NOTE TO USERS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, appointed by the

Division

Department English and American Literature and Language
Committee

have examined a thesis entitled
GRAPHIC DISSERTATION
ACADEMIC DESIGN
(Graphic Design, Modern Poetry, Academic Writing)

presented by Olga Nikolova Nikolova

candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and hereby certify that it is worthy of acceptance.

Signature Barbara E Johnson
Typed name Barbara Johnson

Signature James Engell (Chair: for Daniel Albright)
Typed name Daniel Albright

Signature
Typed name Yunte Huang

Signature
Typed name

Date

GRAPHIC DISSERTATION
ACADEMIC DESIGN

(Graphic Design, Modern Poetry, and Academic Writing)

A thesis presented

by

Olga Nikolova Nikolova

to

The Department of English and American Literature and Language

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
English and American Literature and Language

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2005

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Olga Nikolova Nikolova

Advisors: Barbara Johnson, Daniel Albright, Yunte Huang

GRAPHIC DISSERTATION
ACADEMIC DESIGN

(Graphic Design, Modern Poetry, and Academic Writing)

Abstract: What do graphic design, academic writing and poetry have in common? When do they resist one another? What are the sources of such resistance? This dissertation has the ambition to research such questions by bringing together improbable couples of texts and personae, and by borrowing techniques both from poetry and graphic design. Graphic designers have an unacknowledged influence on the kinds of books we read and we, in academia, know little about the way they think about their job. Typographers insistently draw attention to the text as image; critics traditionally view texts either as immaterial or as embodied meaning. After an examination of the theories of three key graphic designers (chapter one), this thesis turns towards the traditional formats of academic writing (chapter two and three). What happens if we cease to regard the critical text as a text blind to its format, a text which simply attempts to transmit ideas from one mind to another? In this so-called blindness to format, one can discern the ways in which academic writing denies itself the aesthetic pleasures of form: no longer only visual, but also narrative, structural, and semantic. We have come to identify certain graphic and textual formats with fiction, others with criticism, but is it possible to imagine a different perspective? Finally, in chapter four, in texts by Apollinaire, Tristan Tzara, and Ezra

Pound (among others), the question is not only what criticism can reveal about such works, but also what it can learn from their graphic techniques and their printing history.

BRIEF NOTE

Those looking for an introduction, please refer to Appendix I.

To those of you reading a laser color copy, I apologize for the laser printer's tendency to spill yellow every time there was a slightly different tinge of white. It was beyond my control.

To Hermes

the unfailing friend

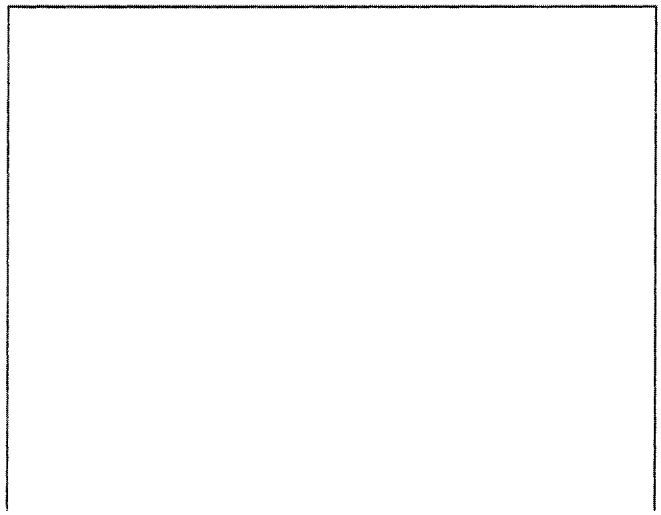
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

Gloom and solemnity are entirely out of place.

drop a habit

I wouldn't like you, my reader, to go from point A to point B in a more or less straight line, on the contrary even. I would like to disrupt your reading, and not leave you alone, until we both, in the process, have decomposed the very idea of an A-to-B.



In fact, the history of design, especially the wave of books published in the last two decades (see bibliography), acknowledges the presence and influence of literary authors. Typography or graphic design anthologies always include figures such as Marinetti, El Lissitzky, or Kurt Schwitters. Typography exhibition catalogues almost invariably have sections on DADA, Futurism, and Constructivism without presenting them as strictly design events, the way literary criticism tends to isolate a literary or at best dramatic and performative substratum in these movements. Design, unlike literary studies, stresses and strains its relationships with the arts, literary, graphic, musical. It formulates its existence on the basis of such relationships,

that is, design does not exist apart from anything.

I don't know any better point to start from.
(Ezra Pound, *ABC* 31)

PREAMBLE

Written Nov 2003.
Sanctioned by time.

Initially I start writing straight text, which is quite elliptical but connects a series of quotations, images or concepts. At every subsequent seating at the computer the text is expanded laterally and lengthwise (there is something here which functions as a skeleton but at the same time, as it continues to be modified, does not share the rigidity of a bone structure). In other words, I start always at the beginning adding not only analysis, but also references within the text or notes that will become separate pages, which will then be referenced from the initial text: in a way, certain parts of this initial text and its additions are erased and replaced by short essays, glossaries, graphs, and the like, at some other point in the dissertation, whether at the end of the chapter, the end of the entire thing, or as interruptions of the directed progression of reading. Where the text sounds disjointed there may be (or not) at some future moment another type of connecting tissue added: graphic, visual, verbal – these are (connective) areas I would like to explore and use for displacements or refocusing in the dissertation as a whole. Architects are often able, by looking at the plans for a building, to enact in their head the actual movements of an inhabitant. The graphic conception of the format for this piece of writing is only schematically present here, although in some prescribed form it exists (completely yet inaccessibly) in my imagination, and probably for lack of time will be merely partly evident when you are reading the following group of documents.

As far as this is only part of the dissertation, of whose overall arrangement I think of as interrelated and cross-referential - this is and will remain a chapter in progress.

THE IMAGINARY DEMONSTRATION

In 1932
Beatrice Warde, who
was regularly contributing to the *Fleuron* under the
pseudonym Paul Beaujon, gave an address to the Society
of Typographic Designers, entitled **"The crystal goblet or printing should be invisible."**

This lecture became one of the most discussed and
anthologized pieces on typography in our (the 2oth)
century. At that time Beatrice Warde was serving
more or less as a spokesperson for the Monotype Cor-
poration and for what later came to be classified as "new
traditionalism in typography." New traditionalism, whose main
figure was Stanley Morison (Times New Roman), was
trying to achieve a reform in the printing business by putting
some order and establishing sound principles of selection and
composition with which to counter the wild proliferation of types
and printed matter between the two wars. As can be seen in its

later acquired name – new traditionalism was trying to be both new and traditional. It was about reform, about *adapting* a treasure of types and conventions inherited from the past to the new exigencies of machine production. This reform apparently was so successful, and successful in such a way, that the types introduced by Morison and Monotype, whose typographic advisor Morison was, are at present the most widely used in academic writing. Although Microsoft has also something to do with this, probably more than 95% of papers written in contemporary Western universities use Times New Roman.[1] There is the assumption that this typeface, arguably through wide usage, is transparent, meaning – we do not notice it, so the desire of the author to communicate and of the reader to understand without any visual obstruction meet at this invisible plane which the text is meant to be.

But the academic environment is also known for its tendency to dematerialize and isolate intellectual work. We create an ethereal mental space for scholarship, and place the real, the physical life, outside, somewhere elsewhere - as if repeating the same magical gesture which denies the materialities of, in this case, literature. Ideas take place in the mind and are on paper (still typographically invisible) only in transit to another person's mind.

But is and should typography be invisible?

[1] My heart aches in reformatting this chapter to comply with the registrar's standards for doctoral dissertations. Does it make sense to put a "side note" which was originally on the side, as a footnote? You are reading one monumental column of unified text in the place of volatile and variously shaped blocks of text crossing a succession of pages. What a shame, that in criticizing precisely this petrified format, my dissertation has to bow to it ! What is this a good price for? No, dear reader, this is not what the dissertation is. This is but a maimed copy, blind and dumb, in the face of a structure even blinder, and if you have lodged yourself in between, in an attempt to read, get out! There are better things to do.

> "Imagine," says Beatrice Warde, "that you have before you a flagon of wine. You may choose your own favorite vintage for this imaginary demonstration, so that it be a deep shimmering crimson in color. You have two goblets before you. One is of solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns. The other is of crystal-clear glass, thin as a bubble, and as transparent. Pour and drink; and according to your choice of goblet, I shall know whether or not you are a connoisseur of wine." (56)

No doubt, connoisseurs would choose crystal over gold.

Beatrice Warde goes further in this "long-winded and fragrant metaphor," which indirectly tries to show the relationship between typography and literature. She compares the stem of the glass to the margins of a book. The vintage wine turns into "the vintage of the human mind" contained in printed matter (59). At this point literature exists, like wine, quite apart from its bottle, goblet or any other container. It can be poured from one glass into another. The typographer is the one who makes the choice of container, and s/he is required to have discernment, taste and knowledge of technique. Design here is about being accommodating, not inventive. And it accommodates to a certain ideal of legibility, of access, without claiming any agency in creating that ideal: the glass does not determine what the wine tastes like.[2]

---

[2] side note: One can see how the premises of this metaphor are still widely shared in the world of literature, including publishers and academics. Publishing books in an electronic format almost invariably assumes precisely that the "text," the "body" of a work of literature, strangely dematerialized in the process, is perfectly detachable from its particular existence on paper. A work of literature, then, allows this extraction. It becomes volatile and infinitely adaptable, yes, the literary like any liquid, takes the form of its container... And then, one attempts to perform the same with, to take a famous example, Guillaume Apollinaire's poem "It's raining." The resistance of a text such as

Apart from claiming a liquid state as the natural state of texts as such, Beatrice Warde is using her metaphor of the crystal goblet to draw distinctions regarding the profession of the typographer and the times:

> "Now the man who first chose glass instead of clay or metal to hold his wine was a "modernist"." (57)

Despite this identification with, or definition of, modernism, Warde positively exhibits a preference for "vintage" and connoisseurship. Modernism is identified as an aesthetic and utilitarian (even consumer) choice, not as a historically bound gesture defying established conventions. "The man who first chose glass" is choosing glass now, and again at this moment. There is perhaps an enviable certainty about literary value and the ways in which it can be a given. Value is placed behind typography (which is invisible), or to be more precise, it is both behind, at a reach, and within the very lack of visibility of a text. Immaterial but substantial (both).

Apollinaire's, brings to the surface the idea that there is an act of translation, not simply repositioning; or that in any case, in Apollinaire's poem there is something (literary? or graphic?) which is inextricable from its particular material conditions. Apollinaire's poem, then, exists differently: reproducing it means reproducing not only the words, to state the obvious, but the particular arrangement of the words on the page. Now, does this count for any and every poem? Can the verbal, or the verbal-poetic, be abstracted from the graphic? I feel tempted to take both yes and no for an answer. But perhaps put this way the question doesn't make much sense, perhaps it makes sense only in particular instances (in life), rather than raised to the level of a generality. For example, in purely technical terms, how are Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* edited for publication? How did he or the printer compose the types in the first place? In what way were/are these compositions testing the limits of the technology at hand? Are contemporary publishers using photography-based reproduction processes in the case of a book such as this? Another particular example: Marinetti's first edition of *Les Mots en Liberte* contains several poems which fold out of the volume three times bigger than its pages. A 1987 Swiss reprint, which has kept the larger part of the typography, has diminished the folded pages to two-page spread-outs. Was this done for technical and/or economical reasons? What else, except size, was lost (was it lost) in the process? What influences the choice of anthologists to unify and standardize (to erase?) the original typography of texts like Marinetti's? (Some of these questions will be touched upon at later points in the dissertation,)

Printing is an added, excessive, and most importantly - a transparent dimension to the text. Evidently visibility here is not taken literally.* Visibility for Warde is what attracts the eye, unwillingly, to the surface of the page and glues it there, instead of allowing it or forcing it to abandon the physicality of the text for the words' power to excite the imagination. The visible text, the physical, is to be overcome, surmounted in favor of the imaginary text, the spiritual.

To go back to the historical moment of Warde's writing, typographers appear in her address much closer to craftsmen (and connoisseurs) than to technicians or engineers as they are presented and wished for in contemporary texts by authors such as Tschichold, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, etc. (see discussion of functionality below).

And already one can identify a number of peculiarities which seem contradictory and which make Warde's text special.

1: Glass is a modern material related to mass production (and skyscrapers), crystal is "superior" glass for a limited public. And then, why not plastic? What does the fact that Warde is not likely to suggest plastic cups show? Wouldn't it go against the traditional conception of literary value Warde's lecture exhibits? Literature in plastic cups does not sound as seductively exclusive as crimson literature in crystal goblets. In other words, Warde defines "modern" typography as 'invisible," but such

* In fact, here we begin to see the ways literal language imperceptibly becomes metaphorical, or acquires metaphorical meaning in certain conditions, when, for example, one plays off different meanings of a word against each other. See prelude to this chapter for more on the subject.

neutrality can only be a kind of blindness, not transparency. And what marks the beginning of modern typography and design (as a discipline and a profession) is precisely the recognition or the consciousness that texts are never (literally) invisible, nor neutral.

The modern typography, which Beatrice Warde is defending is not emphatically associated with modern life or new technologies. There is no rupture with the past, rapture with the future. Modernism here is conjugated on a rationality that ensures the continuation of tradition, "the vintage of the human mind." The continuation of tradition overlaps with communication (transmission). Through the transparency of typographic design, which ensures the flow of tradition, we, readers, have access to the wonderful, intoxicating productions of great minds. Typographers maintain the accessibility of authors' productions. They administer tradition.

Defining typographers as understanding and generous guardians implies that there must be a certain code of conduct (faithfulness to the text in its imagined liquid state), shared among printers, which in its turn has to be based (not on artistic license but) on a rational human nature. To fall back in the old opposition between thought and emotion, Warde prefers that typographers think rather than feel.

She uses a witty anecdote:

> "I once was talking to a man," relates Warde, "who designed a very pleasing advertising type that undoubtedly all of you have used. I said something about what artists think about a certain problem, and he replied with a beautiful gesture: 'Ah, madam, we artists do not think – we *feel*!' That same day I quoted the remark to another designer of my

> acquaintance, and he, being less poetically inclined, murmured: 'I'm not *feeling* very well today, I *think*!' He was right, he did think; he was the thinking sort; and that is why he is not so good a painter, and to my mind ten times better as a typographer." (58)

The desire to draw the line between the typographer and the artist is visible not only in Warde. Stanley Morison rages against designers calling themselves "artists" and using this as an excuse for flamboyancy and whimsical mannerisms (qtd. in Hultenheim n.p). Just as in our clichéd notions the critic is a failed writer, the designer is an artist having a bad day.

But perhaps art (what artists do) is taken here in a decorative sense, or in an arts-and-crafts sense – a treatment of texts and books that has to do more with previous books than with the one at hand; in the sense that we can criticize William Morris for being "artistic" because first and foremost he is trying to revive a medieval aesthetics of books. Modernist typography, even as advocated by new traditionalists, changes the focus to the present (object at hand).

A key word never mentioned in Beatrice Warde's address is functionality. Here is how she further modifies modernism: "the first thing he [the man who chooses glass] asked of this particular object was not 'How it should look?' but 'What must it do?' and to that extent all good typography is modernist" (57). The fact is that these two questions predetermine each other. Printers in previous centuries were not asking either. They were working with templates (see pages 28-9). In this definition of modernism it is the opposition between these two perspectives (looking and doing)

that counts, and mostly their temporal and logical relation. In a sense, "what must it do?" equals "how it should look?" But, of course, for Warde, who wants to do away with the look of texts, "what must it do?" comes prior and as a necessary supplement to "how it should look?" Even Warde, however, is not able to ask one question without implying the other. It is the insertion of function, even action, into the look of a text that is crucial, emphatically crucial, even when performed, as it is here, in terms of negation.[3]

[3] conceptual note: Walter Benjamin also recognizes what we might call the appearance or insertion of action into the literary field: "The construction of life is at present in the power far more of facts than of convictions, and of such facts as have scarcely ever become the basis of convictions. Under these circumstances, true literary activity cannot aspire to take place within a literary framework; this is, rather, the habitual expression of its sterility. Significant literary effectiveness can come into being only in a strict alternation between action and writing; it must nurture the inconspicuous forms that fit its influence in active communities better than does the pretentious, universal gesture of the book – in leaflets, brochures, articles, and placards" (*One-way street*). Why did Benjamin choose to use "alternation" between action and writing? Is literary effectiveness the literary exertion of a kinetic non-literary framework? Writing a little earlier, Apollinaire: "Catalogues, posters, advertisements of all sorts. Believe me, they contain the poetry of our epoch." (flyleaf of Spencer's *Pioneers of Modern Typography*) Translation (again): "The traditional definition of "book" has created a self-fulfilling prophesy in which people continue to produce books that are meant to entomb the material. ... The experiment we undertook with Book Machine is one of translation. To move from one form to another the material has to pass through a kind of translation filter." (Mau 562) Book Machine was an installation, part of an exhibition entitled *Laboratorium*. In what ways is a filter (metaphorically and literally) different from a glass, a window? Finally, let me emphasize that in the context of this thesis I do not make a strict distinction between literature and critical writing.

2: Warde's understanding of function begins with the image of a container, the crystal goblet (the old form vs. content question), but it finishes with the image of a window (a different frame altogether). Compare her metaphor of the crystal goblet with this: "The book typographer has the job of erecting a window between the reader inside the room and that landscape which is the author's words." Being somewhat fond of extended metaphors, she goes on to distinguish three types of windows – stained glass ("a failure as a window"), perfectly transparent ("no visual recollection whatever" – the best), and a window, whose glass is broken into "small leaded panes" (artistic but "not objectionable") (58). This preference for a lack of visual recollection implies an unwanted interference with simple perception and appreciation. Verbal description has the power of creating an effect (and affect, of course) that the typographer has no business modifying. But naturally s/he does. "What must it do?" as a question defines typography in an imperative mode (the text "must" do what?), an imperative the typographer interprets, if not postulates. Preferably invisibly. The imaginary landscape has to remain visible at the expense of the plane separating inside and outside, reader and writer (i.e. the window).

But typography concerns the visual aspects of printed texts. Does visual have to become invisible? What sort of effacement is this? Why does this expressed need for interpretation coincide or provoke the desire to become invisible? Neutral? Or mysterious? An imperative: Do not venture into the realms of the author (maker of landscapes). But the typographer in this case doubles the author in that the typographer re-forms the material thereby *bringing it into existence and into the public eye*; at the same time as s/he is framing a perspective, a window, an opening,

that immediately or a priori places the reader inside (where?) and the author outside (do they ever meet?). And the typographer? Vanished, the magician.

Wishfulthinking: that if I point at it, demonstrate, it will be there at the other end of my line of vision, caught between my hand, my eye and its self-evident existence. Can I perceive it through these three reference points?

> "We think of "reality" as something we can *point* to. It is *this*, *that*."
>
> (Wittgenstein 240)

> "The opening *already* goes unnoticed *as* opening (aperity, aperture), as a diaphanous element guaranteeing the transparency of the passageway to whatever presents itself. While we remain attentive, fascinated, glued to *what* presents itself, we are unable to see *presence* as such, since presence does not present itself, no more than does the visibility of the visible, the audibility of the audible, the medium or "air," which disappears in the act of allowing to appear" (Derrida 313-14).

Do we see the aperture?

I am not certain that face to face with "what presents itself" I would not obstinately attach my look to its impenetrable, opaque site of appearance – to catch the text emerging in its material site. Once I start looking at the letters, as someone once wrote, I cannot read them. Or riding in a car: can you watch both the car window and the landscape behind it? Only *alternately*. Is there another choice here? Reading itself involves looking. Even if my regard is not jolted out of the familiar pattern of

scanning letters, left to right, top to bottom, first and last letter of a word, is not my reading framed by a closer non-reading look – a different decoding? A game of figuring out (literally), which is not "given" but is made, sometimes multiply, in the act of reading=looking? Reading a calligram by Apollinaire, again to take the famous example, the rules of decoding ("how to read") are not a priori given, but decided upon (not necessarily in a definite way) in the act of perception. In other words, it is impossible to talk of the invisible unless I assume that it is invisible to somebody *else*, which is the limitation of my position – as one studying typography, *and* literature, reading, *and* writing. I see more or less, there is more or less the visible for me, but how do I compare?

And if I took a very ordinary book, a perfectly ordinary thrift edition of, let's say, a novel, which you have read, and pointed to you: "Look, there are hardly any margins, the paper is rough and yellowish, the type a 10-point Roman serif with more space between the words and less between the lines to make economies, see they have all the titles centered and the pages justified, and this red cover – don't you remember, isn't there a visual recollection from the first time you read it?" "Yes, but there is something I like about these cheap editions where the typography doesn't matter [=invisible], in the way the text is endlessly condensed on the page." "Even here, you are still talking typography. And perhaps social studies." It becomes apparent (apparent, from appear, appearance) that a hierarchy of importance or significance is uneasily involved in even the simplest description of something as visible (perceptible).

Beatrice Warde, it must be noted, promotes an engaged design, a design conscious of its text – an attitude that with the alleged death or revival of the book at the end of our (the 20th) century is again being foregrounded.[4]

[4] An haphazard example on the use of "foregrounding" from OED (2nd ed. 1989): "**1959** R. QUIRK in Quirk & Smith *Teaching of English* i. 45 The Prague School notion of what has been translated as 'foregrounding'..is defined by Mukarovský as 'the aesthetically intentional distortion of the linguistic components' in relation to the normal standard language on the one hand and to 'the traditional aesthetic canon' on the other."

Jan Tschichold,
the typographer who gave
a theoretical basis to functionalism
a few years before Beatrice Warde gave her address,
posits himself firmly at "a turning-point of civilization, at the end of everything old."

OPTICAL TANGIBILITIES

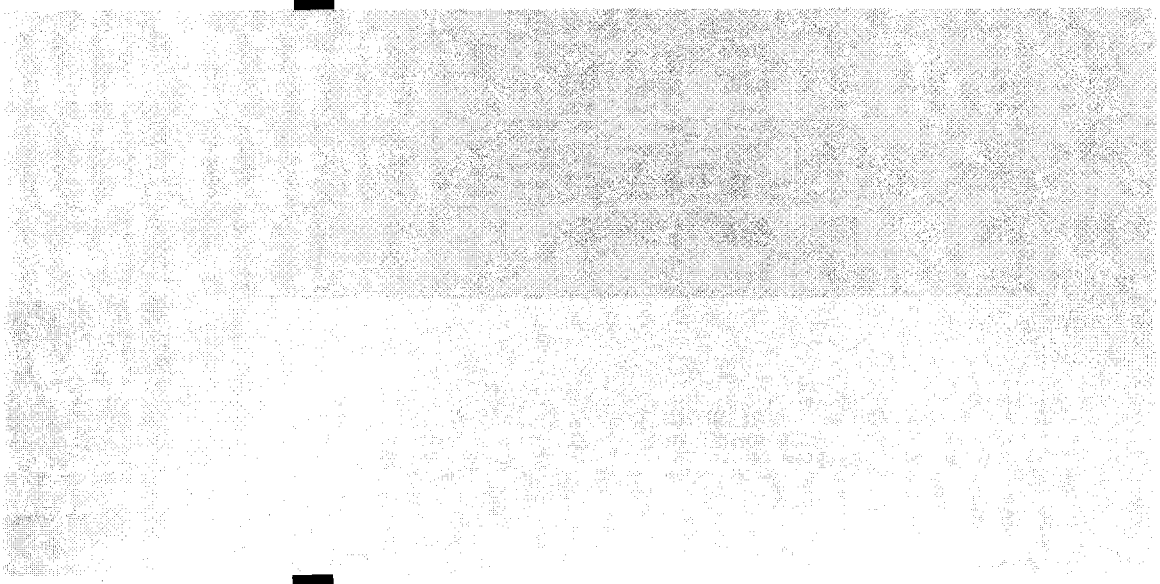
"This parting of the ways is absolute and final," reads the epigraph from Piet Mondrian placed at the top left corner of *The New Typography*'s second page. Tschichold's definitiveness of tone and grammar (quite literally in the case of quotations whether verbal or visual) is taken from, and shared with, the modernisms which we know better.[5] The enchantment with new machines and the disenchantment with tradition and the past also sound familiar:

> "Instead of recognizing and designing for the laws of machine production, the previous generation contented itself with trying anxiously to follow a tradition that was in any case only imaginary [just as Warde's was in her own words]. Before them stand the works of today, untainted by the past, primary shapes which identify the aspect of our time: Car Aeroplane Telephone Wireless Factory Neon-advertising New York! These objects, designed without reference to the aesthetics of the past, have been created by a new kind of man: **the engineer !"** (Tschichold 11)

[5] Or at least recognize better: DADA, Vorticism, Surrealism, etc.

For more than ten days I have been stuck at this point in the chapter, without really progressing in any direction. Perhaps it is some sort of impatience? My deadline is approaching. Or is there something insurmountable in this quotation by Tschichold? What... ? Or is it that I am losing sight of an (unspoken) principle, which is bringing back the sense of an obligation to progress in a definite direction, and I furtively start counting the pages searching for keywords to organize this as a whole? Let me face the stoppage, or go around it.

I came up with four possible solutions:



Solution one: a walk to the beach.

There is a belief that taking a walk allows thoughts to be aired. Like a blanket, which has spent a winter in an old chest, taking your head out for a day in the sun allows the mind to breathe and, absorbing some warmth, to regenerate efficiency. Instead of giving some space for my thoughts to stretch and flex their muscles, however, the ocean air of November in New England strained my head to breaking point. But not everything was lost. On my way back from the beach I interrogated my friend, who was accompanying me on this illusory trip, about his understanding of the role of the engineer in industrial production. I realized that the question "what is an engineer" is historically bound, which

may seem obvious now but it wasn't at all for me before. Moreover, I realized that I *was asking the question* "what is an engineer."

I start doing my homework: what is an engineer according to the common authorities on the meaning of words?

It is probably not very hard to perceive the common etymology of 'engineer' and 'ingenious,' as well as 'genius': all of these derive from the Latin *gignere* (to beget), which in its turn comes from Greek *γιγνεσθαι* - to be born, to come into being. OED (2nd ed. 1989) defines an engineer as "one who contrives, designs, or invents; an author, designer; also an inventor, a plotter, a layer of snares." This is the obsolete meaning of engineer, but the double nature of the designer as one who helps achieve a particular effect through a mechanical design and as one who lays snares, seems to describe well a certain duplicity in technology itself, very much evident in the unpredictability of its effects on manners of living and the consequent hostility this has excited for centuries in various areas of human activity, including the academia.

Jan Tschichold himself, in his break from the New Typography and return to the values of traditional design, criticized his previous enthusiasm for technology for its blindness to what technological progress had meant outside new designer possibilities. "These new possibilities certainly give scope for play to Bill [Max Bill, a Bauhaus student who went on to propound what became known as Swiss Typography, a continuation of the New Typography in many ways] or some other designer, but not to the 'hand' who day-to-day has to insert the same screw into a typewriter." Or again: "For the worker, machine production has thus meant a heavy,

almost deadly loss in the value of experience, and it is entirely wrong to put it on a pedestal.... But since we are unable to manage without machine production, we must accept its products simply as facts, without worshipping them on account of their origins" (qtd. in Kinross 107-8). Tschichold's ardent criticism, which comes after he immigrated from Germany to Britain and still in the wake of WWII, is very poignant in its being not only a criticism of Max Bill, to whom this was a direct reply, but also as an aversion to Tschichold's own youthful infatuation with modernist movements such as Vorticism, Futurism, and Constructivism, which he then saw as complicit with the terrors of the war and Nazi Germany. (For illustrations he uses in 1928 please look at pages 26-29.)

The English language, however, seems to have left this moral duplicity in the background, and delimited the use of the word "engineer" to describe people "whose profession is the designing and constructing of works of public utility," engines being a subcategory of the latter. This is what OED says. Additionally, Miriam-Webster's (10^{th} ed. 2002) registers that "in some jurisdictions," the term "is legally restricted in technical use to a person who has completed a prescribed course of study and complied with requirements concerning registration or licensing." That is, nowadays, engineering is legally regulated and has less to do with invention and authorship than with management and social responsibility. Very few designers nowadays would compare or call themselves engineers.

But for Tschichold in 1928 the engineer was "the new kind of man," and technology was "a kind of second nature." Tschichold's understanding of the word was much more flexible (less specialized) than the contemporary usage of

"engineer" would allow. And much more metaphysical, even. If today someone decided to call the typographer an engineer that would be very clearly a rhetorical flourish, a metaphor with a large interval between vehicle and target. But then, what was it in 1928 which allowed a greater proximity between what an engineer did and what a typographer, or even an author did? Didn't Ezra Pound extol literature as invention, and the author as technician? Similarly, what is the drive behind Duchamp's and Picabia's fascination with technical drawing, which tended to replace or efface completely the literary and the painterly in their works? Isn't the experimentation with typography in so many modernist publications, congenial in my view with the turn to engineering and technical drawing, a kind of swerving the creative process towards a certain technicality? A very different kind of composition, which makes vivid, and visible, not mental perceptions, but rather sets of operations and procedures? (For a discussion of technical drawing and how it might bear on typography, please wait till chapter four.)

In *The New Typography* Tschichold creates a common plane of reference for his various enthusiasms. He writes: "The New Typography is distinguished from the old by the fact that its first objective is to develop its visible form out of the functions of the text. It is essential to give pure and direct expression to the contents of whatever is printed; just as in the works of technology and nature, "form" must be created out of function" (66-7). There is something very final about a technological invention, and I think it is precisely this finality that enchanted Tschichold and he identified as a kind of functionality. For the most part a machine does not allow additions (a masterpiece does not either). It excludes arbitrariness. It

has a more or less intricate but rigid enough set of rules governing its production and its operation. All of its parts are regulated and functioning toward producing a particular effect. Thus, it provides a model for collectivity (less felt in Tschichold's book and fully recognized in his later self-critique). Tschichold's tendency here is towards order and towards installing some sort of necessity as the relation between design and production. Let us not forget, also, that engineers create works of "public utility" and that almost any machine can be described as such work. Utility implies use, use implies a certain education, or know-how, which in the case of typography means that a typographical composition discloses the rules of its consumption – that is, how to read a text is evident in its appearance, without excluding the possibility that a text can be read multiply and variously. The insistence on clarity repeatedly throughout *The New Typography* shows the desire to achieve a similar ideal of functional efficiency. Clarity is not only access to the text or the text's meaning. It is the ideal state of a text. A state of perfect readability and legibility, but, importantly, one whose conditions of existence are predominantly graphic. That is, the new typography uses axes and geometrical shapes to organize content. And paradoxically, at least for me, there is no such thing as stationary graphics. Even the simplest line on a sheet of paper immediately creates space and the possibility of movement. This is where dynamics and unpredictability sneak in. Another way of expressing this is to say that if you look at a page designed by the principles of the new typography, there is always an aesthetic, a fortuitous residue after any functional explanation one may wish to give. One can almost venture to say that the graphic tends to appear as (visible)

residuum of the textual, as the impossibility to exhaust the textual, however one tries to submit it to principles of functionality and utility.

> [In the meantime I received an email from an old friend, who was offering another direction. Translated roughly from its mixture of English and Bulgarian it said the following: "I think the best way to go is not "visibility" but something that goes almost unnoticed in your prospectus – the phrase "the unthinkable detail." This phrase really struck me! You see, on the level on which you will be working, which is the level of typography, fonts, etc, that is a microscopic level – one can say that, here, it is indeed impossible to think things; one can barely start trying to perceive and pay attention. details which thus border on thinkability must become merely visible. Hence the entire drama of typography is the drama and seduction of visibility – the temptation to think that if you look the page close enough (Mau's cone scheme, see next chapter) you will see the details which are unthinkable but in reality we all know that when your eyes come too close to something, it becomes blurred, your eyes fill with involuntary tears and you see nothing. Just as Mau says: an image you will never see."]

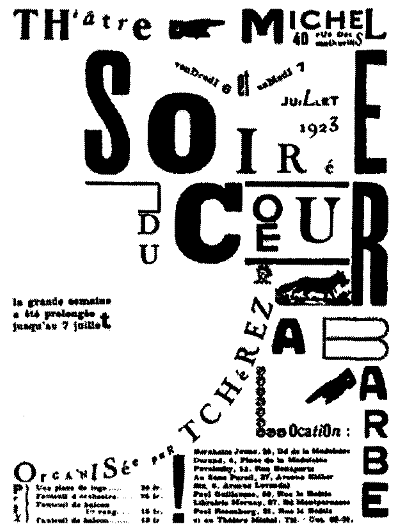
For Tschichold at this point functionality offers a common ground to both try to formulate an utilitarian aesthetic, and to exhibit works he would elevate to the status of models and historical signposts in his outline of the development of typography. Unlike Warde's desire to keep artist and typographer apart through a clichéd opposition between feeling and thought, Tschichold's history of typography has one chapter on "the old typography (1440 – 1914)" (a sweeping gesture) and an

extensive section on "the new art," followed by "the history of the new typography" (Futurism, DADA, Constructivism), last comes "the principles of the new typography." In fact, the new typography does not so much follow from the old, as it comes from elsewhere. It comes from contemporary life and art as Tschichold selectively saw them. There is a disjunction here, whose positive side today we call being interdisciplinary. In the same vein, I am not going to tackle the question of whether there is a distinction between art and design, because Tschichold does not invite such a distinction. In a way, his book takes for granted that such a distinction is a difference in gesture and evaluation rather than a question of something essentially given in a work. What is important is that Tschichold's project does not respect differences between the arts (including typography as the art of printing). And the problem is (on the negative side) – does one always need a totalizing, even utopian, plane on which to promote exchange and mixing of techniques? (Compare contemporary discourse on the possibilities of the Internet with its revolutionary vocabulary and high-pitch declarations.)

Here ends what the walk to the beach produced.

Solution two: (missing).

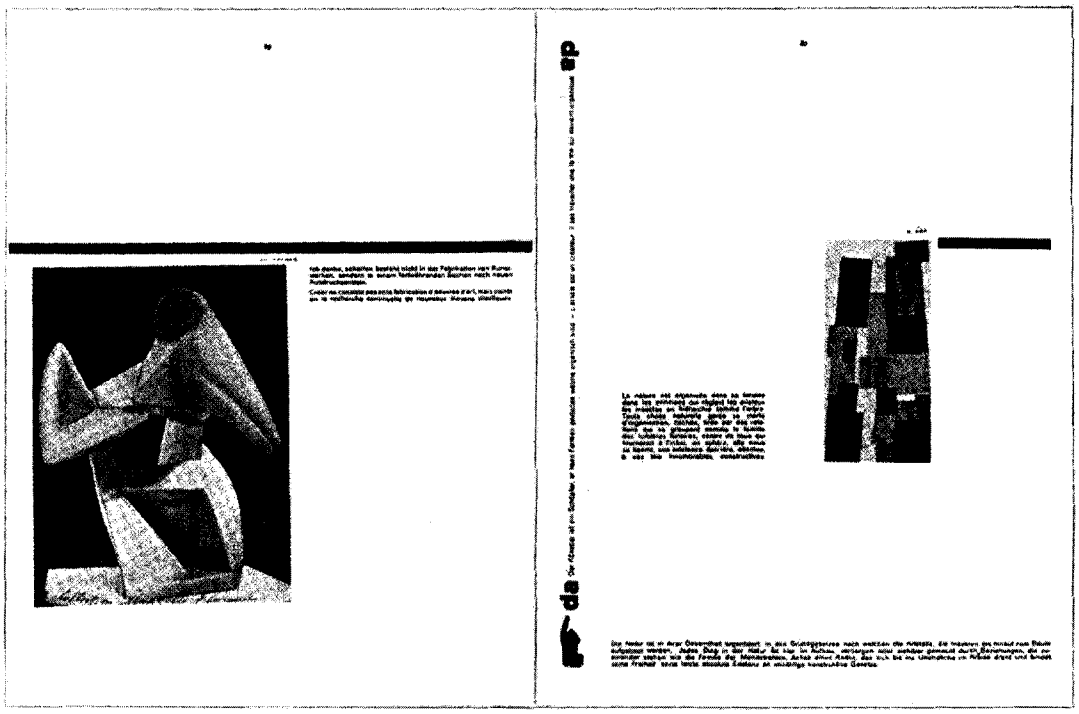
Solution three: if not in terms of text,
let us look at Tschichold's ideas in terms of image.



TRISTAN TZARA: Invitation to a Dadaist evening

F. T. MARINETTI: Poem from *Les mots en liberté futuristes* (Milan 1919)

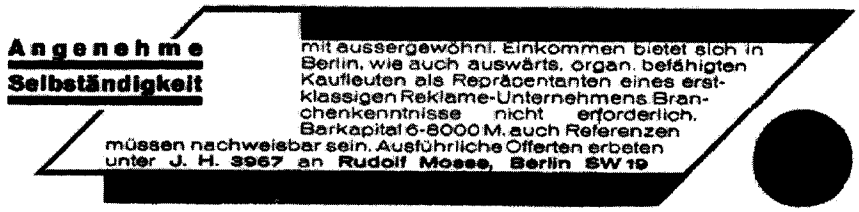
These are two of Tschichold's illustrations, and non-accidentally two of the most current examples of modernist graphic design. Where futurism is concerned, Tschichold's commentary speaks of "optical impact" and "visual strength." "For the first time typography here becomes a functional expression of its content." The DADA invitation, however, can be appreciated only from a "painterly" point of view, because it moves toward abstraction. Tschichold's inclusion of these images is less for a theoretical reason (Futurism and Dadaism do not provide the best examples of functionality). Their inclusion serves as a license. Then and there, Tschichold is (as if) saying, we were freed from tradition: now we can think in a different way about texts, we can invent.



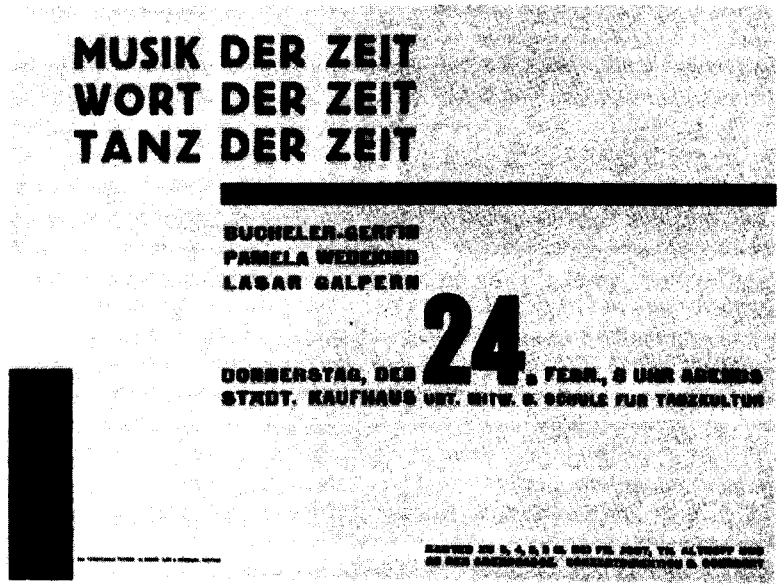
EL LISSITZKY and KURT SCHWITTERS: Double-page spread from the "Nasci" issue of *Merz* 8/9. 1924.

Another quotation from The New Typography, already visually approaching Tschichold's own style. This Merz spread done by Kurt Schwitters and El Lissitzky has one of the following texts on the first page: "To create consists not in producing works of art, but rather in the continual research for new plastic means" (emphasis added). Let me anticipate here the discussion of Bruce Mau at the end of this chapter. At one point Mau writes "when I say research, I mean going out into the world and grappling with the forces directly shaping our working context." (317) I take this as a license too.

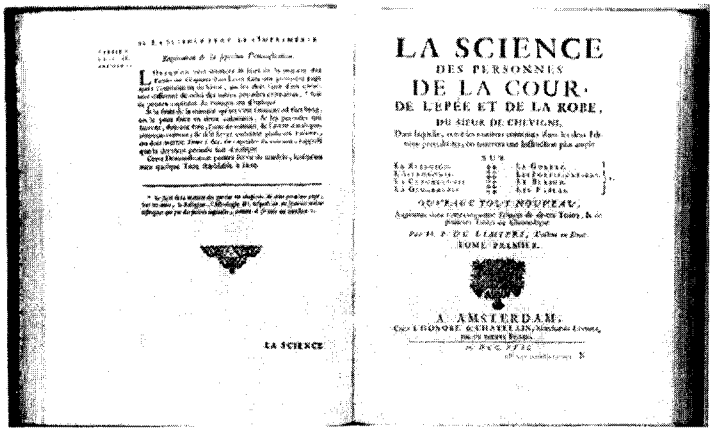
A concert flyer and a "pseudo-modern" advertisement (p.82-3), which Tschichold criticizes for imposing a ready-made shape onto the text (his phrase is "thoughtless shape"). The text below the advertisement reads: "The composition has the idea of a prefabricated foreign shape and forces the words into it. But typographic form must be organic, it must evolve from the nature of the text." One way this can be read is that typographic form EVOLVES out of the text, springs forth, rather than appearing parallel to it and being a good match. In other words,, think NOT correspondence, but CONTIGUITY.
To look at Tschichold's own design on the left: what is it that functionally necessitates the black lines, or the particular configuration of lines as a whole? Composition, as Tschichold would claim himself, has more to do with creative invention (hence the comparison with and admiration for the engineer as inventor of forms), than with following definitions.
One last point: please note that Tschichold is also giving examples of designs that do not work.



An example of pseudo-modern typography.
The compositor has the idea of a prefabricated foreign shape and forces the words into it. But typographic form must be organic, it must evolve from the nature of the text.



JAN TSCHICHOLD: Typographic poster for a concert. Red and black on silver.



LA SCIENCE
DES PERSONNES
DE LA COUR,
DE L'EPÉE ET DE LA ROBE,
DU SIEUR DE CHEVIGNI.
OUVRAGE TOUT NOUVEAU,
TOME PREMIER.
A AMSTERDAM.

Above: Sample title page from Kinross's Modern Typography (146). Kinross comments: "From the first substantial French manual for printers [...] A typical (imagined) title-page is shown on the right-hand page, with an explanation and annotations on the left. Here as elsewhere, Fertel [the author] is concerned with the way typography and the form of the book can structure information." For a different commentary see Tschichold's criticism of central axis design.

Below: Asymmetrical title page done by Tschichold (page 223) – unrecognizable as innovation now, but it definitely was in its time, not only in its different alignment of text and image but in its use of sans serif for literature. Even today sans serif is still largely associated with technical writing, and literary texts are usually set in the more "human" serif types.

Solution four:

When something doesn't work, some thing perhaps needs to be changed. Instead of free-writing, which manuals generally recommend in order to overcome "a writer's block," I decide to change the format of this chapter.[1] Is this a kind of refusal to locate "the block" in my mind and an attempt to transfer it onto the page instead? Originally this part of the dissertation was meant to be quite linear and standard-looking, mainly in order to avoid trouble with Microsoft Word. As a helpful professional at Kinko's said, "Word is very uncooperative with anything outside the standard formats." Sometimes technical abilities can lag behind so-called ideas. For me it has been a constraint for years.

Of course, deciding upon a linear style for something non-linear in conception was (in retrospect) a mistake. With all the talk of non-linearity this may sound banal, but let me look closer: what is non-linearity? It is a negative description and as such is dependent upon its opposite, linearity. So far so good. The way this chapter is to be read is dependent upon the way linear texts are read. But the technology of reading, from the purely physical movement from one page to the next, to the logical progression – a gradual densification and elaboration of a critical "problem" – have been reduced to a bare framework°, which is meant to be the base for a series of loops backwards and forwards in the text of the dissertation as a whole, loops achieved by means of cross-reference, appendices, short essays, simultaneous texts,

[1] Of which, of course, you see nothing. Another very salient point in the dissertation where changing the format to standard double-spaced portrait-oriented page not only does not make sense, but cancels the original meaning of the text.

° a cluster of questions

illustrations, etc. At the end it is the loops that count, whereas adhering to a linear style made the framework a central and absorbing focus.

The greatest difficulty in devising the format for this chapter is to align the different temporalitites of composition. In order to work on page design there has to be a mass of material already in some sort of initial shape. The limitation of Microsoft Word is that it does not allow much flexibility on the level of additions and erasures once the pages are laid out in a slightly more complicated manner. It does not really permit the integration of disparate materials, it allows only working one page in advance. On a practical level this means that I need to have in some ready form the entirety of what I am doing. Which is not only impossible but undesirable too. One part of what this project is about is to test how the graphic side of writing (design) relates with the conceptual side of writing (content) – not after the fact, but in the process. At this point Microsoft Word is constantly freezing the pages of the chapter and ironically, if I need to change something I need to start again and again. Word as a computer program is imposing constant looping of composition.

