BEMBO

Stanley Morison (6 May 1889 – 11 October 1967) was an influential British typographer, printing executive and historian of printing. Largely self-educated, he promoted higher standards in printing and an awareness of the best printing and typefaces of the past.

From the 1920s Morison became an influential adviser to the British Monotype Corporation, advising them on type design. His strong aesthetic sense was a force within the company, which starting shortly before his joining became increasingly known for commissioning popular, historically-influenced designs that revived some of the best typefaces of the past, with particular attention to the middle period of printing from the Renaissance to the late eighteenth-century, and creating and licensing several new type designs that would become popular. Original typefaces commissioned under Morison's involvement included Times New Roman, Gill Sans and Perpetua, while revivals of older designs included Bembo, Ehrhardt and Bell. Times New Roman, the development of which Morison led to the point that he felt he could consider it his own design, has become one of the most used typefaces of all time. Becoming closely connected to The Times newspaper as an advisor on printing, he became part of its management and the editor of the Times Literary Supplement after the war, and late in life joined the editorial board of Encyclopædia Britannica. Stanley Morison was born in Britain on 6 May 1889, at Wanstead, Essex, but spent most of his childhood and early adult years (1896–1912) in London at the family home in Fairfax Road, Harringay. He was self-taught, having left school after his father abandoned his family.

In 1913 Morison became an editorial assistant on The Imprint magazine.

On the imposition of conscription in 1916 during First World War, he was a conscientious objector, and was imprisoned. Like his friend Eric Gill Morison was a convert to Catholicism, distancing him from many of his later colleagues. Morison married Mabel Williamson, a teacher, in 1916; the marriage was an unhappy one and Morison rapidly separated from his wife.

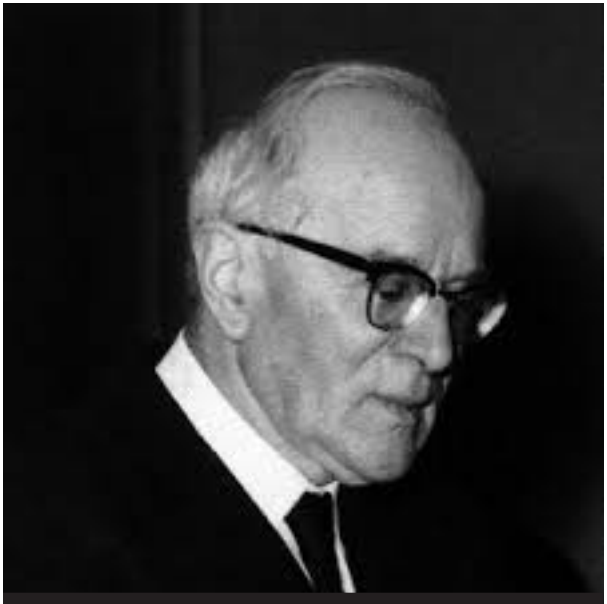
In 1918 he became design supervisor at the Pelican Press, which published material critical of the war. He moved on to a similar position at the Cloister Press. In 1922, he was a founder-member of the Fleuron Society, dedicated to typographic matters (a fleuron being a typographic flower or ornament). He edited the society's journal, The Fleuron, from 1925 to 1930. The quality of the publication's artwork and printing was considered exceptional. From 1923 to 1925, he was also a staff editor/writer for the Penrose Annual, a graphic arts journal.

From 1923 to 1967, Morison was a typographic consultant for the Monotype Corporation. In the 1920s and 1930s, his work at Monotype included research and adaptation of historic typefaces, including the revival of the Bembo and Bell types. He pioneered the great expansion of the company's range of typefaces, and hugely influenced the field of typography to the present day. At Monotype Gill obtained rights to typefaces by leading artists of the time including Bruce Rogers, Jan van Krimpen and Berthold Wolpe. Aesthetically, Morison disliked the excessive historicity of Victorian romantic fine printing, with its interest in reviving blackletter and the appearance of medieval manuscripts, and preferred a more restrained style of printing that nonetheless also rejected the harshly industrial appearance of the "batteries of bold, bad faces" of the nineteenth century.

