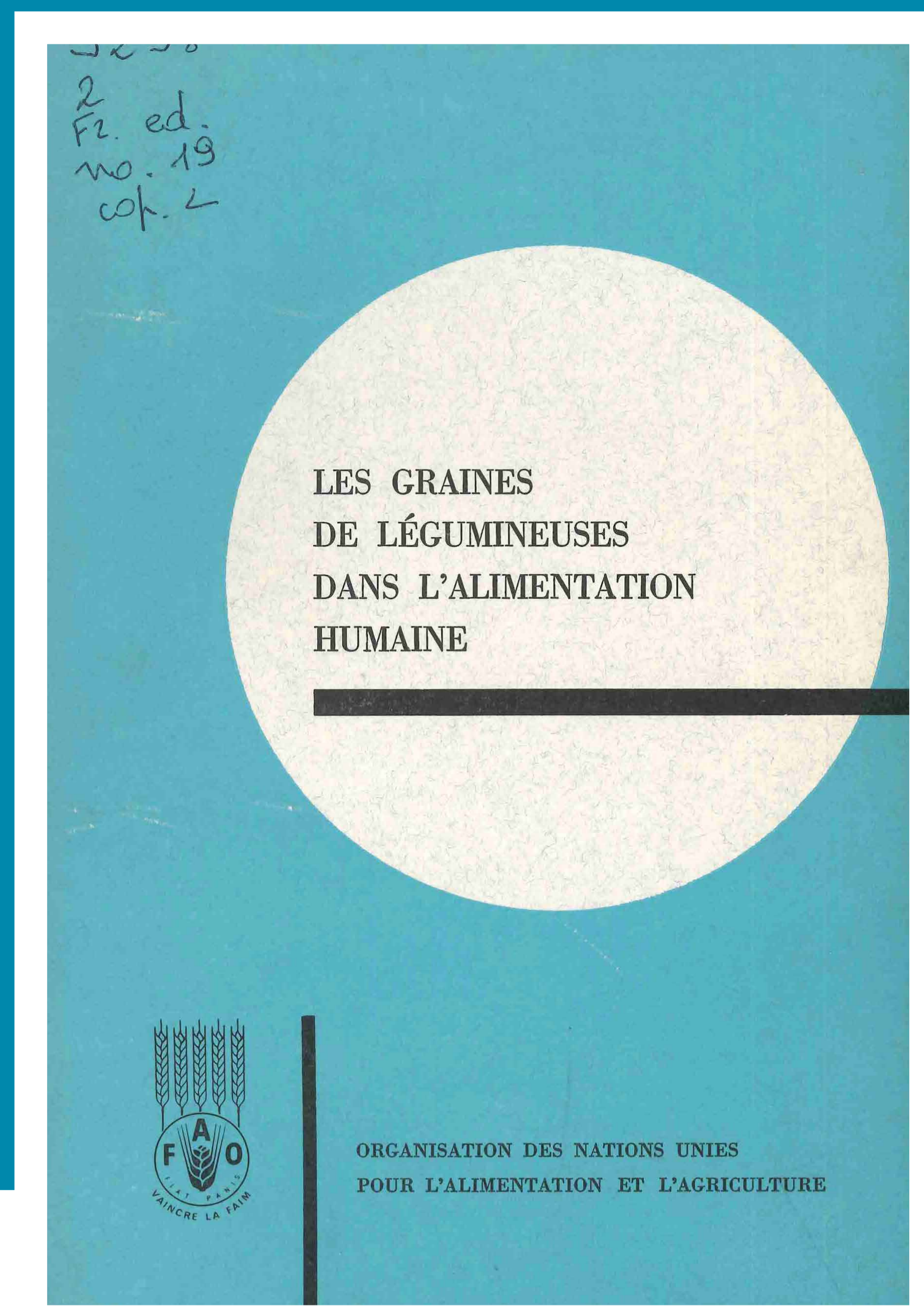




WOULD YOU JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER?

BOOK COVER DESIGNS ON PULSES AND LEGUMES FROM THE FAO LIBRARY COLLECTIONS



2016 International Year of Pulses

The Library of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) celebrated the International Year of Pulses (IYP) in 2016 with an exhibition and a book offering an historic and artistic overview of publications on these super foods. The most striking book covers from the 1910s to the present day were selected from the library's valuable and unique book collections, illustrating how design has changed over the decades to reflect the content, attract audiences and celebrate art.

ART NOUVEAU 1910s

The beginning of the 20th century is characterized by a new art style suitably called Art Nouveau. A highly decorative style using curvilinear patterns often based on plant and floral motifs and stylized female silhouettes.

