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## ‘Books printed by Pierre Vidoue in 24° format’

See also:

- David J. Shaw, ‘Fingerprints and bibliography: about Pierre Vidoue’, *Nouvelles des empreintes / Fingerprint Newsletter*, ii, 1985, p.40 (also pp. 13 and 24).
- David J. Shaw, ‘Book trade practices in early sixteenth-century Paris : Pierre Vidoue (1516–1543)’, pp. 335–46, in: *The Book Triumphant: Print in Transition in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Malcolm Walsby & Graeme Kemp.(Leiden: Brill, 2011). xvi + 378 pp. ISBN 9789004207233.
- David J. Shaw, *Bibliography of editions of the Satires of Juvenal published in Europe up to the year 1600*, Wiki:  
<http://docs.bibsoc.org.uk/juvenal/juvenal-to-1600.htm>
  - ‘Juvenal and Persius, Paris, Pierre Vidoue, 1528’:  
[Juv113 : Paris, Pierre Vidoue, 1528](#)
  - ‘[Editions of Juvenal in 24° \(vigesimoquarto\) format](#)’: and  
[Editions of Juvenal in Long 24° \(vigesimoquarto\) format](#)

*Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1974, pp. 117–122.

Revised and corrected

2025

# Updated list of 24° books printed by Pierre Vidoue, 1522–1532

- Bible. Old Testament. Proverbs, etc. March 1521 [=1522?], for Pierre Viart. 24°. Vienna, ONB.
- Bible. Old Testament. Prophets. June 1522. 24°. Oxford, Bodleian.
- Bible. New Testament. Gospels and Acts. May 1523, for Conrad Resch. 24°. *Inventaire chronologique*, 1523, 429.
- Bible. New Testament. Gospels, Acts, Apocalypse. 1521, for Pierre Viart. 24°: a–x<sup>8</sup>. *Inventaire chronologique*, 1521, 27.
- Bible. New Testament. Epistles. October 1522, for P. Vidoue. 24°: a–r<sup>8</sup> s<sup>6</sup>. Paris, BnF.
- Bible. New Testament. Epistles. 1522, for P. Viart. 24°. Vienna, ONB.
- Bible. Epistles and Apocalypse. 1523, for C, Resch. 24°: aa<sup>8</sup>–zz<sup>8</sup> &&<sup>8</sup> AA–CC<sup>8</sup>. Paris, BnF.
- Erasmus. Familiarum colloquiorum formulae. 1523, for C. Resch. 24°?. *Inventaire chronologique*, 1523, 489.
- Erasmus. Familiarum colloquiorum formulae. April 1528, for F. Regnault. 24°? *Inventaire chronologique*, 1528, 1455.
- Erasmus. Paraphrasis in Epistolas Pauli. 1523, for C. Resch. 24°. Cambridge, UL; Paris, BnF.
- Erasmus. Paraphrasis in Evangelium Matthei. 1523, for C. Resch. 24°: a–z<sup>8</sup> &<sup>8</sup> A–G<sup>8</sup> H<sup>4</sup>. British Library; Bodleian.
- Horae. Rome. [1523?], for G. Hardouyn. 24°. Brussels, BR.
- Horae. Rome. [1526?], for F. Regnault. 24°: a–c<sup>8</sup> A–D<sup>8</sup> E<sup>4</sup> F–G<sup>8</sup> H<sup>6</sup> aa–cc<sup>8</sup>. Paris, BnF.
- Horae. Rome. [1526], for G. Hardouyn. 24°: A–M<sup>8</sup> N–P<sup>4</sup> <sup>2</sup>A<sup>6</sup>. Paris, BnF.
- Horae in laudem beatiss. Virginis. 1528, for G. de Gourmont. 24°: a–o<sup>8</sup>. Bodleian.
- Juvenal. 1528. 24°: a–f<sup>12</sup> g<sup>6</sup>; Persius: a<sup>12</sup> b<sup>6</sup>. D. J. Shaw.
- Terentius. 1528. 24°. Budapest, National Library.
- Terentius. 1532. 24°: a–b<sup>8</sup> c<sup>10</sup> d–z<sup>8</sup> &<sup>6</sup>. Paris, Arsenal.
- Valerius Maximus. 1528. 24°: a–z & A–I<sup>8</sup> k<sup>12</sup>. Versailles, BM.
- Valerius Maximus. [1530]. 24°: a–z & A–I<sup>8</sup> k<sup>12</sup>. British Library; Paris, BnF.
- Vergil. 1522, for Pierre Viart. 24°: A–Y<sup>8</sup>. British Library.