In 1927, the British Monotype Corporation hired Beatrice Warde – quickly named the company's Publicity Manager – and has been credited with spreading Morison's typographic influences through her own writings. Morison and Warde helped edit Monotype's newsletter, the Monotype Recorder, which promoted Monotype equipment and provided tips for users, showcased examples of high-quality printing and included articles on printing history, several by Morison's collaborator Alfred F. Johnson, a curator at the British Museum. Through Daniel Berkeley Updike, the leading figure in American printing of the time with whom he carried an extensive correspondence, he became aware of an obscure late-eighteenth century type known as Bell in the archives of Sheffield type foundry Stephenson Blake, and arranged for Monotype to license and recreate it. While not all his projects at Monotype were successful and his position was insecure at the start of his tenure, his commission of Gill Sans and even more so Times New Roman both proved extremely financially successful for Monotype. Both remain among the most-used typefaces of all time.

Morison became friends with Brooke Crutchley, printer to the University of Cambridge, one of Monotype's best customers, and his archives went to Cambridge after his death. Late in life for Crutchley he wrote the book A Tally of Types, an assessment of the typefaces created by Monotype that were used in Cambridge. Despite its limited scope and some oversights, it is considered one of the landmark books on twentieth-century printing.

As a writer for the Fleuron he was known for promoting the radical idea that italics in book printing were too disruptive to the flow of text, and should be phased out. While this influenced some contemporary type designers such as van Krimpen and Dwiggins at Linotype, Morison rapidly came to concede that the idea was misguided, and late in life commented that Times New Roman included an italic that "owed more to Didot than dogma."



Die Bembo zählt zu den bedeutenden Schriftarten. Sie bildete die Grundlage für die weitaus bekanntere Garamond, hat aber kantigere Serifen als diese.

Das Original der Bembo wurde von dem Venezianer Francesco Griffo für den Druck der Abhandlung De Aetna des jungen Humanisten und späteren Kardinals Pietro Bembo geschnitten. Dieses Werk erschien im Februar 1496 (nach dem damaligen venezianischen Kalender 1495) in der Druckerei von Aldo Manuzio. Der kursive Schnitt geht dagegen auf ein Musterbuch des italienischen Schreibkünstlers Giovanni Tagliente von 1524 zurück.

Nach diesen Vorlagen wurde die heute verwendete Bembo 1929 von dem Schriftkünstler Stanley Morison (nach anderen Quellen von Alfred Fairbank) für die Firma Monotype neu gezeichnet und dabei nach Bembo benannt. Während Monotypes ursprüngliche Buchdruck-Versionen wie das Original die ausgeprägten Oberlängen bei den Buchstaben b, d, f, k und l aufwiesen, sind diese bei den meisten der heute für den Computer verfügbaren Varianten auf Versalhöhe gekürzt worden.