Thinking out the shape of what I am writing, including being able to predict and program navigation through the text, puts the focus on the technicality of writing. ("Technical" here by no means excludes "conceptual" or "intellectual" – on the contrary; but it is a different kind of conceptualizing, more akin to making films than to writing a story.) Before the word "typographer" came into wide use, there existed "compositors," responsible for the laying out of the metal type in the press, and by mirror image - on the page. Most early manuals on printing were outlining rules for the composition of type, rules that were generalized and that, according to

Tschichold (to return to the main figure of this section), imposed an "external order" on the text without respect for its interior logic. (Which is the case of this text at this present moment.)

"In the old typography, the arrangement of individual units is subordinated to the principle of arranging everything on a central axis. ... Its superficiality becomes obvious when we look at Renaissance or Baroque title-pages. ... Main units are arbitrarily cut up: for example, logical order, which should be expressed by the use of different type-sizes, is ruthlessly sacrificed to external form. ... The central axis runs through the whole like an artificial, invisible backbone: its raison d'etre is today as pretentious as the tall white collars of Victorian gentlemen. Even in good central-axis composition the contents are subordinated to "beautiful line arrangement.""

(66)

The criticism Tschichold addresses to traditional typography is that it is, among other things, "artificial" and "invisible." Its organizing principle, the general rule of a central axis which does not take into account the difference between texts, is hidden. Yet for someone who looked at the old typography through the new perspective of Futurism, DADA, etc. (where organizing texts on a page was part of a creative not simply mechanical composition) the central "backbone" suddenly came in plain view and required immediate remedy. Reading *The New Typography* now, it may be difficult to understand the zeal of Tschichold's criticism of the old, as well as the importance of his innovation. Nowadays texts flow in all possible directions – they are vertical, horizontal, animated, asymmetrical or symmetrical, simultaneous, consecutive, embedded, hip, conservative... What today is (becoming) lost in view is

not a central spatial configuration – there is a multiplicity of these, but the streamlining of styles. I am still using mainly a relatively unobtrusive roman serif for this chapter – I venture only this far from Times New Roman, left alignment and double-spacing. [2] At the same time, it is not the typeface and the format but what they have come to stand for – the whole ensemble of the spoken and unspoken, increasingly or decreasingly flexible exigencies of the academic context, i.e. my working context.

[2] The reader, please notice that this *is* Times New Roman, left-aligned and double-spaced, again as a reminder that the present text is only a dumb version of its original.

DISCRETE OBJECTS

Rem Koolhaas' *S, M, L, XL* and Bruce Mau's *Life Style* are the two books responsible for a fashion in the last decade for impressively big books which try to reach beyond their particular disciplinary focus, books that are compendiums of diverse material and have editorial input no less important than the author's. *S, M, L, XL,* for example, is based on the notion of the catalogue: it is meant to give an overview of the work of O.M.A, Koolhaas' architecture studio, but in *Life Style* Mau (who is listed as co-author of *S, M, L, XL*) describes it like this:

> The book consists of graphs, charts, poems, scripts, revisions, essays, metaphors, panic, chronologies, plans, cartoons, Beckett, events, big men, big type, models, diaries, competitions, notebooks, disasters, artworks, dreams, manifestos, drawings, rants, lectures, cities, speculation, sex, invention, and tragedies.
>
> (332)

In other words, there is no common plane of reference. There are no genre limitations. Nothing is irrelevant. In listing the strategies which outline the design method of his studio, Bruce Mau himself makes a comment on what he calls "the end of the discrete object:"

> "Every object incorporates other objects just as it is itself incorporated within other systems. The discrete object must always be considered in its manifold relationships to its milieu. Failure to account for this embeddedness cuts the object off

> from the events it generates and from the events that generated it." (318)

For Mau, the book as a designed object is integrative and research is its organizing principle. (I will come back to research in the next chapter.) A book creates the conditions for triggering events for the reader, requiring a very active engagement on his or her part. A book is almost programmed to allow gradual surfacing of effects. In a sense it allows a whole gamut of variously visible content, which has the dynamic potential to change over time.

> "We expect the work (of graphic design at least) to happen on the surface. Instead, it happens in the "thickness," in the turning of the page, like a spark jumping a gap." (326)

One might object: isn't this the case with every book? Isn't this only a manner of theorizing about books? Merely a new perspective? Perhaps. This would certainly be so if Mau's books themselves were nothing more than the traditional, densely-filled, properly-designed pages of text, unexpectedly containing interesting thoughts. But Mau's principles, as self-indulgent to the designer as they are, issue from and return back to a practice. And it is a practice which does not push the book outside the textual (cf. artist's books, books as objects), which does not reduce the verbal in favor of the graphic. It *expands* the verbal in conjunction with the graphic. Leaving the book as an object only nominally. The book's "manifold relationships to its milieu" are not placed behind (hidden behind) the appearance of self-containment of an object (whether this is self-containment in terms of logic, notions of completeness

and exhaustiveness on a subject, graphic standards, literature's distinctness from the world or a page's distinctness from the landscape, or criticism's separateness from fiction).

In the same vein, Christo: " It is really a matter of putting together many elements. You know very well that you cannot extract its meaning by simply looking at a Tiziano. If you really want to learn about Tiziano, go to Venice and live through an ensemble of things" (45). Let me paraphrase thus: reading a text entails living through it, and living through the ensemble of events it triggers or absorbs. By this I do not mean that if a text talks about fishing one should go fishing, although this may be a good way of taking the text literally or theatrically. But if I read Tom Phillips' *Humument* I might read it through Victorian novels, through contemporary painting, artist's books, English grammar, rhetoric, book design, the market for collectible books, concrete poetry, internet shopping, community interaction, gift giving, globalization, teaching *Middlemarch*, copyright law, authorship, collaboration, transparency, visibility, comic books, ethics, phenomenology, logic, history of literature, contemporary poetry, narrative, language games, lifestyle, advertising, reading patterns, reproduction techniques, composition principles, aesthetics, friendship, personality, discontinuity, all of which make part of the book's meaning – meaning which can be extracted yet is not there in itself, neither in the text's relation to literature as such, but within the lived contexts the book creates.[1] The vitality of

---

[1] In the background of this passage is the following short text from *S, M, L, XL*. It requires to be quoted in full:

Obstacles

Villa Dall'Ava
St.Cloud, Paris, France

Completed 1991

Letter

It was handwritten in blue ink, obviously by someone who was very passionate about architecture.

Reading it, you knew immediately that this was going to be a mythological enterprise.

Desperation

It had a desperate tone: "Dear so-and-so, you are our last chance." Something like that.

Competition

Later, we found out that they had already spent a long time searching for the right architect. They had even held small competitions.

Scandal

We made an appointment. He would pick me up at Charles de Gaulle Airport. When I came out, there was an enormous scandal: someone was trying o kill a policeman.

It turned out to be him. The policeman had asked him to move, but since he was waiting for his architect he had tried to run over the policeman.

Introduction

This was our introduction.

Site

The site was beautiful – a Monet. It slopes toward the Seine. Beyond it, the Bois de Boulogne, and beyond that a panoramic view of the city; the Eiffel Tower is straight on axis. La Defense is to the left.

Neighbors

It is surrounded by 19th-century houses, very picturesque; diagonally across is a 1950s "Belgian" house with a tennis court.

Intimidation I

Two of Le Corbusier's villas are nearby.

Intimidation II

The clients wanted a masterpiece.

Contradiction I

He wanted a glass house.
She wanted a swimming pool on the roof.

Urban/Suburban

Theoretically, it would be possible to see the Eiffel Tower while swimming.

Weight

It was a difficult issue to resolve: the weight of the pool resting on glass.

Columns

The engineer proposed columns to support the parents' apartment.

Butterfly

There are columns inside, but they are absorbed by the wall.
The house floats like a concrete butterfly.

Contradiction II

The site was small.
The house was big.

It had to have the smallest possible footprint.

Pretzel

The zoning regulations described a kind of pyramidal pretzel that the house could not violate.

The site was surrounded by walls; it was already a kind of interior.

The small rectangle of the glass house represents the minimum footprint.
It is only a preliminary enclosure; the real house ends at the walls, where the "others" begin.

Building Permit

The permit process went very fast.
That was the last thing that went fast.

Fight

We got permission to build.
When the neighbors learned what was happening, they became very unhappy. There had never been a house on the site.

Issue

The issue: does etched glass count as a wall?
It was debated all the way to the French Supreme Court.

Commuters

Anyway, we started.
The house was too expensive. Belgian contractors were cheaper.
It would be a house built by commuters.

Deserted

In the end, the lawyers deserted the clients.
They had to argue themselves.
They won.

Delay

Time passed. Time pressed.

Daughter

The daughter grew up. How would she inhabit the house that she had destroyed – accidentally – as a model when she was seven?

Revision

The long wait was bad in some ways, but good in allowing endless revision: it began as a beginner's house: strident, colorful, etc.; it became a record of our own growing up.

Delay

Years passed.

Moved

We moved in to finish the house.
They moved in because it was still unfinished.
We became friends.

[There follow 37 pages of photos.]

Pause

They lived happily ever after.

Saturday

one's critical concerns is tested in the meaningfulness of the ensemble constructed around and within and beyond the text itself. If I try to teach students something about the relationships between the verbal and the visual, they need to be able to extend this beyond the particular situation of this classroom, this poem, this author; and extend this not through generalization and abstraction. But perhaps I got distracted.

This section of the chapter has the goal of showing a third approach to typography: Bruce Mau's notion of design is based on the belief that author and designer share the "ability to freely engage and interpret the world directly, to move away from what is already known, and to explore" (325).[2] The same way a text on philosophy, or a piece of literature is an engagement with and interpretation of "the world." Both for Warde and for Tschichold the work of the typographer was one of interpretation too. For Warde it was a question of erasure and faithfulness to a given tradition. And whereas Tschichold advocated an interpretation of the object at hand and an invention according to a certain desired effect, Mau multiplies the process and opens it to the outside. The designed book participates actively, visibly, in the culture which produces it. It is conscious of its effects, it gives not only a certain performativity to content but a record of the production of content in its varied relations with a world.

One Saturday morning, they counted 30 people outside, looking in ...

[2] "While the pathways followed by designer and author occasionally diverge, it is the separation and tension between them that generates ideas and qualities that could be produced in no other way. ... "We are not sure whether this new way of working means the end of design, or whether it means that designers become authors, or authors become designers, or all three." (327)

Coda

A book is a thing one has in one's hand. A book is a thing one carries in one's bag. A book is an object one reads seated, or standing, or lying. A book is an object one browses through, one looks at, one counts the pages of, one writes in, one sticks notes on, one uses to prop a couch. A book does not disclose its story or its purpose at once. It allows access only to a certain number of its pages at the same time. In an electronic book calling the pages "pages" is only a manner of speaking, and a different manner of speaking. Until recently it took a long stretch of the imagination to lay flat an entire volume, cancel the dynamism (the turning) of the pages and see its entirety from "a bird's point of view." Until recently it took a long stretch of the imagination to graphically represent a book as a series of blocks (a side section of the whole book) with dimensions corresponding to length, height and font parameters of each of its chapters. The different techniques of representation influence the possibilities of perception, it's a two way movement. If our general idea of typography (design) has changed, so has our image of the text .

And now a little interlude:

INTERLUDE CHAPTER

(THE WORLD AND THE PAGE)

Preliminary note: this interlude was conceived to consist of a poster and a booklet in a pocket, although, due to various limitations, this is not how you presently read it.

And why, one may ask, should literary scholarship have anything to do with posters - usually things one puts on the wall for decoration or for the purposes of publicity? But the real question is how a poster can be integrated in the form of a dissertation. How a page can be extended to include multiple pages and how this will influence not only what the text of the chapter says, but also what it does. In other words, the questions of form are to be posited (literally) formally.

The poster has its counterpart in the foldout page, which I have seen in a nineteenth-century engineering manual extended to nearly thirty times the page of the book. The foldout page, though, remains attached to the book as a monstrous limb, at times eclipsing completely the book itself. The purpose here, on the contrary, will be to create a part which both belongs to the whole of the dissertation and separates from it as an independent element, which, then in its own turn, takes its place in the reader's (or the writer's) physical surroundings, tangible surroundings, the world. The seduction of the poster as a form is its often unexpected intrusion into the field of vision – a sight caught in passing, or a momentary contemplation, a lingering impression, an openness to view: effects that I do not wish to deny to literary studies, even if it is only in order to create a physical (and symbolic) relation between work and life, page and world.

The booklet (which is not included here), on the other hand, imposed its own format. It was composed as a brief text, commenting on various aspects (all related to the question of transparency) in various past and future parts of the dissertation. Hence its smallness and detachability from the body of pages are meant to make it accessible at different stages of reading.

In this essay I will go through several texts, joining and disjoining ideas, examining (to use this clichéd and frightful word) how one goes from the "world" to the "page," including how one writes an essay like the one you are presently reading.

The first sentence to greet the reader when s/he opens Edward Tufte's *Envisioning Information* is: "The world is complex, dynamic, multidimensional; the paper is static, flat" (9). For Tufte, as for Stephane Mallarmé a century ago, there is the world and then, there is paper. The question for Tufte, however, is "how ... to represent the rich visual world of experience and measurement on mere flatland" (ib.). The contrast between the world and the paper is clear-cut and exaggerated for a purpose in Tufte's opening paragraph. Flatness is opposed to complexity and multidimensionality, dynamism to being static. But the effect of his words is to establish the separateness of these two realities, "world" and "paper," as what one is faced with, as a beginning. Even as an abstraction (which world, which paper?).

The movement of the book from this point on is ever more into detail and concrete example. In fact, Tufte's *Envisioning Information* is a compendium of maps, drawings, statistical graphs, timetables, pictures, accompanied by succinct running commentary. That is, his book is an illustration or an embodiment of the problems he describes and analyzes – how to present the wealth of materials "out there" in the world, materials we read daily - from the face of the watch and the calendar to advertisements and posters – "in here," in a book, but also within a discussion of what the process of going in and out world/page involves. One might suppose that such a book (which is "work at the intersection of image, word, number, art") would involve mostly

selection and analysis, but from his simple contrastive beginning Tufte rents an amazing opening into – what appear to be – the different ways of "reading" the world, the paper, or one within the frame of the other. Consider this:

> "We thrive in information-thick worlds because of our marvelous and everyday capacities to select, edit, single out, structure, highlight, group, pair, merge, harmonize, synthesize, focus, organize, condense, reduce, boil down, choose, categorize, catalog, classify, list, abstract, scan, look into, idealize, isolate, discriminate, distinguish, screen, pigeonhole, pick over, sort, integrate, blend, inspect, filter, lump, skip, smooth, chunk, average, approximate, cluster, aggregate, outline, summarize, itemize, review, dip into, flip through, browse, glance into, leaf through, skim, refine, enumerate, glean, synopsize, winnow the wheat from the chaff, and separate the sheep from the goats." (50)

Some of these human activities have been traditionally charged with value, others are acquiring more and more importance now. Once in lecture, a professor of mine was talking about Queequeg's first encounter with a big book in *Moby-Dick*. Queequeg is sitting on the bed and leafing through the enormous volume, while he counts the pages. Every time he reaches fifty, he whistles with amazement. The professor said this too was a kind of reading. And I see more relevance in this pronouncement than in the advice given by another professor that a chapter should be around 40 pages (assuming an average attention span); even though in both cases it is still a question of counting the pages.

Let us turn our attention now to another professor, a German who in 1933 gladly left Germany ("right after the closing of the Bauhaus") to come and teach at Black

Mountain College and later, in 1950, at Yale University. Josef Albers' "educational promise" was "to open eyes" (also one of the first phrases he learned in English) or as he later formulated it, "to cultivate the "thinking in situations" which is imagination" (35). Albers' courses in basic drawing and basic design, which the students mockingly but appropriately called "imagineering," were aimed to effect a change in education from a more cerebral, and medieval for Albers, approach towards a more active, manual training:

> "Manual work connects directly with reality
> and fulfills actual needs.
> It provides easily the educationally important
> satisfaction of achievement.
> It provokes curiosity for experience, as well as for
> knowledge.
> It connects intellectual and manual work and workers.
> It develops judgment of usefulness and quality
> as well as respect for material and labor,
> and thus improves cultural and social conditions.
> ... It teaches us that insight and skill depend on observation
> as well as on thought. And through manual work,
> as through art, we realize that there is,
> besides thinking in logical conclusions,
> "thinking in situations,"
> which is just as necessary as thinking in numbers
> or figures or verbal terms." (14)

Imagine that, taken by an irresistible urge to capture a sensation, you take paper and pencil and try to create something (a poem, a drawing) related to the sight and sounds you are immersed in. Actually today we have cameras. Snapshot? The facility of the

camera is nothing more than the illusion of a perfect recording device. I would like to photograph this glass on the table: at my disposal there are at least a dozen possible points of view, a dozen lighting and exposure options, although this may not be evident. If I try drawing it I could use only a bare outline, or draw the reflection of the window in the glass too, or create the illusion of a full bodied object, or even retain the red of the liquid inside and whiten everything else in the kitchen, because I think crimson is a very important color and because I like the overlap of liquid and glass. "The cow looks at grass, it seems," Josef Albers writes earlier in the same lecture, "merely as an edible vegetable. We, usually, see grass first as something predominantly green. ... We see grass, normally, not as a plant, but in areas, in quantities of varying and changing greens. We also look at it as a lawn... as a carpet... as a fur to lie on. And doing this we even may perceive grass as a forest, presupposing that we put our eyes deep enough into it" (17). For Albers, who wrote some educational poems but was not a poet, "grass as a vegetable is a factual fact; grass as forest, an actual fact." In another lecture on basic graphic principles Albers also distinguishes between edge-lines (physically existing, factual lines) and transitional lines (lines of perceptual projection, actual lines) (28). (The distinction between the two is easily perceptible in undulating paper: there are the edges of the paper and then there are the mobile lines formed by its folds.) Apparently for Albers in the various ways one can relate to an object (represent, name, etc.) there are distinctions – certain approaches are closer to art and interpret the difference "between physical fact and psychic effect," others do not. That is, the represented object, the "actual fact," is always more than the object itself because it contains the interpretation of this

difference. We may call this relation of what is and what we do with a pencil or a keyboard an experience in itself, an event, or a "situation" as in "thinking in situations." Then, to go back to the beginning of this essay, the separateness or the distance between "world" and "paper" can be covered in situations; it is the very possibility of thinking, of calling for example the sea a sky and the sky a landscape. It is an unbridgeable interval.

I would like to think that one day Pierre Albert-Birot, the happy poet often forgotten in the discussions of modernism perhaps precisely because he seemed to write a poetry of joy, stopped in front of one of those large columns in Paris where theaters and companies posted their affiches, and thought "hmmm, and why not?". Or did they talk about it with Apollinaire who believed that the poetry of his epoch was in "catalogues, posters,, advertisements," in the words of Walter Benjamin, "the inconspicuous forms"? This is about Pierre Albert-Birot's "poem-posters," published in *La Lune ou le Livre des Poemes* (1924). Printed in his home on a small hand press, the book is now considered a collector's treasure. The poem-posters assume the form of public announcements and notices one usually sees on walls, doors, or as street signs (see postcards). Although the reader has access to them now as pages of a book, they existed as posters too, as one can see in a photo of the author sitting in his "bookstore" (Lentengre 305).

"His poems were an act linked to the hand." "The love for work well done," (Pons 49) or "the satisfaction of achievement" Josef Albers considered so important a part of manual training. And perhaps Albert-Birot's curiosity and animation for quotidian

objects, which one can witness everywhere in his poetry, also has something to do with using one's hands or knowing how to construct things with one's hands along with one's head.

Albert-Birot started the magazine *SIC*, with his wife Germaine, in 1916. The first eleven issues were done at a cheap printer from Polish origin, Rirachovsky. The story goes that Albert-Birot always overviewed the printing of the magazine and took great interest in the job. Encouraged by Rirachovsky, he bought a small hand-manipulated printing press, which in the summer of 1922 was delivered to his bedroom. Being a restorer, sculptor, painter, theater director, writer, editor, Albert-Birot became also a typographer. Typography was where visual art, manual labor and poetry converged. And it is important that literally they converged in an old and cheap press, and in the poet's bedroom. Birot succeeded in collapsing inhabited space, working, creative and emotional space, which gave him, to say the least, independence. It helped him sustain the connection to his writing in the entirety of the process. Birot did not lose sight of the manuscript once it was finished the way it happens to most writers. Nowadays, for instance, authors have very little say in the actual, material production and the promotion of their writing. This has become the domain of designers, publishers and marketers. By contrast, the fate of Albert-Birot's books was in his hands.

Let me mention that the surrealists did not like Birot. They also disliked Jean Cocteau so much that they called Cocteau's mother to tell her her son was dead. For Birot they had their reasons. He had very little to do with the proclaimed principles of surrealism. His works were public projects and personal experiments of a very different (harmless) kind. Where surrealists experimented with the human psyche, Albert-Birot

was enchanted with the hand and its instrument. Despite his elevated moments when he discusses the role of the poet in theoretical terms, poetry in Birot is very quotidian and devoid of mystery. Marvelous and marvelling but devoid of mystery. "Perhaps the poet after all is nothing more than somebody who helps words to their place" ["placeur de mots"] Birot writes in "La Joie des Sept Couleurs." This proposition comes as no surprise from somebody who is now poet-typographer. The poet finds use for words, finds their place, administrates, the way the typographer places text on the page. When we talk of the composition of a poem with Birot, it refers not only to a semantic and syntactic or phonetic composition, but to the composition of metal type in the press as well. If these were consecutive processes (often they must have been the same thing) the latter probably took more time, and certainly equal amount of imagination and precision. For Albert-Birot writing the unspeakable, painting the invisible, which I interpret as ways to extract from things (the world) a certain novelty, was essentially linked to typography, to placing words on the page (the paper). Albert-Birot and Apollinaire (the two collaborated on numerous projects) share a graphic engagement with poetry, but whereas Apollinaire's experiment tested how close literature can come to drawing, Albert-Birot shows to what extend graphic design and printing can play a performative role in the composition (by consequence also the reading) of poetry.

[Apollinaire wrote his poems by hand, they were composed in type by the printer. Some poems were impossible to produce in type and were in manuscript form. For more on Apollinaire – chapter four.]

The world in Albert-Birot's quotidian poems or his poem-posters (if you, for a moment at least, allow me to speak of "the world" in any poem) is a dynamic, multidimensional, mobile world. The poems' mode of existence on paper is... dynamic, multidimensional, and as long as they are read and carried around, it is mobile too. For one thing, objects in Birot's poems are never described; they are the subjects of active verbs. At their most passive they just are (subjects of "to be") something else: "the sea is a grey sky," or "the sea is an old lady/who talks too much," etc. People in his poems are caught in perfectly ordinary interactions: "Two women passed by in the sun/I wanted to look at them/ But they were so pretty/I sneezed", "Ask the wine merchant down the street," "We are here/ We get on a train/We watch trees pass by/We get off/We are at a different place", etc. It is not difficult to enumerate the tropes Birot typically uses – metaphors and personification. What is more to the point is not even how these tropes function in the banality of the events and the apparent simplicity of words and emotions (how simple is it to sneeze for beauty?) – but how they relate to the graphism of the poems.

Albers' distinction between factual edge-lines and actual transition lines described an interval between an object's "real" shape (physical fact) and the transitory shapes it may acquire perceived in changing conditions (psychic effect). One can imagine many ways in which this distinction can be broken down. It is no more stable than any of the innumerable ways in which we choose to map or transform experience. Someone can argue that the difference between edge and line is not precise at all and we do not know enough about eyesight to have the necessary clarity. Right now, however, I

would like to say that there is a difference between the lines formed by the sunrays falling on the sheet of paper and its tactile contour. Moreover, Birot always insisted on the poet "seeing what others do not see," on a connection to a reality, on the poet as a witness to things otherwise invisible. Isn't there something which presents itself as literal in his poetry? When there is a metaphor such as "the sea is an old lady who talks too much," or a substitution as, for example, "Dangerous Road" becoming "Dangerous Love" (see postcard), what is happening in terms of real and transitory shapes (figures)? To put it in another way – what is literal and what is figurative in Albert-Birot's poetry?

Taken literally, figurative means departing from representation. We tend to think of literal as closer to the real, and of figurative as speaking of the real through a second plane of reference. The interesting thing is that this proximity to the real in the notion of the literal is through a certain kind of self-referentiality. Literal refers to the letter, literal is letter by letter, concretely on the page, through itself and not through an abstraction.

From the very beginning Albers' notion of the "factual fact" and the "actual fact" appears to be based on the literal and the figurative (grass as plant and grass as a forest). Graphically speaking, his distinction is based on the recognition of empty space as well as occupied space, white as well as black, position in context instead of abstracted forms. (Let me remind you that I am trying to describe a quality to Albert-Birot's poetry and that I am trying to come as close as I can to an intuition of what this effect is, but also that my purpose is to bring several texts together and pick and outline and stress certain parts as opposed to others, to offer an itinerary through these

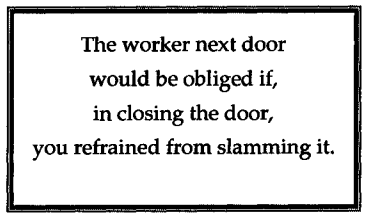
texts in a way that makes sense, that makes something clearer and promotes or justifies what this thesis is about.) Albers' conclusion, though, does not remain in the opposition of literal and figurative. His conclusion's resonating phrase is "many meanings," "one plus one results in many meanings." That is, any operation that is based on the opposition literal/figurative (or factual/actual in his own words) results in many meanings. After all, one plus one equals two is no more factual/literal than one plus one equals three or more. We may choose to call it literal but this will be serving a purpose: for example, to describe situations in which one plus one equals two prevents dangerous fraud (for the shopper, for the engineer). The best we can do is to take into account the proliferation of meanings, break the habit of equalizing, of identifying what we see with what we expect or take for granted. This is the education Albers promoted. Ideally, I would have said this is the education Albert-Birot promoted, but this will be reading a lesson into the poems that may or may not be there.

Albert-Birot's quotidian poems have a literal pull, a force resulting from the placement of the words which refuses allegory. To his friend Pierre Bearn he used to tell that poetry had nothing to say. If it has nothing to say (nothing to which we can say true or false), does it have anything to show, to do? Birot's poems continuously try to break habitual perception. His metaphors (significantly never similes) put the sign "=" between unusual pairs, unusual pairs of very usual realities. But this overlaying of references always loops back to (not an abstracted system of values, not a consistent plane of meaning but) the literal arrangement of words using a certain graphic frame of type, decorative elements, line, all of which in the context of poetry serve as

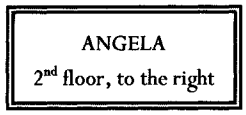
instructions for reading (which in its turn may explain why Albert-Birot had done with punctuation). Just as Albers based his notion of metaphorical multiplicity on very literal attention to forms on paper, the freedom in Albert-Birot to live and read in a multi-relational "ensemble of things" is grounded in typographic composition, whether experimental or more traditionally and precisely ordered. What appears as "studied simplicity" in Albert-Birot is also the clarity of visual composition. What appears as amused brevity and conversational ease is also the interaction of (concrete) visual elements with (verbal) semantic play. (Certain styles of graffiti function the same way.) If the world in his poems is inhabited by everyday realities (bridge, sky, house, train, tree, getting on, getting off, sneezing, etc.), his compositions on paper cite everyday elements of the surrounding visual culture (decorative roses, squares, circles, lines, words in capital letters, public notices, etc.). If I do not want to say that with Albert-Birot the imagination works using the hand and the printing press, it is because in all its meanings "use" is insufficient to describe the dependence of one on the other without implying a hierarchy and an unnecessary separation.

Some poems by Albert-Birot, along with poems by Max Jacob, Robert Delauney and others, were shown as graphic works in several poetry exhibitions. The press at the time reacted exactly with an amused "why not." If one does research on Albert-Birot one has to take into account the contexts in which these poems were and are read – within a portable book, on the wall, into the street, in the art gallery or on postcards. Why does this matter?

An entry in Benjamin's *Arcades Project* quotes two signs in an arcade:



or



Remember that Benjamin's *One-Way Street* is composed under the headings of signs on a street: "Filling Station," "Breakfast Room," "Number 113," "Gloves," "Mexican Embassy," etc. Benjamin is practically using a found structure, a ready-made structure to organize his writing. Fed by a fascination with accidental reading, logical progression and connectedness are replaced by the principle of assembling. Writing is dissociated from the "universal gesture of the book" and aligned with the singularity and haphazardness of an encounter in the street. It has recognized the right to ambiguity, contradiction, incompleteness. Perhaps this principle of discontinuity, which may be no less complex and rigorous, is more faithful to the way we think and the way we communicate knowledge and observation.

Why is it we still prefer the book?

Views on the matter: please do not hesitate to use white space at your pleasure.

a page from the diary of a 'light-hearted academician'

Tom Phillips. Dante Diary sheet VIII

CHAPTER TWO

This is blind text or dummy copy for a second chapter. This is where the second chapter begins by stating what it is and its main concern, subject or argument. This is a brief introduction into the theme by way of a statement or several logically developed and coherent statements which reveal in what way this chapter is going to reassess a certain material. In other words, this is where the chapter proves its scholarly validity, its *raison*

d'etre in the world of literary studies. It defines its terms and demonstrates its method. After proposing a task for itself, the chapter opens an entrance for its original text or texts.

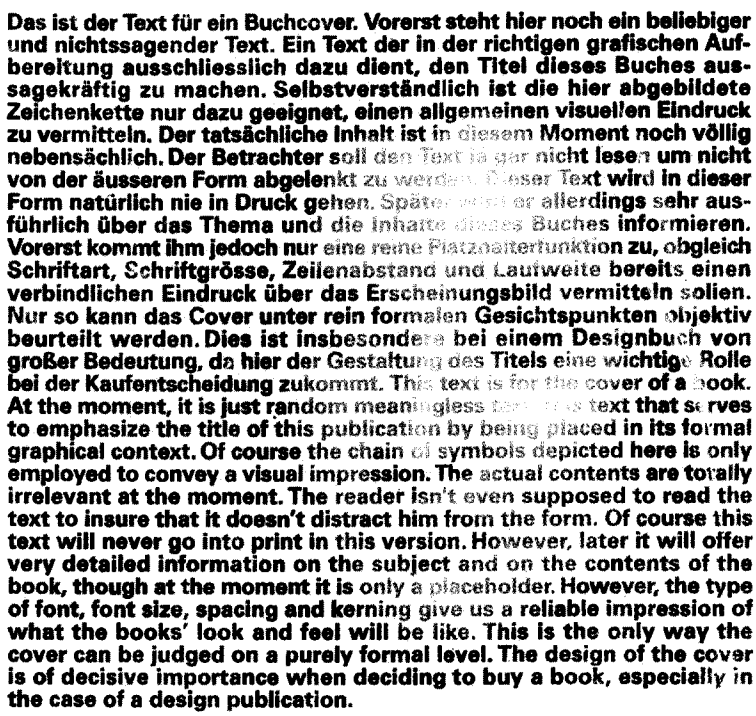
> Here goes an extended quotation from the original text under examination. It is clearly signaled as a quotation by placing it more towards the center of the page, in a smaller block of letters and with larger margins. The quotation is single-spaced and can be in italics to mark more emphatically its foreignness. Recently double-spacing was accepted for quotations, as long as the larger margins still signal its status within the scholarly text being written.
>
> (Title, page number)

Often commentators take advantage of the larger margins to note inconsistencies in argumentation or exposition. These are usually tentatively offered in the form of questions and they keep alive the editorial function of criticism. According to the unwritten rules of academic decorum, a long quotation should be followed by a proportionately long discussion of it. It would be to the merit of the writer if in his or her analysis she draws on previous scholarship on the subject (or on similar subjects). Thus, the original text is taken into its scholarly context and a continuity of a tradition of research is affirmed. Within this tradition the scholar can claim his/her debt and pronounce the last word. Since one can never be sure of, or is no longer capable of, reading all on a specific subject, the "last word" is understood mostly in temporal terms. The equally spaced paragraphs create a regular visual rhythm punctuated by the denser texts of the original materials:

> As the just judge must reinvent the laws, even though she or he must be faithful to them, so the cultural critic must posit anew, as something new, the culture that is studied, while at the same time being faithful to it. This positing also recreates the critic. (Hillis Miller, *Illustration* 59)

The rhythm of paragraphs is mirrored in the logical progression of the argument. Clear transitions from one aspect of a problem to the next mark the gradual achievement of consistency by signposting the original text in a meaningful way. This is done by paying close attention to concrete word choices and in the case of poetry, placement within the aural and visual (prosodic) form of the poem on the page. From then on, the discussion is conducted according to method and purpose, as a guarantee that the game will be played in observance of the rules, i.e. that it will take place in the realm of scholarship and not fiction.

After multiplying the original text of literature into a respectful assembly of readings and commentaries, including his or her own, the chapter singles out aspects and ideas in the materials, which corroborate the initial theses. This is where writing approaches in its movement a full circle and comes back as an uncanny encounter in the conflict between faithfulness and innovation. Following a reaffirmation of the


Das ist der Text für ein Buchcover. Vorerst steht hier noch ein beliebiger und nichtssagender Text. Ein Text der in der richtigen grafischen Aufbereitung ausschliesslich dazu dient, den Titel dieses Buches aussagekräftig zu machen. Selbstverständlich ist die hier abgebildete Zeichenkette nur dazu geeignet, einen allgemeinen visuellen Eindruck zu vermitteln. Der tatsächliche Inhalt ist in diesem Moment noch völlig nebensächlich. Der Betrachter soll den Text ja gar nicht lesen um nicht von der äusseren Form abgelenkt zu werden. Dieser Text wird in dieser Form natürlich nie in Druck gehen. Später wird er allerdings sehr ausführlich über das Thema und die Inhalte dieses Buches informieren. Vorerst kommt ihm jedoch nur eine reine Platzhalterfunktion zu, obgleich Schriftart, Schriftgrösse, Zeilenabstand und Laufweite bereits einen verbindlichen Eindruck über das Erscheinungsbild vermitteln solien. Nur so kann das Cover unter rein formalen Gesichtspunkten objektiv beurteilt werden. Dies ist insbesondere bei einem Designbuch von großer Bedeutung, da hier der Gestaltung des Titels eine wichtige Rolle bei der Kaufentscheidung zukommt. This text is for the cover of a book. At the moment, it is just random meaningless text that serves to emphasize the title of this publication by being placed in its formal graphical context. Of course the chain of symbols depicted here is only employed to convey a visual impression. The actual contents are totally irrelevant at the moment. The reader isn't even supposed to read the text to insure that it doesn't distract him from the form. Of course this text will never go into print in this version. However, later it will offer very detailed information on the subject and on the contents of the book, though at the moment it is only a placeholder. However, the type of font, font size, spacing and kerning give us a reliable impression of what the books' look and feel will be like. This is the only way the cover can be judged on a purely formal level. The design of the cover is of decisive importance when deciding to buy a book, especially in the case of a design publication.

the cover of +rosebud magazine n.3

initial claims, the chapter may propose further possibilities for exploration and research. Stating such possibilities makes a good (open-ended) conclusion. Rarely one can put a quotation at the very end of the coherent entity which the chapter represents.

"Writing is a wager."

A Public Conversation of Scholars

Today (22 October) there was a roundtable discussion in the Humanities Center, entitled "Is it time to rebuild the humanities?" No delicate thoughts, the feeling pervasive in Thompson Room was one of "loss," lack of excitement, and even, lack of orientation as to what are, should be or shall be the humanities. Nothing seemed simple, nothing was clearly mapped. Literary studies felt like old creaky furniture, no longer either beautiful or particularly useful. Perhaps the tone was set in advance by the character of the event – a self-diagnosis, a self-questioning. And times of self-questioning tend to be gloomy. But something somebody said struck – not a chord – a silence , in my patiently listening ear:

"Young scholars and graduate students have difficulty figuring out what a "contribution" to the field might be." [a]

Vocabulary

Here are some expressions collected from a recent article by Mary Ann Caws:

layers of reading, layers of meaning,

accumulations intensify,

extraordinary weight, revisions,[b] stress, reminders in various patterns,

sight lines,

lend a punctual charge

unreliable, it used to be, verbal or visual,

permission to look afresh.

Nice place! No place!

Perfectly in accord, almost magically harmonious, let us try to imagine the utopian coexistence of text and image. Would it be a hybrid? Would it be an immediate impression? Canceling the temporality of reading or prolonging the act of looking, this perfect union will have to refuse to say anything (image) and reveal an indescribable (but repeatable) mesh of significations (text). I am deliberately diverting the term "linguistic" here. An indefinite conflation of unread text and unseen image? Each term and its negative – read, unread, seen, unseen, text and image – existing without obligation to remain the same, or to remain themselves. Not merely a visible effect, but something intricately dynamic. Almost a history of sorts.

An experiment:

DO NOT READ THIS.

(Well, did you? Could you go back and resist reading?)

(Did you, technically? Where does reading begin?)

Strictly speaking: unread text is image – and there is the temptation, (to resist here,) to say "purely image," "unread text is purely image" ; just as text is unseen image. Invisible as image. Transparent.[c] What we are after here is not a symmetry: whereas it would be difficult to refuse letters a pictorial character, it is easier to refuse

pictures a verbal character. But this should be enough to imagine our utopia: the documentation of the emergence, and metamorphosis of letter-images into word-text,[d] where all three (emergence, registration and metamorphosis) are layers of a simultaneous process. So, a temporal rather than spatial utopia. The mind beyond its limit in perception. A perfect future? (Very simply put, the idea here is that time as probably most would agree flows in one direction, whereas space has many dimensions. Even though a text, a poem, a visual composition on the page can allow for multiple readings in different directions, following different axes, backwards and forwards, with repetition, interference, re-interpretation, that is, a whole drama whose turning pivot becomes reading itself with all its adjacent and not so clearly distinguished activities [cf. Tufte in interlude chapter], the mind can not (yet) follow all processes at once. It spins an itinerary, a temporal thread through the text. And perhaps it is impossible, or perhaps only with an effort can it hold all layers and meanings in view. In retrospect. Tinged with memory. Hence utopia, the total artwork elsewhere. Simultaneity remains the vanishing point in this construction.)

The Contribution to the Field

In perfect honesty I admit that the phrase - "a contribution to the field" (please have a good look at this expressionless cliché – "contribution to the field"), has for a long time filled me with skepticism bordering on disgust. Apparently, one needs to figure out "what" could stand behind the phrase. One has to give meaning to it by placing an object – a dissertation, a book – on the other side of the equation. But this something which can amount to "a contribution," of which one can proudly say "This is my contribution," has to fulfill a function (contribute, as well as pay tribute) and fit into a definition (a field). That is, not anything goes, so how does one learn what will meet the expectations stirred by the words' repeated, insistent even if discredited audibility?

There is a sentence in our "Prospectus guidelines," a document which keeps being desperately out-of-date and keeps being pushed into the hands of every graduate student, every year until they leave. There is a sentence that stuck and which comes back now and then like a popular refrain from childhood. It says, "And remember you are writing A BOOK." "BOOK" is originally in capitals and this is significant. But in the vaguest of ways, what is significant about it is that it is meant to be significant. A "BOOK" (!!) as opposed to what? As opposed to an article, a letter, a postcard. But also, not *Madame Bovary*, not *The Cantos*, not even *The Arcades Project*. Some idea of what a book is and what a literary scholar does, the idea of a

given coherence of exposition and analysis, the idea of some wholeness (shut close between covers) is implied here, creating (as if) a necessary relation between this vague but memorable BOOK and the dissertation even before it has been began. [e]

I imagine that the imperative to "contribute" has its beginnings in the more or less utopian discourse of early 20th century science, where "the field" of knowledge could be conceivably laid out in plain view, if not by an act of perception, then by a collective effort of the imagination and a little bit of faith. I may be wrong. (Is one allowed to open the possibility of being wrong in a dissertation? In its solitary enclosure, the dissertation gives the last word. Without contradiction.) I imagine also that "the contribution to the field" has something to do with a passion to preserve, archive, gloss over, describe and collect all possible data, with a view to a certain completeness, or with a view that it might come in handy or turn out unexpectedly valuable. The principle of nineteen-century curio shops and the market for antiques? Rem Koolhaas gave a presentation (entitled "Utopia?") on his new project in China, last year here at the design school, and he pointed out that the temporal interval between the preservation and the thing being preserved has been decreasing exponentially: if in the 17th century they were putting in museums artifacts two millennia old, now we are archiving objects less than several years old. This is evident. The more material there is, the more area for analysis and interpretation, but the less constraint. Hence perhaps the concurrent passion for holding on to inherited forms (procedures) and formats (general makeup): it provides a sense of continuation and secure points in "a field" which has become only too vast, multiple and diverse.[f]

Rimbaud's Biography

November 14) At dinner last night, somebody brought a biography of Arthur Rimbaud to the table. "It's pretty good. It actually has narrative to it and it's not academic." "Are you opposing good to academic?" (laughter) "No, no, but it's easier to read, and it's kind of beautiful." Well. It is not difficult to understand this point of view, and, in fact, there is something about how easy it is to understand this point of view.[g]

Then, we went on to talk about the movie.

Harvard University Archives

"I must confess, that like "microfilm," the notation "dissertation" in a catalogue or database has for many years marked the limits of my research; it has always read like an archivist's shorthand for delayed and expensive accessibility, superseded, unknown or ignored by other scholars, worst of all unindexed, and sized with that suspicious chemical sheen that sweats a threatening toxicity onto the fingers of its readers. ... But be forewarned: this could never have been the dissertation I wanted

to write. The requirements for a doctorate granted by the University of California at Berkeley preclude it. In the Graduate Division's "Guidelines for Submitting a Doctoral Dissertation," the section on format sets rigid typographic constraints, regulating font, spacing, margins, binding, paper stock and even ink." Thus Craig Dworkin at Berkeley in 1999 (viii). In 2003 his thesis was published as a book by Northwestern University Press and the paragraph on the dissertation as a threatening "failure" was erased (after all, the dissertation was a success, or was it?). What remained from the text above was this: "Although this book was began while I was a graduate student at Berkeley, it could never have been a dissertation. [To become a book is not to be a dissertation?] The requirements for a doctorate granted by the University of California at Berkeley precluded it." Etc. To preclude: to shut close beforehand, foreclose.

Harvard University Archives is located in Pusey Library, the underground division of Widener. Thinking that it is only rational first to produce a work and then address the question of archiving and publication, but considering that I might be faced with a dilemma in the case of the Archives' refusal to accept my thesis, I went to see the person responsible for doctoral dissertations. Result: as long as the paper and the binding meet standards for durability, the Harvard Archives have nothing to say. However, my query should be redirected[h] to the Registrar's and to UMI ("UMI ... maintains the definitive bibliographic record for over 2 million doctoral dissertations and master's theses.")

The Anticlimax of Diagram

i An apology for understatement, ellipsis, economy of expression, without ready-made rephrasable expansive conclusions.

All the literature on the relationships between text and image has registered, in one way or another, a common ground (in theory) where a conflict between the verbal and the visual can be played out. Martin Heusser in his editorial introduction to a selection of papers on text and image interactions, quotes W. J. T. Mitchell to observe that "the history of western culture 'is in part the story of a protracted struggle for dominance between pictorial and linguistic signs'" (13). The common ground here is signification, the reason for conflict the disputable declaration of independence of either word or image. To use a phrase from another author in the same volume, "the logical or narrative impulse" has created here, or repeated rather, a very neatly organized structure – a common axis (being a sign, producing meaning) and two polar ends (words and images). This figure, extraordinarily pervasive as if potent with some self-perpetuating principle, has already mapped all possible alliances and critical positions. So, when Heusser reaches the conclusion in his introduction, it is no longer any surprise that we have come back to the starting point: "With this, we come full circle in our short critique of the relation between word and image. It has become clear that the two are inseparable because they are

constitutionally part of one another. Starting from the word-end, so to speak, we found that the image cannot be extirpated from language because language is by definition a sort of image and therefore depends on the image if it is to exercise its (conventional) function properly" (17). In homage to ambiguity, fluid and open positionings, also complexity, here is an incomplete sentence from Mallarmé: that tracery of sinuous and mobile variations on the idea that the written word claims to fix...

Multiplicity is difficult, as difficult as allowing for difference.

