VISIBLE LANGUAGE

The Journal for Research on the Visual Media of Language Expression
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Cover: We cannot imagine a better statement on the role of visible language than Israel Shenker's photograph of Professor Alexander Gerschenkron in his office at Harvard University. Additional comment on inside back cover.

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Verbal Shape in the Poetry of Villon and Marot

Tom Conley

Generally speaking, lyrics written in the early years of the printing press cannot be read in editions other than their own. A visual aesthetic informing the poetic texture of François Villon and Clément marot is essential to an understanding of their work: *Le Grant Testament* of 1489 in gothic font and the physical shape of the *epitaphes* and *rondeaux* of the *Adolescence clémentine* use in a differential manner the absence of volume on the page's two-dimensional surface to elaborate a human drama of three dimensions. Thus their dialogue between voice and space or discourse and figure is always an open one, showing in its punctuation the areas of mediation and desire that generate great lyric poetry.

It is an ironic heritage that forces the late twentieth-century reader to discover the most lyrical range of word and figure in the earliest years of the printing press. Poets and editors who shaped the incunabulum's page were no doubt at a crossroads between aural and visual traditions that later—after the success of the printed book and the impact of the Reformation—would, apart from a few anomalies, disappear until the nineteenth century. Thus the demise of visual poetry is particularly striking in France where the later Middle Ages, after their supposed entombment during the Age of Reason and Enlightenment, are resurrected in the plastic verse of Hugo, Baudelaire, and Mallarmé.[1] Two gifted poets, François Villon and Clément Marot, are such participants of this heritage that their lyrics cannot be disengaged from either the visual shape printers gave to their words or the shape of the fixed poetic forms which contain them. Their poetry is an economy of visual and verbal writing in which the interaction of typeface and voice, each of reciprocal measure, draws the spatial perimeters around drama of Christian and monetary salvation. Concomitantly, the shift from gothic to roman font in the thirty-four years separating the first printed editions of Villon's *Le Grant Testament*

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et codicille (Paris: Pierre Levet, 1489) and Marot's *Adolescence clémentine* (Paris: Galiot du Pré, 1533) indicates the beginning of a tremendous shift in principles of reading and writing, and whose impact would not be fully comprehended until the end of the French Renaissance.

Prior to analysis of Villon's and Marot's lyrics, two points require elucidation. The first concerns the early printed book's influence upon the visual nature of reading until as late as 1595. Early French converts to Gutenberg like Jean du Pré, Johann Heynlin, Pierre Levet, and Jean Trepperel had to make their books resemble wherever possible a finely cut and delicately designed book of hours, and to give a new commodity an old sense of value. Very ironically, the first texts in France were set in a rounded, roman type that apparently did not have the visual appeal of a manuscript in gothic script. Thus the seemingly primitive *lettre bâtarde* replaced the classical font and became a popular visual form until at least 1530. "It developed into a beautiful letter, principally, if not always, used for printing of French. It was in type of this family that what is believed to be the first book in French printed in Paris, *viz., Chronicques de France,* was produced by Pasquier Bonhomme about 1486."[2] We know that with Geoffroy Tory's *Champ fleury* of 1529, almost synchronic with Marot's early lyrics, the regressive Renaissance of the printed letter is finally corrected. Tory's book—an abecedarium, a manual for the drawing of roman characters and a treatise on every letter as a mirror of the world's physical body—was paradoxically to erase and to preserve the visual aspects of the gothic page in literary texts of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Like his predecessors, Tory literally saw and felt the printed surface as he deciphered it, and even embodies in his theory and practice what would have an almost terminal expression in Montaigne's *Essays,* themselves a logical poetics of visual and verbal isomorphism that had been the habit of writing in the past century. "Plutarch," Montaigne said coyly, "says that he saw the Latin language through things: here, the same: meaning enlightens and produces words; no longer wind, but flesh and bone."[3] In fact, the essayist's remarks on the visceral quality of

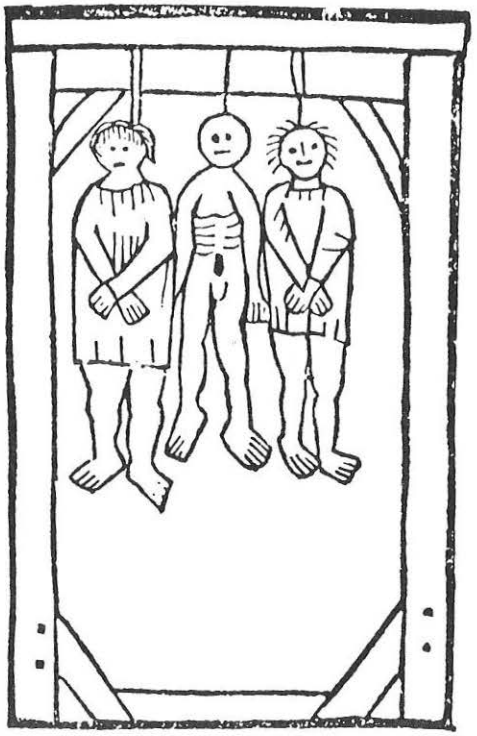
any worthwhile style only echoes what had been exploited by the early printers who had to rival the illuminated manuscript: shape and sense, text and illustration, interlace and phrase had to function harmoniously and economically if the printed book were to sell copy.

The second point raises a question requiring much longer study. The *lettre bâtarde*, so popular among the first Parisian printers, often has a function identical with the poems it conveys (see Fig. 1). Field and background are so indistinguishable, intervals so reduced and spelling so varied that, at least with Villon, words run over and into one another. No single reading can ever be established: words disperse and then agglomerate into groups of meaning according to the reader's sense of aural and visual distinction. Since each generation can punctuate a text following its own patterns of perception, it comes as no surprise that Marot, writing in the age of roman type, would feel bewildered in front of Villon's gothic characters. Possibly for this reason Pierre Guiraud felt it necessary in his study of Villon's slang to reproduce the *Jargon et Jobelin* in the original printed text. Words and sounds elide and accumulate so profusely that each ballad becomes a global anagram dedicated to one of six criminal professions.[4] The critic uses this principle of sign and field to extrapolate three superimposed codes hidden within the jargon. The first is composed of tricksters' slang derived from common parlance and leads to a sub-code of cardplayers' tricks and trumps; below these is hidden a practical manual of pederasty for use of prisoners before their conviction and execution. In the same spirit David Kuhn reproduced portions of the *Grant Testament et petit* from the Longnon-Foulet edition in italics and without punctuation, thus bringing his reader as close as possible to the text of 1489. "A prosaic punctuation," he remarked, "tends fatally to reduce the syntactic fluidity of the text upon which an author of the period counted for his most beautiful effects."[5] It is generally supposed that Villon was dead before the printing press arrived in France, but his legends and lines were conserved in manuscripts before reappearing in the similar style of the *lettre bâtarde* in 1489. When Marot, son of the well-known *Grand Rhétoriqueur* Jean Marot and member of the Basochian society, *Les Enfants sans soucy,* published

Le rondeau que feiſt
ledit Villon quant
il fut iugie

Je ſuis francois dont ce me poiſe
Ne de paris empres pontoiſe
Qui dune corde dune toiſe
Saura mon col que mon cul poiſe

Figure 1A. Villon refusing the gallows and leaving his *rondeau* and *epitaphe* in the first printed edition: Pierre Levet's *Le Grant testament villon/et le petit. Son codicille. Le iargon et les balades* (Paris, 1489).



Epitaphe dudit Villon

Freres humains qui apres no⁹ viues
Nayez les cueurs contre no⁹ endurcis
Car se pitie de no⁹ pouurez auez
Dieu en aura plustost de vous mercis
Vous nous voiez cy atachez cinq sip
Quāt de la char q̄ trop auōs nourrie
Elle est pieca deuouree et pourrie
et no⁹ les os deuenōs cēdres & pouldre
De nostre mal personne ne sen rie
Mais priez dieu que tous nous vueil
le absoulōre

LE QUATRAIN

QUE FIT VILLON QUAND IL FUT JUGÉ A MOURIR

Je suis Françoys, dont ce me poise,
Né de Paris emprès Pontoise,.
Et d'une corde d'une toise,
Saura mon col que mon cul poise.

L'ÉPITAPHE

EN FORME DE BALLADE QUE FIT VILLON
POUR LUI ET SES COMPAGNONS
S'ATTENDANT A ÈTRE PENDU AVEC EUX

Frères humains qui après nous vivez,
N'ayez les cœurs contre nous endurcis,
Car, si pitié de nous pauvres avez,
Dieu en aura plus tôt de vous mercis.
Vous nous voyez ci attachés cinq, six:
Quand de la chair, que trop avons nourrie,
Elle est piéçà dévorée et pourrie,
Et nous, les os, devenons cendre et poudre.
De notre mal personne ne s'en rie,
Mais priez Dieu que tous nous veuille absoudre!

Figure 1B. The modern counterpart following Galiot du Pré's edition of 1533, the first using roman typeface.

in 1533 what was considered the first critical edition of Villon's works (Paris: Galiot du Pré), he both preserved and destroyed the legacy of his master; the roman type and frequent punctuation molded the text into the form it assumes in most modern editions. But in his own early lyrics—his adolescence—Marot ironically elaborated forms resembling those in Villon's poetry. His process of destruction on one level and his continuation on another—in his use of the *epitaphe, rondeau, and epître*—will be the major problem of our comparative study.

Below a woodcut of a personnage whom we recognize as Villon, and to the left of a framed illustration of three bodies hanging from a gallows in Pierre Levet's illustrated first edition of the *Testament* (Fig. 1), is a quatrain entitled *Le rondeau que feist ledict Villon quant il fut iugie*, perhaps the most succinct example of a text to be seen:

> I am Frances and this hangs heavy
> Born in Paris not far from Levet
> Now from a rope of about a levy
> My neck'll know my ass is heavy[6]

Built concentrically so as to depart from a wide geographical area of France connoted by the name *Francois,* the poem moves to a *Paris* ironically near its own suburb on *Ponthoise,* then to the rope around the voice's neck in the last line. The literal weight in the ditty is balanced by the verbs at both ends that hold the nouns within, a mode of expression that leads to intimation of death in the length of the rope measured between the fourth line's first, future verb *saura* and its last, present verb *poise,* a word pulling the rope around the poet's throat and tending to elongate the distance between the neck and buttocks.

Circles of constriction operate complexly in a synthesis of graphics, rhetoric, and music in the famous *Ballade de la Grosse Margot* whose title probably refers to an ensign above a Parisian tavern. One of the more salacious poems of the later Middle Ages, its three stanzas of ten lines and its envoy of seven lines, each with refrain of *en ce bordeau ou tenons nostre estat* ("In this haven/bordello/port where we keep our state/court/order"), obeys the rules of narration and metrics to the letter. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of vertical and horizontal readings draws a theatrical space for the Christian drama of redemption.[7] The first stanza describes, in his own words, the narrator/pimp's public duties; the second, more intimate, tells of his conjugal strife; and the third explains how, in a topsy-turvy world, healthy flatulence brings order and love back to their lives. The envoy, like the ring of the refrain, answers the rhetorical question asked in the first two lines:

> If I love and squeeze the belle with joy
> Must you think me a villain or fool?

By progression from left to right, top to bottom, and exterior to interior volumes—first the bordello, then the bedroom, the mattress, and finally the entwined bodies—the opening question has a hypothetical answer in the envoy. From a generalized ethical problem established in the opening lines, the ballad becomes a spatial drama with progressively smaller fields of action constricting the protagonist's physical and moral perspective. Though its fixed form would apparently represent a hermetic system with its own logic, internal development, and resolution, an open-ended spatial play overdetermines the poem, producing total equivocation through the crisscrossing of spatial and rhetorical systems. The voyage from outside to inside resembles the movement of dolls in a medieval theatre of boistrous cruelty; most of the rhymes are richly masculine, and every tonic syllable ends abruptly on a plosive *t*. Like the choppy *h* set in counterpoint to the musical *r* of the ballad from François to his ungrateful Marthe (v. 942-969), the *t* could be construed to stop each line on a prosaic or dissonant visual note and to punctuate the fixed form's flowing melody. But here as elsewhere in the poem, the palpable surface of the printed characters in *gothique bâtard*—where word and image are conjoined—tends to open the closed system. Words pushed together must be read according to shifting patterns of field and background, forcing the eye and ear to scan the text quite differently from one reading to the next, a process often generating contradictory or equivocal interpretations from a kernal form of several compressed words. On a printed page of 1489 the *t* would be the most visible letter except for the obvious acrostic in the envoy of the collective name Villon(e), the French *(Françoys)* villain of the city *(ville)*. Such vertical codings must have been evident to readers of illuminated manuscripts, since an opposition of left and right sides is seen with the proper name on one side while the *t* represents the other perimeter. The poet's voice is therefore progressively removed from the poem's system as it unfolds—scratched, as it were—as no more than a signature in juxtaposition to the poetic surface from which it is paradoxically excluded.

A grid forming the poem's cardinal points could be drawn according to poles of question and answer, statement and counter-

statement, or proposition and rebuttal that the rhetorical tradition had embodied throughout the Middle Ages. With Villon it is always charted or mapped on the poem's surface in the most effective pieces: the poem Marot entitled the *Ballade des dames du temps jadis*, the debate between Villon's body and heart, or even the ballad thought to be dedicated to the poet's mother, the *Priere pour nostre dame*. The recurrent structure is underscored in the *Ballade de la Grosse Margot* by the re-appearance of the verb *aymer* (v. 1) which moves from first-person singular to its collective plural (v. 35) in the envoy. Likewise, the nominative *vil* associated with *sot* returns in the first three lines of the acrostic. And the infinitive *tenir* surfaces in the same first-person plural in each refrain, but only in the ballad's final three lines does the spatial coding of words assault the reader with revelation of global turpitude and filth:

> *W*ind. hail. freeze. I've got my toast
> *I* am filth: filth I boast
> *L*o what's better: each blackens most
> *L*et one be another: it's cat and mouse
> *O* Lewd we love: lewde soots us
> *N*ow we flee honor, honor flees us
> *E*re our heaven be home and house[8]

Very clearly the poem is to be read through a series of musical and spatial oppositions which the envoy's decasyllables synthesize so crisply. Each line is broken into equal pairs of affective and alliterative units and can be visualized as walls or cloisters delineating outside and inside, cold and warm *(vente, gresle, gelle*, and *pain cuit)*, masculine and feminine or passive and active *(paillard* and *paillarde)*, question and answer *(lequel vaut mieux . . .)*; excrement as subject and complement *(ordure amons . . .)*; and finally, as the binary contrast of honor and action akin to the replusion of like poles of a magnet in *Nous deffuyons onneur: il nous deffuit*. Spatial and rhythmic pairings establish the poem's equivocal moral geography. The reader can only navigate a forever mediated, *zigzag* course that is paradoxically no more than that of (however tautological) what it is: reading from left to right and top to bottom.

Villon

Se iayme et ſers la belle de bon hait
Mes deues vous tenir a vil ne ſot
Elle a en ſoy des biens a ſon ſouhait
Pour elle ſeings le bloucler et paſſot
Quant viennent gens ie cours et hap
pe vng pot
Au vi mẽ fuiz ſãs demener grãt bruit
ie leur tendz eaue paĩ frõmage a fruit
Silz iouẽt bien: ie leurs diz q̃ bien ſtat
Retournez cy quãt vo⁹ſeres en ruit
En ce bourdeau ou tenõs noſtre eſtat

La groſſe margot

Mais adonc il ya grant dehait
Quãt ſãs argẽt ſẽba coucher margot
Veoir ne la puis mõ cuer mort la hait
Sa robe prent/chaperon et ſurcot
Si lup iure quil tiendra pour leſcot
Par les couſtes: ſi ſe prent lantecriſt
Crie et iure par la mort ieſucriſt
Que nõ fera: lors iẽpongne vng eſclat
Deſſus ſõ nez lup en fais vng eſcript
En ce bordeau ou tenons noſtre eſtat

Figure 2. Villon and Margot crowning their ballad in Levet's text.