# BOOKS PRINTED BY PIERRE VIDOUE IN 24° FORMAT

Of the books published in France in the early sixteenth century one of the rarer categories must be those printed in very small formats. The typical book of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is either a folio or a quarto volume. The smaller octavos and duodecimos (12°) only slowly increase in number. Books in still smaller formats (16°, 24°, 32°) seem to have been quite rare. It is possible that this impression is erroneous and that the small formats, being more vulnerable both in size and in value, have simply failed to survive from this early period. It is, however, true that they survive in much greater numbers from the second half of the sixteenth century and I shall assume here that the small formats were genuinely unusual at the beginning of the century.

The question which I should like to investigate here is that of the introduction of books in 24° format by the Parisian printers. When did they first come into use? Which printers produced them regularly? What technical characteristics can be discovered about their production? I shall first of all make some general remarks about these questions and then examine some examples from the press of Pierre Vidoue.

The first problem is to distinguish the format of these small books. A 24° book consists of sheets folded so that each sheet makes twenty-four leaves. There are several ways of folding the sheet to give this result and often the sheet would be divided to give three gatherings of eight leaves each (24° in eights). In this case it becomes extremely difficult to distinguish 16°,

24°, and 32° books, all of which may have been folded to give gatherings in eights. Typical patterns of imposition for these formats can be found in Philip Gaskell's *New Introduction to Bibliography*; and in an interesting article by D. F. Foxon, 'Some notes on Agenda Format'. In ideal circumstances the true format of a small book can be determined from the size and proportions of the uncut leaf, from the direction of the chainlines and position of the watermark in the paper, and sometimes from chance evidence in the signatures or catchwords. A useful table of these features is given by Gaskell (pp. 85-86). If the book was printed on vellum, much of this evidence is of course not available.

In an article in the *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1958 Frederick Goff examined a number of miniature incunabula in the Library of Congress. Unfortunately the criteria of inclusion were simply of dimension (smaller than 85 x 120 mm) and the article provides little material about the precise formats of these books. One certainly cannot determine from it whether there had been Parisian 24° books printed before 1500.

Foxon's article on books in 'agenda format' states that the earliest twenty-fours known to him are editions of the classics printed by Alexander Paganinus in Venice in 1515. He shows that these were genuinely of 24° format but highlights the problem of identifying such items in catalogues by pointing out that they have variously been described as 8°, or 32°, as

1 *The Library*, 5, viii, 1953, pp. 163-173.





• IUVENII IUVENALIS A-  
 QVINATIS  
 SATYRÆ XVI

\* A. PERSII FLACCI  
 SATYRÆ SEX.

PARISIIS.

\* Apud Petrum Vidoueam,  
 ubi & Impressum.

1 5 2 8  
 \* PAR SIT FOR VNA  
 LABORI.

Fig. 1 Title-page of  
 Juvenal and Persius:  
 Satyrae. Paris,  
 Pierre Vidoue, 1528.  
 Original dimensions:  
 97 x 50 mm.

well as 24°. Foxon mentions (p. 167) as an early Parisian example the edition of Erasmus's 'Colloquia' published by Simon de Colines in 1527. This is a 24° gathered in twelves, but it is described by Renouard as 16°, which makes one suspect that the same may be true of other sixteens listed in Renouard's bibliography<sup>2</sup>.

Several Parisian printers specialized in producing miniature books of Hours in both Latin and French. There are doubtless some twenty-fours among them but as these devotional books were often printed on vellum this is not easy to prove.

15/6  
Library  
A Parisian printer who produced a number of books in small formats during the 1520s is Pierre Vidoue. Details of his career, which stretched from 1514 to 1543, can be found in Renouard's 'Répertoire' (pp. 428–429). Vidoue printed books of Hours, for example, a number of which are octavos, others being in smaller formats. In the British Museum there are two such editions printed by Vidoue for Germain Hardouyn in 1525 and 1526<sup>3</sup>. Both are printed on vellum and determining the format is therefore difficult. One appears to be 16° and the other 32° or possibly 24°. Both are gathered in eights.

