

Submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Master of Arts in Typeface Design, Department of Typography and Graphic Communication, at the University of Reading.

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Introduction

This reflection on practice relates my year of study at the MA Typeface Design of the University of Reading. It covers the development of Capoeira, a typefamily intended for bilingual publications such as brochures, leaflets and magazines, and that includes Latin, Greek and Cyrillic.

Through a constant testing and revising process Capoeira was slowly and gradually refined, improving both its efficiency and personality. In a first part, I'm explaining the brief and the purpose of such a typeface. The second parts relates the developement of the typeface: the first constraints I had to face and the choices I had to make. And finally, the third part is related to the additional charaters and the last adjustment that were done in order for the typeface to be operational.

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Running text:

- serif

- color distinction (according to the language)

- same typeface used (not always the case)



At the beginning of the year, we were asked to think about a brief that would define the purpose of the typeface we were about to create. Not having thought about any particular direction for my design, I tried to think about ideas in order to come out with a brief precise enough to draw an outline of the future typeface. The only thing I knew was that I wanted to experiment as much as possible, and tryout some unusual shapes through the survey of a non-latin script. Having recently worked on a graphic design project linked with phonetic writings, I first thought about creating a typeface that would include characters of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and used in publications (e.g. linguistic books, dictionaries, etc.). However, due to various reasons, I decided to create a typeface that would include Greek and Cyrillic, along with Latin, and intended to be used in bilingual publications such as airline magazines or design magazine but that could also work for brochures, leaflets, city guides, etc.



1. «Air France Magazine» (French/English) 2. «Lufthansa Magazin» (German/English)

4. «2BOARD»: Athens" International

Airport magazine (Greek/English)

3. «Ronda Iberia Magazine» (Spanish/English)

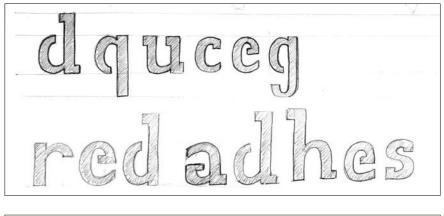
> In order to do so, it was first necessary for me to take note of the requirements for a typeface designed for magazines: first, as for newspapers, typeface design in magazines needs to be capable of running lengthy texts (although in magazines articles tend to be shorter and more often interrupted by other elements on page such as illustrations and/or photographs). Again, in magazine layouts the text hierarchy is much more important, and the fonts that are chosen tend to be fairly playful, with a strong identity (and even more when the magazine is supposed to represent a brand, like for airline companies). Finally, being a typeface including several scripts, the challenge would be for them to work nicely together when used in the same text or on a same page [Fig.1].

Scale: 41%

- Epigraph and highlited text:
- sans serif
- use of bolds to highlight some passages.



In order to get an idea of the features of this future typeface, I first started re-drawing characters of various existing typefaces, selecting features that pleased me, and paying special attention on proportions and consistencies between characters [fig.2]. Those first sketches were made without any specific idea of how the typeface would later look like, trying out as many combinations as possible. As an introductory workshop at the end of October, we were asked by Gerard Unger to draw a first set of letters by hand, in order to test its efficiency at very small sizes (as one can see in dictionaries). Using the usual MATD (Master of Arts in Typeface Design) test word "adhesion"¹ allowed us some very fast interventions, constantly reducing the scale at various stages with a photocopier. [fig.3] This practice helped us understanding the appearance of alterations due to scale (details disappearing, others appearing heavier, dark spots, spacing issues, etc.) as well as measuring the limits of customizing details. [fig.4]





This workshop was also an opportunity to get familiar with Font-Lab, trying to reproduce the shapes of the drawn letters [fig.5] (the sketches were not used in FontLab as a background, in order to gain confidence using Bezier curves and for the eye to get used to the features of each letter). In addition to that, a first test document was created, with a selection of words using the same letters as "adhesion": this way, it was even easier to identify the main problems created by the scale variations. **[fig.6**]