Puis paiy ſe faitiz me lacheVng gros
(pet
Pl⁹ enflambe quyVenimeuy eſcarbot
Riant ma ſiet le poing ſur le ſommet
Gogo me dit et me fait le iambot
to⁹ deuy enſẽble domõs cõeVng ſabot
Et au reueil quãt le Ventre luy bruit
Mõte ſur moy quel ne gaſte ſon fruit
ſoubzelle geinſ pl⁹ quyaiz me fait plat
De paillarder tout elle me deſtruit
En ce bordeau ou tenons noſtre eſtat

Vẽte.greſle.gelle:iay mon pain cuit
Ie ſuis paillard:la paillarde me ſuit
Ordure auons:ordure nous arruit
Luy Vault lautre ceſt a mauchat mau
rat
No⁹ deffuions hõneur: t il no⁹ deffuit
En ce bordeau ou tenons noſtre eſtat

Item a marion lyVolle
Et a ſa grant iehanne de bretaigne
Donne tenir publicque eſcolle
Oy leſcollier le maiſtre enſeigne
Lieu neſt ou ce marche ne tiengne
Si non en la griſſe de meßun
De quoy ie dis fy de lenſeigne
Puis que louurage eſt ſi commun

Item auſſi a noe le iolys
Autre choſe ie ne luy donne
Fors plain point doſiers freiz cueilliz
En mon iardin ie la bondonne
Charite eſt et belle aumoſne
Ame ne doit eſtre marry
Vnze Vings coups luy en ordonne
Par les mains de maiſtre henry

Item ne ſcay qua loſtel dieu
Donner nauy pouures hoſpitaulx
Vrdes nont icy temps ne lieu
Car pouures gens ont aſſez maulx
Chaſcun leur enuoie leurs os
Les mendians ont eu mon oye
Au fort ilz en auront les os
A pouures gens menu monnoye

Item ie donne a mon barbier
Qui ſe nomme colin galerne
Pres Voiſin dangelot lerbier
Vng groſ glaſſon.prins ou ⁊ en marne
Affin quaſon aiſe ſe yuerne
De leſtomac le tiengne pres
Se liuer ainſi ſe gouuerne
Trop naura chault leſte daprez

Item rien auy enfans trouuez
Mais les perduz faut que conſole
f.i

The surprising equivalence of visual and verbal space could be too easily explained away by reference to the impact of the printed book which tends to ossify and sclerose the art of memory. Recollection depends on a spatial logic somewhat akin to the volume of a theatre, and the contradictions the book introduces would give to occasional poetry this privileged physicality absent from either the oral or the scriptural molds, but would be a brief and charmed amalgam of the two, a moment which would last until signifiers would no longer be the reflection or substance of the signified or, perhaps, when noblemen after the time of Montaigne would no longer serve elegant dinners of mutton, mackerel, mallard, mushroom, and morils for purpose of heralding the letter M.[9] However speculative, the word was—if not the thing—at least a finer reflection of it. The economy of such cogent language would appear today to have been marvelously utopian or at best of honest coinage. At that time the equivalence of words either to salvation, to the body, or to money may never have been so evident. Marot, as keen reader of Villon, may have been one of the last medieval poets working toward so fluid an isomorphism, and his fixed forms and circumstantial pieces reflect the sense of physical language so absent in discourse of the next century.

With his epitaphs Marot begins where Villon ended. On first sight hardly as concentric as the circular structure of the ballad for Fat Margot, the epitaph for Frère Jean Levesque synthesizes imagined space and the rectangular symmetry of two quatrains framed around a perfectly built ditty:

Cy gist, repose et dort léans	Here lies, rests and sleeps within
Le feu Evesque d'Orléans:	The regretted Bishop of Orleans:
J'entends l'Evesque en son surnom,	I mean Bishop in his surname
Et frère Jehan en propre nom.	And Brother John in proper name,
Qui mourut l'an cinq cens et vingt,	Who died in the year fifteen twenty
De la vérolle qui luy vint.	With syphilis of which he had aplenty.
Or affin que sainctes et anges	Then, so that saints and angels
Ne prennent ces boutons estranges,	Won't catch these ruddy pimples,
Prions Dieu, qu'au frère frappart	Let us pray God, for the brother knocker
Il donne quelque chambre à part.[10]	That he be placed in another locker.

Translated into modern English, the lines become an ironically innocuous poem less worthy of inscription on a granite surface than of inclusion in a book beneath the tongue-in-cheek title-epitaph of Clément Marot's *Adolescence clémentine* unearthing the facile and childish grafitti of boyhood.

The poem's tensions develop from differential oppositions of words and space. The sequence of flat rhymes in punctuation marks after the tonic units in a schema of *aa*, *bb*, *cc*, and so on, delineates the triple layering of volume. In lines one and two the oblong area is set below the point of the words' emission in the onlooker's imaginary theatre, then continued in the third and fourth lines' play on the titles appropriate to the tombstone. After a transition from surnames to proper names in the fifth and sixth lines, the central spatial segment, a since famous cliché, forms the median layer in words of a triple-decked tomb sculpture, the ironic counterpart of a conventionally planned monument.[11] The couplets below deal inversely with an identical unit of heavenly space above, suggested so economically by the poet's imprecation that the reader pray to God that a separate place be reserved for syphilitics: in devotion, hands folded and eyes cast upwards, the reader's knees remain on earth, leaving within the field of view no more than the facts recounted in the central section, those of the date and cause of death. Vertical ordering generates, of course, the modification in meaning from the space of *Ci-gist*—heightened only through the progression from left to right and top to bottom —to the fictive room *à part*. And identical, too, with the rapport between rhetoric and superficies are the inverted values given to proper and common behavior in direct proportion with a rectangle at a depth of six feet alloted to a clerical figure at his Christian internment.

On the text's margins there remains another economy and mode of exchange in satire. The poem's rhetoric suggests an evangelical view and masks its critical force through sometimes equivocal rhymes close to those of the *Grands Rhétoriqueurs (dort léans and d'Orléans; frappart* and *-re à part)*. Indebtedness to the masters went so far as commissioned lines for their own graves, a sort of occasion for occasions that the epitaph to Guillaume Crétin reveals. After describing the austere simplicity of the tombstone above such a royal poet, Marot exclaims that

C'est de Cretin, Cretin, qui tant sçavoit.
Regarder donc si ce tombeau avoit
De ce Cretin les faits laborieux,
Comme il devroit estre bien glorieux
Veu qu'il prend gloire au pauvre corps tout mort
Lequel par tout vermine mine et mort:
O dur tombeau, de ce que en kevvres,
Contente toy, avoir n'en peux les Oevvres,
Chose eternelle en mort iamais ne tombe:
Et qui ne meurt n'a que faire de tombe.

It's Cretin's, Cretin who knew so much,
Look and see if the grave did have such,
The facts of this Cretin so laborious
As he shall always be so glorious,
Seeing that it takes glory on the poor body so dead
Where everywhere does insect infect his bed.
Oh hard tomb, of what you must cover,
Be happy not to have his works and their cover,
Eternal thing into death will never fall
And the dead know well what shall be fall.

The heritage of the epitaph combines spirit and word. Repetition of Cretin, an ignoble name—this *(ce)* Cretin—three times negates the negation of the name, ascribing to it a positive and eternal glory. The apprentice's imitation of the *Rhétoriqueur's* metrics tends to erase the presence of the circumstantial poet and ennobles, through simple imitation of daring combinations, the athletic verse of the master Crétin. *Vermine* and *mine*, *mort* and *mord*, *tombeau* (and the implied *tombe beau*), *tombe* (n.), and *tombe* (v.) are so equivocal that the poetic architecture rivals that of the master-masons who work with seemingly far more resistant granite and marble. Not by chance Marot places this inscription at the crypt or bottom layer of his complete works, in the final chapters entitled *epitaphes* and *cimetière*.[12]

The exchange of compliments or mock-reverent glances with a past master tells us why poetry of the time brings verbal and visual signs together so efficiently, for words—since they embody the objects they describe—are for the poet or valet the equivalent of money. The *rondeau*, a very popular form in the fifteenth century, has the same reciprocity of sound and surface so evident in the epitaph. Marot wrote among the finest specimens of the genre, and he reputedly abandoned them after 1527, at which time a much easier and freer flowing form, the sonnet, was about to appear in France. "To do *rondeaux*, you have to do them round," remarked Pierre Fabri in his manual of second rhetoric in 1521,[13]

a statement repeated twenty-six years later in Thomas Sebillet's *Art poeticque françoys*. "The *rondeau* is thus named by its form. For as with the circle, after having run about *(discouru)* the whole circumference, we always return to the first point from which the discourse had begun its path."[14] Less a container for superficial ideas than a rigorous model requiring exacting and meticulous choice of themes and words, the *rondeau's* circular "discourse" was a perfect vehicle for expression of difference, repetition, mutation, and metamorphosis of sense where words turn, unfold, and invert themselves from the opening clause to the almost symmetrical refrain at the third and fourth stanzas' conclusions. One piece balances or, as Montaigne would say, *contrerolles* (both controls and examines from multiple vantage points) itself as it is read. Thus the *rondeau's* shape becomes a perfect medium of exchange in the form of the coin and the balance, two icons of cyclic behavior, of give-and-take, of weighing, asking, thanking, solliciting, bargaining, praising, and of begging. In the majority of Marot's sixty-four examples, signs and their image-fields have the unalloyed ring of money. Words are emitted as if they were coins falling from an open pouch and striking a stone counter with the clink of pewter or copper.

The system of expression brings the spoken and written language to its basal and most efficiently unabashed status. A bad poet, Marot sings, who fumbles "*Raison, mesure, texte, et glose*"[15] ought to be put to pasture. Combination of rhetoric, music, and the poem's page—this *texte et glose*—valorizes the written word and constitutes a poor man's currency. His slyest use of surface can be seen in the second rondel of the *Adolescence clémentine* in which enumerations of loudly ringing words are in counterpoint to the softly whispered *rentrement, "un bien petit."* Keynote are the sound of the words and the resulting, but monetarily worthless, circumference of a poem drawing not a coin but an IOU. Series of richly rhymed and tonically positioned nouns and imperatives—*taille, baille, vaille,* and *chaille*—lead to the last enunciation, *cliquaille,* a graphic and sonorous synonym of silver, and whose echo is the final payment, always deferred but ultimately overdue in the refrain of still another clause to come:

A un Créancier

Un bien petit *de pres me venez prendre*
Pour vous payer: et si debvez entendre
Que je n'euz onc Angloys de vostre taille:
Car à tous coups vous criez: Baille, Baille,
Et n'ay de quoy contre vous me deffendre.
Sur moy ne fault telle rigueur estendre,
Car de pecune un peu ma bourse est tendre:
Et toutes fois j'en ay, vaille que vaille,
Un bien petit.
Mais à vous veoir—ou lon me puisse pendre!
Il semble advis qu'on ne vous vueille rendre
Ce qu'on vous doit: beau Sire, ne vous chaille!
Quand je seray plus garny de cliquaille,
Vous en aurez: mais il vous fault attendre
Un bien petit.

To a Creditor

A little nearer you come to me and my hand
In order that I pay: but you must understand
That I never had a farthing of the size you say
For the amount you cry and hark, Pay, Pay!
I never have credit on which to stand.
Against me your wrath you mustn't disband,
For my purse has here and there but a threadbare strand:
But I always will have, yea or nay,
A little.
But in seeing you—be I hanged by a flaxen band—
It seems so strange that we just can't hand
Over what we owe: gentle master, come what may,
When I'll have in my pocket a good week's pay,
You'll have yours: meanwhile on your faith you must stand
A little

The trickster's job is to transform worthless words into false money, and once completed, the poem fools the imaginary reader-as-creditor with its hollow song. Like Panurge's tale of the tramp who pays the restauranteur with the clink of his money in exchange for the aroma of a roast (*Tiers livre,* chapter XXXVII), the equivalence of sound to pieces of food or metal portrays the poem's image-sign as counterfeit banknote or illusory ticket permitting passage across barriers similar to those erected along the margins of Villon's ballads. Written with attention to salvation, the lines become the space of physical passage that will eventually fill an empty stomach.

The thirty-second *rondeau* tells of the poet's detention at the gates of Reims. The poem associates its own margins with the

city's shape and the poet's own body. Each rhyme is almost perfectly equivocal, as meanings can be inverted in the same fashion within the lines as in the refrain. Yet the real refrain, once again in opposition to the poem's buckle, *Au despartir*, is the word *refrains* in the sixth line. Repetitions are literal blows (from the Old French, *fraindre*, to strike or hit) on behalf of a belligerent host, but only with the opportune arrival of François Premier on September 19, 1521, en route from Troyes to Saint-Thierry, does the narrator hope for *grains* (line eleven, unleavened coins of sorts) that will resuscitate the poet's mangy nag and fill his own hungry mouth.[16] A *rondeau* may pay the passage from one barrier to another, but the last sound, *Au despartir*, wafts back to the fellow knaves who are held up and still detained at the city's portals:

Au Roy

Au despartir de la ville de Reins
Faulte d'argent me rend foible de reins,
Roy des Françoys, voire de telle sorte
Que ne sçay pas comme d'icy je sorte,
Car mon cheval tient mieulx que par les creins.
Puis l'hoste est rude, et plein de gros refrains:
Je y laisseray mors, bossettes, et frains,
Ce m'a il dict—ou le Diable l'emporte—
Au despartir.
Si vous supply, Prince, que j'ayme, et crains,
Faictes miracles avecques aucuns grains.
Resuscitez ceste personne morte:
Ou autrement demourray à la porte
Avec plusieurs qui sont à ce contrainctz
Au despartir.

To the King

In leaving one day the city of Reins,
Need-of-money weakens me with kidney pain,
King of Frances, indeed of such higher grist,
I don't know how long here I must desist:
My horse is a bonebag and a stringy mane,
And the host is rough, with many nasty refrains:
"I'll leave you with bites, bruises, bloodstains!"
That he told me—lest the Devil insist—
In leaving.
I beg of you Prince, to whom my love and fear pertain,
Do a miracle by sprinkling on us a sack of grain,
Resuscitate this poet dead from disdain,
Otherwise I'll stay at the entry, all the same,
With those like me who strain and strain
In leaving.

Nowhere is the verbal topos of circularity drawn so cogently or so graphically. Form and content are one, both being empty within the circle they trace. Here the void is the unfilled stomach and the roundabout manner of address that beckons to cross its own circumference. The rondel both illustrates and opens a system of economic exchange at its most immediate level, the poem being a diagram with its acuitous locations of need at the extremities.

The words, when enunciated, are no longer the property of the craftsman who glossed and measured them. In fact, the sounds belonged to no one and were perhaps—whether at Reims, on a tombstone, or within a Parisian bordello—image-signs arbitrarily linked to the objects they signify. Property would therefore not equal propriety at the level of the poem. Concomitantly, space and economy become isomorphic forms on the surface of the sixteenth-century's printed page. In reconstructing rhetorical habits of the declining Middle Ages, one critic has noted, "It is savory to remark that the art of speech is originally linked to a claim for property—as if language, as an object of a transformation, a basis for a practice, determined itself not at all from a subtle ideological mediation . . . but from the barest sociality *(socialité)* affirmed in its fundamental brutality, that of earthly possession: we begin—in our world—to reflect on language in order to protect our goods."[17] The substitution of sounds for things—that is to say, of poems for women or food with Villon and Marot—effectuates a transfer or translation of equivalent quantities of desire whose economics in the physical presence of lines to be seen and read are, though blatently non-utopian, highly poetic. The reader's displacement into the world of circumstantial exchange leaves one gaping hole in the reader's sensibility: the rondel's circularity emphasized in the last clause will always open the closed system with the reminder that the whole work cannot ring true, for the poem would otherwise never exist. In this light Villon's ballads and Marot's occasional rhymes become microscopic novels whose rhetoric is a field of continually mediated desire for momentary illusion of harmony between the forms of language and the objects they signify.

This aspect of occasional poetry could invert the scale of values that as students of literature we have been told to respect. In the

seventeenth century's pantheon La Fontaine holds a niche not far from Racine, but nonetheless numerous literary studies note how brilliantly the author of the *Fables* drew from Marot's forms.[18] Rather than illustrating the continuity of a poetic tradition, the history of verse from Marot to La Fontaine proves that the image-sign and status of the word as money necessarily disappear. The famous *Epistre à son amy Lyon*, composed by Marot in 1526 but only published in 1534, uses the same verbal shape seen in the rondels. Borrowing from Aesop's fable of the lion and rat, Marot thanks his friend Lyon Jamet for his help in having him removed from the Châtelet prison in Paris after trial and conviction for transgression of abstinence during Lent. The discourse in the letter of thanks conveys the very isomorphism of image and sign. Lion and rat, two mammals at opposite ends of the great chain-of-being's hierarchy, are brought together through the equivalent weight of their words and deeds, which an English translation can only approximate. The lion, who had done himself honor in saving the rat, now finds himself caught in a trap. He sees the rodent arrive,

Mais despita chatz, chates, et chatons,
Et prisa fort ratz, rates, et ratons,
Dont il avoit trouvé temps favorable
Pour secourir le lyon secourable;
Auquel a dit: 'Tays-toy, lyon lié,
Par moy sera maintenant deslié:
Tu le vaulx bien, car le cueur joly as.
Bien y parut, quand tu me deslias.
Secouru m'as fort lyonneusement,
Ors secouru seras rateusement.' (11. 36-45)

But he scorned toms, kitties, and cats,
And truly loved all rodents, pests, and rats;
Now time favored the little thing
To save the savable animal king,
To whom he said, "Be quiet, lion-tied,
By me you'll surely and safely be untied.
You're worth it, for in your worthy heart I did confide
And all came true when my claws you untied.
You saved me most lionfully,
And you'll be saved rather ratfully."

