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The Look of the Book: Visual Elements in the Experience of Reading from "Tristram Shandy" to Contemporary Artists' Books

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Abstract

In the age of the novel, we read fiction sequentially and unselfconsciously. This practice requires us to ignore the materiality and appearance of books, for these factors disrupt narrative absorption. "The Look of the Book" explores specific books from England and America whose visual and material characteristics resist and redefine habitual experiences of reading prose. These specimens connect word and image in the book format, and they therefore resist the theories of critics since Gotthold Lessing that have separated visual and verbal modes.

Lessing's contemporary, Laurence Sterne, uses visual elements in *Tristram Shandy* (1760–67) to digress from the reading sequence while furthering the overall narrative. Sterne's techniques also establish a taxonomy of the book's constituent variables. In the twentieth century, as bookmaking technologies became more widely accessible, a printing renaissance brought artists into book design. Vanessa Bell creates images and designs page layouts to amplify her sister Virginia Woolf's ekphrastic fiction in the third "decorated" edition of Woolf's *Kew Gardens* (Hogarth Press, 1927). The illustrations change the pace of reading by integrating word, image and book structure. In Tom Phillips' *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel* and *Sheherazade: A Flip Book*, by artist Janet Zweig and author Holly Anderson, words are inseparable from the visual layout of the page, and the resulting written texts create temporally fractured narratives. These postmodern artists' books show that narrative fiction and the physical novel are both malleable structures.

In all of these works, the "book composer," who masterminds the visual arrangement of the text, influences the reading experience in ways that have not been explored in the context of literary criticism. As predictions about the 'death of the book' circulate in the academy and popular media, this dissertation suggests that books can make available complex modes of reading that we generally do not expect from novels. This interdisciplinary approach is essential at a time when images pervade the cultural context and are being integrated more thoroughly into print media.

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THE LOOK OF THE BOOK:

VISUAL ELEMENTS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF READING

FROM *TRISTRAM SHANDY* TO CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS' BOOKS

Karen L. Schiff


A DISSERTATION


in

Comparative Literature and Literary Theory

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1998


Wendy Steiner, Supervisor of Dissertation


Rita Barnard, Acting Graduate Group Chairperson

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1998

TO MY GRANDPARENTS,
MAX AND RENA GASS,
FOR THEIR STRONG LOVE
AND SUPPORT

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ABSTRACT

THE LOOK OF THE BOOK:
VISUAL ELEMENTS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF READING
FROM *TRISTRAM SHANDY* TO CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS' BOOKS

KAREN SCHIFF

WENDY STEINER

In the age of the novel, we read fiction sequentially and unselfconsciously. This practice requires us to ignore the materiality and appearance of books, for these factors disrupt narrative absorption. "The Look of the Book" explores specific books from England and America whose visual and material characteristics resist and redefine habitual experiences of reading prose. These specimens connect word and image in the book format, and they therefore resist the theories of critics since Gotthold Lessing that have separated visual and verbal modes.

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author Holly Anderson, words are inseparable from the visual layout of the page, and the resulting written texts create temporally fractured narratives. These postmodern artists' books show that narrative fiction and the physical novel are both malleable structures.

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Introduction: Composing Fictions

In the standard printed novel, all visible elements of the book facilitate the reader's absorption in the linguistic text. They create the conditions for the experience psychologist Victor Nell describes in *Lost In A Book: The Psychology of Reading for Pleasure*: "When you read a book you lose the feeling of reading. The whole mechanics of the process of turning the pages and looking at letters vanishes . . ." (290). But the books I explore in this dissertation resist this "falling away of the barriers between you and [the book]" (Poulet 1213). These works — *Tristram Shandy* by Laurence Sterne, *Kew Gardens* by Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, and two artists' books, *A Humument* by Tom Phillips and *Sheherezade* by Janet Zweig and Holly Anderson — defamiliarize and redefine the activity of reading by highlighting the visual appearance of the words on the page, adding images to prose in unusual ways, and foregrounding the material construction of the book. Readers or critics of these works must either become familiar with new frameworks for combining words, images, and materiality, or risk missing a fuller sense of textual significance.

The defamiliarization of the look of the book foregrounds the fact that no text can be considered apart from its material embodiment. The literature we read is always inflected by its visual manifestation. As Jerome McGann writes in *The Textual Condition*: "The word is always and everywhere made flesh" (176). Of course, the image is also made flesh: both

symbol systems are made visible by ink or pigment, and exist within the margins of the book page.¹ But these facts are so familiar that they fade into the background, until particular books, such as those in this study, violate the conventional forms.

A. Historical Backdrop: Printing, Reading, and the Space and Time of the Novel

Standard printed novels, since the rise of the genre in the eighteenth century, have been dominated by the linearity of linguistic sequence. The sequential structure of language fits neatly into lines of print: grammar restricts the order of words and printing arranges them into a linear presentation on the page. Just as language is organized in linear time, the structure of the book also contains a temporal sequence. But rarely do critics investigate the effects of spatial or visual configuration on the experience of reading a novel.

The lack of visual intrusions on the novel's pages means that each page corresponds visually to all the others.² The "grey page" of the conventional novel mechanistically repeats one design: "The first assembly line . . . was not one which produced stoves or shoes or weaponry but one which produced the printed book" (Ong 118). The uniformity of the page

¹ For this reason, I use the word "text" to refer to either words or images that are printed in the book. When I refer to either of these textual elements separately, I use phrases such as "written text" or "visual image." Here "writing" implies the transformation of language into printed letterforms on the book page, and not the handwriting that this word can also indicate. In general in this work, I distinguish the "text" from the materiality or physicality of the book.

² The design of book pages is more consistent than that of the pages in a magazine or newspaper. Though the general format of a particular periodical might be recognizable, individual pages still have to incorporate various predesigned "foreign" elements of advertisements and notices.

design keeps the structure of reading consistent, and allows the reader to attend more closely to the story instead of to the physical medium.

The visual appearance of the page, as it becomes habitual, also expedites a reader's progress through text. As Walter Ong writes, "By and large, printed texts are far easier to read than manuscript texts. The effects of the greater legibility of print are massive. The greater legibility ultimately makes for rapid, silent reading" (Ong 122). The habitual process of reading such a novel treats words as if they were also travelling on an assembly line: the eye moves relentlessly from the left to the right margin, from the top to the bottom of a page, from the front to the back of a book.³ These movements from the beginning to the end of the line, page, or volume indicate progressions through time as well as space.

It is necessary to distinguish between the time it takes to read and the time the reader imaginatively inhabits, for the visual appearance of the book affects both kinds of time. Most theorists discuss the chronological time it takes to read books: Robert Scholes writes that "Reading, it cannot be emphasized too much, takes place in time" (8). Book artist Buzz Spector explains this in terms of the book as a material structure: "Reading as an endeavor takes real time, as the textual or pictorial narrative develops through many turnings of pages" (10). Pages determine the time of reading: if they present large quantities of information, the reader's pace through the book is slower.

This mechanistic view of reading assumes that the pages will be turned in sequence, though the format of the codex does not require such

³ Claude Gandelman reports that the eye moves more erratically during speed reading.

handling. As Jeffrey Masten, Peter Stallybrass, and Nancy Vickers observe in their book, *Language Machines*,

Perhaps one of the most persistent modern myths of reading is the myth of teleological narrative: the myth that “the book,” as a technological form, is organized so as to be read from page 1 to page 2, from page 2 to page 3, and so on to the end of the book. This is of course a *possible* way of reading a book, and one that was encouraged by the development of narrative fiction in the eighteenth century. (2)⁴

Novels generally fulfill this expectation and immerse the reader in a narrative, unlike other genres such as reference books and modern bibles which invite an idiosyncratic reading sequence (Masten, Stallybrass and Vickers 3-4). But the novel can only command a mechanistic reading sequence if its pages all look the same. With consistent layout, “A literary (prose) text contained in a book *ignores* the fact that the book is an autonomous space-time sequence” (Carrión 31).

Still, a consistent page treatment affects the reader’s sense of time less predictably than the assembly-line metaphor would lead us to expect. Instead of chopping up time into measured parcels, the familiarity of the book page allows the reader’s imaginary time to flow more freely. As Sven Birkerts observes this common experience in his popular book, *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age*, “Through the process of reading we slip out of our customary time orientation, marked by distractedness and superficiality [*sic*], into the realm of duration” (32). Birkerts loosely appropriates Henri Bergson’s idea of the *durée*, a lasting present moment that is not defined by chronological time. As we lose consciousness of the book page, we blur our sense of the time that it takes to

⁴ Though narrative traditions did not begin in the eighteenth century, examples of the novel do build, question, and perpetuate the “myth of teleological narrative.”

read, and we become absorbed in another sense of time suggested by the unfolding narrative.

Even when books diverge from the familiar “grey page,” by including a full-page illustration opposite a page of type, the sequence of words can remain uninterrupted. The “sister arts” of literature and visual art stand side by side, each on its own half of the opening or page spread; this arrangement does not substantially challenge a novelistic reading practice. A glance at an illustration does not necessarily break a reader’s absorption in a narrative space or time.

In a general sense, however, a reader’s progression through words is different from the movement that images demand. While reading a line of print generally does involve moving from the beginning to the end of a sentence, processing images in time is less sequential. Though a drawn line can have a beginning and an end, it can be recognized as the same line if “read” backwards as easily as forwards; the same cannot be said of a sentence.

Pictures that involve more than one line (i.e., representations, color fields) have no sequential path for the eye to follow in time; the notion of “progress” is not strictly measurable. A picture can be “looked at” with a general gaze as well as “read” with an eye for the narrative structure (of an allegorical painting, for instance) or the flow of the visual composition. This gaze is removed from the sequence of time as well as from directionality. Thus these books play with the reader’s perception of time in the narrative.

The works I have selected all require extra time and effort to read because they all combine word and image in unusual ways. Though the inclusion of images in texts is hardly new, the arrangement of these images

disrupts the usual reading practice. The book page is no longer a vehicle for literary text; it is a self-consciously explored site for decoration and defamiliarization. The reader therefore must develop a new way of moving through the book, which changes the rhythm of reading (in real time and imaginary time). One result, to Birkerts' traditionalist chagrin, is a loss of the reader's absorption in the narrative. On the whole, however, these composers enrich the overall significance of the narrative by investing all elements of the book with expressive potential.

B. Word/Image Theory

Visual alterations of the book page situate these works within a centuries-old theoretical discussion of the relations between words and images. Though my project moves from the eighteenth century to the present, I do not claim that the inclusion of images in texts begins in the eighteenth century. Nor do I mean to suggest a teleological development in book production from an emphasis on the word to an emphasis on the image. The emphasis on word or image depends on technological capacity of the moment as much as on aesthetic context or authorial intention.

Certainly textual artistry has accompanied verbal texts in many cultures for centuries; manuscript productions and even early printed texts mixed the visual and verbal modes to great effect. "In the Far East," writes Michel Butor, "calligraphy has always been considered as the necessary communication between painting and poetry" ("Réponses" 177). But in contemporary Western culture, calligraphy is considered a rarified art or craft. Instead, for bringing together words and images, Butor says, "We have

today the composition of the book" ("Réponses" 177).⁵ Butor's words can apply to a wide range of Western book production. He focuses on novelists such as Miguel de Cervantes, Fyodor Dostoïevski, Honoré de Balzac, Émile Zola, and William Faulkner. But with the exception of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, these novels are printed in conventional style; the words fill a consistent rectangular area on each page.⁶ Thus, rather than making teleological or geographical claims about the "evolution" of word and image combinations in the book format, I investigate disruptions of conventionally printed books produced during the era of the novel, to uncover the meanings that those disruptions add to specific texts.

Since the late-eighteenth-century musings of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, many studies of words and images treat the two modes of expression as separate. Lessing ushered in an era of art criticism that assigned different functions to authors' and artists' work. Following his

⁵ "En Extrême-Orient, la calligraphie a toujours été considérée comme la communication nécessaire entre peinture et poésie. Nous avons aujourd'hui l'arrangement du livre." The word "arrangement" is difficult to translate. The *Collins-Robert French Dictionary* suggests "layout" in the context of "mobilier," or the spatial arrangement of furniture in a room. Since the layout of a book page, in letterpress printing, also involves the arrangement of furniture (meaning blocks of spacing material) in the metal frame that holds the letters of a page, and since the arrangement of words on a page is commonly called "layout," this word seems a plausible translation. In the context of "mots," however, the translation is "order," but this seems to refer more to grammatical order or syntax. Though the "'arrangement' of the book" does involve an ordering of words, this "order" includes visual considerations and not just proper linguistic sequence. The word "composition," as I define it in this project, encompasses all of these meanings (see section D, below).