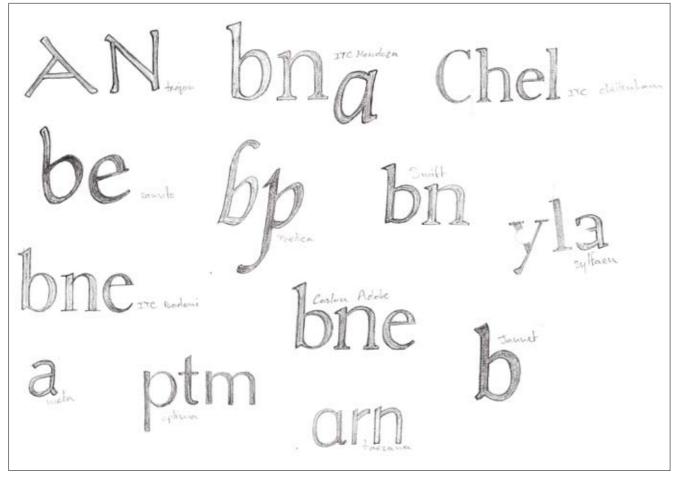


fig.2. Pencil reproduction of characters from various existing typefaces .Scale: 70%

5 over 6 pt.

spead apead apeada pe apead dedada a apeada

specia declaria a apecia p pepa apecal apenda per ap-pen ada a de declaria per papada dea e da apecal ap-papada dea e da apecal ape-papada dea declaria apec-dea a pe-apecal pena ape-da declaria deci apecal ap-apecal pe da peca pena-peja pen den ada pena-pe e edad pe apecal pe a-pe e edad pe apecal pe a-

eeped dead deedeed epe

peeped daad dooleed epe daep a a a dad pep peek daed dooleed epec dool peeped dooleed epec uios ped are dool pep dalap adool pea pedos dad ped shorp peeped daad ada peped dooleed daep epec pe dapped a dooleed apec pec dapped a dooleed apec pec a sodd dooleed adde pep addod dooleed adde pee addod dooleed adde pee addod dooleed adde adoep a a dool dooleed adde

6 over 7.2pt.

apead apead apead pe apead papa pea dad dedada papa apea pepe pe apead dedada a apeada pea gea dud pea apead apead e da dea dad dedada a pead apead apeada pe apee de pepe pe e dad apead ada dada apead dada pepa pea ada a de dedada papa e da apead ada dada apead dada pepa pea ada a de dedada papa e da apead aba dada apead dada pepa pea ada a de dedada papa e da apead apee dedada a papa pepa apead ada apeod papa apee apead apead aba papa pe apead dad apepa apee pe pea a dea pe pea apead papada dea deda apee papada de apeada pe e da de dea dad dad da e dea dea a pe apead da apeada pe e da de dea dad dad da e dea dea a pe apeada dea apeada pe e da de pepe apea a pead papada tea papa apeada apeada pee da de pepe apea a dead papa pea peada da dedada dea apeada pepe pea a peag pada hapa pea papada apead apeada ped de de pepe pepe da da apead papada dea das dedada per pe ada pea pepa pea dea apead apead apead da edada apee e cida epead pepe da da apead apada da adad ada pead pe da de pepe pea dea apead apada da adead aba peada pead pa da peade pea dea apead apada da ada da peada apead apead pa e des spes de papa ada pepe apeada dada apeada pea a dea dada apeada apee apea pe e edad pe apead pe ada apead dedada de a de nea ancad de ancad

peeped dead deedeed epee pee a add paepae a epoe dapped apod dad added deep a a a dad pep pedee added ped deedeed papa ape peed ped papa add dead deedeed pee deed peeped deedeed paepae pep deedeed peolee deedeed dada peeped deedeed epoe adead pedee peep dead a added adeep peeped added added ped ape deed pep dadap ape pepped aped pepped ape added dad deep pedee adead pea pedee dad ped a peed deep dada adead papa dad peope and peope dad peor a peor a peor dad aveca page dad peoped peop peop addend added a peor dad deceded peo peoped peop peoped end dad dad peor dad deceded peor decideed added dada dadap a decedeed apeor dad peor deceded a ped decedeed deced dadap zident a peoped dad peor deceded a decep padded decedend peor dad peor decedeed decedeed a peor access a specific acceded a decep addecep peor paga peop added add paepac paded a decep addecep deced deced dadap dadap peop added add paepac paded a decep addecep peor dadap dadap peor access a specific en acced decederd addece addecep deced decep addeced add paepac paded a decep addecep decederd deced pep pep a spee pee a aped deedeed adeep adeep deedeed deed pee epee adead dadap peed a pee added deeded add deedeed aped ped deed aped pea papa peeped dadap dad adeep ape dapped a deedeed dead pepped deedeed

fig. 6. First test document (with the letters "adep"). Scale: 95%

fig. 3. Early sketches using "adhesion" letters. Scale: 93%

fig. 4. First sketches for Gerard Unger's first workshop, experimenting with the joining strokes. Scale: 60%

fig.5. First glyphs drawn in FontLab after Gerard's workshop

combines enough characteristic shapes to

define an important number of features

"Hamburgerfonstiv").

