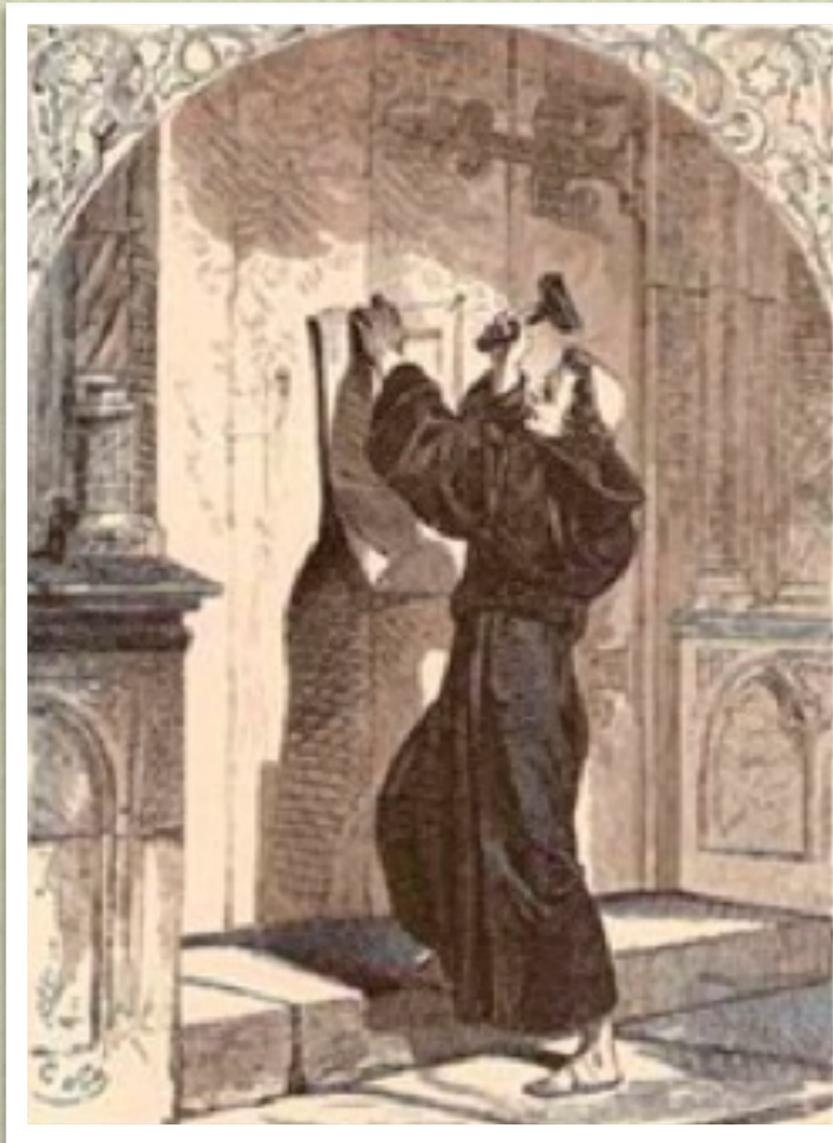
- Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979)