In a gesture perhaps similarly reductive as mapping various phenomena into a single two-dimensional figure, I offer a parallel (same?) situation, this time concerning standardization:

> "The Russian rationalist says one type only in everything that is printed. We must have standardization, he contends. We must cut out this *bourgeois* pandering to ostentation and display.
>
> The advertisement typographer, on the other hand, must have many types. The advertisement he designs must be different from their neighbours – at any price!
>
> Then comes the typographical purist. He says, 'show me first the paper type, for there [are?] many questions of shape and serif, weight and colour that I must settle.'
>
> And so we go on, taking refuge at last in the eternal evasion of *chacun à son gout* (printer's advertisement in *Art and Industry,* July 1937)." (Jobling 137)

And couldn't we *also* map this "struggle for dominance" against the division between the sensual and the intellectual? When Moholy-Nagy writes "typographical materials themselves contain strongly optical tangibilities of which they can render the content of the communication in a directly visible – not only in an indirectly intellectual – fashion," he is taking a step backwards from general assumptions [cf. chapter one]. Text, traditionally conceived as directly present to the mind, as directly intellectual, is, through the senses of a designer/writer, only indirectly so. It is first and foremost "directly visible." For Moholy-Nagy both of these definitions of direct-ness on the one hand, and visible and intellectual (imaginary?) on the other, pass through a memorable phrase: "optical tangibilities." Why tangible? What has perceptibility to touch to do with the look of texts?

In the past, in China, they used to perfume inks. At some point in communist Bulgaria they did this too.[j]

Noise

Ultimately, what I would like to create is noise. Noise. Perhaps not even the rustle of language, but the buzzing of thought set in motion,

which steals from the sides and resounds through the hollows of memory. Not even that clear and discernible a noise. Not

recognizable. But the noise of, one might say, vague nostalgia – concrete in impact but not in outline, it

overwhelms one by surprise, from behind. An unexpected wave pushes the swimmer's back while he tries

to walk out of the water. Noise which makes one trip over and lose the balance of conclusions. Noise, then,

which only in repetition, interference, layering and rhythm can approach the movement of music. Yet is just background in itself. [k]

Epigraphs

"Anagram
"Invent, invent wildly, paying no attention to connections, till it becomes impossible to summarize. A simple relay race among symbols, one says the name of the next, without rest. To dismantle the world into a saraband of anagrams, endless. And then believe in what cannot be expressed ..." Rem Koolhaas quoting Umberto Eco. With a grain of salt.

"But, as always happens with the obvious, this will take some time[l] to demonstrate." (Lacoue-Labarthe 48)

Artificial Invisible Skeleton

The further I go, the less I see a possibility of going back, without a profound dissatisfaction. I see absolutely no reason why criticism or scholarship as it is called this side of the Atlantic, should be written the way it used to be. That is, in coherent, detached (impersonal, monologic), continuous text which is then placed aside, on the side (the margin is its origin), and serves to be a supporting structure for a so-called original text, which our piece of criticism claims to be of genuine interest in itself, whereas claiming only derivative interest in its own efficaciousness. The facts of research, explanations, pointing out, aspects of the text, elaborating tools for handling what we inherit as literature or as language, challenging the politics of or promoting the politics of, a text – which of these does really require the use of continuously built paragraphs around an armature of perfectly acceptable, clichéd expressions and grammatical structures? A secondary text? Even after one has given up the idea of giving the last word, or producing a definitive, the definitive reading? Even after one has admitted that the critiques that matter claim a position on the other side of criticism itself? That what is considered good scholarship is perseverance and some ingenuity tightly fitted into an unshakeable format?[m] A dummy copy. A text that is not read, or not meant to be read but which fulfills certain functions, invisibly replacing not only a multiplicity of possibilities with artificial (fortuitous) constraints, but also passion with fear of the failure to comply.

Lorem Ipsum

Blind text, dummy copy, Lorem Ipsum are all names for the use of "dummy" or "model" text in the printing industry. The blind text provides the appearance of normal distribution of letters, i.e. the appearance of standard text, but consists of scrambled Latin and/or repeated phrases ad infinitum. The purpose of this technique is to foreclose any engagement with content and focus the viewer's attention on the layout of the page. Dummy copy is, so to say, a way to test designer possibilities. The blind text inhabits a certain unreality. This is its seduction: a text which says nothing, a text which refuses to mean, a text which blindly stares back, unrecognizable. The "real" text is replaced with something nonsensical, which at the same time is its copy, its dumb copy. In other words, blind text has to do with reproduction. (We will come back to this later.) But let us take a step backwards to the question of meaninglessness: Lorem Ipsum is meant to be meaningless.

An article on blind text in +rosebud (see note *e*) starts with a paragraph floating in the upper part of the page ambiguously taking the place of the epigraph or an abstract or simply a beginning which receives more emphasis (all capital letters, position with respect to the rest). The entire text of the article, in fact, is in two colors: red and black, allowing one text to be embedded within the other, one text to emerge from the other, one text to surround the other, one text to create its double, one text to betray its other, or simply a text to betray the fortuitousness of its communicative possibilities.

Merely play?

Does it matter if we call it playfulness

except in order to establish some concept of seriousness?

In our working context being serious or rigorous, in the fastness of change in technologies of writing, has come to stand for dummy transparency and knowledgeability. Look at the economy and beauty of the mere use of color in the article (next page). It conveys complexity of thought and engagement with the theme, a multiplicity of suggestions which may or may not accord with the views in the article. Thus, in a sense, dividing itself, (the article,) into writing and design (at least) to confirm one of its tentative claims ("Dummy copy only exists because of the division between writing and design.").[n] A complexity that seven left-justified block paragraph you would expect to find in respectable scholarly journals, can never vie for: not for *lack* of depth, but because traditionally scholarship has excluded graphic complexity from its techniques for encoding meaning. I do not subscribe here to the

idea that images (color in this case) are volatile and ambiguous, whereas words tend to solidify ideas in argumentative positions. But, for the sake of liveliness, I enjoy the article's frivolity with respect to the unwritten rules of the academy.

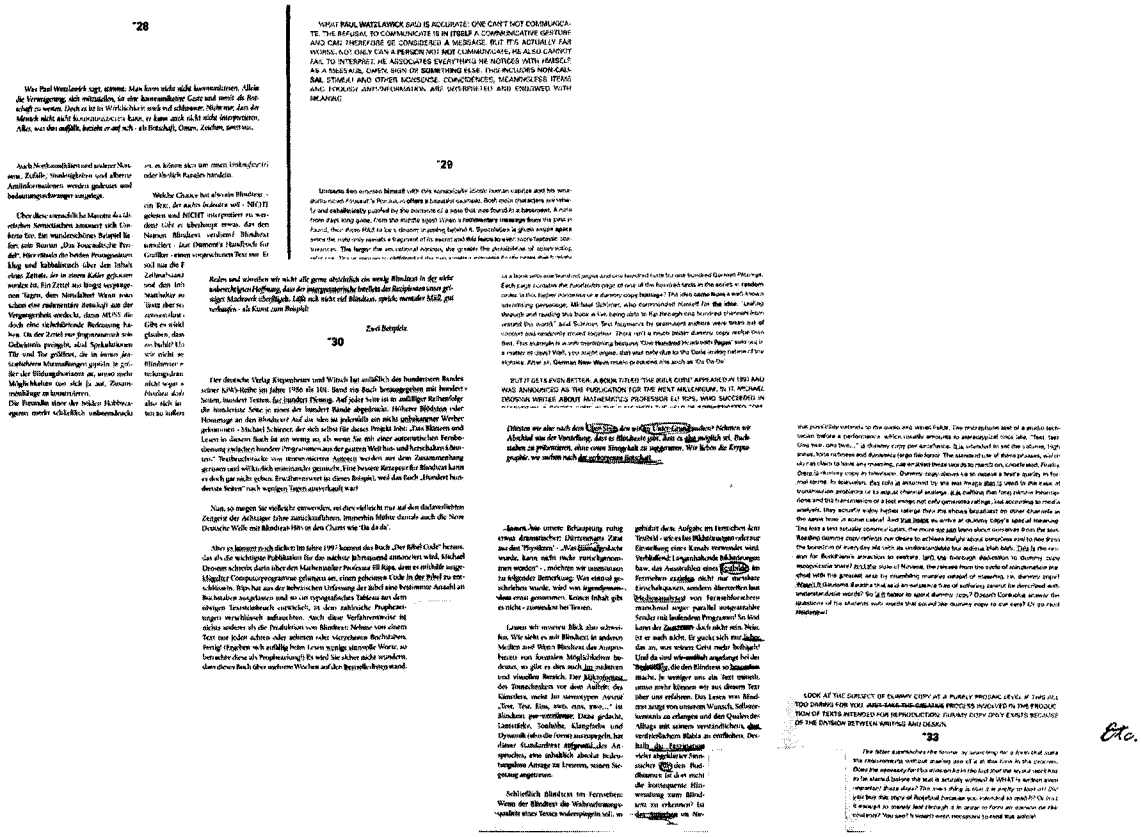
An article on blind text in +rosebud starts with a paragraph floating in the upper part of the page ambiguously taking the place of the epigraph, an abstract or simply a beginning which receives more emphasis (all capital letters, position with respect to the rest). The entire text of the article, in fact, is in two colors: red and black, llowing one text to be embedded within the other, one text to emerge from the other, one text to surround the other, one text to create its double, one text to betray its double, or simply a text to betray the fortuitousness of its communicative possibilities.

Merely play?

Does it matter if we call it playfulness

except in order to establish some distorted concept of seriousness?

In order to take into account how color multiplies the text, we can read and juxtapose the doubles:



Note that the black and red type do not coincide In German (left side) and English (right side), and color contrast gradually blends into ways of underlining, crossing out, etc. (+rosebud 28-33)

WHAT PAUL WATZLAWICK SAID IS ACCURATE: ONE CAN'T NOT COMMUNICA – TE. THE REFUSAL TO COMMUNICATE IS IN ITSELF A COMMUNICATIVE GESTURE AND CAN THEREFORE BE CONSIDERED A MESSAGE. BUT IT'S ACTUALLY FAR WORSE. NOT ONLY CAN A PERSON NOT NOT COMMUNICATE, HE ALSO CANNOT FAIL TO INTERPRET. HE ASSOCIATES EVERYTHING HE NOTICES WITH HIMSELF, AS A MESSAGE, OMEN, SIGN OR SOMETHING ELSE. THIS INCLUDES NON-CAU- SAL STIMULI AND OTHER NONSENSE. COINCIDENCES, MEANINGLESS ITEMS AND FOOLISH ANTI-INFORMATION ARE INTERPRETED AND ENDOWED WITH MEANING.

Then:
PAUL WATZLAWICK IS IN ITSELF A PERSON NOT SOMETHING NON-CAUSAL.

Aha! I hear the skeptic say, it doesn't really make sense, it's not even close to profound! But it is not completely meaningless either. Skewed, it half makes sense. It invites and denies interpretation. So this doubly, triply, multiply coded passage, demonstrates what it talks about: the paranoid search for meanings. For a long time now, they have been called "deeper meanings:" deeper than meets the eye. [o]

But the meanings we speak of here all come up and meet the eye: come up, literally spring up, leap from the page because it is not only a question of color. It is also a question of shade. If this was a black and white image, one color would be darker or lighter than the other, and both would be darker than the white page. +rosebud, by the way, uses different colors for page background, so the traditional dark upon white image for the text is not the rule. The distribution of different shades of color creates layering (depth), as well as what Caws calls "sight lines" – itineraries the eye is lead to take, on and between surfaces. These visual aspects (ways of envisioning information – think even statistics) prove, on the one hand, that, yes, design comes after, over, before writing – as an interpretation or a structuring device. In the case of texts, design can complement syntax in communicating relations between elements. On the other hand, the interpretation can coincide with writing, analysis can coincide with creation.[p] But this is not the most important distinction: for different purposes, at different moments, we can make the decision to isolate and divide or to claim inseparability.

The existence of dummy copy is not solely the separation of writing and design. What the dummy copy does is to throw into plain view framing devices, coding devices.

Here is one possibility to express this idea: reproduction: the existence of form without content can be a dumb copy of something yet to appear. Shelley speaks of composing words to a musical line. The composition of any metered verse is in question here. Writing a dissertation too. Any process of formalizing writing into rules and constraints. Even, if you wish, what Mallarmé calls having "a *country.*" Then somebody comes along and says, no, it is not about counting the syllables, it is about cadence; or, it is not about having all the words symmetrically distributed around a central axis on a title page, it is about piecing the text in accordance with its meaning and function.

Here is a second possibility to express this idea: reproduction: by making visible the graphic constraints we comply with in producing a text, the blind text makes perceptible the intellectual constraints we follow, consciously or unconsciously. Consider this anonymous piece of Surrealism:

"Anybody who has recollection of having learned to draw a straight line or a regular curve will be well assured that the act belongs to the order known as purposive or voluntary action. The experienced artist or draughtsman will know equally well that drawing of the line or curve very soon falls into the region of the automatic and involuntary. The fact is that every action tends to become habitual, involuntary, and automatic from the time of its first performance, whether it be the stroking of the moustache, the preening of the hair, the satisfaction of an appetite, or the recollection of a name. Even a mental attitude or viewpoint tends to become habitual and to that extent beyond the control of the thinker." (in Caws ed., *Anthology* 59)

Sometimes I wonder whether one would not be better off on the solid ground of easy equations and unilateral solutions. Yet, in a very natural way, as things have tended to happen, to present themselves and solidify in choices – in writing and in analysis – and despite knowing that this too will not find "the element of happiness" and will remain "a practice of despair" – yet, the work of criticism, at its best, does and should perhaps always un-do teaching (handing down patterns). Blind text reflects the limit of what can be taught.

And here is a third possibility to express the same idea: blind text is only to an extent silent text. The viewer is not in conversation with it, the way somebody can hear music without listening. Up to a certain point. It is only beyond a threshold that one becomes the other, hearing becomes listening, looking becomes seeing, seeing becomes reading, etc. What is this threshold?
How does one break the silence surrounding any object? How does one go from simply reading to producing a reading? To creating another text?

50 Years Later

Yesterday (19 November) one of my roommates was sitting in the kitchen and browsing through a book on architecture. She leafed through it showing big type, many variously cut and placed images, color, dynamism. I asked why it looked as if it was a Bruce Mau book. (Bruce Mau books are pretty recognizable.) Because all books on architecture now look like Bruce Mau books, she replied. So they all want to be Rem Koolhaas books done by Bruce Mau. No one can ignore Koolhaas in architecture today, even if they don't like him, and it's difficult not to like him so I guess they love-hate him. (I don't remember who said which part of this exactly, all in all we agreed and were finishing each other's sentences.)

Fifty years from now somebody will be remembering on TV how at the turn of the century every architecture student had a copy of *S, M, L, XL* on their bookshelf. "I have had a longstanding interest in surrealism," Rem Koolhaas says in an interview, " but more for its analytical powers than for its exploitation of the subconscious or for its aesthetics... I was most impressed by its "paranoid" methods, which I consider one of the genuine inventions of this century, a rational method which does not pretend to be objective, through which analysis becomes identical to creation."

(1190)

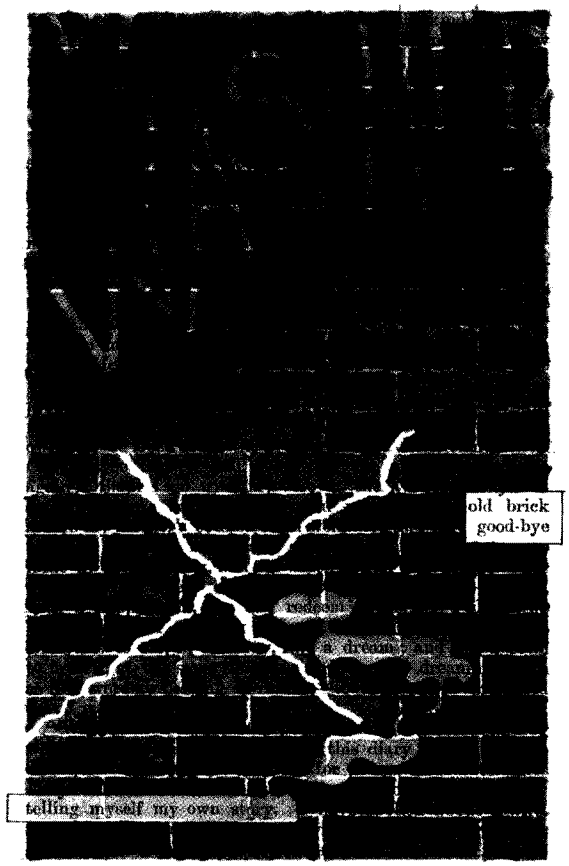
Mr. Tom Tom Tom was here

Most of what is written on Tom Phillips so far – and it is not much – is written by non-academics in the spirit of appreciation. Attention is drawn to the diversity of his projects, the "face-value beauty" of his work, the way music informs his painting, his painting informs his literary work, etc. Modest commentaries, writings on Phillips appear more as recommendations than analyses. At the same time an analysis is always, even if indirectly, also a recommendation. Craig Dworkin, whose dissertation and whose book are in the background of this chapter, proposes humbly that at least his thesis might make people read works otherwise not much talked about and less accessible.

Scholarship: to render public service. (People likely to pick up Dworkin's book are also very likely to have already heard of and read the less accessible works he discusses.)

Having been dealing mostly with first editions of modernist works, at the Harvard UP bookstore I am astounded by the volume of contemporary books. Jarring colors. The shelves are HEAVY and unwelcoming. The smallest book is 200 pages. The "end of the book" right now corresponds in reality to the end of the manageable volume one reads on a trip from New York to Boston, the manageable volume one puts in one's bag without hurting the shoulder, that one, finally, reads from cover to cover, without the anxiety of work never finished.

Just as the bookstores themselves, overwhelming in their abundance, need constant (re)discovery, not out of the darkness of memory, but out of the dust of endless shelves and warehouses. One has to learn to read for treasures. To be an archaeologist.



Dworkin outlines in detail the excavating (exhuming) character of Phillips' *Humument*. The fascination of this archaeological undertaking, however, has a very strange twist in Phillips. Here it is no longer a question of recreating a lost reality (an ancient world).

Page 44 reads (note that we can no longer say "Tom Phillips wrote"):

" dream

this diary
for

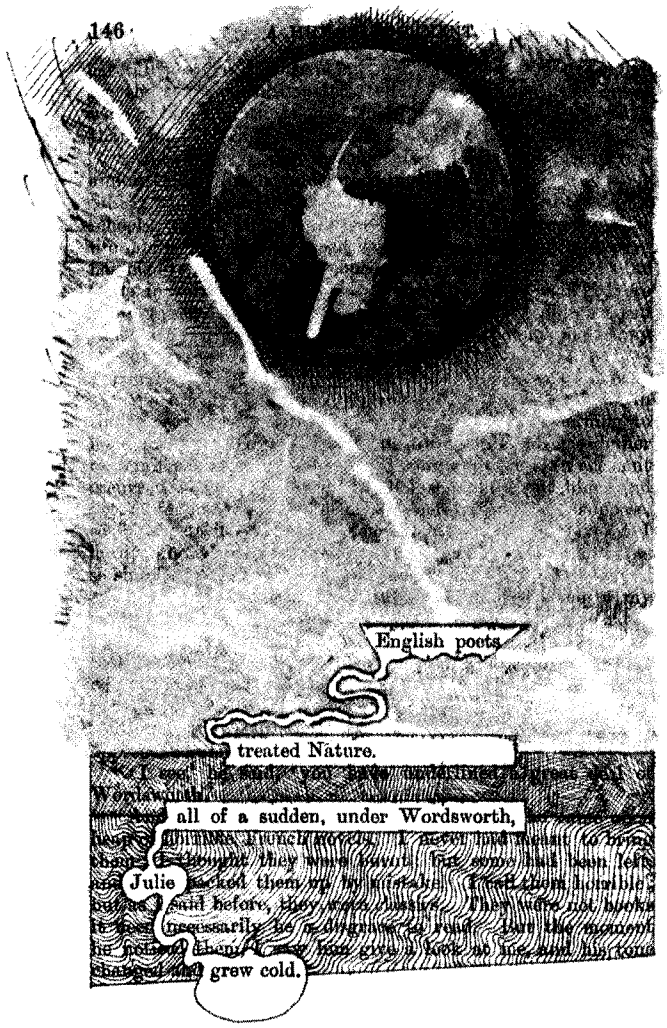
telling myself my own story."

The pauses matter. The movement from left to right too. They prolong the reading, slow it down. The eye wanders the way it would do over a painting, picking up clues which way to move next. Does the visual syntax replace the "crippled" grammar? Characteristically, the subject is missing. One is left with the trace of vandalism. "M [Tom?] was her[e]."

But who is dreaming, who is writing and who is reading (redeeming) the dream? The context invalidates these questions. The idiom is flexed in another direction: how the page was made. The image and the brick of text on the right are obviously correlated. Graffiti and telling one's own story too. A story not cut in stone, not even dreamt in stone: but ghostly, half-emerging as the new in the cracks of the old. "I", the missing antecedent of "my" and "myself," is a figure for somebody or something passing – the book itself, a writer, a reader. All we know is: it/he/she "was here." The thirty or so names to appear in *Humument* float around and ricochet between all the pronouns. The pronouns are the real signposts in the book. They are, paradoxically, stable in their indefiniteness. The names form temporary relations. Even when a page can be seen in the light of Phillips's work as autobiographical (202 e.g.), there is nothing which fixes it so. These are evident effects. What is not so evident is a process of reinventing the intensely subjective poetry of the Romatics through, at their basis, modernist techniques and into a contemporary context.

The parallel to the Romantics is sought by Phillips. Page 146 reads: English poets/ treated Nature. / all of a sudden, under Wordsworth, / Julie / grew cold." In another page one meets "Keats/ an acquaintance of/ Homer." Byron also has a cameo appearance. As do Pound, Stein and Apollinaire. The term "treated" directly

references Phillips's techniques in *Humument*, implying that English poets cut, pasted and painted over nature (thus Nature). But the book here is hardly a Book.



A student once suggested that the book *Humument* is dreaming its own story. The book is made to "speak." This is another way of saying that the pages "reveal" hidden poems. Or that the poems follow certain rules and use only the words available on the page, replacing the formal rules of versification with semantic and visual ones. (Verse has always meant a visual constraint too.) The personification of the book, though, is an effect only of the indeterminacy of pronouns. A kind of ventriloquism where it is no longer possible to say where the source of poetic language is. When writing about Mallock, the original author of *A Human Document*, Phillips uses the phrase "he can be *made to speak* on subjects" etc. Or else: "[I] have yet to find a situation, statement or thought which its [the book's] words cannot be adapted to cover." Compared to the self-projective personification of nature in Wordsworth or Shelley, Phillips is conscious of and plays with the very mechanism of the trope. Compared to Ezra Pound's use in *The Cantos* of quotation and paraphrase (from Confucius, John Adams, etc), which make other authors "speak" within a fragmented, depersonalized context, *Humument* is very much a "chrysanthelephantine" poem in the same formal tradition.

"But why not just write something out is the question, isn't it? Why go through such tortuous ways of finding texts if you feel something, or think something, or want to say something? The thing is, you just don't know what you think or feel until you find some way of cornering yourself, like you're cornered with a page of somebody else's text and having made yourself certain rules, and being the kind of person that sticks to rules, you find something that you actually think, within that text."

(*Fiction* July 88, 8 and 9)

To be "cornered with a page of somebody else's text." Let us save this for later.

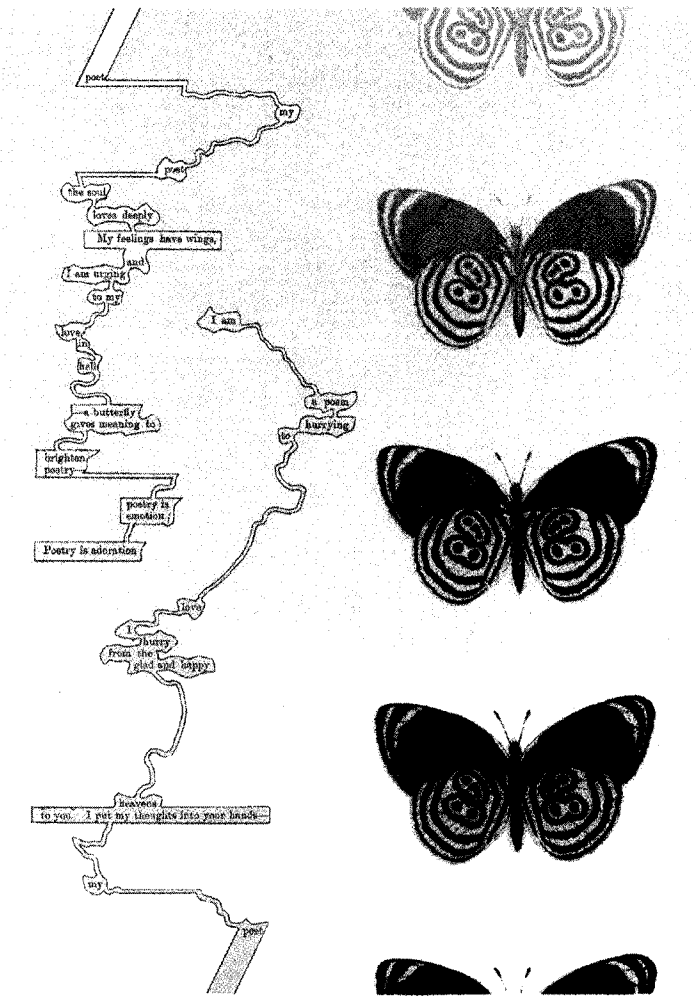


Illustration from Phillips's translation of *Dante's Inferno* using *Humument* as commentary. Beatrice sending Virgil to Dante. Poetry, teacher, student, and another echo of Wordsworth. A spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings..

Laboratory of delight

What does it mean to break the silence surrounding an object or surrounding a piece of literature? What does it mean to write *on* literature? Pointing out and naming. This may ultimately come to redefining analysis. Let us tentatively imagine that analysis is not the art of description (criticism has admitted its self-defeat in such a definition: the best description of a text is to repeat it).

Let us also not presume that we can either isolate the elements of a text or explain its pleasures through some unity of effect, that unnamable total effect, never analyzed itself but always presumed, towards which everything in a poem seems to work.

Are we left with historical research and providing historical contexts? (Most of it has been done already.)

Or political contexts and agendas? Keep reading poetical tropes as tropes of thought, poetry 'as always already' philosophy?[q] Even that doesn't go without saying. The job has perhaps been done. We need a perspective, a point of view and here is another simple experiment: a Hollis catalogue search and a paragraph with the key phrases from the books written on John Milton in the last 24 years. Please read through.

::::: the age of Milton, Anglo-American millennialism, the tyranny of heaven, centered on the word, critical pasts, nationalism and historical loss in Renaissance England, in defense of Adam, Melville's annotations on Milton, religion and society, the arms of the family: the significance of John Milton's relatives and associates, writing biography, literature and dissent, companion to Milton, imagining death, aspects of subjectivity, nation state and empire, Milton and the ends of time, the grounds of contention, threshold poetics, Milton and intersubjectivity, reassembling truth, memories of Milton, coming of age as a poet, altering eyes new perspectives on, genius, reading the rhetoric of revenge, the consolation of otherness, a short introduction, the endless kingdom, Milton and the terms of liberty, all the names in heaven, explaining the English revolution, twentieth century perspectives, the author's due, the transformation of ancient epic, iconology in Milton's poetry, gender and heroism, speaking grief, time capsules, the problem of knowledge, inversion in Milton's poetry, complete critical guide, Milton among the Romans, aging, race and culture, the science of the saints, study in literary theodicy, the building in the text, Milton and modernity, Milton and the preaching arts, representing revolution in Milton, the female sublime, Milton and the rabbis, imperfect sense, Milton to Pope, crime and punishment in the England of, exiled from light: divine law, morality and violence in, British imperial expansion and transformation of paradise lost,

> allegory and epic, a study of the place of women in the poetry of, poetic occasion, female authority and literary experiment, Milton and religious controversy: satire and polemic in, the life of, living texts: interpreting Milton, a journey through the drama of salvation, epic invocations: converting the muse, radical religion, humanism on trial, the education of women in seventeenth century England, the epic tradition, science and poetry in, the biblical presence in, the sources and traditions of, poetry of independence, the imperial vision, under Western eyes, bodies and selves, etc., etc., etc. :::::

This list includes only the last five years, in fact. The paragraph was becoming too long. Roughly, there have appeared between 20 and 30 books on Milton each year from 1980 to 2004. There are, needless to say, thousands of critical studies of various aspects in Milton's work. An already unimaginable number of pages and the production does not seem to be slowing down. On the contrary, it has been and probably will continue accelerating. We are beyond the possibility of imagining anything like "the field" of Milton studies, or any possibility of "covering" the scholarship on Milton. It is beyond human capacities.[r] Now there is the need for machines: sophisticated databases, catalogues and research technologies only to keep this stupendous quantity of text (no matter how brilliant) simply available. This also means that the larger part remains and will remain unread. Blind text, which is meant to open eyes. A dazzling image of futility, I believe, with the best intentions. This is how literary scholarship looks from a distance.[s]

Criticism is supposed to be a laboratory of delight of sorts. One hears often that if there is no *pleasure* in doing this (graduate school), there is no *sense* in doing it. Delight is the basis of the study and the teaching of literature. But how does one reconcile the love of delight with the "dream of scientificity,"[1] which foregrounds rigor, perseverance, seriousness (sometimes bordering on grimness), linear structures, formulaic and transparent language, even a Christian idea of suffering and reward? Which makes it still possible to talk about the PhD degree and the dissertation without making a distinction between the sciences and the humanities?

A Tentative Suggestion

Think how often the dissertation is referred to as an "ordeal," (and not an exhilarating adventure, for example).

Rosanna Warren, in an article for a book on the American painter Anne Eisner (yet to appear): "Stylization, I would argue, is the deployment of decorative formulas; style is the quest for knowledge made visible and recognizable." Drawing in Anne Eisner is seen as a "dual practice" : "the acquisition of knowledge neurologically linked to the refinement of mark that gives birth to style." In other words, observing

and the process which transforms observation into knowing one's surroundings or one's subject takes place physically as well as intellectually.

Josef Albers asked his students to draw the lines of an object in the air before putting the pen down to paper. The air-drawing is not simply technical learning (controlled physical movement), it is getting to *know* the object (analyzing it) in its particular surroundings (position, lighting, and so on). The process is "visible and recognizable" as such. The student is moving his or her hand in the air.

Anne Eisner is drawing a line which will immediately create three dimensions and show the connection of the foot, the ankle to the gravitational pull of the ground. The result is a record of the process.

As in reading from the erratic movement, unexpected pleasures, bafflements and disappointments, one goes into the structuring discourse of writing (a particular reading), demonstrates familiarity, proves not only that the text is experienced (in its technical facts – rhythm, syntax, tropes, etc), but that *something else* can be made of that experience.

There is always the text and something else.

Analysis is seen here as not the breaking apart, the disassembling, but as the construction (creation) of a double-headed monster, a janus-faced machine which travels the whole itinerary from one page ("original") to another ("derivative"), as the passage from perception to knowledge. This 'passage' is precisely where delight comes in and precisely where the academy (no surprise) exercises its disciplinary function, where the unwritten rules and requirements come in.

And this is the main difference between writing a poem and writing a critical paper. Between thought and the object of attention comes in a blueprint. A dummy copy. The masterful fulfillment of which proves the writer's membership in the profession. But mastering the rules is one part of the process.

It is worthwhile to learn how to write a sonnet: if, only if, one reinvents the form and the form presents itself as intellectual necessity.[u]

It drifts as quiet canal water...

Bill Hurrell[v] in an introduction to Tom Phillips' works calls him "a light-hearted academician." Before studying art Phillips studied English at Oxford. "Academician" in his case is intentionally ambiguous. It refers to Phillips' being a member of the Royal Academy of Art. It does not exclude, however, the general reference to his work's "academic" character. He translated and illustrated *Dante's Inferno*. He kept a diary of thoughts, facts, colors, landscapes, trivia related to Dante. A page from his diary is quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Phillips likes collecting and preserving all sorts of remnants. The Dante book is based on years of research. Like any serious academic project, it includes commentary, interpretation, and translation. It is done in an inventive and rigorous way. Lefthand pages contain Dante's poem.

Righthand pages reflect on the poetry with poetry of their own: they are illustrations ("commentary" Phillips says) from *A Human Document.* Dante's poem is not alone. It no longer stands by itself. The illustrations interrupt. Interact. Left page and right page are read intermittently, to combined effect, which makes one pause. It is something different. What Phillips has displaced is the status of his work as derivative in interest, as secondary and dependent for its relevance on the original text. Both works, both worlds.

He explains: "All the work on *A Humument* has been done in the evenings so that I might not, had the thing become a folly, regret the waste of days. One kind of impulse that brought this book into slow being was the prevailing climate of textual criticism. As a text, *A Humument* is not unaware of what then occupied the pages of *TelQuel*... At its lowest it is a reasonable example of *bricolage,* and at its highest it is perhaps a massive *deconstruction* job taking the form of a curious unwitting collaboration between two ill-suited people seventy-five years apart."

So Phillips enjoys being "cornered with somebody else's text" and he is "not unaware" of the critical practices which were gathering speed at the time he began *Humument.* There is a warning in the double negative ("not unaware") – do not put too much emphasis; I am pointing to a common element, not sameness. Destroying a text with affection.

Intersection

Barbara Johnson reads Wallace Stevens. "Anecdote of the jar." "What is it about jars and urns?" Keats. Heidegger too. Ponge. This is about things. Things which stand by themselves. "I placed a jar in Tennessee

And round it was..."

The hand recedes. And there it is. It is. And it is a poem.

It has to survive the excited love of the critic.

Two hundred meters north, in another office, illuminated by a single shaft of light through a small window, Yunte Huang is thinking about a blind man. The blind man was a teacher in English in his native town (in China), but Yunte never took lessons from him, never spoke to him. What is it to change places, travel? They don't know here that Chinese poetry comes with a heavy armour of commentary embedded, *embedded,* within the poem. Between the lines, in smaller characters. "To read between the lines."

And one floor up Daniel Albright is telling a student that the point is to push the idea to the extreme and see what happens.

Inventing Problems

Marcel Duchamp gave examples of the infra-thin (l'inframince, infra = below, mince = thin, slim), but never moved away from the real ("one has to take the real as it comes"). There is no registered attempt to give an abstract definition among his notes. The infrathin's verbal existence winds through an open set of observed phenomena – with something in common (perhaps) but escaping abstraction. There is not only no point in defining the "concept", but any definition would replace one set of words with another without having gotten to the bottom of the affair at all. Duchamp, his step-son reports, was fond of saying that "explanations explain nothing." On one of the notes he wrote "Look for more examples." (See end of chapter for a sample of Duchamp's examples from his *Notes*.)[W] Ezra Pound named this "the ideogrammic method" (as a medium for poetry), or staying close to the thing. The ideogrammic method is too well known to discuss here. There is only one thing I would like to single out, something that seems to round off the movement of this chapter: Pound never meant the ideogrammic method to be a method of explanation. He meant it to be a manner of teaching and learning. The facts (the luminous details) were meant to speak for themselves, by themselves and in their interaction with other facts, in a way leading the mind through unverbalized connections – to possibly further articulation, or possibly not. In other words, juxtaposing two or three poems taught one more about poetry and writing than a detached abstract commentary. Pound's greatest insistence

was to go back and look at the poetry and compare with attention to technique. Stay close to reality. Duchamp illustrates this method better than Pound ever managed to. And so the separation between one kind of writing and another. Analysis and creation? The moment [of silence] of being cornered with somebody else's text. What are the chances of *A Human Document* becoming *Humument*? What is the possibility of *A Human Document* becoming a commentary on Dante's *Inferno*?

The possible is
an infra-thin –
The possibility of several
tubes of color
becoming a Seurat is
the concrete "explanation"
of the possible as infra
thin

The possible implying
the becoming – the passage from
one to the other takes place
in the infra-thin

Velvet trousers –
their whistling sound (in walking) by
brushing of the 2 legs is an
infra thin separation signaled
by sound

When the tobacco smoke smells also of the
mouth which exhales it, the 2 odors
marry by infra thin (olfactory
infra thin)

The warmth of a seat (which has just
been left) is infra-thin

...
allegory
(in general)
is an application
of the infra thin
...
gratuitousness of the little weight
...
watered silk –
iridescents

Subway gates – The people
who go through at the very last moment
infra thin –

The convention of the arrow
sign produces an infra thin
reaction on the sense of movement

A ray of light (sun) ...
Smoke or other gas
cut into infrathin slices

infrathin
caresses

inhabitants of
the infra thin
do-nothings

barely touching. while trying to place
1 plane surface
precisely on another plane surface
you pass through some **infra thin moments** –

Condensing vapors
– on polished surfaces
glass / copper / infra thin

crease molds. worn trousers and very creased.
(giving a sculptural expression of the individual who wore them)
the act of wearing the trousers, the trouser
wearing is comparable to the hand
making of an original sculpture

...

Look for other examples –

[a] This chapter has the task to explore relations between text and image, design and writing, blind text, academic discourse, academic decorum and its unwritten rules, the treated page (*humument*), commentaries and original texts. It is an exploratory, rather than an explanatory text. Hence its discontinuous manner of proceeding.

Also, the chapter exemplifies a point of departure, a distancing from the academic standard, which in itself is partly the object of attention here. Distance tests boundaries. The monologic character of academic writing is characterized by apparent erasures: one does not introduce, for example, personal events and quotidian impressions unless these are interpreted within a neutralized framework to validate their relevance. But there is only one way to find out how far the relevance of detail can be stretched and whether what is at stake is not, also, within the same undertaking, the relevance of literary studies themselves.

I saw (I see) no other way to throw the habitual into visibility. The footnotes will be the depositories of standard font, vocabulary, and argumentation.

[b] The October (2004) issue of *PMLA*'s theme was "Literary studies and the visual arts." The opening of the editor's column cites the Iraqi prisoners' abuse and a statement by Donald Rumsfeld on the power of the images in the scandal. It was photographs that gave "a vivid realization" of what happened. "Words just don't do it," Rumsfeld claimed. You can imagine how the article goes on to put Rumsfeld's comments into question. Thus reiterating and re-positing the conflict between word and image (see pages 63-65 of present chapter), the editor concludes that "A sustained discussion of words and images, of reading and looking, seems especially urgent" (1211). This sense of urgency is echoed in Tobin Siebers' "Words Stare like a Glass Eye:" "A new era has dawned, and we are not prepared for it." (1315) Mary Ann Caws, in her turn, writes: "What we are after now is giving ourselves permission to look afresh at looking." (1313)

In 1992 the relationships between word and image were also a "crucial topic," when J. Hillis Miller published *Illustration* – a kind of manifesto for what was then and is perhaps still called, cultural studies. Miller too diagnosed a lag between the times and scholarship in literary studies, urging for a renewed "responsibility to read, to read all sorts of signs" (58). Given the time span of this felt demand to face the increasing importance of visual arts (painting and cinema mainly) for literary studies, one can justifiably be skeptical of their prophetic tone. Prolonged urgency is a failure.

Phrases culled from recent academic events at Harvard, speak of another (emphatically not unrelated) pressing concern: "especially now in a climate of opposition between the plain spoken and the convoluted," "in an atmosphere of anti-academicism," "the loss of paradigm," "in a world ever more impatient of the complex, ever more disdainful of the intellectual," etc.

[c] The question of transparency requires one more distinction. Dworkin, in his *Reading the Illegible* examines Charles Bernstein's *Veil*, a work of tightly overwritten (to the limit of legibility) pages: "The lessons of *Veil,* however, are not just a reminder of the "materiality of the signifier" (that familiar if frequently forgotten story whose moral has never been well learned and rarely really taken to heart);" (52) And a little later: "With patience and concentration, almost all of the text can be deciphered, if only bit by bit, so that Bernstein's palimpsests do not so much prevent reading as redirect and discipline usual reading habits" (53) Dworkin's embarrassment in repeating the arguments implicit in this single phrase, "the materiality of the signifier," is understandable. For the last couple of decades authors such as Johanna Drucker, Jerome McGann, Marjorie Perloff, L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets and concrete poets have insistently drawn attention to the material existence and the appearance of texts. From denials of transparency to processes of modification and deferral of its functions, this critical tradition has been trying to offer an alternative approach to the study of poetry. But as Dworkin remarks its "lessons," its "moral" has gone largely ignored. I imagine the reasons for the insistent ignorance of the public regarding these projects are various: from the exclusiveness of the claims (exclusions tend to sneak back in), to academic politics, to a certain impossibility in the very desire to address materiality in abstract discourse (all of the critical books on the subjects I have come across comply with ideologies in format different if not contrary to their claims, i.e. they are classical books of criticism where the physical text is meant to be perfectly transparent).

[d] Mallarmé's own utopia: "A man may come along, forgetting everything (it's never fitting to be unaware, except on purpose) of the intellectual baggage his contemporaries carry; a man seeking to know, according to some very simple and primitive process, for example, what symphonic equation shapes the seasons, habit of light and cloud; two or three remarks in line with this blazing heat, with this bad weather, linking our passion to diverse climes. If he has, re-created by himself, taken care to preserve in his storeroom a strict piety for the 24 letters as they are established in his language through the miracle of infinity, together with a sense for their symmetries, action, reflection, even their transfiguration into the supernatural, which is verse – he possesses, this Edenic civilized being, above all other possessions, the element of happiness, a doctrine, or a *country*" etc., etc. (*Mallarmé in Prose* 36) The word "doctrine," of course, is unmistakably linked with "doctorate" and both have to do with the ability and the possibility to teach. Ideally, one has to hand down the "element of happiness" (the philosopher's stone) even though whoever receives it, receives it as "intellectual baggage" which has to be forgotten.

[e] Hillis Miller hastens to talk about electronic publications and their potential influence on print formats: "Derrida has not just written abstractly about the end of the book. He has produced non-book books that anticipate effects soon to be much more easily obtainable on the computer, just as Benjamin did in his use of a mosaic of details juxtaposed in montage without full specification of the logical

links between them." (34) There are two phrases which I find particularly interesting here: "the end of the book," and "effects ... more easily attainable on the computer." Paradoxically talk of the "end of the book," which (although not in Derrida) conflates the material whole of a book with "a natural totality," has excited a new trend in experimental print publishing. Two of the publications cited in this thesis have gone in this direction. "We must reiterate its power, capabilities, and bonds to life. Nostalgic laments for a dying form are false and deserve ridicule." (Mau's *Life Style* 110) "+rosebud is a design magazine that operates with the desire to explore and exhaust the possibilities and potentials that paper and 2D-structure have to offer." (+rosebud: bilingual German/English magazine coming annually out of Vienna and Ammenrdorf, includes visual arts, fiction, critical writing.) These new explorations develop and function in contrast to the "idea of the book" (according to which the west is "the civilization of the book"), as well as non-book "surfaces of inscription" such as screens, labels, brand names, etc. Furthermore, the gesture with which Miller equates print effects with the effects of electronic forms only confirms a distance between the two. The lag is there. The book, Miller implies, will have to catch up with electronic media. The two then are participating in the same competition (for the attention of the public). They progress on the same axis (but which one?). In other words, Derrida's formal experiments become interesting in so far as they "anticipate" something else, rather than as reinventions or innovations in themselves – perhaps in the same way that his analyses have been reformulated and rephrased until they have become everyday academic vocabulary while at the same time their formal and stylistic aspects have been quietly ignored. I do not know of any *scholar* who has consciously inherited and reimagined Derrida's experimental style (the "tissue of quotations" that "Dissemination" is, for example).

[f] The scientific language is still retained in the official regulations for submitting the thesis. Consider: "The UMI publishing agreement in no way prevents the author from making any disposition of other manuscript copies, nor does it prevent the author from publishing the thesis at any time. The assumption that underlies the regulations concerning the deposit of doctoral theses is that they must be "published" in the old sense. That is, they must be made available as proof of the candidate's achievement. This assumption echoes a traditional European idea that the candidate for a doctorate must make a contribution to knowledge and cannot have a degree for making a discovery that is kept secret. It is, therefore, only in very exceptional cases that access to theses is restricted." (http://www.gsas.harvard.edu/academic/thesis.html#4-2, accessed 15/12/2004) UMI, started in 1938 with a project to preserve in microfilm some of the holdings of the British Museum, is now, as part of ProQuest Information and Learning, the largest archive in the world, as well as probably the largest information dealer. "Publish" in the old sense = "archive" in the present? What happened in translating this European tradition on American soil?

[g] In the same roundtable discussion on the future of the humanities, Louis Menand suggested six clusters of problems or points of critique, the third one of which suggested that "dissertation topics have been basically the same for the last fifty years."

[h] Responsibility for the doctoral dissertation is thus divided between... Or better: the dissertation is thus cornered between .. four institutions: the department, the archive, the registrar, and the surrogate publisher ("publication" as an obligatory part of the degree).

[i] Understatement – fall below rather than above truth, thus in a sense retreating from a claim to the truth. Re-phrasable and expansive ready-made solutions – conclusions that claim singular access to truth and whose claim or claims ramify for the most part not only invisibly but also blindly. Hence literally: blind text.