Library  
Vidoue also produced a series of classical texts which are definitely twenty-fours. The earliest which I have so far traced is an edition of Vergil (British Museum, C. 19. a. 22) printed by Vidoue for Pierre Viart in 1522. This copy is printed on vellum and the sheets are gathered in eights, but the size and proportions of the leaf (105 x 51 mm) show clearly that this is a 24°. A woodcut border found on the title-pages of several of the sections of this Vergil also occurs in 24° books printed by Vidoue in 1528 and is of such a size that it could only have been of use for books in this format.

In 1528 Vidoue produced several classical texts in twenty-fours. The Fairfax Murray catalogue (no. 559) records an edition of Valerius Maximus printed in March 1528 with the woodcut showing an author presenting his book which has been noted in the 1522 Vergil. The format is given as 16° but the page dimensions ( $4\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{8}'' = 105 \times 55 \text{ mm}$ ) suggest that this too is 24°. I do not know the present location of any copies of this edition.

The British Museum has an undated Valerius Maximus which closely resembles the edition just mentioned and which is definitely a long 24° with vertical chainlines. The gatherings are in eights with the exception of the last one which significantly is in twelve (a-z, &, A-I<sup>8</sup> k<sup>12</sup>). The Fairfax Murray Valerius has the same collation. The British Museum Library title-page has a different printer's device (Renouard: Marques, 1096) which is found at the end of the Fairfax Murray copy. The type is an extremely small roman fount (51R) with some Greek type of similar size. There are 34 lines to the page and the page dimensions are characteristic of a long 24° (108 x 53 mm). The date of this British Museum edition cannot be ascertained from evidence in the book, though the missing last leaf possibly had a dated colophon. Presumably it dates too from the late 1520s. The existence of two 24° editions of this text indicates that the book was sufficiently popular in this small format to warrant reprinting it.

Library  
A particularly interesting example, also dated 1528, is a hitherto unrecorded edition of the Satires of Juvenal and Persius, owned by the author. It is quite clearly a long 24°. The gatherings are in twelves (a-f<sup>12</sup> g<sup>6</sup>, a<sup>12</sup> b<sup>6</sup>). The page dimensions are 97 x 50 mm. This book also has on its title-page the woodcut of an author presenting his book, together with a decorated border, both of which are found in other twenty-fours. The text is that of the Aldine Juvenal with the addition of *Argumenta* by Mancinellus. The book is probably a copy of one of Badius's octavo editions of Juvenal and Persius of 1506 or 1512<sup>4</sup>. The type used is the 51R found in the undated Valerius.

Enough evidence can be found in this Juvenal to show how the sheets were imposed and folded. In particular there is an unusual pattern of catchwords: the catchwords are

<sup>2</sup> Philippe Renouard: *Bibliographie des éditions de Simon de Colines*. Paris 1894. p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> British Museum C. 41. a. 14 and C. 17. a. 10. I should like to record my gratitude to Dr. J. Jolliffe of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, who made available to me his list of British Museum books printed by Pierre Vidoue.

<sup>4</sup> D. J. Shaw: Badius's octavo editions of the classics. In: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1973. pp. 276–281.