-



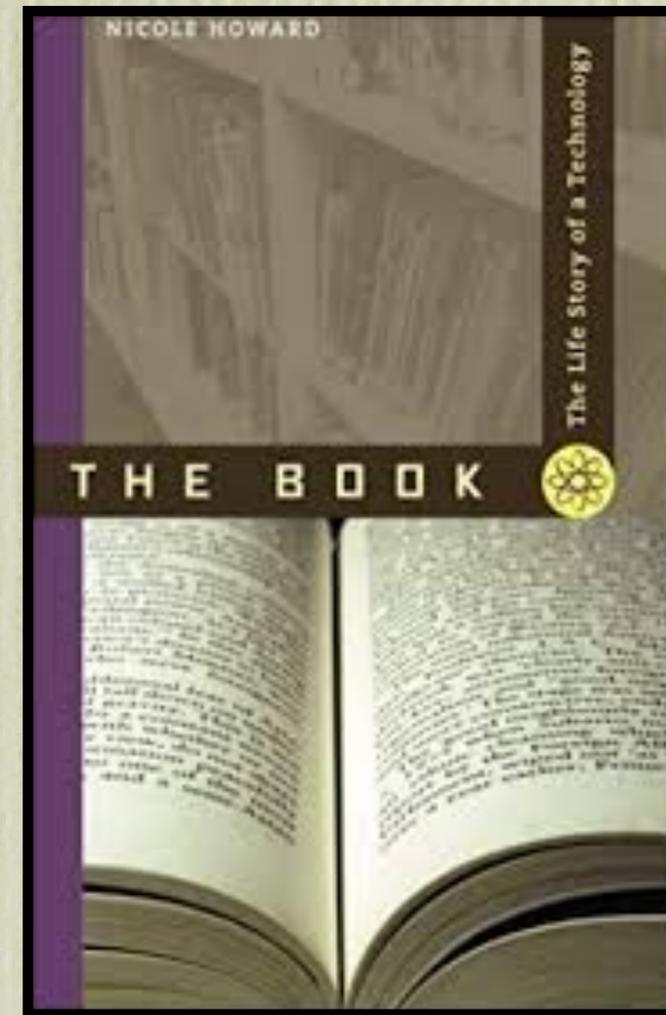
The Protestant Reformation

- **Martin Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences* (1517)**



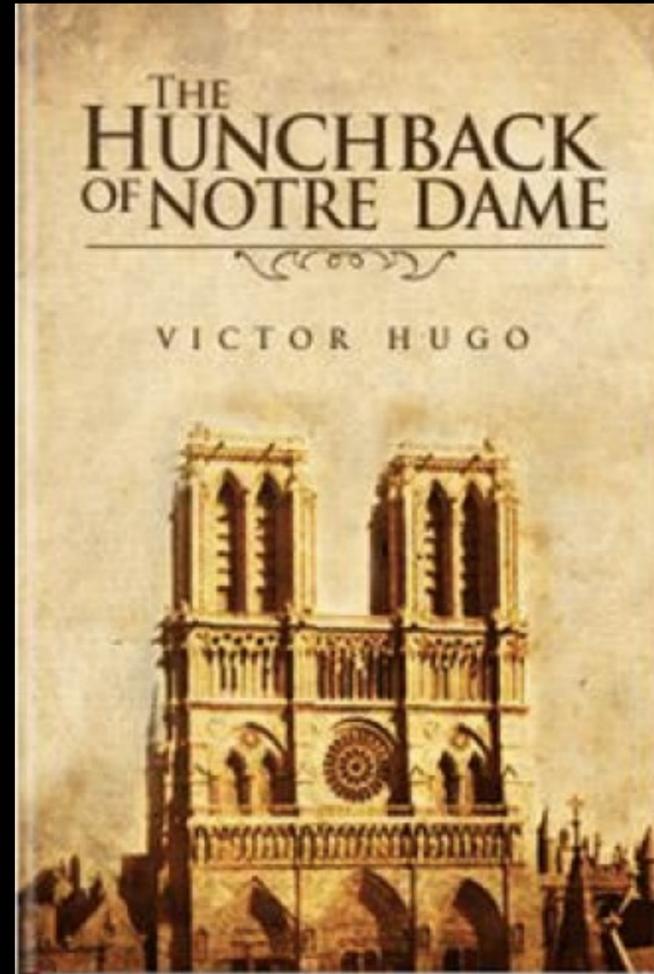
Nicole Howard,
The Book: The Life Story of a Technology
(Johns Hopkins Press, 2009)

- “The most dominant and cohesive institution in sixteenth-century life, the Catholic Church, faced a more serious threat than the Islamic advance at its greatest, all thanks to printed books” (58)
- "Luther's criticisms against the Catholic Church targeted not only their corrupt economic practices, but their monopoly on scriptural interpretation as well" (58)



“The archdeacon gazed at the gigantic edifice for some time in silence, then extending his right hand, with a sigh, towards the printed book which lay open on the table, and his left towards Notre-Dame, and turning a sad glance from the book to the church,--"Alas," he said, **“this will destroy that [ceci tuera cela].”**”

Victor Hugo,
Notre-Dame de Paris (1831)