Good actions are musical exchanges of equally weighed and repeated words that in a purer or higher mimetic context would be unacceptable: the pairing-off of *chatz, chates*, and *chatons* with *ratz, rates*, and *ratons*, the exchange of mock-heroic adverbs *lyonneusement* and *rateusement*, the daring repetitions of *secourir* and

its variants four times in seven decasyllabic lines, or the inversions of *lier-des-lier* are the literal pans of a poetic balance, and the distance between the high and low totems is counterpoised by words and deeds of identical measure. Yet as an epistle the poem is still only one term of a greater rhetorical exchange that briefly displaces in its discourse the writer's need to stay alive, for the tale in the fable becomes microcosmic of greater patterns of communication. We must remember that the fabulous lion always refers equivocally to Marot's very real friend Lyon Jamet and reminds him of urgent times of need. In using Marot's version over one hundred years later, La Fontaine was to rewrite Aesop's tale, but he would never permit the word as visual sign of money or measure of exchange to exist as a poem.

If the signifier and signified of the late fifteeneth and early sixteenth centuries are of the same substance and weight, and if they are given such equivalence through a rhetoric of bodily economy and boundary dictated by circumstance and occasion, then, what critics have decried as stultified forms, decrepitude, or sterile versification in poetry of the same period must be reconsidered for the attempt to correlate visual sign and field of meaning. In their deceptively open-ended scenographic systems, the words become a surface of religious and monetary salvation. The poem assumes the form of a theatre, a church, or a piece of metal on which the displacement of need and desire takes place. In that space there occurs the inter-discursive flow between an area schematized and the voice or body in relation to it; between compliments and the food swapped for them: only in the physical shape of its language does the early printed book convey the revery of such lucid communication. Today, in an age when words—still largely dominated by an aesthetic of representation—tend toward transparency, we often forget that the most moving poems are always those either inscribed upon or drawn by the poet's body. When used as an area of mediation on which music is both seen and heard, the poem's verbal shape actually heightens and enhances the lyric tone. And if Villon and Marot are to be remembered as lyric poets, their lyricism—in part an acuitous balance of visual and aural measure—must be appreciated for its differential economy of bodily needs and desire.

1. See David W. Seaman, "The Development of Visual Poetry in France," *Visible Language*, VI (Winter 1972), 19-44. Also appropriate is Michel Foucault's well-known distinction in *Les Mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966) between an epistemological configuration of resemblance and reciprocity of the later Middle Ages and representation or analogy of the seventeenth century.
2. Daniel Updike, *Printing Types, Their History, Forms and Use*. 2nd ed., vol. I (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 86-87.
3. *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard-Pléiade, 1962), *Essais*, III, v, p. 851. We have elsewhere examined visual aspects of Montaigne's writing in "The Page's Hidden Dimension: Surface and Emblem in Montaigne's *Essais*," *Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, VII (Spring 1974), 13-26.
4. From a study of the several thousand variants in the twenty printed editions from 1489 to 1533, Guiraud remarks, "We can conclude that the editors (at least the earliest) had the key for the first reading but without realizing the existence of two other versions underneath. It is the first reading that they try to emendate," *Le Jargon de Villon ou le gai savoir de la coquille* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), p. 23. Guiraud touches on a problem studied by Meyer Schapiro in "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image-Signs," *Semiotica*, I, 3 (1969), 228.
5. *La Poétique de François Villon* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1967), p. 39.
6. This an all subsequent translations are ours. We feel that the reader, faced with two versions of the same text, cannot but find by means of comparative difference and obvious lack in the English renderings how blatently physical are the metrics of Villon and Marot.
7. As Seaman had noted, "Complex acrostics not only were devotional for the poet, but could also stimulate meditation; the reader follows the letters like the beads of a rosary, finding satisfaction in the resolution of the poetry and the acrostic, while the visual design of the acrostic turns the text into an icon" (p. 27).
8. Here we encounter a textual contradiction of the type Pierre Guiraud had uncovered. Levet omits line three and places line five of the envoy in its place, destroying the perfect anagram found in the manuscripts. We must remember that such a popular poem was known by heart, and its printed resemblance to the ideal may have been close enough for any reader, the acrostic constituting a mnemonic device (Seaman, p. 22). But VIOL would inflect VILLON with a slightly different meaning, give the poet a shade of sexual deviation, quite appropriate to Margot's context. For this reason we use both versions of the manuscript and first printed edition.
9. "Des Noms" (*Essais*, I, xlvi), p. 266.
10. *L'Adolescence clémentine*, éd. V.-L. Saulnier (Paris: Armand Colin, 1958), p. 113. All reference to poems by Marot will be made to this text which differs little from the first printed edition. The topic of the Bishop of Orléans could also be a reminder of Thibaut d'Aussigny, who presumably tortured Villon. At the same time, as Guiraud notes, *Orléans* is a signature for *horle héants*, to shout against the spiteful enemy, *Le Testament de Villon ou le gai savoir de la Basoche* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 131.
11. Such, for example, the monument for Marguerite of Austria partially designed by the poet-architect and friend of Marot's father, Jean Lemaire de Belges, in Paul Frankl, *Gothic Architecture* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1962), plate 171.

12. Such is the ordering in the posthumous *Oevvres de Clement Marot, de Cahors en Quercy, valet de chambre du Roy*. A Lyon, Pour Iean Gauthier, 1597, pp. 566-67 (University of Minnesota Special Collections Z842 M347).
13. *Le Grand et Vrai Art de pleine rhétorique* (Rouen, 1521), reprinted in 1890 (Rouen: Imprimerie Espérance Cagniard), vol. II, p. 63.
14. *Art Poétique françoys*, éd. Félix Gaiffe (Paris: Hachette, 1910), p. 119.
15. "*A ung poete ignorant*," rondel VII: "*Qu'on meine aux champs ce coquardeau,/ Lequel gaste (quand il compose) Raison, mesure, texte et glose,/Soit en ballade, ou en rondeau. . . .*" (Take to pasture this nincompoop at a loss,/Who spoils whatever he handles,/Reason, measure, text, and gloss/Either in ballads or rondels. . . .)
16. See biographical notes in C. A. Mayer, Clément Marot, *Oeuvres diverses* (London: Athlone Press, 1966), p. 101.
17. Roland Barthes, "L'Ancienne Rhétorique," *Communications*, no. 16 (1970), pp. 190-91.
18. Odette de Mourgues, *La Fontaine: 'Fables'* (London: Arnold, 1967), p. 7.

The Inscription on the Whetstone from Strøm

Elmer H. Antonsen

The runic inscription on the Whetstone from Strøm in Norway is of particular interest because it represents the earliest attestation of a work-song in the Germanic languages. Archeologists cannot aid in the dating of this inscription, since no other objects were found with the whetstone. Previous attempts to fix a date on the basis of runic and linguistic evidence have relied on ad hoc assumptions concerning phonological developments and the relative age of certain runic variants. It is shown that the inscription can be interpreted without such ad hoc hypotheses and that the work-song must date from approximately 450-500 A.D. at the latest, rather than from the beginning of the seventh century as previously assumed.

1. In 1908 on an island at the end of the Strømfjord in Norway was found a whetstone made of fine-grained sandstone and approximately 15 cm. in length, 2 cm. wide, and 1 cm. thick. Nothing else was found with this whetstone, so that archeologists can tell us little about its age. Each of the narrow sides of the whetstone bears an inscription in the older, so-called Germanic, runes:

Side A

Side B

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All of the runic shapes are clear and unremarkable, except for the **s** and the **k** of Side B (see below). The inscription is of great interest to runic scholars for a number of reasons. First, we are grateful for any inscription which is beyond all doubt complete, which presents no problems in reading, and which consists of complete utterances which add to our knowledge of the vocabulary, morphology, and syntax of the language these inscriptions (dating from about 150-600 A.D.) were written in. Secondly, this inscription takes us a step further into the history of Germanic verse-form, since the text is clearly alliterative and consists of two Germanic "long-lines," each displaying two "half-lines" with two stresses each:

w á t e h á l i / h í n o h ó r n a

h á h a s k á þ i / h á þ u l í g i

The text represents the earliest attested work-song in the Germanic languages. But how old is this work-song? Since archeologists cannot help us, we must rely on the runic text for the answer. On the basis of the shapes of the runes themselves, of their phonological values, and of the analysis of morphological forms found in the inscription, most scholars agree with Krause that the whetstone is to be ascribed to the early seventh century; i.e., toward the very end of the period of inscriptions in the older runic alphabet. In my view, however, the basis for this dating is so faulty that it cannot be correct, and I shall attempt to show that the inscription must be considerably older.

2. Once an inscription has been read and transliterated, the next step is to divide it into meaningful units. Fortunately, in the case of our inscription this is no difficult task and most scholars are agreed on the word divisions given above. The next step is to identify the lexical items and their grammatical forms. If we start with the most transparent ones first, we see that the last word of Side A, **horna,** must be the neuter noun meaning "horn" found in all Germanic languages and also in the inscription on the Gold Horn from Gallehus in this very same form. Morphologically, **horna** can be either nominative or accusative singular. Proceeding

Figure 1. Side A of the Whetstone from Strøm. Photographs are through the courtesy of Universitetet i Trondheim Museet, Norway, where the whetstone is now located.

Figure 2. Side B of the Whetstone from Strøm.

backwards in the line, the word **hino** is easily recognizable as corresponding to the masculine accusative singular of the deictic pronoun found in Gothic *hina* "this" and Old English *hine* "him." Its gender does not agree with that of **horna,** so **horna** is isolated in the sentence and must be a neuter nominative.

In runic writing there was an orthographic convention that double consonants were designated by only a single rune. Thus **hali** can be the representation for *halli,* which corresponds to the masculine nouns found in Old Icelandic *hallr,* Old English *heall* "flat stone," Gothic *hallus* "rock," and runic **halaz**=*hallaz* in the inscription from Stenstad. The root is clearly */hall-/, while the final **-i** of our word derives from the stem-formant of *i*-stem nouns also found in Latin *collis* "hill." The absence of a **-z** in **hali** (corresponding to the *-s* in Latin) indicates that this word must be an accusative singular, thus agreeing with the gender, number, and case of **hino.** On Side A, then, we are left with the word **wate,** which remains to be analyzed, but can already be considered a prime candidate for the verb which requires the accusative found in *halli hinō* "this stone." Since *halli hinō* can only refer to the whetstone itself, and since we know that such whetstones were used to sharpen agricultural instruments and were carried in a horn containing water and attached to a man's belt, **wate** must be a verb related to the adjectives found in Old English *wǣt,* Old Icelandic *vātr* "wet." Before discussing the form of this verb, however, let us turn to the second side of the inscription.

On Side B the words **skaþi** (**þ**=*th* as in *think*) and **ligi** can be related to the verbs found in English *scathe, lie,* and German *schaden, liegen,* with their Scandinavian counterparts. The two remaining words, **haha** and **haþu,** must be nouns associated with these verbs. So far, most scholars are in agreement. Divergences in opinion arise in the identification and interpretation of **haha** and **haþu** and in the identification of the forms of the verbs **wate, skaþi, ligi.**

3. Sophus Bugge, Magnus Olsen, and Wolfgang Krause all assume that **wate** must correspond in form to Old Icelandic *vǣta* "to wet." The ending **-e** is explained as that of the third person singular, present optative, and the whole line is interpreted to

mean "may the horn wet this stone." This analysis presents linguistic difficulties, however, since such a form would derive from a Proto-Germanic */wǣt-ij-ai/, which in the normal course of development would have produced the runic form ***watije.** In order to overcome this difficulty, Olsen attempted to explain **wate** as a late form from which the stem-formant **-ij-** of this supposed weak verb of class I had been lost. Krause accepts this explanation, but such an assumption cannot be made, since it conflicts with the evidence of the endings of all other words in the inscription, which are perfectly regular for the language of the inscriptions up to the period of the bracteates. Bracteates, modelled after Roman coins and medals, are dateable to ca. 400-550 A.D., and those with runic inscriptions show no evidence for phonological developments which would justify Olsen's proposed loss of **-ij-.**

The verb **ligi** corresponds to Gothic *ligjan*, Old Icelandic *liggja*, Old Saxon *liggian* "to lie" and must derive from the Proto-Germanic imperative singular */leg-ij-e/, which in the language of the inscriptions would have become *ligī*=**ligi.** Similarly, **skaþi** corresponds to Gothic *skaþjan*, Old Icelandic *skeþja*, Old Frisian *skethia* "to scathe" and derives from */skaþ-ij-e/, producing *skaþī*=**skaþi.** Olsen felt that the three verbs of the inscription must represent parallel forms, and since he considered **wate** to be an optative, he sought to interpret **skaþi** and **ligi** as optatives also, but was faced with the necessity of explaining the different endings of **wat-e** on the one hand and **skaþ-i** and **lig-i** on the other. He sought to do this by proposing still another ad hoc rule: the development of the ending was different after the long root syllable of **wate**=*wāt-e* from that after the short root syllables in **skaþ-i**=*skaþ-i* and **ligi**=*lig-i*. Actually, the optative forms of these verbs would derive from Proto-Germanic forms with the suffixes */-(i)j-ai/, which would have produced the runic forms ***watije, *skaþje,** and ***ligje,** or even if we were to accept the implausible loss of ***-(i)j-,** then the forms would have to be ***wate, *skaþe,** and ***lige.** It is impossible, then, to consider all three verbs to be the same form of verbs of the same class, unless one is willing to posit otherwise unattested developments in order to "explain" single forms. Such a procedure is not acceptable, however, and

certainly not if the forms can be explained in keeping with otherwise attested developments.

Olsen's assumption that the three verbs represent parallel forms is undoubtedly correct, but his mistake lies in assuming that all three belong to the same class of verbs; i.e., to the weak verbs of class I and the so-called *j*-present strong verbs (which would have identical forms in the formations under discussion here). He was led into this pitfall by equating **wate** with Old Icelandic *vǣta*, a weak verb of class I, while overlooking the fact that adjectives and nouns can be converted into verbs of other weak classes in the Germanic languages, as seen for example in the variegated forms of the verb "to scathe": Old English *sceaþian*, Old Saxon *skathon*, Old High German *skadōn* (class II), and Old High German *skadēn* (class III), in addition to forms of weak class I and *j*-present strong verbs. The runic verb **wate** is perfectly regular if we assume it to be a second person singular imperative of weak class III from Proto-Germanic */wæt-ǣ/, which would produce by regular development *wāt-ē*=**wate,** as v. Grienberger suggested.

Side A can therefore be translated straightforwardly as "Wet this stone, horn!" Side B then says "Scathe, . . .! Lie, . . .!" and the logical subjects of the three verbs are all different and the nouns **haha** and **haþu,** like **horna,** must be nominatives. Furthermore, **haha** must denote something which can scathe or do harm, while **haþu** must be something which can lie.

4. Olsen attempted to relate the noun **haha** to Swedish *hå* f., *hår* m. "new grass after the first mowing" and to derive it from Proto-Germanic */hæhwa-/. However, as we have seen, **haha** must be the designation of something which can be sharpened and therefore "do harm"; i.e., it must be an agricultural tool. Furthermore, the derivation from a presumed */hæhwa-/ presupposes an ad hoc loss of /-w-/. Etymologically, **haha** can only be assigned to a large group of derivatives from the Proto-Indo-European roots */k̂ek-, keg-/ meaning "hooked, forked, sharp" and represented in such Germanic items as Gothic *hoha*, Old High German *huoh(-ili)* "plow," Old Saxon *haco*, Old English *hōc*, Old High German *hāko* "hook," Old Icelandic *hǭkja* "crook, crutch," and probably also in older English *haugh* "hoe." Our noun would therefore be

the designation for a hooked, sharp tool, which in this inscription could only be a scythe. Whether this was the normal word for "scythe" or was used only for poetic and alliterative purposes cannot be ascertained. As to form, it must be the nominative singular of a masculine *n*-stem.