⁶ When Faulkner wrote *The Sound and the Fury*, he wanted to print the opening "Benjy" section in differently colored types to indicate the different registers of discourse that were present in the narrative. He occasionally made books in his spare time, so he could be sensitive to the appearance of his written work. At the time, however (1929), printing technology was not developed enough to fulfill Faulkner's wish, so instead he agreed to use italics and punctuation strategically after debating with his publisher. He rejected his publisher's suggestion to put spaces between sections of the narrative (as shown in Meriwether 296). For detailed accounts of this exchange, see Gail Morrison 55-58 and James Meriwether 295-99.

lead, subsequent critics often examine artworks created by different people for different occasions, and the agendas of the pieces are only serendipitously congruent. For example, the table of contents for Daniel R. Schwarz's book, *Reconfiguring Modernism: Explorations in the Relationship between Modern Art and Modern Literature*, yields at least four such pairings.⁷ Lessing himself develops his theories with inspiration from Homer as the epitome of poetry (79), and from Raphael as a prime example of painting (92), a pairing motivated by little aside from a shared aesthetic excellence and accepted historical importance.

This structure encourages a dialectic of comparison, which Mitchell warns can either assume unfounded commonalities or incommensurable difference. On the one hand, an interartistic comparison can be reduced to a semiotic insistence that all works of art are comprised of "unifying, homogeneous" signs. On the other hand, the elaborate codification of verbal and visual signs runs the risk of implying that the relations between these signs are constrained to a "strategy of comparison/contrast that ignores other forms of relationship," such as "metonymic juxtapositions, . . . incommensurability, and . . . unmediated or non-negotiable forms of alterity" (Mitchell, *Picture* 87).

The works in this study engage these alternative relations between word and image. Despite the post-Enlightenment separation of the two modes and the resulting practice of comparing them, there is ample historical precedent for their joint consideration. Sometimes, indeed, the separation of word and image derives from misinterpretations of earlier

⁷ His chapters examine relations between Edouard Manet and Henry James; Paul Gauguin and Joseph Conrad; Paul Cézanne and T. S. Eliot; Pablo Picasso, James Joyce, and Wallace Stevens.

theorists. Classical writings, for instance, often mention the arts together. Though at that time painting was not considered as worthy of attention as poetry — “no theoretical treatise had survived that attempted, as the *Poetics* did for literature, to define the nature of the art of painting, and to discuss it in terms of formal aesthetic” (Lee 6) — poetry and painting in Aristotle’s *Poetics* and Horace’s *Ars Poetica* form analogies for each other instead of being treated as irremediably separate. Aristotle maintains, for example, that “artists imitate men doing or experiencing something” (qtd. in Lee 5, n12), a description that could as easily have described the work of the poet. He reasons, furthermore, that “plot was the most essential element in tragedy” because “a canvas smeared at random with the loveliest colors will not give as much pleasure as a portrait done in outline” (Lee 5). Horace uses another type of analogy when he said that “poetry should be compared to painting which exhibits not merely a detailed style that requires close scrutiny, but also a broad, impressionistic style that will not please unless viewed from a distance” (Lee 5). These writings imply that the two arts can be perceived with similar attitudes; there is a relation between word and image that lets the philosophers use one mode to modify their discussion of the other.

The works in this project require an interdisciplinary consideration of word and image that brings together the “sister arts” within the book structure.⁸ They relate in this structure dialectically: the different

⁸ If word and image are sisters, then who are their parents? Wendy Steiner holds that the different modes grow from (and therefore expose) a common cultural history, or the set of past and the present resources that are available to both verbal and visual artists. As she writes in *The Colors of Rhetoric*, “the interartistic comparison inevitably reveals the aesthetic norms of the period” (18). These aesthetic norms are guiding forces (not constraints — sometimes they are the structures against which works are created) that give birth to all works of art. W. J. T. Mitchell, writing later, concludes that Steiner’s philosophy is

characteristics of words and images need not be subsumed by a theory of semiotics. As J. Hillis Miller writes in his book, *Illustration*,

Any sign is to some degree meaningless or possessed of a unique non-repeatable or untranslatable meaning. In this each sign is like a proper name. Or, to propose a final formulation, it is not only the case that any visual image is other than, the 'other' of, its accompanying words. Each expression in each medium is also inhabited by its own other. The difficult, perhaps impossible, task of reading works in either medium consists, in part, of identifying in each case this other by way of tracks it has left within the work. (Miller 95-96)

Each textual element makes a unique contribution to the overall work. It also exists in an inextricable relation with the "other" elements in the book. It is therefore necessary to discuss their combined significance instead of merely their coexistence.

In describing a relation between word and image that suits the works in this project, I find most useful two theoretical configurations by W.J.T. Mitchell. First, he describes the work of William Blake in *Blake's Composite Art* as an ever-changing array of "visual-verbal independence and interplay" (9), a "composite art."⁹ Word and image are both separate and joined; they have distinct characteristics but can work together. But Blake's work is not wholly germane to my study, since Blake did not reproduce his words with letterpress technology (which would have been appropriate to his time). Instead, he made them into part of his illuminations by hand-lettering his poems on metal plates, as if the letters

inevitably "arty" and only succeeds in reifying the most commonly held assumptions about any particular time (*Language* 87). He neglects to consider, however, the critic's use of the information; he fatalistically assumes the prior acceptance of insipid generalizations about cultural history. But it is just such a dual- (or multi-) disciplinary study of contemporaneous works of art that initially produce — or challenge — a sense of the zeitgeist that he criticizes Steiner for continually recreating.

⁹ Mitchell's title term echoes Jean Hagstrum's discussion of Blake (Hagstrum 1).

were also etched images. In fact, writes Mitchell, “there is almost something perverse about discussing the ‘relations’ between the constituent parts of an art form which is so obviously unified in both conception and execution” (*Blake’s* 15). The examples in my study, in contrast, integrate visual images with *type*.

Mitchell’s typographical expression for a successful interartistic study, which appears in a footnote in his book *Picture Theory*, serves as my second reference point:

I will employ the typographic convention of the slash to designate ‘image/text’ as a problematic gap, cleavage, or rupture in representation. The term ‘imagetext’ designates composite, synthetic works (or concepts) that combine image and text. ‘Image-text,’ with a hyphen, designates *relations* of the visual and verbal. (89, n9)

Instead of separating the image/text from other ways of representing interactions between words and images, I contend that the image/text is like a structure of “*différance*” that underlies all interdisciplinary considerations. There can be no image-text without image/text, because there can be no “relations” between modes without some basic connections.

The “image-text” configuration matches J. Hillis Miller’s characterization of conventionally illustrated books. Images stand apart from words and signify in a different mode. Occasionally examples of imagetext, by virtue of blending the modes, can avoid the image/text relation. In typography, for example, words cannot be considered in relation to a visual manifestation, because that visual manifestation is never separate from the word itself. Art historian Johanna Drucker therefore characterizes typography as “refusing to resolve into either a visual or a verbal mode” (Drucker, *Visible* 4). Because type engages the visual sense

and the verbal understanding at the same time, the reader may need to attend to these perceptions sequentially in order to distinguish between them.

Since I use the word “text” in this project to include visual images, I rewrite Mitchell’s idea as the “word/image.” This phrase encapsulates the simultaneous disjunction and conjunction of word and image in this project. The image ruptures the consistent appearance of the page, but is still integral to its overall text(ure). “Poetry and painting” retain their individual significations but are related through their juxtaposition. Even when the images do not seem to replicate the content of the narrative, the combination of these two modes within the shared framework of a single page spread impels the reader actively to seek the relation between the visual and verbal elements in order to understand the book or narrative as a coherent whole. Here McGann significantly reminds us that “text” derives from a participle of the Latin “woven” — the word/image interweaves strands from these two modes to craft a unified work of art that contains various ruptures and cleavages.

In general, the works explore the interplay, the “problematic gap” between word and image that the reader must find ways to bridge. How does the image inflect the word? What is the nature of their disruptions and reattachments in specific works? None of these inquiries will be possible without first examining the material context in which the word/image relation appears: the book as an object.

C. The Material Text

Language and images are produced using physical materials such as ink and paper. Book artist Buzz Spector maintains that the book can be perceived through all of our senses: “The whole book can only be known if we add the knowledge of the hand, ear, and nose to that of the eye. This is not a trivial point: a book that cannot comfortably be held; or which stinks of mildew; or whose pages crumble when turned, will be more difficult to read very well” (75).¹⁰ Spector offers an excessively materialist view of the book. My aim is more modulated; I blend a materialist inquiry with the specifics of interpreting specific texts. In part, I am building on the work of Jerome McGann, whose book *The Textual Condition* attempts to revolutionize editing practices by restoring attention to the extralinguistic aspects of literature. Though my project does not consider the ways that a book affects the ear or the nose, it does attend to the book as a tactile object as well as a visible one. Of course, reading already involves both the eye and the hand: we hold the book and look at the words and images.

The fact that words and images can be grouped together as readable elements casts doubt on Jerome McGann’s characterization of “the text as a laced network of linguistic and bibliographical codes” (*Textual* 13). McGann’s category of the “bibliographical” cannot distinguish between extralinguistic textual elements.¹¹ Readers perceive McGann’s examples of

¹⁰ In my investigation, I neglect the odor of books, since the sense of smell is highly individualized and context-specific, and therefore difficult to theorize in a general way. I will also leave aside the aural qualities of books that Spector neglects to define; I can only imagine that he means the sound of turning a page, which again is not deliberately created and whose significance I am not prepared to probe.

¹¹ McGann repeats his theoretical categories elsewhere in the book: “Every literary work that descends to us operates through the deployment of a double helix of perceptual codes: the linguistic codes, on the one hand, and the bibliographical codes on the other” (*Textual*

“bibliographical codes” — “ink, typeface, paper, and various other phenomena” (13) — through different senses. Typeface is perceived visually, while paper is primarily perceived through touch. Ink can be tactile as well as visible, especially in letterpress-printed books. Therefore, in this project, I specify McGann’s categories further; though the “linguistic” or “verbal” still refers to the denotations and connotations of words, the “imagistic” or “visual” and the “material” replace the “bibliographical” in my discussion. The “visual” involves not only images themselves, but also the appearance and arrangement of words and images on the page. The “material” refers to the more identifiably physical qualities of the volume’s paper and binding.

When McGann conflates the “visual” (or “imagistic”) and “material” in his discussion of “bibliographical” codes, he loses clarity in his theory. He uses words for visuality and materiality almost interchangeably:

We recognize the [bibliographical codes] simply by *looking* at a medieval literary manuscript — or at any of William Blake’s equivalent illuminated texts . . . Or at Emily Dickinson’s manuscript books of poetry, or her letters. In each of these cases the physique of the “document” has been forced to play an aesthetic function, has been made part of the “literary work.” That is to say, in these kinds of literary works the distinction between physical medium and conceptual message breaks down completely. (77, emphasis original)

In this paragraph, when McGann begins by “*looking at*” illuminations and ends by calling attention to the “physique” or “physical medium” of literary works, he conflates these two ways of perceiving the text.¹² When he

77). Again, I believe that he tries to make the word “bibliographical” represent too many aspects of reading the book.

¹² In part, I believe the conflation comes from ambiguous terminology. The “spatial structure” (*Textual* 113) of a text is perceived both in terms of visual space (page composition) and physical space (the material components that make up that structure).

analyzes Dickinson's writing in more detail, for example, his claim that the physical structure dictates the visual appearance of her pages loses persuasiveness from its lack of specificity.¹³ He writes, "The grouping of the poems into fascicles corresponds to a similar approach to the text at a more local level — a poetic deployment of writing within the given space of the page" (*Black* 27). This is clear enough at first glance: Dickinson's poems gain expressive power by relating their line breaks with the edges of the "fascicle" books she sewed for herself. But is the "space of the page" a physical or a visual consideration, or rather, how does the book engage both of these categories together? When McGann concludes, "one observes how crucially *visible* this language is" (*Black* 27, emphasis original), he does not offer any answers. "Visible" indicates either a textual layout or a material artifact. McGann's repeated use of italics for the language of visibility, here and elsewhere in his book, suggests that he has not found appropriate terms for the diversity of details grouped under the category of the "bibliographical."