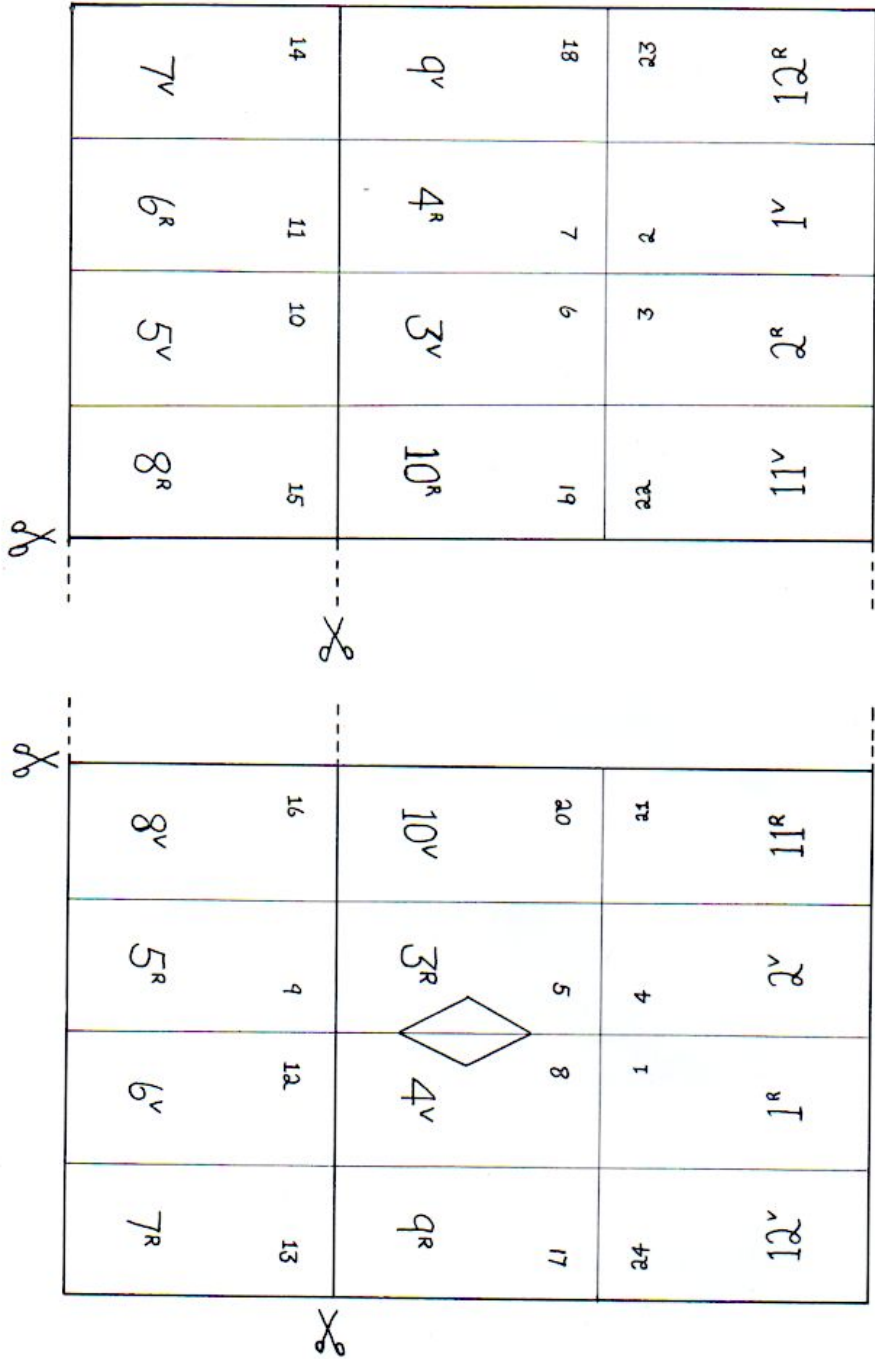


Fig. 2 Half-sheet 24° in inverted imposition. The position of the watermark is shown by a diamond.

regularly found on the versos of leaves 4, 6, 8, and 12 in each gathering and in no other positions. This pattern is not recorded elsewhere (for example by Sayce in his study of compositorial practice<sup>5</sup>). The function of the catchword on the twelfth verso is clearly to ensure the correct sequence of gatherings by matching the first word of the following page (duplicating one of the functions of the signature). The reason for the position of the other catchwords is less straightforward. It concerns the methods of cutting and folding sheets for 12° and 24° formats and enables us to identify which method might have been used by Vidoue for this book.

Each gathering is obviously a half-sheet. When cut in half, a 24° sheet gives two half-sheets of twelve leaves each which are then treated like 12° sheets. The diagram shows the disposition of the pages on the two sides of the paper. Both the leaf and page numbers are shown. The half-sheet was then cut as indicated in the diagram. The bottom two-thirds was folded as an «inverted octavo» (see Gaskell, figure 51 and also figure 56), giving leaves 1–4 and 9–12. The top third was then folded and inserted as leaves 5–8, thus making a gathering in twelves.