and proportions of a whole typeface (like

1.this word has been chosen because it

a) Getting familiar with the design process

Once I started building my own design, one of the first features I wanted to give to my typeface was a calligraphic aspect (as seen on

b) Finding personality

Even if the first attempts looked considerably unbalanced it was already possible to spot the early features of the typeface. In order to stick to the brief, it was therefore necessary to define appropriate characteristics for this typeface, the main goal being to develop an original design that would distinguish it from the existing typefaces, but also legible and functional enough to be used in a magazine. Consequently, it would be a typeface with relatively low contrast, fairly pronounced serifs and a certain dynamic stroke movement.

The contrast the lettershapes was added progressively. The first letters had almost no contrast at all. Once I added contrast, I had to balance it between the letters, to give them a general homogeneity when they are set in a text. [fig.7]

with the stems.

人人人

fig. 9. Studying various serif shapes.

Scale: 90%

During one of the several feedback sessions we had with Gerry, he pointed out that the nice thing about my design was this dynamic stroke movement that is noticeable in the bowl of the "d" [fig.8], and that I should try to reproduce this effect on the other letters. As a result, the shape of the serif changed as well: in order to balance the "swinging effect" created by the stroke's movement, both sides of the serifs have been designed differently (one side bracketed, and the other with a soft angle). [fig.9 & 10]

c) Refinements and adjustments

At some point, I started developing the rest of the character set, based on the 8 letters I already had. This helped me distinguish the inconsistencies and the lack of contrast between the letters. Bearing in mind that the typeface had to be legible and functional, I then started to set up a system connecting the letters in terms of look in feel: adjusting the contrast, the proportions, harmonizing the stroke widths.

One of the main issues was the deep cuts in the strokes connections where the round stroke met a straight one (e.g. lowercase "n" or "d") introducing a shifted and pointy angle in the counters (even more noticeable at small sizes). Therefore, I was advised to apply a shallower joint (I noticed later that it would also help the distinction between the roman and the italic). [fig.11]

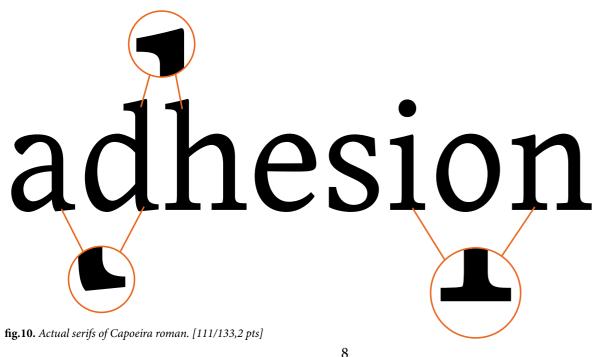


adhesion adhesion adhesion

fig.7. From top to bottom: early digital versions from the 8th, 21st & 22nd December 2009. Scale: 46%



fig. 8. Illustration of the diagonal stress (round shapes) [126/151,2 pts]



some italic shapes) in order to translate liveliness and speed.

In the meantime, in order to insist on this dynamic feeling, strong bracketed serifs where added and I started playing with the modulation of the curves, so that they became thinner when joining

adhesion adhesion adhesion adhesion adhesion adhesion

fig. 14. Interpolation using multiple masters: the previous version being the first, and the new being the third. Scale: 33%

adhesion adhesion

fig.17. Comparing the first version of the italic with the last one [63/75,6 pts]



10



fig.15. Drawings made with two pencils taped together. Scale: 25%

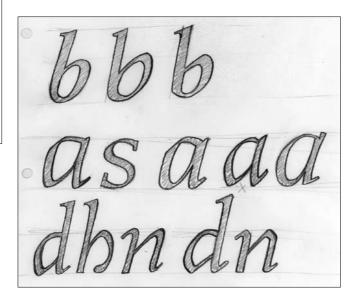


fig.16. Trying to introduce liveliness and speed in the drawings of the italic. Scale: 46%



fig.12. Terminal trials (pencil over printout). Scale: 30%

I also struggled finding the correct shape and weight for the terminals, and it took me a while to find a shape that would both follow the general aspect of the rest of the typeface, and stand out enough to be noticed. [fig.12 & 13]