These categories are of course difficult to tease out from each other. One can perceive material elements visually as well as through the sense of touch. The physical contours of the page constrain not only the print area but the field of vision. Language, too, is perceived visually, making reading itself a visual activity. But if visibility is separate enough to warrant inclusion in McGann's list of extralinguistic "bibliographical" codes, surely it can be wrested free from materiality as well.¹⁴

¹³ For McGann's full analysis of Dickinson, see *Black Riders*, pages 26–41.

¹⁴ The confusion of categorization can become even more profound when materiality is never separated out from the other elements. Michele Moylan and Lane Stiles create theoretical confusion in their summary of the "concrete forms" that readers must assimilate in order to understand (or "read") all the meanings of a text in the book format. In an introduction to

Material texts are created by a writer who creates the verbal text, an artist who creates images, and a book designer who creates the physical book that houses the words and images. I call the work of this third figure book composition, though the word “composition” itself can also refer to the work of the writer or the artist.

D. Authorship Includes Book Composition

The production of any book is a composite activity. It requires the coming together of many different contexts, from writing and illustrating the story to printing and publishing the book. In addition, the relations of all the people involved in these processes influence the project, and the artistic beliefs of the time intersect with all of these elements.¹⁵ All of these as aspects of “book composition,” which has several components.

“Composition” refers, first, to the physical act of composing type in letterpress printing, which is the historical genesis and reference point for all printing processes in the West since the Gutenberg Bible was produced in

their anthology, *Reading Books: Essays on the Material Text and Literature in America*, they write,

Clearly, when we read books, we really read *books*—that is, we read the physicality or materiality of the book as well as and in relation to the text itself. Literacy, then, may be said to include not only textual competence but material competence, an ability to read the semiotics of the concrete forms that embody, shape, and condition the meanings of text. Bindings, illustrations, paper, typeface, layout, advertisements, scholarly introductions, promotional blurbs—all function as parts of a semiotic system, parts of the total meaning of a text. (2)

While the list that Moylan and Stiles compile forms a rich umbrella for the diverse essays their anthology, they muddy the category of “physicality or materiality” by including scholarly introductions and illustrations in the same category as bindings and paper. The linguistic or imagistic elements that do not belong to a given literary work, but are still included in the same book, are more properly identified, as McGann quotes Gérard Genette, as “paratexts” — texts that are “ancillary to the main textual event” (*Textual* 13).

¹⁵ In this last assertion, I stop short of saying that any particular belief “influences” or “causes” any particular work of art. The relation between philosophy and artistic production is complicated; Roger Fry, for example, coined much of the terminology that *later* described his own work.

the fifteenth century. A “compositor” is historically a pressroom worker who assembles (or “composes”) words and lines, letter by letter (and space by space), on a tool called a “composing stick.” The next step in the printing process is to arrange these lines in a metal frame called a “chase.” This step involves creating a visual (and physically tight) arrangement, or composition, between the text area and the edges of the page as delineated by the chase. Blocks of “furniture” hold the letters in position inside the frame and therefore fill in the composition. Though the type and furniture can look elegant in their physical arrangement in the chase, this sense of “composition” refers to the visual arrangement of type and white space in the finished product.

Though this process is rarely used in twentieth-century book production, it still influences the characteristics of the printed page. Print carries the legacy of being fixed firmly into place. As print historian Walter Ong notes in his study of the cultural effects of material textuality, *Orality and Literacy*,

Print situates words in space more relentlessly than writing ever did. Writing moves words from the sound world to a world of visual space, but print locks words into position in this space. Control of position is everything in print. (Ong, 121)

In contemporary printing, words are composed or locked onto the page instead of in the chase.

The movement from speech to writing to print brings different people into the act of generating language for others’ consumption. In the shift from orality to literacy, the figure of the writer emerges, and the development of print adds a person who coordinates the typographical

composition. I call this figure the book composer, but print production includes more than just typography. The composer masterminds the look of the book overall. This person must orchestrate diverse elements (such as words, images, blank space, paper stock) into a harmonious or coherent whole, and bring them into physical form during printing. Also, the composer must coordinate the collaborative efforts of, in addition to the writer, book designers, printers, sometimes composers, and (if the book has images or handwork) illustrators, artists, and/or craftspeople. In this sense, book composition is like the process of composing a symphonic work: the words, images, and materials in printed books work together like the distinct instruments of an orchestra — sometimes with dissonance, sometimes in consonance.¹⁶ The book can be composed as a work of art.

The composer's work is most often done by a person associated with the printer or publisher; indeed, the reputation of the publisher often influences the reception of a book as much as the author's name. The person who we commonly call the author might be more properly called the writer, because writing is only one component of literary "composition." Authorship includes the text's design, and the book composer coordinates its material production.¹⁷ This process generally takes place after the original writing, though not always.

¹⁶In the case of *Tristram Shandy*, the metaphor of the author as orchestral composer inspires an entire volume called *Laurence Sterne and the Origins of the Musical Novel*. Interestingly, the summation of musicality in *Tristram Shandy* borrows heavily from the terminology of visuality (Freedman 12-13).

¹⁷ Generally, the book is then packaged, marketed and sold with the assistance of many other people. Though this process may bring the book into a reader's hands, the sociology and economics of marketing books do not fit into my investigation of literary creation. Another study, perhaps, could probe works that make this process integral to the meaning of the book, just as I am reclaiming the significance of the printing process.

In twentieth-century culture, our customary focus on the writer as the producer of literature assumes that the writer and the “composer” are always separate. The writer does the ‘important’ or ‘creative’ work and hands off the text to the composer, who does the ‘dirty work’ of wrestling the literary creation into a marketable form.¹⁸ Early printing was literally filthy work; printshop workers were called “printer’s devils” because they would inevitably become covered in black ink and look like the devil. This formulation makes the composer’s role separate from and subordinate to the writer’s. It has been easy, then, to neglect the composer’s impact on the book.

The composer has also been neglected because in standard novels, the book design is indeed subservient to the literary text. The importance of the words displaces those who facilitate their material production. The graphic artist, writes typographer and book designer Jan Tschichold, is “a mere lieutenant” to “the sanctity of the written word” (8-9); Tschichold advises considering this position as a kind of martyrdom. He writes, “To remain nameless and without specific appreciation, yet to have been of service to a valuable work and to the small number of visually sensitive readers — this, as a rule, is the only compensation for the long, and indeed never-ending, indenture of the typographer” (7). But when the material text demands a reader’s attention, the composer can no longer remain a background figure.

In this project, any literary text will be assumed to have at least two figures who contribute to its authorship before production and distribution: the writer and the book composer. The composer is either the writer or an

¹⁸ See Masten, Stallybrass, and Vickers 2 for a discussion of the ‘perverse’ and ‘adulterous’ nature of the physical text, as opposed to the purity of immaterial language.

artist with whom the writer collaborates. These composers' work is not so distant from the writers' efforts. The text's two "author figures" inevitably have some relationship, even if a third person (such as a literary agent or an illustrator) mediates that connection. Thus the production of books is a social as well as a literary practice, and the chapters will examine the relations between writers and composers as significant factors in the production of literary meaning. The work of composing the material book comes into the foreground, but always with reference to the literary text.

E. Examples

The visual techniques of the various composers do not necessarily follow the trajectory of art historical development as it is generally studied, though they do reflect an evolution in printing and book production techniques. In fact, I see a reverse history in the ways that composers integrate images into printed texts: twentieth-century artists often look to medieval illuminations or early examples of illustrated books such as the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Francesco Colonna, 1499), composed by Aldus Manutius, for inspiration. My study therefore proceeds through a series of idiosyncratic examples, chosen from moments in the history of the novel that are particularly conscious of the look of the book.

Focusing on the visuality of prose is an unusual tactic, because critics generally sublimate the material composition of a novel to its narrative goals. In contrast, Jerome McGann claims that poetry "takes its own textual activities as a ground subject . . . poetical texts operate to display their own practices, to put them forward as the subject of attention" (*Textual* 10-11). Though McGann admits that prose fiction can be considered a "poetical

text," theorists who investigate the combinations of words, images, and materiality often tend to work with poetry. W.J.T. Mitchell explores Blake's illuminated poetry in *Blake's Composite Art*; Wendy Steiner probes concrete poetry in *The Colors of Rhetoric* (198-218), and McGann relies on the work of various poets to support his ideas about typography and material textuality in *The Textual Condition* and *Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism*.

Reader-response theorists, on the other hand, tend to focus on prose fiction for their case studies. Roland Barthes explores the categories by which a reader understands Honoré de Balzac's short story, "Sarrasine," in *S/Z*. Robert Scholes and Wolfgang Iser also focus on literary prose, as does Georges Poulet, whose choice is related to his interest in the book as a form. Still, all these theorists neglect the physical manifestations of words and how they look on the page. Georges Poulet mentions these factors only to note their disappearance in the act of reading.

Though the examples in my study are produced in the context of the history of the novel, none of them completely fits that category; even *Tristram Shandy* stands out from its eighteenth-century contemporaries. As Ian Watt writes in his landmark study, *The Rise of the Novel*, "*Tristram Shandy* is not so much a novel as a parody of a novel, and, with a precocious technical maturity, Sterne turns his irony against many of the narrative methods which the new genre had so lately developed" (Watt 291). Still, these works use conventional novelistic narrative style and book production techniques as points of departure.

In Chapter 1, I begin with Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760-67) because Sterne oversaw all aspects of book production, from the spacing

of the type to the project of hand-marbling thousands of specially-folded pieces of paper. His work as a composer supports his narrative project of disrupting the forward progress of time with “digressions”: imagistic interventions disrupt the reader’s progress through the text. But just as the narrative digressions create a new sense of time, Sterne’s images force the reader to imagine a larger sense of how to “read” the work. Three major imagistic elements — the black page, the marbled page, and the “flourish” that Uncle Toby draws with his cane — stand for impenetrable experiences of death, sex, and freedom.

Nine volumes were published between 1760 and 1767; the relation between word and image therefore precedes the theories outlined in Lessing’s landmark *Laocöon*. Sterne, then, will serve as a companion to Lessing’s theory: while Lessing examines the differences between painting and poetry and the separate usefulness for each medium, Sterne’s novel offers an example of their combination. This chapter therefore establishes a basis for word/image relations in the book form. *Tristram Shandy* serves as a reference for works of fiction whose “looks” affect their interpretation, while Lessing does not entertain the conjunction of word and image.

The twentieth-century book art I discuss is made possible by William Morris’ nineteenth-century Kelmscott Press editions. While Morris was the epitome of a textual composer, he aimed to craft beautiful books rather than to inflect the literary meaning of the texts he printed. His praise for mixing images with words takes on the tone of a moral invective:

The picture-book is not, perhaps, absolutely necessary to man’s life, but it gives us such endless pleasure, and is so intimately connected with the other absolutely necessary art of imaginative literature, that it must

remain one of the very worthiest things towards the production of which reasonable men should strive. (Morris, "Ideal" 73.)

Though Morris acknowledges the import of "imaginative literature," he is better known today for putting Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* into a new form (in 1896) than for his own writings. Moreover, his visual compositions create the "endless pleasure" of beautiful books without bringing that visuality into a complex interaction with the words.

Morris' work inspired a "renaissance in printing" that spread throughout England, Europe and America. Printers (in advertising as well as literary publishing) adorned their work liberally with illustrations and ornaments. At the same time that Morris was working, Stéphane Mallarmé was inventing the methods of symbolist poetry, in which the imagistic arrangement of words on the page took the place of a conventional illustration. Thus twentieth-century book composers used both words and images as expressive media.