The noun **haþu** was explained by v. Grienberger as the reflex of a Proto-Germanic */hawiþ̄/, nominative singular feminine, derived from the verb */hawwan-/ "to cut down, hew" and translated as "a mowing." Once again, this derivation presupposes an ad hoc loss of */-wi-/, which finds no support in inscriptions in the older runic alphabet. Krause accepts v. Grienberger's explanation after rejecting Olsen's equation of **haþu** with the Germanic word for "battle," as in Old High German and Old Saxon *hathu-*, Old English *heaþu-*, and Old Icelandic *hoþ*, because of "syntactic reasons." He apparently means that a word denoting "battle" would not fit into the context. However, runic **haþu** can very well be the reflex of a neuter *u*-stem noun from Proto-Indo-European */kot-w-m/ meaning "that which is cut down," from which the word for "battle" is also derived (cf. the modern expression "to mow down the enemy"). With such an analysis, the entire inscription reads: "Wet this stone, horn! Scythe, scathe! Hay [or grain], lie!" The whole point of the worksong is an admonition to the horn to wet the whetstone to permit it to sharpen the blade properly so that the scythe will cut the hay or grain clean and the latter will lie (i.e., not stand up again, as happens with a dull scythe). There is no evidence in the inscription for late phonological developments and there is no need to assume, as Krause does, that some forms are "feierlich archaisierende Formen" (i.e., archaic forms used on solemn occasions), while others supposedly represent more "colloquial" forms. There is no evidence in any runic inscription known to us that forces us to assume the writer ever consciously used archaic forms.

5. The other basis for a late dating of this inscription is supposedly found in the shape of two of the runes themselves, the **s**-rune = ᛋ and the **k**-rune = ᛉ on Side B. All others are perfectly normal in every respect.

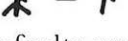
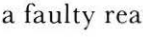
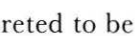
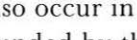
It is common practice to assume that certain shapes of various runes represent older or younger stages when compared to other shapes. The method of determining the chronological ordering of the variants has been a somewhat haphazard undertaking, however. In most cases, we have no way of knowing what the "original" shape was, or indeed whether there were not various traditions which preferred one shape over another. In addition, it is well known that nondistinctive variants can be expected from one and the same writer. The distinctive features of the older runes are given in Table I. The basic shapes are those most commonly found in inscriptions of Scandinavian provenience.

In the case of the **s**-rune, the distinctive features are [- staff, 2 crooks], whereby 2 = more than one (cf. the variants  ,  ,  , etc.), whereas the **k**-rune has only one crook (see below), and the **j**-rune has two crooks which are not connected. The difference between  and  is therefore completely nondistinctive. While it is true that the shape becomes the dominant one in inscriptions in the younger fuþark, there is no way of determining how early it could have occurred. It could have occurred from the very earliest times, since it would not have been mistaken for any other runic symbol. It therefore cannot be cited as evidence for a late dating of this inscription.

As for the **k**-rune, our inscription displays a variety with a staff =  . The development of staffs in originally staffless runes, it has been maintained, increases toward the end of the older period and into the period of the younger inscriptions. As a matter of fact, among the staffless runes, **g, o,** and **s** never developed forms with a staff, and the **ng**-rune with a staff =  always represents the phonological sequence /ing/, so that it is actually best regarded as a bind-rune (i.e., ligature) consisting of the **i**-rune + the **ng**-rune, rather than an **ng**-rune with a staff. If we look at the evidence presented in the inscriptions themselves, we find **k**-runes with staffs among the very oldest inscriptions known to us (e.g., on the Vimose woodplane, dated archeologically as early as

Table I. Distinctive features of the Germanic runes.

	no branch		*1 branch*	*2 branches*		*pocket*	*1 crook*	*2 crooks*	
				unilateral	*bilateral*			*continuous*	*interrupted*
1 staff	i	top	 l	 a	t	 w			
		center	 n	 f	 z	 þ			
		bottom	u	 p	æ	 b		r	
2 staffs		top	 e	 m					
		center	 h						
		bottom		d					
no staff				 g	o	ng	k	s	j

the second century, and the Kragehul lanceshaft from about 300 A.D.). These shapes may very well have resulted from the use of bind-runes, e.g.,  **az,** and  **ka,** with a faulty reanalysis of the component parts, so that  was interpreted to be  and to be  Such bind-runes also occur in the very earliest inscriptions. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that we simply do not know what the original shape of this rune was (cf. Greek κ and Latin *c*). In view of these uncertainties, the shape of the **k**-rune cannot be used to brand this inscription as early or late.

It will be seen from the foregoing that there is actually no evidence which would justify us in assigning the inscription on the Whetstone from Strøm to a period later than that of the runic bracteates. We can therefore be relatively certain that our work-song is a product of the fifth century, or of the beginning of the sixth century at the latest.

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Letters with Alternative Basic Shapes

Earl M. Herrick

In many written languages there are letters each of which may be embodied by marks having more than one basic shape. For each occurrence of such a letter, the shape of the mark used to embody it is normally selected according to the circumstances in which the letter occurs. Thus, some alternative basic shapes are appropriate to certain places in a word or another part of a text; some are used by different dialects; some belong to different coscripts (subdivisions of a script that each have basic shapes for all of its letters); some are used by certain typefaces or styles of handwriting. This paper discusses these several kinds of variation among basic shapes, and gives examples from several scripts.

Within many scripts and written languages, there are certain letters which can each be embodied[1] by marks with two or more basic shapes. For each of these letters the language or its script normally has rules which prescribe the conditions under which each of those basic shapes is used to realize it. The present paper will discuss four kinds of such conditioned variation: positional variation, dialectal variation, variation among coscripts, and stylistic variation. For each of these, it will show examples of the alternative characters involved and will describe how the choice is made among them.[2]

Positional variations

Positional variation occurs when a letter is realized by different basic shapes according to the place where it occurs within a syllable, a word, or another definable unit of its written language. Figures 1 through 3 give examples of such variation in three scripts.

In the Naskhi script of the Araboid genus (Fig. 1),[3] as in the other scripts of that genus, almost every letter can be realized by four different basic shapes which are often, but need not be, much alike. (Some letters which can never be attached to a following

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Figure 1. Positional variation: *Naskhi script.*

Variants for word-initial position	Variants for word-medial position	Variants for word-final position	Variants for isolated position
ثـ	ـثـ	ـث	ث
عـ	ـعـ	ـع	ع

Figure 2. Positional variation: *Neohellenic script.*

Variant for word-final position if not capitalized	Variant for all other positions if not capitalized
ς	σ

Figure 3. Positional variation: *Bengali script.*

Variants for syllables not containing consonants	Variants for syllables containing consonants
কৈ	ক্ষ
কৌ	ক্ত

letter have only two basic shapes each.) The choice among these basic shapes depends on whether the letter occurs initially, medially, or finally in a word or occurs in isolation unattached to any other letter.

In the Neohellenic script (Fig. 2) the letter named "sigma," if it is not capitalized, can be realized by either of two basic shapes. One of these occurs at the ends of words, the other occurs everywhere else.

In the Bengali script (Fig. 3), as generally in scripts of the Brahmic family, each vowel letter can be realized by two different basic shapes. One of these is used when the vowel forms an entire syllable by itself; the other is used when it occurs in a syllable together with one or more consonants.

Dialectal variations

A script or an alphabet, like any other part of a language, may show dialectal variation. And—just as a language can be one language despite geographical, social, or other kinds of variation in the sounds which embody its phonemes, or variation in the grammatical constructions which it allows, or variation in the words which it uses for certain meanings—so a language or a script can be one language or one script despite dialectal variations in the marks which embody its letters. The status of any linguistic variety as a language or as a dialect depends only on usage, including popular opinion and official recognition. It cannot be determined by quantitative measurements, since the differences among the acknowledged dialects in one linguistic situation may be larger than the differences among the acknowledged languages in another situation.[4] Therefore, even though a writing system has some variation within it, it is one script with dialects so long as the people who use it regard it as a single script.

An example of dialectal variation on a largely geographical basis occurs within the Devanagari script. Although most letters of that script are printed by the same basic shapes wherever that script is used, some of its letters are printed by different basic shapes, depending on where the printing is done. Examples of these differences are shown in Figure 4; the two groups of characters

Figure 4. Dialectal variation: *Devanagari script.*

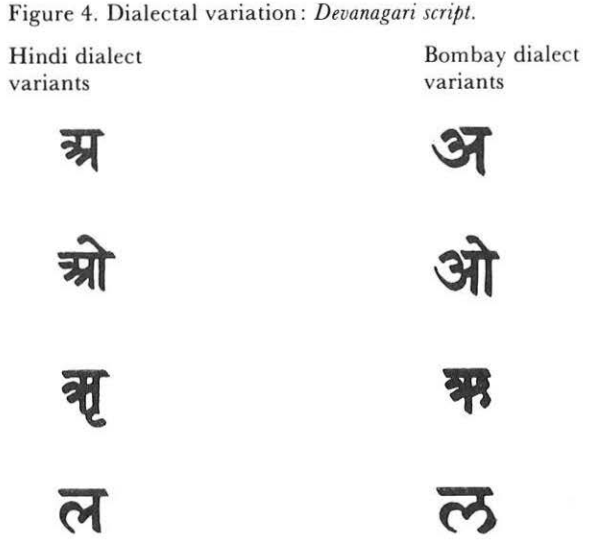

Figure 5. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Neoroman script.*

Majuscule set of basic shapes			Minuscule set of basic shapes	Italic set of basic shapes
Capital coscript	Italic capital coscript	Small capital coscript	Lower-case coscript	Italic lower-case coscript
A	*A*	A	a	*a*
D	*D*	D	d	*d*
G	*G*	G	g	*g*
N	*N*	N	n	*n*
S	*S*	S	s	*s*
V	*V*	V	v	*v*

shown there seem to have no generally accepted names, and the terms used for them there are taken from Lambert (1953). Within the region where the Devanagari script is used, types with basic shapes from the Hindi dialect seem to be used more commonly by printers in the north and east, while types with basic shapes from the Bombay dialect seem to be used more commonly by printers in the south and west. Many printers, however, use types with some basic shapes from each dialect. The present state of these dialects deserves systematic, scientific investigation.

Dialect differences within a script may extend to the languages which have alphabets from that script. Thus, the Hindi language is used in a region which extends across the boundary between these two dialects of the Devanagari script, and the Hindi alphabet from that script has dialects which correspond to the dialects of its script. Attempts to eliminate these dialectal differences and to create a single compromise alphabet for Hindi were made at two conferences organized by the Uttar Pradesh government during the 1950's (Saran 1969, pp. 61-62).

Variations among coscripts

Each of the letters of the Neoroman script can be embodied by several different characters, which may differ from one another in basic shape, in height, and/or in slope. These characters can be divided into groups, each of which contains at least one character for each letter of the script, and each of which is used under certain definable circumstances as the source for characters to embody the letters of the script. Therefore, when a person writes with an alphabet from the Neoroman script, he must consider not only the letters which represent the words he wants to write but also the groups of characters that are appropriate for those words or parts of those words. Each character which he writes must belong to both the appropriate letter and the appropriate group of characters.

Because each of these groups of characters within the Neoroman script could itself be a script—except that it is not normally used alone to provide the writing system of any language—each of these groups may be called a "coscript" within the Neoroman script, and the Neoroman script as a whole may be called a "compound

script."[5] The Neoroman script ordinarily has five coscripts: "capitals," "italic capitals," "small capitals," "lower-case," and "italic lower-case."[6] Examples of them are shown in Figure 5.

The characters belonging to the different coscripts of a compound script need not be wholly dissimilar, but they may show various kinds of similarity. In Figure 5 the five Neoroman coscripts have been grouped according to the sets of basic shapes which they use. One set of basic shapes, which may be called the "minuscule" set, is used only by the lower-case coscript; another, which may be called the "italic" set, is used only by the italic lower-case coscript. The capital, italic capital, and small-capital coscripts, however, all use the same set of basic shapes, which may be called the "majuscule" set.[7] These three sets of basic shapes are non-discrete, because some of their basic shapes belong to more than one set.

Some other compound scripts are illustrated in Figures 6 through 10. Each of these illustrations shows only a few letters from its script, but should suffice to show the kinds of variations which occur among its coscripts and sets of basic shapes. In each of these illustrations, the characters shown on one horizontal row embody the same letter.

The Fraktur script (Fig. 6) has capital and lower-case coscripts; the sets of basic shapes which its coscripts use are essentially discrete.[8] The Gaelic script (Fig. 7) also has capital and lower-case coscripts, but the sets of basic shapes which they use are non-discrete. The Neocyrillic script (Fig. 8) has five coscripts and three sets of basic shapes, corresponding to those of the Neoroman script.[9]

Although compound scripts seem to be most common within the Hellenic family, at least two languages of the Far East use compound scripts belonging to other families. The Cambodian script (Fig. 9) has four coscripts and three non-discrete sets of basic shapes.[10] The script of the Japanese syllabary (Kana script, Fig. 10) has two coscripts which use separate, discrete sets of basic shapes.[11]

Figure 6. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Fraktur script*.

Majuscule set of basic shapes	Minuscule set of basic shapes
Capital coscript	Lower-case coscript
𝔅	𝔟
𝔈	𝔢
𝔊	𝔥
𝔎	𝔯

Figure 7. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Gaelic script*.

Majuscule set of basic shapes	Minuscule set of basic shapes
Capital coscript	Lower-case coscript
𝔄	𝔞
𝔉	𝔣
𝔖	𝔯
𝔗	𝔱

Stylistic variations

In linguistics and literary scholarship "style" has been a word of many meanings. As it is being used here, a style is a choice: any choice which a language allows a speaker or a writer to make among several sets of linguistic forms that have the same denotative meaning. In written texts printed from moveable type or by other mechanical devices for reproducing characters, one such stylistic choice is the choice among typefaces. Although the selection of a typeface for printing a certain text usually has no effect on the basic shapes which realize the letters in that text, it sometimes happens that a letter, even though its coscript, its position, and its dialect are known, may still be realized by any of two or more basic shapes, the selection among which depends on the typeface which has been chosen. Figures 11 and 12 show examples

Figure 8. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Neocyrillic script.*

Majuscule set of basic shapes			Minuscule set of basic shapes	Italic set of basic shapes
Capital coscript	Italic capital coscript	Small capital coscript	Lower-case coscript	Italic lower-case coscript
А	*А*	ᴀ	а	*а*
Г	*Г*	ᴦ	г	*г*
Е	*Е*	ᴇ	е	*е*
И	*И*	ɪ	и	*и*
К	*К*	ᴋ	к	*к*
У	*У*	ʏ	у	*у*

Figure 9. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Cambodian script.*

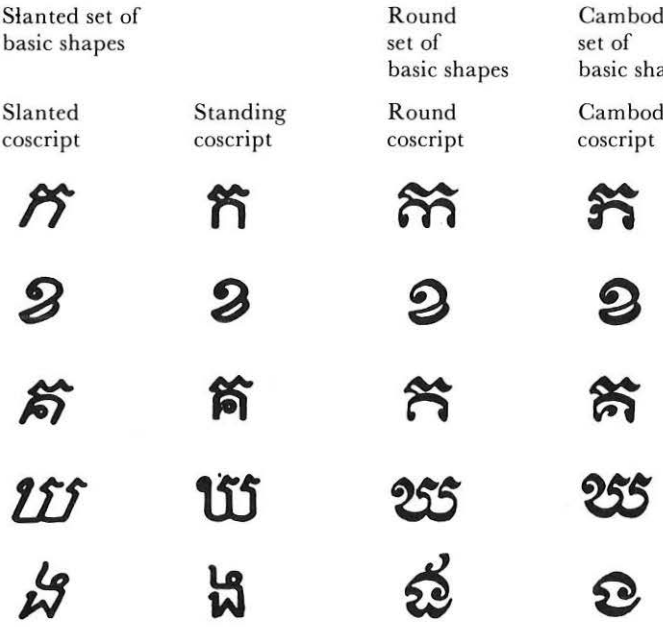

Figure 10. Compound script: coscripts and sets of basic shapes: *Kana script.*

of such stylistic variations among basic shapes. The two shapes from the Neoroman script (Fig. 11) may both be used to realize the letter g when it is not capitalized; the two shapes from the Neocyrillic script (Fig. 12) may both be used to realize the letter П. In each script, some typefaces use the first mark, while others use the second.