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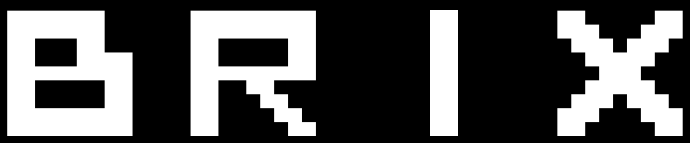
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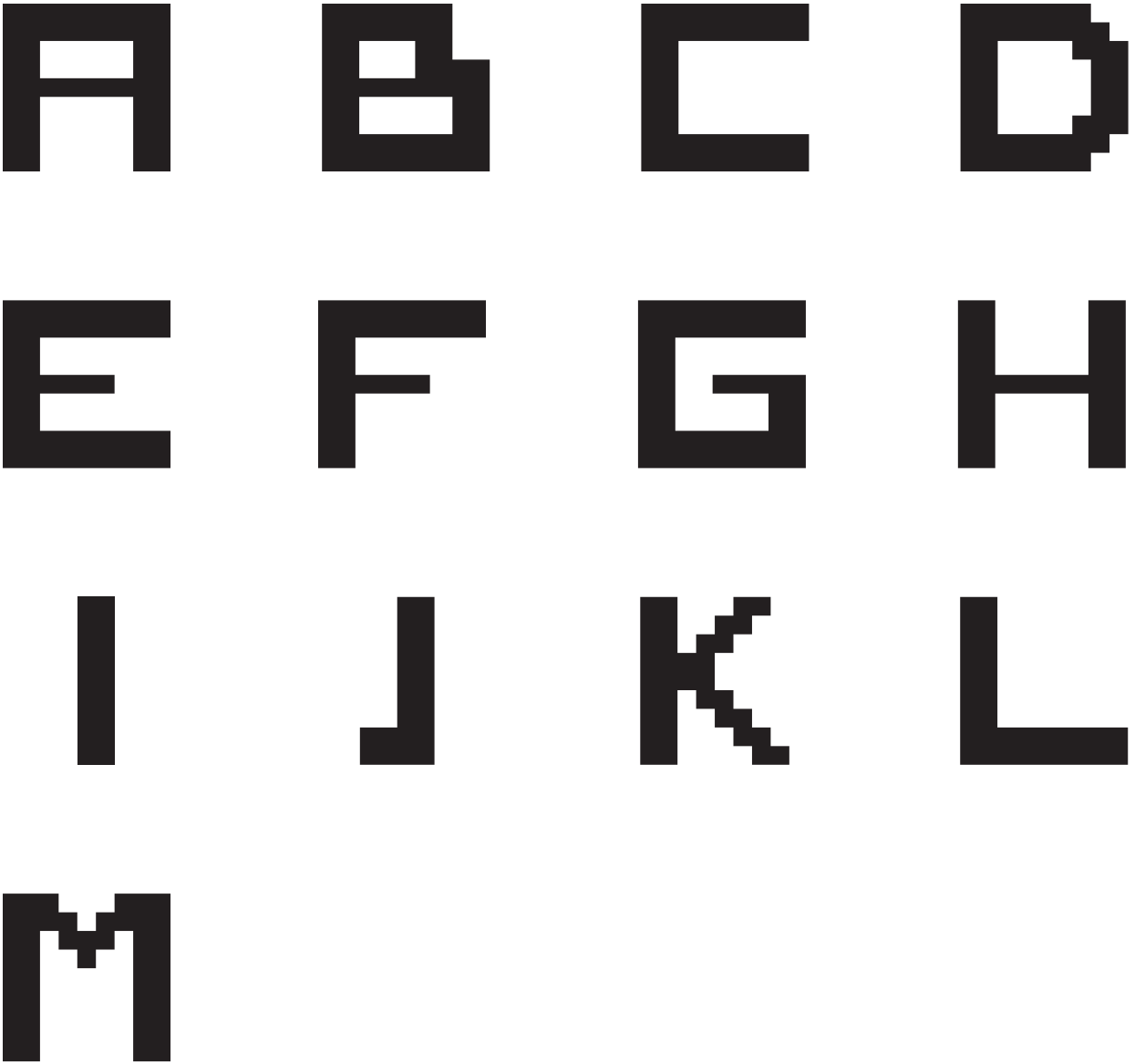
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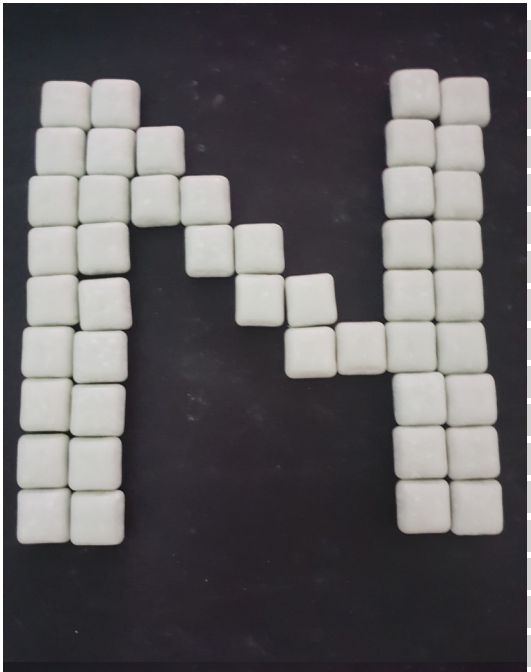