The diagram given here no doubt requires some explanation. That this book consists of half-sheets of long twenty-fours is shown by the evidence of the catchwords, as described earlier. This arrangement of the catchwords ensured that the four-leaf cut-off was folded and inserted correctly. The signatures would also provide such a check for the binder. It is significant that only leaves 1–5 of each gathering were signed. The printer did not need to sign any further leaves since it is leaf 5 (the first recto of the insert) which shows that the gathering is correctly put together.

The diagram differs in one important respect from the one given by Gaskell for long 24° in twelves (Gaskell, figure 62). The pages are here arranged so that the first leaf occurs in an inner position in the sheet instead of at the outer corner. This «inverted» imposition is also noted by Foxon in his 24° in eights. The evidence for this arrangement is found in the position of the watermarks. In gathering f of

the Juvenal and gathering a of the Persius the watermark is found at the centre of the outer edge of leaf 3. This is only possible in the inverted imposition, as can be seen by examination of the diagram. It has not been possible to determine which method of half-sheet imposition was followed (one method gives two identical gatherings, the other gives a gathering for each of two signatures).

It seems that Vidoue issued a uniform series of classical texts in 24° format at this time, further examples of which may well be discovered. A 12° Terence dated 1528 is reported by Lawton<sup>6</sup>. This could well prove to be a 24° in twelves. A Valerius Probus of 1528 is reported at Versailles, as well as a Terence of 1532 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris<sup>7</sup>.

There may well also be further examples to discover from the early 1520s. A French epitome of Budé's *De Asse* of 1522 has on its title-page the device which Vidoue used in several 24° books described here<sup>8</sup>. The British Museum copy of this book was destroyed by bombing during the last war and I have not yet been able to examine the two copies in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

It has been shown here that a Parisian printer, Pierre Vidoue, was producing books in 24° format in 1522, only a few years after the earliest Italian examples. Later in the same decade the same printer produced a series of classical texts in this format for which he possessed specially small woodcut devices. Some devotional books printed by him may also be twenty-fours. Many of these books were twenty-fours in eights. A Juvenal and Persius in twelves provided evidence about the form of imposition used by the printer.

This study suggests several areas which warrant further investigation. Are there

<sup>5</sup> R. A. Sayce: *Compositorial Practices and the Localisation of Printed Books, 1530–1800*. In: *The Library*, 5, xxi, 1966, pp. 30–34.

<sup>6</sup> H. W. Lawton: *Térence en France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris 1926, p. 141, no. 198.

<sup>7</sup> I am grateful to Mme Veyrin-Forrer, Conservateur de la Réserve des Imprimés, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, for information about these two editions which I have not yet examined.

<sup>8</sup> Renouard: *Marques*, 1096. Brunet, I, 1374; V, 1653.



examples of Parisian twenty-fours earlier than 1522? Can further examples of Vidoue's series of classical texts be found? Which other Parisian printers were producing books in this format at the time? What is the evidence concerning the other small formats, 18° and 32°? The answers to these questions should provide some interesting information about commercial and technical practices in the printing and publishing trades of early sixteenth-century Paris.

Provisional list of books by Pierre Vidoue in 24° format:

- 1522: Vergil.  
for Pierre Viart.  
24°: A-Y<sup>4</sup>  
British Museum C. 19.a.22.

- 1522: Bude, De Aese.  
(12°?)  
British Museum (destroyed), Biblio  
theque Nationale. *Bohlinian.* 8°  
1528: Valerius Maximus.  
24°: a-z, &, A-I<sup>8</sup> k<sup>12</sup>  
Fairfax Murray 559.  
1528: Juvenal and Persius.  
24°: a-f<sup>12</sup> g<sup>6</sup>, a<sup>12</sup> b<sup>6</sup>  
D. J. Shaw.  
1528: Terence.  
(12°?)  
Lawton 198. *Budapest, Ul.*  
1528: Valerius ~~Probus~~ *Maximus*  
Versailles, BM (I. 457.a.p.A)  
1532: Terence.  
Arsenal.  
[undated]: Valerius Maximus. [1580]  
24°: a-z, &, A-I<sup>8</sup> k<sup>12</sup>  
British Museum 11352.a.32.