[j] Bruce Mau's incomplete manifesto reads #34: Make mistakes faster. (I believe the permission to make mistakes even more important than the permission to look afresh) and #37: Break it, stretch it, bend it, crush it, crack it, fold it. (which signifies not so much the encouragement to break into parts (analysis) and destroy (the pleasure of), as it prerequisites the ability to "handle" (literally) tradition (expectations). (*Life Style* 90-91)

[k] "When Kant heard the news of revolution, he interrupted his talk. Goethe continued his. How pretentious of them both!

When a young man enters the art of writing like a little mouse tiptoeing into an attic bursting with eggplants and mandrakes for the first time without its mother, not even sure of the down on his cheeks, and asks himself, with his ink-stained fingers and a terrible cramp in his right shoulder, if the rhyming dictionary – whose pages, if not the cover, may very well be in tatters by this time and which perpetually crumples up under the blows of his anxiety – will be of use to him much longer, his self-doubt follows the indiscreet paths of distraction which abound in both big, silent houses and small, noisy rooms, and this self-doubt begins to giggle here and there, doing amazing magic tricks like breaking a pen, placing a charming specter in the blue shadow of a pair of shoes or a jousting tournament on a fingernail, changing the location of the sky, or peeling the earth and throwing away the pits, for example.' (Aragon 78)

[l] In a sense, all work here can be reduced to (simple if not minute) word choice and word placement: learning how to - not only how to say something, but also to distribute the stresses, the emotional or analytical punctuation which remains invisible but is felt as the will to communicate, and to be honest, in whatever there is to express.

[m] Let us summon, without any pretense, out of context, the help of Alain Robbe-Grillet (who else?) on the difficulty of shaking off formats: "A new form will always seem more or less an absence of any form at all, since it is unconsciously judged by reference to the consecrated forms. In one of the most celebrated French reference works, we may read in the article on Schönberg: "Author of audacious works, written without regard for any rules whatever"! This brief judgment is to be found under the heading *Music,* evidently written by a specialist." (260)
"First, to oppose or even to distinguish between form and content is henceforth out of the question. Not because the source of their unity has at last been located but because the focal point of literary analysis has shifted: the problem now is to contrast *form* and *formlessness*, to study the history of a murmur." (229) This prohibition, equally difficult to shake off and which has acquired an incredible currency in the academy, comes from Michel Foucault.

[n] Roger Caillois in an article on "The Ultimate Bibliophilia" (which by the way turns out to be a mute reading of the world as a book) finds even hostility between literature and printing,: "[The latent hostility between the two] comes, rather, from the fact that there is no necessary relationship between the content of the book and the book itself. ... A lover of seafood, who savors oysters, clams, and abalone, may well evince no interest whatsoever in the splendid spirals, cones, and spines that festoon their shells." (62)
If the relationship was necessary, it would have been truth – unchangeably, inscribed in stone, the ideal of a text. And fortunately not. Perhaps the distance, the interval between writing and form, literature and printing, the liquid nature of texts, is what makes it all possible in the first place. Let us talk about form and formlessness as precisely the difference between form and content – instead of locating (which in any case remains only a metaphor) "the source" of their dis-unity, place analysis as its expression.

[o] Bruce Mau, evidently one of the main characters in this dissertation, speaks of the space between the page and the eye as the locus of designer intervention: "Imagine a cone of vision. The eyeball is the narrowest point of the cone, which expands to meet the page. What has happened in design is that designers have begun to put filters into the cone by adding layers between the eye and the content. ... The problem is that the cone of vision is only a limited space and will accommodate only so much before it is oversaturated." (204-205) That is, if one expands the cone the eye loses the content. As opposed to this oversaturation, Mau proposes working in the depth of the page which is beautifully limitless and leaves the eye free to excavate meaning.

[p] I would venture to say that every creation is a kind of analysis. Isn't analysis a way of perceiving?

[q] The correlation of theory and poetry is almost self-evident, despite the increasing marginalization of poetry. The February issue of *PMLA* is centered on precisely this topic. Poetry continues to be read as a kind of a matrix of thinking, which helps philosophy (or theory) to reflect on itself. But if poetry is already philosophy and philosophy thus recognizes that it is "language' or "écriture" which poetry also is, the resulting circular movement keeps producing, in its centrifugal inertia an infinitude of studies which only retrace the paths of first-comers by feeding new literary texts into the process. The first signs of exhaustion (now perceptible in almost any seminar or roundtable discussion) which hinted a lack (the so-called "loss of paradigm") I saw in Homi Bhabha's seminar (2002) with the telling title "Literary Theory in the Life of Literature." The last discussions of the seminar were devoted to figuring a history of "turns" which retrospectively made sense of what happened in literary studies in the 20th century, but whose overarching concern was in the question: "what next?"
The question has been very audible.

[r] At this year's English department Christmas party someone mentioned that since the invention of printing there has always been the sense of a flood of texts, with printing there has always been too many texts to read and to cope with. This reminds me of a cliché current enough among both students and teachers – the desire to study a text "in depth." Of course, this is a desire that can never be satisfied: the unlocking of all doors, a text revealing its secrets completely, and blinding the reader in its radiant nakedness.

[s] James Elkins wrote *Why Are Our Pictures Puzzles* in an attempt to understand what he calls "a kind of collective hysteria about pictures, brought on by the fact that pictures do not speak and do not mean anything aside from their trappings of legible signs" (16). For Elkins pictures became obsessively puzzles for art history in the 20th century by somehow contagiously picking up complexity from texts. (Dali is a central figure in Elkins' analysis precisely because of his emblematically transparent paintings, which reveal layers of hidden images.) Art history has fallen in love with ambiguity because it renders interpretation infinite. At the same time this affection shows a greater awareness of the "pitfalls" of interpretation, especially as it has been thought out in the literature on "word and image" "which only flowered in the twentieth" century. "We write intensively, with an aversion for plain meanings, technical mastery, and simple illusion; we are attracted to metaphors, and especially ones loaned by other disciplines; we love whatever can be made conceptually intricate" (44). Elkins's project, based also on statistics showing the precipitous growth of the discipline, is not in any sense nostalgic for a premodern simplicity. Instead of denying the value of interpretation (basically the process of surrounding pictures with words), he emphasizes that pictures "have no words, and therefore they do not "say" anything. ... [I]n so far as they are pictures, they mean nothing. ... This is a truth that art history finds very hard: even the most fascinating and absorbing pictures, the ones that

call for the full expertise of the discipline, are fundamentally meaningless: if they were not, they would not be pictures – they would be texts." (255-6)
Elkins borrows the following question (among others) from Derrida: "does [painting] perhaps contain a truth within itself, as a knowledge of oil or tempera or canvases?" (252)
I would like to juxtapose here Ezra Pound's *ABC of Reading*, which after its brief opening sections consists of the so-called "exhibits" – parts of poems the attentive study of which should guide the reader through different literary techniques. The exhibits are like slices of poetry to compare. To make the analogy a little more explicit, Pound also writes (I believe in the same book) that one could learn about painting by going and actually looking at paintings. This is developed more at the end of the present chapter. Please keep reading, or directly look at "Inventing Problems."

[t] Formally speaking, decoration is unacceptable in academic texts both in the humanities and the sciences. If one tries to work on the appearance of writing, graphs and other illustrations, it has to be within the bounds of propriety: modest, unobtrusive, self-effacing, the text has to be as bare as possible, just as the findings and analysis have to be as precise as possible. Indeed, wouldn't decoration clothe the naked truth? The desire for scientificity regulates relevance. I.e., without decoration at least writing does not appear irrelevant.

[u] If the talk of reinventing form and intellectual necessity sounds out of reach for someone in the position of a graduate student, I invite the reader to translate the paragraph in terms much more common in providing guidelines for PhD dissertations: namely, "proving one's capacity as a scholar" (mastering the blueprint), "genuine interest in the subject" (intellectual necessity), and "originality" (invention). My choice of expression has among its reasons something suggested by a friend in a conversation: the difference between knowledge *that* (something is the case) and knowledge *about* (something as the case). In other words, the interesting thing here is what these terms mean *in particular*, how they act as (internalized) imperatives and in what ways they inflect the process of thinking and writing the dissertation.

[v] Bill Hurrell, who supposedly writes from Indian Head, Saskatchewan, may well be another affectionate appropriation of William Hurrell Mallock's name, i.e. Phillips' light-heartedness in practice.

[w] Duchamp's notes on the infrathin are reminiscent of both Albert-Birot's poetry and Albers's passion for different ways of seeing extremely ordinary objects and events: people getting out of a subway, a sun ray falling on dust, china dolls in a window, vapor on a smooth surface, blue swimtrunks, green grass, etc.

[x,y,z] Blank.

C H AP TER TH REE

THE FIRST SESSION

I invited a friend to participate in the procedures of this chapter. Performativeness here is not a metaphor. We gathered together, after some preliminary exchange of ideas on how to organize what follows. We decided on three sessions of interviews. What came out of these sessions makes up the content and form of the chapter. We chose the word "interview" over dialogue or conversation, perhaps for some intuitive reasons. But let events unfold. We will not anticipate. Room is left for the unpredictable and the whimsical. For what brought us together was also the view that rigor is not incompatible with joy. This is an attempt to set a mind against itself. Here we are, under the guise of Q and A:

Q: Before we go into the conception of this chapter and what it is supposed to be, let me first ask you this: how did you come up with the idea for your thesis? I know that what you wanted to talk about was also how one comes up with a theme or an idea, how one formulates a topic before anything has been written. In a sense, how and is one able to predict the development of one's thought?

A: I see many questions in what you just said... Where shall I begin? [Pause.]

Let me begin by saying that I remember vividly my surroundings and not the step-by-step arguments that went through my head when I thought of my future dissertation. I was in Sofia and was supposed to fly to Paris very early in the morning. This is some time in August 2002. The summer after that terrifying spring semester which culminated in the "Generals." You have to know that I have periods when my brain just refuses any more work. It hurts, if one can imagine pain which is neither emotional nor a headache. It closes itself and I can neither read, nor write. This happened with the GREs when I was applying to Harvard, it happened in March before the generals which were in May. So, for two months I felt somehow stupid and unable, then took the exam and went to France to spend the summer traveling. For the first time I opened up to phenomena in a way. My head I imagine was so

fatigued that I started watching and listening instead of thinking. The interference of waves on the surface of the Garonne. Insects, frogs, and birds (what magic!) in the Pyrenees. And so on. I read only two books for the whole summer – Bergson's *Matter and Memory* and Wittgenstein's *Lectures on Mathematics*. I also saw a beautiful exhibition of machines for flying, not necessarily airplanes, all kinds of machines, most of them modernist experiments, including a series of drawings by Malevich and Lissitzky. It was beautiful. My attitude was very joyful and unquestioning, almost passive. At the end I went to see my parents for a while, and that's where we pick up, that sleepless night before flying back to Paris. I was always interested in art, and my university days at Sofia I started learning design, software, advertising, somewhat on the side, never as anything really serious. But after this summer of surprisingly intense perception, I wanted to read less and look more. I was convinced that we read too much, that it was deadening. And this is where design sneaked in. Design has everything to do with the way we look, and the way we read. So, after browsing some Asterix comic books, I spend a couple of hours just turning this mixture of desires, memories, and convictions in my head and decided that I didn't want to exclude the birds in the Pyrenees from the picture. Although, you know, one is not supposed to talk about this in a dissertation. It's a breach of manners. Unless! unless one can make something philosophical, or metaphysical, or simply critical out of it. In most cases it doesn't work, the person behind the dissertation should remain there, behind. Behind the scholar. At the beginning I had only an outline of an idea, and a very basic one – just look at the texts which are visibly different and see what happens. The argument is almost self-evident:

texts are not transparent and there are authors who remind us, more or less successfully. They effectuate a change in perception, in reading habits, and isn't that what art is about, changing perception? Then, you have the political, ethical, aesthetic raminifications, the more focused on an author you become. Charles Bernstein has written on it, Johanna Drucker, Jerome McGann, Steve McCaffery, Marjorie Perloff, Craig Dworkin, concrete poets have written on it. Many, many people have written about this. But the criticism on the visuality of texts remains marginal. Perhaps rightly so. I don't know about this. But I realized that my idea was not new at all, and most of all - that wasn't it. That wasn't what I was after. Something else gradually became evident reading all those books on texts and images and the history of graphic design. Anyway, I jumped too far into the future. I flew to Paris on the morning and stayed with a French policeman, a friend of my friend (future husband), who played the guitar, a very tender melancholic guitar, in one of those Paris apartments that look directly into your neighbor's kitchen. I am giving you all these completely inconsequential details. In the evening we picked up another friend who was flying in from New York and we decided to drive to the sea to the North. Drive the whole night and come back. I was to fly to Boston noon the next day. We got as far as Rouen. We never reached the sea. And this is how I came up with the idea for my thesis.

Q: You said you didn't want to exclude the birds in the Pyrenees from the picture. What does that mean?

A: The first tutorial I taught at Harvard was on Surrealism and Dadaism, the fall 2002 actually. My only student was Helen Dimos. The tutorial was mostly on what led up to Surrealism in fact, including Rimbaud, Lautreamont, Mallarmé, etc. It was a great tutorial. In *Matter and Memory*, Bergson talks about conversation as something almost magical. There we are, that's about the only thing I remember from *Matter and Memory* from that summer. Bergson uses a phrase, he talks about how our intellect follows the movement of thought of the other person. Let me find the exact text. Page 121. He says, "But let us question our own consciousness, and ask of it what happens when we listen to the words of another person with the desire to understand them. Do we passively wait for the impressions to go in search of their images? Do we not rather feel that we are adopting a certain disposition, which varies with our interlocutor, with the language he speaks, with the nature of the ideas which he expresses – and varies, above all, with the general movement of his phrase, as though we were choosing the key in which our own intellect is called upon to play? The motor diagram, emphasizing his utterance, following through all its windings the curve of his thought, shows our thought the road. It is the empty vessel, which determines, by its form, the form which the fluid mass, rushing into it, already tends to take." The curve of his thought through all its windings ! Isn't this a fantastic way to put it. That must be somebody who loved conversation. And of course, he doesn't forget to stress the "desire to understand" without which such a

dance of the intellect could never happen. Helen was an incredible interlocutor and a lot came out of our conversations for both of us. But there was a question which kept recurring, doubtless very pertinent to the conjunction of these two people with very different backgrounds who had gotten together because of their love of poetry. We

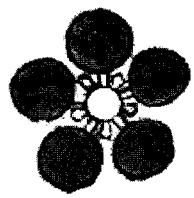
adopted a certain disposition. The question was, to put it in a very unsophisticated way: what does that have to do with life? All these questions one can throw at a poem about its verse form, about its metaphors, about its type and use of space on the page, etc. etc. what does that have to do with life? I know, what is life anyway. One can dismiss the question right away by saying that it's the wrong one, that terza rima is life too, or inversely, that drinking coffee in the morning has nothing, doesn't have to have anything, to do with the afternoon reading of Dante. And perhaps it is more related with why go to school, education in general. We were both very happy to be there talking. Helen wrote a paper later on Beckett, which was also about drinking coffee. For me, the question lodged itself right at the center of my teaching and my nascent dissertation but there is no easy way to give an answer. It is not that one should talk about birds and mountains in the dissertation. Not at all. This would make for a lot of boring reading. People love to talk about their experience, again more or less

successfully. Like the poets. For me, it became a formal concern, almost a formalist concern.

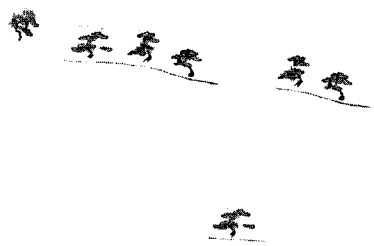
Q: Can you elaborate?

A: Not really. It is what you see in the dissertation. Not only… I don't want to chew it up and spit it. I can't do this. I can't put it in a nutshell. A lot of it is showing rather than telling. [Pause.] One thing I'll mention: I started very often to write in my comments on students' papers: "At the end of this piece of writing you should be able to use the word "passion" (if the essay was on Love in *Dangerous Liaisons* for example) more precisely, to understand what it meant in 17th century France and what it means now." or "Writing is un-learning your own language." and "Writing is the documentation of the emergence of thought." A lot of students responded positively. Some didn't at all. But I think I was trying to make them pay intense attention to words and reality, and that these two formed only temporary correspondences.

Q: Again, you can't leave it at that. Say something more about these correspondences, and then we'll have to go back to our original plan of questions.



A: Hmmm.... You know, I read somewhere that Nabokov asked his students to identify the plants outside in the yard, on the street. In general, I find Nabokov a bit pretentious but I was struck by this. I still have doubts that one should be necessarily versed in biology, but it is common enough among writers. Perhaps Rousseau is to blame. Anyway, they do this also in writers' seminars. They go out and look at the plants and name them. So, Nabokov and the writers' seminars have provided for me a very new sensation. When I go out in the street now and I look at the trees, bushes, flowers, I don't know their names. Or maybe I know some of them in Bulgarian, some of them in English and French, but not even the majority of plants. The sensation is of blankness, complete overwhelming blankness. The absence of language. I can describe the plants but it's not the same. I don't have the words to point to them. The shortcut to being easily understood. With animals, birds for example, one doesn't have this problem, because one does not see so many animals whose names one doesn't know. And then, there is always the neighbor who's going to tell you that these two red birds whose baby fell off the nest, are called cardinals. The conversation about trees goes "Hmm, I don't really know what this is..." Etc. This sensation of blankness is not made softer in any way by the fact that I can take an illustrated dictionary and learn the words. It's larger than that. There is also the other side: I know a favorite plant of Leonardo, but I have never seen one. And when you say "I like this song," how is this different from when you say the same thing about another song? Or when they



favorite plant of Leonardo, but I have never

P

A

S

S

I

O

N

...

used the word "passion" in the French court two centuries ago, it was something negative, something one had to fight with all the might of one's reason. Now passion is an advantage to say the least. Passion is prized today. I think this dizzying blankness, very exhilarating at the same time, let me stress, it's vertiginous, this dizzying blankness is similar to what the student experiences when they have to write a paper, and there they are in front of the poem or the novel, and in front of the empty screen. It's a very special moment – one of unwillingness on both sides. The text is unyielding and the mind is silent. So, how does one start writing? Why start writing at all? I'm not going to say anything more on this. I've said too much already.

Q: Ok. Let's go back to the reason why you wanted to do this interview.

A: Yes, and thank you for agreeing to do this. It's good to have company. The reason why... I need to be careful how I phrase this... There is freedom to speaking, which is not in writing. No. [Short pause.]

Let me be precise. Speaking has a different rhythm to it. For different occasions you can describe this different rhythm as "spontaneity," or "breath," or "ease." You can repeat while speaking. You can break in the middle of a sentence and start elsewhere. Swerve. Divert the conversation. Look at things around you and let them in what you are saying. Avoid given areas without much significance. In writing, if you divert the attention it has to be for a reason. Writing has a complexity which requires a certain responsibility. But most importantly, the most important thing is – in a conversation you are not alone. Especially in academic writing – one is always alone, even when giving a talk. Every now and then, there are interviews or transcripts of conversations attached to the end of books. Or you get transcripts of roundtable discussions, though roundtable discussions have another structure altogether – there are usually a series of speakers, a series of short talks and then question and answer sessions, so they are not precisely dialogic.

Q: So, you wanted to have more "freedom"?

A: Ahmm... now that you put it this way – no. ! I mean, why not? But, no, without constraints there is no game. I'll give a series of assertions, a kind of experiment, and let them, let's hope, they will produce a combined effect.

1. A conversation has an element of improvisation about it. We can have a set of questions or themes. But imagine them as gardens. You never know what exactly you can discover.

2. My main concern before sitting down to do this with you was how one predicts thought, how one starts writing - since writing has a design internal to it which is much more easily perceivable post factum, but in terms of building this internal design, you can say the writer has to handle past, present and future in the process, *at the same time*. I think this is one reason why many authors have found the imaginary conversation as a genre very attractive. By imitating speech between people, not merely speech, it is possible to reflect on composition. Imagine the game of cat's cradle. Or a Frisbee match – you have these moving people and something which delineates trajectories between them. It is very dynamic, wonderfully dynamic. And it is registered, it is a record when you put it in writing.

3. In an interview one can go off track. Digressions are much more acceptable. The logical armature of arguments is more reactive and more flexible. Inconsequent details get in, which is very important, keep the mind from sliding off of the text.

4. This said, I don't really enjoy the predictability of imaginary dialogues. There is the character who (pseudo) resists and plays dumb, and the character that spins the truth-bearing theories. An interview is more honest. We know from the start that you ask the questions, and we've agreed on some, but you can surprise me, and I talk more. It's very egocentric, but in an honest way.

Q: This reminds me of one imaginary dialogue, actually. Oscar Wilde's "The Critic as Artist." In Wilde, the critic, as well as the artist, is a sublime egotist. An individual who has elaborated minutely his own individuality, and the more he talks about himself the more fascinating it is to read. Would you agree with this?

A: Yes. But with reservations. Wilde makes a distinction in this dialogue. One is not supposed to relate anything that happens. Wilde likes things to be piquant, so he wants to hear your secrets. There are a lot of expectations already. In the words he uses, in the names he mentions – Rousseau, Flaubert, Byron. You remember the dialogue starts with some remarks on memoirs and the contemporary fad for memoirs. And what is affirmed is personal revelation. Personal letters we may pry into. We all like reading other people's correspondence. "Autobiography is irresistible." But not biography. Autobiography. And it's a very artificial dialogue, very polished, almost unbearable to a modern ear, this elegance of style, with our contemporary taste for naturalness in quotation marks. So I think in Wilde there is a relation between style and individual. Egotism drives both to perfection, which in its turn may make nature or life perfect for a while. I am losing what I wanted to say... Yes, the critic as an egocentric. Wilde's example is Walter Pater and Mona Lisa. His argument is that Mona Lisa was the starting point for another creation in Pater. The painting was merely a point of departure. What Pater created was something independent and different, in a sense even more enchanting than Mona Lisa. In this sense I would subscribe to the importance of egotism. It is Pater and no one else that wrote that essay. He didn't bow down before the picture, he turned it around, looked at it, thought about it, and produced something. It's a good way to think about criticism. I want to say a much better way to think about

criticism than what Helen Vendler just proposed in her Jefferson lecture. She used the word "evangelists" actually. I was disturbed by the whole Christian vocabulary, but what she meant was I think that scholars point to things, they draw your attention to them, and keep the good stuff from being forgotten, or "forsaken" if we want to stay within the Christian rhetoric. But Vendler had a whole agenda for what she called the "cultural patrimony" which sounded very backward. The whole project degraded somewhat "the critical faculty." If critics merely tell you "look at this, listen to this" – they are passive repositories of knowledge. Databases. Or traffic signals. I don't know. Butlers? There is something disturbing in the idea. There is the belief from the very beginning that people don't look or don't know what to look at. Then the presumption that you can tell people what to pay attention to and how to live. And she reacts to the present uncertainty about art and the humanities and literary studies, but Wilde is reacting too and although not a critic himself he paints the critic in a very charming light. Basically in his dialogue you have one character who thinks criticism is completely useless and one that elevates it as the highest gift and the premise for anything worthwhile. Vendler's answer, and it's the same puzzle, is very unimaginative. Wilde's, as usual, is excessive.

Q: In what you have written so far in the thesis, the majority of authors work with other authors' texts as "points of departure" – Tom Phillips, John Cage, Derrida, Ezra Pound. Is this related to your questions about criticism and in what way?

A: Right – there are mainly three types of figures in the dissertation – designers, teachers, and authors like the ones you just mentioned. These are all figures of people

who work with somebody else's text and produce something we have difficulty putting in categories or we have difficulty dealing with. The terms are not clear. For me this is related to the difficulty in writing the dissertation, in understanding what the dissertation is supposed to be and what it is supposed to do. But why are the terms not clear? Why did scholars jump to their feet and decry what Pound was doing with Chinese poetry or Propertius? Or John Cage who was told that if he wrote poetry, if he was a poet then everybody could claim the title. So yes, all of these intersect and translate into questions in the thesis.

Q: Does that mean that you are trying to draw parallels and find something in common between all these different areas? Are you answering the questions you yourself pose?

A: No, no, no. I am not drawing parallels, not in the usual sense of the word, in the literal sense perhaps. But no, I am not dealing with any of the issues you can readily imagine – authorship, intellectual property, discipline boundaries, and so on. It has been done already much better than I can hope to. As I said this has to do with the dissertation as such. Think about it – I don't make a strict distinction between writing and design, so author and designer go together for me, and the purpose of the

dissertation in purely practical terms is to prepare you to teach, isn't it? As for the second question – no, I don't have answers. I am against giving answers.

Q: ? You are being facetious.

A: Only partly. It is one way of saying less rather than more than you can handle. I want to write as honestly as possible, that is, not go beyond what I know. Sometimes I catch myself soaring into generalities and I have to resist my own impulse. But all of the time, all of the time I want to stay close to the details, what is real, really in front of me. To lump all of these authors or realities together would be unforgivable. The dissertation, the process of researching and writing it is something I can reflect on, *through* these different texts and authors.

Q: Aren't you creating then a rather self-enclosed universe?

A: Maybe. Maybe you are right. But there is no going around this.

Q: Well, in the prospectus you wrote "Bear with me. I am trying to understand where I am."

A: Yes. Yes. I remember. Very nice of you.

Q: I can imagine the sense of wonder…

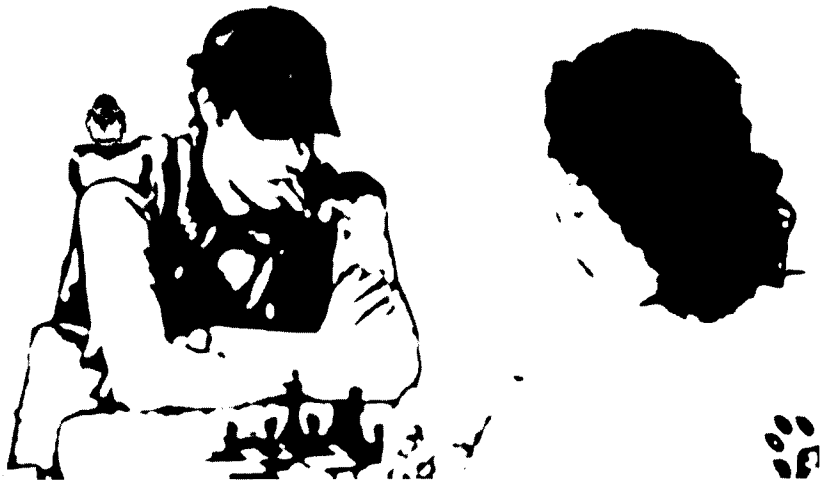
A: Especially when faced with what seem fortuitous demands or prohibitions. The university will not accept landscape orientation of the page, for example. They insist on portrait. I need to understand what I am complying with. Of course, it's not only about the page, the page as such. It's also about writing. My heart bleeds when I have to

reformat the texts to fit the standards, you cannot imagine. I feel this as an incredible compromise. Whole sections of writing are cancelled by the format they require at the registrar's. Shall I assume that nobody is going to read it, so it doesn't matter? I think that's what they are assuming. But this cuts at the heart of the entire project. Sorry to go on like this…

Q: What are you going to do?

A: I don't know yet.

Q: Ok. Shall we leave this for the next session?



A caesura is not a blow of fate, but like it forms a hole, an interval, around which one arranges fragments of life and work. (Benjamin, *One-way Street*)

"Hegel ridiculed Leibniz for having invited the court ladies to undertake experimental metaphysics while walking in the gardens, to see whether two leaves of a tree could not have the same concept. Replace the court ladies by forensic scientists: no two grains of dust are absolutely identical, no two hands have the same distinctive points, no two typewriters have the same strike, no two revolvers score their bullets in the same manner..."
(Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*)

> Narration has an undeniable charm to it. Breton, for example, tells of how Arthur Cravan, "in a very tired, very weary tone," asked Andre Gide: "Monsieur Gide, where are we with respect to time?" To which Gide, with no malice intended, replied: "Fifteen minutes before six." (Caws x) Apollinaire, on the other hand, saw the beginning of cubism in the following conversation: "O divine Dionysos, why are you pulling my ears?" Ariadne asks her philosophical lover... "I find something very pleasant, very agreeable about your ears, Ariadne. Why aren't they even longer?" (in Caws ed., *Manifesto* 121)

Moxon: "If the Emphasis bear hard upon the Word to be exprest as well as the Thing to be exprest, it ought to begin with a *Capital.* I shall bring for instance an Observation I made about forty years ago on the word *That,* viz. that that Word may be reiterated five times, and make good sense." 'That that That that That Man would have stand at the beginning of the *Line* should stand at the end; it will, by toning and laying Emphasis on the middlemost That become good Sense. Now all the thats ought to be *Set* in *Italick,* and the middlemost That ought to begin with a *Capital,* because it is both the Thing and Word." Dizzying.
(From *Mechanick Excercises* qtd. in McLean 11)

Overheard conversation: sometimes when I start asking myself questions, why something is like *this*, and like *that*, and it goes in circles and circles, until I finally fall in the middle and lose myself, as if in a maelstrom.

"The materialities of communication"? (Kittler xiii) Eyes and ears. Paper. Ink. Liquid crystal screens. Keys. Tones. Fingers. Light. Color. Cards. Gesture. Nuance. Retina. Muscle. Neuron. Interaction. Texture (the difference in eating fois gras and shrimp, for example; drinking wine or coffee. No? Touching paper made of rice, made of wood, or other paper. Looking at a Mac or a PC.). Just where really can you stop?

Ce milieu extravagant me plait et je m'y plonge, voila. (Flaubert)
[I like this extravagant milieu and I dive into it, there.]

THE SECOND SESSION

The second meeting unlike the first is taking place in the evening. We have decided on a diversion in the accompaniment of wine ("that marvelous combination possessed by a noble wine, which at once heats the blood and induces meditation"). The diversion – a game, by academics for academics (bafa). There are seven cards on the table. The lights are dim, naturally. We have prepared.

Q: It is not going to be easy. It's a challenge. [Questioning look at A, after which eyes lowered at the table.] The cards have numeric values on the back. From one to seven. You see the trees – one is displaced on each card. They come from an old Japanese map. I am sure they saw the world very differently. When you see these maps, they are such complex, incredible intersections of pictorial lines, even the houses, the bridges, the walls, the hills and the trees, the fishermen, you recognize the movement of the brush. You know, listen, you can say where the starting point is and where the brush stroke finishes. I wish they made maps like these now.

A: You are so predictable. We need to focus. Do you mind if I smoke here?

Q: I knew cigarettes would have to make an entry. No. Go ahead.

So, we follow the map. You'll go first. Choose any card. This will be the beginning. The second card, which I choose, will determine the direction – whether we'll move in descending or ascending numbers. The last card will remain face down. As you know there are seven quotations on the cards, which will become gradually visible by drawing the cards. They are in an arbitrary order. The goal is to construct and maintain a continuous argumentation. I emphasize continuous. The point is to build a continuity.

A: Understood. But the word "argumentation" … may be misleading. "Critical text"? A continuous critical text?

Q: Yes. The only strict rule is: you are obliged to begin with the last sentence of the previous player.

A: Are we allowing interruptions and questions?

Q: The player whose turn it is will have the choice to allow or ignore interruptions. Ready?

A: I am a little scared. Hrgh. Nervous rather.

Q: Me too.

A: Let's go. It's a performance. No right to fail. I can't believe we actually sat down to play the game. Dear readers, this is in your honor!

Q: More wine?

A: Please.

Q: You go.

A: I… choose this one. 4.

Q: Listen carefully: "I submit my causes of joy." [A burst of laughter.] Good choice. At least some of this unbearable unyielding tension is gone. Listen: "I submit my causes of joy." Ellipsis. "A true noun, an isolated thing, does not exist in nature. Things are only the terminal points, or rather the meeting points, of actions, cross-sections cut through actions, snapshots." Ernest Fenollosa. [pages 5 & 10]

A: Let us begin by the caesura in this quote. It is a pause inserted by the reader. In fact, I didn't expect the comic effect, although a comic effect is often signaled by a pause. The original text does not look like this. Between the first and the second sentence on the card there are five pages of other sentences, including several ideograms. But extracted and juxtaposed as they are on the card – arranged around a visible pause – there is a relation implied, forcing the text to mean something it probably doesn't, if read in the usual order. What is this relation? "I submit my causes of joy." It is a performative sentence. I submit something. I have discovered something. It has brought me joy. Here it is, my cause of joy, submitted to you, the reader, this text. Feel ! It's like our cards on the table. It's an offering and a demand. I cannot help but discern Ezra

Pound in the background. I have no idea whether the original Fenollosa text is so to the point. "I submit my causes of joy" is the last sentence of a paragraph, so it falls with all the emphasis possible on the page. Its brevity is certainly reminiscent of Pound. I'll risk a generalization and say that almost all of Pound's writings are offered, submitted to the reader with the impatience of a proud cat (tail exalted in the air) bringing its prey to one's lap. "Will people accept them? / (i.e. these songs)." ["Tenzone"] "My fellow sufferers, songs of my youth" ["The Condolence"]

"Go, little naked and impudent songs,
Go with a light foot !
(Or with two light feet, if it please you !)
Go and dance shamelessly !
Go with an impertinent frolic !
...
Go ! rejuvenate things !"

["Salutation the Second"] These come from Pound's *Lustra*, which he makes sure to define on the cover of the volume as the Latin word for offerings. But in the other volumes too, his translations as a whole (discoveries so precious I have to make them accessible to you), his criticism.

"Let the student brace himself and prepare for the worst." [*ABC* 27]

"HAVE PATIENCE..."

"This is where the present commentator suggests that his reader pause for reflection." [*Kulchur* 138]

Pound is very good at creating a communicative situation which entails something more than saying, which is also a wager, a challenge, a demand, and the reader may take it or leave it. Many readers prefer not to. "Man reading shd. be man intensely alive. The book shd. be a ball of light in one's hand." [*Kulchur* 55] And what is one supposed to do with a ball of light? Lux, lumina, lustra, luminous, illuminate. No one said "utility." [Do you sense the danger in reading "for power" in combination with literature as unearthly, in the context of war?] We have here Fenollosa's "causes of joy" in discovering Chinese poetry. One of these apparently – that is what the card implies with these dots, three of them, but they could have been two, as in a colon, only then we would have interfered with the rules of the MLA – one of these joys consists, apparently, in the dissolution of the boundary between language and nature. And when I say "boundary," forget the drawing of a line, resist the facility of geometry. Perhaps it is only the possibility of saying "Language is one thing, and nature is another." A comma. "A true noun, [, equals =] an isolated thing..." The collapsing of noun and thing is done by means of grammar: both occupy the subject position. A little later, Fenollosa says "a pure verb, [, equals =] an abstract motion." But it is only a momentary dissolution, which serves as a jump board to turn nature into the test of poetic language. If this is how it is in nature, language is at its best (poetry) when it follows in her trail. Taking snapshots, cutting cross-sections, pausing for reflection. The idea of universal language hangs on both threads – language and nature are one but one is the test of the other. Nothing surprising. I'll continue just a little bit more. I need to add some surprise after I just took it from under our feet. The part that Pound retained

and reiterated was not the search for universal grammar in mimetic accord with nature, but a distaste for logic and rhetoric, in contrast to which he promoted science and style. That is, if logic was classifying a cherry tree as a tree, a plant, a vegetable, etc. Fenollosa writes "The cherry tree is all that it does." If logic hides the object within larger and larger categories (like a box within a box within a box...), Fenollosa suggests to multiply the object into different aspects. "Logic" in this sense would be like taking the illustrated dictionary and locating the names of the trees on the street. Or the court ladies testing whether the leaves have "the same concept." But even here, even with the dictionary or the courtly audience of Leibniz, we have a situation within which words can make one have a closer look at the bark or the blossoms of a cherry tree. The lesson Pound took from Fenollosa was that "a true noun" or "a pure verb," doesn't mean anything – does not exist in nature, does not mean, does not do anything, verbally.

[Gesture of invitation to Q, who picks up the next card.]

Q: The lesson Pound took from Fenollosa was that "a true noun" or "a pure verb," doesn't mean anything – does not exist, does not mean, does not do anything, verbally. (Your words sound strange in my mouth. The card I choose is 3, so we'll move in descending order, but I will read the quote later.)

[A butterfly, amazingly red, draws all eyes towards its circling motion around the glasses and the lamp. Its red wings touch the pale yellow of the table and depart swiftly through the window, indiscernible in the gauze of darkness outside. Refocusing takes

some time and some wine. Smoke. The interior of the room if photographed would resemble a stage. It is staged. We are properly attired. There are many objects that have no function whatsoever. That is, no gun is visible which will have to be fired by the end of the game. Q is looking through the notes from A's commentary.]

"A true noun" or "a pure verb," doesn't mean anything – does not exist in nature, does not mean, does not do anything, verbally. But when I am saying this, what do I mean by "true" and "pure"? Is it the same as Fenollosa? The same as you? Or the same as Pound? If the phrases didn't refer to anything in the first place, we seem to have multiplied them, in their emptiness, empty words, and forced them into circulation, in this room. Is anything changed? When Fenollosa writes "a true noun" and "a pure verb," he is understanding nature in terms of grammar. Perfect stasis. Motion without substance. As grammatical categories. But grammar is a makeshift way of describing language. I have difficulty looking at this chair and thinking "noun." Unless I am testing the functions of the word "noun," not the thing-ness of the chair. Pound doesn't make the jump to nature, to language imitating nature in its procedures. To look at it realistically, Fenollosa is falling into abstraction when he begins to talk of transference of force (the sentence) and grammatical categories as natural phenomena. Abstraction goes against the core of what Pound called his "method." In parallel to science, the method consists in juxtaposing and examining concrete samples. Assembling by staying within what one "knows" (the word is so often in capitals in Pound), within first hand knowledge. I think if one looks closely, though, the method of Fenollosa/Pound becomes blurry. The words of any language escape a simple division

into abstract and concrete. It starts with the concrete, literally – the pictorial character of Chinese writing – and transposes it onto something much less tangible. It is a method for what? Not making tractors, right? I don't think Pound ever defines the scope of the ideogrammic method. The contexts within which it appears, make it a method of learning (about) art (learning an art and about it for Pound are inseparable) – poetry and painting are his example activities. The comparisons of slices he gives as illustrations, are either paintings, or pieces of poetry. But when you put together a painting by Goya, Felicien Rops, and, I don't know, Damien Hirst say, what can you gather in terms of knowledge? Is it as concrete as rust + flamingo + rose + cherry = red? Pound's search for a common denominator… Note that the value of this equation is that practically most people know (= have seen) what rust, rose and cherry are. Pound's search for a common denominator is slippery like soap. Which doesn't mean it may not be useful. Go ahead.

A: Just wanted to say that it may not be a good way of thinking about language, but I still think it is very practical in insisting on first-hand examination of texts. *And* things. The two are so often imagined as contrary, whereas he imagines them as contiguous. Have you read "The study in aesthetics"? Can we look at it?

Q: Where's the book? [Sips, fingertips obliviously collect dust particles from the polished table.]

A: Here. So in the beginning there are the "very small children" who see a beautiful woman passing by and are "smitten by an unusual wisdom." They shout "*Guarda ! Ahi, guarda ! ch' è be' a !" [Look ! Hey, look! how beautiful !]*

But three years after this
I heard the young Dante, whose last name I do not know –
For there are, in Sirmione, twenty-eight young Dantes and thirty-four Catulli ;
And there had been a great catch of sardines,
And his elders
Were packing them in the great wooden boxes
For the market in Brescia, and he
Leapt about, snatching at the bright fish
And getting in both their ways ;
And in vain they commanded him to *sta fermo ! [be still]*
And when they would not let him arrange
The fish in the boxes
He stroked those which were already arranged,
Murmuring for his own satisfaction
This identical phrase :
Ch' è be'a.

And at this I was mildly abashed.

This is actually not the first time Pound uses dead fish to talk about aesthetics. Even though he refuses to identify Dante as *the* Dante, the fish safely leads to Louis Agassiz. Agassiz is the man who – by looking at glaciers and the relief around them, suggested there was an Ice Age in the development of the earth. He was famous for his comparative anatomy studies on fish. He identified developments in the fish, leading up to the idea of evolution. In most cases in fact, when he mentions science, Pound has in mind comparative biology. The anecdote of Agassiz and his student, which opens *ABC of Reading*, tells of how one can describe without really looking. A description can fail to grasp anything about the object by repeating what is thought of as expected knowledge. The first mistake of the student is to reproduce a textbook description.

The student has to repeat the exercise, with a difference, until he comes to knowing something about the fish – already decomposed. So, the first lesson in aesthetics is "forget what you have been taught" or "test against experience what you have been taught." This is Agassiz.

The second reference in the poem is to Icarus [Ruthven 228]. "Getting in both their ways" is a "translation" of a line in Ovid: Icarus excitedly playing and leaping about is in the way of his father's "marvelous work" [mirabile patris opus]. In "The study in aesthetics" the work of the elders is almost the opposite of Daedalus's flying machine: sardines have been traditionally, and deliciously, the food of the poor, they are the sign of ordinary life. [cf. "Salutation" in *Lustra*] We know what happens to Icarus. Young Dante here is extracting something out of the ordinary, the smelly and dirty fish, as opposed to or as continuous with the anonymous woman.

The last line of the poem has often been read as a nonsequitur. But the title suggests that the poem itself is "a study" in the aesthetic in an everyday setting. The definite article, "*the* study", in the context of the collection turns the poem into one of a series of occasions, or anecdotal poems, with a certain sarcastic overtone. The "I" makes an entrance last but is an obligatory element. In all of the anecdotal poems the sarcasm springs from a definite perspective, having to do as much with Latin poetry as it does with French fin-de-siecle. The observer, detached and sardonic and superior, is always there. The small children in the beginning of the poem stop their play, freeze at the sight, "smitten by an unusual wisdom." The poet too freezes at the sight of young Dante playing with the fish and exclaiming at its beauty. "Abashed" now means mostly "embarrassed." But etymologically, it means to freeze by surprise or shock in

the middle of yawning. If this seems like taking it too far, let us stay with what is certain. "Abash" is related to the exclamation *Bah!*

So, where is the aesthetic in this poem? Is it the children smitten by a passing woman? Is it Dante playing with the fish to the annoyance of his elders? Or is it in the abashed observer, who realizes he had made a mistake, and mildly exclaims in his own turn?

Q; You are missing the main point – the children are admiring a woman,

and young Dante is admiring fish. This is the main cause of abashment.

A: Why would that be the cause? If the beauty of the woman is the source of "unusual wisdom," Dante is "murmuring for his own satisfaction." I don't see a hierarchy here. There is not enough to make a hierarchy.

Q: But for Pound the study of fish pointed to the ideogrammic method. Not only Agassiz,

Aristotle too. Aristotle was looking at fish, describing them and trying to classify them into species. He got the dolphins right (as mammals). In the *Paris Review* interview, Pound says "Alexander gave orders to the fishermen that if they found out anything about fish that was interesting, a specific thing, they were to tell Aristotle. And with that correlation you got ichthyology to the scientific point where it stayed for two thousand years." (When biologists figured out dolphins were mammals.) [6] And just

a little later he emphasizes how important curiosity is, along with sincerity in the business of letters.

A: I wonder how you managed to pull all this simply out of your hat.

[More dust particles swept by oblivious fingertips.]

Q: Hm.

A: I didn't mean to derail the text completely. [Gesture.]

Q: No, you've just made the job harder, but I'll work with what we have and now we have Fenollosa, a poem by Pound and a quotation on a card from Barbara Johnson. I'll read it: "Yet the linguistic "noise" of the act of translating, in *not* being meant or intended, comes close to the pure linguisticness of language itself." [Johnson 61] Here again there is the word "pure." Before going on to provide a gloss for this quotation, which certainly will touch upon it only barely, like vapor, let's consider all things opaque that are in front of us, here, in the dim light. Five more cards with tender miniature lines of trees on them – five more snatches of text, which we will need to assemble. The future is opaque. The rest of this evening. It's already late. But all these words which begin to seem like blind text. True noun. Pure verb. Method. Noise. Ch'e bella! Guarda. Abashed. Pure linguisticness. I think we are on the right track. But the goal is not to surround this opacity with words.

[Nod. A reaches slowly, turns the card.]