Of the many works that combine words and images during this time period, I focus in my next chapter on *Kew Gardens* (3rd ed., 1927), written by Virginia Woolf and "decorated" and composed by her sister Vanessa Bell, instead of a more technically accomplished example. As a piece of fiction, it is worthy of some attention — it is a harbinger of Woolf's more accomplished work — and all three of its editions (as a separate volume) contained illustrations.¹⁹ In fact, it was conceived from the beginning as a work of illustrated fiction. Both sisters were involved in aspects of textual composition; they were not, like many writers and book illustrators of the

¹⁹ When it was issued as part of a short story collection, *Monday or Tuesday* (1921), the collection was illustrated as well, though this particular story was not. It was also issued after Woolf's death as part of an unillustrated collection, *The Haunted House and Other Short Stories* (1944).

time, unfamiliar with or distant from the printing process. *Kew Gardens* relies more heavily on the form of the novel than most *livres d'artistes* being published in France at the time, which were typically illustrated poetry. Bell's work emphasizes the modernist ekphrastic style of her sister's fiction, and the visual arrangements and images on certain pages provide the reader with additional ways to interpret Woolf's written text.

Later in the twentieth century, a "book arts" movement grew out the *livres d'artistes*, as well as from the Dada, Surrealist, and Futurist experiments with word and image in France, Russia and Italy. As the technologies of book production became more accessible in the sixties and later, a new genre arose in which bookmaking techniques could be used for artistic production (and not merely literary reproduction): hence the category "artists' books." Though this genre has since spawned others, such as book sculpture, I examine two specimens that mimic the novel in some ways but disrupt the reading sequence through visual interventions. Both use previously existing works of narrative as springboards for their writing, and both contain printed text.²⁰ The ways that they depart from the standard appearance of the novel serve their goals of redefining the sequences of narrative and of the reading process.

Tom Phillips' *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel* alters the pages of an 1892 novel by painting on them and leaving selected words showing through the paint. Though Phillips could have created a sequential narrative over the course of many pages, he instead uses each page as an endpoint in itself. The discontinuities in his book challenge the

²⁰ Some artists' books contain no written text at all; others use handwritten text instead of print.

reader to bridge the gaps and create a different sense of narrative connection. This challenge echoes the projects of William S. Burroughs and Roland Barthes, both of whom cut up texts and recombined their sections to gain new insights into literary expression.

In *Sheherezade: A Flip Book*, book artist Janet Zweig makes the words of the story — writer Holly Anderson’s revision of the *Thousand and One Nights* — leave the fixed position on the page that print usually occupies. As the reader flips through the book, the words seem to fly off the page into the space around it. Zweig thus exploits the physical structure of the codex; the point is (like Phillips’) that narratives quickly shift; time implies impermanence and even the illusion of narrative time is more fleeting than we usually care to acknowledge. Zweig’s illustrations of a woman who repeatedly takes off her dress, on the verso of each page, support the written text’s implication that behind every story, or every cloak of narrative, another story lies in wait.

Though all books use the page as a unit of space, in these examples the page becomes expressive of the work’s thematic concerns. *Tristram Shandy* uses white space to play with the rhythm of reading. *Kew Gardens* breaks up the story into descriptive moments on separate pages, with blank versos between vignettes. *A Humument* uses each page as the site for a separate word-image composition; the work is like a novel made of discrete and interchangeable concrete poems. *Sheherezade* uses the page as a vehicle for the book’s main conceit: if you flip through the pages you will be able to “read” a movement in the words. It is no longer a stable plane on which print can rest; the space and time of the narrative are constantly shifting.

Thus experiments with the structure of the book are experiments with time and the sequence of thoughts.

F. The import and impact of this work

All of the works in my dissertation invoke a tension between aesthetic printing and commercial publishing. None was circulated widely in the editions investigated here, and modern editions of the earlier works invariably alter the very elements that make the editions signify uniquely. Reprintings of *Tristram Shandy* bastardize the marbled page, for instance, and reissues of *Kew Gardens* change the proportions of the book and therefore the layout of the texts within the page margins. Artists' books circulate in small editions to a limited audience, though these examples are available on the free market.

Still, these works reflect (and perhaps incrementally influence) developments in publishing culture. They also expose the mechanics of reading at a time when books are coming under scrutiny as a reading technology. While contemporary theory aims to "read" the imagistic presentations of text on computer, this project uncovers the obverse challenge to reading that comes with the activity of "looking" at printed texts. This is an increasingly valuable framework to develop in an age when more publications use graphic design in unusual ways, and when computer-generated combinations of images and words expand the possibilities for what we encounter when we read. Moreover, publishers of trade paperbacks in the past ten years have become more likely to identify a book's designers, jacket artists, and even typefaces. The people involved in a work's composition are gaining recognition as it becomes more evident that

the enjoyment of reading comes through a carefully crafted object. These works also suggest new kinds of narrative absorption possible within the familiar context of the book.

Chapter I:

Physical Digressions in *Tristram Shandy*

Though Laurence Sterne's nine-volume magnum opus, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1760-67), has been studied in the context of the rise of the novel, it has never completely fit that categorization. The most immediately distinct element of the book — in terms of narrative — is its relentless change of subject: it has no one discernible plotline. Shandy's detailed encounters with the people in his family's life (who include his father Walter Shandy, his mother, his uncle Toby, his uncle's companion Corporal Trim, and the legendary beauty Widow Wadman, along with a cast of hilarious supporting characters such as an obstetrician named Dr. Slop) are interrupted with characters' personal histories, informal philosophical treatises, elaborate bawdy invention, and quotations from scores of works both actual and fictional.¹ No summary can adequately indicate the heterogeneity of the book's subject matter, nor can it encapsulate Sterne's meandering narrative style.

Most critics attribute the book's style to Sterne's games with the usual time sequence of the novel. The narrative ostensibly recounts a man's existence from the moment of conception, but its deliberately haphazard fashion sets his birth a third of the way through. A reader encounters not a story, but a constant undercutting of a story: Sterne (or his narrator,

¹ For a catalogue of the works that appear in *Tristram Shandy*, see Hawley 12-35.

Tristram Shandy²) presents information in the novel through a constant barrage of “digressions.”³ These are distinct from narrative asides not only in their frequency but also in their character: they destroy the very notion of plot instead of being a temporary diversion from a main plotline.

Critic William Piper’s discussion of the difference between Sterne’s digressive technique and other eighteenth-century novelists’ narrative asides, in “Sterne’s Digressive Artistry,” suggests the focus of my argument: that Sterne’s interventions are uniquely physical. He writes, “The texture of Tristram’s discourse is thicker [than that of *Tom Jones*], finally, because Tristram has attempted to involve all possible elements of society in it as deeply as he could (I. iv.)” (Piper 561). Piper’s use of words such as “thicker” and “texture” to describe Sterne’s rhetoric acknowledge the presence of the non-verbal dimension of touch in the novel.⁴ In grasping for terminology,

² The narrator is a complex figure: he is a conflation of Sterne the writer of the book and Shandy the writer of his life story. The book is written in the first person, ostensibly an account of the “Life and Opinions” of its titular character. Tristram, however, also chronicles the process of book production in such a way that he figures himself as the composer of the book that we are holding. Thus Shandy accounts for Sterne’s life as well as his own. Wayne Booth classifies him as a “self-conscious narrator” — a term that can include “observers and narrator-agents of all . . . kinds” (155), but he goes beyond self-consciousness: he has a double consciousness. The narrator is both an author and a character. I note this doubleness in reference to the written text: Sterne/Shandy. I hold Sterne solely responsible for visual and material aspects of the text that require a composer’s hand.

³ The constant digressions are a “barrage” in the sense that they assault and destroy readers’ conventional expectations of narrative sequence. Eric Rothstein, in fact, equates digression with battle, and writing with warfare (66). In section C, I discuss digression in detail and show that in a Shandean context, writing inevitably is synonymous with digression.

⁴ When Jerome McGann discusses textual “thickness” in *The Textual Condition*, he uses the term in two ways, neither of which quite match either Piper’s fumbling descriptions or my discussion of materiality in *Tristram Shandy*. First, McGann says that “thickness” refers to the rhetorical accretion of layers of description, metaphor, and metonymy, but then it “is also built through the textual presence and activities of many nonauthorial agents” (75-76). In other words, “thickness” accounts for the traces of many workers’ contributions to the finished book as a manufactured product. Though this sense of the word evokes the physical aspect of the text, it emphasizes the labor practices necessary to create bibliographic effects. My focus shifts to the effects themselves and their role in making the act of reading into a “thicker,” multidimensional experience.

Piper goes beyond a discursive frame into the realm of the physical; he therefore unconsciously introduces the idea of reading *Tristram Shandy* as a multisensory experience.

The violation of the physical form of continuous printed text does not just throw the flow of narrative into disarray; it also breaks the illusion of narrative cohesion and makes the act of reading explicitly and consciously physical. The reader is jolted out of an immersed state and into an immediate sensual experience of interacting with the book as consciously constructed object. As Russian Formalist critic Victor Shklovsky writes, "In general, [Sterne] accentuates the very structure of the novel. By violating the form, he forces us to attend to it; and for him the awareness of form through its violation constitutes the content of the novel" (quoted in Loveridge 20). The reader attends to the form because it is no longer familiar; in the absence of conventional literary structures the reader must determine anew what is happening.

Shklovsky's writing about the narrative "form" or "structure" can easily apply to Sterne's games with visually perceived material structures. These physical digressions include inserted images and pages, attention to the bodies of the people involved in the reading process, or merely a heightened awareness of the physical aspects of the book.

Sterne reveals his method early, and he also reveals his motivations. Towards the beginning of the first volume, Sterne/Shandy asks "madam" reader to "immediately turn back, that is, as soon as you get to the next full stop, and read the whole chapter over again" (I, xx, 130/41).⁵ As an antidote

⁵ In this chapter, page numbers will be identified by their volume, chapter, and page in both the first edition and the Norton Critical Edition (with the page numbers separated by a slash).

to the habitual reading process, Sterne/Shandy requires the “madam” to look for the next period on the page, a mark that usually is passed over during a reader’s swift progress through the written text. He asks the madam to reread as well as look, however; to follow Sterne’s instructions is to create a heightened consciousness of what and how you are reading, instead of reading “forward” in a mechanized way.

Though Sterne/Shandy initially justifies his unprecedented request as a way to ensure that the reader will notice a particular passage, he also confesses an agenda that extends to all readers of all novels. This agenda underlies all of his digressions, material as well as narrative.

‘Tis to rebuke a vicious taste which has crept into thousands besides herself; —of reading straight forwards, more in quest of the adventure, than of the deep erudition and knowledge which a book of this cast, if read over as it should be, would infallibly impart with them.—The mind should be accustomed to make wise reflections, and draw curious conclusions as it goes along; . . . I wish . . . that all good people, both male and female, from her example, may be taught to think as well as read. (I, xx, 130-33/41-42)

Sterne/Shandy asks the “madam” to reverse direction in order to break her habit of reading from the beginning to the end of the book. He implies that this physical habit, ingrained by the visual layout of print in the novel, constrains the movements of thought. The mind cannot “make wise reflections, and draw curious conclusions” if it only moves in one direction in search of the next narrative development. Reading mechanistically engages only one quality of the text — the verbal narrative. It does not admit the less sequential influence of visual or material elements.

Sterne/Shandy likewise cautions critics against the obverse reading practice of focusing too exclusively on the physical characteristics of the

book. Any criticism that pays attention to any one aspect of a book, and neglects the book's other aspects, inspires Sterne/Shandy's complaint that "[T]he cant of criticism is the most tormenting!" (III, xii, 60/133). He shows the absurd misguidedness of a singleminded approach by taking it to the ridiculously literal extreme of the "connoisseur" who evaluates a book's appearance while ignoring its content completely.

And what of this new book the whole world makes such a rout about? — Oh! 'tis out of all plumb, my Lord, — quite an irregular thing! — not one of the angles at the four corners was a right angle. — I had my rule and compasses, &c. my Lord, in my pocket. ————— Excellent critic!

—And for the epick poem, your lordship bid me look at;— upon taking the length, breadth, height, and depth of it, and trying them at home upon an exact scale of *Bossu's*, — 'tis out, my Lord, in every one of its dimensions. ————— Admirable connoisseur! (III, xii, 58-59/132)

The critic measures the book's physical dimensions but does not read its words. The critic's 'authoritative opinion' then receives Sterne/Shandy's sarcastic denunciation. Ignorant misreadings result from looking too closely at any one aspect of the text's composition, whether that tight focus entails too much attention to either the words or the materials.