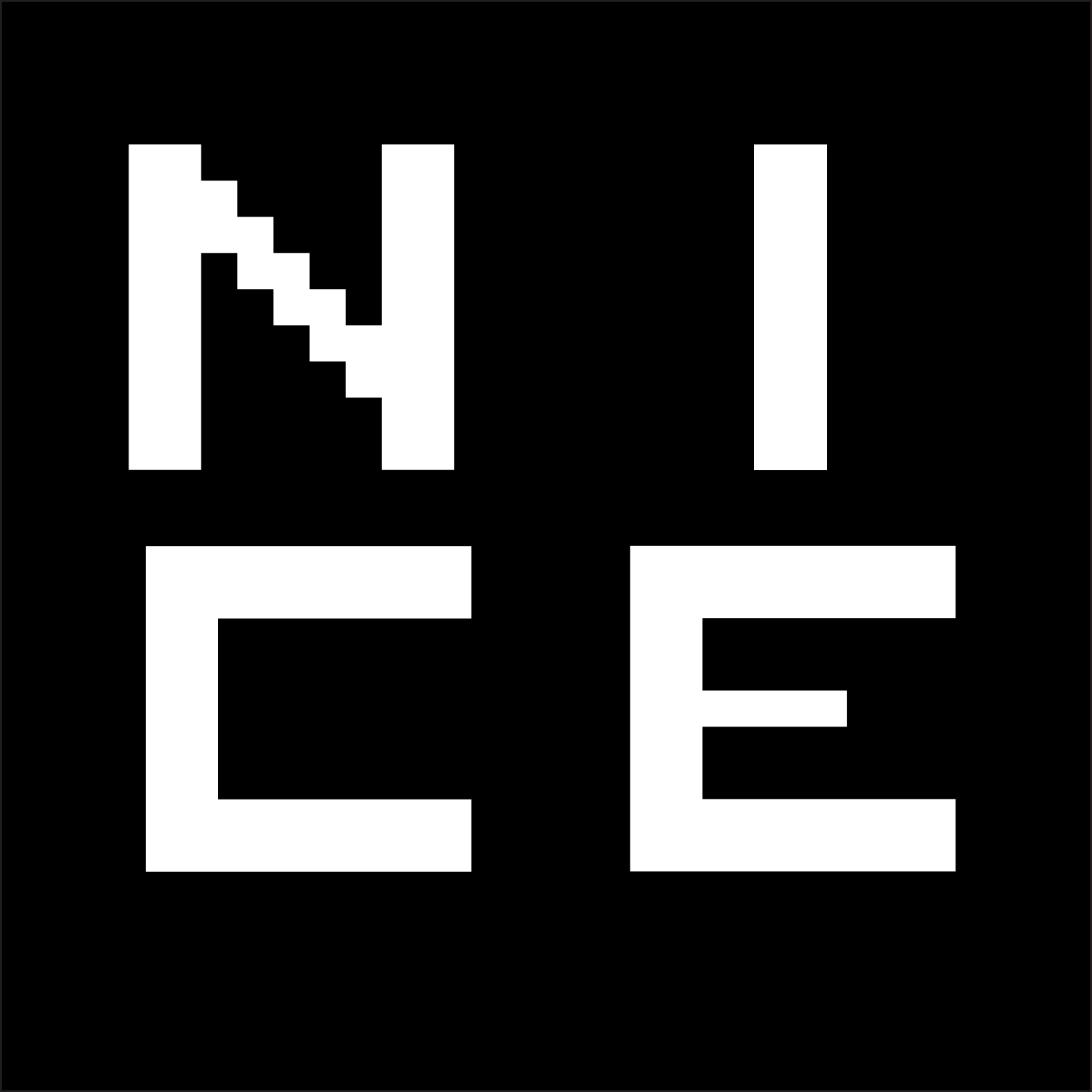
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