Besides, I had to adjust the general weight of the typeface, which was too light when set as a text. On his second visit, Gerard suggested I should therefore use the multiple master technology, interpolating between the actual weight and a bolder version of it, in order to find a suitable weight. [fig.14]

d) Building an italic

The design of the italic was introduced during a workshop held by Victor Gaultney. We were taught how to give a cursive aspect to the roman, reproducing the movement and the change of direction of a broad nib pen. To do so, we used two pencils taped together, drawing on a slanted version of the existing roman and adjusting over the curves' transition. [fig.15] At the mean time, it was also an opportunity for me to reintroduce some of the features of the roman abandoned earlier, like the deep joints smoothly connecting to the stem. In addition to that narrow counter, and large instrokes and outstrokes were applied as well (losing the serif of the roman, except on the descender of the letter "p"). [fig.16,17 & 18]

Thus, after adapting the overall contrast when set next to the roman, the italic ended up looking much more lively and speed, still matching nicely with the roman. [fig.19 & 20]

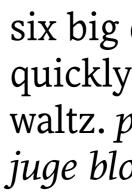


fig.20. Comparison of Capoeira roman and Capoeira italic as it is now. [29/34,8 pts]

fig.19. Unlike the lowercases of Capoeira roman, the italics are strongly influenced by a handwritten movement: deep joints, smooth connections, narrow counters and large instrokes and outsrokes. [190/228 pts]

fig.13. Current terminals of Capoeira regular. [84/100,8 pts]

six big devils from japan quickly forgot how to waltz. portez ce whisky au juge blond qui fume.

Η εμφάνιση του υπουργού Άμυνας Geoff Hoon ενώπιον της επιτροπής του δικαστή Hutton που διερευνά τα αίτια του θανάτου του καθηγητή David Kelly, ήταν το προσωρινό αποκορύφωμα στις εργασίες της επιτροπής, καθώς αύριο κατα- θέτει ο πρωθυπουργός Tony Blair. Mr Hoon said he did not believe Dr Kelly had been poorly treated. The defence secretary acknowledged he was aware of the media strategy whereby Dr Kellys name would be confirmed if it was put to officers of the Υπουργειο Еσωτερικων. Ну, здравствуйте, здравствуйте. Je vois que je vous fais peur, садитесь и рассказывайте. Так говорила в июле 1805 года известная Анна Павловна Шерер, фрейлина и приближенная императрицы Марии

Феодоровны, встречая важного и чиновного князя Василия, первого приехавшего на ее вечер. Eh bien, mon prince. Gênes et Lucques ne sont plus que des apanages, des поместья, de la famille Buonaparte. Non, je vous préviens, que si vous ne me dites pas, que nous avons la guerre, si vous vous permettez encore de pallier toutes les infamies, toutes les atrocités de cet Antichrist (ma parole, j"y crois). He said he did not see how the government could resist calls for Dr Kelly to appear before the Commons foreign affairs committee. Mr Hoon said he asked the committee to restrict Dr Kellys appearance before it to minutes out of concern for the scientist. Asked about suggestions that he didnt want Dr Kelly to be questioned on

his views about the dossier, yelou tou, και τα οποία θα μπορούσαν να οδηγή σουν ενδεχομένως στην αποκάλυψη του David Kelly. Σειρά πάντως σήμερα να καταθέσει στην επιτροπή έχει ένας μάρτυρας που χαρακτηρίζεται κλειδί για την υπόθεση. Πρόκειται για τον επικεφαλής της επιτροπής που συντονίζει την New Scotland Yard, John Scarlett. отвечал, нисколько не смутясь такою встречей, вошедший князь, в придворном, шитом мундире, в чулках, башмаках, при звездах, с светлым выражением плоского лица. Он говорил на том изысканном французском языке, на котором не только говорили, но и думали наши деды, и с теми тихими, покровительственными