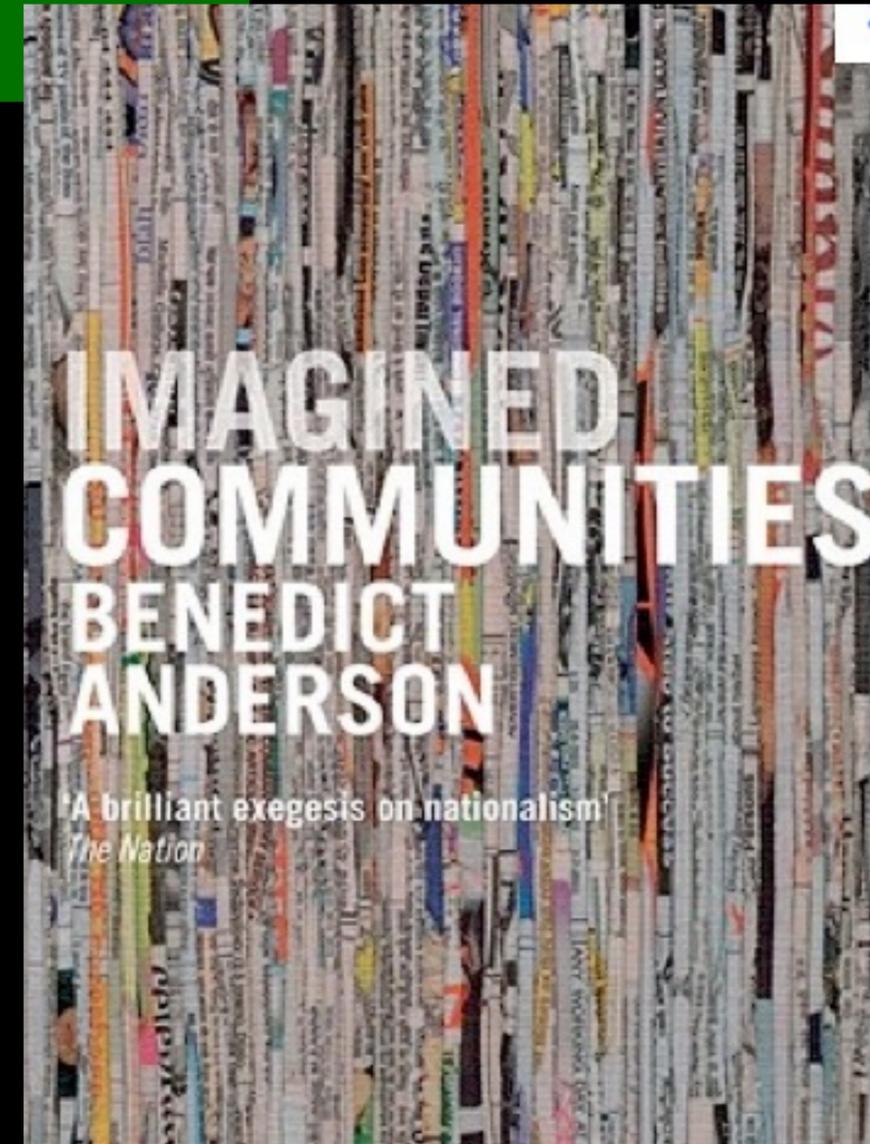
The Making of the Nation

The definition of a nation is “an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (15)

18th C newspaper and novel were new forms that “provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the kind of imagined community that is the nation” (30)

“At the same time, the newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbours, is continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life” (39-40)

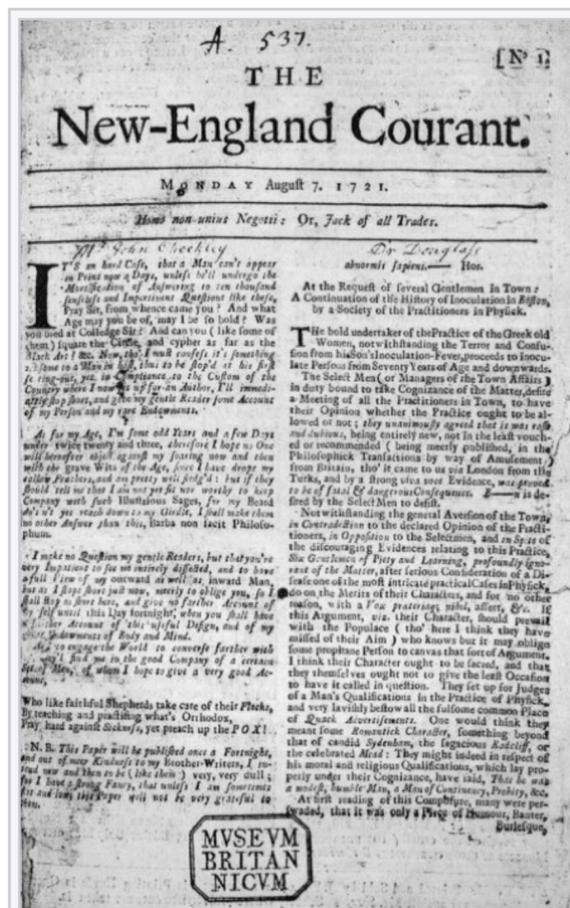
“These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally-imagined community” (47)



Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso Books, 1983)

American periodicals

- Postal Service Act 1792 (signed by George Washington) provided subsidies for mailing newspapers. Ben Franklin first postal master
- Franklin saw newspapers as place for national education and discourse

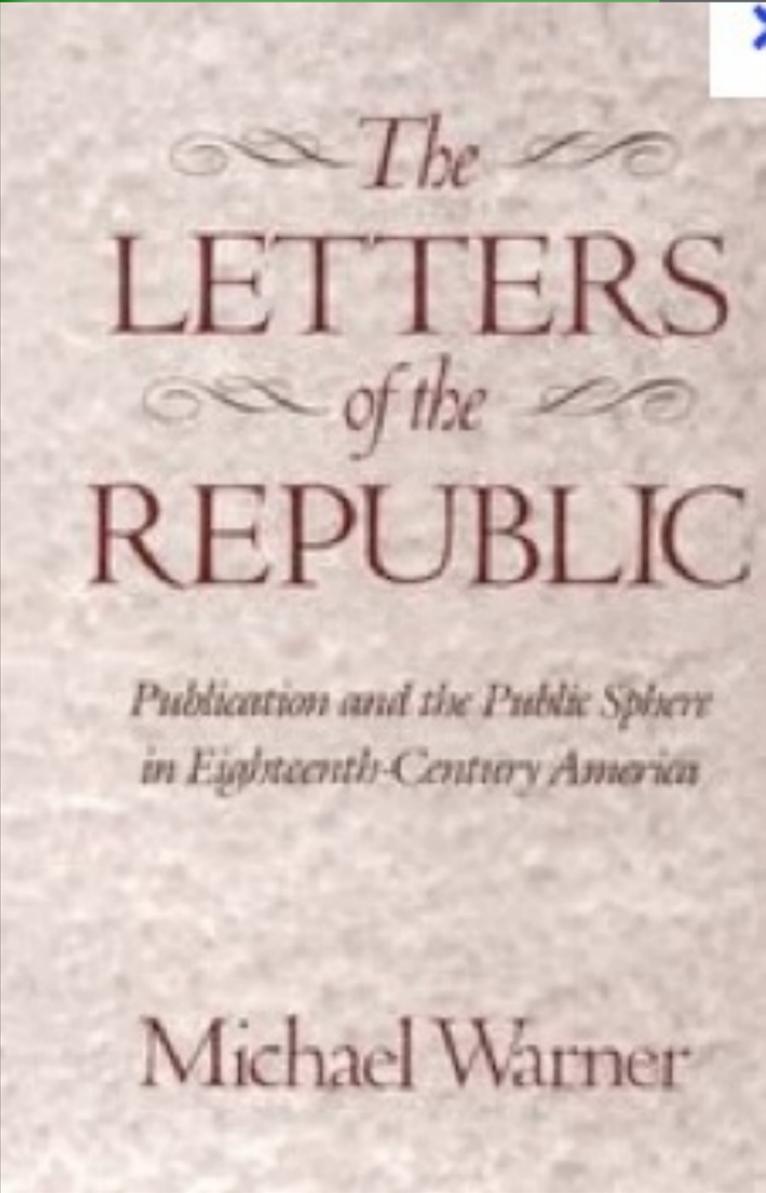


The New England Courant, the 7 August 1721 front page

“We the People”

“The “we” does not exist before the declaration. **The signature invents the signatory**” (105)

“The text itself becomes not only the supreme law, but the only original embodiment of the people” (102)



The
LETTERS
of the
REPUBLIC

*Publication and the Public Sphere
in Eighteenth-Century America*

Michael Warner

Printing Shops as Social Spaces



- “Printing shops often turned into intellectual dens as the conversation in their inner confines produced writings, and the writing in turn were disseminated in print” (Nicole Howard, *The Book*, 73)



In the Beginning was the Word: A Visualization of the Page as Interface



The following Flash animation seeks to represent the morphs of the page over the past 1,000 years.