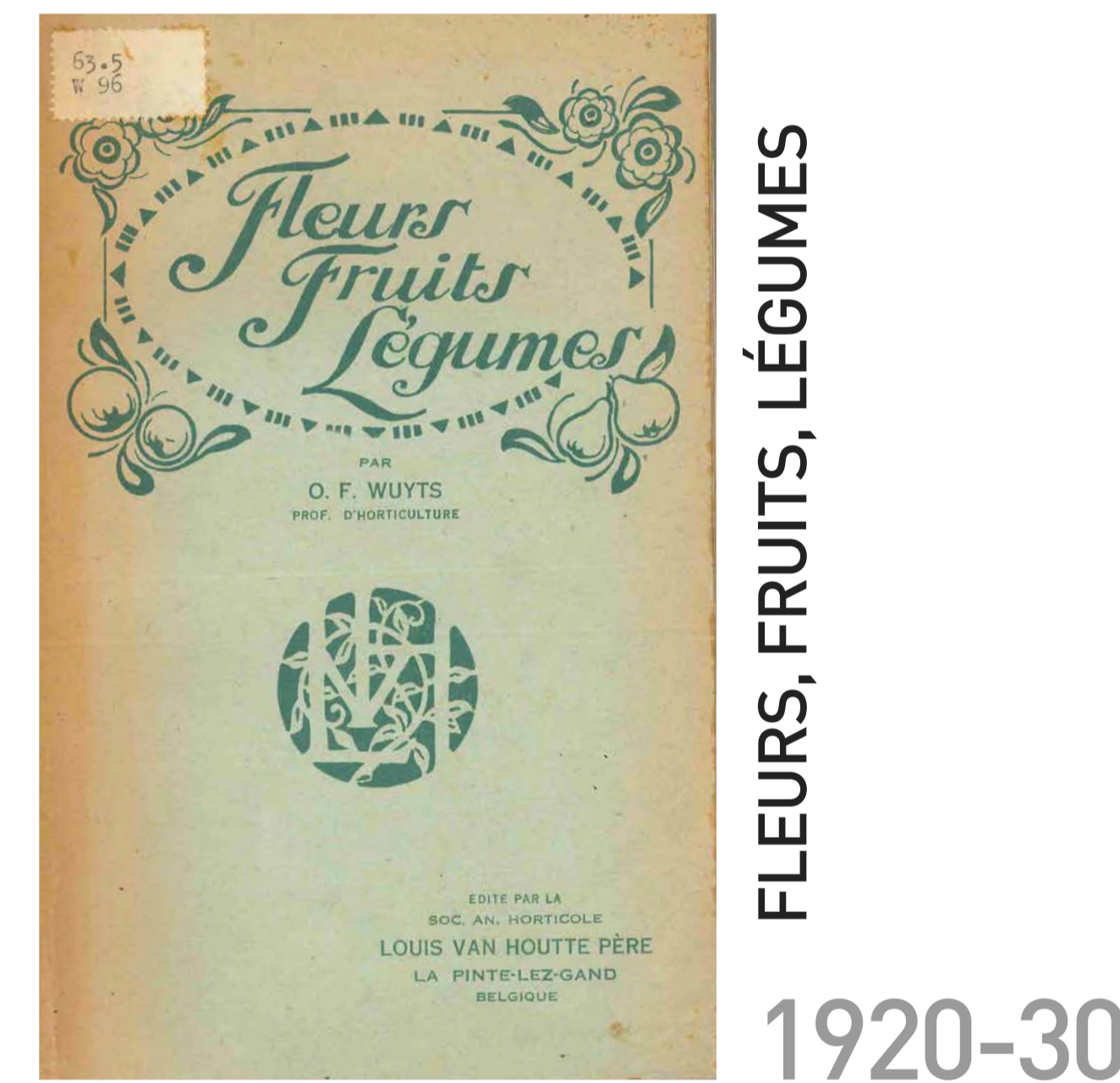


PLANT FOOD: ITS NATURE, COMPOSITION AND MOST PROFITABLE USE

1914

ART DECO 1920s-30s

The rich Art Nouveau movement is replaced in the 1920s by Art Deco, a more streamlined, rectilinear style, often characterized by rich colours and bold geometric shapes.