In this chapter, when I examine narrative, visual, and material elements separately, it is only a step towards recombining them. The work is not a minutely categorizeable system, but mystically interconnected modes of meaning. Verbal, visual, and material elements are considered in search of their interrelation in an overall effect. Just as no one narrative line can be followed exclusively, no other single element of the novel makes sense outside the context of the book's overall multisensory mosaic of information. This belief — or rather, this mandate — reveals itself in the

book's narrative discourse, its material composition, and in its demands upon readers.

Critical interpretations of his novel can only be enriched, therefore, by an inquiry into Sterne's combination of the visual and the verbal. As critic Peter de Voogd writes about *Tristram Shandy*, "the text's verbal and visual elements are so intimately interwoven that they form an aesthetic whole. Text and picture cannot be divorced from one another without serious loss: the picture is the text, the text the picture" ("Aesthetic" 384).⁶ Or, as Ronald Primeau observes, *Tristram Shandy* is "an eighteenth-century multi-media package" (20).

The description of the effect of Sterne's material digression implies that readers can either attend to the material or the narrative aspects of a book, and that these two modes of interacting with the book are mutually exclusive. This assumption underlies critic Roger B. Moss' article on "Sterne's Punctuation." Moss asserts that *Tristram Shandy* establishes an unbridgeable "gulf" between the mind and the body, the narrative and the material. He says that "the book's typographical jokes" are created through the "gulf . . . between the physical fact of the book and the intellectual and spiritual demand to read it as narrative, as conversation, in short, as meaning" (184). He analyzes each major image as Sterne's allusion to the body, and concludes that Sterne resorts to such visual "punctuation" because words, which are of the mind, cannot express physicality. According to this argument, Sterne separates linguistic and visual elements to demonstrate the incompatibility of mind and body.

⁶ Though De Voogd makes this assertion specifically about the novel's typography and page design, Sterne's other visual elements are equally indivisible from his narrative.

Sterne's devices do not separate the visual from the verbal, however. His images amplify the narrative, or they interact with it in ways that call upon the reader to make connections instead of halting all possibility of interpretation. Typography and page layout, for instance, bring the meanings of words together with their physical embodiments (see section F.1.). *Tristram Shandy* therefore demonstrates a connection between the book and narrative, the body and the mind, and not a "gulf." Sterne uses his various textual devices to pursue a complicated integration of the two that might more adequately represent reality. Sterne's digressions (of all varieties) make the reader stop and wonder what is happening, instead of stopping altogether (see section C. on the dual movement of digression and progression).

Sterne's and my recombination of words, images and materials is a means towards the end of thinking differently. Integrating materiality with narrative creates a new kind of reading. Sterne's visual and material games are inextricably tied to his agenda of forcing readers to think about the material they are reading instead of blindly forging ahead through the text. Sterne imagines a way of thinking and reading that integrates mind with body, mental with physical, narrative with material, to yield a full experience of the text.

Sterne can accomplish this because he acts as the composer; he can include images in unusual ways and control the physical composition of the book. Sterne himself needed to be a master of many trades in order to create successful reading situations that would be "unfamiliar" yet decipherable to his readers.

A. Sterne as Composer

While Sterne was not a printer himself, he had experience with both visual art and the arts of printing.⁷ Sterne therefore is able to serve as *Tristram Shandy's* composer as well as its writer. It is eminently clear that Sterne is as invested in his book's visual and material production as in its writing. On the most fundamental level, as Sterne enthusiast-turned-scholar Kenneth Monkman observes of *Tristram Shandy*, "There is ample evidence that [Sterne] took a meticulous interest in his words and how they were printed" (30-31).⁸

By the time he wrote *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne had already self-published several pamphlets with the Ward family printers in his town of York, and this process taught him much about textual composition.⁹ Peter de Voogd reports that these early productions were already characterized by Sterne's involvement in the details of publishing: "even in 1759, when Caesar Ward in York had printed his satirical pamphlet A Political Romance. Sterne wrote Ward: 'do not presume to alter or transpose one

⁷ Sometimes in the novel, but not commonly noted, are Sterne's explicit references to the arts of printing. Sterne's discussion of printing within the context of his narrative proves that he knew enough about the finer points of printing to use them as another medium for his novelistic objectives. Some of these examples will be discussed in other sections.

⁸ Monkman makes this summation at the end of his discussion of "alterations and additions the author himself made between editions . . . Sterne, we should remember, was far from being the slapdash writer he sometimes made himself out to be (30). The motivation for his inquiry is therefore literary: he confesses that "what Sterne wrote interests me far more than how it was printed" (11). When Monkman's conclusion is quoted by critics such as W. G. Day and Roger B. Moss, however (Day 145; Moss 183), it arises from expositions of *Tristram Shandy's* marbled page and its "punctuation," meaning the printing anomalies that create the book's unusual appearance. My motivation strikes a middle ground: I aim to show the unseverable interconnections between Sterne's narrative project and his composition work. The fact that this early novel writer controlled the composition of his book makes it imperative to interpret his narrative in conjunction with the book's non-verbal "narrative" elements.

⁹ Give examples, talk about Amy and Cesar Ward, and the transfer of the press to her in widowhood.

Word, not rectify one false Spelling, nor so much as add or diminish one Comma or Tittle.” (“Aesthetic” 383).

Sterne had grand plans for the success of his novel, so he wanted to print in York and secure a London publisher, James and Robert Dodsley, to publicize and distribute from London. He chose the Dodsleys because of their high quality work. When the Dodsleys balked at the proposal, Sterne tried to assure them, “I . . . shall correct every proof myself, it shall go perfect into the world, and be printed in so creditable a way as to paper, type, &c., as to do no dishonour to you, who, I know, never chuse to print a book meanly” (quoted in Rogoff 4, Moss 182). Sterne’s stubbornness about overseeing the production of his novel may have been a reason for the Dodsleys to reject the first two volumes of his manuscript.

Sterne’s textual peculiarities also could have repelled the Dodsleys. Where generally a novel contains continuously printed words, Sterne’s text is peppered with typographical quirks, such as punctuation marks that replace words and blank spaces in the page layout. From the evidence of “the extant manuscripts of his other masterpiece A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy,” Peter de Voogd finds “that Sterne corrected his proofs with very great care, revising his text in minor detail, specifying typographic accidentals such as italics, upper and lower case with professional precision, and devoting much care to lay-out and paragraphing” (“Aesthetic” 383). Sterne’s wish to control his text extends to every element of words’ appearances.

Sterne also played with page numbering and the order of chapters, and oversaw the printing of “wrong” catchwords.¹⁰ These changes were likely to have infuriated printers because proper sequencing and catchwords expedite accurate printing and book assembly. Printers may also have resisted Sterne’s idea of printing the text area of an entire page — both sides — with black ink; this “illustration” would have been difficult to ink consistently and time-consuming to dry properly. Critic Alain Bony imagines “the printer’s impatience — or his amusement?” upon working with Sterne “to make, for better or for worse, the typographical work coincide with the results that he seeks” (20).¹¹

Sterne even invested his own money in his book’s visual features. He occasionally bought woodcuts for the novel (Moss 183; for example, see the lines of narrative, fig. A.1., and Trim’s flourish, fig. A.2.). Woodcut illustrations were so expensive at that time that printers routinely reused them when possible. Sterne also most likely paid for the book’s most extravagant feature, its handmade marbled page (Moss 183).¹² Together, these details prove the depth of Sterne’s concern for the look of his book. As W.G. Day concludes, “From the evidence of the marbled leaf one may

¹⁰ “In old books, [a catchword is] a word placed at the bottom of each page, under the last word in the last line, anticipating the first word of the following page. It was supposed to assist the reader as he turned the page” but it also helped the printer to retain proper page sequence (Holden 29). Sterne occasionally left out catchwords altogether, according to his visual arrangements or humor.

¹¹ “L’impatience de l’imprimeur — ou son amusement? . . . pour faire, tant bien que mal, coïncider le travail du typographe avec les effets qu’il recherche” (20).

¹² While I have followed common critical terminology in referring to the black and marbled page, this is actually a misnomer, because a page only falls on either a recto or a verso of a leaf of paper. Sterne blackens and marbles *two* pages in *Tristram Shandy*. In both cases, the two pages are the recto and verso of the same leaf of paper. Subsequent editions often follow the original version, but the way that critics discuss “the marbled *page*” neglects the physical dimension of the paper that Sterne involves. Both images seem to permeate the paper.

suggest that Sterne's meticulousness extended beyond the words to the appearance of the work as a whole" (145).¹³

Later, when the first volumes of *Tristram Shandy* sold well, Robert Dodsley decided to print the succeeding volumes, and Sterne "saw each volume through the press himself, which is the more remarkable since he had to travel all the way from Coxwold in Yorkshire to London during the worst possible season (all of the volumes came out in winter)" (de Voogd, "Aesthetic" 383). The transition from the York printer to the Dodsleys in London was aesthetically uncomplicated: as Moss reports, "Sterne . . . had his York printer imitate as closely as possible the typography of Dodsley's own recently printed edition of *The Prince of Abissinia* (Johnson's *Rasselas*)" (Moss 182). The new printers could take over production without changing the visual characteristics of Sterne's typography or page layout. Even the paper matched reasonably well.

Sterne's care with his visual and material composition calls for special attention to his first editions. Many of Sterne's significant page divisions and artful page layouts are obscured by the formats of later editions. The subtleties embedded in his more elaborate anomalies, such as the marbled page, are muted by editors' lack of attention to the role of visual detail in the novel. These inevitably affect a reader's experience of the novel: as Jerome McGann writes, "radically different . . . [formatting] calls out to different reading expectations and procedures" (*Textual* 115). The bulk of this chapter will analyze Sterne's composition in the first edition, to better understand his narrative project.

¹³See Leonard W. Rogoff's "The Untypical Typography of *Tristram Shandy*" for an accounting of the contemporary texts from which Sterne adapts many of his unusual devices.

The major difference in the Dodsleys' second edition of the first two volumes was the inclusion of two etchings by William Hogarth, a prominent artist of the day and a friend of Sterne's. The success of the first edition of *Tristram Shandy* gave Sterne license to request the etchings (Anderson 75, n1), which are the most strictly illustrative visual elements in the text. The other images in the text serve symbolic rather than representative functions. The grandest of these, and symbolically the richest, is the marbled page, which could almost be considered a painting.

De Voogd reports that Sterne painted as a hobby, and that *Tristram Shandy* contains a surprisingly large number of references to artists and to art historical issues "that indicate a more than passing awareness of art theory . . . One in every six chapters contains explicit references to the art of painting" ("Accidents" 280). Sterne was also acquainted with the arts required in book illustration. He illustrated at least one book: a volume of poems by "Wodhul" published in 1772 (Sterne, *Works* xvi). But the marbled page is a unique kind of illustration or painting: its production process yields a different result for each iteration.

B. The marbled page

The marbled leaf, as Alain Bony asserts, is "uncontestably the most astonishing of the typographical and bibliographical eccentricities in all of Sterne's work" (14).¹⁴ In the first edition, it is indeed a bibliographic marvel (see fig. A.3.). It is the only instance of color in the entire nine volumes, made in an era when "coloured illustrations were extremely rare"

¹⁴ "incontestablement la plus étonnante des excentricités typographiques et bibliographiques de l'œuvre de Sterne." Bony, unlike McGann, separates typography from other types of "bibliographic" codes.

(Patterson 83). Even after two hundred years, the pigments retain their riotous intensity, and no other work of literature has attempted to integrate a craft project on such a grand scale. Its uniqueness, and its centrality in *Tristram Shandy*, merit detailed analysis.

1. *The production process*

The endeavor of producing the marbled pages that appear in volume III, on pages 169 and 170 (both sides of one leaf of paper), was time-consuming, complicated, painstaking and expensive.¹⁵ A special tub or trough was prepared to hold a mucilagenous medium called “size” — water thickened with gum — and oil-based pigments were spread and/or sprinkled on the surface of the size. In the original edition, the marblers used five colors of oil-based pigments.¹⁶ The pigments would have distributed themselves on top of and alongside each other across the water’s surface. Sometimes marblers manipulated the colors into patterns with a comb or stylus, though this is not the case in *Tristram Shandy*. The marbler laid down the paper on top of the pigments. According to the experience of twentieth-century craftsman Thomas Maitland Cleland, this step had to be done “very carefully—to avoid air pockets which would cause blank spaces” (quoted in Thompson 161).¹⁷ When the paper came in contact with the

¹⁵ Descriptions of the production process appear in de Voogd “Accidents,” 284-85; Jamieson 56; Thompson 160-61. Bony provides references to nineteenth-century bookbinding and marbling guides (15, n4).