We are guided by two suppositions: 1. The concept of the "interface," developed within computer science to describe hardware or software that allows human-computer communication, can be fruitfully applied to understand those material forms -- the page, the book, or the print -- that have mediated so much human access to information in the long age of the codex. 2. Changes in the page interface have reflected and supported change in reading practices.



To visualize these ideas, we have chosen the first fourteen lines of the gospel of John -- "In the beginning was the Word..."



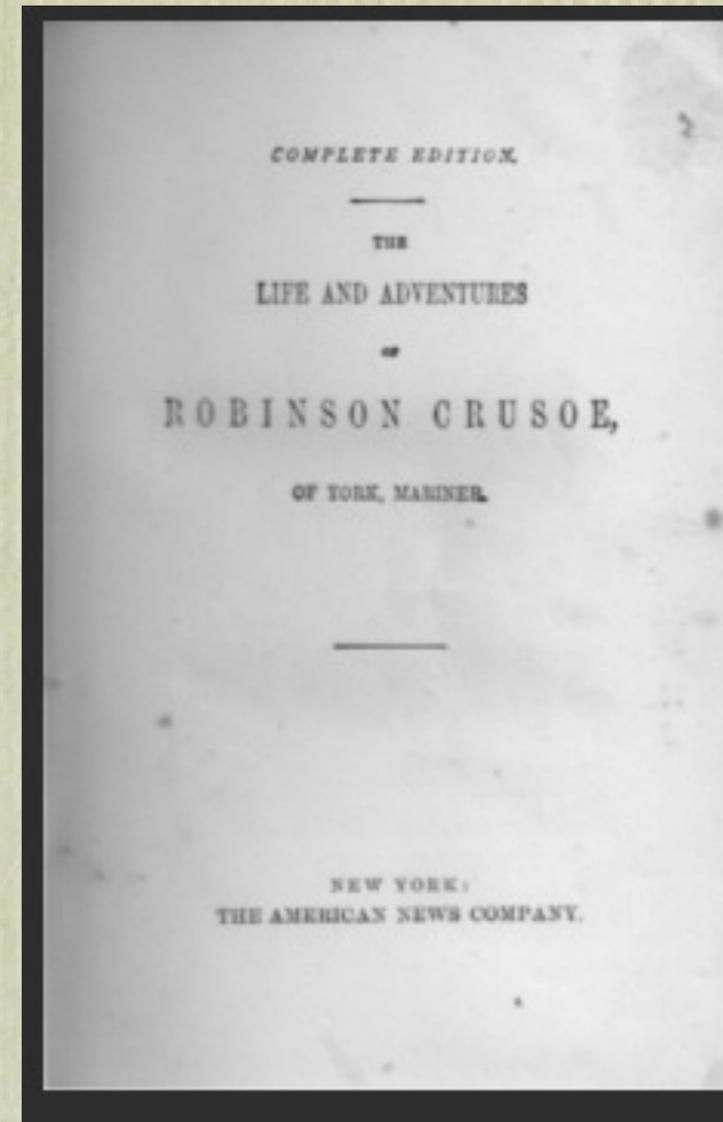
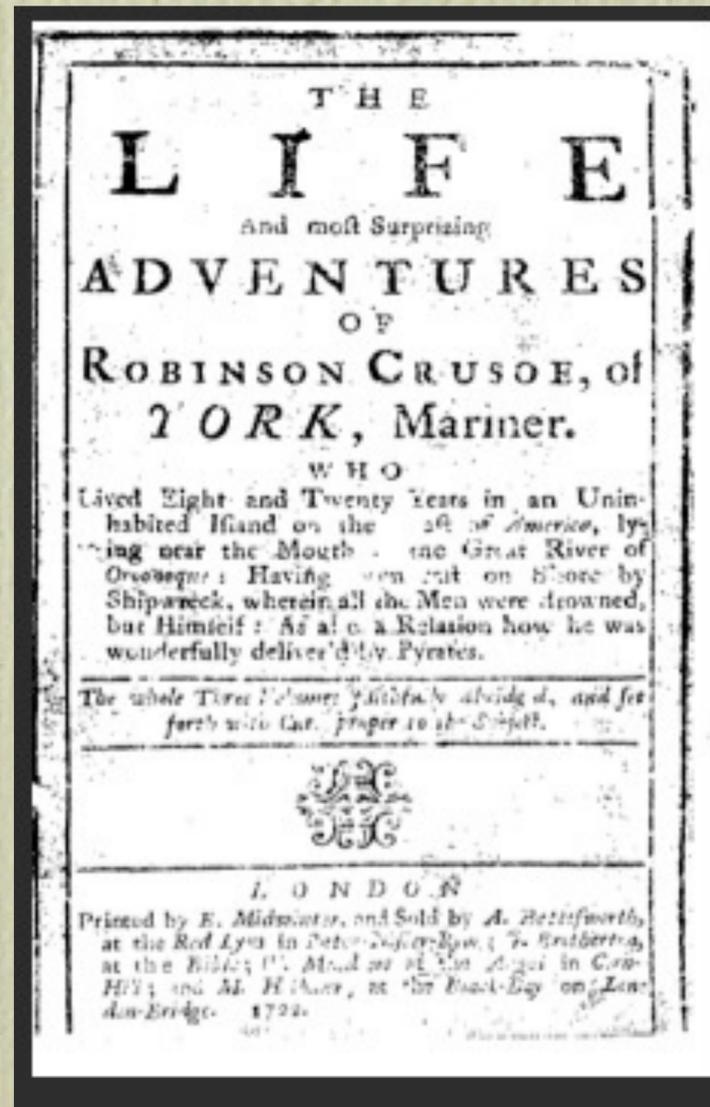
Enter