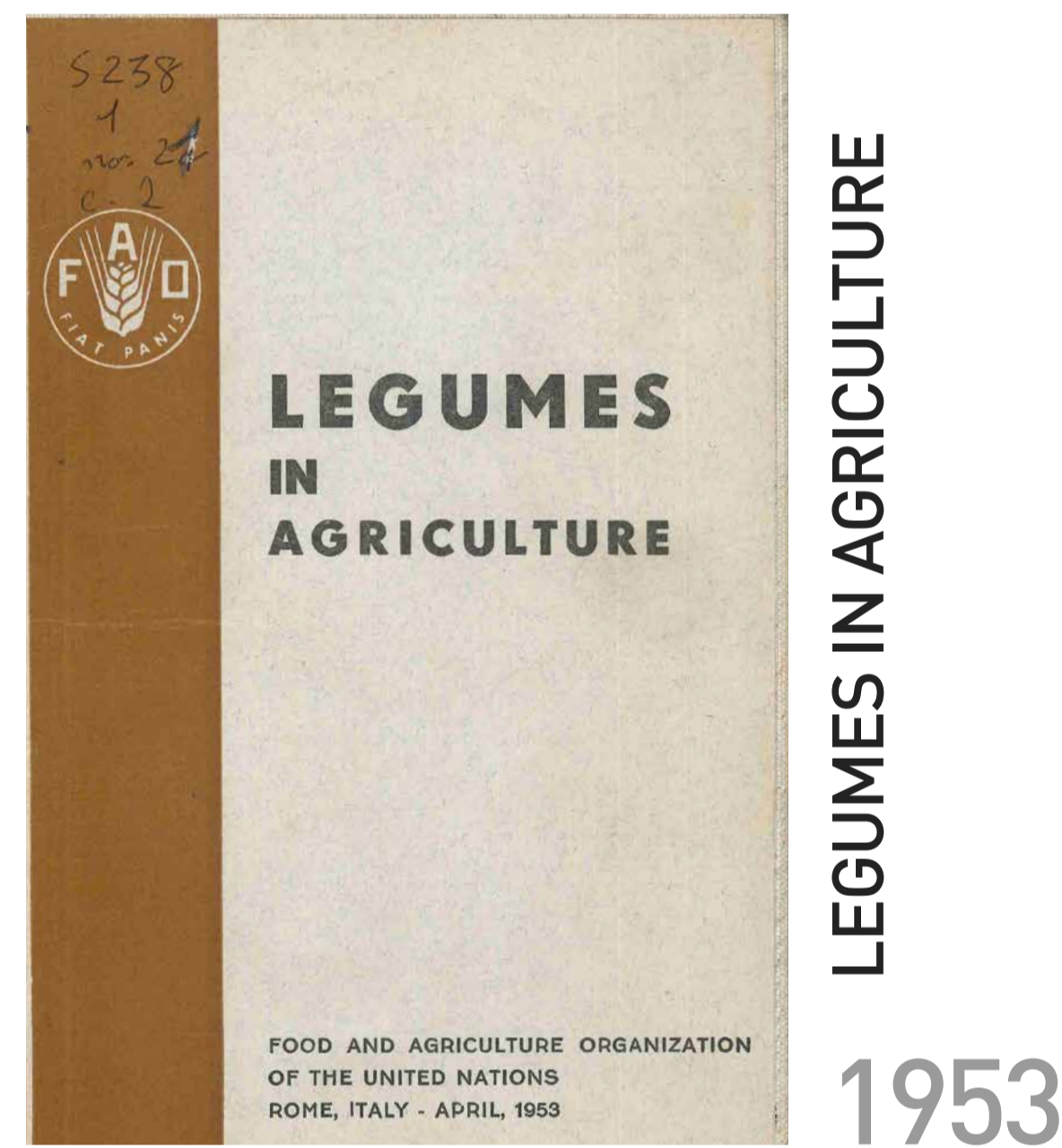


FLEURS, FRUITS, LÉGUMES

1920-30

INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE 1940s-50s

Functional cover designs that are entirely centred on the bibliographic information. Titles, authors and publishers are displayed with bold fonts and framed by monochromatic design and square lines.