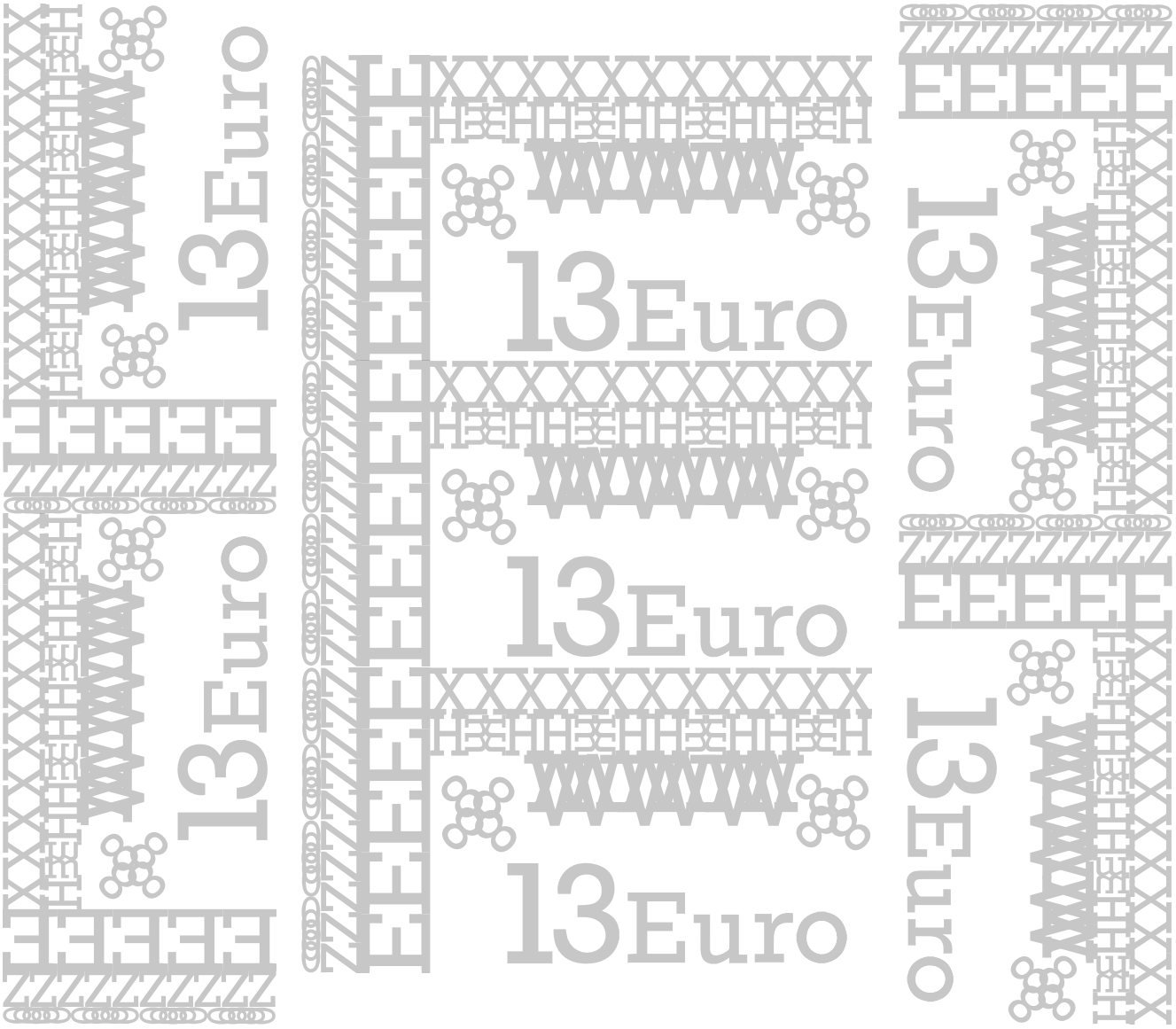
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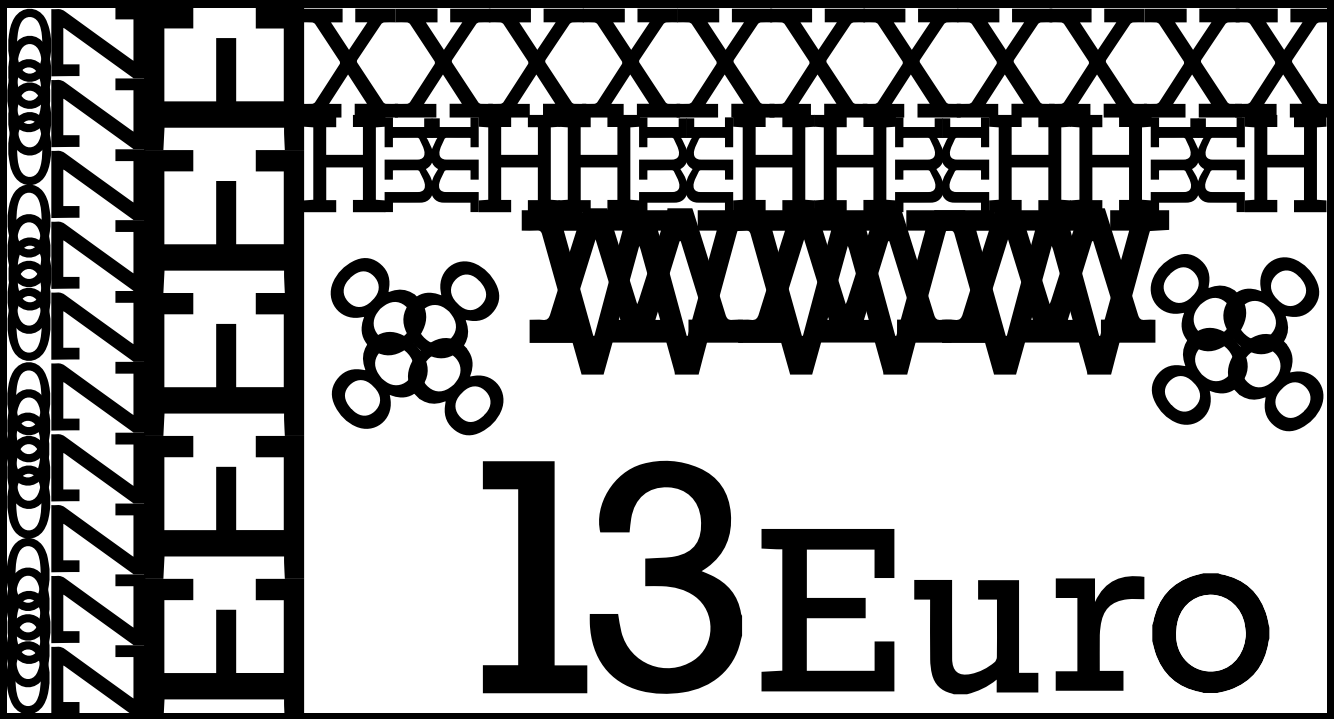