¹⁶ Again, Day’s testimony is useful: “All the marbled leaves I have seen in the first edition contain five colors: a base of white or gall, red, olive green, yellow, and white or gall again” (144). Gall is an off-white.

¹⁷ Though Cleland describes his twentieth-century marbling procedure for replicating the eighteenth-century original, his technique is accurate to the original and therefore yields a result with the proper appearance.

surface, the pigments would adhere to the sheet. The marbler could then remove the paper and dry it as a print.

This marbling process came to Europe in the sixteenth century, most likely from Near Eastern cultures such as Turkey and Persia (Dailey i-ii). The art reached England in the seventeenth century, but by the latter half of the eighteenth century there were still relatively few marblers in the book trade. Beginning in 1760, the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, held competitions to rectify this situation. The Society, based in London, generally aimed “not to promote experimentation, . . . but to encourage the people of England to become professional artists, better traders, and manufacturers and producers of commodities desirable in domestic and world markets” (Patterson 85). Its competition offered “premiums to induce craftsmen to make marbled papers” (Adams 421); this was a way to reward whoever could produce the largest *quantity* of high-quality marbled paper, rather than the specimen of the best quality.¹⁸

Sterne was a member of the Society during the year that it established the contest. Other members included his publishers the Dodsleys, who remained long after Sterne left. While it is not clear whether Sterne

¹⁸ Charles Adams quotes a 1762 record of the Society which announces the third year of the contest:

An account having been laid before the Society of the great quantity of paper, commonly called Marbled Paper, imported into this kingdom from foreign countries, the Society came to a resolution to offer a Premium of fifty pounds to the candidate who should produce forty reams of the best and nearest in quality to foreign Marbled Paper; and a premium of twenty-five pounds to the candidate who should produce twenty reams of ditto, manufactured in England. (421, n21)

The contest terms changed over the years that it was held, in order to attract more participants (for exact details of the requirements and prizes, see Patterson 86-87). In fact, no prize was awarded in the year Sterne was a member, but this does not affect the certainty that he would have been aware of the Society’s “special interest in marbling” (Patterson 86).

attended any meetings, he was undoubtedly aware of the paper marbling competition, as were the Dodsleys.¹⁹ By the time Sterne printed the third volume, in which the marbled leaf appears, it was 1772, and the Dodsleys were printing Sterne's first editions. If Sterne had not been aware of marbled paper before writing volume III of his novel, he must have been enlightened by his participation in the Society. The contest itself generated sufficient public discourse about marbling for historians of marbling to assume that "the quality of marbling in England was not worthy of mention" until after 1763, the first year that a prize was awarded (Patterson 86). Sterne could therefore imagine that the laborious process of making "Turkish" papers could be repeated in large enough quantities to fill an entire edition. Diana Patterson conjectures that Sterne and/or the Dodsleys most likely identified a marbler capable of handling the *Tristram Shandy* job from among the contest applicants (86).²⁰

A simple approach to providing a marbled page would involve marbling large sheets of paper, then cutting them down to insert in the book. It would also have been easier to cut pieces of marbled paper to the size of the text area and then paste each piece onto a piece of text paper. Indeed, subsequent editions have done both. Sterne, instead, began with sheets of paper cut down to match the size of the leaves in his duodecimo volume. They were folded at the text margins to expose a rectangle the size of the print area.²¹ After marbling this central rectangle only, the marbler would remove the sheet, dry it, fold the margins back in the other direction,

¹⁹ The Dodsleys did attend Society meetings; it is likely that attendance was easier for these London residents than it was for Sterne, who resided in York.

²⁰ For a more detailed speculation on the marbler's identity, see Patterson 83-90.

²¹ W.G. Day testifies that "All the copies I have seen retain quite clearly the fold marks from the operation" (144).

and repeat the entire process for the other side. This required more precision than the process of double-sided marbling that seventeenth-century Englishman John Evelyn describes in a seventeenth-century marbling guide. He writes, "One that were very dextrous at the applying of the paper, may (when one is dry) marble both the sides" (in Adams 420). His description does not preclude the option of cutting off any fingerprinted edges, a technique that was not possible for Sterne's project.

Since the first edition consisted of about four thousand copies, the exacting marbling process had to be repeated at least eight thousand times (Day 145).²² When the marbling itself was finished, there were additional tasks to complete the project: someone hand-stamped the page numbers onto both pages before the sheet was "tipped" (glued) into place in the volume, in a gap between signatures. Diana Patterson argues, from the evidence of a virtually untouched first edition, that the page was sewn into place as well as glued (74). The enormity, complexity and expense of the task required Sterne's intrepid commitment, which in itself signals the marbling's thematic importance.

Nonetheless, very few subsequent editions have attempted to reproduce the marbled page in a style that at all approaches that of the original. The Dodsleys' reissues contained properly marbled pages, though in different sizes and colors from the original, but publishers have generally taken any number of shortcuts to avoid the trouble and expense of this undertaking. Unfortunately, these shortcuts also shortchange the

²² Patterson notes that there is no document to support this number (91, n1), but I see no reason to doubt Day's research.

symbolism, as I begin to show at the end of this section and as I explore in more detail throughout this chapter.

Even before the end of the eighteenth century, reprintings of *Tristram Shandy* took shortcuts around the project of the marbled pages. As W.G. Day reports (see fig. A.4.),

In the London edition of the novel printed in 1794 for T. Cadell, pages 327 and 328 of volume I bear the note:

The BOOKBINDER is desired to cover both sides of this leaf with the best marbled paper, taking care to keep the folio lines clear, and to preserve the proper margins.

The same instructions are to be found in the edition of the Works printed in London in 1795 for the Booksellers (8 vols., I, 265-6). (143-44)

None of these editions actually contains any marbling, however; only this inscription bears witness to Sterne's intentions.

Editor George Macy adds that a twentieth-century Oxford World's Classics edition does not even pretend that anyone will complete the page; it leaves the page blank except for "the legend printed: 'In the early editions a marbled leaf was inserted here'" (quoted in Thompson 160). A 1968 Japanese edition, on the other hand, inserts a color photograph of a fifth-edition marbled page at what must be considerable expense (Day 145, n5). But on the whole, as Alain Bony finds, "modern editions offer nothing but photography, in black and white, of a marbled paper, in which the design is even sometimes identical on both sides" (16, n7).²³ A 1970 AMS reprint of the 1904 *Yorick Deluxe Edition*, for instance, strays from Sterne's original by offering only one page of marbling. The page is isolated from the rest of the text by blank pages on both sides, and it does not contain margins or page

²³"les éditions modernes n'offrent qu'une photographie, en noir et blanc, d'un papier marbré, dont le dessin est même parfois identique sur les deux faces."

numbers (see fig. A.5.). Samuel Holt Monk's edition, published in 1950 and considered a classic text, restores margins to the page, and prints a reproduction of marbling on both sides of a leaf. But the sides contain identical black and white reproductions of marbled paper whose design does not accurately represent the marbling style of Sterne's original technique (see fig. A.6.).

Only George Macy's Limited Editions Club, in 1935, published an edition in which a paper marbler, Thomas Maitland Cleland, "faithfully reproduced by hand methods the marbled page" in a way that resembles the original version. Even this craftsman, however, simplified the process by masking off the margins with a mat before marbling instead of relying on the folds in the paper to delineate the printing area. The mat must have been especially useful for the drying process; when the "excess liquid is drained off" (Cleland, in Thompson 161) the mat keeps the margins clean. Even with this shortcut, Cleland expended "almost one month of solid labor" on the project, and he found that "To repeat this operation successfully some fifteen hundred times presented practical difficulties of a kind which I promise not to tell you about" (quoted in Thompson 161). If the matted version took this much effort, it is clear that folding the edges of each page in the original version would have created a project of immense duration and complication.²⁴

What, then, is the point of the marbling?

²⁴See Day 144-45 for a speculation on the various complications of Sterne's production project.

2. *The marbled page as an ejaculation*

In the context of the narrative, it is obvious that this image represents Walter Shandy's ejaculation, but none of the articles on the marbled page have remarked on this connection. In the chapters surrounding the marbled page, Walter Shandy engages in reading any books he can find — most notably by Erasmus and 'Slawkenburgius' — on "noses." The repeated implication, which remains unstated yet is reified through elaborate negations (III, xxxi, 148-49/158-59), is that the nose symbolizes the penis. Walter Shandy's act of reading therefore becomes associated with this sexual organ.

As we get closer to the marbled page, the activity of reading itself is also revealed to be bawdy. Walter "solaced himself" with his reading material . . .

after the manner, in which, 'tis ten to one, your worship solaced yourself with your first mistress,—that is, from morning even unto night: which by the bye, how delightful soever it may prove to the inamorato, —is of little, or no entertainment at all, to by-standers.—Take notice, I go no farther with the simile . . . (III, xxxv, 165/163)

Reading is associated now with either masturbation or copulation. In either case, it is clear that Sterne's vision of the sexualized reading experience centers around the penis, for in the final chapter before the marbling, he interrupts a description of a tract "upon the various uses and seasonable applications of long noses" with the following instigation:

Now don't let Satan, my dear girl, in this chapter, take advantage of any one spot of rising-ground to get astride of your imagination, if you can any ways help it; or it he is so nimble as to slip on,—let me beg of you, like an unback'd filly, *to frisk it, to squirt it, to jump it, to rear it, to bound it,—and to kick it, with long kicks and*

short kicks, till like Tickletohy's mare, you break a strap or a crupper. . . (III, xxxvi, 176/164)

This description of wringing an orgasm from a penis (through copulation or manual stimulation) is equated with the action of reading in the following paragraph, where Sterne/Shandy asks twice, "Who was Tickletohy's mare?" The answer, which he does not supply, is that "Tickletohy" is slang for "penis" and "Tickletohy's mare" is the "young mare in Rabelais, IV.13, [who] had 'never been leaped yet' (Anderson, *Tristram* 164, n2). Instead of answering the question, Sterne/Shandy launches into his command to "Read, read, read, read, my unlearned reader! read, . . . for without much reading, by which your reverence knows, I mean much knowledge . . ." ²⁵ By now the reader does know that "knowledge," refers to sexual activity or at least to an intellectual interest in sexual organs. ²⁶ Therefore "reading" becomes equated with sex, at least for Walter Shandy and for the reader of *Tristram Shandy*.

The text after the marbled page supports the conclusion that the page is an ejaculation. Sterne/Shandy quotes from the tract Walter Shandy is reading:

*"Nihil me pœnitet hujus nasi," quoth Pamphagus;—that is, —
—"My nose has been the making of me."———"Nec est
cur pœnitet," replies Cocles; that is, "How the duce should such a
nose fail?" (III, xxxvii, 180/164).²⁷*

²⁵ The repetition of "read" parallels the repetition, in the previous paragraph of the novel, of the infinitives that describe the things that the young woman could do with the "spot of rising-ground," and the shorter rhythm of the single syllable is like the quickening of rhythmic stimulation that leads to orgasm.

²⁶ It is also sensible here to invoke the Biblical sense of "knowledge" as sexual intercourse.

²⁷ "Pamphagus says, 'The nose does not displease me.' Cocles replies, 'Nor is there reason why it should displease you'" (Anderson, *Tristram* 164, n3).

The nose has been an organ of pleasure for both Pamphagus and Cocles.²⁸ It has also been “the making of me” in the sense that the sperm in an ejaculation will help to create new life. The new life that is being created here is Tristram’s, primarily.