A: I would like to add the next card. 2. I see another passing woman here. "The description of "love at last sight" in "A une passante" exemplifies for Benjamin Baudelaire's intense but circumscribed capacity for loving and looking. It is somewhat surprising, then, that here Benjamin translates the title as "Einer Dame" [To a Lady], thus missing all the nuances that would later form his theory of modernity. George, in contrast, translates it as "Einer Vorübergehenden" [To a Passing Woman], which preserves the structure of substantivising a feminine noun out of an adjective of fleetingness. The grammatical crystallization duplicates the sudden appearance of the woman in the crowd. She precipitates out from the supersaturated solution of the poet's

expectations." [Johnson 44] Oh I like this idea of some one precipitating out from a saturated background, crystal out of liquid. But the goal is not to surround these words with opacity, neither to break their opacity, their resistance. Do you remember in our last session, somewhat towards the end, I said something like "I want to stay close to the real, what is really in front of me." I used the word "real" and then I kept thinking about it. I wasn't sure, I fumbled in the dark a little when I was saying that. And especially as I kept reading Barbara Johnson's book. She uses "real." The first chapter is on Baudelaire's trial. "If real, then condemned. If symbolic, then not real." The word migrates slowly through the text, picking up meanings. Lacan is there, Flaubert too, Plato, Derrida, Sappho, Saussure. Many others. You can imagine how the word ricochets from one name to another. Talking of these names as clusters of associations. The text accumulates all these layers. It is always a pleasure to be witness to such dexterity. And whatever the conclusions one draws about ambiguity and philosophy and sexual difference, I would like to point to this as a technique of expression, or a critical technique. Perhaps the technique was there all along, in philosophy mostly, in what Derrida wrote of as the translation of a "normal" word into a philosopheme, or the overlapping of text and texture. But I want to insist on it as a technique, consciously used as a technique – talking about method in a very down-to-earth way. "The cherry tree is all that it does." You have to be very careful, especially careful every time you mention the word "real" in relation to literature. I mean in general. You can suddenly find yourself fighting an army of monsters, of things you don't mean. What I am partly avoiding in speaking is this precision in handling the material, like jewels or tiny insects with even tinier limbs, every word within a pattern

of possibilities, and the constant juggling with perspectives – within the phrase, within a trope, within the paragraph, and so on. Like typography – there is a microscale and a macroscale once you become aware of the technicalities of what you are doing. Yes.

Q: I wanted to go back to the "noise" on the previous card. Is what is *not* meant or intended "noise"? Every time you lift this glass and put it back on the table, there is noise. Of course, now if I do it to illustrate, the noise will be intended. Does that make it a sound? That's not important. Not only the act of translating, I thought. Every text produces "linguistic "noise."" The technique you are describing, of, how shall I put it, creating ripples through a text, … or … reverberations of different meanings within the space (context) of the same word, .. or … to descend from the metaphorical – of knowing and using words in their associative complexity - do you see it in contradiction to this idea of linguistic noise.

A: In the sense that they pull in opposite directions.

Shall we?

Q: Yes. Card. 1. Oh it's a poem! And in French !

A: You need French to read it, but to write it you need to know only the alphabet.

Q: No. Only the shape of the letters.

For the first time, the relation between Cage's musical projects and his writings becomes visible to me. But of course. Hear the unintended ! So… once you become aware, as you put it, of the technicalities of composition, how is one supposed to go about translating such a poem? What about the question of faithfulness?

[Long pause. The session continues after a couple of hours' work on Duchamp's *Notes*. The sources for the extract [p.15] from Cage's *Mirage Verbal* are notes 132, 82, 200, 7, 20, 103, 181. The words "Gaz" and "Cube" at the end of the page seem to be insertions by Cage into the pool of words culled from note 181. Two "translations" were prepared in the meantime – one literal of the words appearing in French, using Paul Matisse's original translation of the notes; and another one using the same selection of notes and keeping the form of the mesostic but using a slightly different set of words around the same central bone.]

erotic
pump

the compression
there

grain
and
to have the
picture
on a background

obliged
to have
similarity

the time
of dandruffs
onto
a paper wet with
gas
cut
follows
the
capillaries
mobile
A and
the
time
which
separates two
states

gas

cube

violin
no importance
by
a and B
there
the average
subject

poMpe
érotIque

la compRession
lA

Grain
Et
aVoir la
picturE
suR un fond

oBligé
d'Avoir
simiLarité

le teMps
de pellIcules
suR
un pApier humide de
Gaz
coupE
suiVant
lEs
capillaiRes
moBiles
A et
Les
teMps
qui
sépaRe deux
étAts

Gaz

cubE

Violon
sans importancE
paR
a et B
lA
Le sujet
Moyenne

puMp
erotic lIquid

the compRession
not exAct enough

Grain of
yEs
haVe the
picturE
Reappearing every 2

oBliged
to hAve
similArity

in tiMe
fallen from the hair
onto a papeR
gAs
made in Germany
thE
loVe with a sparkling
thEm
capillaRy
moBile
A and
interval
tiMe
whIch
sepaRates two
stAtes

Gas

cubE

Violin
no importancE
oR
a and B
At
all these
Mean of

poMpe
érotIque

la compRession
lA

Grain
Et
aVoir la
picturE
suR un fond

oBligé
d'Avoir
similArité

le teMps
de pellIcules
suR
un pApier humide de
Gaz
coupE
suIVant
lEs
capillaiRes
moBiles
A et
Les
teMps
qui
sépaRe deux
étAts

Gaz

cubE

Violon
sans importancE
paR
a et B
lA
Le sujet
Moyenne

Q: For the record. We used the same notes and chose a group of words, according to the same constraints from the English text. It reads differently. Just as it reads differently if … when the first time you read Cage's *Mirage Verbal*, you were already acquainted with Duchamp's notes. Duchamp's brief, witty, feats of attention echo around the… around this very visible figure, which the poem is.

A: Duchamp imagined such a thing as musical sculpture. Venus of Milo made of sounds, for example. I think this is possible now. With the technology we have. Everyone knows that the sense of hearing and spatial perception are linked. A sound can indicate a particular point in space.

Q: Yes, yes. Let's stay on track. Marjorie Perloff wrote an article on one of Cage's mesostics based on something Jasper Johns said ("What you say"). She mentions that the mesostic did not work very well with Pound's *Cantos*. As if *the Cantos* were not a very similar musical experiment. But at one point she evaluates the project like this: "The strategy of "What you say. . ." --and this is where the mesostic mode, with its dependence on a fixed word pool, can work so effectively-- is to recharge individual words by consistently shifting their context and hence their use" ["Music"]. You recognize the word "recharge," of course. "Literature is language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree." The two words that Pound uses to describe the release of this potential from words (words as batteries or nutriment), are "energy" and "flavour." In *How to Write*, the unpublished supplement to *How to Read*, he says that we learn the history of our words before we

are able to "extract the long held flavour." [*Machine Art* 89] At the beginning of *Guide to Kulchur* he pictures learning as grinding knowledge into fine powder. Releasing the flavor of words. Hearing the noise they make, but also their unpredictable associative valence. Linguistic noise. A verbal and sonorous mirage. It may seem as if I am threading all these metaphors on a string and you wonder now, I am sure, where I am going to take it. What am I going to do with this string of metaphors? But the thing is that until you go there, you don't know the place, and even when you know it, it is in relation to the itinerary you take.

A: You are not getting away with this. I'll open the next card (7): which brings us back to Duchamp. "Condensing vapors – on polished surfaces

glass
copper
infra thin" .

So we ended up back with Duchamp and the infra thin.

Q: Not necessarily. Think.

A: I am.

Q: Condense. Condensare.

A: I see. … Isn't the … The possibility…

The difference between the two translations we made is infra thin.

[Q gestures to say it is ok, but not really good, adds the last card. 6.]

Q: "STYLE, the attainment of style consists in so knowing words that one will communicate the various parts of what one says with the various degrees and weights of importance which one wishes." [Pound, *Kulchur* 59]

A: What does (the attention paid to) the condensation of vapor on a polished surface have to do with writing poetry? Writing a dissertation? The interesting thing about the infra thin is that it is invention based on multiplicity. If you wish, you have the valence before you have the word. It verges on the imponderable. The difference between learning a foreign language and …

Q: Yes, it verges on the imponderable, and imponderabilities, [breath] imponderabilities are part of anything there is to express. That is, the parts you can not weigh and cut up and distribute around your phrases.

A: But which may still be there. Potentially, as Barbara Johnson shows. But isn't Pound putting the emphasis on what you *can* weigh?

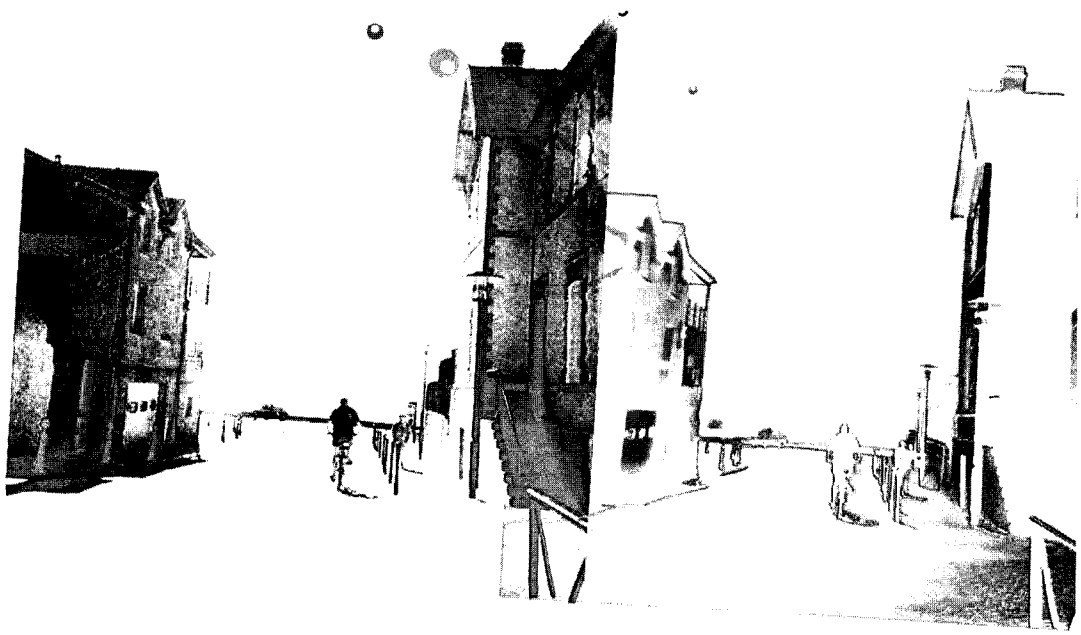
Q: Is he? Cage is not.

A: A major difference.

Q: And where are *we* putting the stress? Oh look !

A: Beautiful, eh !

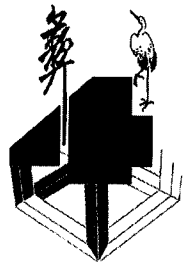
[Dawn. 5:30 am. In an orange haze, which makes the birds more audible than ever, the sun is tinting the edges of the window. The seduction to see the world gradually blossom out of its tranquility was too great. We took the camera and dived into the morning. And that was the end of the second session. So long, readers!]

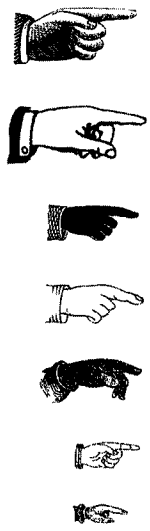


The third session took place in the late afternoon of a spring day. It was devoted to elaborating graphic details, going over the text, choosing illustrations and decorations, and finally turning the soft copy which you cannot see into the hard copy you hold in your hands. The entire layout of this chapter is a record of what went on during the 6 hours of this last session. Much to show, nothing to explain. Conversation went back to the soundlessness out of which it appeared.

THE THIRD SESSION

CHAPTER





ONE : APOLLINAIRE'S "IT'S RAINING"

"It's raining" remains the most pervasively visible text by Apollinaire. The strange allure of the poem is not easy to put in words. [A sheer thorn in the eyes. This is probably the tritest way of beginning a scholarly paper: X is one of Y, or X (object of attention) is the most/least Z (particular quality, usually quite broad) of Y (class of objects). Here is a random example from PMLA (October 2004): "The students of the present generation are the first in a long time who will not take their cultural identities from books." (Siebers 1315) Within the same gesture the scholar brings the object into view, qualifies it vaguely, and classifies it. Within the same gesture authority to do so is claimed. The territory is marked. Such beginning imitates the end of research. "I know," the scholar seems to say, "because I have roamed out and about, among many volumes, and have seen it all. Let me now tell you how things stand." From here on any beginning loses its innocence. How many ready-made opening sentences do you have at your disposal? How many immediately available ways to introduce quotations? Special turns of phrase to announce your discoveries? Is it possible to write as if for the first time?] Or, it is perhaps unnecessary to try to put in words the strange allure of Apollinaire's "It's raining." Rather, let us examine the surroundings of its various visual incorporations.

The poem's first appearance is in Pierre Albert-Birot's journal *SIC*. [Isn't this the commonest way to begin an exposition of the different aspects of a subject? Chronology, enumeration, creating a series where there were individual events. Afterwards you pretend that the order created is untouchable: facts. Never mind the relations you have, at the same time, set in motion. A case in point: see the chronology Appendix III.] Albert-Birot has a story about the typographical composition of the text, which remains unpublished and inaccessible, and of which we have the fragmented account of Marie-Louise Lentengre, PAB's biographer. The story of the poem goes hand in hand with the story of the magazine. By the fall of 1916 *SIC* was becoming successful. It was available in 18 galleries and bookstores and was even distributed by "Messagerie Hachette."* One could buy the magazine in train stations and subway entrances. The success translated into better printing and better typography: "The magazine passed to the printer Levé and, although keeping the same format, benefited from a more careful and efficient typographic design. It is Levé himself, who, not daring to entrust a simple worker with the task, composed in the galley, letter by letter, the famous calligram by Apollinaire "It's raining," [...] a small masterpiece of typography achieved in one night, as Albert-Birot tells in his *Causerie*...[unpublished talk on Apollinaire from 1965]" (Lentengre 108). In other words, if it wasn't for Albert-Birot and Levé the story of the poem might have been very different. [Truism: but unavoidable? Why not spell it out, simply and directly, cut to the chase: that there is no longer a way to pretend the sensitivity of the compositor does not matter. Such

* The growing Hachette company was the chief distributor of Parisian newspapers and magazines; in the 1940s they introduced the famous and lucrative "Livre de Poche" series of French classics. *SIC* was available for subscriptions abroad: no small feat.

blindness costs dearly.] Perhaps it is in this light one should see the experiment of John Crombie (a designer and writer associated with OuLiPo, and with his own small press in Paris) who in 1989 published a series of typographic interpretations of "It's raining." What were the possible histories of the poem before it froze in Levé's beautiful composition?*

Lentengre's book itself, not surprisingly, comes from the publishing house of Jean Michel Place. Jean Michel Place emerged on the scene (1975) with the reproduction *in*

---

* On a related issue, John Crombie wrote a letter to the *London Review of Books*, which I will quote in full. The situation has not changed in the last 6 years, but Harvard has two of the 500 copies:

Golden Imbeciles

From John Crombie

In his review of the *Oulipo Compendium* (*LRB*, 29 April [1999]), John Sturrock devotes a paragraph to Raymond Queneau's 'titanic' work *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* and to an English translation thereof by Stanley Chapman featured in the *Compendium* - albeit with the pages left uncut, which rather defeats the work's combinatorial purpose. Readers may be interested to know that an English version of Queneau's work was published in book form in 1983 by Kickshaws, in my own adaptation, under the title *One Hundred Million Million Poems.* In our edition, the sheets were cut into strips, as in the original French work, so as to allow individual lines to be recombined at will - the whole point of the exercise.

Hand-set and printed in a limited edition of 500 copies, it soon went out of print. But no commercial publisher, British or American, was prepared to risk his/her arm to bring out a regular edition in English, unlike German, Swedish and other publishers, who have since issued successful commercial editions of their own.

John Crombie

Paris

The second part of this chapter presents a similar case of publishing which "deafeats" or reduces irresponsibly a work's purpose. The author: Tristan Tzara.

In America, doubtlessly the land of consumerism, the energy of graphic designers is harnessed mostly in advertising and business. There have never appeared to be great collaborations between design and literature, to the progressive marginalization of literature (given that we already want our reality designed). This is why the debates among American graphic designers turn around the ethical questions in designing for products of doubtful public value. They never touch on poetry. This is one reason why there is still no good edition of Emily Dickinson's poems, still no color edition of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, less and less beautiful and manageable volumes of classic English poetry (instead of the bulky heavy-handed "collected" or "complete" collections). This is why also literary studies in the academy have remained relatively blind to the graphic forms of texts and almost no one has tried to exert pressure on publishers or stir discussions which could influence the kinds of books we get. We all recognize that Gutenberg caused a revolution, but still think of designing and publishing literature as something which has barely a bearing on our reading and writing.

facsimile of *La Révolution Surréaliste* and *SIC*, and later of a series of avant-garde publications from the beginning of the 20th century, thus contributing to the diffusion of modernist literature and the growth of modernist studies. This is how one can still buy all major DADA publications for less than the price of a baseball ticket. But Lentengre's book itself, amply illustrated, and strangely designed in two columns per page, reproduces a retouched image of "It's raining." The photo is on the same eye-level as the story about Levé. In a typically documentary fashion, the text is grounded in the image: "this is the small masterpiece of typography, the poem we were talking about, only smaller." The image is the proof of the story. That is, the image is supposed to tell the same story, only we never asked to hear it.

Apollinaire's name, of course, lent clout to PAB's publication, so the poem's appearance is an important detail. And Levé is present as part of the success of the magazine. [You mean, Lentengre doesn't have the same motive as you?] But the passage answers certain points of curiosity: if a work of poetry has such distinctive visual character, how was it made, how was it printed? Did the author collaborate with the designer? Was the author the designer? Does it matter? [Good question.]

In his very influential *Pioneers of Modern Typography* * Herbert Spencer devotes two page spreads to Apollinaire, while never actually mentioning Apollinaire's name in the essay accompanying the illustrations. [This is one strategy for marking the territory, you have been there and it is verifiable, the reader will recognize it by A in the vicinity of B in the book of C. And predictably it is going to be only a passage. If it was a place to

* MIT Press's sales and promotion department called it "the standard guide to the avant-garde origins of modern graphic design and typography."

settle down you would not have gone further, although I know that nothing can stop the scholar in the ever expanding conquest of existing ideas.] Preceding Apollinaire are individual images from *Blast*, Lewis Carroll, Man Ray.... Following are the explosive poems of Marinetti and Soffici.

Apollinaire's place is transitional and somehow, implied by the absence of any particular discussion of his work, self-evident.

APOLLINAIRE

Jorge Luis Borges had a similar idea of Apollinaire:

> "Although he lived his days among the *baladins* of Cubism and Futurism, he was not a modern man. He was somewhat less complex and more happy, more ancient, and stronger. (He was so unmodern that modernity seemed picturesque, and perhaps even moving, to him.)" (*The Total Library*)

Spencer's only commentary is contained in the captions:

> "Apollinaire took little direct interest in how his calligrammes were translated into type. This is his manuscript for Il Pleut, written in red and black ink on a page torn from an exercise book, and, opposite, as it was set by M. Levé, the printer of the review SIC (Sons, Ideés, Couleurs), in which it first appeared in 1916." (18)

"Apollinaire took little direct interest in how his calligrammes were translated into type. This is his manuscript for Il Pleut, written in red and black ink on a page torn from an exercise book, and, opposite, as it was set by M. Levé, the printer of the review SIC (Sons, Ideés, Couleurs), in which it first appeared in 1916." (18)

For Spencer there are two things which deserve attention: the choice (and doubt) of how to name the texts, and the fact that Apollinaire did not actually participate in the typographic compositions. I find something puzzling about these commentaries. [Aren't you breaching manners?] They do not, strictly speaking, propel the story of Spencer's argument, which finds its succinct expression in his opening sentence: "The roots of modern typography are entwined with those of twentieth-century painting, poetry, and architecture" (13). Precisely because Apollinaire had no passion for the typography of his poems: he called them "calligrammes," beautiful pieces of writing. Again, visually speaking, the calligrams would belong to a tradition of figurative handwriting. "Would belong" – if the book of poems was not caught in a very different historical movement, where the calligrams remain somewhat foreign. [These points (places of interest in the argument) go somewhat unnoticed. But then, one is never able to notice everything.] So, why, then, did Spencer reproduce on two entire pages "It's raining" both in manuscript and in its typographic version? [Worse than previous, but still a good question. If you answer this one, you can answer the previous one.]

Apollinaire is anticipated in the commentary to Lewis Carroll's illustration. The mouse's tale is seen as "an amusing [...] example of the use of typographic form to reflect the subject of the text – a technique exploited with great impact by Apollinaire in 1914 in his *Idéogrammes Lyriques* (see pages 16-17)." This 1914 edition was never published. It exists only as a single dummy copy. [A-ha!]

The opening visual sequence of Spencer's essay wobbles, showing the uncertainty of any beginning, especially when it sets as its task to trace the "roots" of something. The page from *Blast* (1914) sits oddly next to (preceding) the mouse's tail/tale from *Alice in Wonderland* (1865). Morgenstern's "Fisches Nachtgesang"

(1905) and Man Ray's crossed-out wordless poem (1924) were one-off experiments, showing neither artist's preoccupation with design. (Note the zigzagging chronology.) And then, Apollinaire (1914), who took "little direct interest" in type.

"Reflect the subject of the poem"? "Stress the essence of the poem"? That's about it, isn't it? These example show awareness (to rephrase according to my own palate) of a relation between different means of expression, semantic and graphic.

I am not going to try to impose coherence on the opening sequence of illustrations in Spencer's book. His failure to make it all cohere is infinitely more interesting than a perfectly evident introduction would be. He threw some more or less random pictures, a constellation, out of which he could start the work of tracing connections. Which, one may venture, is more or less the work of this chapter too.

IL PLEUT

Il pleut des voix de femmes comme si elles étaient mortes même dans le souvenir

c'est vous aussi qu'il pleut merveilleuses rencontres de ma vie ô gouttelettes

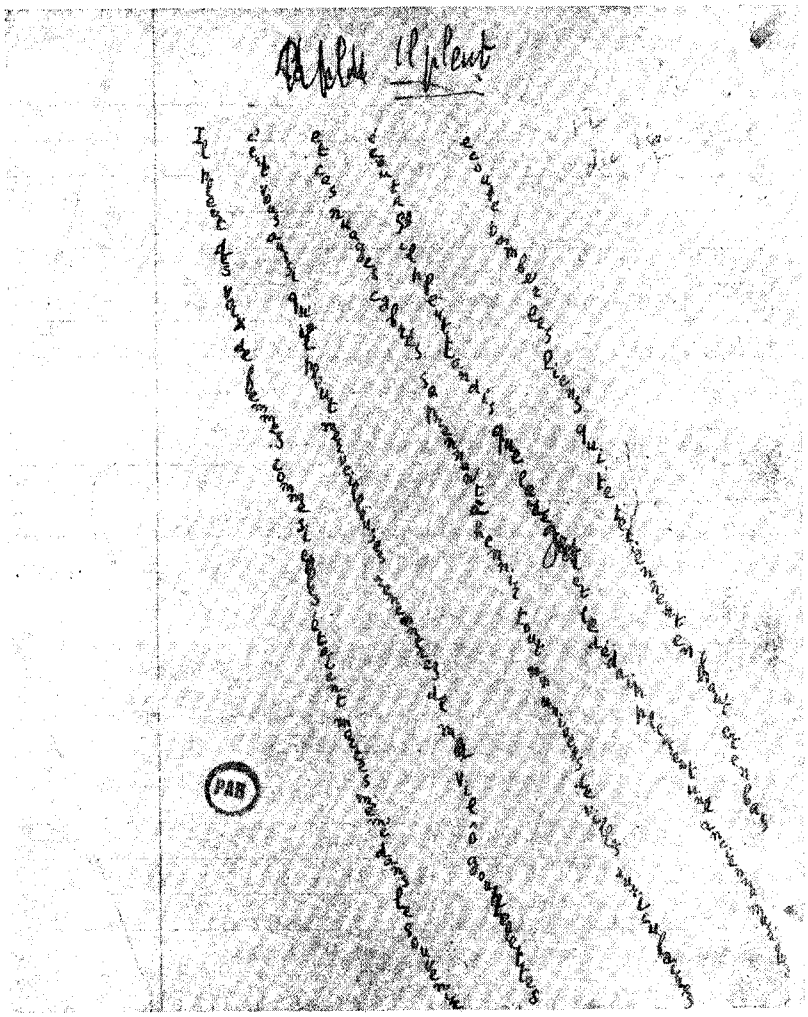
et ces nuages cabres se prennent à hennir tout un univers de villes auriculaires

écoute s'il pleut tandis que le regret et le dédain pleurent une ancienne musique

écoute tomber les liens qui te retiennent en haut et en bas

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

Levé's Apollinaire.



Apollinaire's Apollinaire.

I found out today (26 April) that Stefan Themerson published a short book (I imagine limited edition) called *Apollinaire's Lyrical Ideograms* (1968). This collection of documents was, I think, the source of Spencer's illustrations and commentary (Themerson is among other things a printer). *Apollinaire's Lyrical Ideograms* also

reproduces in two pages the manuscript and Levé's composition of "It's raining," mentioning the black and red ink and the torn page from an exercise notebook. Themerson also asked of the poem (which "has been reprinted, and re-reprinted hundreds of times") how its "final stage [the setting in type] worked out" (20). He took his question first to the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, but apparently Apollinaire corrected spelling and wording only. Then, he went to the source - Pierre Albert-Birot, and received a negative answer: "No. Apollinaire *ne s'y intéressait pas* [took no interest]. He never said anything about the printing of his poems. Other poets – yes. I still have an old, two or three pages long, letter from Aragon, all about how he wanted his work to be presented in *SIC*." "M. Levé had already semi-retired [...] [b]ut one evening, when he was shown the original for 'Il Pleut', he liked it so much that he wanted to set it up himself, and he did." (23) [Levé's was a labor of love.]

Themerson confirmed the un-modernity of Apollinaire.
His book registers the step by step unfolding of the questions, as well as the impossibility (failure) to put them at rest. Maybe even the form wasn't so new. Wasn't the lyricism "old-fashioned"? And yet, yet...

Themerson's interest in the typography of Apollinaire's poems is admittedly "personal. That is, he is not trying to put the poet at the source of modern graphic design. But he sees Apollinaire's poetry as implicated in a larger debate.
In the context of *Apollinaire's Lyrical Ideograms* one reads "It's Raining" among philosophers and scientists:

"A table has four legs; a 'table' has five letters.

This typographic device " ' " & " ' " is used by linguistic philosophers to make clear whether they mean a particular thing (a table) or the word that designates it (a 'table'). It sounds childishly simple, but... But what shall we do with Apollinaire's 'tables'? They are not tables (one cannot sit at them), they are 'tables.' And yet, they have both 'legs' *and* letters." (13)

And:

"At one extreme is the language behaviour of scientists and engineers at work. This behaviour is highly effective. Its tasks are to explain the world and to learn to control it whenever possible so as to satisfy specific needs. At the other extreme is the language behaviour of psychotics and of people under the spell of superstition and of demagogy. ... scientists at work are aware of the limitations of language; ... They are aware of different orders of abstraction. The linguistic behaviour of psychotics, of rigid 'believers', ... violates semantic principles. These individuals confuse words with things. ... Both word magic and demagogy aim to channelize the reactions of people to symbols, so as to make responses automatic, uncritical, immediate... Such reactions make possible gigantic sales volumes unrelated to the quality of the product; they make for persistent hostilities among groups; they make wars inevitable." (S. I. Hayakawa qtd. 15)

(Cf. Albers' 1+1= 3 or more, p.42-44 in interlude chapter)

Do we deduct here complicity between poetry and advertising?

Tristan Tzara wrote ⇓

"PUBLICITY AND BUSINESS ARE ALSO POETIC ELEMENTS."

(*Seven Manifestos* 8)

Apollinaire himself is quoted by Spencer:

> "CATALOGUES, POSTERS, ADVERTISEMENTS OF ALL SORTS. ⇐
> BELIEVE ME, THEY CONTAIN THE POETRY OF OUR EPOCH."

[After dividing the world in two, good use of language and bad use of language, all that is left for the reader is to take sides. Where would you stand? You cannot deny that the implied definition of what poetry does, is not to be ignored. And if even partially true, then criticism tries to un-do the effects (the confusions and seductions), of poetry. Why else would we want to separate vehicle from target in a metaphor?]

With peace-making generosity Themerson places poetry in "the middle ground between these limits." But the two quotes are telling. After all, the inverted commas (one should be precise to distinguish from quotation marks?) cannot be read aloud. [A new rule can be invented where one claps their hands to signal inverted commas.] They are only written signs. They show that punctuation is not merely instructions for reading. Between words and things comes writing. Literally. [The cheap effect of an incomplete sentence. A shortcut to showing you can afford to break the rules.] The question is not simply "what shall we do with Apollinaire's 'tables'", but what kind of " 'legs' " do these " 'tables' " have. What kind of droplets are falling and breaking in "It's raining"? Apollinaire is not only confusing the rain with women's voices and the clouds with "auricular" buildings, he is confusing the raindrops with letters. And let us stress, psychotic or not, this is not a modernist gesture in itself. "It's raining" is probably the closest Western poetry has come to Japanese haiku in its decorative calligraphic form.

Like Eastern calligraphy, it can be hung on a wall. It is almost too fine for the heaviness of a book. The merit of Levé's composition is precisely to transform the uneven, ugly handwriting of Apollinaire into something as intricately nuanced as the content requires. It is a quietly acknowledged collaboration. If Levé had left other work to evince more interest, the poem could have been listed under his name and not Apollinaire's in typography reference and history books. [Posit a hypothetical future to correct the past? That is the only role the conditional sentence can play in such discourse, unlike the imperative which it replaces.

Yes, looking up Apollinaire in typography encyclopedias or historical overviews such as Andel's *Avant-Garde Page Design 1900 – 1950,* shows that he gets all the credit. But then, there is one Apollinaire, whereas there were many printers who worked on the calligrams. The "argument" overstresses the importance of Levé, even if it shows that printers were much more conscientious back then, before they were relegated to the 'simple' task of operating machines and design started requiring a salary of its own. What you remain blind to is exactly that the story of "It's raining" is also the story of the separation of printer and designer, the disappearance of the compositor.] For the inattentive eye, however, there will be little difference between Levé and other renderings of the poem. Perhaps indeed the difference is too fine. Or perhaps we are not used to making fine distinctions. Just having the 'same' words is enough. Or, most probably, we are so used to careless printing that we do not

notice it anymore. As if we are more efficient this way, putting the text in any form quickly available. Even when reproduction and design processes have become so cheap and accessible. For comparison, where Levé had to use any small objects at hand to hold the metal types in place and distribute the white spaces in such irresistible wind-blown manner, nowadays a typographer needs only to move the fingers with a computer mouse. I would not say that it can take less time (imagination and precision), but the process requires less physical effort and the product is easier to transmit in various forms. [Maybe. Maybe not.]

Let me quickly point out several differences between the standard editions of "It's raining."

Needless to say that Levé's version is always the one reproduced in typography books. Here are some of the reasons why. He moved the title to the right and set it in square slab-serif capitals, which hang above the page with architectural gravity. Clouds in the poem transform into "auricular cities."

He extended the space between words, and left enough space between letters to accentuate their individual effect.

Round letters look like drops of water. Look at " ô " in "ô goutelettes".

Long letters (such as "l", "t", "i") form vertical lines.

He progressively changed the alignment of the letters not only to create a movement from top to bottom (nowhere does a letter go more than a space to the right, i.e. words read continuously, less successful compositions have words read in a zigzag manner by

moving letters back to the left), but also to create a fluctuating interval between the columns of falling characters.

The general sweep to the right is locked in tension with these

fluctuating intervals (space between) the columns.

He kept groups of letters in the same vertical alignment: look at the poem,

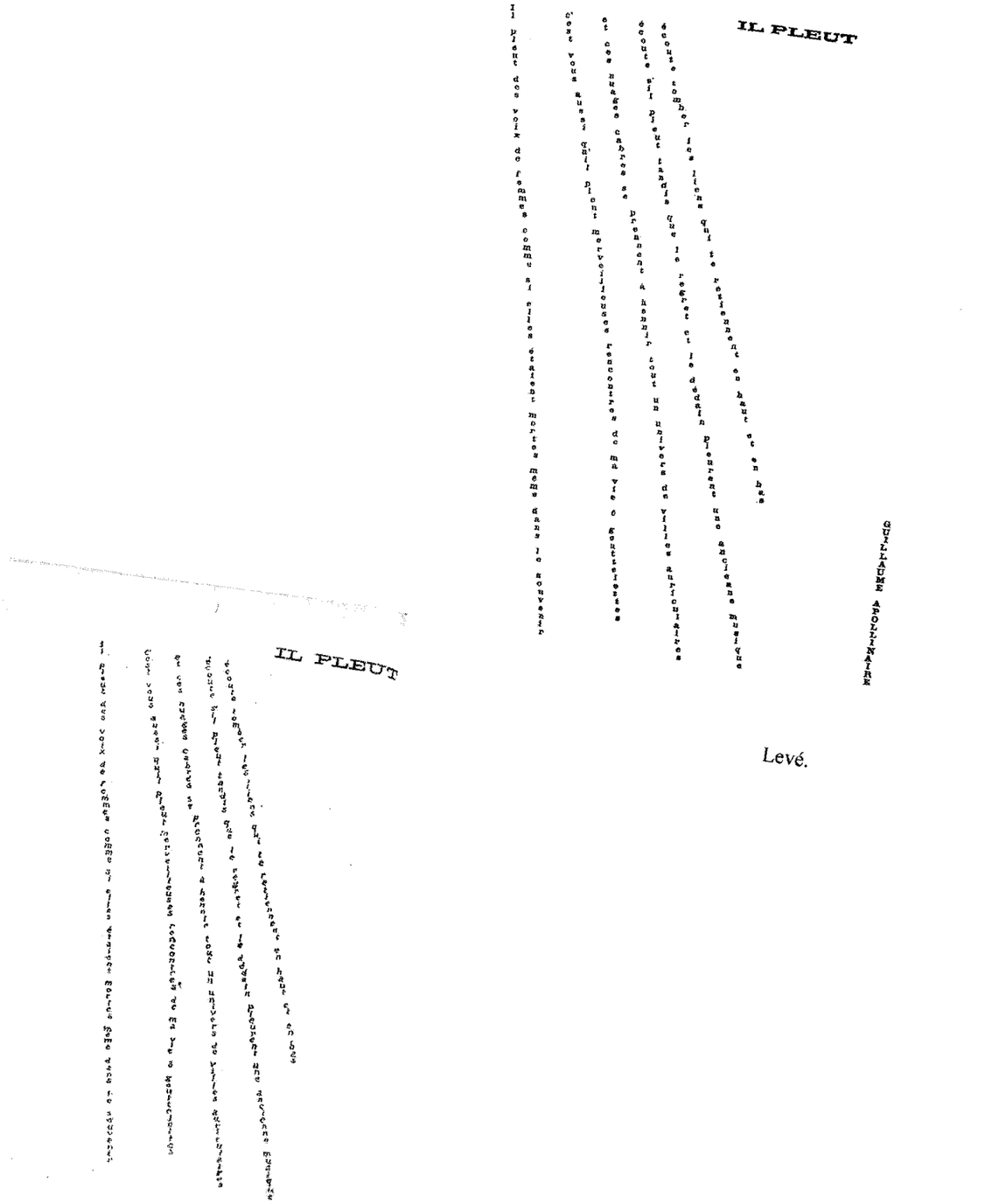
find which, and you will see to what effect ("de ma vie ô …").

The type is unsentimental and elegant,

with just enough serifs to resist the wind.

By contrast (or in honour), the Gallimard edition of 1925 had somebody copy by hand Levé's composition and probably printed it from block. What becomes immediately obvious is that (a type resembling) handwriting adds unnecessary curliness or sentimentality, where there is only distanced metaphorical sadness. Even the poet's unsightly hand is better than the cultured regularity of a cursive. From the 1930s on, Gallimard, which has kept *Calligrammes* in circulation with a new printing almost every year, reproduced Levé, changing only the title - now in italics like all other titles in the volume. In other words, the poem, through its title, was incorporated into the volume where it did not originally belong. [Here comes a conclusion. An interpretation dressed as fact, but all in all only a different way to read a title.]

Look attentively, read, compare:



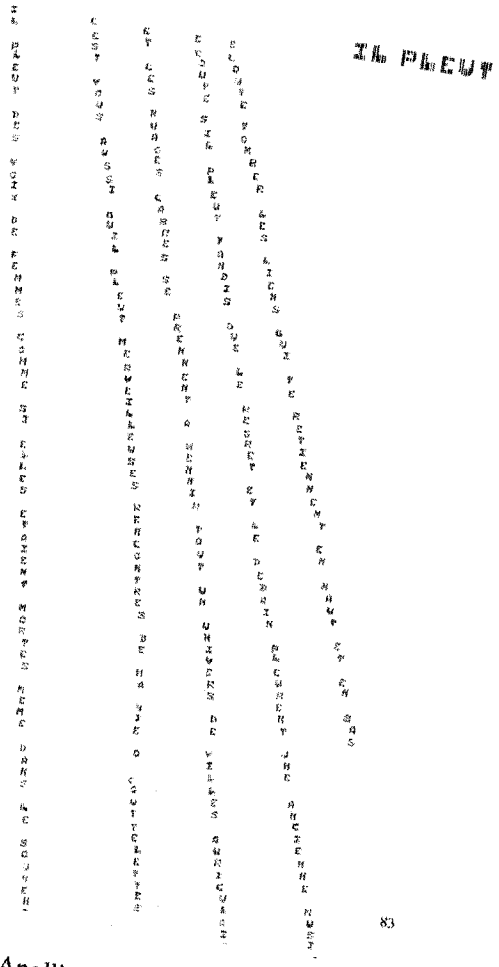
Levé.

Anonymous, Gallimard, 1925.

It's Raining

listen to the fetters falling that bind you high and low
listen to it rain while regret and disdain weep an ancient music
and those clouds rear and begin to whine a universe of auricular cities
it's raining you too marvelous encounter of my life of drop lets
it's raining women's voices as if they were dead even in memory

Greet's (translator) English version.



Raymond Gid's Apollinaire.

1930 saw a deluxe edition from *NRF* with lithographs by Giorgio de Chirico. A perfect art deco object, its covers are in leather, in black, red and gold, with the typical elongated vertical lettering in art deco style. The paper is Chine (very soft, natural white), but the lithographs, picturing for the most part a sun whose rays like cords tie it to various architectural elements and furniture à la Chirico, only in contrasted coal grey and dark black, do not contribute greatly to the volume. Any pictorial additions would risk being superfluous in *Calligrammes*.

But the typography... the typography is very neat, so neat and clean that it does not work. [Ellipsis, repetition, emotion disguised as grammar.] Maurice Darantière, the printer in question, left the word "calligrammes" in thin red to run as a header on most pages, which although perfect in terms of color, adds unnecessary noise.

Of course, on the page with "It's raining" the header had to go. The title was changed to a smart serif roman type, speaking of refinement rather than gathering clouds. The lines of verse fall in a much wavier manner, often zigzagging and losing completely the resistance of Levé's straight lines blown irregularly to the right. The changes were infra-thin, but crucial: nothing alluring in Darantière's poem, simply professionalism.*

Massin, the renowned French book designer and typographer, also tried his hand and prepared a special edition of *Calligrammes* for the Club du Meilleur Livre in 1955. "It's raining" posed the smallest problem for Massin – it was simply reproduced. The focus in this special edition was on "truncated" or " deformed" poems, as well as on making available documents of the original proofs and manuscripts by Apollinaire for

* Unforunately, I could not get a photocopy of Darantière's "It's raining."

the Mercure de France 1918 first edition. The purpose of the project was largely corrective. Although Massin's book has not aged well (it is not clearly seductive the way some of his other works are, e.g. *Delire a Deux*), apparently it had effect: Gallimard reverted to manuscript versions of a number of poems.

A typographer such as Massin could not but feel certain powerlessness with Apollinaire. Apollinaire was "more of an enlightened amateur than a typographer," his note reads. The Mercure de France edition, printed two months before the death of the poet, was clearly of no superior quality, but it had frozen already the state of the poems. The best such a corrective edition could do, was to bring to light the intentions of Apollinaire as far as they were recorded. To offer new typographic compositions would require a work of its own, which would have to be dissociated from the name of Apollinaire and attached to the name of the typographer – at his or her own risk. This is precisely what Raymond Gid, another major 20th century French typographer, did. Raymond Gid not only took responsibility for the typography. He called himself typoet. You can judge for yourself how successful Gid's "It's raining" is above, and whether you appreciate the doubling the vertical white lines create of the falling letters (at the expense of legibility). Gid, like many typographers and poets after Mallarmé, laid great stress on white space. He saw it as the philosopher's stone of designers:

> "Silence is everything. [...] Every creation is first silence. [...] For us, typographers, silence is free : it is the white sheet and it is peace for the eyes. Our craft requires equally to preserve the whiteness and to conquer it. More than ever, in the tumult, only silence gives value to the words by allowing them to signify."
> ("Prelude" in Peignot 156, my translation)

This "Prelude" is very fittingly placed on the page adjacent to a reproduction of "It's raining" in its English edition*. No one would fail to see how "It's raining" turns the page into an invisible 'landscape' – this is the kind of signification Gid talks about. [Only? Doesn't the English translation of the text show that someone read it differently – as acquiring "significance"? The most frequent move in the game of academic writing – out of a cluster of possibilities, the choice of that one which serves the purpose and occasion of the piece. Can one be non-exclusive? Can one move in many direction at the same time? For the alternative English translation see illustration at the end of this part of chapter four.]

It is always interesting to see what poetically minded typographers have to say about the influence of literature on their craft, about what they learn from literature. Massin put his observations in a big book in 1991 and called it *La Mise en Pages*. Apollinaire, predictably, is not absent:

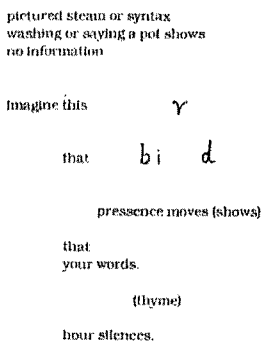
> "Inventor of the word "calligramme" (before him we used to call them "vers figurés" or "rhombiques", because they often had the form of a spinning top) Apollinaire places words in the page on a par with the painter with his spots of color: it is not without reason that he predicted a future "where poets will have unknown till now freedom" and he thought that "typographic artifacts pushed very far" could "consummate the synthesis of the arts, of music, painting and literature". (47)

From Mallarmé he took the idea that a page never exists by itself: every sheet has recto and verso, and every page has a facing page thus composing a double spread. In zen calligraphers, such as Hakuin, Massin stresses the techniques for making meaningful

---

* *Célébration de la Lettre*. Despite its French title, the book is in English and the translation is quite different.

visual transitions between writing and painting – something that is still very rare in Western graphic design, where traditionally the links between words and images tend to be narrative and thematic. [What the designer takes is what the scholar has left: the scholar's garbage is the designer's treasure. There will be more on visual transitions between letters, ideograms and drawings. Keep in mind: how do you go from A to Apple, or from r to a flying bird?]



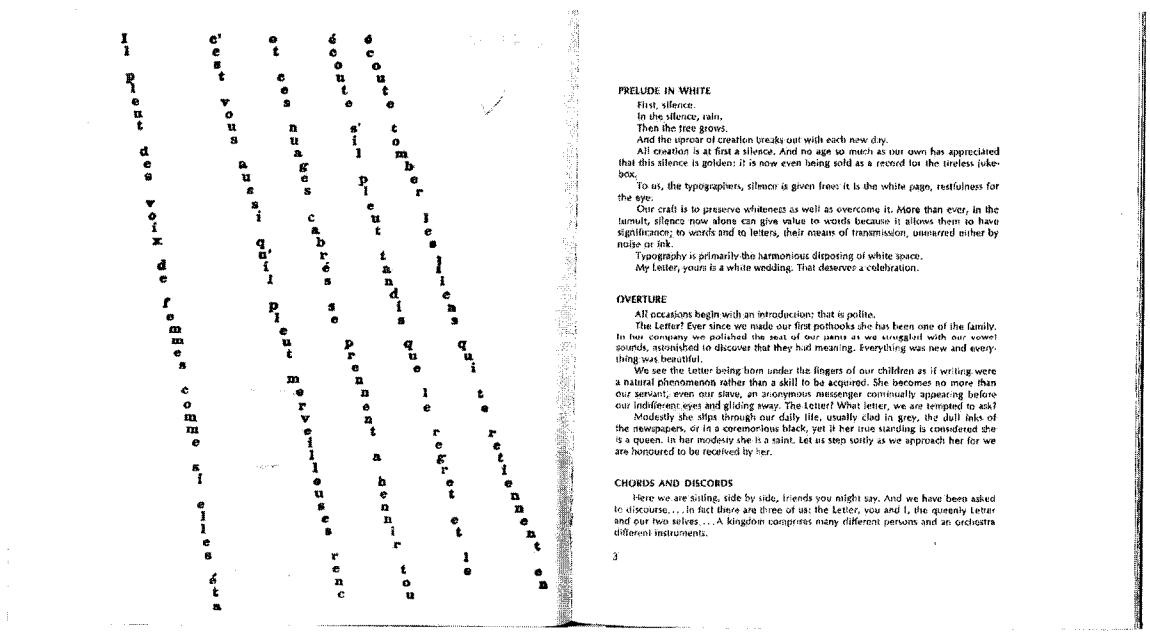
McCaffery, *Evoba* 32.