A similar variation among basic shapes occurs in the handwriting of some people. The writer of the example shown in Figure 13 (which is taken from a marginal notation on a manuscript) has used two basic shapes for non-capitalized r and two for non-capitalized s. The variation between the shapes for r must be a stylistic variation, since both occur in equivalent environments. The data shown here is insufficient to prove whether the shapes for s are stylistic or positional variants.

A comment on the linguistic treatment of these variations

The four kinds of variation which have been described here should be dealt with in the linguistic analysis of any script which has them. The variation resulting from a choice among typefaces or styles of handwriting is, as has been said, a stylistic variation and can be described by whatever notation is used to handle other stylistic variations. Dialectal variation is a similar phenomenon, and presumably can be handled by a similar notation. The other two kinds of variation are both conditioned by the contexts in which letters occur. For positional variation, the context is formed by other letters (or equivalent elements such as the space between words). For variation among coscripts, the context is formed by certain linguistic elements that occur simultaneously with letters and specify which coscript has been chosen for them.

1. The relationship between abstract units of language (such as letters and basic shapes) and the objects which physically serve as a communication medium for a language will be called "embodiment," while the relationship between two kinds of abstract linguistic units will be called "realization." Thus, a mark embodies a letter or a basic shape, while a basic shape realizes a letter.

Figure 11. Stylistic variation: *Neoroman script.*

Figure 12. Stylistic variation: *Neocyrillic script.*

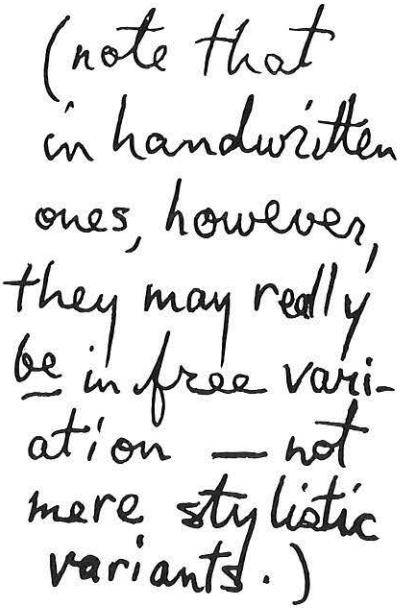

Figure 13.
Example of stylistic variation:
"Neoroman" handwriting.

2. The author wants to thank Norman H. Zide and George L. Trager for their comments and assistance.
3. The system of names used here for scripts and genera of scripts was defined in Herrick 1974.
4. If one linguistic situation is described by both terms, however, its languages will be more divergent than its dialects. For the linguistic use of these terms, see Hockett (1958, pp. 321-22), Gleason (1961, p. 398), and Trager (1972, pp. 12-14).
5. A script which does not have coscripts may be called a "simple script."
6. Depending on the linguistic analysis being used, the Neoroman script may also have two or four boldface coscripts.
7. The term "alphabet" has been used both for coscripts and for sets of basic shapes. Gill (1951, pp. 257-61), for example, uses it to mean sets of basic shapes, while Carter (1969, p. 45) refers to all the Neoroman coscripts as "alphabets," and then refers to the three oldest coscripts, which use different sets of basic shapes, as the "essential alphabets" of that script.
8. There is one Fraktur letter which is always realized by the same basic shape, whether it is capitalized or not.
9. See Trager (1972, p. 261) on the use of Neocyrillic small capitals.
10. See Huffman (1970, pp. 77-79) for the appearance and uses of these Cambodian coscripts.
11. See Chaplin and Martin (1967, pp. 6-9) for the contrasting uses of these Japanese coscripts.

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Handwriting Education—
A Bibliography of Contemporary Publications

Ching Y. Suen

This bibliography presents some contemporary references related to handwriting education. The varied collection is aimed at providing the researcher with extensive up-to-date source materials on handwriting instruction, systems and practices, instruments, quality and methods of evaluation.

The author began investigating problems related to computer recognition of handprinted characters in 1972. The aim was to design a handwriting system (or systems) easy to write and at the same time reliable for legible production for both human and machine recognition. In the course of this investigation, an extensive survey of the literature has been made to study the methods of instruction as well as the characteristics of handwriting. Reports of the findings are being prepared.

Because of the special purpose of the investigation, this bibliography was compiled within certain limitations. It is confined to a list of current references, mainly those published in the past twenty years. Earlier works are usually cited in the works referred to in this bibliography. References on calligraphy were not included because the author considered it a rather special subject. * Furthermore, no effort was made to include works related to the historical development of handwriting, such as those of Anderson, Arrighi, Benson, Blunt, and others cited in Reynolds' bibliography.

*Those who are interested in the history of handwriting and calligraphy can refer to L. J. Reynolds, *Bibliography of Italic Handwriting*, (published by the Western American Branch of the Society of Italic Handwriting, 1968) and the bibliography of C. Lehman, "Handwriting Legibility: A Method of Objective Evaluation," (*Visible Language*, 1973, *7* (4), 325-344).

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The entries are classified into six major areas to facilitate reference of specific questions.

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2. Characteristics and quality of handwriting and methods of evaluation
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4. Diagnostic and remedial teaching
5. Handwriting instruments
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Maurice Roche: Crâne, Carne

Thomas D. O'Donnell

Maurice Roche has distinguished himself from the more traditional *nouveau roman* through the role he accords to language and through the phenomenon of intertextuality in his three novels, *Compact*, *Circus*, and *Codex*. His approach to both phenomena is well illustrated by the pun "carne/crâne" to which he constantly returns in *Circus*. The *crâne*, suggesting death, and the *carne*, suggesting sexuality, may be seen as the traditional polarities of the eros/thanatos axis, and substantiate an anagrammatic reading of *Circus*' title: *cri*, or death, and *cu(l)s*, or sex. The pun, as the intersection of two or more signs, becomes for Roche the intersection of two or more sign systems: the spoken word, the written word, and the layout of the printed page. It is in his refusal to accept the linearity of a novelistic text that Roche is the most avant-garde.

The three novels of the contemporary novelist Maurice Roche—*Compact*, *Circus*, and *Codex*[1]—illustrate two phenomena which typify current French writing. The first of these phenomena is the role accorded to language. It is not surprising that Philippe Sollers should now be involved in a project for translating *Finnegans Wake* into French, or that Roche himself should insert portions of the *Wake's* first thunderclap into *Compact*. The *word* has become the hero of the contemporary novel in France, much to the detriment of traditional plot and characterization. As the study of ancient Egyptian texts shows, the magical powers and sacred character of language have been with our culture for a long time. If contemporary French writers are showing an interest in Joyce, it is because they recognize in the exiled Irishman a modern exponent of this aspect of language.

The second phenomenon, that of intertextuality, is also a familiar one. Robbe-Grillet reproduces his bicycle-riding voyeur, complete with half-spent cigarette butts, in *Projet pour une révolution à New York*. Butor points out the possibility of constructing a book

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from the bits and pieces of other books. Roche recalls this in *Circus*, "l'art d'utiliser les restes" ("the art of using left-overs") and goes a step further, drawing upon his earlier study of Monteverdi in *Compact*, quoting from and alluding to both previous works in *Circus* and *Codex*. Thus, while any text of Maurice Roche may be read alone, the three novels are complementary and yield more if each is examined in the context of the others.

These two phenomena, while not the exclusive delimiters either of Roche or of the *nouveau nouveau roman*, are nonetheless useful areas upon which to focus our attention, because they converge upon a *jeu de mots* which is central to all three novels. The *jeu* involved is first found within parentheses early in *Circus* (Fig. 1); it reappears later in *Circus* (pp. 50 [Fig. 2] and 73 [Fig. 3] and in *Codex* (p. 125 [Fig. 4]). Within the parentheses are five letters: a large capital *C*, a smaller capital *E*, and small *r*, *n*, and *a* circumflex. The placement of letters is such that the reader must choose between two possible readings—*carne*, "meat" or "flesh,"[2] and *crâne*, "skull"—neither of which can ever be definitively chosen in preference to the other. From this point onward in *Circus* each allusion to things sexual, *carne*, will necessarily evoke death, the *crâne* (and vice versa, naturally). It is a cliché, of course, that eroticism and death have much in common. In the past, this has been graphically illustrated by the smiling martyrs of the illustrated *Golden Legend*, to which Robbe-Grillet alludes in *Projet pour une révolution à New York*, and by the occasionally un-subtle serenity of Saint Sebastian adorning the walls of our churches and museums.

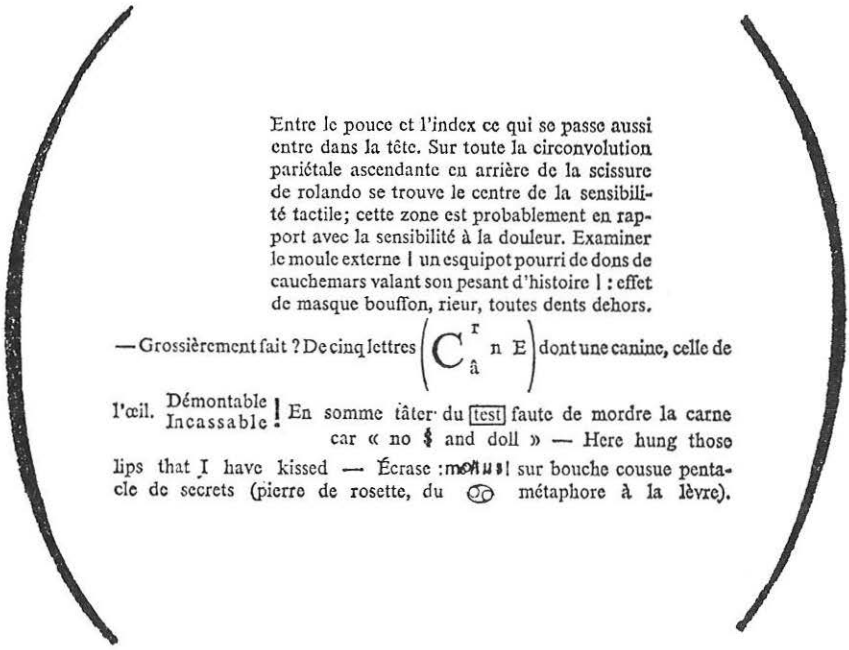
Roche departs somewhat from these more familiar approaches in that he chooses the *word* as the vehicle, both verbal and ideogrammatic, for the ambiguous relationship between death and sex. Roche's pun is both verbal—a transposition of letters and sounds—and visual—words will be used to create the image of a skull throughout *Circus* and *Codex*, a dozen or so times in all. The choice of a small capital *E* is seen to be a play between two forms of expression, verbal and visual. The *E*, like the *C*, the *r*/*â* and the *n*, establishes an axis in the skull, causing us to turn the book 90° and to read the *E* as a lower jaw. The propriety of this reading is substantiated by a passage of *Compact* in which Roche mentions

Entre le pouce et l'index ce qui se passe aussi entre dans la tête. Sur toute la circonvolution pariétale ascendante en arrière de la scissure de rolando se trouve le centre de la sensibilité tactile; cette zone est probablement en rapport avec la sensibilité à la douleur. Examiner le moule externe | un esquipot pourri de dons de cauchemars valant son pesant d'histoire] : effet de masque bouffon, rieur, toutes dents dehors.

— Grossièrement fait ? De cinq lettres $\left(C^{r}_{\hat{a}}\ n\ E\right)$ dont une canine, celle de l'œil. Démontable / Incassable ! En somme tâter du [test] faute de mordre la carne car « no $ and doll » — Here hung those lips that I have kissed — Écrase : morsus ! sur bouche cousue pentacle de secrets (pierre de rosette, du ♋ métaphore à la lèvre).

Figure 1. *Circus*, page 22.

Figure 2. *Circus*, page 50.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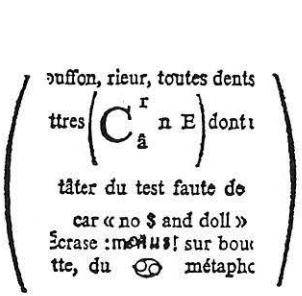
— Grossièrement fait ? De cinq lettres $\left(C^{r}_{\hat{a}}\ n\ E\right)$ dont une canine, celle de l'œil. Démontable / Incassable ! En somme tâter du [test] faute de mordre la carne car « no $ and doll » — Here hung those lips that I have kissed — Écrase : morsus ! sur bouche cousue pentacle de secrets (pierre de rosette, du ♋ métaphore à la lèvre).

"les pirates de l'île des Cocos": "On sait que 'Les maux de tête sont très près du crâne.' On lit cela—quand on veut—, en légende (au-dessus) d'un monogramme reproduisant, couché, l'emblème bien connu des frères de la côte: les pirates de l'île des  "

Figure 3. *Circus*, page 73.

Légende perdue d'un dessin **secret** ***éventé.***
Saga contant obscurément un désastre : **dire la *fin d'une* bonne *aventure* (:)**



faðiʀ aft faigian sunu.

Croire, tirant les cartes pour le fils (décédé - son avenir?), tirer les fils d'un petit pantin pour qui il suffisait *d'être*

l'homme à abattre

son jeu.

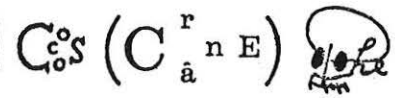
Se substituer à lui en lui subtilisant cet « atout » qui prend la valeur que son possesseur lui attribue : (Jolly) Joker - masque de personne (efface face) de camarde, compère du prestidigitateur, l' mot ayant la main et du jeu dans l[a] manche. Pitre fou[tu] comme l' de pique, ***faisant le mort / une drôle de tête / pour rire.*** Etant fauché passer à l'as (on n'y coupe pas *ici bas* :) on coupe.

(*Compact*, p. 106; cf. *Codex*, pp. 13, 92, 113) (Fig. 5).[3] Here again we are obliged to rotate our monogram 90° to find the skull, the emblem of the "brothers of the coast."

The *crâne/carne* pun in particular and the eros/thanatos axis in general are supported and reinforced by a number of elements in *Compact*, *Circus*, and *Codex*. We might begin to show this by

Figure 4. *Codex*, page 125.

Moments entre parenthèses (:

:) à l'intersection :

Totemtanz raide

geste figé(e) dans son mouvement

: : blason de la mort *avoir trait à chef* **ta** **gueule** **propre**

attempting a Ricardolian (i.e., anagrammatic) analysis of the title of *Circus*. The two-syllable title is readily broken down into *cri,* "cry," proper to death, and *cu (l),* "ass," appropriate to the other end of the axis. *Culs* and *cris* abound in *Circus,* appearing a dozen or so times in 129 pages. Three of these manifestations merit special attention. On page 64, we learn that the "seule chose crue" ("the only raw thing" or "the only thing believed") is "la cuite" ("the cooked"). Ignoring the dipsoidal level of the pun,[4] if that is at all possible, we are left with a tribute, albeit a left-handed one, to Claude Lévi-Strauss. Our suspicions are soon confirmed as "le cru et le cuit" ("the raw and the cooked") becomes "le cul et le cri" ("the ass and the cry") (p. 87).

The third and most striking manifestation is to be found at the very end of *Circus*. Re-introducing his theme by the mention of a *cul-de-bouteille/lampe,* Roche goes on to externalize the noise he hears in his head: "la rumeur (vox populi)?) *le bruit de fond*" (p. 129).[5] Ironically, this *bruit de fond* is also a flatulent *bruit de fondement,* or fart. This *bruit blanc* ("white noise") becomes "le grand cluster *universel,*" "cluster" being a cluster, a reference to Custer from *Compact,* p. 37 ("God damn them! crie le général Custer, charge! with drawn sword!"), and the traditional "clystère." In short order, it becomes "la grosse piquouse dernier cri" ("the latest word in big stickers") and "le suppositoire analgésique." Before the bomb drops, an apparent extension to universality of the earlier *bruit de fond(ement),* we are asked a final question about the *piquouse:* "l'avoir où?" ("where to put it?"). The obvious but unwritten answer, "au cul," is indicated by the evocative description of the needle: "dernier *cri.*" The needle is finally transformed into the hands of a clock approaching "L'HEURE H" ("H HOUR"), setting the stage for the (at least) triple entendre, "VOICI QU'ELLE TOMBE."[6]

The *crâne* and its *cri* are related to themes other than the *cul.* Writing prescriptively of a new society, Roche suggests "D'abord, s'enfoncer bien dans le crâne (et à coups de crosse si nécessaire) qu'il ne faut pas se casser la tête" (*Circus,* p. 108).[7] This sentence is in fact an echo of an earlier one: "N'avoir pas (de) raison de ne pas s'enfoncer *cela dans le crâne* dans le délire" (p. 4).[8] Later, Roche depicts a "devise qui écorche: verticale plantée dans le corps du

texte,"[9] i.e., in the body of the *tête,* the "head." The *devise,* "TOVS : IE : VOVS : TVE," appears next to a literally parenthetical quotation of page 165 of *Compact.* The crâne is replaced on this page of *Circus* by its ideogrammatic paradigm: parentheses. The parentheses may of course represent in a schematic fashion a well-rounded *cul* as well. Interestingly enough, the passage in parentheses is the companion piece of a similar passage describing a skull, on the previous page of *Compact:*

> Impasse des Catacombes.
>
> Nous sommes attablés côte à côte, notre compagne et nous, tournant le dos à l'entrée. Nous voyons dans la grande glace, au fond de la salle, le tableau que nous formons dans ce décor: la voûte en berceau assez basse; juste au-dessous, nos deux têtes, pas trop rapprochées; à droite et à gauche la pointe d'une épaule saille légèrement. Au centre de la table une bouteille (de la bière, plaisanterie maison!) entre deux verres. Nous avons la sensation d'être le moule de quelque calligrame fantôme: notre image réduite à la dimension d'un crâne (et nous sommes dedans).[10]

Figure 5. *Compact,* page 106.