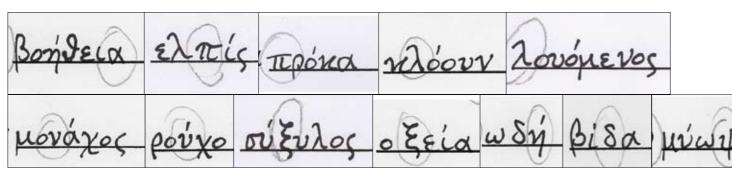


fig.22. Handwritten letters selected by Gerry. Scale: 140%

fig.21. Greek, Latin and Cyrillic set in a same text [9/10,8 pts]

αεηιμρ αεηιμ

fig.24. First experience, and last result of Capoeira Greek, using the letters of the Greek "adhesion". Scale: [105/126 pts]

fig. 26. A selection of related shapes between Latin, Greek and Cyrillic. [50/60 pts]

aad TITT

fig.23. Analysis of selected shapes. Scale: 71%

The design of the Greek and the Cyrillic started independently but through the design process they both influenced the design of the Latin. Preserving their singularity, they still share some similar features (serifs/terminals, relative proportions), which allow them to appear equally important when set together on a same page. [fig.21]

First of all, we had in the last week of November, a workshop on Greek held by Gerry Leonidas, that had a great impact on the later design developments. We were first asked to copy by hand series of letter combinations in order to get familiar with the script and it's important influence of the tool. After selecting the letters that had the right shapes and proportions [fig.22 & 23], we were quickly encouraged to digitalize a group of letters (used is the same way as "adhesion"). The result was that the first attempts designing Greek letters showed a very naïve comprehension of the script, being too influenced by the shapes of existing Greek typefaces (that are often considered as being "too Latinized", losing of their handwriting influence) [fig.24]. So I went back to my first drawings, and tried to reproduce the shapes that translated the best the use of the tool and the stress of the stroke (instrokes/outsrokes, uninterrupted connections, etc.). And once I got familiar with the script and stopped focusing on isolated shapes, it became easier for me to adjust the proportions and build a common movement throughout the whole typeface. Still, when set together with Latin, this latter appeared more geometric because of rhythm created by the repeated vertical strokes. That's why I had to compensate this effect in Greek, by condensing some of the round shapes first, and then adjusting the spacing that needed to be optically balanced (in order to reduce the condensed effect created by the round letters, frequently clashing against each other).



2. The reform of the Russian alphabet underwent a change when Tsar Peter I of Russia ("Peter the Great") introduced the Civil Script between 1708 and 1710. The main aim of this reform, was to make easier the printing of non-Church books essentially by simplifying some letterforms, introducing some news forms and dropping redundant letters and shapes peculiar to Church writings. Consequently, the letterforms were westernized and adopted by the other languages that were already using the alphabet.

Even if historically, Latin, Greek and Cyrillic scripts are closely related, Cyrillic has no calligraphic tradition. And since Peter the Great's reform², many characters in Cyrillic look very similar to Latin (some of them are almost identical, while others are strongly influenced by Latin) [fig.26]. Cyrillic lowercases for example, look very much like Latin small caps, and have much fewer ascenders and descenders. Therefore, I decided to try to distinguish the Cyrillic from the two other script insisting on its strong formal aspect (the Greek being fairly calligraphic and the Latin sharing both aspects).

αβγδεζηθικλμν ξοπρσςτυφχψω

fig.25. Preview of the actual Greek lowercases. [48/57,6 pts]

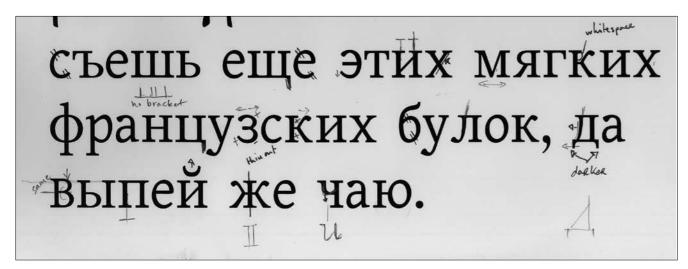


fig. 27. One of Victor's correction on Cyrillic. Scale: 74%

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Image: Image																	
<u> </u>	Metrics - Capoeira																
4	N►	m	i	n	i	m	u u	m		u	n	b	x	n	0	x	0
	I H	865 30	292 30	584 30	292 30	865 30	569 10	865 30		569 10	584 30	560 15	494 10	584 30	531 50	494 10	531 50
+	8 ^m y + ≪	15	25	15	25	15	25	15		25	15	50	10	15	50	10	50
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fig. 28. Screenshot of FontLab's metrics window with the letter combination that allows adjusting the spacing ("x" being successively replaced by "a", "b", "c", "d",etc.). Scale: 53%.