Massin's best books put these principles to practice. His interpretations of Ionesco (*The Bald Prima Donna* and *Délire à Deux*) are almost cinematic creations. [Cinematic creations? Put priciples to practice? Clichés, clichés. It may be possible not to invent new vocabulary but still forget the old one. Or fail with charm.] The books happen in visual sequences which incorporate typography, handwriting, photography, painting, commanding their own rhythm of reading, and encoding Massin's notions of counterpoint, duration and movement.

Is reading and teaching Ionesco the same after Massin?

I would not say that knowing the history of publications of *Calligrammes* is very important in reading the poems, (then why bother is the question, isn't it?), although I would infinitely prefer to hold an edition with good typography. But if one searches to explain how and why "It's raining" has turned into an icon of both poetry and graphic design, and to what uses the poem is put, in what histories it serves as a building block,

then curiosity (and one needs to learn to be curious) about the techniques of composition it involved is inevitable. How else can one articulate the sense of foreignness (within modernism) Apollinaire's poetry inspires? Merely its "old-fashioned" sentiments? How describe the passage it creates between graphic design and literature? [This is not very clear. Remember Queneau's *Exercises in Style*. Is such stylistic variation possible when you write critically? "It's raining" tells a double story, the disappearance of one man's work behind another's, the disappearance of the look of a text behind its meaning, but what is the story your own text is telling? It drew its concrete shape out of an indefinite pool of possible words and layouts, and even if you are able to recognize its strategies and choices, its movement remains impossible to capture. In Queneau every story is different, but think of this not in terms of sameness and difference, think of it in terms of the impossibility to go backwards, back to the basics, the building blocks, the impossibility to rebuild without building something else altogether and the necessity to pretend that you *can* return, "un-do" the confusions, "un-learn" what you know by heart.]



PRELUDE IN WHITE

First, silence.
In the silence, rain.
Then the tree grows.
And the uproar of creation breaks out with each new day.

All creation is at first a silence. And no age so much as our own has appreciated that this silence is golden: it is now even being sold as a record for the tireless juke-box.

To us, the typographers, silence is given freer it is the white page, restfulness for the eye.

Our craft is to preserve whiteness as well as overcome it. More than ever, in the tumult, silence now alone can give value to words because it allows them to have significance; to words and to letters, their means of transmission, unmarred either by noise or ink.

Typography is primarily the harmonious disposing of white space.

My Letter, yours is a white wedding. That deserves a celebration.

OVERTURE

All occasions begin with an introduction: that is polite.

The Letter? Ever since we made our first pothooks she has been one of the family. In her company we polished the seat of our pants as we struggled with our vowel sounds, astonished to discover that they had meaning. Everything was new and everything was beautiful.

We see the Letter being born under the fingers of our children as if writing were a natural phenomenon rather than a skill to be acquired. She becomes no more than our servant, even our slave, an anonymous messenger continually appearing before our indifferent eyes and gliding away. The Letter? What letter, we are tempted to ask?

Modestly she slips through our daily life, usually clad in grey, the dull inks of the newspapers, or in a ceremonious black, yet if her true standing is considered she is a queen. In her modesty she is a saint. Let us step softly as we approach her for we are honoured to be received by her.

CHORDS AND DISCORDS

Here we are sitting, side by side, friends you might say. And we have been asked to discourse. . . . In fact there are three of us: the Letter, you and I, the queenly Letter and our two selves. . . . A kingdom comprises many different persons and an orchestra different instruments.

3

II

TWO : TZARA "IN ALL KINDS OF TYPE" 2

I would not go through the same detailed discussion of Tristan Tzara's dada manifestos and advertisements. But I believe such textual research is the necessary basis for teaching the larger part of modernist literature from the beginning of the 20th century; as well as (or especially) for providing editions of such works of at least satisfactory quality.

[Ideally this would be a presentation which excludes the presenter.]

A. Following two pages: UNE NUIT D'ECHECS GRAS [A Night of Serious Trouble] – advertising page for the sale of dada publications, composed by Tristan Tzara, in *391*, #14 p.4 (November 1920) in *Collection 391*, ed. Sanouillet (vol. 1, p. 92 and 136).

"Tzara had composed a first draft in pencil, where remains… a line written: "Print *in all kinds of type* possible." This draft was partially traced over with black ink by Tzara, partially with blue ink by Picabia. […]

N° XIV,4

UNE NUIT D'ÉCHECS GRAS

PagE composée par Tristan TZara

HIHIHIHIHIHIHIHIHIHIHI

Réclame pour la

VENTE DE PUBLICATIONS dada

du 10 au 25 Décembre 1920

chez POVOLOZKY, 13, rue Bonaparte, Paris

391 N° 6 2 Frs New-York

391 N° 8 2 Frs ZURICH rose

feu économique rose

l'art est mort

VAGIN MYSTIQUE de Zurich

DADA DA DADALINE DA DADAISTE D'DADAPHONE DA DADA DA CHOSE DA DADA JÉSUS-CHRIST RASTAQUOUÈRE PAR FRANCIS PICABIA PARAIT AUJOURD'HUI

Francis PICABIA

UNIQUE EUNUQUE

Préface par Tr. TZARA

COLLECTION DADA

Au Sans-Pareil, Paris : 3 fr. 50

FRANCIS PICABIA :

La Fille née sans Mère 4 Fr.

Pensées sans langage 5 Fr. 50

IL Y A DADA ET DADA...............

Un livre de GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES est sous presse.

L'AMOUR dans le Cœur

Parlez-lui de moi

N° 1 N° 2

Directeur : Francis PICABIA

CANNIBALE

La Revue

BLEU

L'YPOPSYCHIE

MATCH

Ne vous pressez pas les 25 poèmes de Tristan Tzara sont épuisés

A 150 Fr.

391 13 Achetez-le dans votre intérêt

PROVERBE

Die BAARGELD

MAX ERNST

DIE SCHAMADE

Serner :

DERNIER DÉRANGEMENT

(Steegmann, Hannovre) 3 Fr.

manifeste Dada

ALMANACH DADA

JÉSUS CHRIST RASTAQUOUÈRE

par Francis PICABIA

Chez POVOLOZKY 5 FR.

Vient de paraître : HÉLAS

CINÉMA CALENDRIER DU CŒUR ABSTRAIT

par TRISTAN TZARA

19 Bois par ARP

Collection Dada

tirage limité

10 exempl. sur Japon 150 Frs.

200 exempl. sur papier à la forme 25 Frs.

Adresser les commandes au "Sans Pareil" 37, Av. Kléber, Paris

Paul Bourget écrit sur ce livre : Il faut absolument lire ce livre merveilleux

Henri Lavedan écrit sur ce livre : Il faut lire ce livre. Tzara est un sinistre farceur

Henri Bordeaux écrit : Il faut lire ce livre sur un champ de violettes

Picasso écrit : Arp est le plus grand graveur sur bois

Anatole France écrit : Tzara est un idiot, son livre un attentat aux mœurs

Réclame pour moi

FRENCH CANCAN

RIO TINTO

I LOVE YOU

MERCI

DADA 3

Fr. 1.50

Edition de Luxe 20 Fr.

Occasion, Situation, Expropriation

ARP :

La Pompe à nuages

(Steegmann, Hannovre) 3 Frs

voici le célèbre Arp

le voici venir

voici le célèbre Arp

le voici venir venir venir

DADAPHONE

J. EVOLA

ARTE ASTRATTA

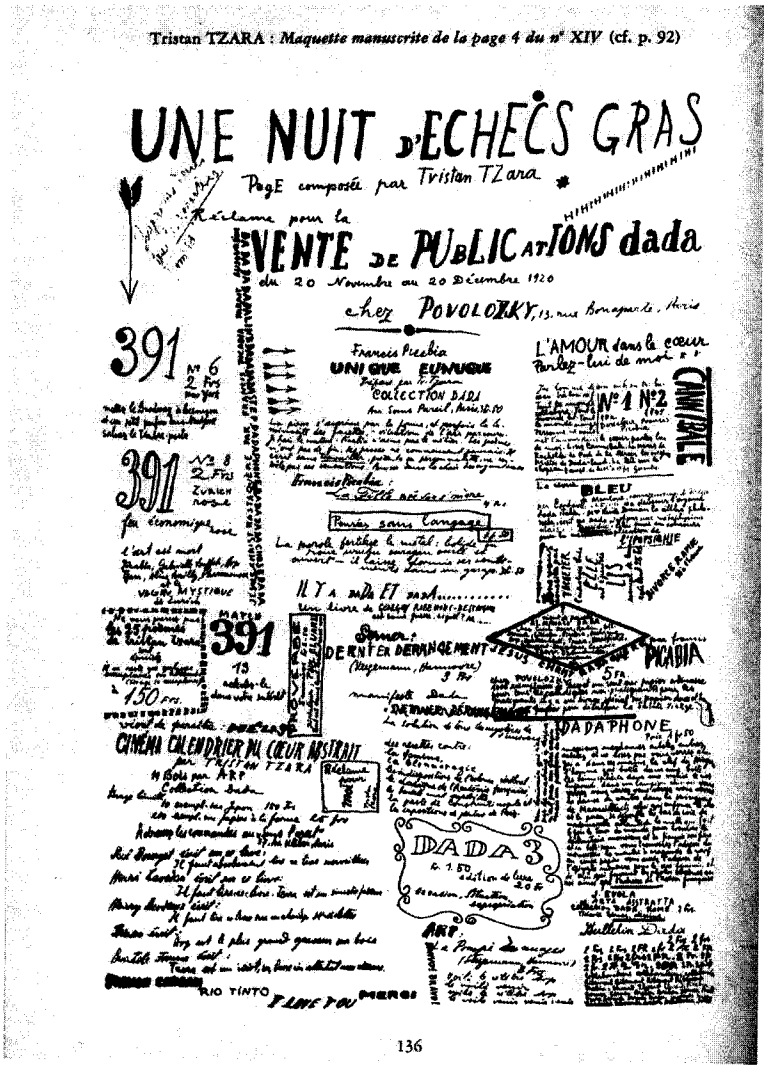
Collection DADA, ROME, 2 Fr.

Bulletin Dada

92

The contribution of Dada in matters of typography would prove of great importance and it deserves an in-depth technical study. But let us point here only to the particular interest of this page: the comparison between the handwritten draft and the finished page will allow us to truly evaluate the great talent of Tzara for publicity and admire the professionalism of the typographer. […]

The gallery of the Russian immigrant Jacques Povolozky, situated at the corner of the streets Bonaparte and Beaux-Arts, was fully supportive of the ideas of the Dadaists, who published under its aegis a number of works and who organized there many events [manifestations]: one such was "The Sale of Dada Publications," which initially scheduled (see draft) for the period from 20 November to 20 December, was pushed to "10 till 25 Dec." in order to coincide with an exhibition of paintings by Picabia." (Sanouillet 123, my translation) The exhibition took place in Povolozky's gallery.



It is in Paris that Tzara's typographic/advertising imagination ran wild. One reason: what was made available by the printer.

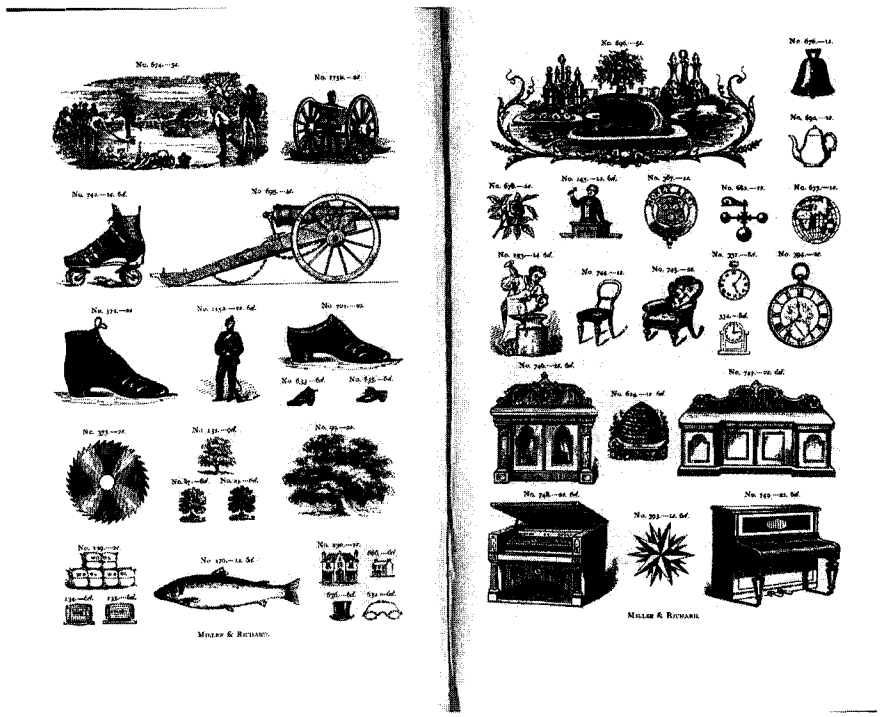
Ellen Lupton in her brief outline emphasizes the "found" commercial character of Tzara's designs.

> "Dada artists and poets also used the technologies and conventions of commercial printing to attack the institution of art. To construct poems, posters, and invitations, Tristan Tzara and Ilia Zdanevich (Iliazd) lifted slogans from advertising and journalism and borrowed typographic conventions from commercial printing, such as mixed fonts and shifting scales of type. In a 1923 poster for a Dada soireé, Iliazd assembled a motley assortment of typographic elements--letters large and small, ornaments and dingbats, wood-engraved illustrations, an oversized exclamation mark--in a composition whose stacked forms and curved and angled lines aggressively eat away at the structural grid of letterpress. Yet the grid, ragged and bruised, remains intact, its orthogonal pressures bracing together the elements of the printed page. Each letter and ornament is a fabricated object, a rigid readymade, locked into place with spacers and blank blocks of printer's furniture. [Lupton is speaking about the famous Coeur à Barbe soireé poster.] Tzara's lithographic announcement for the 1921 Salon Dada expresses a similar aesthetic of commercial quotation. Various slogans, written in a tone of abject defeat ("Nobody is supposed to ignore Dada. . . . Forget me not, please"), are depicted as street signs casually littered across the surface of the poster. Although the elements resemble industrial artifacts, every mark and letter has been drawn by hand. The design is infused with the accidental aesthetic of the found commercial object, yet it has been executed with conventional drawing tools. To create the poster, the artist probably worked directly on lithographic transfer paper, unaided by any photomechanical processes." (Lupton n.p.)

I would only add that although seen in the street, the dingbats, and various types came from the printer (in many cases Povolozky).

B. Although neatly ordered in rows and columns, typefounders' catalogues already show the nonsensical juxtaposition of accidental elements (Lupton's "accidental aesthetics").

Compare pages from this (beautiful) 1893 catalogue with the Dada pages that precede and follow.



Miller &Richards n.p.

Everyday objects – like umbrellas, shoes, chairs, glasses – are transformed into conventional signs. Animals and people are frozen into ornaments, suggesting a multiplicity of stories. The figures are no longer even human or animal: they have

become the roles they play. Thus they are ready representatives of both what art is (figurative) and what it was not supposed to be (mass produced, widely applicable).

DOUBLE PICA ELONGATED ANTIQUE

Be merry and wise is a proverb of old
'Tis this we apply and to this we
ESTIMATES DESIGNS OR SPECIMENS
£1234567890$

GREAT PRIMER ELONGATED ANTIQUE

Beholding the bright countenance of truth in
the quiet still air of delightful studies
REFORMATION OF CHURCH GOVERNMENTS
£1234567890$

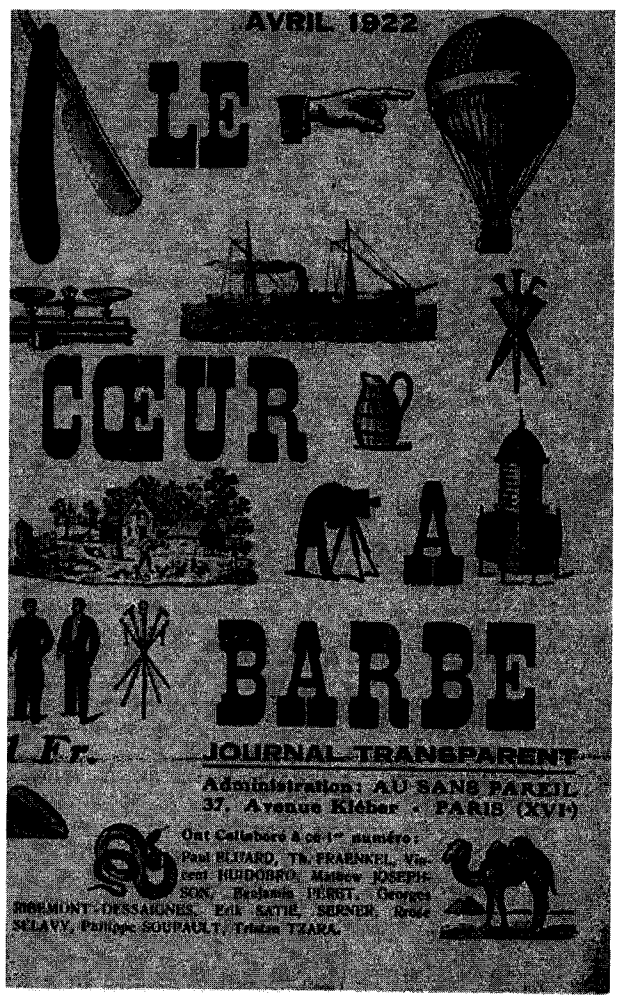
PICA ELONGATED ANTIQUE

I read somewhere or other I think in Dionysius that
history is philosophy teaching by examples
HENRY ST. JOHN 1672-1751 VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE
LONDON EDINBURGH TORONTO

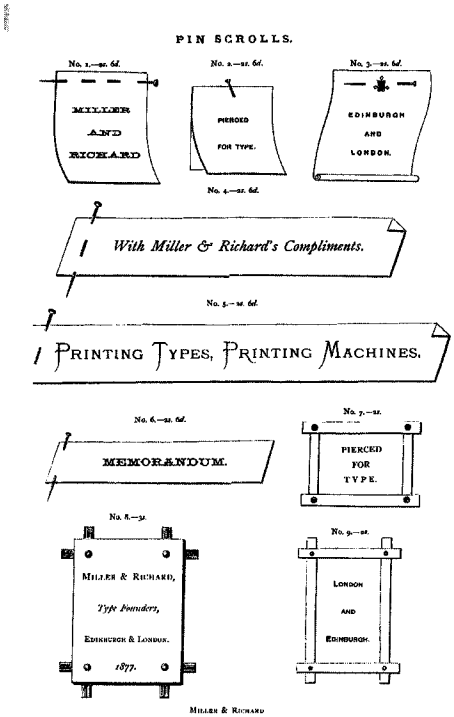
MILLER & RICHARD

Miller & Richards n.p.

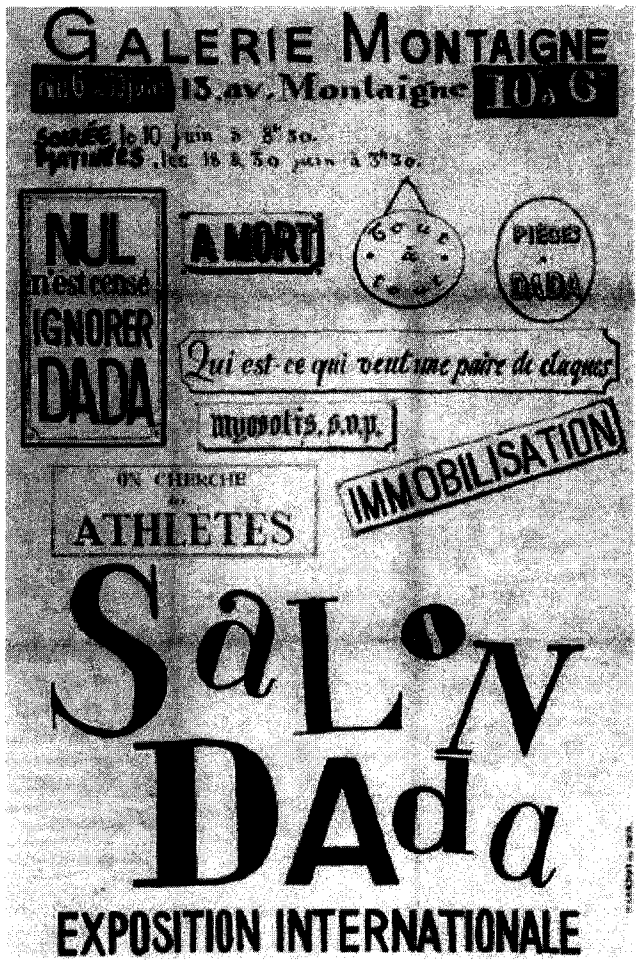
C. Tzara's (not Illiazd's)
Le Coeur à Barbe:
cover of the magazine
(one issue, April 1922),
(in *Cabaret* 225).



D. Tzara's Salon Dada poster (1921).



Miller & Richards n.p.



E. Let us go backwards and trace another source for Tzara's engagement with printing types and their use in experimental compositions.

Just before Tzara's arrival from Zurich to Paris, Pierre-Albert Birot reviewed *DADA 2*, the magazine, in *SIC*:

> Dada 2. –One day out of uniformity boredom emerged : The presentation of works in this careful review brought back in my mouth this line of verse. The completely mechanical regularity in the way poems, notes, bibliographies and the opinions of its makers follow one after the other, resembles marching legs in a parade. A poem, as perfectly understood by the Romanian editor of this review, is a construction, a monument, an entity, why push it back into the ranks and make it part of something else. Every poem has its physiognomy, why force it into uniform and since it's a work of art, why not give it a base or even a frame isolating it like a picture or a statue ? In brief, why does *DADA* create individualism with the painters and collectivism with the poets?
>
> (*SIC*, # 25 January 1918, p.8)

Breuil Eddie, who has a very informative web page devoted to his research on Dadaism, concludes:

> "[These harsh remarks] have to be considered as the point of departure for the desire to transform structurally the review [*DADA*].
> In fact, it would have been enough for the editor of *SIC* just to glance at *DADA 3* to realize that his remarks had been taken into account by Tzara."
> ("Ceci n'a aucun sens" 18, my translation)

Looking at the entirety of DADA publications associated with Tzara, anyone would be struck by the sudden change in layout design. Something happened somewhere around

the third issue. Eddie notices that *DADA 3* (December 1918) looks almost identical to *SIC* from January 1918. The cover of *SIC* features an "ideogrammatic poem," "Les éclats," resembling a poem by Apollinaire, whose *Calligrammes* have not yet been published but have been in the making for quite a while. The term "ideogrammatic poem" clearly points to Apollinaire. But the text that Tzara catapulted across the cover reads very differently: "I don't even want to know if men existed before me. (Descartes)" If this was a sincere slogan, the name of Descartes would not be there. It "operates" paradoxically and self-referentially, like saying "I am lying."

(Descartes never wrote anything of the sort.)

The genres to which Dada constantly leaned: twisting whatever verbally and visibly exists around but especially forms of circulating knowledge, that is public knowledge and public notices are domesticated with humor:

proverbs, advertisements, signs, graffiti...

"He laughs best who laughs last." signed "Th. Fraenkel."

"I understand less and less." signed "Louis Aragon."

"In the middle of the word "poetry," a cranky man scratches his head." signed "Eluard, Paul."

(*Proverbe*, #3 April 1920)

"We are looking for athletes."

"Who wants slaps in the face."

"Completely." ["a mort" literally "till death"]

(*Salon Dada*, June 1920)

"I am looking for a serious friend." signed (falsely) "Jean Cocteau, the Parisian." (*391* Nov. 1920)

... in all kinds of type possible.

When appearing in the margins (running in all directions possible) and not within the integral text of the page, these pieces of false/poetic news were added by the editors (Tzara, Picabia, Ribemont-Dessaignes) after the pages were composed at the printer shop.

If there was so much "found poetry," then there must have been poetry to find – on billboards, in newspapers, in the cafes, the streets, just as Tom Phillips finds what he wants to say in *A Human Document* but also in random postcards that tell random stories (see his *We Are the People* and *The Postcard Century*). [Calling these poetry is a self-defeating gesture. Tzara was against (well, and for) poetry. But do we really wish to extend the use of the word "poetry" so much? Is this useful, or just a matter of imprecision?]

Breuil Eddie puts it succinctly:

> "Dada typography breaks radically from the classical cleansed aesthetics of official literary reviews such as N.R.F. [Nouvelle Review Francaise]. [...] a demanding amateurism, the search for spontaneity and a sort of aesthetics of failure [ratage]..."
> ("Ceci n'as aucun sens" 19)

"Aesthetics of failure" here describes two qualities: the expression and subversion of desire (desire to mean, desire to seduce, desire to settle on techniques, etc.), and the unwillingness to use anything twice for the same purpose. [Would the reader, please, go back, read the final sentence of part one and make the connection?] No grammar of correspondences is to be built out of the typographic experiments: italics does not always mean emphasis, bold does not always mean NB! , three asterisks or a black block do not always signal end of paragraph. See the various ways in which the name DADA is typed in "Manifest Dada de 1918" (below).

The real question this juggling distribution between signs and meanings posits, is how to reproduce the works, for example in translation or on the web. Tzara, as Lupton mentions, often used "traditional drawing tools." The "Night of Serious Trouble" draft is amazing in its specificity about reproducing different types by hand. And the printed version illustrates the incredible conscientiousness of the printer in trying to match Tzara's drawing to available types. But ultimately, what Tzara was after was odd juxtapositions, variation without any trace of utility. In the process types could be switched, replaced, repeated, as long as it broke traditional typographical hierarchies and conventions. No specific lettering was associated with specific words, except at random. So, if it didn't really matter for Tzara which type fell onto which phrase, should it matter to the translator? What does one translate – the product or the process?

> [But also why have practical considerations such as these acquired a bad name in academic writing? Don't they come, in many ways, before or on a par with exegesis? Don't they determine what kinds of texts we read, *and* how we read them?]

Neither the later French edition (1963) of Tzara's manifestos, nor its English translation (1977), cared to reproduce faithfully the typography. Very obviously, and somewhat surprisingly, these editions have been made with the idea to get the text through and roughly approximate the graphics of the original, while in the meantime bringing up to standard some of Tzara's whims.

Francis Picabia's name written without capitals on the flyleaf is corrected to all capitals.

The opening paragraph of the "Manifest of 1918," which originally stands to the left, is drawn to the right, justified, italicized and transformed into an epitaph.

Three asterisks are sometimes doubled by (classical) paragraph divisions, i.e. new lines.

The main text is put in bold and the short slogans which rent the pages are in regular type, reversing the original and losing completely the impact of bold capital letters in the middle of an otherwise quiet-looking column of text, etc., etc.

The list of standardizations or senseless alterations is too long to give item by item here.

These editions have tried to reproduce neither the product nor the process.

F. "Dadaist Disgust" from "Manifeste Dada de 1918" (DADA 3 (1918) in *Cabaret* 142) and its English version (in *Lampisteries* (1977) 13). The beautiful 1925 limited edition of Tzara's manifestos was available neither for photocopying nor photography.

[At first sight the two versions are very alike, aren't they? But the sloppiness of the English text can be perceived quickly. Simply enumerate the differences between the two texts on the following page.]

Dégoût dadaïste.

Tout produit du dégoût susceptible de devenir une négation de la famille, est *dada*; proteste aux poings de tout son être en action déstructive: **dada**; connaissance de tous les moyens rejétés jusqu'à présent par le sexe pudique du compromis commode et de la politesse: **dada**; abolition de la logique, danse des impuissants de la création: **dada**; de toute hiérarchie et équation sociale installée pour les valeurs par nos vallets: DADA; chaque objet, tous les objets, les sentiments et les obscurités, les apparitions et le choc précis des lignes parallèles, sont des moyens pour le combat: DADA; abolition de la mémoire: DADA; abolition de l'archéologie: *DADA*; aboliton des prophètes: DADA, abolition du futur: DADA; croyance absolue indiscutable dans chaque dieu produit immédiat de la spontanéité: DADA; saut élégant et sans préjudice, d'une harmonie à l'autre sphère; trajectoire d'une parole jettée comme un disque sonore cri; respecter toutes les individualités dans leur folie du moment: sérieuse, craintive, timide, ardente, vigoureuse, décidée, enthousiaste; peler son église de tout accéssoire inutil et lourd; cracher comme une cascade lumineuse la pensée désobligente ou amoureuse, ou la choyer — avec la vive satisfaction que c'est tout-à-fait égal — avec la même intensité dans le buisson, pur d'insectes pour le sang bien né, et doré de corps d'archanges, de son âme. Liberté: **DADA DADA DADA**, hurlement des couleurs crispées, entrelacement des contraires et de toutes les contradictions, des grotesques, des inconséquences: **LA VIE.**

TRISTAN TZARA.

CRITERION

DADAIST DISGUST

Every product of disgust that is capable of becoming a negation of the family is *dada*; protest with the fists of one's whole being in destructive action: DADA; acquaintance with all the means hitherto rejected by the sexual prudishness of easy compromise and good manners: DADA; abolition of logic, dance of those who are incapable of creation: *DADA*; every hierarchy and social equation established for values by our valets: DADA; every object, all objects, feelings and obscurities, every apparition and the precise shock of parallel lines, are means for the battle of: DADA; the abolition of memory: *DADA*; the abolition of archaeology: DADA the abolition of prophets: DADA; the abolition of the future: DADA; the absolute and indiscutable belief in every god that is an immediate product of spontaneity: *DADA*; the elegant and unprejudiced leap from one harmony to another sphere; the trajectory of a word, a cry, thrown into the air like an acoustic disc; to respect all individualities in their folly of the moment, whether serious, fearful, timid, ardent, vigorous, decided or enthusiastic; to strip one's church of every useless and unwieldy accessory; to spew out like a luminous cascade any offensive or loving thought, or to cherish it – with the lively satisfaction that it's all precisely the same thing – with the same intensity in the bush, which is free of insects for the blue-blooded, and gilded with the bodies of archangels, with one's soul. Liberty: **DADA DADA DADA**; — the roar of contorted pains, the interweaving of contraries and of all contradictions, freaks and irrelevancies: LIFE.

III

THREE : INTERLUDE

3

1. Peignot in his *Typoésie* gives Chiang Yee's (1963) pictorial interpretations of Chinese characters (10).

[Isn't this like reading/drawing constellations in the clear of night's sky?]

For Peignot, Yee's illustrations
prove possible an analogy between writing and drawing.
For Ezra Pound such analogy became a principle for
incorporating within *The Cantos*
(making transitions that work between)
different systems of writing.

2. From a letter sent to Jerome Peignot by Cassandre (famous modernist typographer) on the occasion of the publication of Peignot's book *De l'écriture à la typographie* ([*From Writing to Typography*], Gallimard, 1957). Reproduced in original handwriting in *Typoésie* (62).

"I regret only that you did not devote attention to the reason

(the most important for me) for this singular lethargy, which has paralyzed writing and so also typography since the 18th century. Don't you believe that the reason is mainly to be found in the disappearance of a certain ritual of the gesture,

which was part of the way of life, of "a manner of existing,"

which extended into all forms of art.

At this epoch art was still primarily "ceremony" and not individual horseplay."

Do not think of ceremony as prescribed action. Think of ceremony as awareness of context and awareness of the role others play in a particular production.

Whether everything went wrong with the translation of the Greeks into Latin, or with the rise of individualism in the 19th century is another question.

But we have certainly been participating in a tradition which favors the single name.

3. The most well-known type Cassandre created was 

Blaise Cendrars wrote the text for the first presentation of  on the market.

This is a translation from French and from the original layout as far as it was possible.

New page is signaled by the sign for a new line in quoting poetry, the slash:

A / Alone / a letter is nothing / [abcdefghijklmno...] / BIFUR / Bifur type for advertising type for advertising BIFUR type for advertising... / [abcdefghijklmnopqrs...] / print WORDS / WORDS

/ which SNAP / BUT ! DANGER / do not make it illegible do not make it illegible.... / 24 36 48 60 [different sizes of Bifur in columns across double page spread] / / / REMEMBER / ÆŒÇC^{ie}C^{o} Et [signs] / that you MUST [typographic "fist" points from above to] follow typographic FASHION / [abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz] / DEBERNY et PEIGNOT / [123456789...] / who [for the last 20 years] have created Le Grasser L'Auriol .... [names of types] / present to you today / the BIFUR designed by CASSANDRE / [technical information] / DARE / [colophon] .

The text by Cassandre himself reads:

"We would like to say that BIFUR is not a DECORATIVE type.

> Bifur was conceived like the electrical broom or an explosive engine in order to fulfill a specific function – not to decorate. It is this virtue of utility which allows it to participate in our current times.
> A letter was originally a pure form but was successively deformed by the sculptor's chisel, the alcoholic quill of the scribe, the type cutting knife of the first printers impressed to imitate the quill with their little mechanics. We have tried to give back to the letter all that belonged to the letter, and only to the letter.
> We have simply tried to give the word its power as IMAGE which it originally possessed. [...] DANGER. --- Bifur was conceived, like the traffic signals on a railway, in order to function [signal] – complete stop.[...] Bifur, an advertising type, was designed to print a word, a single word alone, a poster-word."
>
> (*Typoésie* 61)

4. "He once said that part of the fascination that lettering held for him was that in this activity, at least, he was concerned only with the thing itself, and not with its likeness to anything else on earth." Harling on Eric Gill (Harling 5)

5. "Most alphabet books back to Greenaway's *A Apple Pie* domesticate abstract phonetic signs by attaching them to Apple, Barn, Cat, Disco, Enzyme: what the letter stands for in the concrete world. [...]

The working alphabet is (a) serious, (b) such an emblem of orderly progression, (c) remembering to keep within the lines, (d) red pencil marks showing which way your b or d should have bulged or dulged, (e) [...]

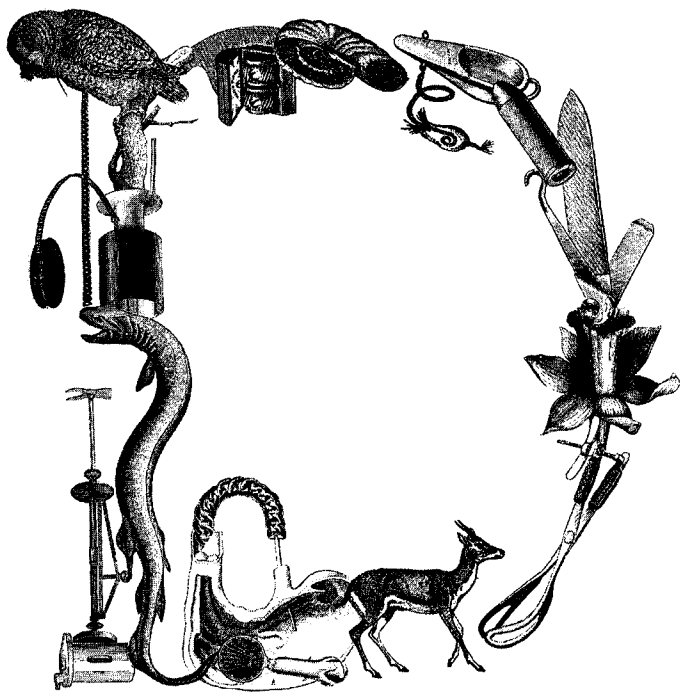
It's consequently a prime candidate for burlesque." [Or for poetry.]

(McKay in Zeller, *Focus on* 65-66)

6. If Cassandre's type was designed to spell a single word, Zeller reduces the applicability of letters even further. See illustrations.

Here is what Zeller has to say about his alphabet:

"Botannical [sic] remnants, electrical apparati or bones,



tools from catalogues or exotic customs are coupled with animals
till they take on the shapes of the metamorphosis and clamor
for their place here, like beasts in heat. A true alphabestiary
surrounds me and waits for me, and through thousands of pages
I hear the ticking of snails in the petrified deserts.
Where am I now?"
("Cutting out letters means..." in *Alphacollage*, n.p.)

The prehistoric character of the images, their deliberate anachronism, is parallel to Cassandre's claim of some *original* power which belonged to letters. [It is also parallel to Pound/Fenollosa's claim of some original (inherent) poetic quality to Chinese ideograms.]

Abstract and concrete are tied in a knot difficult to articulate.

Zeller used his alphabet only once according to traditional function, i.e. in order to write, in a poem entitled "Describe your moons..."

(*In the Country of the Antipodes* 66-7)

FOR THAT WHICH I DREAM

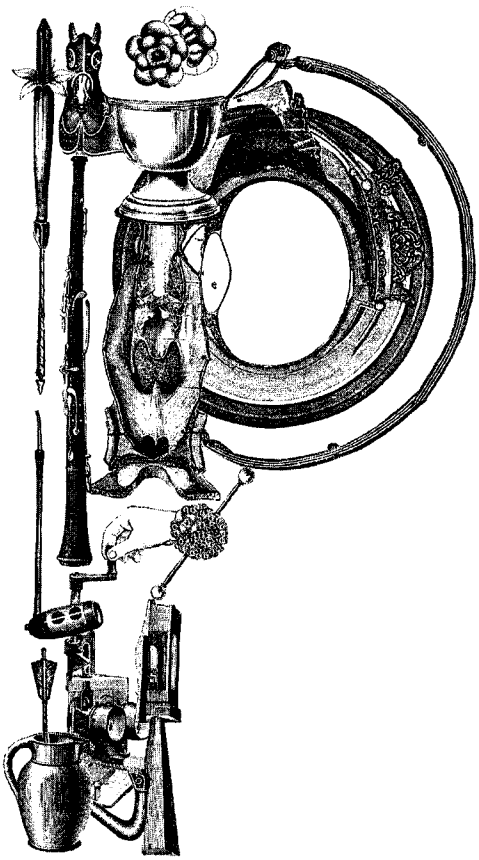
THERE EXISTS NO EQUIVALENT IN WORDS

FOR THAT WHICH I DREAM

D
R
D R E A M
A
M

The crossing "dreams" utilize the letters of *Alphacollage*. It is not a very successful poem. One of the reasons why is that each letter in itself is already replete with

remnants of stories and particles of dreams. To spell it out is tautological, a weakness which perhaps Zeller sensed, hence the attempt to make the poem minimal (only one sentence) and the desire to repeat (to try to set the words afloat and cancel their meaning). There is a type based, if not on Zeller's alphabet, at least on the same principle. It was used for the titles of articles in the last issue of the magazine *NEST* (Fall 2004).



Zeller's and Cassandre's alphabets have
stopped serving writing.
They almost deny writing.
They have begun serving themselves.
They break the traditional principle of
typography
(discussed in the first chapter of this
dissertation) –
that the lettering should exist on an
imaginary plane and
erase its optical presence for the sake of the author's original meaning (text is unseen image). We cannot even be sure that we are still talking of typography here. We have passed a threshold into something different.

[Perhaps the same way after a certain threshold criticism stops serving literature and claims its own place. To give an odd example – how far is Starobinki/Saussure's *Words*

Upon Words about anagrams in literature and not a co-authored and fascinating story of two scholars' obsessions?] But this uncertainty about where, in what context, to place and talk about such works, speaks of a resistance within the works themselves, which I consider absolutely necessary. It is this resistance which draws my attention and does not let my eyes slide off the pages. [Isn't it enough to see one page sometimes?] Someone suggested, contrary to Mallarmé,

that the ideal text may be the one you prefer to watching the sea,

the one you do put between your eyes and the sea.

And what resistance am I talking about? The one you lose in a work of illegibility such as Charles Bernstein's *Veil*, or Steve McCaffery's *Carnival*, where the death throes of the typewriter have produced layers upon layers of letters, which scream for attention (the look of words is not to be ignored!)

but fail to return any seduction for the loss of signification.

IV

F OUR : THE CASE OF CONCRETE POETRY

4

Finally, this is a good place to share my objections to concrete poetry, to which partly belong Bernstein's and McCaffery's texts mentioned above. Believe me, I have been waiting a whole dissertation to see whether this type of writing will find its place in the project. All roads were seemingly leading to "concrete poetry", weren't they? Where else do design and literature come together so obviously? In keeping with my goal to minimize my writing input by the end of the dissertation, I will be brief and where possible will rely on what others have said or done already.

My objections are two; they are very simple and related to each other.

1. "Concrete poetry" fails to offer anything which was not done better before.

2. Its concern with "structure," whether semantic, syntactical, optical, phonetic, etc., fails to perform any interesting research into such questions.

In detail: if "concrete poetry" tries to approach painting and show rather than tell,

I fail to see in what way replacing grammatical syntax with spatial arrangement meta-communicates anything about syntax, or how repeating a word and manipulating it within such figures as paronomasia, homonymy, anagram, etc. *in isolation* on a page reveals anything about semantics. But also, what difference does it make which word is going to be repeated this time, if it is not about referring to "reality" – once, one "poem" should be enough, shouldn't it?

And why this boring typography if it is about looks?

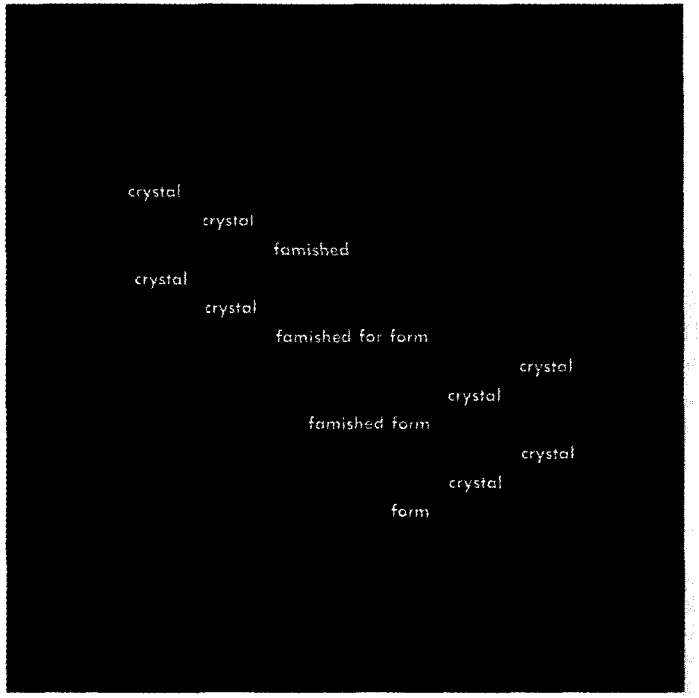
Then, "concrete poetry" wants the reader to be satisfied with lack of meaning for the sake of the "poem-object", but all poems are also objects and approach silence without the grand claims of making a discovery. Pages are "linguistic areas" per se, but they cannot exist in a vacuum. In its push for reduction "concrete poetry" has cut the branch it sits on.

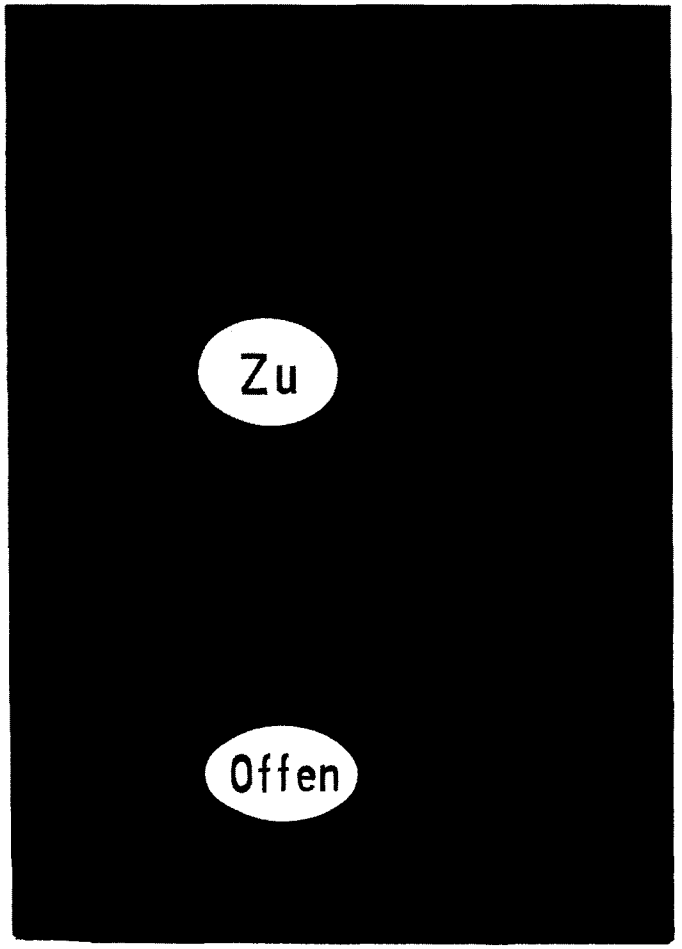
Well, I rely on the illustrations for the rest.