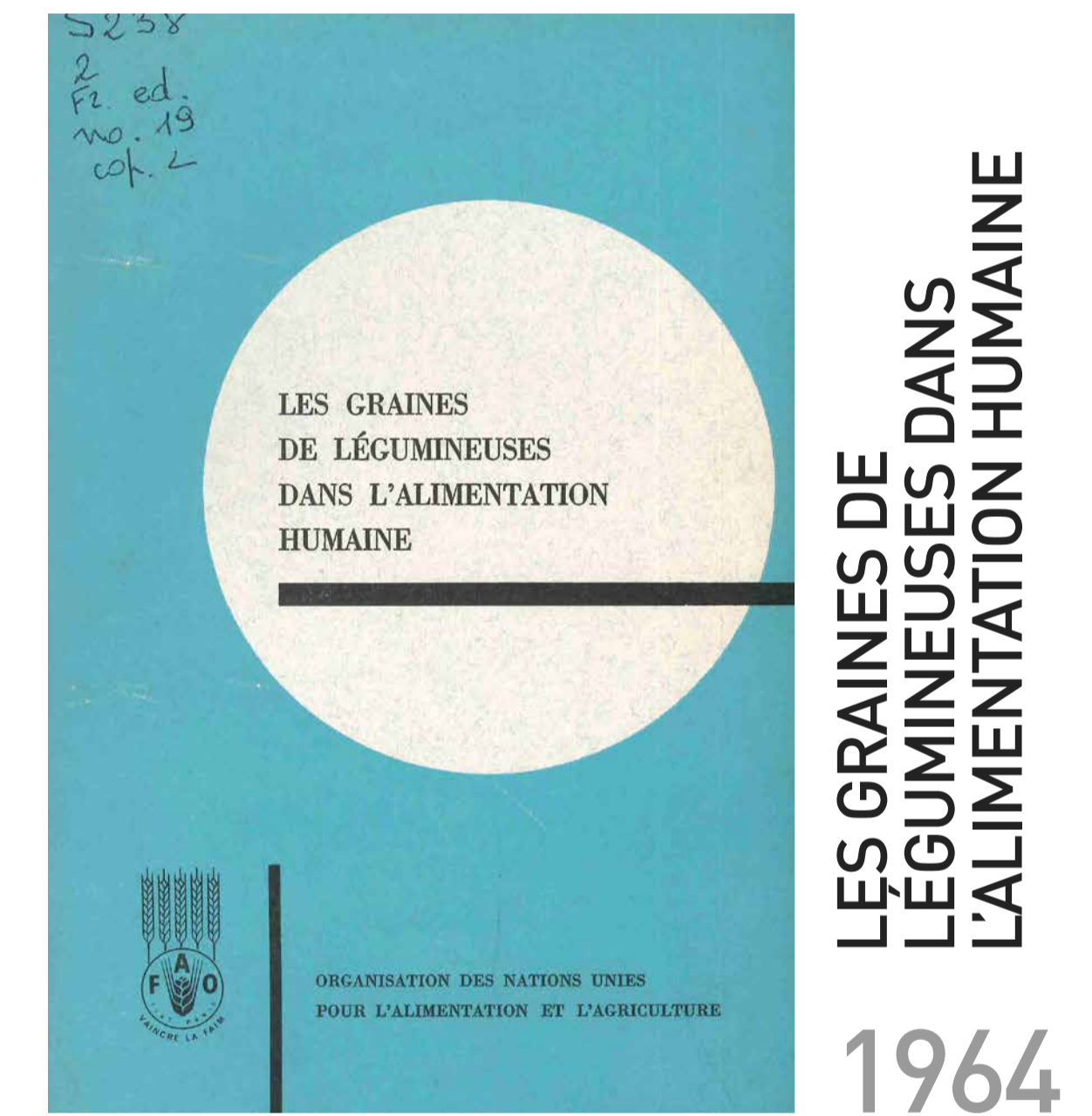


LEGUMES IN AGRICULTURE

1953

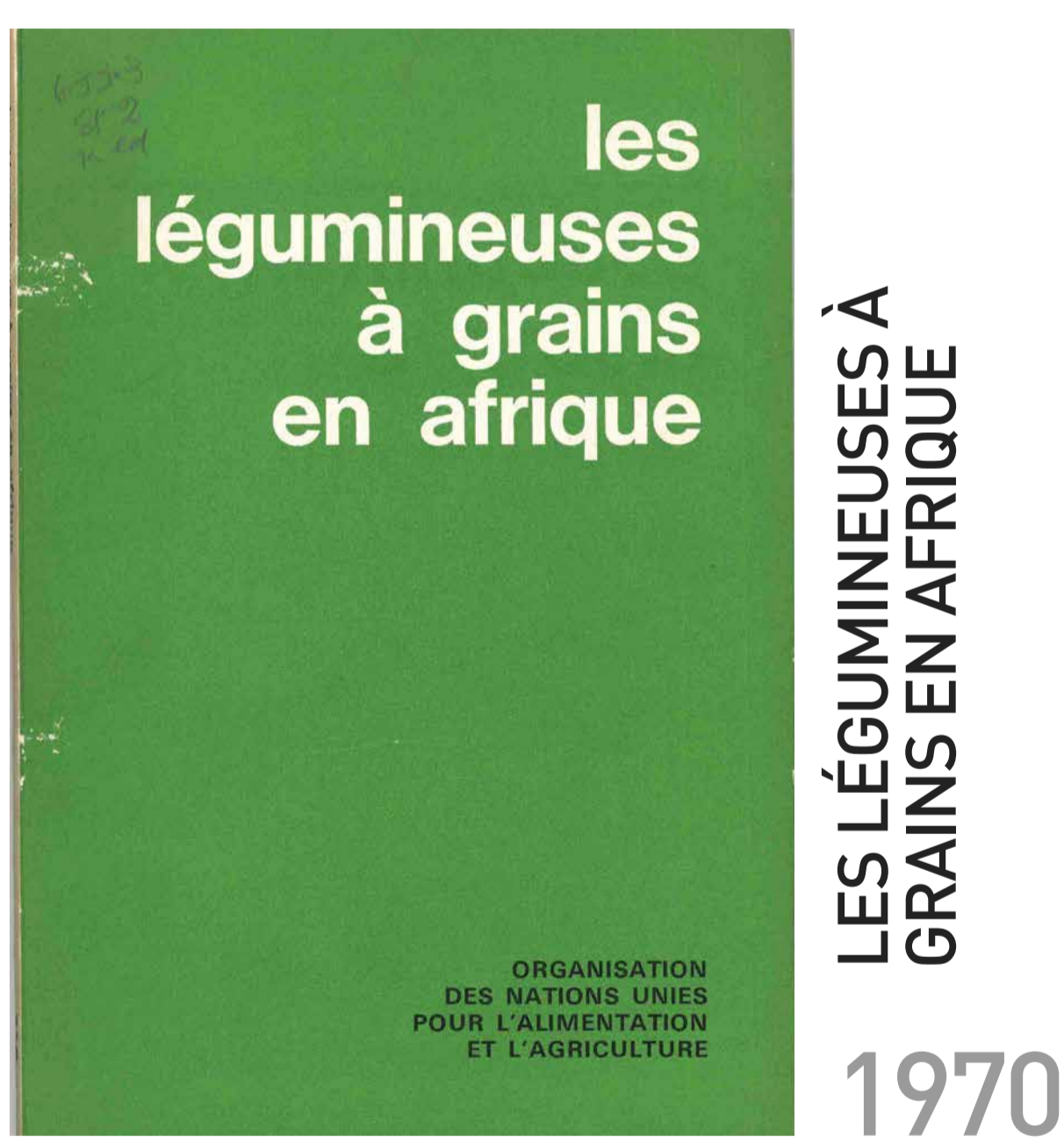
TIME OF CONTRAST 1960s

The influence of early 20th century art movements like Suprematism and Constructivism forged a new relationship between art, text and reader to channel the power of modernity. A time of change with high-tech designs in contrast with the popular hippie culture.