Thanks to Victor Gaultney's visits, I could get regularly feedbacks from him, which helped me understanding the peculiarities of Cyrillic letterforms [fig.27]. For example, I was advised to pay attention that not all lowercase letters have to be on the x-height, that letters that looked very similar shouldn't have necessarily the same shapes nor the same thickness, that the letters that look like reversed Latin characters need to be balanced accordingly, etc.

Again, while designing the Cyrillic, I was sometimes going back to Latin, trying to establish a relationship between the two scripts, one script getting inspired by the other. This way, I managed to improve much quicker both designs, making decisions for one script or the other.

f) Adjusting the spacing (test documents)

fig. 28. Extract of one of the spacing

test documents, each word using

as a first letter. Scale: 150%.

On a visit, Gerard also showed his method of spacing the letters. In order for the words to look even in a sentence and therefore improving the overall colour, it was necessary for them to be correctly spaced. Using several combinations of letters [fig.28], each letter spacing was adjusted placing the letters between a straight shape and/or a round shape (in this case, next to the letters "n" and "o"). Then, series of tests documents were used to check the spacing between lowercases, capitals and small capitals.

pple absolute acronym aorta askew agent a afternoon agj abracadabra big badger bor successively the letters from "a" to "z" k clamor cedar dank dvorak democracy dh phemera eggs ebbey equalize eyed foreigi grand ghost goblin gentleman hitter hell porate january jump kleptomanic khaki k exicon lull light lazy llama lacquer lawyer i een never google opera orca ossify once or e panacea qatar quit quorum query rand i ck size salty sea squash softist stipple sax their trombone trampoline typography un ar vick valerie vladimir vagabond vera voo er wrapper weight werewolf xray xiu yessir nini 1234567890 Are Apple Absolute Acror zure Aluminum Autumn Afternoon Agj Ab ezier Brashest Coda Chuck Clamor Cedar nsive Echo Evict Effort Ephemera Eggs Ebl y Fissure Fax Facts Fudgy Grand Ghost Go Igloo Impish Inundate Incorporate Janua

a) *Small caps/caps*

After defining the shapes of the lowercase letters, the idea was to develop small capitals. They were designed slightly taller compared to the x-height, in order to adjust the optical balance when set together in a same text. [fig.29] The small capital letters where then scaled up to create the uppercase, adjusting their weights and widths and some of its formal features (larger serifs, stems widths, etc.). The capital height has been set slightly lower than the ascender height, in order to reduce clumsiness when set in languages with a higher frequency of capitals, like German. Moreover, it allows more space for capital diacritical marks.



fig. 29. Capoeira's proportions. [65/78 pts]

b) Designing figures

During the design process two sets of figures were created: old style (also the default set) and lining. Based on the same design, their height has been adapted to their use, and subtle differences in stroke endings were created). Later on, an italic version was also added, with some "wavy" strokes that reproduce the calligraphic aspect. [fig.30]

c) *Diacritics*

Though not specifically mentioned in the brief, I thought that it was necessary -having already Greek and Cyrillic included in the typeface- to design the diacritics used by the Latin script, in order to cover the majority of European languages. The peculiar aspect of the diacritics lays in the fact that they have been design rather short and bold, and have a relatively steep angle on lowercases, taking full advantage of the ascender space (as opposed to the shallow uppercase diacritics, chosen to save more space in terms of leading). [fig.31 & 32]

g) *Metrics classes and kerning pairs*

Once the spacing was fixed for the majority of the letters, there were still some pairs where the space between two letters was either too big or too small. To fix this problem, kerning was applied on a selection of problematic combinations. In order to keep the number of kerning pairs to a minimum, and given that a number of glyphs shared similar shapes, they where gathered together in kerning classes. [fig.33]

0123456789 0123456789 0123456789

fig.30. Capoeira has two sets of figures: old style (default) and lining. An italic variant has also been added. [92/110,4 pts]