On sait que

« Les maux de tête sont très près du crâne. »

On lit cela — quand on veut —,
en légende (au-dessus) d'un monogramme reproduisant, couché, l'emblème bien connu des frères de la côte : les pirates de l'île des

, sur la grande enveloppe bistre contenant le message posthume de l'oncle voyageur.

Si l'on ouvre l'enveloppe, on peut en sortir une feuille de papier format 21 × 27 (commercial).

This very text is then reprinted, white on black, next to a vertical column resembling a series of pre-columbian pictograms in *Circus* (p. 68 [Fig. 6]) : portions of the text are "blacked out" in order to produce, once more, a skull. The transition from "ordinary" writing to non-verbal, purely graphic representation is completed in *Codex* as the scene is depicted visually, non-verbally and in no particular context (p. 127 [Fig. 7]).

Figure 6. *Circus,* page 68.

Anything but not everything. In rebus.

Die Linien des Lebens sind verschieden
Wie Wege sind.

DIIS MANIBVS.

Mors vitæ contraria, & pueloſima, quæ cuncta calcat, ſuppeditat, rapit, conſumit, diſſoluit, melliſluè duos mutuò ſe feriſſim & ardenter amantes, hic extinctos coniunxit.

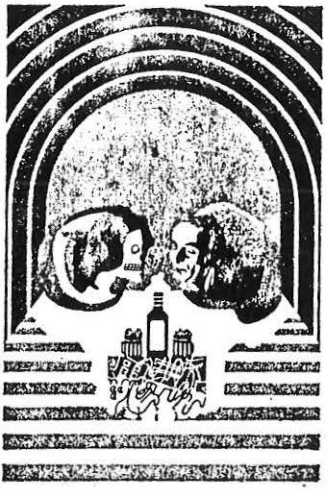
Figure 7. *Codex*, page 127.

Marié? ..... Non!... mais qui fait des rêves cochons dans la case correspondante / au troisième état du cerveau, ce qui met les corps caverneux en particulier à contribution...

Enfants? ..... A part moi, aucun. (L'autre est décédé.)

Domicile? ..... Homme sans maison. De passage ; mais caveau en vue.

Signe particulier? Une marque sur un nez bourbon pour en avoir trop bu



Signature : *Empreintes :*

× sur le passé.

Runic characters in a vertical column appear next to the text in parentheses on page 73; a few pages later, a similar parenthetical construction is to be found with a pair of vertical electrical graphs—the caption: "Capite agere aliquid," "to drive something into the head" (Fig. 8). A fourth parenthesis, repeating an earlier text which turns a skull into a musical instrument, is paralleled by two columns of Sanskrit musical notation. Finally, we discover a "skull-flask pour se rincer la dalle" (p. 122),[11] accompanied by the vertical "PRIEZ POUR NOUS" (PRAY/LAUGH FOR US") (Fig. 9).

Figure 8. *Circus*, page 80.

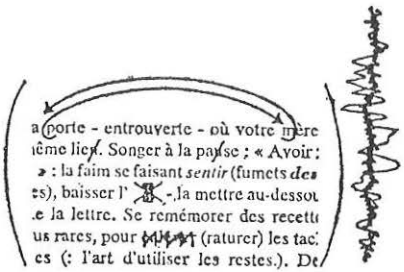
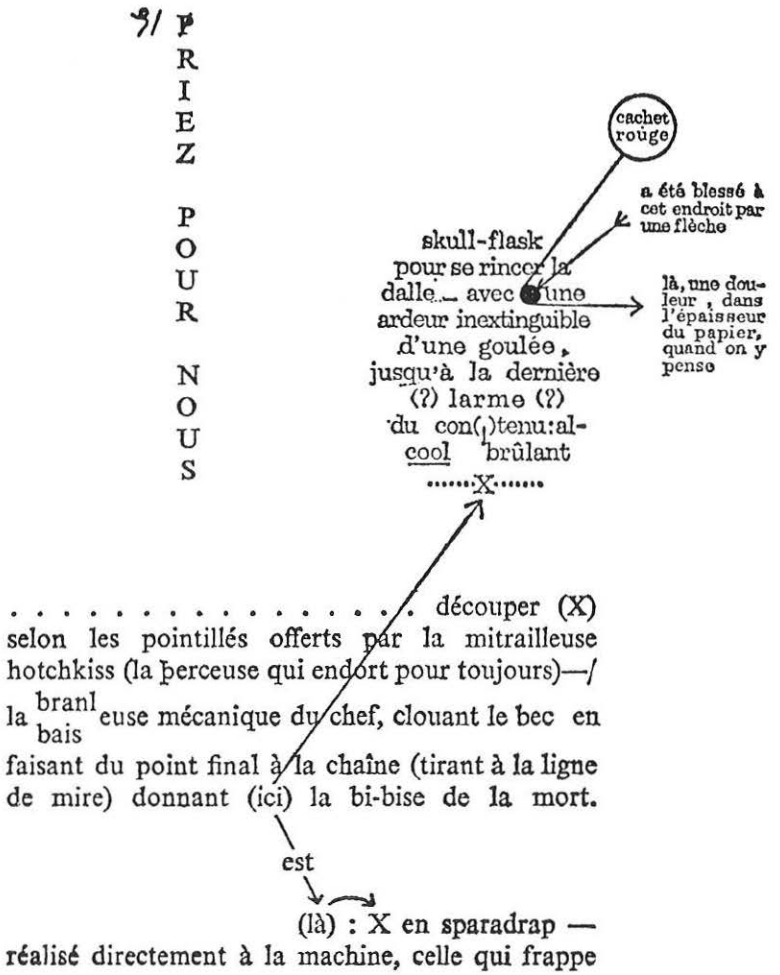
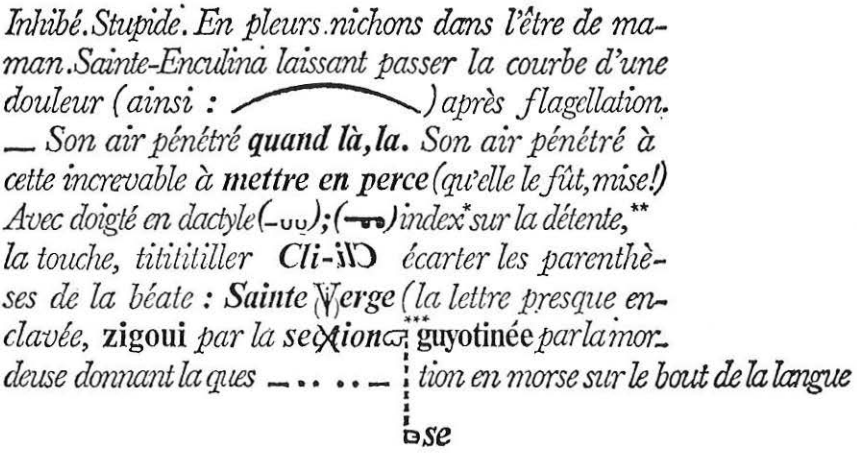


Figure 9. *Circus*, page 122.



There is one additional skull in *Circus* that merits a fair amount of attention (p. 123 [Fig. 10]). What is most striking is that this skull suggests death hardly at all; it bears greater resemblance to a sex manual illustrated with ideograms. This cranium is dedicated to a flagellated Sainte-Enculina.[12] "Son air pénétré" reminds us of the musical context of *Compact* and *Circus*, as well as of "pocket woman," the inflatable sailor's companion of *Compact*. "'The pocket woman should never be boiled.' On s'en sert plusieurs fois, ensuite on la fout en l'air" (p. 59).[13] Descending the skull's vertical axis, we pass between a metric dactyl and a similar musical note, each within parentheses: the two eyes. Continuing on this axis of bilateral symmetry, we pass through the Cli-ilↃ, receiving instructions to "écarter les parenthèses de la béate."[14] Whether or not one chooses to see the symmetrical CↃ of Cli-ilↃ as the parentheses in question, one is in any case immediately faced with the Sainte (Ⱳ)erge ("Holy Virgin"/"Holy Cock"). The paren-

Figure 10. *Circus*, page 123.



thesized and penetrated *V* leaves little doubt that the parentheses in *Circus* are emblematic not only of *le crâne* and *le cul*, but of the labia majora as well. This interpretation adds new significance to the vertical columns already examined, and could be anticipated and verified by a Ricardolian analysis of the title of *Circus*' earlier companion piece, *Compact*.

Needless to say, the thanatos/eros axis is less than a revolutionary novelty in Western literature. On the other hand, Roche's importance is not that he gives new life to the theme of death; his choice of themes is relatively unimportant. What is important is a novelist's absolute refusal to restrict himself to the line of type. Placing equal emphasis on what is read, what is heard, and what is seen, Roche assembles not a linear work of literature but rather a huge matrix of x dimensions. Because of the phenomenon of intertextuality, x rapidly becomes x^n, n being the number of texts resonating upon each other. Each element of the matrix is to be read in terms of semantic content and sound, but also in terms of its physical appearance on the printed page and of its spatial relationship to other elements within the matrix. His work, then, is open-ended in the extreme, to an extent paralleled perhaps only by *Finnegans Wake* and Queneau's *Cent Mille Milliards de poèmes*. Roche's current work in progress, *Cave*, promises to expand the matrix further, and its polyvalent title, together with the introduction of the theme of cave painting in *Codex*, allows us to anticipate an even stronger future commitment to visual writing on the part of the author.

1. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966, 1972, 1974.
2. *Carne* is an Italian word, not French. Nonetheless, it clearly evokes *chair,* "flesh," and *charogne*, "carrion."
3. "We know that 'Headaches are very close to the skull.' We read that—when we want to—, on the caption (above) a monogram reproducing, on its side, the well known emblem of the brothers of the coast: the pirates of the island

of  ."

4. *Cru* refers also to vineyards and vintages; *cuite* in French slang describes someone who has had too much to drink; "prendre la cuite" is to go on a binge.
5. "the rumbling (vox populi)) *the background noise.*"
6. "VOICI QU'ELLE TOMBE": "THERE SHE FALLS." "SHE" may be the bomb, presumably hydrogen, of H Hour, or the *hache* ("axe"), pronounced like the letter *H.* "VOICI QUELLE TOMBE": "HERE IS QUITE A TOMB."
7. "First, sink it into your skull (and with rifle butts, if necessary) that you mustn't rack your brains."
8. "(To have no reason)/(To not be right) not to sink (that into your skull) into delirium."
9. "a motto that skins: a vertical planted in the body of the text."
10. Impasse des Catacombes.

We are seated at the table next to each other, we and our girl friend, turning our backs to the entry. We see in the big mirror, at the end of the room, the tableau we form in this decor: the rather low barrel vault; just below, our two heads, not too close; to the right and left the tip of a shoulder projects slightly. In the center of the table a bottle (beer, a house joke) between two glasses. We have the sensation of being the mould of some phantom calligram: our image reduced to the size of a skull (and we are inside).

11. "a skull-flask to take a snort from." *Dalle* also means "tombstone."
12. *Enculer:* "to sodomize."
13. "You use her several times, then you throw her away." "La foutre en l'air" also means, literally, "to screw her in the air."
14. "to separate the parentheses of the smug."

The Development of Passenger/Pedestrian Oriented Symbols for Use in Transportation-Related Facilities

The American Institute of Graphic Arts

The American Institute of Graphic Arts in cooperation with the United States Department of Transportation, Office of Facilitation, has created 34 passenger and pedestrian oriented symbols for use in transportation-related facilities. The intent of the project was to produce a consistent and inter-related group of symbols to bridge the language barrier and simplify basic messages at domestic and international travel facilities. The working process attempted to take full advantage of strong and widely recognized existing symbol concepts and to introduce new symbol forms only where no satisfactory concepts existed. The report includes detailed descriptions of the process employed to create the symbols as well as guidelines for their use.

Over the past several years, numerous international, national, and local organizations have developed sets of symbols for use in facilitating passenger and pedestrian orientation in transportation-related facilities and at the sites of large international events. (Throughout this report the term "symbol" is used to denote both true symbols such as the Red Cross and pictorial devices, pictographs, or pictograms which are illustrative in nature.) Some of these groups have attempted to establish international standards but have been criticized for the overall graphic quality of the drawings, as well as for some of the concepts. Others, especially those associated with temporary events, such as Olympic Games or World's Fairs, have spent considerable effort to achieve graphic excellence. At the same time, they have made a conscious effort to give their symbols a unique graphic character inappropriate for wider functional needs. Out of all this effort have come a number of well-conceived and well-executed individual symbols, but no one complete system that seems immediately adaptable to the needs of transportation-related facilities in the U.S.

To develop such a system and to take full advantage of the work

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Address: AIGA, 1059 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10021.

done to date by others throughout the world, the American Institute of Graphic Arts in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Facilitation, has compiled an inventory of symbol systems which have actually been used in transportation-related facilities or large international events. We have not concentrated on theoretical or experimental proposals, although we are aware of them. In addition, we have compiled and analyzed whatever existing research seemed pertinent. Unfortunately most of the reports seem more concerned with the methodology than with the conclusions reached. Nevertheless, all relevant data has been considered when making evaluations.

To undertake the project, the AIGA appointed a committee of five members with considerable experience and interest in the problem. It was determined that the task of the committee would be to review the major symbol systems in use around the world, to analyze the effectiveness of each based on personal experience, and from this analysis to develop a clear concept for each message area. The committee's next task was to determine who should draw the symbols and prepare the guidelines for using them. Finally they were to direct the execution of work by other AIGA members.

The committee was composed of Thomas H. Geismar (chairman), Seymour Chwast, Rudolph deHarak, John Lees, and Massimo Vignelli. The firm Cook and Shanosky was involved in all of the deliberations and eventually designed the new symbols and their graphic system. The firm Page, Arbitrio, and Resen was in charge of the guidelines section.

Each existing symbol was analyzed independently by each committee member. In addition, each group was discussed at some length by the whole committee, and the recommendations were arrived at as a joint decision of the group. Some decisions were easily made; others provoked considerable discussion. These decisions were then submitted to a working panel of the DOT Advisory Committee for review. That committee thoroughly reviewed the recommendations, and made a determination on each, accepting many, revising some, and rejecting a few. The AIGA then reviewed the working panel's response, and revised some of its recommendations. In evaluating the existing material, it was always presumed that all recommended symbol concepts

would require at least some graphic modifications or refinements to be incorporated in a uniform graphic system. Other symbols required new or modified concepts and consequently considerable original drawing.

A set of guidelines for using the symbols and relating them to the verbal messages was developed—not to provide a rigid set of rules but rather to suggest a range of possibilities within which the problems most commonly encountered in facility signage can be resolved without sacrificing the integrity of the symbol system.

Finally, in the course of this project we have found common agreement on a few key points concerning symbols:

We are convinced that the effectiveness of symbols is strictly limited. They are most effective when they represent a service or concession that can be represented by an object, such as a bus or bar glass. They are much less effective when used to represent a process or activity, such as Ticket Purchase, because these are complex interactions that vary considerably from mode to mode and even from carrier to carrier.

We are convinced that symbols are useless at a facility unless incorporated as part of an intelligent total sign system. The use of symbols alone, without consideration for the verbal messages and all other signing, will only add to the confusion.

