

GIUSEPPE PAGANO:

EVOLUTION OF TYPOGRAPHY IN ITALY

In no other country was the development of typography so strongly influenced by tradition during the nineteenth century as in Italy, where, however it was not so much a case of an inner traditional tie as of more external influence and stimulus with regard to form. The taste for the neo-classical (i.e. variations of 15th century models and Bodoni's style) was most noticeable in practice immediately after the War and until a few years ago. This movement performed a twofold service, for in the first place it exercised the effect of a healthy repercussion on the degenerate symptoms of the "Liberty period" and, secondly, it also provided the best typographers with a secure basis for exercising the craftsmanship of their vocation.

This movement, however, also had the disadvantage that it restricted the development of contemporary typography. This restrictive effect was all the more difficult to overcome because, in addition to all the influences of tradition and of the typographical examples provided by England and Germany, development was still hampered by dialectic misunderstanding, so that it was only the neo-classical style that could give typography a pronounced Italian stamp.

The controversy between the upholders of neo-classicism and the advocates of a modern typographical taste still continues, but the contrasts between the style of graphic expression of earlier centuries and the requirements of the present day are being increasingly recognized both by the public and by the graphic artists themselves.

PER L'ARCHITETTURA E L'ARREDAMENTO

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