17th C=Shift to focus on readers

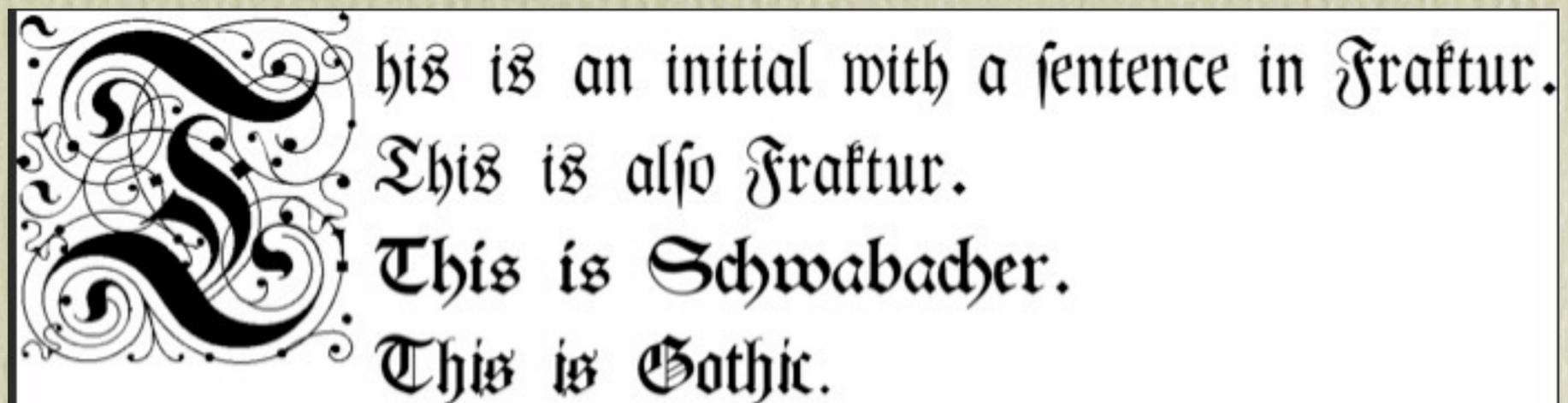
“The navigational aids, we now associate with the book.... arose during this period through a shift from devices that helped printers and binders in manufacturing a book, to devices that helped readers navigate that same text.” (86)
the reader-focused elements, mark the codex as commodity (Borsuk, 88)

-

Title Pages



New Types to Represent



Classic Roman Typeface

What do each of these fonts “say”?
One word for each.

1. How can a font mean and matter?

2. How can a font mean and matter?

3. How can a font mean and matter?

4. How can a font mean and matter?

Take Aways/Questions