LES GRAINES DE LÉGUMINEUSES DANS L'ALIMENTATION HUMAINE

1964

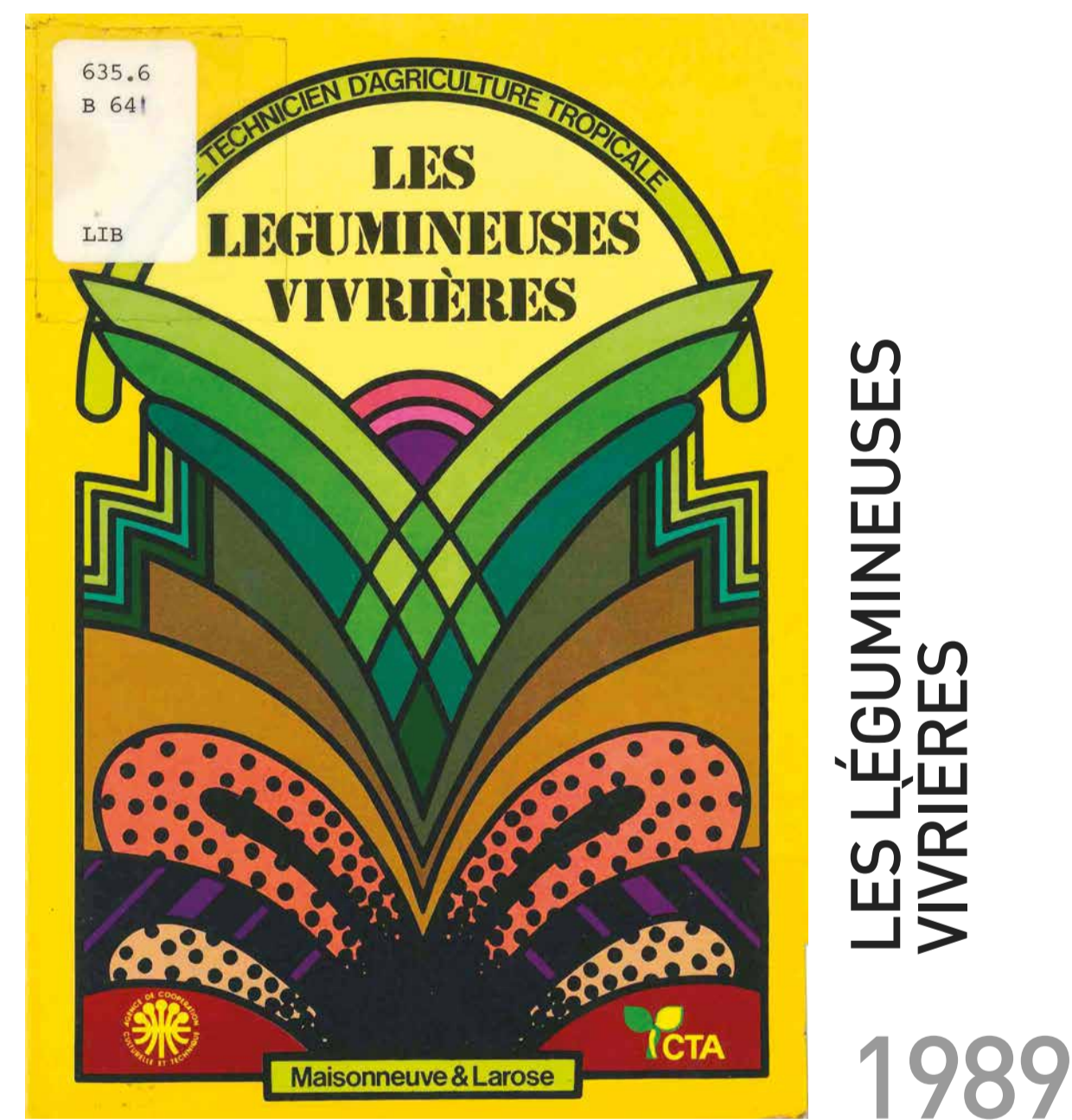


LES LÉGUMINEUSES À GRAINS EN AFRIQUE

1970

LESS IS MORE 1970s

Minimalism takes over. Colour printing advances and makes symbols and fonts pop out better against an "autumn" colour palette. Experimentation is going on in the world of typography. Letters are condensed or expanded or made balloonny.