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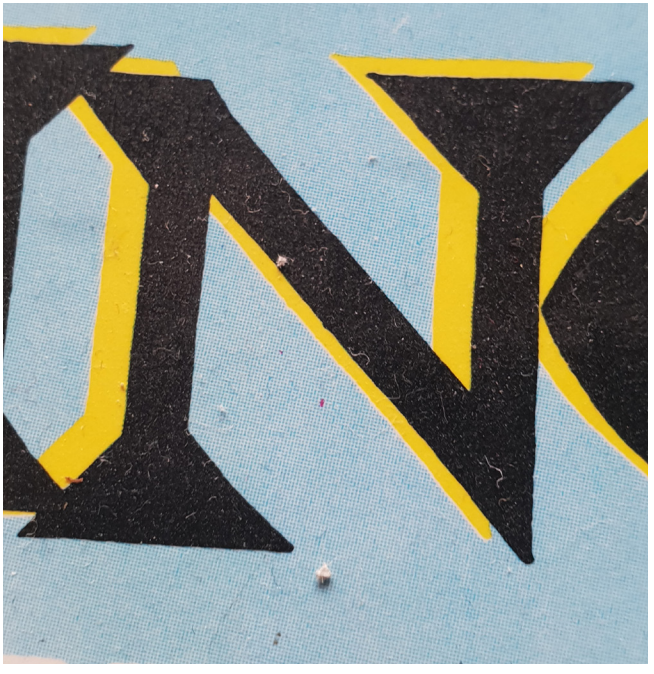