We are convinced that it is more harmful to oversign than to undersign. To mix messages about relatively insignificant activities and concessions with essential public messages weakens the communication. While there may be some messages beyond this basic group that require symbols, only those messages that are truly essential should be considered.

Having said this, we do feel that, properly used, symbols can play an important role in facilitating communication and orientation in transportation-related facilities. We also believe that a well conceived and well designed set of symbols can win wide acceptance.

Thomas H. Geismar, Chairman.
The American Institute of Graphic Arts Committee on Signs and Symbols, November, 1974.

Initial Message Areas

The first task of the committee was to develop a group of initial message areas:

The first category, Public Services, contains twelve messages which represent services widely used in transportation-related facilities and seven additional messages to represent all common public transportation modes. The second category, Concessions, includes messages that are related to commercial activities. The third category, Processing Activities, was developed for the messages that represent important passenger-related procedures. Finally, a fourth category was created for Regulations. Three prohibitory messages were selected along with two closely related opposites.

We have attempted to describe the message areas with wording that corresponds to conventional terms, without over simplifying. These are not necessarily the words that would appear on actual signs. The guideline section of this report offers recommendations about the suggested wording that should appear with the symbols.

Public Services

Telephone
Mail
Currency Exchange
First Aid
Lost and Found
Baggage Lockers
Elevator
Toilets, Men
Toilets, Women
Toilets
Information
Hotel Information
Taxi
Bus
Ground Transportation
Rail Transportation
Air Transportation
Heliport
Water Transportation

Concessions

Car Rental
Restaurant
Coffee Shop
Bar
Shops

Processing Activities

Ticket Purchase
Baggage Check-in
Baggage Claim
Customs
Immigration

Regulations

No Smoking
Smoking
No Parking
Parking
No Entry

Transportation Related Symbols

Basis of Evaluation

Frequently the words legibility, readability, and clarity enter discussions about symbols. While these words reflect realistic concerns, they are too inaccurate to be useful in evaluating symbols. To produce consistent judgments a more objective basis was needed. Three very fundamental aspects served as the outline for the committee's evaluations. All visual communication, including symbols, have three distinct dimensions: semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic. The strengths and weaknesses of every symbol can be evaluated in relation to these basics of communication.

The semantic dimension refers to the relationship of a visual image to a meaning.

How well does this symbol represent the message?
Do people fail to understand the message that the symbol denotes?
Do people from various cultures misunderstand this symbol?
Do people of various ages fail to understand this symbol?
Is it difficult to learn this symbol?
Has this symbol already been widely accepted?
Does this symbol contain elements that are unrelated to the message?

The syntactic dimension refers to the relationship of one visual image to another.

How does this symbol look?
How well do the parts of this symbol relate to each other?
How well does this symbol relate to other symbols?
Is the construction of this symbol consistent in its use of figure/ground, solid/outline, overlapping, transparency, orientation, format, scale, color, and texture?
Does this symbol use a hierarchy of recognition?
Are the most important elements recognized first?
Does this symbol seriously contradict existing standards or conventions?
Is this symbol, and its elements, capable of systematic application for a variety of interrelated concepts?

The pragmatic dimension refers to the relationship of a visual image to a user.

Can a person see the sign?
Is this symbol seriously affected by poor lighting conditions, oblique viewing angles, and other visual "noise"?
Does this symbol remain visible throughout the range of typical viewing distances?
Is this symbol especially vulnerable to vandalism?
Is this symbol difficult to reproduce?
Can this symbol be enlarged and reduced successfully?

In actuality, these three dimensions are interrelated in complex ways. Nevertheless, recognizing them makes it possible to logically isolate and evaluate specific qualities.

Considerations in Drawing the Symbols

In attempting to establish a unified set of symbols, one of the goals was to draw the symbols so they had a single graphic vocabulary. This was especially difficult in this project because of the extreme variety of images required by the messages. Some of the messages can be represented by bold abstract forms which depend on widespread education to become conventional symbols, such as the red cross or the internationally accepted No Entry symbol. Others depend on a picture of an object that is closely associated with the message to carry the meaning, such as airplane for Air Transportation or coffee cup for Coffee Shop. Finally, there are messages that are actually complex pictures of people engaged in processes such as purchasing a ticket, riding in an elevator, or inspecting luggage. Nevertheless, all the symbols, simple and complex, must function as a group with a recognizable visual vocabulary. Fortunately there are basic visual devices that can help establish a unified graphic vocabulary among the symbols. Many of these devices were employed in the creation of the initial group of symbols.

Simplification of the images is one characteristic that makes the set of symbols a coherent group. The amount of detail used in the drawings has been reduced to a practical minimum. Unimportant features have been eliminated, resulting in a set of symbols that

are consistently bold and direct. This characteristic boldness is also important if the symbols are to function as signs in busy confusing environments where unnecessary details would reduce legibility.

Guidelines for Application

The following guidelines were developed to illustrate desirable applications of the symbols to signage.

From the standpoint of legibility and recognizability, "ideal" guidelines would advocate universal consistency in presentation (including layout, accompanying letter style, arrow, size relationship, color relationship, illumination, and conformity to an established size/distance formula). However, cultural, environmental, and architectural conditions and styles vary greatly. Thus, from an aesthetic point of view an ideal set of guidelines would advocate freedom of application to allow and encourage the integration of graphics into the visual fabric of the environment.

These two ideals appear to be in conflict, but in fact need not be. Experienced designers know that the same visual elements may function entirely differently in different surroundings. For example, a yellow panel will stand out powerfully on a dark grey wall, be less forceful on a white wall, and disappear entirely on a yellow wall; or, a modern sans-serif letter style that may be in harmony with the contemporary architecture of a modern airport may be dissonant in an environment like Colonial Williamsburg.

Legibility Criteria

The following diagram illustrates the results of pragmatic testing of several symbols (Ticket Purchase, Elevator, and Taxi) and represents a rough guide to size/distance relationships. For the purpose of this illustration, legibility was defined as the recognition of the various elements that make the symbol understandable without the aid of wording or preconditioning. Recognition of the symbols after they are learned is another matter, and we feel cannot be meaningfully tested at this time except in the case of those few well known symbols such as First Aid, Men, Women, etc. The testing was done in daylight using symbols with black figures on white symbol fields displayed on a black sign background.

Figure 1 shows the result of the testing on the Ticket Purchase symbol. The distances from which the Taxi symbol was legible were 10% greater; for the Elevator symbol, 30% less.

One of the most important aspects of good signing is siting (Fig. 2). The closer to one's natural line of vision, the better. A useful rule of thumb is to avoid exceeding a 10-degree angle from the natural line of vision. This formula has value, primarily with regard to height, except in the case of a roadway or corridor type of con-

Figure 1.

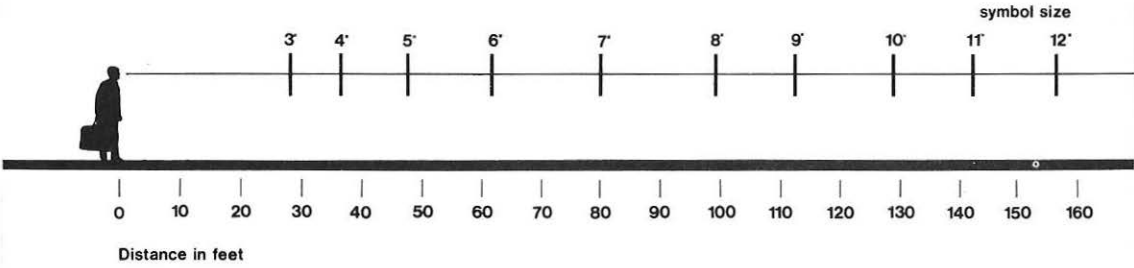
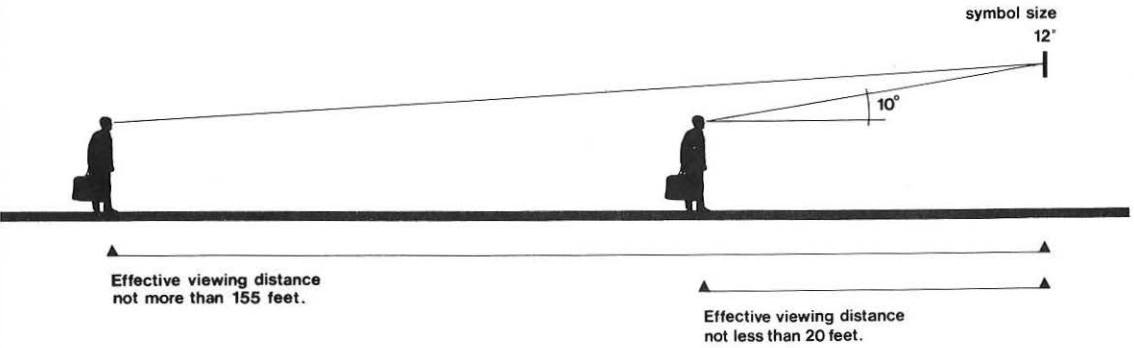


Figure 2.



dition where natural line of vision can be reasonably defined. If conditions require that the viewing angle exceeds 10 degrees, the size/distance relationship may have to be adjusted (for example, a sign at 15 feet above the floor level will probably have to be larger than the same sign at 8 feet to be as effective) or another smaller sign may have to be added for short-distance reading.

It must be pointed out that legibility varies greatly from one symbol to another or from one type style to another, and that color relationships, lighting, spacing, and viewing angle may also affect legibility. We recommend pragmatic testing of symbols and lettering on-site, or in simulated on-site conditions. If an attempt is made to equalize symbols of unequal legibility in a signing system by varying their size, the result would be visually chaotic. We recommend that the legibility characteristics of the least legible symbols determine the size of all the symbols in a given system. This would provide a sense of order and adequate legibility throughout. The intensity of internal lighting of symbols on translucent background material should be minimal to prevent loss of legibility due to halation, the spreading of light.

Use of Grid

We recommend that within a given facility or system only one type style be used, and that a consistent vocabulary of relationships be developed. In order to aid in the development and application of an established vocabulary, we recommend the use of some kind of consistent grid as a basis for the sign layouts. The grid used for the illustrations in these guidelines established certain key relationships; one symbol width between lettering and symbol, one half symbol width between arrow and symbol under most conditions, and one quarter symbol width between symbols.

Lettering

In order to provide the freedom to respond meaningfully to varying architectural and cultural styles, we are not recommending any one lettering or type style for use with the symbols. Choice of a type style should take into account legibility and compatibility with the symbols and the environment. Lettering and word-spacing affect the legibility and appearance of different

lettering styles in varying ways at different distances. Color and lighting also affect spacing needs. Generally, the following rules of thumb are useful:

White lettering on a dark background requires more letter spacing than does black on white.

Internally lighted letters may require greater letter-spacing, depending upon intensity of light.

Open letter-spacing increases legibility from great distances. (Larger letters spaced tighter and occupying the same area may accomplish the same thing.)

Many type styles suffer aesthetically when open letter-spacing is used.

Well executed optical letter-spacing (either open or tight) is better than mechanical letter-spacing.

Helvetica Medium (caps and lower-case) was selected for these illustrations because of its excellent legibility, compatibility with the symbols, and aesthetic quality. Its extremely large x-height (the height of lower case-letters such as the x) also allows the use of both upper- and lower-case with relatively little size loss. The word shapes created by the ascending and descending letters aid in legibility.

The directional arrow style was selected because of its compatibility with the Helvetica Medium letter style used and was positioned in a consistent relationship to the symbols.

Lettering size should be determined by testing, but a reasonably effective guide is to provide 1 inch of letter height for each 50 feet of viewing distance.

Symbol Presentation

In order to ensure legibility and recognizability of the symbols, it is important that certain visual elements be kept consistent. The drawing of the symbols and the proportional relationship of the figure (the drawing or symbolic device) to the symbol field (the square area with radius corners) must always be maintained.

With the exception of the No Smoking, No Parking, and No Entry symbols the figure must always be presented in the symbol field. It is also important that the figure always be black on a white symbol field. (Never use the symbols in reverse: white figure in a black symbol field. Many are difficult to read when presented in this manner.) A very dark color may be used in lieu of black for the figure, or a light color for the symbol field, if desired, but strong dark/light contrast must be maintained in order to ensure good legibility.

Summary

The recommended family of symbols represents the best efforts of the committee and its subcontractors during the time available. Throughout the process of evaluation, selection, and design, decisions have been made subjectively by individuals and groups having wide experience in the problems of signage. Beyond this method, however, it is quite difficult to predetermine objectively the effectiveness of any one symbol. Experience shows that constant repetition has more to do with effectiveness than does a difference in style of drawing or appropriateness of concept. The No Entry symbol is now understood in most Western countries because it has been widely used; it would be meaningless in an area where it had never been seen. For the same reason, the results of survey tests taken at on-site locations have their limitations. Do most people recognize the handset as a symbol for telephone because it is a good symbol or because it has already been widely used? Would a different symbol for telephone, with equal exposure, have been even more effective? Can a symbol with very little exposure be expected to be well recognized?

With an understanding that such tests can provide only limited information, we do feel that use of the symbols in actual conditions can help point up any especially poor symbols or major defects in the overall system. Such testing should be carried out in a wide range of locations, at least some of which serve large numbers of foreign visitors. We further recommend that any survey evaluations to be made at on-site locations be done professionally with the goals and methods clearly predetermined.

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This article has been excerpted with kind permission from *Symbol Signs: The Development of Passenger/Pedestrian Oriented Symbols for Use in Transportation-Related Facilities* (DOT-OS-40192 November 1974) prepared by The American Institute of Graphic Arts for the Office of Facilitation, Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety, and Consumer Affairs, United States Department of Transportation. The entire document is available through the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, VA 22151. Price: $6.25.

Correspondence

The editors welcome comments on articles, reviews, and letters that have appeared in past numbers. Communications should be addressed to the Editor, c/o The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH USA 44106.

To the Editor:

I have read Aaron Marcus' "Introduction to the Visual Syntax of Concrete Poetry" with great interest. The problem of categorisation is an important one with which I have been struggling albeit rather unsuccessfully for a long time (see my collaborative study with Bob Cobbing, *Concerning Concrete Poetry*, privately printed, London 1971). However, I doubt that Marcus does justice to the classification which he cites in his article (*Visible Language*, VIII, 4, 333f, n. 2) which is set out in the Stedelijk Museum's catalogue *Sound texts ?concrete poetry? visual texts*, Amsterdam 1971. This catalogue briefly summarises pages 6-16 & 22-116 of the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Helmhaus, *Text Buchstabe Bild* (=Text Letter Picture) which has eleven pages by Felix Andreas Baumann devoted to twenty-six or twenty-nine categories which are then exemplified on pages 22-116. Though I doubt that Baumann's classification is quite flawless, methodologically speaking, it does merit notice and in the context of an article concerning classification it could well have received detailed discussion.[1] In my article "Framed and Shaped Writing" in *Studio International (Studiographic Supplement*, September 1968, pp. 110-114) I proposed a classification of mixes of word(s) and picture(s) which, though it grew out of a corpus pre-concrete visual poetry and of advertising, is nevertheless germane to classifying concrete poetry (see illustration).

On page 335, n7, of his article Marcus cites Hall's summary of Gibson's thirteen categories of perspective. Only about half of them relate to static two-dimensional representation, while the remainder are binocular or relate to the perception of motion. There is an excellent collection of examples of perspectival cues—such as size, tone, vertical position applied to both pictorial and textual material—in Frank Mulvey's *Graphic Perception of Space* (Reinhold, New York 1969). It is a most instructive exercise to read Mulvey's work in Gibson's order.