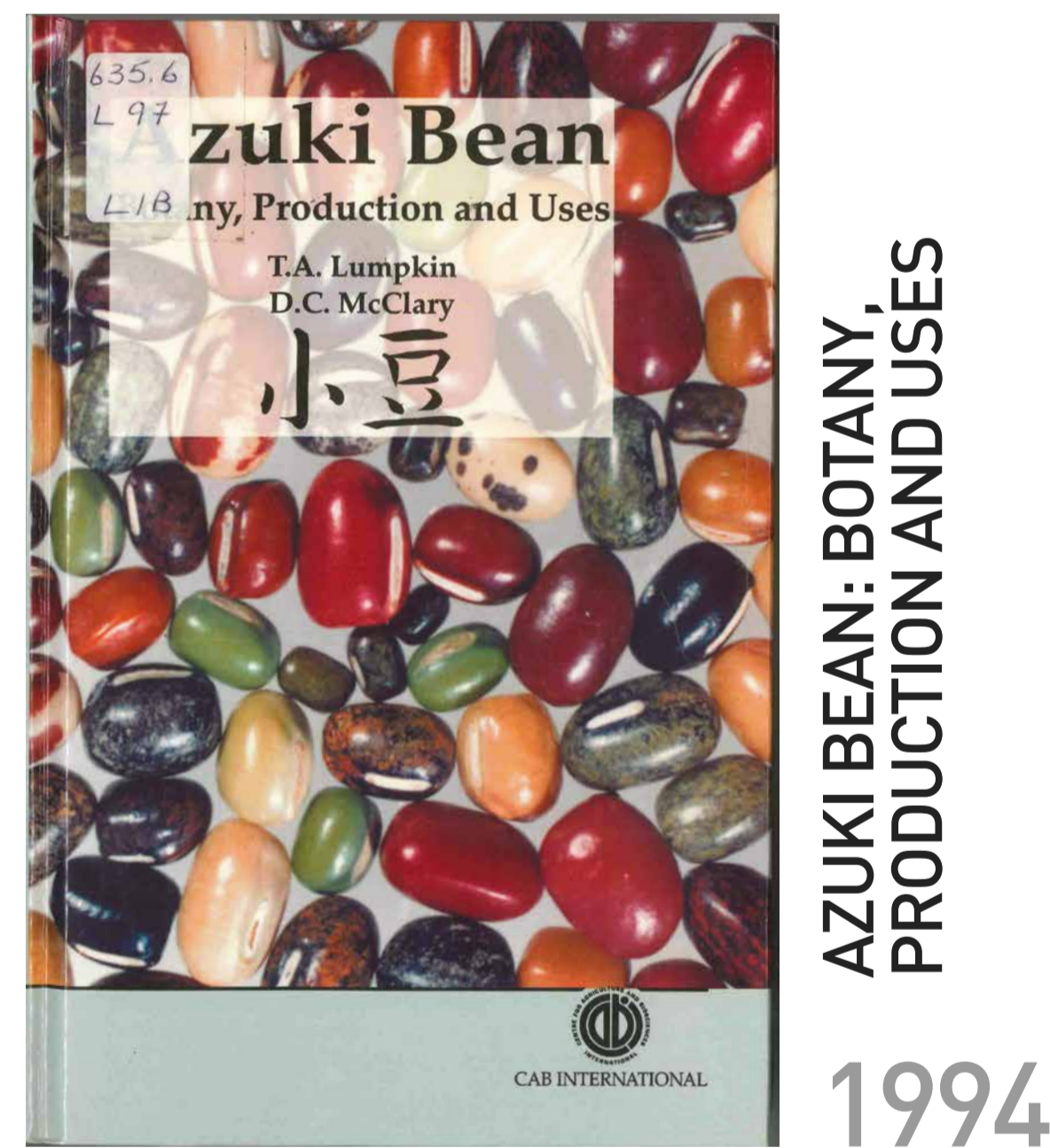


LES LÉGUMINEUSES VIVRIÈRES

1989

80s DECO 1980s

Captivating colours appear - bright yellows, vivid greens, psychedelic colour combinations - together with clean fonts with pronounced angles and curves. Here and there, a touch of Art Deco, also called '80s Deco.