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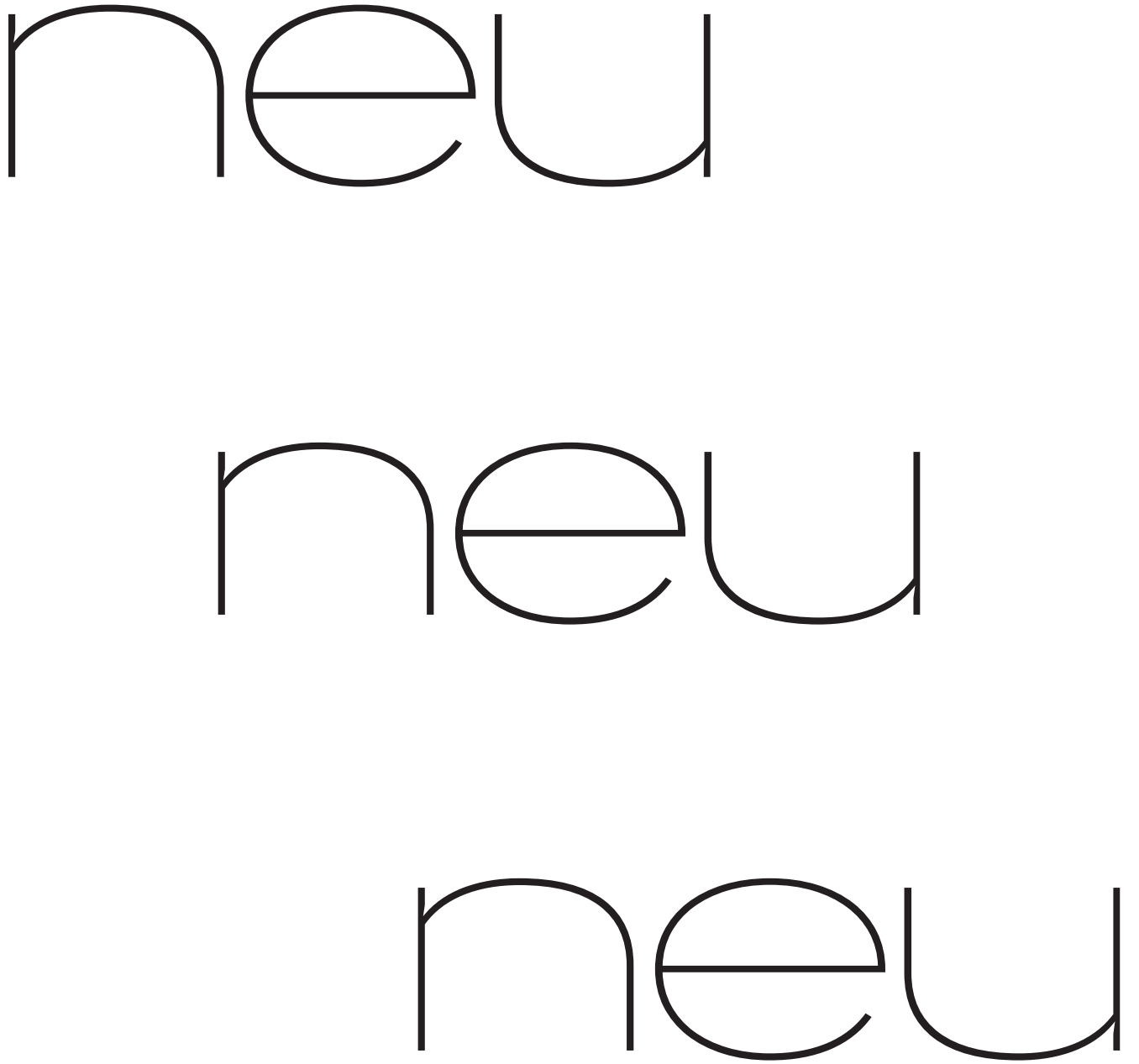
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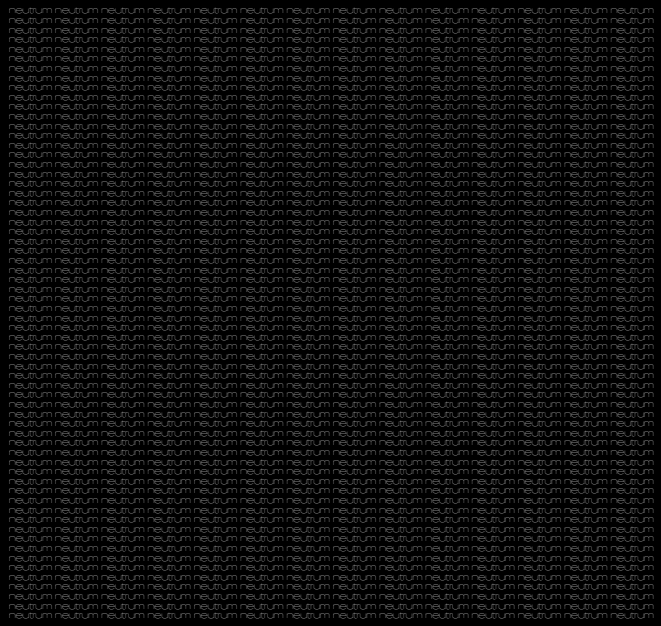