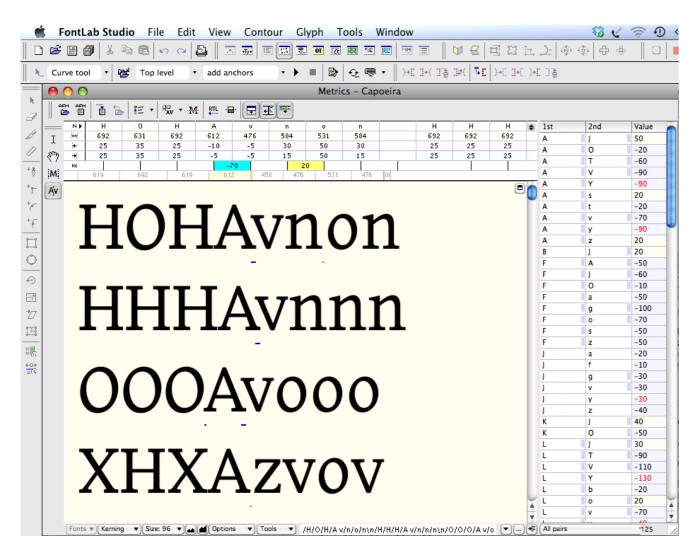


fig.33. Screenshot of FontLab's kerning window with the letter combination that allows adjusting the kerning ("v" being successively replaced by "a", "b", "c", "d",etc.). Scale: 53%

16

ūŭůűuwwwwwyýŷÿźž żðþàáâaéèéêîôù 'A'E ΰϋώΗ̈́Ϊёijĥĸ́ўŕſ́Ė̈́ΪҜ́Ўй fig. 31. Capoeira's extended character set covers Unicode" Latin extend A block. [16/19,2pts]

ÀÁÂÃÄĂÅĆĈČĊĎÈÉ

ÊĚËĒĔĖĜĞĠĤÌÍĨĨË

ĬIJĹŃŇÑÒÓÔÕÖŎŔŘ

ŚŜŠŤÙÚÛŨÜŪŬŮŴ

ŴŴŴŶŶŶŸŹŽŻĐÞà

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oeŕŗřśŝšşşßţùúûũü

fig.32. The angle and the shape of the diacritical mark changes according to *the case.* [72/86,4 *pts*]

3 Expanding the character set and adjusting the spacing.

Conclusion

Capoeira, as it was designed during the MA course was not a finished project. In order to achieve the goals defined in the brief, it still needs refinements and adjustments. Many possible improvement and extensions could be added: spacing issues still need to be fixed, the italic variant should be expanded, a selection of different weights could be added (going from thin to black) as well as a caption and a display version, tabular figures,...the list could never stop!

Nevertheless after this year, I consider that I've acquired enough historical, theoretical and technical knowledge, to get confident enough to complete the type family and eventually develop a professional project on my own.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTVWXYZA ÂÃÄĂÅĆĈČĊĎÈÉÊĖĒĒĖĠĞĠĤÌĺĨĨ ÏEĬIJĹŃŇÑÒÓÔÕÖŎŔŘŚŜŠŤÙÚŨŨŪŪ ŬŮŴŴŴŴŶŶŶŸŹŽŻĐÞABCDEFGHIJK LMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmno pgrstuvwxyzàáâãäāäåaæaéćĉčċçèéê ěëēeegggiíîĩïīįıĵkĺļńňñņòóôõööŏőø oeŕrřśŝšşşßtùúûũüūŭůűųwwwwwyýŷ 1234567890123456789^{ish}ABCDEFGH IJKLMNOPQRSTVWXYZabcdefqhijklmnopqrstuvwxyzàáâaéèéêîôoeùfffiffi *flffl!&0123456789*АВГΔЕΖНΘІКЛМ ΝΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩ Ά Έ Ή Ί Ϊ Ό ΎΫ Ώα βγδεζηθικλμνξοπρσςτυφχψωάέήϊ ΐόύΰΰώΑΒΕΜΗΟΡСΤΓБΠКИХЦШ ЪЫЖЧЬЯЭЅЄӏЈУЮЗЛДИЇёіјһќў́ŕФЃ ЁЇЌЎЋЉЊЏђЂаеруикбфохсѕвгтм нплжьъыюзцщшњчяэєљџћдй...

Designed by Lilith E. Laborey in july 2009 xelalilith@free.fr

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