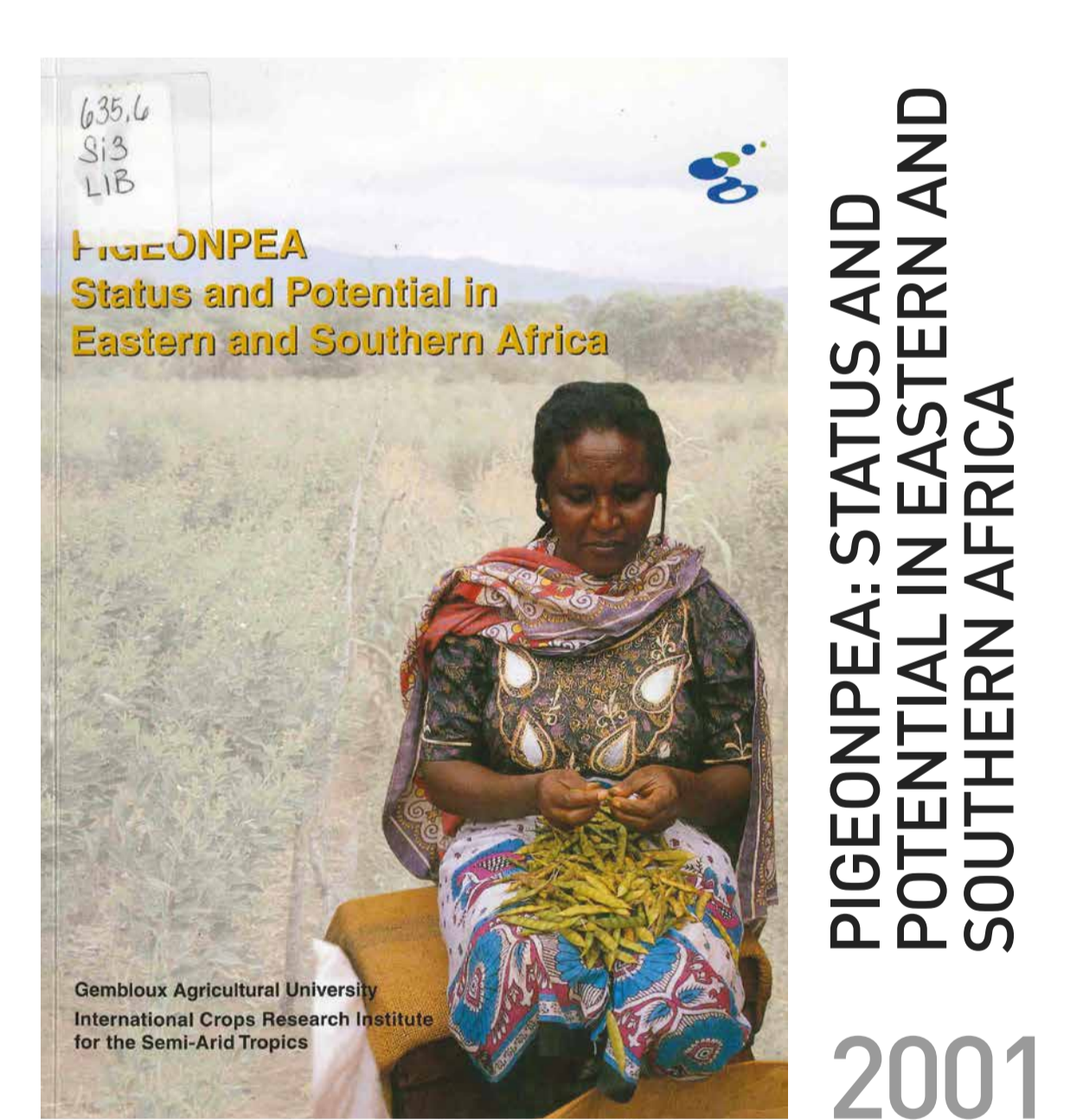


AZUKI BEAN: BOTANY, PRODUCTION AND USES

1994

THE PICTURE 1990s

The 1990s are hard to pin down in terms of specific fonts, colours or designs, although there is a recurrent element: the picture. This may in part be due to the birth of Photoshop in the 1990s.



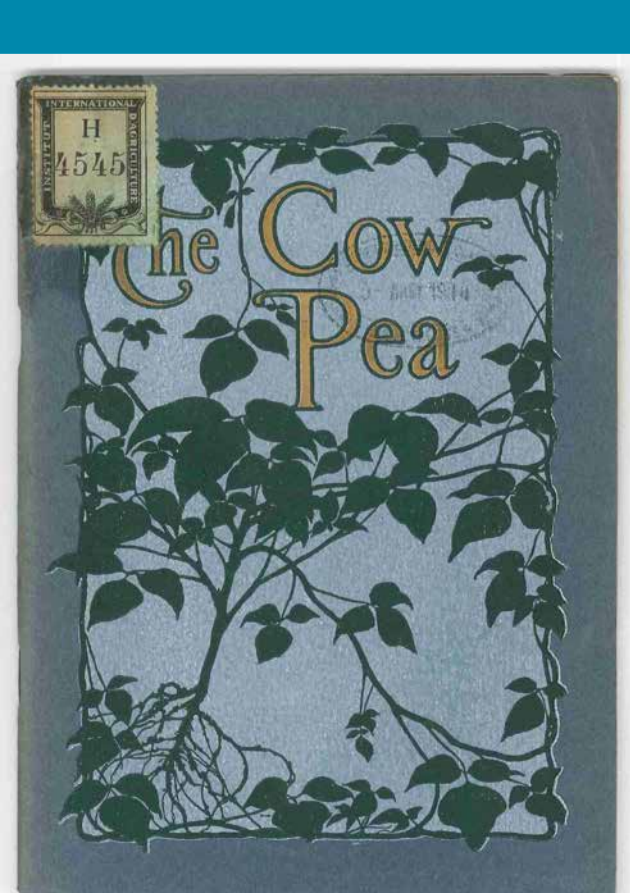
PIGEONPEA: STATUS AND POTENTIAL IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