Concrete poets like to tell the story of how miraculously all over the globe poets seemed to be going in the same direction and thus "concrete poetry," a truly international movement was born. [Is it possible that all over the globe people were coming to terms with modernism?] The following images are only a selection. More available and easy to find.

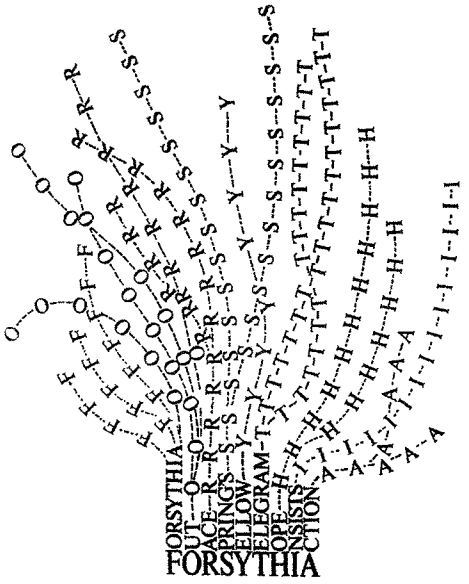
3. Heraldo de Campos [crystal famished form], [1950s] (Solt 99), and
Heinz and Bodo Rasch, Binding of *Zu Offen: Türen und Fenster* [To Close and Open: Doors and Windows], 1931 (Andel 235).
[Note that Heinz and Rasch's design is a book cover, which in this context looks like modesty.]

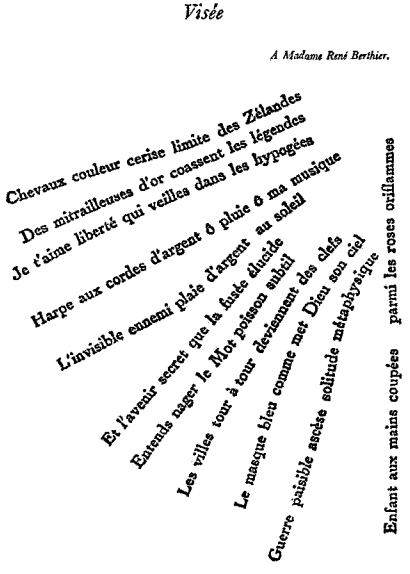
Figure 10 Haroldo de Campos (Translation Edwin Morgan)

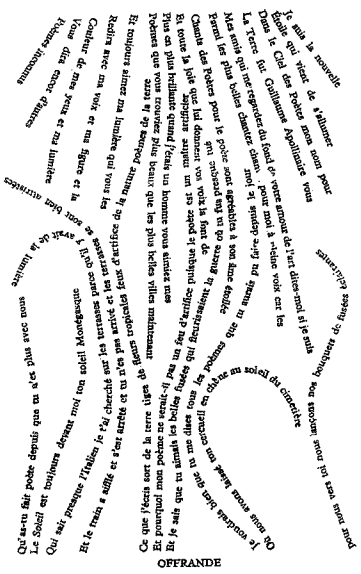




4. Mary Ellen Solt "Forsythia" (Williams n.p.), (1966),
Pierre-Albert Birot "Offrande" (*Poésie 1916-1924* 213) and Apollinaire's "Visée," (1915) (Massin *Mise en Pages* 46).





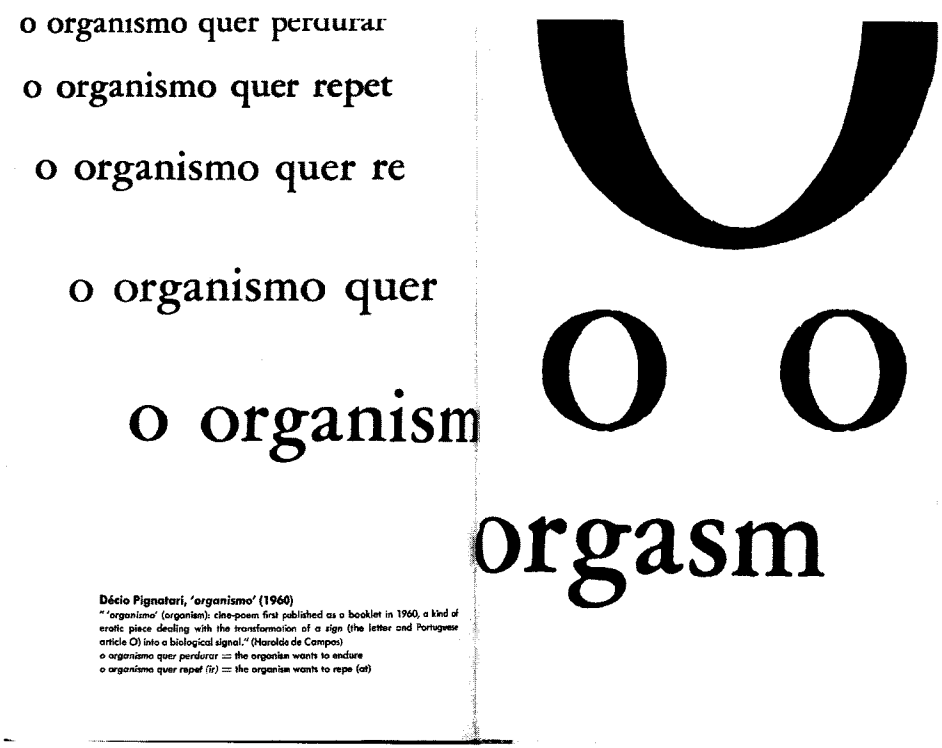


213

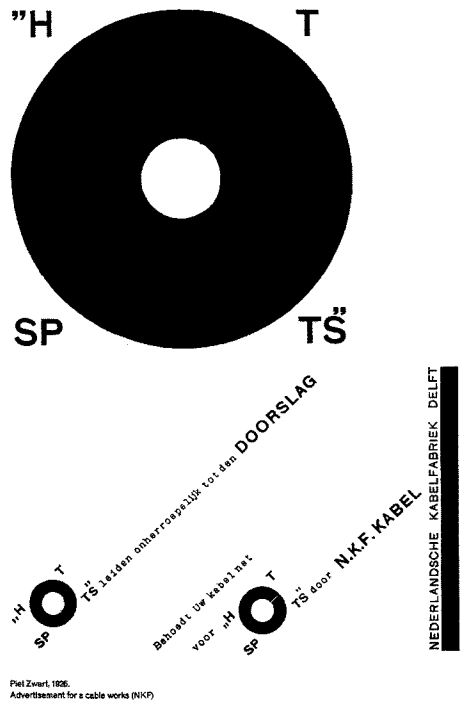
5. Ocarte [Tragic Outcome], 1968 (Solt 197) and
Piet Zwart from NKF Catalogue, 1924 (Spencer 115).

Figure 96 Ocarte

6. Décio Pignatari "organismo," 1960 (Williams n.p.)
Piet Zwart, Advertisement for cable works (NKF), 1926 (Spencer 110).

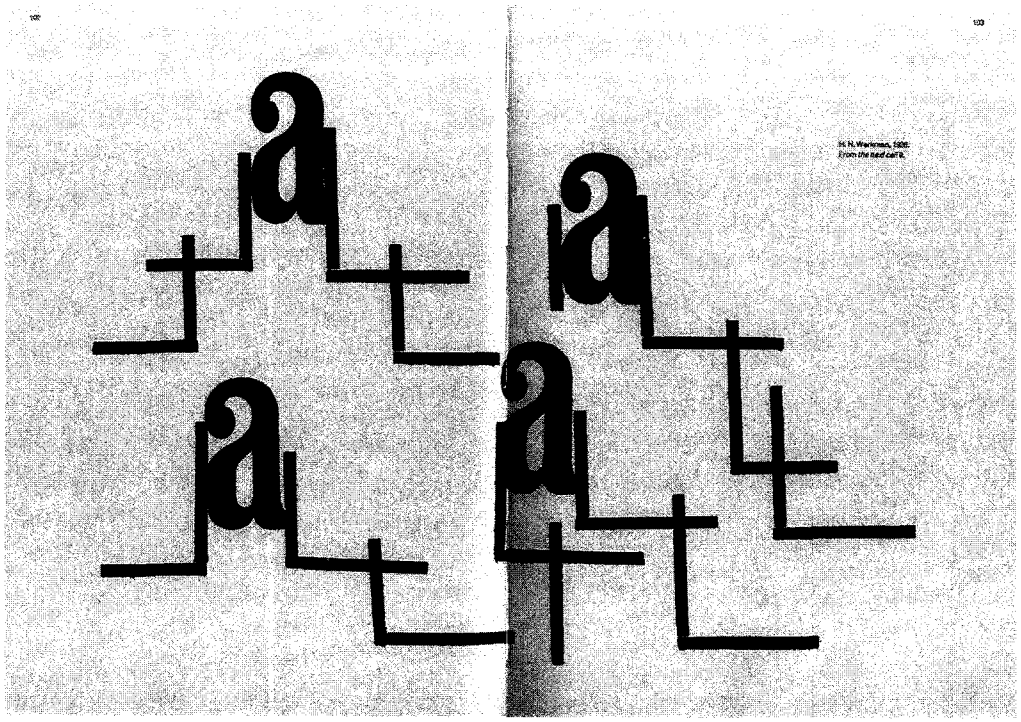


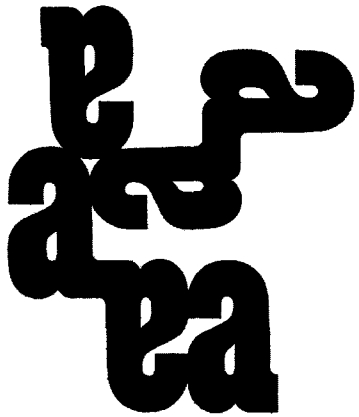
Décio Pignatari, 'organismo' (1960)
" 'organismo' (organism): cine-poem first published as a booklet in 1960, a kind of erotic piece dealing with the transformation of a sign (the letter and Portugese article O) into a biological signal." (Harolde de Campos)
o organismo quer perdurar = the organism wants to endure
o organismo quer repet (ir) = the organism wants to repe (at)



Piet Zwart, 1926.
Advertisement for a cable works (NKF)

7. Hansjörg Mayer [aaaaaa], 1967 (Bann 64) and
H.N.Werkman from *the next call 9* , 1926 (Spencer 103).





V

5

FIVE : CANTOS DE LUXE

The facts: the first three editions of Ezra Pound's *The Cantos* were limited deluxe editions:

1925: *A Draft of XVI. Cantos*. (Three Mountains Press, Paris.)

1928: *A Draft of Cantos 17-27*. (John Rodker, London.)

1930: *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. (Hours Press, Paris.)

Then, in 1933, Farrar & Rhinehart in New York and Faber & Faber in London issued the trade *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. From then on, *The Cantos* came out in trade editions.

In their preparation of a revised edition in the 1970s (the project for a definitive edition of *The Cantos* was ultimately abandoned, for various reasons; see Eastman), the publishers and editors collated editions from the 1930's Hours Press (marginally included) onwards. The so-called "deluxe period" (a phrase which implies more deliberation than it ought to) is also a period of unsuccessful publication. I am not interested here in the textual difficulties of the various editions of *The Cantos*, even though as a narrow but abysmal area of research I find it fascinating. Here it is a question of design – aesthetic, academic, publishing.

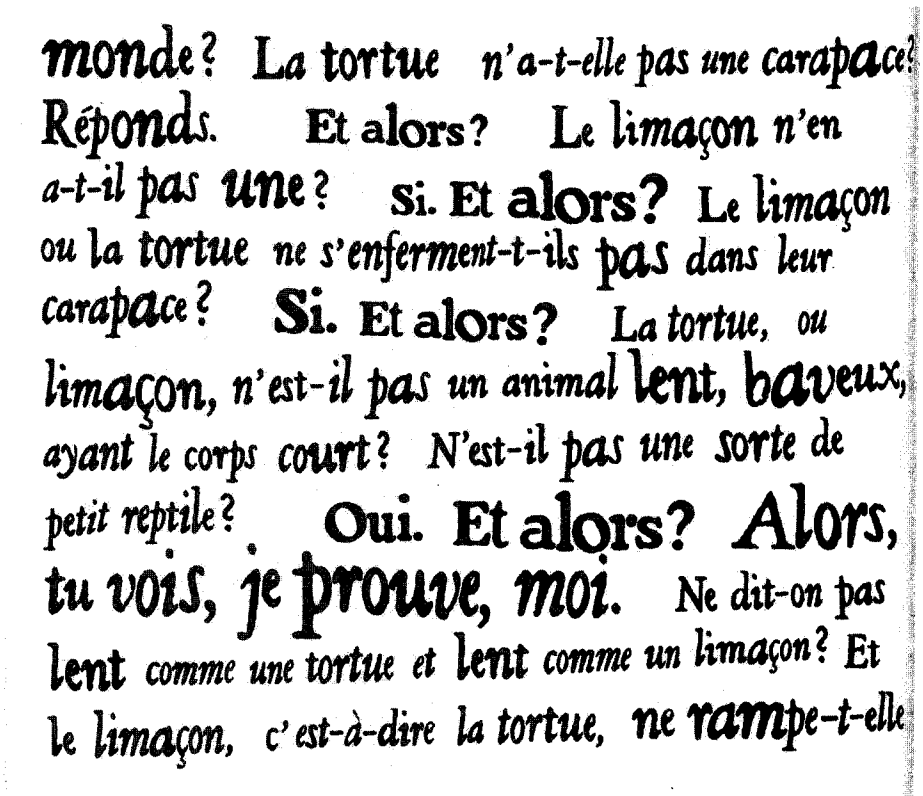
8. There is one final thing I would like to say and I will say it: texts and ideas should be kept in circulation. But they should be renewed.

[What is wrong with being derivative?]

"Concrete poetry" might have been more interesting if

it learned everything it possibly could about Dada, Cubism, the new typography, Pound, etc., forgot it [the way one forgets the rules of a foreign language once having achieved some proficiency?] and then made it new in its own way.

Now, the way it is, "concrete poetry" seems the lazy poets' poetry.


monde? La tortue n'a-t-elle pas une carapace?
Réponds. Et alors? Le limaçon n'en
a-t-il pas une? Si. Et alors? Le limaçon
ou la tortue ne s'enferment-t-ils pas dans leur
carapace? Si. Et alors? La tortue, ou
limaçon, n'est-il pas un animal lent, baveux,
ayant le corps court? N'est-il pas une sorte de
petit reptile? Oui. Et alors? Alors,
tu vois, je prouve, moi. Ne dit-on pas
lent comme une tortue et lent comme un limaçon? Et
le limaçon, c'est-à-dire la tortue, ne rampe-t-elle

Massin's sonorous calligraphy in *Délire à Deux* (by Ionesco).

What follows is a series of quotes, which can show the reader various ways in which Ezra Pound thought of deluxe and trade editions, or publishing in general. By way of commentary, let me just say that publishing for Pound was more than a personal issue, though it was often expressed as personal grievance. Getting texts published and distributed ensured that the "good stuff (books)" were kept in circulation. Many of his translations were fueled by the same desire to make available and set in motion ideas and writing techniques. Hence, throughout his life, the ire at publishers who could not see the urgency of getting Fenollosa's essay or Guido's rimes (etc.) out there.

I am not going to try to impose a pattern: I don't see any. Jerome McGann sees an aesthetic turn in Pound's publishing history – from Pre-Raphaelite fine printing to industrial "transparent" editions. My doubts about his theory will be voiced locally. Miranda Hickman undermines McGann's claims but searches for ideological reasons for the disappearance of the deluxe editions in Pound's work. My objection to this is that I cannot imagine a single being guided by consistent strategy in the face of changing conditions – be they economical, social, or literary.

Both authors seem to assume that there is the "text" and then, there is an "embodiment" or "incarnation" of the text in an edition.* But such a "text" can only be supposed, so I

* [Katherine Hayles' choice of the word "instantiations", implies a similar attitude: although a (maybe) good description of the way electronic texts function, applied to print, it forfeits Hayles attempt to promote media-specific reading. Please look closer into the choices the following sentence makes: "Understanding literature as the interplay between form and medium, MSA [media-specific analysis] insists that "texts" must always be embodied to exist in the world" (69). The moment you use "embodied," "instantiated," "incarnated" and I understand perfectly the will to metaphors, you are reintroducing "the split between physical and verbal" (ib.) (which is in any case not a good way to put it, because "physical and verbal" are categories too broad to be perfectly meaningful). The major problem here, as in many cases, is lack of attention and precision in knowing what one is saying as far as one can. Tellingly, Hayles' article is in a special volume of *Poetics Today* (Spring 2004) - subtitled "the Reflective Turn"...]

would prefer to stay with what is there in my library and allow for silence when I have no answer. Both McGann and Hickman ignore the particular circumstances of producing the books, which occludes the picture and creates the impression of speaking from a distance, the way we have become used to speaking from a distance and condensing 50 years of life into a couple of gestures or several turns (imagist, vorticist, objectivist, linguistic, pictorial,... reflective). I have never been able to live in such terms. To my surprise, I have been easily convinced that they explain well.

[Silence.]

> "Which brings us to the physical realities of printing and publishing, a subject on which, despite *Studies in Bibliography*, literati frequently guard a convenient ignorance."
>
> (Hugh Kenner in Eastman xii)

August 1, 1922? Ezra
Pound to Carlos Williams:

Cher Bull:

There s a printer here wants me to supervise a series of booklets, prose
(in your case perhaps verse, or whatever form your new stuff is in.)
Gen. size about 50 pages. (??? too short for you.)
Limited private edtn. of 350 copies. 50 dollars down to author, and another 50 later. [...]
It is a means of getting in 100 dollars extra. before one goes to publisher.
Yeats' sisters' press in Ireland has brought him in
a good deal in this way. I got nearly as much from my little
book with them as from the big Macmillan edtn. of Noh.
I shall keep the series strictly modern. One can be more intimate.
The private limited edtn. don't imply that one is talking to the public. but simply to ones friends.

[...]
(P/W 63-4)

Six volumes of the series (called "Inquest") came out. The Bel Esprit project for collecting money and helping T.S.Eliot to quit his job at the bank and devote his energy to writing, dates from the same year: 1922. Publishing means subsistence for a writer.

> 1923 Ezra Pound to Kate Buss
>
> The Three Mts. is following this prose series by a dee looks edtn of my Cantos (about 16 of 'em, I think) of UNRIVALLED magnificence. Price 25 dollars per copy, and 50 and 100 bones for Vellum and illuminateds.
> It is to be one of the real bits of printing; modern book to be jacked up to somewhere near level of mediaeval mss.
> No Kelmscott mess of illegibility.
> (qtd. in Hickman 174)

The background: "Pound had located a talented and wealthy American printer in Paris, William Bird. Together with Robert McAlmon, another U.S. expatriate with money to spare, they established the Three Mountains Press. It specialized in fine, limited editions of innovative British and American writing." (explanatory note P/W 49)

"Another American expatriate, William Bird, a native of Buffalo, New York, started his Three Mountains Press about the same time. While McAlmon's press work was undistinguished, Bird's limited editions were beautifully designed and printed. They were works of art in themselves. He had acquired a massive 18th-century hand press which recaptured the glory of hand printing of an earlier era. [Note that the press was quite old and the "looks" was quite old too. If the machine came from more than a century ago, Pound was excited about a "mss" feel of the edition. He speaks of "magnificence," that is, the appearance of grandeur, which he

plays down with the spelling of "dee looks," (also "deLOOKS," "de lookx" and "de muxe" in various letters). The pun translates discomfort? A book of such dimensions (40cm or 15.7" high) and cost is unwieldy.

This note is written (by Henri Campbell, an ex-minister and retired bookshop owner) with fascination for small publishing houses. What the author calls "works of art in themselves," I have seen other people describe as "amateurish." Personally, I was unseduced by Bird's book of the XVI Cantos.]

In time economic considerations led McAlmon and Bird to combine their operations, and Three Mountains Press lasted only about five years. But these were years of exceptional vitality for the press...

Bird then sold his printing press to Nancy Cunard, a wealthy English expatriate who gave it new life as Hours Press. Cunard also brought forth a remarkable list of books over the four-year period of its existence, including works by Pound and Robert Graves. Parenthetically, in the face of computerized book production today, there is something deeply satisfying in the contemplation of books combining the crispness of hand printing with thoughtful design that characterizes these expatriate press books."

(Campbell n.p.) Yes, nostalgia.

14 Feb 1935. e.e.cummings to EP.

but speaking of tickets and theatres I'd rather plant potatoes in a blind man's pocket than suffer

a single trick,or even an asterisk, at the prehensile hands of those lousy limeies who are just so good no milkfed moron would trust their fifth cousins with a red hot stove

he tactfully concluded,proving his opponent's point avec ees

--

yours

23 Feb 1935. EP to e.e.cummings

[23] Feb[ruary] XIII [1935] Rapallo

My dear Estlin

don't be more of a foooll than nature has made you.

Poor Mairet is doin' his damndest/ and cant risk suppression. England wd/ certainly stop the paper the minute it fuck'd. BUT

once past the initial difficulty / and once you get a real toe hold in that funny oh very country; I don't think you wd/ have difficulty in fuckin away to ye/ cocks content, IN between book covers; and in de lookx editions.

(P/C 54-55)

The deluxe edition is here also the fancy bedroom.

Hickman states the apparent: "Pound had valued deluxe editions, then, not only for their aesthetic value [on which he was punning] but also for their potential to subvert the control commercial publishers had over what got published and how." (183)

1931 EP to Caresse Crosby:

The de luxe book was (has been) useful in breaking the strangle hold that the s.o.b. had on ALL publication. But the minute the luxe was made into a trust (Random Louse etc.) and forced into trade channels it ceased pretty much to be useful// e.g. you find yourself tied by what cd. SELL.

Also the luxe almost useless for new writers at any time. ...

(qtd. in Conover 110) [The "s.o.b."? Usury? Quote unclear in original publication.]

To endow limited deluxe editions (a nineteenth-century invention marking the commodification of books) with subversive potential seems dubious from the

beginning. The deluxe cost money and brought money when successful. From this point of view it could have been useful. But as Hugh Kenner notes, "the few who purchased the deluxe editions need not have been *readers*" (414) ("useless for new writers"). Up to this point we had not made a distinction between small editions (affordable and independently realizable) and limited editions (related to patronage).

1936 EP to Wyndham Lewis:

Talkin' with local printer the other day/
GOOD working linotype machine secondhand/
no more trouble to work than this typewriter
worth about 400 quid/ i;e; interest charges
wd. be 20 quid a year. /
    DAMN deluxe edtns/
[Go]d damn it one lives so long to learn so
little.
(qtd. in Hickman 191)

In other words, the moment commercial publishing houses such as Random House came into the business of the deluxe, it became obvious that it was the small publishers who, usually in closer collaboration with the writers and artists, and by risking the publication of more avant-garde material, were providing all the subversion one could attach to limited editions. Pound's realization that technology was becoming accessible and cheap seems a little belated. [Linotype machine was invented in 1886. Phototypesetting was invented in 1925.]

Same year (1936) to Carlos Williams:

"DAMN ... bloody a social disorder that provides in 30 years NO decent publishing house"
(P/W 179)

The story of *A Draft of XVI. Cantos*:

"After he returned to Paris, in April 1923, Pound hastened to conclude the Malatesta Cantos. It was at this time that William Bird proposed a deluxe edition of *The Cantos.* The project was formidable and involved the collaboration of three men: author, publisher, and artist." (Rainey [7])

Rainey, showing the attitude of a bibliophile, recognizes the collaborative nature of the deluxe edition. Note that the initiative was taken by Bird. Collectibles are expensive and often profitable.

It is in this context that Pound asked Strater to illustrate the book. Henri Strater (Rainey calls him "an improbable choice") was an American painter who acquired brief celebrity around the 1922 Paris Salon d'Autonne.

> "Oh well by that time we [Strater, Pound, and Hemingway] were all buddies. He was writing the last of his cantos then, and was thinking about how to print them. He wanted it illuminated ... he wanted it to be brought out in illuminated form. So he said to me, "Will you do it?"
> I said, "Hell no!"
> He said, "I don't know anybody else to do them." And he kept at it and persuaded me. I had done a great deal of training in life-size drawing, and I thought maybe I could learn something by trying my hand at these small drawings. Later he had me meet Bill Bird."
> (Strater qtd. in Rainey [8])

> "On the illustrations I'd have several ideas and he'd have several ideas, and we'd agreed on a general subject. Pound saw the first few finished

> drawings, but didn't see them all in finished form. I didn't show them all to him in the later stages, I'd take them directly to Bill Bird."
>
> (Strater qtd. in Culver 450)

At one point Pound wanted to remove the love knot in the illustrations for Canto IV and Culver, a friend of Strater, reports that Bird refused on the grounds that he would not have asked Pound to change his text either. For Bird apparently the contributions of author and illustrator came under equal rights.

Pound provided ample textual explanations and gave Strater old books on Malatesta (from the 15th century). The disagreement of critics how much Pound was actually involved in the illustrations is based on imprecision. The general direction, the illuminated manuscript looks of the volume was definitely decided by Pound and Bird. The particular illustrations and capitals were clearly designed by Strater, and not very successfully. Apart from the difficulties of getting to terms with the medium, Strater never became absorbed or responsive to the Cantos. They were obfuscations or "ob-fus-cu-tra-tion!" (qtd in Rainey [9]). At best, the illustrations duplicated the text, unimaginatively translating keywords into key images. Nowhere does Strater interpret the Cantos in innovative or interesting ways. Does this justify the almost complete erasure of Strater's name when discussing the volume (in McGann, Hickner, Kenner, Read)? Or is it a manner of subsuming under the "intentions" of our main character the wills and abilities of two others?

While Kenner never really devotes much attention to the de luxe editions, let us look at McGann's idea about their significance in understanding the story of Pound the writer.

> "The descent from the texts of 1925/1928 – which culminate
> Pound's appropriation of his Pre-Raphaelite inheritance –
> to the industrial text of 1933 was not immediate."
> (*Textual Condition* (TC) 131)

[It passed through the Hours Press edition (1930) with initials designed in a clearly modern style by Dorothy Shakespear Pound. Does "descent" here also signify that a move from nineteenth-century aestheticism to twentieth-century modernism equals going downhill?]

"Industrial text" probably misleadingly points to means of production, but both deluxe and industrial (note that this opposition does not mean much today, 2005) would have been set in metal type and printed through an automated process (for a picture of Bird's machine see Wilhelm 217). Both were "industrial" texts. And, of course, we know what "industrial" is doing here – distinguishing between "creative expression" and "mass production."

> "To read *A Draft of XVI. Cantos*, in face of
> the standard New Directions collected
> *Cantos*, is to explode the self-transparency
> of the latter as a mere apparition." (TC 124)

It is clear that for McGann the deluxe edition makes the standard ND copy more interesting (radially codified), but I don't know if we are to read the two texts in opposition, in comparison, or one through the other ("in face of"?). I have difficulty thinking of transparency ("self-transparency"?) as an apparition, and if it goes away what are we left with? The deluxe overly ornate pages? Or a palimpsest? [How transparent is really the text of ND's *Cantos*? Given that only the English type for the

initials is one and the same throughout the volume, and that because ND held on to a particular style for *The Cantos* (just as Faber in England did). The ideograms, for example, are in Dorothy Pound's hand in the beginning and in a rather dull standard font by the end. But we will come back to this. Later, later.]

> [A]nd no library in the world holds all the journals and volumes in which *The Cantos* was progressively issued. The practical problem reflected a larger one: every publication invoked another social code of meaning, another specific set of relations between author, readers, and mediating institutions, just as it involved a broader gesture towards the unity of the work, another promise of wholeness – a totality which was always just beyond the horizon, a future that was always about to be realized.
>
> (Rainey n.p.)
>
> [But also, every editor's dream – a perfect text, a complete realization of what the author "wanted." Even though between author and edition many fates are lodged, no less than between 'constellation' and constellation.]

McGann offers insights into the inevitable bibliographical nature of Pound's *Cantos,* which contain an intermittent scholarly apparatus within the text – inevitable, as for a large part *The Cantos* are the author's notes from research (see Kenner on not covering one's traces below), -- but McGann's ideas on how to read the poem are undermined by: either a lack of attention to historical detail, or a love for Pre-Raphaelite art. Coming fresh out of his research on Malatesta, Pound was looking for the right way to publish *The Cantos*. He made a profitable but otherwise rather unfortunate choice.

[He attempted to repeat the venture, with clearly financial aims in view, but both the 1928 and the 1930 deluxe editions failed to sell well.]

In reality his models were Renaissance books. His reference to William Morris is as a negative example of messiness and illegibility. If Pound's book refers to Morris, it is via Renaissance manuscripts and not the other way round. This story is happening in Paris, post Vorticism, post Futurism, contemporary with Dada and a nascent Surrealism in comparison to whose publications (often limited editions) Pound's bulky and uneven deluxe is hopelessly out of place.

It is William Bird who is directly part of a tradition of artisanal printing. Pound's participation is variously motivated – by money, by opportunity, by fascination with old books.

How can then *A Draft of XVI. Cantos* be "a clear historical allusion" to William Morris and the nineteenth-century aesthetic movement (TC 122)? Or how can we say that Pound "wanted to display their [*The Cantos]* positive relation to late nineteenth-century poetic traditions" (124) and show "his commitments to bibliographical coding for his work" (144)? [Rhetorical questions?

Has McGann revised his views by now? or is the problem in the attempt to speak from a distance rather than within historical detail?]

Although, of course, I would never deny the importance of reading the context of producing a particular book. (For more on the subject see Rogers)

McGann concludes: "Pound's elaborate bibliographical coding rhymes with topics he raises and pursues at the work's linguistic levels ... Pound's use of the physique of the book in his 1925/1928 edition of the early cantos [note that two editions

are collapsed into one here – self-defeating from a bibliographical reader] consequently goes far beyond the bibliographical experiments of Mallarmé, Apollinaire, the vorticists, the imagists, and the futurists." (ib. 141) Which claim I have difficulty making sense of. How does one book go "far beyond" another? How do we measure?

PAUSE.

> "Pound was frequently indifferent to errors, whether his own or his printers'." (Young n.p.)

"[A]nd hardly anyone, least of all Pound can produce two identical typescripts." (Kenner in Eastman xii)

> "Pound never covered his tracks; he let "Rihaku" stand in *Cathay* for a poet whose Chinese name he knew was "Li Po," in testimony to the chain of transmission, Mori and Ariga via Fenollosa." (ib. xiv)

> "*The Cantos* are a corrector's paradise. There are printers' errors. There are discrepancies between parallel printings, sometimes but not always ascribable to a printer. There are errors of fact or transcription committed by the author, who at one point (present page 262) had Souan yen bagging fifteen tigers as a result of misreading a note about page 15 of his source. And there are modifications that look like errors but aren't." (ib. xvii)

"One imagines a long succession of collapsing proofreaders as well." (Eastman 25)

"Working alone day and night, one "Gertrude" is reported to have pasted all the corrections into *Cantos* I-LXXXIV and refolioed the pages so that the book could be shipped to the printers by September 1st. As a result of her efforts, the "Complete *Cantos*" achieved a publication date of November 11, 1970. (Eastman 27)

[In 1979 Hugh Kenner expressed the hope that by "2000 A.D." "a text of the *Cantos* worthy of the effort the poet and so many collaborators have invested" would have seen the day.] [No, it hasn't appeared, probably due in part to Pound's belief that the printing sanctioned the poem as it is. See below. Shall we have by 2030 A.D. a good, well-researched and thought-out, electronic edition?]

6 April 1933. Ezra Pound to e.e.cummings:

Also I don't think EIMI <u>is</u> obscure, or not very

BUT, the longer a work is the more and longer shd. be the passages that are perfectly clear and simple to read.

matter of scale, matter of how long you can cause the reader to stay immobile or nearly so on a given number of pages.

[...]
a page two, or three, or two and one half centimeters <u>narrower</u>, at least a column of type that much narrower might solve all the difficulties.
//
That has I think been tested optically etc. the normal or average eye sees a certain width without heaving from side to side.
Maybe hygienic for it to exercise its wobble.... but I dunno that the orfer shd. sacrifice himself on that altar.
at any rate I can see

he adds, unhatting and becombing his raven mane. ==

but I don't see the rest of the line until I look specially at it. multiply that 40 times per page for 400 pages....

///

Mebbe there IZ wide=angle eyes. But chew gotter count on a cert. no. ov yr. readers bein at least as dumb as I am.

Even in the Bitch and Bugle [The Hound and Horn magazine]
I found it difficult to read the stuff consequtively.

which prob. annoys me a lot more than it will you.

[...]
OH w ell Whell hell itza great woik. Me complimenks.

yrs

E

(P/C 24)

4 May 1947 Dorothy Pound to Katue Kitasono

Dear Mr. Kitasono:

Ezra's wife writing. I have just been with E.P. He asks me to write to you the following notes, and send on the Confucius, *Studio Integrale*.

He wants an estimate of what it would cost to print the Confucian Anthology ("as you sent me – TEXT, not Mao's comment").

Characters about as large as enclosed. NOT MORE than 6 columns of 8 [characters] per page. Or 7 if needed to complete a strophe, with 7th column for title. Each poem of the 305 to start on NEW page, no strophe to be broken – if 2 strophes (say 34 characters) won't go entirely on page, then start new page.

Verse form to be indicated clearly, by disposition of characters.

Cost for 2000 copies, leaving bottom ½ page blank for translation & notes.

Characters of same verse a little closer. Then break between verses as here between the characters. 8 chs. to fill height here taken by seven.

Sorry this isn't a copy of S.Int. on the better paper. He wants sample of font of type & of paper.

... so the shape of the strophe can be seen by american eye.

... if verse is 6 characters, the next verse starts on new column.

... no verse to be broken at column end, cf. my *Cavalcanti.*

... page size as *Integrale*, or a little larger. Pages to run occidental fashion.

[...]

Please write to E.P. again. A few words from outside world gives him so much pleasure, even if only a postcard.

[In 1940 Pound had received a letter from an Italian anthropologist in Japan: "Some one from beyond the sea has always a wonderful effect: such is the nature of man. Thank you!" (ib. 98)]

Greetings,

believe me

yours most sincerely

Dorothy Pound

(Kodama 115-116)

"In an undated letter to New Directions ... Pound showed real enthusiasm [not for corrections but] only for new columns of ideograms which he visualized as bordering all the Chinese Cantos, while these poems' texts would remain untouched. Drawing the graphs on his letter's margins to illustrate the aesthetics of his concept, he summarized what may have been his general perspective on textual matters in his poem quite succinctly:

> Git the ideaHHHH
> Canto text as printed. "

(Eastman 29)

[And aesthetic matters? It is an open question.]

Let us consider the looks of *The Cantos*. And let us catch the word "aesthetics" before it disappears back to where it belongs in Eastman's quote.

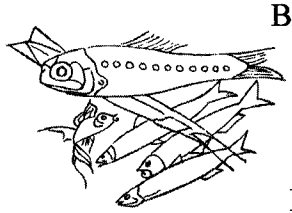
"... so the shape of the strophe can be seen by american eye."

Eastman recognizes that there is an aesthetic side to the incorporation of ideograms into a verse form written in Latin characters. [Verse "form" as visual form whether it is constrained by metrics or by functional concerns related to reading.] But what is Pound's aesthetic concept? What kind of aesthetics is this?

> "Pound, in any case, chose most of the characters he used in *The Cantos* precisely because they admit the possibility of being interpreted as "literal images." [...] [T]his paper is predicated on the possibility that we have not gone far enough in our visual interpretation of the characters, for we have not really done anything more than see the characters as "linguistic images."" (Cayley 230)

[Cayley is trying to get the best out of not being able to *read* Chinese, which is the case of a large part of Pound's readers. Remember that designers often don't read the text or replace it with dummy copy in order to see its effect. On the same note (and to follow on Albert-Birot's advice to Tzara), contemporary magazine and poetry books have (to doubtful effects) drawn the poem to the top of the page. The top of the page is the privileged part – beginning, announcing, entitling. But don't we – visually and instantly – distinguish verse from prose through the relation between black letters and white space, or as some typographer put it, "between occupied space and empty space"?]

> "some difficult passage besprinkled with ideograms" (ib. 231)
> "We don't normally think of diagrams or illustrations as actually part of the text, but [...] we may have to change our minds." (ib. 233)



But what is Pound's aesthetic concept? What kind of aesthetics is this?

"Continuing the parley with Browning's shade,
Pound notes one impulse, display of wonders one has found.
He inverts his ragbag image, no longer a putting-in but a spilling-out:

Say that I dump my catch, shiny and silvery .
As fresh sardines flapping and slipping on the marginal cobbles? "
(Kenner 357)

Ideograms in Pound pertain to an aesthetic which is more than pictorial and more than etymological. [Graphic? In the full sense of the word.] If at the beginning of the project Pound was excited about imitating a European manuscript look for the text, by Canto XXXIV (first ideogram) the direction seems very different. It is an almost impossible challenge (anyone?) to try to combine Chinese characters with the representational decorative conventions of Renaissance books. These are two different calligraphic traditions. That the two were candidates for *the Cantos* is evident not only in the various attempts at decorative initials, but also in the surviving tailpieces and dingbats designed at different points by Dorothy Shakespear (of which the fish above is an example).

I am not trying to reduce the ideograms to illustrations. Rather, I am trying to elevate illustrations to ideograms. When Gaudier-Brzeska was able to see a horse in the written character, he, we deduce, knew how to look. If you ask a mechanic to look at the technical drawing of an engine, s/he will be able to tell you how the engine is supposed to work. For you the drawing may remain a beautiful abstract image, or become meaningful in a different way, if you learn the technique.

If the example of technical drawing seems far-fetched, take something closer: calligraphy. To understand the significance of the calligraphic gesture (for calligraphy is also an art of movement) is it enough to just look at it? Can one figure out how to appreciate the traces left by the brush – the record of a gesture, but also of an author, a tradition, and so on? It depends. It depends on the context of looking, and on the state of mind with which one approaches. In this respect *The Cantos* are surprisingly consistent. The ideograms are always part of what critics have called "associative complexes" within which the ideograms can be looked at to some effect. After all, the poet developed only a Confucian "terminology" (Kenner 452), not a whole language for the reader to learn.

sumne fugol othbaer
learned what the Mass meant,
how one shd/ perform it

the dancing at Corpus the toys in the
service at Auxerre

top, whip, and the rest of them.

[I heard it in the s.h. a suitable place

to hear that the war was over]

the scollop of the sky shut down on its pearl

καλλιπλόκαμα Ida.
With drawn sword as at Nemi
day comes after day

and the liars on the quai at Siracusa
still vie with Odysseus
seven words to a bomb

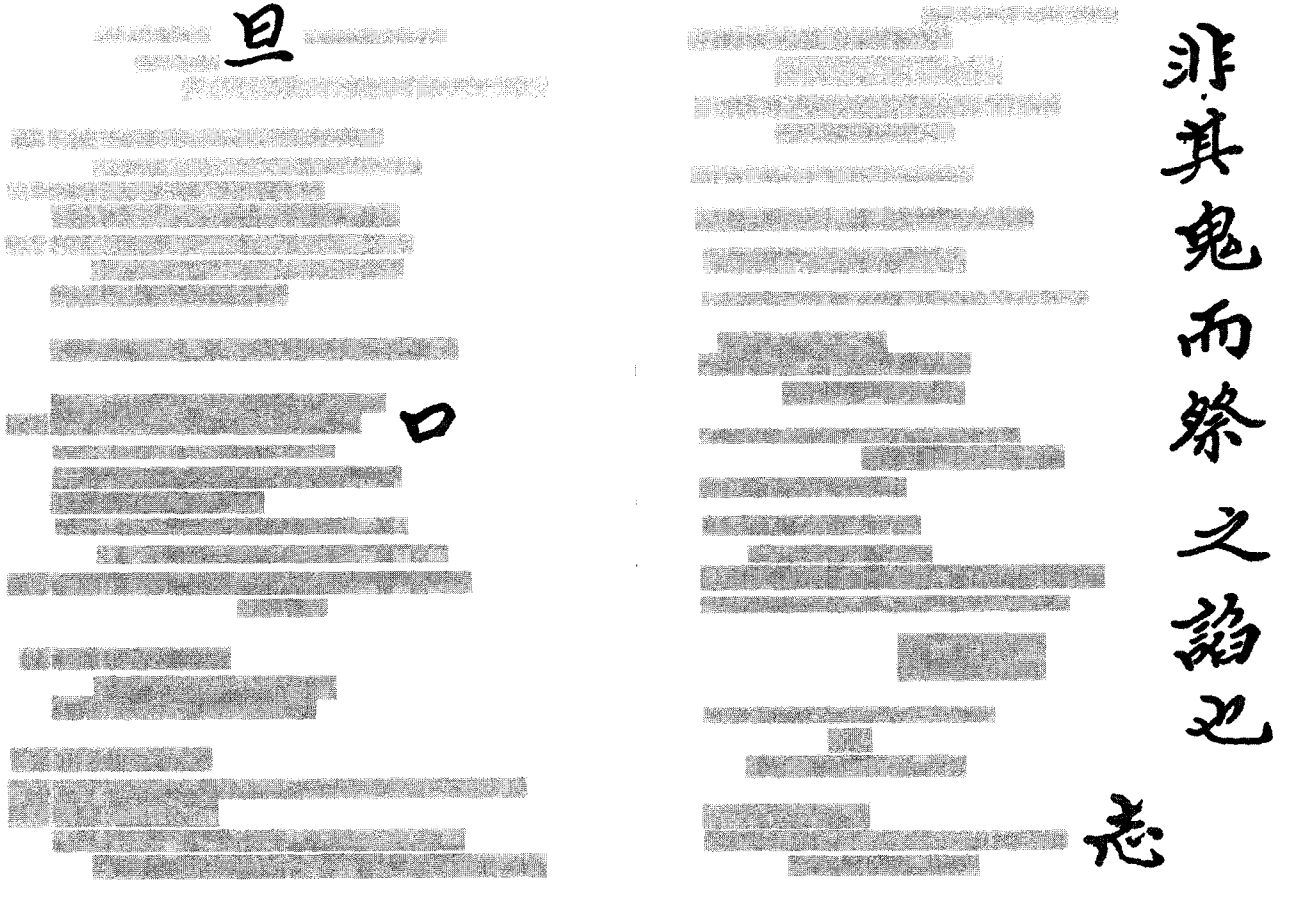
dum capitolium scandet
the rest is explodable
Very potent, can they again put one together
as the two halves of a seal, or a tally stick?

Shun's will and
King Wan's will

were as the two halves of a seal
½s
in the Middle Kingdom

Their aims as one
directio voluntatis, as lord over the heart
the two sages united

487



486 487

[Canto LXXVII (ND 486-7). Which strophes do you see first – the Chinese characters or the English verse? Painters reportedly use a black mirror to repose their eyes and look afresh at the landscape.]

Pound told his daughter not

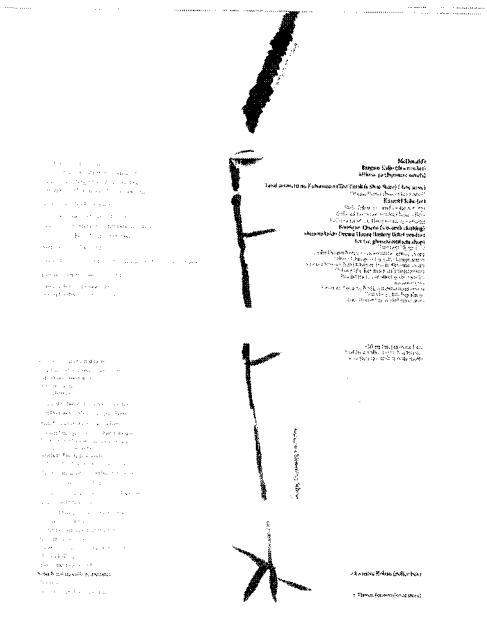
to worry about what she

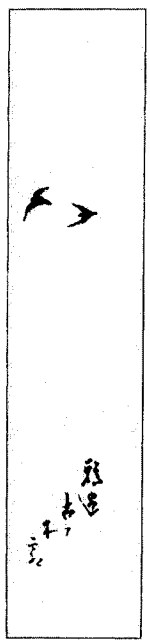
didn't understand

Bright dawn
next day
on the sht house
with the shadow of the gibbets attendant

immediately in the poem. For a while at least he believed that he had provided "the key" if there was need for any. From the example of "dawn" & "sun" (the ideograms) it appears that he was trying to teach something by way of illustration. If one notices that the ideograms repeatedly appear surrounded by the words "sun," and "dawn", is it possible not to see a sun in their shape?