The process used to produce the style of marbling used in *Tristram Shandy* represents both Walter Shandy’s ejaculate and Laurence Sterne’s (or Tristram Shandy’s) approach to writing. Sterne’s specimens feature colors randomly distributed on the size. Diana Patterson’s account of the history of this method has a strong bearing on the symbolism of the page: “The pattern used on the marbled leaf in *Tristram Shandy*, which is now called Turkish, is usually untouched splatterings of colour” (70). Actually, all marbled paper was widely known as “Turkish paper” as late as the seventeenth century.²⁹ Sterne may have been aware of either application of the term “Turkish,” for he says that Walter Shandy “was originally a *Turky* merchant,” (I, iv, 11/4) or “A dealer in goods from the Near East” (Anderson, *Tristram* 4, n8). Tristram’s father is thereby associated with the history of the marbling art, especially figured as splatterings on the page.

²⁸ Story comes from Erasmus, “De captandis sacerdotiis”, in *Familiarium colloquiorum* (Argentinae 1519).

²⁹ Joannes Zahn, writing in 1685, reports that the paper “now most common everywhere is the paper called Turkish, thus named because it was undoubtedly first invented by the Turks” (Adams 416). Several publications of the period refer to “Turkish paper” instead of “marbled paper,” such as Athanasius Kircher’s seminal manual “A Way of Coloring Paper in a Turkish Manner” (1646), his student Caspar Schott’s “How to Design Paper with Various Colors in the Turkish Manner” (1657), Daniel Schwenter’s “How to Make and Design Turkish Papers” (pub. 1651), and Joannes Zahn’s “The Best Method of Coloring Paper in the Turkish Manner” (1685). All of these titles are translated (the former two from Latin, and the latter two from German) by Charles Adams, and they are discussed in his article on seventeenth-century marbled paper (413; 415; 416).

Peter de Voogd erroneously assumes that the marbling in *Tristram Shandy* uses a comb ("Accidents" 284). Certainly this was a common style at the time, but it was not Sterne's choice.

During the early parts of the century, certainly before 1780, the most popular pattern, now called Dutch, was made by combing the colors into a feather-like pattern. Another, now called French, was made by swirling the colors. (Patterson 70)

In a practical sense, Sterne could have chosen the unusual Turkish pattern because it took less time to produce; it did not require the extra step of combing or swirling the colors (see fig. A.7. for examples of marbling that is manipulated in this way). This would have been an important consideration for publishing the volume in a timely manner. In a symbolic sense, however, it is significant that the Dutch and French patterns are more tightly controlled than the Turkish pattern. The marbler must apply colors carefully in order to yield relatively consistent patterns when combed or swirled. The more heteroglot effect of the more randomly applied colors matches the narrative texture of *Tristram Shandy*, which is anything but predictable. The patterns of the marbled page are left up to chance, and indeed much of the novel laments the chance occurrences that affected Walter Shandy's ejaculation and resulted in Tristram's star-crossed birth. Even Sterne/Shandy's approach to crafting a narrative is self-consciously chaotic: after a brief digression, he writes, "But this is neither here nor there—why do I mention it?—Ask my pen, — it governs me, — I govern it not" (VI, vi, 18/292). This description of the writing process is visually represented through the unpredictability of the marbling process. And of course the pen and the penis have been symbolically linked many times before.

The "Turkish" splatterings yield an organic image that more closely resembles a body's ejaculate than either of the popular patterns. The marbled page looks like biological slide, or like a medical illustration of a body organ. The paint splatterings could be drops of ejaculate, or perhaps an image of a woman's womb, shown from the inside. The base color of the first edition's marbling is an appropriately fleshlike pink, and the page is indeed spotted with white blobs of pigment.³⁰ It therefore brings the human body into the activity of reading.

If the marbled page is Walter Shandy's ejaculation that results in Tristram's conception, it also refers to the conjoining of elements in the sexual act: the sperm and the egg, the man's and woman's bodies. Thus Tristram's own history begins not just "*ab Ovo*," as he purposes, but also with his father's ejaculation. This joining of elements reflects Sterne's model for reading, in which he imagines a cooperation between the writer and the reader. Sterne does not want to supply all the information to his reader; he prefers to divide the work by half. This cooperation (or copulation) of the writer and the reader results in Tristram's being brought to life, just as the union of male and female bodies creates him as a human being.

3. ("*motly emblem for my work!*")

In the page directly across from the first page of marbling, Sterne introduces the marbled page as the "(*motley emblem of my work!*)" (III,

³⁰ This color choice is commensurate with contemporary marblers' instructions; see de Voogd, "Flourish" 130.

xxxvi, 168/164; see fig. A.8.).³¹ This highly visual page cannot epitomize the novel as an *œuvre*, because at the point of the third volume's publication Sterne has not yet written half of the volumes that comprise the total published "work." Rather, it stands for both Sterne's creative process — the "work" of creating the book — and the effect that it has upon the reader — the "work" that the novel performs. In both contexts, the "motly" uniqueness of each page, as produced in the original edition, is key to its 'emblematic' meanings.

The fact that each handmade page is unique means that the experience of reading each book is different. This supports Sterne's aim to desystematize the reading process. As Diana Patterson, who collected and analyzed as many marbled leaves as she could find, writes, "No two readers could have precisely the same experience of reading Volume 3 because of that leaf, and no reader without a leaf could have had a proper experience of the novel" (83). Peter de Voogd corroborates the first half of Patterson's statement when he writes, "It is fitting that your copy of *Tristram Shandy* is different from mine, since your subjective experience of the book is different. And when you turn the [marbled] page, the design is different again" ("Accidents" 287). But it is the latter half of Patterson's statement that I aim to explore in this chapter: how does the original handmade marbled leaf add to the experience of reading *Tristram Shandy*?

³¹Sterne emphasizes his bold symbolic statement by punctuating it with an exclamation point. It is also curious that he sets the phrase off from the rest of the text with parentheses. Though parentheses generally indicate an aside, they visually bracket and call attention to the words *written* between them by suddenly changing the look (and the tone) of the sentence. In the context of this novel, the parentheses are a visual embodiment of a narrative digression.

By requiring the marbling to be completed only within the text margins of each side of the leaf, Sterne asks for us to 'read' the marbling as if it were a text. The only textual elements on the marbled pages that can be conventionally "read," however, are the page numbers stamped in the margins. The obvious presence of numbers lends credence to Alain Bony's suggestion that the page be considered numerically, as the "central" page of volumes III and IV, because of its physical position in the text. He calculates that the marbled page appears exactly in the middle of the total number of pages in these two volumes, which were published concurrently and can thus be grouped together for the purposes of this exercise (Bony 19-20). One way to "read" the page, therefore, is to consider the message of centrality that the numbers communicate.³² This supports Sterne's insistence (and my own assertion) that the marbled page is a thematic key to the book.

Because I see the marbled page as performing such a pivotal role, it will also serve as a focus in this chapter. In each section, ideas will be supported with other examples from the novel, but the marbled page itself suggests the many ways that Sterne uses physicality to disrupt and enrich the reading sequence.

C. Digression, Progression, and Reading

The marbled page is one of many visual and material digressions that Sterne uses to augment his written text. They undermine the primacy of the story in the same way that his narrative digressions destroy the illusion

³²It should be obvious that the number game does not hold true for reprintings of the novel, in which the pagination is inevitably different. The AMS edition, for instance, omits all numbers from the marbled page, and the pagination goes out of sequence because the blank pages surrounding the marbled page are not numbered.

of plot. Sterne's famous "digressions" simultaneously frustrate and reconfigure the experience of narrative immersion. This dialectical structure underlies the narrative, which is at once "progressive" and "digressive." The dialectic of digression becomes a metaphor for the way of thinking that Sterne promotes as an antidote to the sequential thought processes associated with moving through pages at an unconsciously mechanistic rate.

Critics have devoted much attention to Sterne's narrative "digressions," but only in the context of examining Sterne's writing. Sterne's digressions also affect the reader's experience of composition, both because they refer directly to the physical makeup of the book and because Sterne also changes the book's composition itself (in his role as composer as well as writer). While the narrative digression destroys the notion of progress along a "linear" plot, the visual or material digression calls into question the fact that there is a storyline at all. All of these visual and material digressions from the usual way of making and reading a book are Sterne's way to express the non-narrative sensuality of life. His innovations make available modes of understanding that cannot coexist with the necessity of progressing through the text mechanistically.

Tristram Shandy therefore questions the idea that "progress" is a relentless march into the future, whether that march is leading toward the next thought, the next page, or the next step towards being over-interpellated by our machines. As reading is a metaphor for the other sequentially organized activities, the digression's interruption of reading critiques the forces of "progress" (i.e., mechanization) and of any

unconsciously obeyed forward momentum. The individual mind and the sensual body can resist the machine of progress.

1. *The Dialectic of Digression and Progression*

In terms of narrative organization, the digression seems equivalent to a narrative aside. Novels have always diverged from a storyline to give the reader information that does not immediately further the plot.³³ The ubiquity of this technique, in fact, inspires Shklovsky's famous declaration, "*Tristram Shandy* is the most typical novel in world literature" (57).³⁴ Shklovsky shows that Sterne's relentless and comic use of digressions plays with the "natural" or expected sequence of time and action, and argues that this extreme digressive structure exposes the constructedness of plot and therefore the artifice of all fiction. But Shklovsky's agenda "not . . . to analyze Laurence Sterne's novel, but rather to illustrate general laws of plot" (27) prevents him from distinguishing not only the peculiarities of *Tristram Shandy's* narrative digressions, but also from looking beyond the verbal mode to probe Sterne's digressive composition techniques.

³³ Critic William Piper, when he attempts to define "Sterne's Digressive Artistry," finds that he must distinguish Sterne's writing from that of other eighteenth-century novelists. But his analysis does not ring true, either because many early novels aim for verosimilitude or because he remains too bound up in the Sterne/Shandy's own assertions. He quotes *Tristram Shandy* in his summation, "The texture of *Tristram's* discourse is thicker [than that of *Tom Jones*], finally, because *Tristram* has attempted to involve all possible elements of society in it as deeply as he could (I. iv.)" (561).

³⁴ Shklovsky's contention seems surprising since it follows a lengthy explication of the novel's *unique propensity for shunning a sequential narrative development*. But since he explores that uniqueness in order to build a general theory of novelistic plot (55), his conclusion does not contradict his argument.

Shklovsky's famous one-sentence paragraph ends a chapter in his book, *Tristram Shandy*. The physical context of the statement in his text is significant to this project on the visual functions of prose: the famous sentence stands apart from the lengthier paragraphs that precede it. This arrangement at the end of the article contributes to its reception as a monumental conclusion.

Sterne's digressions are most often figured as resequencings of time and of conventional storylines. As Russian Formalist critic Victor Shklovsky sums up, "The action is continually interrupted; the author repeatedly goes backward or leaps forward; whole ten-page passages are filled with whimsical discussions about fortifications or about the influence of a person's nose or name on his character" (27). Sometimes the disruptions involve more than one volume of the novel: on page 45 of volume II, for instance, uncle Toby and Walter Shandy resume talking by the fireside, as if no time has passed since the first part of their conversation in the middle of volume I. The main character/narrator Tristram is not even born, nor does the novel's preface appear, until volume III.

"Interruptions" of this scale move beyond the scope of a conventional narrative aside. But what distinguishes a Shandean digression from any other narrative interruption? Sterne/Shandy's own discussions of digression in *Tristram Shandy* provide some hints, and they also lay the ground for considering Sterne's visual and material games as non-verbal variants of his narrative digressions.

Sterne begins volume VII *Tristram Shandy* with an epigraph that explains his digressive technique. He writes, "*Non enim excursus hic ejus, sed opus ipsum est.*" or as the Norton Critical Edition translates, "For this is not a digression (or excursion), but is itself the work" (VII, i, 1/335).³⁵ In other words, narrative digressions do not distract from the story; they are the story itself. The epigraph heralds a volume filled with literal "excursions": Tristram tries desperately to flee the specter of death by

³⁵ The fact that Sterne writes this helpful sentence in Latin is typically a Shandean contradiction of offering assistance in a somewhat intractable way. For a discussion of Sterne's technique of simultaneous revelation and concealment, see section.

travelling through France. The stories of his travails do seem unrelated to the other volumes of the novel, which take place in England. But Sterne's epigraph, which could apply to the work as a whole, declares that these ostensibly tangential plot developments are actually integral ingredients of the overall work.³⁶

To say that asides are as important to plot development as the main storyline reduces the complexity of Sterne's agenda. This formulation preserves a configuration of novelistic progress along a main plotline that Sterne aims to dismantle. For Sterne, the notion of "plot" as such is irrelevant; there is a constant non-linear progress towards greater understanding of character. Thus it is unimportant whether the narrative takes place in France or England. The real action of the novel — or the revelation of information — takes place everywhere and all the time.