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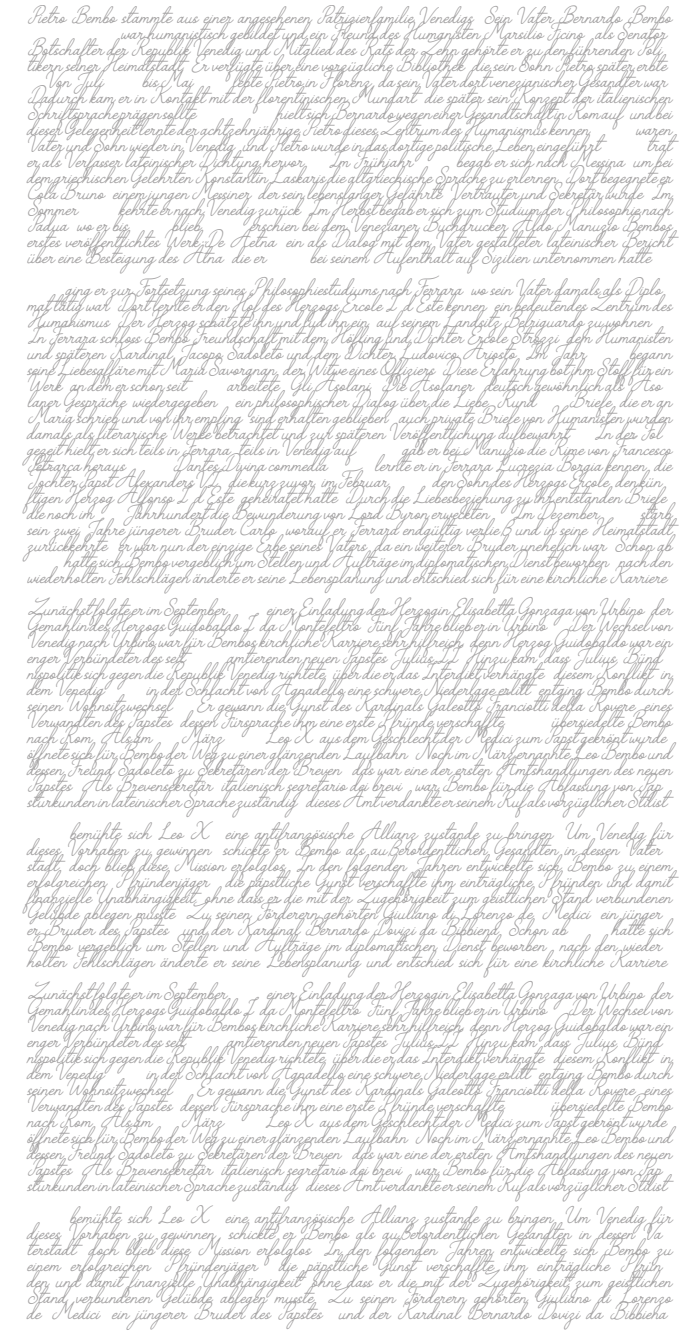

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