Map of the street which opens the poem "Kūhaku" by David Cady and kozyndan (*Kūhaku* 48-9). The map is also trace of the brush. The importance of the brush has some relevance. The particular trace, record of movement, is a means of expression. Compare to Pound's indexing of his sources.

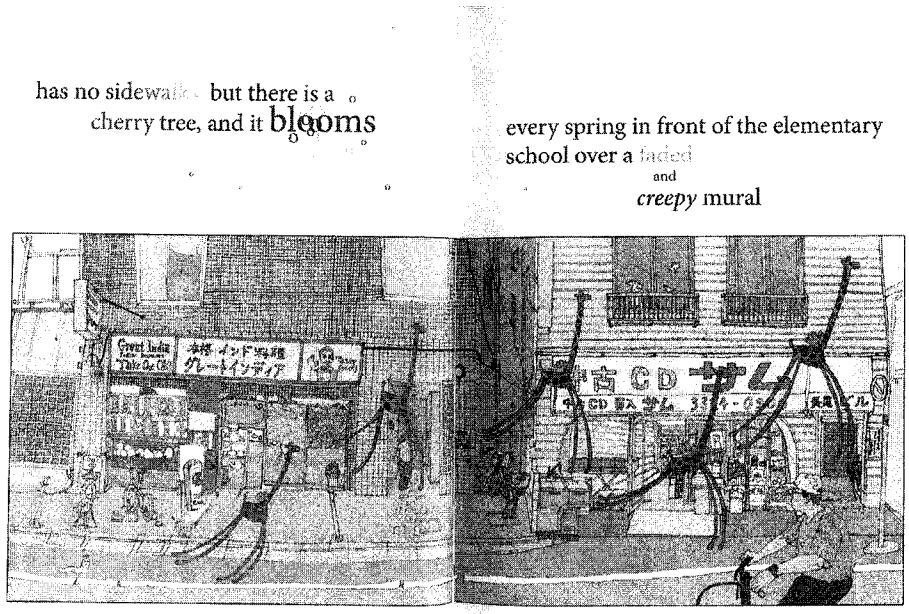




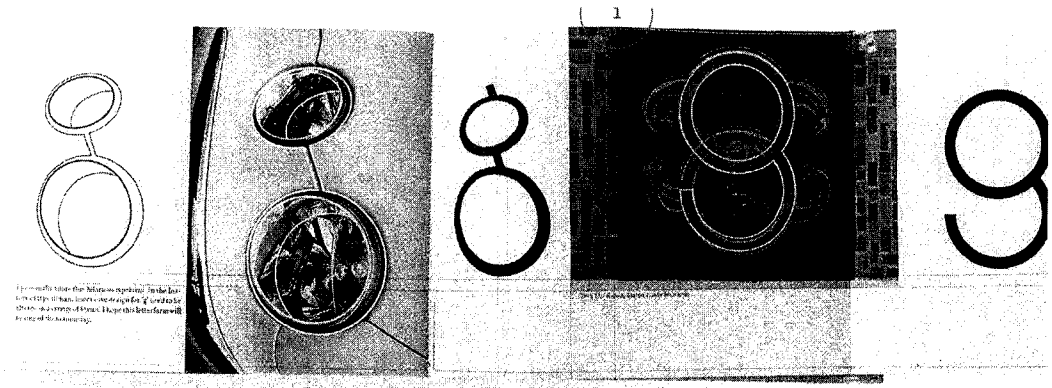
Massin uses this 18th-century calligraphy by Hakuin to illustrate how "space and movement are often associated." (*Mise en Pages* 59)

So, part of the concept of *the Cantos* has to do with how to look at drawing/writing, that is, how to read. The ideograms are here also as lessons in visual aesthetics, but the kind of visual aesthetics which has everything to do with writing. This is one way of understanding why Pound did not care for corrections, but cared for more Chinese characters.

This is one way of explaining why Strater's or Hynes's illustrations remain illustrations,and have no chance of becoming integral to the text.



Somebody has mistaken the shape of "o" for blossoms. (*Kūhaku* 54-55)



Wonsuk Kang, a Korean student at Pratt Institute, interpreting the English alphabet. (*The New York Types*) "It gives you a different way of looking at New York," a reader remarked. *How Design* April 2005.

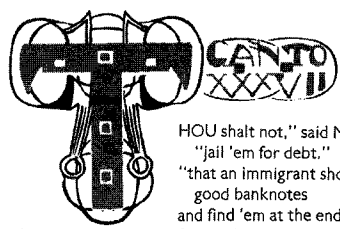
Finally, I would like to look at an unrealized project for *The Cantos* for which Dorothy Pound was designing a decorative alphabet. Dorothy Pound's designs, if I may be allowed the preference, are different.

With her alphabet one can speak of typography in a modern sense of the word. That she never finished the alphabets she was working on is our loss.

Dorothy Pound's techniques (she has incredibly assured lines) are analogous to Pound's incorporation of ideograms, which makes her initials successful in a functional sense. It is not about decorating the page. It is about what goes well – is "good to look at" – in *The Cantos*.

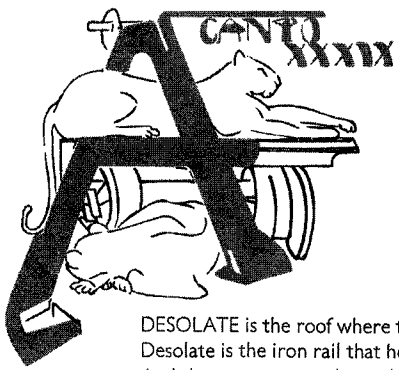
The machines her designs feature are represented "artistically" – they are not

This initial by Dorothy Pound was at first completely opaque to me, the way some ideograms are. It features an abstract view of a machine, showing both parts which are internal and parts which can be seen from outside, one learns. (All ills. from *Shakespear's Pound: the Illuminated Cantos*)



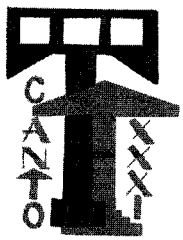
HOU shalt not," said Martin Van Buren,
"jail 'em for debt."
"that an immigrant shd. set out with
good banknotes
and find 'em at the end of his voyage
but waste paper . . . . if a man have in primeval forest
set up his cabin, shall rich patroon take it from him?

precise and do not follow conventions of technical drawing. [Compare to Albers's admonition that while to see how "1 + 1 = 3 or more" may be good for the imagination, it may not be good when shopping or building a bridge, which describes well the difference between "artistic" and "technical" in this context.] They alternate internal and external views of machine parts, returning to the point of view of the machine as form, an undertaking apparently shared with Pound:



DESOLATE is the roof where the cat sat,
Desolate is the iron rail that he walked
And the corner post whence he greeted the sunrise.
In hill path: "thkk thgk"
of the loom
"Thgk, thkk" and the sharp sound of a song
under olives

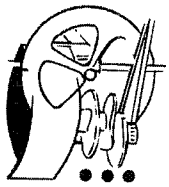
Note that the lower part of this strange architecture is made of wheels and the upper part is held by a lever.



EMPUS loquendi,
Tempus tacendi.
Said Mr Jefferson: it wd. have
given us time.

The overlapping heads and tails of the two T's imply rotation.

"It seems possible that any man intending to practice the plastic arts; or to know excellent from mediocre or inefficient in the plastic arts might, in our time, more readily awaken his eye by looking at spare parts and at assembled machinery than by walking through galleries ... not because a rolling press is necessarily a more pleasing spectacle than a wall painted by Cosimo Tura, but because people, as we now know them, can hardly look at anything as *form.*"
(*Machine Art* 57)



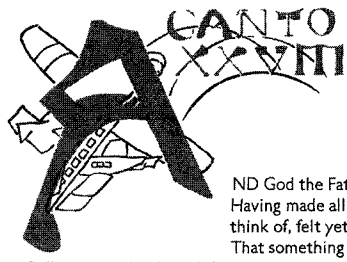
Quincey Nov. 13, 1815

Is that despotism
or absolute power . . .
unlimited sovereignty,

Parts one finds inside an engine with pistons.
Photos of these in Pound's *Machine Art.*

Pound was collecting images of spare parts for the project of his book on "machine art." Some of these may have very well served Dorothy Pound in designing the initials. But the main merit of her letters is that they achieve a transition between letters and drawings, between representational form and abstract form, without narrowly (narratively) interpreting the poem: to be more precise, without interpreting the part of *The Cantos* that one can paraphrase.

Of course, Dorothy Pound's designs, which never made it to print in her time, remains the domain of limited editions.



ND God the Father Eternal (Boja d'un Dio!)
Having made all things he cd.
think of, felt yet
That something was lacking, and thought
Still more, and reflected that
The Romagnolo was lacking, and
Stamped with his foot in the mud and
Up comes the Romagnolo:

Thematic initial: what does Canto XXVIII
have to do with airplanes? Fascinating, fascinating.

But Pound's *Cantos* is already decorated, perhaps not as amply as Pound may have wanted to but certainly enough.

One only needs to look.

And that is all I have to say.

FIN

APPENDIX I

i have gathered here some fragments that I couldn't let go.

They must have a place in the dissertation. And there is no need to try and mend their fragmentariness. Because this is how they presented themselves to me, as bits of stories, and not as supporting columns of a bigger architecture. These pieces can come at the beginning or the end, or any point in the dissertation without breaking into any imagined unity of the text. They point to a past: the fait accompli of this volume. But also to an imagined future. Recently, talking about my work, I found myself saying that now the ideal lecture (or critical text) for me is one composed entirely of quotations, where the critical attitude is expressed solely in the composition of the piece. A completely different kind of work based more on the art of combination, than on anything else. Please accept these fragments here, in lieu of a conclusion, or, an introduction.

Giacometti painted a portrait of James Lord. Lord secretly kept a diary and then wrote a portrait of Giacometti. I don't think that picture and book can now go separately. Mutual perception.
Giacometti: "Cézanne never really finished anything. He went as far as he could, then abandoned the job. That's the terrible thing; the more one works on a picture, the more impossible it becomes to finish it." Lord: "Those were prophetic words. But I didn't know it then. I drank my Coca-Cola, said goodbye, and left."
Twelve days later, Lord: "It's difficult for me to imagine how things must appear to you."
"That's exactly what I'm trying to do," he said, "to show how things appear to me."
"But what," I asked, "is the relation between your vision, the way things appear to you, and the technique that you have at your disposal to translate that vision into something which is visible to others?"
"That's the whole drama," he said. "I don't have such a technique."[i]

(Pensively...) That's the whole drama.

[i] Lord, *A Giacometti Portrait*, pp. 11, 76-77.

The difficulty of writing a final chapter: which author, imagining the moment of being, finally, liberated of her labors, can sit, again, and toil at the words, without impatience? The finish is too close at hand. "Simply a matter of work"?[ii] I know perfectly how to go about writing, I know too well, but I need to surprise myself...

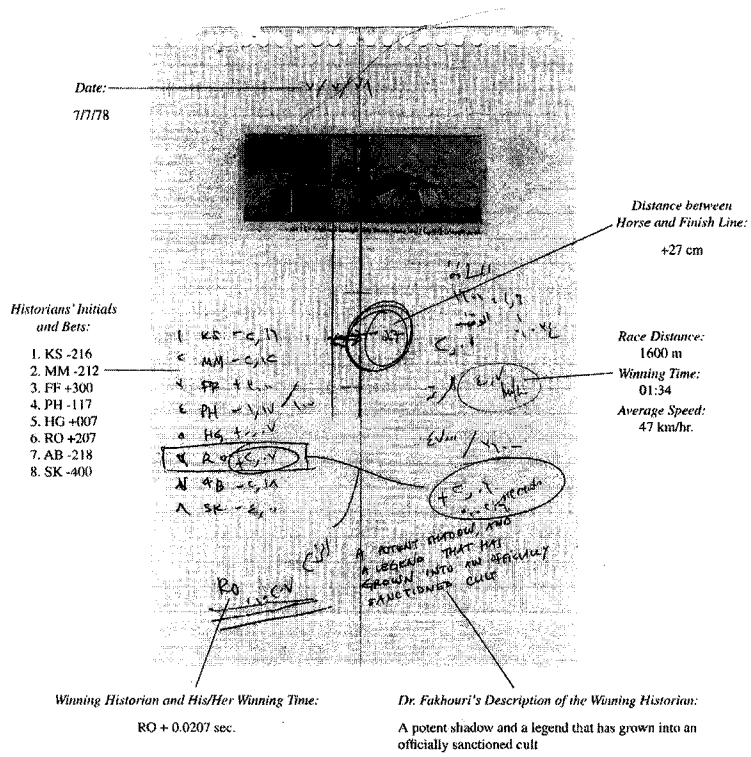
"It is a little known fact that the major historians of the Lebanese civil war were avid gamblers. It is said that every Sunday, at the race track – Marxists and Islamists bet on races one through seven; Maronite nationalists and socialists on races eight through fifteen.

Race after race, the historians stood behind the track photographer, whose job was to image the winning horse as it crossed the finish line, to record the photo-finish. It is also said that they convinced (some say bribed) the photographer to snap only one picture as the winning horse arrived. Each historian wagered on precisely when - how many fractions of a second before or after the horse crossed the finish line – the photographer would expose his frame.

The following pages have been reproduced from the notebooks of Dr. Fadl Fakhouri.

[...]

[T]hey [these pages] offer an image of what can be imagined, what can be said, what can be taken for granted, and what can appear as rational or not."[iii]



[ii] Brian Eno *Oblique Strategies* (a box of cards), #44.
[iii] Walid Raad, "Missing Lebanese Wars," i-ii.

"There is also the *Catullus* (Aldine, 1562) whose front page bears the penned inscription: "Ezra Pound, June 1928, aquistavit in Venetiis da Cassini Librario." It is in Canto XXIV that Cassini tells of his discovery that the original statues of Nicolò and Borso d'Este (1472) were melted to make cannon balls in Napoleon's times:

> And the priest sent a boy to the hardware
> And he brought back the nails in a wrapping,
> And it was the leaf of a diary
> And he got the rest from the hardware"
> (Cassini, librario, speaking) [iv]

"Which is all of the story, like a torn papyrus. That is how the past exists, phantasmagoric weskits, stray words, random things recorded. The imagination augments, metabolizes, feeding on all it has to feed on, such scraps."[v]

Saussure:

> [vi] When the actors have left the stage,
> a few objects remain: a flower on the floor, a [ ]*
> which lingers in the memory, suggesting more or less what has happened,
> but which, being only partial, leaves room for -

[iv] Mary de Raschwiltz, "Ezra Pound's Library," 5.
[v] Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 5.
[vi] Starobinski/Saussure, *Words Upon Words,* 7. *note of Starobinski: "Space left blank in the text."

APPENDIX II

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

page . . . . . .

123. see 111 and 119.

144. Noon by the sea, Pornic, France, July 2002.

146. A chair in the sun.

154-5. Apollinaire's "It's raining" in Spencer, pp. 18-19.

162. Apollinaire's "It's raining" in the Gallimard edition, p.64.

163. in the English edition, p.101.

164. Raymond Gid's interpretation of "It's raining" from his *Typographies*, p. 83.

169. Raymond Gid, *Célébration de la Lettre,* pp. 2-3.

171-2. Tristan Tzara, "Une Nuit d'Echecs Gras" in Sanouillet vol.1, pp. 92 and 136.

174-5. Miller & Richards Typefounders Catalogue, n.p.
175. *Le Coeur a Barbe* from Iowa Digital Dada Library.

183. Catalogue page from Miller & Richards. *Salon Dada,* source unknown.

182. Tristan Tzara, "Degout Dadaiste," in DADA 3 (1918) and in English edition from 1977.

183. Chiang Yee, ideograms and drawings. Peignot, p.10.

186 and 188. Ludwig Zeller, *Alphacollage,* n.p.

192. Heraldo de Campos, poem, in Solt, p.99, and Heinz and Rasch, book cover, in Andel, p.235.

193. Mary Ellen Solt, "Forsythia," in Williams,n.p. ; Apollinaire, "Visée" in Massin *Mise en Pages*, p. 46; Pierre Albert-Birot, "Offrande" in *Poesie 1916-1924*, p.213.

194. Ocarte, poem, in Solt, p.197; and Piet Zwart, advertisement, in Spencer, p.115.

195. Decio Pignatari, "organismo,' in Williams, n.p.; and Piet Zwart, advertisement, in Spencer, p.110.

196. H.N.Werkman, composition, in Spencer, p.103; and Hansjörg Mayer in Bann, p.64.

197. Massin in Ionesco's *Délire à Deux*, n.p.

215. Fish design by Dorothy Shakespear Pound, *Shakespear's Pound,* n.p.

216-7. Page from the New Direction's standard edition of *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, p. 486-487.

218a. Double-page spread from "Kūhaku" in *Kūhaku,* pp. 48-49.

218b. Hakuin, calligraphy in Massin, *Mise en Pages,* p.59.

230a. Three lines from *The Cantos,* see 227-8.

219b. Double-page spread from "Kūhaku" in *Kūhaku,* pp. 54-55.

220. Wonsuk Kand, *New York Types, How Design Magazine* April 2005.

220-222. Dorothy Pound's decorative initials, see 226.

APPENDIX III

Late 1980s **POSTSCRIPT**, page description language: "there is no longer any distinction between TEXT AND NON-TEXT, image and non-image." First desktop publishing programs. **1980s**

1985 Fontographer font design software introduced by AltSys. Anyone can make fonts. 1985

1982 Adobe Systems Inc. founded. 1987 Adobe Illustrator. 1989 Adobe Photoshop. 1982

1966 Digiset by Rudolf Hell GmbH, first **DIGITAL TYPESETTING. 1966**

1952 Phototypesetting is common, spaces between letters and font size are infinitely variable. 1952

1949 Intertype introduce Fotosetter. 1949

1949 Deberny and Peignot introduce Lumitype machine, known as **PHOTON** in the USA. 1949

1945 International Typographic Style, known as "Swiss Style" dominant trend. 1945

1932 Stanley Morisson, consultant for Monotype Corp., produces a new roman font for the *Times*, i.e. **TIMES NEW ROMAN. 1932**

1925 "elementare typographie" by Jan Tschichold. 1925

1925 Uhertype invent **PHOTOTYPESETTING** machine, typefaces designed by Jan Tschichold. 1925

1917 October Revolution. 1917

1916 London Underground sans serif by Edward Johnston. 1916

1886 Ottmar Mergenthaler, a watchmaker, invents the "Blower", later **LINOTYPE MACHINE. 1886**

1883 Tolbert Lanston realizes his idea for a monotype composition machine. 1883

1873 Remington (USA) start factory production of typewriters. Anyone can type. 1873

1864 Peter Mitterhoffer creates one of the first typewriters in wood. 1864

TYPOGRAPHY LITERATURE TYPOGRAPHY LITERATURE LITERATYPOGRAPHY LITERATURE TYPOGRAPHY LITERATURE TYPOGRAPHY

1897 Stephane Mallarme publishes **Un Coup de Des** in Cosmopolis. 1897

1908 Ezra Pound publishes privately and supervises the printing of **A LUME SPENTO**. The book is on "paper which was a remainder of a supply which had been used for a History of the Church." 1908

1914 Gertrude Stein's **TENDER BUTTONS**. Wyndham Lewis issues the first Blast, which El Lissitzky brings back to Russia as an example of good typography. **1914**

1915 Alfred Stieglitz, with Marius de Zayas, Agnes Meyer and Katharine Rhoades begins an experimental magazine **291**. 1915

1916 Pierre Albert-Birot launches **SIC** (sons, idees, couleurs). First ten issues printed at atelier of Rirachovsky, PAB takes interest in the process. 1916

1917 Francis **PICABIA** starts 391. Marcel Duchamp makes Blindman and Rongwrong. 1917

1918 Guillaume Apollinaire's Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War 1913- 1916. Kurt Schwitters makes his first Merz collages. 1918

1922 Albert-Birot buys a small printing press, which is delivered, at the beginning of the summer, in his bedroom. 1922

1922 LISSITZKY designs "Of two squares" and translates typographically Mayakovsky's "Dlja Golosa." 1922

1925 Ezra Pound produces A Draft of XVI **CANTOS**. Dorothy Shakespeare designs some of the capitals for later cantos (1930). 1925

1926 Duchamp: Disks inscribed with puns. White letters pasted on eight black cardboard disks, each 30 cm in diameter. **1925**

1934 Yale University Press publishes Ezra Pound's ABC of Reading. 1934

1940 Lissitzky design parts of the Soviet section for the world exhibition in New York. 1940

1941 BOITE-EN-VALISE. 1941

1967 first publication of a page from Tom Phillips' A Humument. 1967

1980 trade edition of **A HUMUMENT** by Thames and Hudson. 1980

1996 It was supposed to take 265 days to finish and be 264 pages in length... O.M.A., Bruce Mau and Rem Koolhaas. S, M, L, Xl. **1344 pages. 1996**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(This bibliography necessarily contains works essential, marginal, boring, glanced at, mentioned in passing, annoying, crucial, exciting. It necessarily also excludes works that shaped this thesis. Who can be certain that everything read is kept track of?)

+rosebud 3 (2001). Ammerndorf (Germany); Wien (Austria): Rosebud, Inc., 2001.

391. Reédition critique. Vol. 1 (see Sanouillet). Paris: Le Terrain Vague, 1960.

Albers, Josef. *Interaction of color*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

---. *Poems and drawings*. New Haven: Readymade Press, 1958.

---. *Search versus re-search: three lectures by Josef Albers at Trinity College, April 1965*. Hartford, Conn.: Trinity College Press, 1969.

Albert-Birot, Pierre. *Le catalogue de l'antiquaire: descriptions de quelques objets anciens et de quelques amateurs*. Troarn: Amiot-Lenganey, 1993.

---. *Cinémas*. Paris: J.-M. Place, 1995.

---. *La joie des sept couleurs, poème orné de cinq poèmes-paysages hors-texte le tout composé en 1918 par Pierre Albert-Birot*. Paris: editions "Sic", 1919.

---. *La lune, ou, Le livre des poèmes*. Paris: Budry, 1924.

---. *Poèmes quotidiens*. Paris: Editions "Sic", 1919.

---. *Poésie 1916-1920*. Ed. Arlette Albert-Birot. Mortemart: Rougerie, 1987.

---. *Poésie, 1916-1924*. Ed. Arlette Albert-Birot. Mortemart: Rougerie, 1992.

---. *Poésie, 1927-1937*. Ed. Arlette Albert-Birot. Mortemart: Rougerie, 1981.

---. *Trente et un poèmes de poche*. Paris: Éditions "Sic," 1917.

Andel, Jaroslav. *Avant-garde page design, 1900-1950*. New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2002.

Apollinaire, Guillaume. *Calligrammes: poèmes de la paix et de la guerre, 1913 – 1916*. 1st ed. With a portrait of the author by Pablo Picasso, engraving R. Jaudon. Paris: Mercure de France, 1918.

---. *Calligrammes*. 4. ed. Paris: Gallimard, 1925.

---. *Calligrammes*; lithos de Chirico. De Luxe ed. Paris: Librarie Gallimard, 1930.

---. *Calligrammes*. A new edition completely rev. and corr. acc. to original proofs, augmented by numerous reproductions of calligrams in manuscript. Annotated by Michel Decaudin. Typography Massin. Paris: Club du meilleur livre, 1955.

---. *Calligrammes*. Pref. de Michel Butor. Paris: Gallimard, 1966.

---. *Calligrammes: poems of peace and war (1913-1916)*. Trans. Anne Hyde Greet. Bilingual ed. Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1980.

---. *Journal Intime, 1898-1918*. Montpellier, France: Editions du Limon, 1991.

Aragon , Luois. "From *The Fate of La Fontaine."* Caws ed. *Surrealist Painters and Poets,* 77-84.

Armitage, Merle. *Books and Typography Designed by Merle Armitage*. With articles by Carl Zigrosser, Edwin Corle, Ward Ritchie [and others] ... New York: E. Weyhe, 1938.

Aynsley, Jeremy. *Graphic Design in Germany, 1890-1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Bann, Stephen, ed. *Concrete Poetry: an International Anthology*. London: Magazine Edtns, 1967.

Baudin, Fernand. *How Typography Works: and Why It Is Important*. London: Lund Humphries, 1989.

Baumann, Walter. "Birds, Said Hudson, Are Not Automata." *Paideuma* 15 (1986): 121-124.

Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.

---. *Illuminations*. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zorn. London: Pimlico, 1999.

---. *One-way Street and Other Writings*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott, Kingsley Shorter. London: Verso, 1979.

Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. Trans. Paul, Nancy Margaret, and W. Scott Palmer. New York: Zone Books, 1988.

Bierut, Michael, et al. eds. *Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design*. New York: Allworth Press, 1999.

---, et al. eds. *Looking Closer 4: Critical Writings on Graphic Desing*. New York: Allworth Press, 2002.

Bohn, Willard. "Thoughts That Join Like Spokes: Pound's Image of Apollinaire." *Paideuma* 18 (1989): 127-145.

Borges, Jorge Luis. *The Total Library: Non-fiction 1922-1986*. Ed. Eliot Weinberger; Trans. Esther Allen, Suzanne Jill Levine and Eliot Weinberger. London; New York: Penguin, 1999.

Cabanne, Pierre. *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*. Trans. Ron Padgett. New York: Viking Press, 1971.

Cabaret Voltaire; Der Zeltweg; Dada; Le Couer A Barbe, 1916-1922. Ed. Michel Giroud. Paris: Jean Michel Place, 1981.

Cage, John. *I-VI*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990.

---. *Empty Words : Writings '73-'78*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1981, 1979.

---. *M: Writings, '67-'72*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1973.

---. *Mirage Verbal: Writings Through Marcel Duchamp, Notes*. Plombières-les-Dijon: Ulysse, fin de siècle, 1990.

---. *Silence; Lectures and Writings*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.

---. *X : Writings '79-'82*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press; Scranton, Pa., 1983.

Caillois, Roger. "The Ultimate Bibliophilia." Hollier and Mehlman, 60-63.

Campbell, Henry A. "Expatriate Press in Paris in the 1920s." 4 May 2005. <http://abbookman.com/ABBookman_FAB0102.html>.

Carpenter, Humphrey. *A Serious Character: the Life of Ezra Pound*. London; Boston: Faber and Faber, 1988.

Cayley, John. "The Literal Image: Illustrations in *The Cantos*." *Paideuma* 14 (1986): 127-151.

Caws. Mary Ann. *The Art of Interference: Stressed Readings in Verbal and Visual Texts*. New York: Polity Press in association with B. Blackwell, 1989.

---. "Looking: Literature's Other." *PMLA* 119 (2004): 1293-1314.

---, ed. *Surrealist Painters and Poets: an Anthology*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001.

---, ed. *Manifesto: a Century of Isms*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001.

Christo and Jean-Claude.*Christo and Jean-Claude in the Vogel Collection.*New York: Harry H. Abrams, 2002.

Clearfield, Andrew. "Pound, Paris, Dada." *Paideuma* 7 (1978): 113-140.

Conover, Anne. "Ezra Pound and the Crosby Continental Editions." in *Ezra Pound and Europe*. Eds. Richard Taylor and Claus Melchior. Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1993.

Crombie, John. "Golden Imbeciles." *London Review of Books* 21.11 (27 May 1999). 8 May 2005 <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v21/n11/letters.html>.

Culver, Michael. "The Art of Henri Strater: an Examination of the Illustrations for Pound's *A Draft of XVI. Cantos*." *Paideuma* 12 (1983): 447 - ?.

De Man, Paul. *Critical Writings 1953-1978*. Lindsay Waters ed. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989.

Derrida, Jacques. *Dissemination.* Trans. Barbara Johnson. Chicago: University Press, 1981.

Drucker, Johanna. *Figuring the word: essays on books, writing, and visual poetics*. New York: Granary Books, 1998.

---. *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909-1923*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

---. *The word made flesh*. New York: Granary Books, 1996.

Duchamp, Marcel. *Marcel Duchamp, Notes*. Trans. Paul Matisse. Boston : G.K. Hall, 1983.

---. *Salt Seller; the Writings of Marcel Duchamp*. Ed. by Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Dworkin, Craig. *Reading the Illegible*. Diss. U of California at Berkeley, 1998. UMI, 1998. ATT 9902059. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2003.

Eddie, Breuil. "Ceci n'a aucun sens." 28 April 2005. <http://perso.univ-lyon2.fr/~edbreuil/Dada/typodada/PDF/I.pdf>.

Elam, Kimberly. *Expressive Typography: the Word as Image*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1990.

Elkins, James. *Why Are Our Pictures Puzzles?* New York and London: Routledge, 1999.

Eno, Brian. *A Year with Swollen Appendices: the Diary of Brian Eno*. London: Faber & Faber, 1996.

Fenollosa, Ernest. *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry.* Ezra Pound ed. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1968.

Foucault, Michel. "Richard's Mallarmé." Hollier and Mehlman, 226-234.

Friedl, Friedrich, Nicolaus Ott, and Bernard Stein. *Typography: an Encyclopedic Survey of Type Design and Techniques throughout History*. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1998.

Gallup, Donald. *Ezra Pound, a Bibliography*. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1983.

Gid, Raymond. *12 estampes Dédiées aux Amateurs*. Calligraphies et typographies de Raymond Gid. Montanthiaume, Chatenay-Nalabry: impr. Trapinex, 1967.

---. *Célébration de la Lettre*. Trans. P.M. Handover. New York: The Composing Room, 1965.

---. *Typographies*. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1998.

Gill, Eric. *An Essay on Typography*. 1st U.S. ed. Boston: D.R. Godine, 1988.

Goudy, Frederic W. *A Half-century of Type Design and Typography, 1895-1945*. New York: The Typophiles, 1946.

Gutjahr, Paul C. and Megan L. Benton eds. *Illuminating Letters: Typography and Literary Interpretation*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

Harling, Robert. *The Letter Forms and Type Designs of Eric Gill*. Westerham: Hurtwood Press, 1979.

Hayles, N. Katherine. "Print is Flat, Code is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis." *Poetics Today* 25:1 (Spring 2004), 67-90.

Heller, Steven, and Louise Fili. *Design Connoisseur: an Eclectic Collection of Imagery and Type*. New York: Allworth Press, 2000.

---, and Karen Pomeroy, eds. *Design Literacy: Understanding Graphic Design*. New York: Allworth Press, 1997

---, and Georgette Balance, eds. *Graphic Design History*. New York: Allworth Press, 2001.

---. *Merz to Emigre and Beyond : Avant-garde Magazine Design of the Twentieth Century*. London: Phaidon, 2003.

---, and Seymour Chwast, eds. *Graphic Style: from Victorian to Digital*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000.

---, and Philip B. Meggs, eds. *Texts on Type: Critical Writings on Typography*. New York: Allworth Press, 2001.

Heusser, Martin, ed. *Word & Image Interactions: A Selection of Papers Given at the Second International Conference on Word and Image, Universitat Zurich, August 27-31, 1990*. Basel: Wiese Verlag, 1993.

Hickman, Miranda B. ""To Facilitate the Traffic" (or, "Damn Deluxe Edtns"): Ezra Pound's Turn from the Deluxe." *Paideuma* 28 (1999): 173-192.

Hocks, Mary E. and Michelle R. Kendrick eds. *Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media*. MIT Press, 2003.

Hodnett, Edward. *Image and Text: Studies in the Illustration of English Literature*. London: Scolar Press, 1982.

Hollier, Denis, and Jeffrey Mehlman, eds. *Literary Debate: Texts and Contexts*. New York: The New Press, 1999.

Huang, Yunte. *Transpacific Displacement: Ethnography, Translation, and Intertextual Travel in Twentieth-century American Literature*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Hultenheim, C.F. comp. and ed. *Typographica: Sept. 10, 2002-Jan. 10, 2003 : an exhibition of 20th century typography and graphic design*. Stockholm, Sweden: Royal Library, 2002.

Ionesco, Eugène. *Délire à Deux: Essai de Calligraphie Sonore par Massin, (d'après l'interprétation de Tsilla Chelton et de Jean-Louis Barrault à l'Odéon-Théâtre de France)*. Paris: Gallimard, 1966.

---. *The Bald Prima Donna: anti-play, followed by a previously unpublished scene; trans. Donald Watson, typography by Massin with photographs by Henry Cohen, after the production of the play by Nicolas Bataille with the actors of the Théâtre de la Huchette*. London, Calder & Boyars, 1966.

Jay, Martin and Teresa Brennan eds. *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Jin, Songpin. *The Poetics of the Ideogram*. Frankfurt am Main; Berlin; Bern; Bruxelles; New York; Oxford; Wien: Peter Lang. 2002.

Jobling, Paul and David Crowley eds. *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation since 1800*. Manchester and New York, Manchester UP, 1996.

Johnson, Barbara. *Mother Tongues: Sexuality, Trials, Motherhood, Translation*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Judovitz, Dalia. *Unpacking Duchamp: Art in Transit*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Kasper, M. *All Cotton Briefs*. Brooklyn: Benzene, 1992.

Kenner, Hugh. *The Pound Era*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Kinross, Robin. *Modern Typography: an Essay in Critical History*. London : Hyphen Press, 2004.

Kittler, Friedrich. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter.* Transl. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz. Stanford: Stanford Up, 1999.

Kodama, Sanehide ed. *Ezra Pound and Japan.* Redding Ridge, CT: Black Swan Books, 1987.

Koolhaas, Rem., O.M.A. and Bruce Mau. *S, M, L, XL.* The Monacelli Press, 1995.

Kūhaku. Bruce Rutledge ed. Seattle; Tokio: Chin Music Press, 2005.

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe. *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics.* Christopher Fynsk trans. and ed. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Latour, Bruno, and Peter Galison eds. *Laboratorium.* Dumont, 2001.

Laughlin, James. *Pound as Wuz: Essays and Lectures on Ezra Pound.* Saint Paul: Graywolf Press, 1987.

Lentengre, Marie-Louise. *Pierre Albert-Birot: l'Invention de Soi.* Paris: Jean-Michel Place, 1993.

Lord, James. *A Giacometti Portrait.* New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1980.

Lupton, Ellen. "Design and Production in the Mechanical Age (excerpt)." 2 May 2005. <http://www.designwritingresearch.org/essays/mechage.html>.

Lyotard, Jean François. *Duchamp's TRANS/formers: a book.* Venice, CA: Lapis Press, 1990.

Lund, Hans. *Text as Picture: Studies in the Literary Transformation of Pictures.* Kacke Gotrick trans. Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992.

Mallarmé, Stéphane. *Collected Poems.* Trans. Henri Weinfield. Berkeley: U of California Press, 1995.

---. *Mallarmé in Prose.* Ed. Mary Ann Caws. Trans. Jill Anderson et al. New York: New Directions, 2001.

Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *Les Mots en Liberté Futuristes.* Milano: Edizioni futuriste di "Poesia", 1919.

---. *Les Mots en Liberté Futuristes.* Reprint. Lausanne: L'Age d'homme, 1987.

Massin. *L'ABC du Métier.* Paris: Impr. nationale, 1989.

---. *La Mise en Pages.* Paris : Hoëbeke, 1991.

---. *Letter and Image.* Trans. Caroline Hillier and Vivienne Menkes. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1970.

Mau, Bruce. *Life Style.* Phaidon Press Ltd., 2000.

McCaffery, Steve. *Carnival; the First Panel, 1967-70.* Toronto: Coach House Press, 1973.

---. *Carnival: the Second Panel, 1970-75.* Toronto: Coach House Press, 1978.

---. *Evoba: the Investigations Meditations 1976-78*. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1987.

McGann, Jerome J. *Black Riders: the Visible Language of Modernism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

---. "A note on the Current State of Humanities Scholarship." *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Winter 2004): 409-413.

---. *Radiant Textuality: Literature after the World Wide Web*. New York : Palgrave, 2001.

---. *The Textual Condition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

McLean, Ruari. *How Typography Happens*. London: British Library; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000.

Meggs, Philip B. *A History of Graphic Design* . New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.

Miller & Richards. *Typefounders Catalogue: Specimens of Book Newspaper Jobbing and Ornamental Types*. Edinburgh; London: [Miller & Richards], 1873. Bloomfield Books Reprint, 1974.

Miller, J. Hillis. *Illustration*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992.

Morison, Stanley. *The Typographic Book, 1450-1935: a Study of Fine Typography through Five Centuries*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963.

---. *First Principles of Typography*. Cambridge [Eng.] University Press, 1951.

Peignot, Jerome, comp. and ed. *Typoésie*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1993.

Perloff, Marjorie. *21st-century Modernism: the "New" Poetics*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

---. *The Futurist Moment: Avant-garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

---. "The Music of Verbal Space: John Cage's "What you say."' Ubuweb. 10 May 2005. <http://www.ubu.com/papers/perloff02.html>.

---, ed. *Postmodern Genres*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

---. *Radical Artifice: Writing Poetry in the Age of Media*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Phillips, Tom, trans. and illustr. *Dante's Inferno: the First Part of the Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*. London; New York: Thames and Hudson, 1985.

---. *A Humument*. London: Tetrad Press, 1970[-1975].

---. *A Humument: a Treated Victorian Novel*. 1st rev. ed. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987. And 3rd. rev. ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 2004.

---. *A Humument: Variants & Variations*. London: Talfourd Press, 1992.

---, John James and Andrew Crozier. *In One Side & Out the Other*. London: Ferry Press, 1970.

---. *The Postcard Century: 2000 Cards and Their Messages*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2000.

---. *Tom Phillips: Works and Texts*. London; New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992.

---. *Tom Phillips: Works, Texts to 1974*. Stuttgart: Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 1983.

---. *We Are the People: Postcards from the Collection of Tom Phillips*. London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 2004.

Pons, Max, ed. *Connaissance de Pierre Albert-Birot: Témoignages, Hommages, Etudes, Notes, Texts*. Saint-Front-sur-Lémance, France: Editions du Cercle Culturel et Artisanal de Bonaguil, 1968.

Pound, Dorothy Shakespear. *Etruscan Gate*. Exeter: The Rougement Press, 1971.

Pound, Ezra. *ABC of Reading*. New York: New Directions, 1960.

---. "The Art of Poetry: An Interview with Ezra Pound." Paris Review 28 (Summer/Fall 1962). Accessed 10 May 2005. http://www.theparisreview.com/media/4598_POUND.pdf

---. *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*. 3rd paperbound printing. New York: New Directions, 1996.

---. *A Draft of XVI Cantos of Ezra Pound: for the Beginning of a Poem of Some Length*. Now first made into a book; with initials by Henry Strater. Paris: Three Mountains Press, 1925.

---. *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Paris: Hours press, 1930.

---. *A Draft of the Cantos 17-27 of Ezra Pound*; initials by Gladys Hynes. London: J. Rodker, 1928.

---. *Guide to Kulchur*. New York: New Directions, 1970.

---.*Machine Art and Other Writings: the Lost Thought of the Italian Years*. Ed. Maria Luisa Ardizzone. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.

---. *Pound/Cummings: the Correspondence of Ezra Pound and E. E. Cummings*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press, 1996.

---. *Pound/Williams: The Correspondence of Ezra Pound: Selected Letters of Ezra Pound and Carlos Williams*. Ed. Hugh Witemeyer. New York: New Directions, 1996.

---. *Shakespear's Pound: Illuminated Cantos*. Nacogdoches, Tex.: LaNana Creek Press; London, England: Scolar Press, 1999.

Poynor, Rick. *Design without Boundaries: Visual Communication in Transition.* London: Booth-Clibborn, 1998.

---. *No More Rules: Graphic Design and Postmodernism.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

---. *Obey the Giant: Life in the Image World.* London: August; Basel: Birkhäuser, 2001.

Queneau, Raymond. *Cent Mille Milliards de Poèmes.* Paris: Gallimard, 1961.

---. *Exercices de Style.* Paris: Gallimard, 1982.

---. *One Hundred Million Million Poems.* English version by John Crombie. Paris: Kickshaws, 1983.

Raad, Walid. "Missing Lebanese Wars: a Project by Walid Raad." *Public Culture* 11:2 (Spring 1999): i-xv.

Rachewiltz, Mary de. "Ezra Pound's Library: What Remains." *Ezra Pound and Europe.* Eds. Richard Taylor and Claus Melchior. Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1993.

Rainey, Lawrence S. "A Poem Including History: The Cantos of Ezra Pound: Introduction to an Exhibition at the Beinecke Library, September – December 1989." *Paideuma* 21 (1992), n.p.

Read, Forrest. "The Mathematical Symbolism of Ezra Pound's Revolutionary Mind." *Paideuma* 7 (1978): 7-72.

Reiner, Imre. *Modern and Historical Typography: an Illustrated Guide.* St. Gall: Zollikofer, 1948.

Robbe-Grillet, Alain. "A Future for the Novel." Hollier and Mehlman, 259-264.

Rogers, Shef. "How Many Ts Had Ezra Pound's Printer?" *Studies in Bibliography* 49 (1996): 277-283.

Rothenstein, Julian and Mel Gooding, eds. *ABZ: More Alphabets and Other Signs.* San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003.

Ruthven, K. K. *A Guide to Ezra Pound's Personae.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

Ryan, David. *Letter Perfect: the Art of Modernist Typography, 1896-1953.* Rohnert Park, Calif.: Pomegranate, 2001.

Sanouillet, Michel, ed. *Francis Picabia and 391.* Vol. 2 (see 391). Paris: Le Terrain Vague, 1966.

Sherman, Carol. *Diderot and the Art of Dialogue.* Geneve: Librarie Droz, 1976.

Shipcott, Grant. *Typographical Periodicals between the Wars: a Critique of the Fleuron, Signature, and Typography.* Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1980.

SIC (Sons Idées Couleurs). Paris: P. Albert-Birot, 1916-1919.

Siebers, Tobin. "Words Stare like a Glass Eye: From Literary to Visual to Disability Studies and Back Again." *PMLA* 119 (2004): 1315-1324.

Solt, Mary Ellen, ed. *Concrete Poetry: a World View*. Bloomington; London: Indiana UP, 1968.

Spencer, Herbert. *Pioneers of Modern Typography*. Rev. ed. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983.

Starobinski, Jean. *Words Upon Words: the Anagrams of Ferdinand de Saussure*. Trans. Olivia Emmet. New Haven: Yale UP, 1979.

Themerson, Stefan. *Apollinaire's Lyrical Ideograms*. London: Gaberbocchus, 1968.

Thompson, Douglas. "Pound and Brazilian Concretism." *Paideuma* 6 (1977): 279-294.

Tschichold, Jan. *The New Typography: a Handbook for Modern Designers*. Trans. Ruari McLean. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Tracy, Walter. *The Typographic Scene*. London: Gordon Fraser, 1988.

Tufte, Edward. *Envisioning Information*. Cheshire, Connecticut: Graphics Press, 1990.

Turchi, Peter. *Maps of the Imagination: the Writer as Cartographer*. San Antonio, Tex.: Trinity University Press, 2004.

Tzara, Tristan. *Lampisteries, Précédées des Sept Manifestes Dada*. Quelques dessins de Francis Picabia. Paris: J.J. Pauvert, 1963.

---. *Sept Manifestes Dada: Quelques Dessins de Francis Picabia*. Paris: Editions du Diorama, Jean Budry, 1924.

---. *Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries*. Trans. Barbara Wright; ill. by Francis Picabia. London: Calder, 1977.

Wagner, Peter. *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution*. London: Reaktion Books, 1995.

Warde, Beatrice. "The Crystal Goblet or Printing Should Be Invisible." Bierut et al., 56-59.

Warren, Rosanna. "Drawing on the Forest: Anne Eisner at Epulu." n.d.

Wilhelm, James J. "Nancy Cunard: A Sometime Flame, a Stalwart Friend." *Paideuma* 19 (1990): 201-221.

Williams, Emmett, ed. *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*. New York; Villefranche; Frankfurt: Something Else Press, 1967.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Wittgenstein's Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics, Cambrdige 1939.* Cora Diamond ed. Chicago; London: U of Chicago Press, 1976.

Young, John. "Review Peter Stoicheff: *The Hall of Mirrors:* Drafts & Fragments *and the End of Ezra Pound's Cantos.*" 6 May 2005. http://www.msstate.edu/archives/text/vol10/young.html#1. Originally in *Text* 10 (1995).

Zeller, Ludwig. *50 Collages.* Oakville (Ontario): Mosaic Press, 1981.

---. *Alphacollage.* Erin (Ontario): The Porcupine's Quill, 1982.

---. *In the Country of the Antipodes.* Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1979.

---, and A.F. Moritz. *Phantoms in the Ark.* Vancouver: Canadadada, 1994.