2001

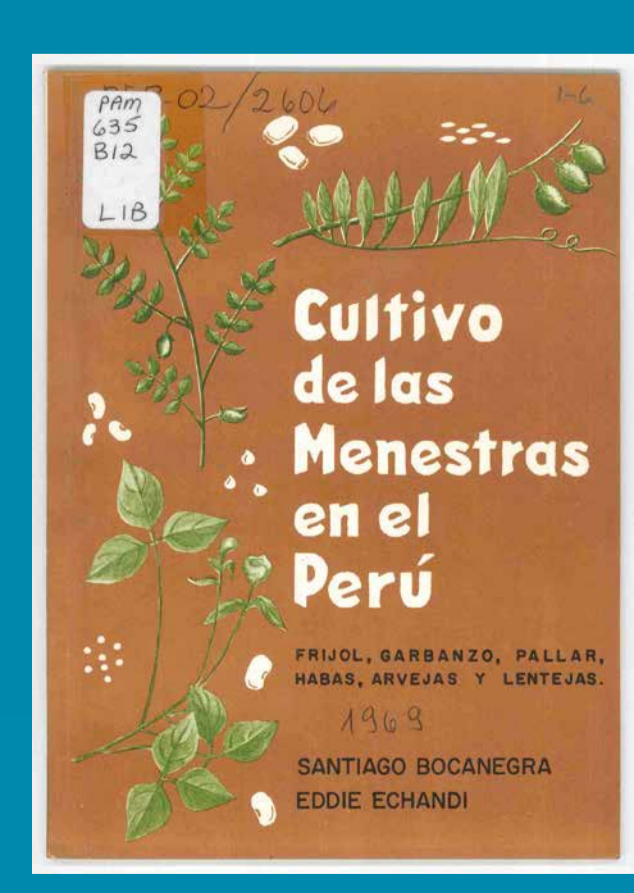
TO THE POINT 2000s

The new millennium sees modern and minimalist designs, sleek and to the point, on the verge of becoming anonymous. It's all about the message!

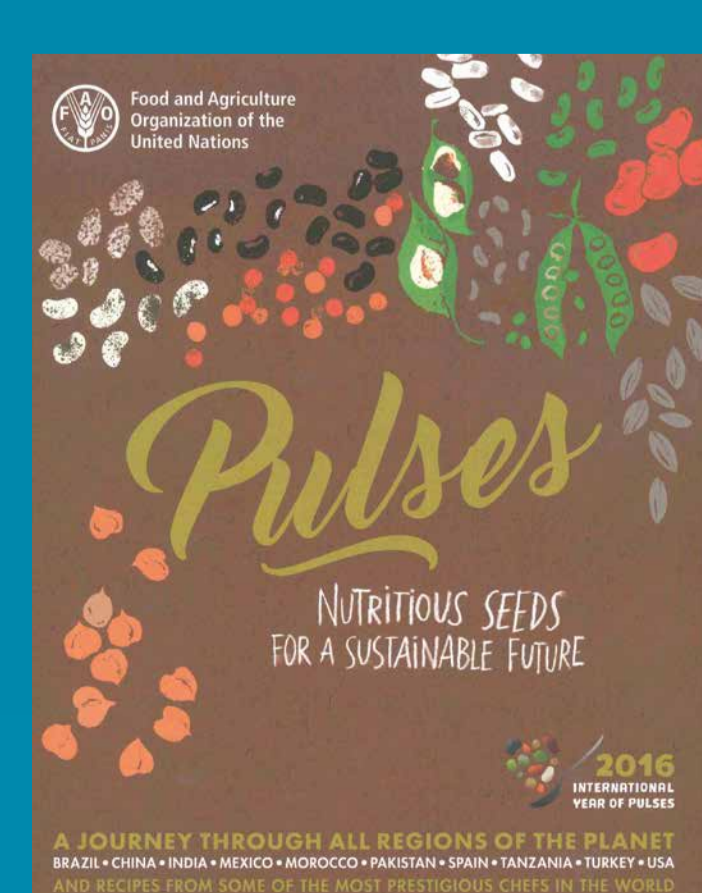
FROM 1914 TO 2016: TRANSFORMING OLD INTO NEW TO REFLECT THE PRESENT



1914



1969



2016

This timeline shows how there is an interrelationship between book cover designs - how every period is inspired by earlier art styles and how the meaning of a cover design is shaped by previous designs.

The highly decorative style of the 1910s with its curvilinear plant and floral motives and the ethnic look with nature-based colour palette of the 1960s add layers of depth to the design of the 2016 FAO publication, which transforms the beauty of these early art styles into a timeless modern look.