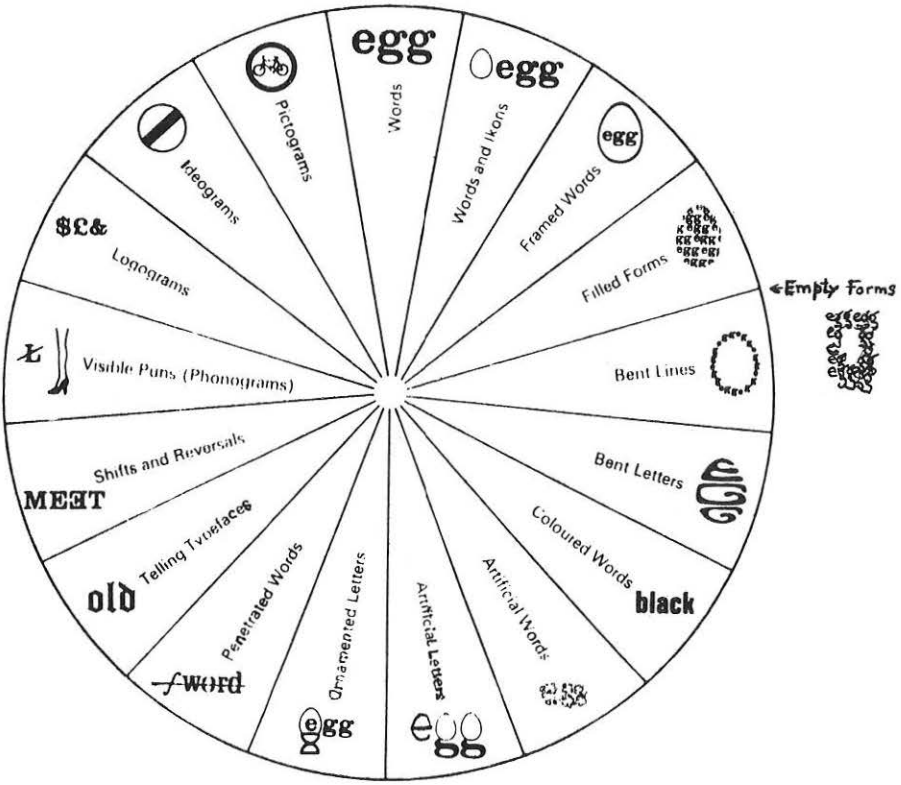
May I say how interesting and informative I found Marcus' article

and how high I find the standard of your journal's theoretical articles on concrete and visual poetry.

Peter Mayer, Visual Communication Lecturer, Graphic Department
Goldsmiths' College, New Cross, London SE14 6NW, England

1. Our tentative and unpublished classification (which was omitted from our book) comprised the following categories. We have included much of Baumann's categorisation which is denoted by lower-case letters in parentheses; Baumann prefixes each category with such a letter.

Action poem, Alphabet, Alphabet text (i), Anagram, Acrostic, Audiopoem, Audiovisual text (r), Collage (j), Calligraphic text (v) also handwritten, Colour text (m), Coloured text (m), Committed text= Protest poem (q), Constellation (e), De-collage (j), Duplicator (=mimeo) text, Electronic poem, Experimental poem, Flag/Banner poem, Flipbook poem, Fragment text (k), Fauve, Handwritten text (t), Ideogram (e), Ideogrammatic text, Ideograph, Kinkon, Kinetic, Kinetic (optical), Labyrinth (d & e), Letter pictures (w), Lettrist, Machine poem, Mimetic, Number poem (n), Object (static) poem (x), Objective poem, Onomatopoeia, Optical poem, Palindrome, Permutational poem,



Phonetic poem, Phonic poem, Picture text (u), Poster poem, Protest poem (q), Puns (paranomasia), Reduction (g & h), Semantic poetry, Semiotic text, Serial poem (f), Signs & code texts (v), Shaped poems, Sound poems, Superimpositions (c), Suprematist, Tautology (l), Text and design combinations (z), Text alphabet (i), Text fragments (k), Text series and textbooks (v), Text-sound compositions, Typewriter poems, Typestracts (s) Typograms (s), Visual poetry.

Some of these categories are in terms of media, of content, form, rhetorical tropes and/or figures, none of which can be neglected and most of which cut across each other.

To the Editor:

First of all I'd like to thank Herr Zapf for giving me an opportunity to air a few ideas in regard to *Visible Language* and the 1974 covers (Correspondence, Winter 1975, p. 92).

One can't help but muse at the idea of Herr Zapf's criticism that the journal is looking like an "underground publication" when in actuality the rational for most scientific publications are dialectic, and therefore "underground" in their manifestations. Traditionally, scientific publications have always played a questioning role in society. Information has always presupposed the question. Knowledge has always existed to scrutinize existing situations.

There seems to me to be a slight discrepancy here in regard to the design of many scientific journals. Clearly all scientific publications "want to be taken seriously." But the question is whether the traditional design vehicles utilized to maintain the credibility of such institutions are indicative of the scientific journals' ultimate purpose—to question and not to secure. It seems a bit ironic to me that the viability of such journals be dependent upon identifying with existing design mores "in order to be taken seriously."

The scientific spirit has always been a "self-made" one—not always clear in its attempts, sometimes muddled in its thoughts, and rarely purely professional in its entire expression. Our "self-made" covers are in a sense visual experiments. One mustn't forget that these covers were done for a publication called *Visible Language*—the Journal for Research on the Visual Media of Language Expression, which in the past has dealt primarily with visible language in a verbal sense. That is verbal language in a visual sense—which may be the crux to the whole matter.

Ken Komai, Basle, Switzerland

Résumé des Articles

Traduction: Fernand Baudin

Le graphisme des poèmes de Villon et de Marot *par Tom Conley*

En général, les poèmes écrits dans les débuts de l'imprimerie ne devraient se lire que dans les éditions incunables. Le graphisme des poèmes de François Villon et de Clément Marot est essentiel pour l'intelligence de l'oeuvre: *Le Grand Testament* de 1489 en caractères gothiques et les formes *épitaphes* ou *rondeaux* de *l'Adolescence clémentine* s'inscrivent dans les deux dimensions de la page de manière à suggérer une troisième dimension, celle du drame humain. De talle sorte que le dialogue entre la voix humaine et l'espace de la page, entre le discours et sa forme typographique restent toujours ouverts, la ponctuation marquant les zones de passage, d'évasion qui sont sources de grande poésie lyrique.

L'Inscription sur la pierre à aiguiser de Strøm par *Elmer H. Antonsen*

L'inscription runique sur la pierre à aiguiser de Strøm en Norvège est particulièrement interessante parce-qu'elle présente la plus ancienne chanson de travail connue dans les langues germaniques. Les archéologues ne peuvent pas aider à dater cette inscription parce-qu'on n'a pas trouvé d'autres objets avec la pierre. Les essais jusqu'aujourdhui à dater l'inscription se basent sur des fausses suppositions à l'égard des développements phonologiques et de l'âge relatif de certaines variantes runiques. Il se démontre que l'inscription peut être interprétée sans telles hypothèses et que la chanson de travail doit se dater d'environ 450-500 A.D., pas du début de la septième siècle comme l'on a supposé jusqu'à présent.

Les différentes graphies de certaines lettres *par Earl M. Herrick*

Dans beaucoup de langues écrites il y a des lettres qui ont plusieurs graphies différentes. Partout où une lettre de ce genre vient à s'écrire, sa graphie est déterminée par sa position dans le mot ou dans le texte; par une forme dialectale; par les graphies voisines, dans les écritures dont chaque lettre est subdivisée en éléments distincts; par la nature, par le style de sa transcription typographique ou calligraphique. L'article examine ces variantes graphiques et fournit des illustrations en plusieurs langues.

L'enseignement de l'écriture: bibliographie des publications récentes *par Ching Y. Suen*

D'une manière générale cette bibliographie se rapporte aux ouvrages concernant l'apprentissage de l'écriture. Très diversifiée, elle s'adresse aux chercheurs et leur apporte une source abondante d'informations sur les méthodes, les exercises, les instruments les plus récents, ainsi que sur les systèmes d'évaluation et de cotation.

Mauriche Roche: Crâne, Carne *par Thomas D. O'Donnell*

Maurice Roche s'est détaché du *nouveau roman* au sens courant, par la fonction qu'il attribue au language et par les liens textuels qui relient ses trois ouvrages: *Compact*, *Circus*, et *Codex*. Son attitude à l'égard de ce double aspect du langage est illustrée par carne/crâne jeu de mots qui revient sans cesse dans *Circus*, le crâne suggérant la mort, la carne suggérant la sexualité, correspondent sans doute à l'antithèse classique eros/thanatos et authorisent la lecture anagrammatique de *Circus* en *cri* pour mort, et cu(l)s pour sexe. Le calembour, intersection de deux ou trois signes, devient pour Roche l'intersection de deux ou trois systèmes de symboles: le mot parlé, le mot

écrit, la disposition typographique de la page. C'est par son refus de la lecture linéaire, propre au roman, que Roche est le plus avant-garde.

Une signalisation à l'usage des piétons et des passagers dans les transports publics *par l'American Institute of Graphic Arts*

En collaboration avec le Service des Usagers, Ministère des Transports, l'A.I.G.A. a créé 34 symboles à l'usage des passagers et des piétons. Il s'agissait de concevoir un ensemble cohérent, susceptible d'éluder tous les problèmes linguistiques au niveau des instructions élémentaires communes à toutes les entreprises de transports publics, à l'échelle nationale ou internationale. L'A.I.G.A. s'est attaché par principe aux symboles existants et dont l'usage est déjà généralisé; il n'a introduit de nouveaux signes que pour des concepts encore mal définis. L'article donne la description détaillée de la démarche suivie et des directives pour leur utilisation.

Kurzfassung der Beiträge

Übersetzung: Dirk Wendt

Wortformen in der Dichtung von Villon und Marot *von Tom Conley*

Im allgemeinen kann man Lyrik aus der Frühzeit der Druckpresse nicht in anderen Ausgaben als im Original lesen. Die visuelle Ästhetik in der Gestaltung der dichterischen Struktur von Francois Villon und Clément Marot ist wesentlich für das Verständnis ihrer Werke: *Le Grand Testament* of 1489 in gothischer Schrift und die physische Form der *epitaphes* und *rondeaux* der *Adolescence clémentine* benutzen in differenzierter Weise den Mangel an Fülle auf der zweidimensionalen Oberfläche, um eine menschliche Tragödie in drei Dimensionen herauszuarbeiten. So bleibt ihr Dialog zwischen Stimme und Raum oder Gespräch und Figur stets offen und zeigt in seiner Punktuation die Bereiche der Durchdringung und Sehnsucht, die große lyrische Dichtung ausmachen.

Die Inschrift auf dem Wetzstein von Strøm *von Elmer H. Antonsen*

Die Runeninschrift auf dem Wetzstein von Strøm in Norwegen ist von besonderem Interesse, weil sie den frühesten Beleg eines Arbeitsliedes in den germanischen Sprachen darstellt. Die Archäologen können nicht dazu beitragen, diese Inschrift zu datieren, da keine anderen Gegenstände mit dem Wetzstein gefunden wurden. Frühere Versuche, die Datierung aufgrund runologischer und linguistischer Kriterien festzulegen, basierten auf unbegründeten Annahmen in bezug auf phonologische Entwicklungen und das relative Alter bestimmter Runenvarianten. Es wird gezeigt, daß die Inschrift ohne solche Annahmen gedeutet werden kann, und daß das Arbeitslied nicht aus dem Beginn des 7. Jahrhunderts, wie früher angenommen, sondern spätestens aus der Zeit um 450-500 n.Chr. stammen muß.

Buchstaben mit alternativen Grundformen *von Earl M. Herrick*

In vielen geschriebenen Sprachen gibt es Buchstaben, die durch Zeichen ausgedrückt werden können, die mehr als eine Grundform haben. Bei jedem Auftreten des Buchstabens wird die Form benutzt, die den Umständen entspricht, unter denen der Buchstabe auftritt. So sind einige der verschiedenen Grundformen angremessen bei gewissen Stellen im Wort oder anderen Stellen des Textes; einige werden in verschiedenen Dialekten benutzt; einige gehören zu verschiedenen Parallelformen (Unterformen der Schrift, die jeweils Grundformen aller Buchstaben haben); einige werden von verschiedenen Druckschriften oder Handschriften gebraucht. Dieser Aufsatz diskutiert die verschiedenen Arten der Variation zwischen den Grundformen und gibt Beispiele aus verschiedenen Schriften.

Schreiben lernen—Eine Bibliographie zeitgenössischer Veröffentlichungen *von Ching Y. Suen*

Diese Bibliographie gibt zeitgenössische Literatur zum Schreibenlernen an. Die vielfältige Sammlung hat den Zweck, dem Forscher ausführliches Quellen-Material über den Schreibunterricht, -systeme und -praktiken, Instrumente und Methoden der Bewertung in die Hand zu geben.

Maurice Roche: Crâne, Carne *von Thomas D. O'Dannell*

Maurice Roche unterscheidet sich von dem traditionelleren *Nouveau Roman* durch die Rolle, die er der Sprache zuweist, und durch das Phänomen des Miteinander-Verwoben-Seins seiner drei Novellen *Compact, Circus* und *Codex*. Sein Aufsatz zu den beiden Phänomenen ist gut illustriert an dem Wortspiel "*carne/crâne*", auf das er im *Circus* beharrlich zurückkommt. Das *crâne*, das an Tod erinnert, und das *carne*, das an Sexualität anklingt, können als die traditionellen Polaritäten der eros/thanatos-Dimension gesehen werden, und legen eine anagrammatische Leseweise des Titels "*Circus*" nahe: *cri* oder Tod, und *cu(l)s*, oder Sex. Das Wortspiel, als Kreuzung von zwei oder mehr Zeichen, wird für Roche die Kreuzung von zwei oder mehr Zeichensystemen: das gesprochene Wort, das geschriebene Wort, und die graphische Anordnung auf der gedruckten Seite. In seiner Weigerung, die Liniarität des Novellen-Textes zu akzeptieren, ist Roche am avantgardistischsten.

Die Entwicklung von Fahrgast-/Fußgängerorientierten Symbolen zum Gebrauch in Verkehrseinrichtungen *von: The American Institute of Graphic Arts*

Das "American Institute of Graphic Arts" (Amerikanische Institut für graphische Künste' hat in Zusammenarbeit mit dem United States Department of Transportation (U.S. Verkehrsministerium), Office of Facilitation (Büro für Erleichterungen) 34 an Fahrgäste und Fußgänger gerichtete Symbole zum Gebrauch in Verkehrseinrichtungen geschaffen. Das Ziel des Projektes war es, eine konsistente und in sich aufeinander abgestimmte Gruppe von Symbolen herzustellen, welche die Sprachschranken überbrücken und elementare Informationen an einheimischen und internationalen Reise-Einrichtungen vereinfachen könnten. Im Verlauf der Arbeit wurden weitverbreitete und eingeführte Symbolvorstellungen voll ausgenutzt und neue Symbol-Formen nur eingeführt, wenn keine befriedigenden Vorbilder vorhanden waren. Der Bericht enthält ausführliche Beschreibungen des Verlaufs der Entwicklung der Symbole wie auch Richtlinien für ihren Gebrauch.

This number of *Visible Language* has been composed in Baskerville types by Great Lakes Lithograph Company, Cleveland, Ohio. It has been printed by the Mueller Printing Company, Cleveland, on Plainwell Kashmir Matte—80-pound text and 80-pound cover paper.

The Authors

Tom Conley is an assistant professor in the Department of French and Italian at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN 55455). He received his Ph.D. on Renaissance narrative in France from the University of Wisconsin in 1971, and has published on the plastic aspects of sixteenth century and modern French literature. Dr. Conley is currently preparing a monograph on Montaigne's spatial aesthetic and teaches courses on word and images in French literature and cinema.

Elmer H. Antonsen is Professor of Germanic Languages and of Linguistics and Head of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Illinois (Urbana, IL 61801). He has taught graduate courses in runic inscriptions and Germanic linguistics at the Universities of Illinois, North Carolina, and Iowa. Dr. Antonsen is the author of numerous articles in American and European journals. His *Concise Grammar of the Older Runic Inscriptions*, to be published this year by Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, is the first such work written in English.

Earl M. Herrick is an instructor in the Department of English at Texas A & I University (Kingsville, TX 78363) where he teaches linguistics and English and Spanish grammar. His research interests include the linguistic study of written language and stratificational linguistic theory. He has published several papers on both of those topics and is now completing for publication a comprehensive linquisitic analysis of the writing system of English.

Ching Y. Suen is assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science at Concordia University (Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8). He received his Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering from the University of British Columbia in 1972. Dr. Suen's current interests include optical character recognition, speech aids for the blind, and evaluation of computer equipment.

Thomas D. O'Donnell is an assistant professor of French at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN 55455). He completed his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in 1971, writing on James Joyce and Michel Butor. Dr. O'Donnell has written on the *nouveau roman* and the *nouveau nouveau roman*, and is currently working on a monograph on the *théorie des générateurs* in the contemporary French novel.

The American Institute of Graphics Arts (1059 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10021) is a non-profit professional society founded in 1914, as a formal cooperative organization to recognize those whose manner of expression involves creative work in the graphic arts. Its primary concern is the advocacy of excellence in all forms of graphic communication. The AIGA is the oldest and largest organization in the United States devoted to the interests of the creators and users of all the graphic arts.