Sterne articulates a dual movement of digression and progression that more accurately represents his novelistic technique. Early in the novel, Sterne writes,

...there is a master-stroke of digressive skill, the merit of which has all along, I fear, been overlooked by my reader, —not for want of penetration in him,——but because 'tis an excellence seldom looked for, or expected indeed, in a digression;——and it is this: That tho' my digressions are all fair, as you observe,——and that I fly off from what I am about, as far and as often too as any writer in Great-Britain; yet I constantly take care to order affairs so, that my main business does not stand still in my absence.

I was just going, for example, to have given you the great outlines of my uncle *Toby's* most whimsical character;—when my aunt *Dinah* and the coachman came a-cross us, and led us a

³⁶It also could be said that this chapter on *Tristram Shandy* constitutes a digression from the main focus of my project, which concentrates on visual functions of prose in a twentieth-century context. But Sterne's epigraph holds true here as well: I am digressing from the expected "plot" to establish the issues that confront novel composers beginning with the eighteenth-century rise of this genre.

vagary some millions of miles into the very heart of the planetary system: Notwithstanding all this, you perceive that the drawing of my uncle *Toby's* character went on gently all the time;—not the great contours of it,—that was impossible,—but some familiar strokes and faint designations of it, were here and there touch'd in, as we went along, so that you are much better acquainted with my uncle *Toby* now than you was before.

By this contrivance the machinery of my work is of a species by itself; two contrary motions are introduced into it, and reconciled, which were thought to be at variance with each other. In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too,—and at the same time. (I, xxii, 161-62/51-52)

Sterne/Shandy predicts that “my reader” will fail to notice the doubleness inherent in his digressions. When he takes what is commonly seen as a narrative aside, he craftily gives the reader information that is not explicitly related to any particular plot but which is nonetheless useful in interpreting the novel as a whole. There is a sense of gradual revelation or nonlinear “progress” through a matrix of detail. The digressions therefore simultaneously interrupt any developing “plot” and encourage a multilayered flow of the narrative.

Critics tend to discuss Sterne's paragraphs on digression too simply to suit Sterne's push-and-pull game. It is true, for instance, that the double movement of the digression and progression working together is “an imitation of life: the orbit of the earth around the sun, as Tristram says, ‘suggested the thought’” (Olshin 529). But Sterne/Shandy couches this inspiration in an emphatically cautionary note that directly follows the paragraphs quoted above:

This, Sir, is a very different story from that of the earth's moving round her axis, in her diurnal rotation, with her progress in her elliptick orbit which brings about the year, and constitutes that variety and vicissitude of seasons we enjoy; though I own it suggested the thought,—as I believe the greatest of our boasted improvements

and discoveries have come from some such trifling hints (I, xxii, 162-63/52).

Astronomical events are like complicated machinery, but they are not strictly analagous to the action of digression in *Tristram Shandy*. Even though the earth's orbit is elliptical (i.e., digressive in its path), and even though the seasons have "vicissitudes" within their predictable variety or order, Sterne maintains that his formulation of a simultaneously digressive and progressive work "is a very different story" from the direct cause and effect relationship between planetary movements and climatic change. Though Sterne/Shandy admits that the astronomical metaphor "suggested the thought" of the contrary motions working together, the relationship between astronomy and narrative approach is only a whiff of a "trifling" connection. Strictly mechanistic metaphors are not "like life" (Olshin 529) enough to describe the type of "vagary" that unexpectedly leads "some millions of miles into the very heart of the planetary system." Nor can they account for the "faint designations . . . here and there" that percolate below the discernible workings of Sterne's text.

Digression in the reading process is inevitable, Sterne would assert, because physical human bodies are not strictly mechanistic. He illustrates this idea at the beginning of volume VIII, when Shandy is continuing a discussion of digressions and plot lines that he began at the end of volume VI.

I defy, notwithstanding all that has been said upon *straight lines** in sundry pages of my book—I defy the best cabbage planter that ever existed, whether he plants backwards or forwards, it makes little difference in the account (except that he will have more to answer for in the one case than in the other)—I defy him to go

on coolly, critically, and canonically, planting his cabbages one by one, in straight lines, and stoical distances, especially if slits in petticoats are unsew'd up—without ever and anon straddling out, or sidling into some bastardly digression——”

* Vid. Vol. VI, p. 152.

(VIII, i, 1-2/380)

It is impossible for the cabbage planter to plant a row of cabbage crops in a mechanically straight line, Tristram suggests, simply by virtue of being human and therefore unmechanized. It is especially difficult to regularize the body's actions when a woman's body is visible (through “slits in petticoats”). The body, whether it is in action or in the field of vision, disrupts regularity.³⁷

This passage also demonstrates that reading cannot proceed without digression. The footnote in the text interrupts readers with a reference to the exact page of an earlier, related discussion (see “The Reader's Body,” section E.3., below). The passage also implies that readers cannot keep their eyes moving “stoically” along the rows of words in the presence of a live body. Sterne's many techniques for bringing bodies into the text explore the ramifications of this implication. Words themselves are like cabbages, planted in rows along the page. In this passage, the words cannot articulate even a single thought without digressing; the phrase “I defy” is therefore repeated three times as the narrator tries to return to his declaration-in-progress.³⁸ Thus the figure of the cabbage planter represents Sterne as the writer and composer of the novel.

³⁷ See section E. for a full discussion of bodies in the book.

³⁸ A similar phenomenon occurs in volume VIII, when Corporal Trim tries to tell a story to uncle Toby. After each of four digressions (mostly in the form of Toby interrupting the story), Trim resumes the tale after a heading which appears centered on the page identically each time:

The story of the king of Bohemia and
his seven castles, continued.

Sometimes Sterne “plants” asterisks on the page instead of words; these marks even look like cabbages. Though using asterisks as replacements for words is not unique to Sterne in the eighteenth century, Sterne creates a physical lack of “stoical distances” between the asterisks instead of merely incorporating them into the narrative.³⁹ When they are printed for rows at a time, he arranges the asterisks idiosyncratically instead of mechanistically, thereby making visible the digressions’ inevitability (see fig. A.9.).

Type generally is designed to facilitate the regular spacing of elements. In Sterne’s day, lead spacers for letterpress came in standard “em” and “en” widths to help compositors arrange type systematically. His printers would therefore be quite capable of creating reasonably regularly spaced lines of punctuation. Sterne’s lines, however, must have included odd-sized slugs to create the irregular spaces among the asterisks. The marks dance on the page; the spaces between them take on a vitality and a sense of aesthetic play that disappears in more recent editions’ mechanically regularized arrangements of the same sections (see fig. A.10.). This non-narrative digression represents Sterne’s theory that digression is an inevitable companion to progress, whether that progress is the work of planting cabbages, composing type, writing, or reading.

In this case, the repetition functions like clearing the throat: it refocuses the reader’s attention on the section of the story to come. The words “I defy,” however, need to be repeated simply in order to preserve the grammatical sense of the passage.

³⁹“Readers of the works of Samuel Richardson were used to the convention of using asterisks instead of names, presumably in order to preserve anonymity. In the hands of Sterne, in *Tristram Shandy*, the use of the asterisks can become redundant, for he provides us with enough information to identify easily the person or place” (Hutcheon 105).

2. *Non-narrative Digressions*

When the usual conventions of linguistic representation, page layout, and bibliographical construction are called into question, the reader must slow down and find new ways of assimilating information. The book defamiliarizes the appearance of text with printing experiments and jokes, blank spaces in unexpected places, and references to the physical composition of the printed volume.

Though Sterne writes most directly about narrative digressions, his idea of digression and progression applies equally to how he uses visual and material elements in the text. The way in which digressions encourage progress is instructive for considering Sterne's combination of language with non-verbal elements. A plot digression takes the reader's attention in a particular direction (just as the line of language or print must be read in a particular order), while the narrative is "here and there touch'd in" with "some familiar strokes and faint designations" (I, xxii, 161-62/51-52). This non-directional, subtler action uses the language of visibility, for the double movement of narrative digression and "drawing character" can also refer to the double modality of words and non-verbal textual elements.

Because some of Sterne's digressions are imagistic — the marbled page being the most distracting of the lot — his "work" also includes creating a relation between word and image. The visual and material composition augments and echoes the narrative project: the function of the visual element within the verbal novel is like the narrative digression within an overall progression.

When critics attempt to interpret the function of the "digression" solely in terms of narrative plot, the result is myopic. William Bowman

Piper, for example, theorizes that the digressions in *Tristram Shandy* generally offer opinions on or explain the context behind events, but he then must differentiate the result from other eighteenth-century texts (such as *Tom Jones*) that also feature explanatory asides. Piper's attempts to explain the difference stay on a thematic level: "The texture of *Tristram's* discourse is thicker [than that of *Tom Jones*], finally, because *Tristram* has attempted to involve all possible elements of society in it as deeply as he could (I. iv.)" (561). Though this is an accurate statement (that is derived directly from *Shandy's* own testimony in the text of the novel), it only admits the didactic level of *Sterne's* discourse.

Visual and material elements in *Tristram Shandy* play two roles: like narrative digressions, they can disturb the sequence of reading by presenting visual information that is unusual to see in a book. But they also work upon the reader's consciousness atemporally, in ways that have little in common with language or sequence. *Sterne/Shandy* asserts "that of all the senses, the eye. . .has the quickest commerce with the soul,—gives a smarter stroke, and leaves something more inexpressible upon the fancy, than words can either convey—or sometimes get rid of" (V, vii, 46/253). The simplest way to divert attention from a storyline, in a conventional novel, is to create a narrative aside. But for *Sterne*, the simplest way to divert attention in general is to introduce a visual element. During the process of integrating the surprising visual interruption into an overall understanding of the text, a new and unexpected perception of the point becomes evident, though it could not have been expressed in language.

Sterne insists early in the novel that digressions are the defining ingredient of the reading experience, and that they are the building blocks of the book as a printed object.

Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine; — they are the life, the soul of reading; — take them out of this book for instance — you might as well take the book along with them; one cold eternal winter would reign on every page of it; restore them to the writer; — he steps forth like a bridegroom, — bids All hail; brings in variety, and forbids the appetite to fail. (I, xxii, 163/52)

At first, it seems as though Sterne is saying that digressions make reading more interesting; a reader might as well abandon the project of reading a book that has no digressions. But the reason for abandoning the book is not just that it would be boring, but that it would no longer exist. Digressions are the very material out of which the book is constructed: removing them would leave the pages as blank as a permanent winter snowscape.⁴⁰ A book with digressions, on the other hand, invigorates the activities of the writer and the reader.

This interpretation is supported by Sterne's characterizing the writer as "a bridegroom," who is traditionally clothed in a suit as black as ink. The groom is also a figure of joyous energy — "sunshine" — as he marries his bride, who traditionally wears a dress as white as a blank page. The marriage of ink and page creates the "life" of the digression, and readers are inspired to pay attention — "All hail" — to the ceremonious event. The "variety" of digressions that the author can write as a result of the marriage "forbids the appetite to fail."⁴¹ That is, the continuous digressions will entertain the

⁴⁰Sterne uses blank pages as digressions later in the novel. (Discussed below.)

⁴¹For a discussion of reading as heterosexual intercourse, see section.

reader enough to create an “appetite” or an anticipation of new directions to follow.

Anticipation implies a future that the reader will approach over time; therefore it is arguable that Sterne’s notion of digression only reinforces an appetite for a conventionally sequential narrative. But the flavor of that sequence is not mechanically neat. Instead, Sterne writes, “if it is to be a digression, it must be a good frisky one, and upon a frisky subject too” (IX, xii, 48/433). The “digression” defines the “progress” of the narrative so that progress no longer has a strictly forward motion. (See discussion of Olshin, above.)

Sterne discusses digressions as not being constrained to a narrative mode. At the beginning of a chapter, for instance, he declares,

Upon looking back from the end of the last chapter and surveying the texture of what has been wrote, it is necessary, that upon this page and the five following, a good quantity of heterogeneous matter be inserted, to keep up that just balance betwixt wisdom and folly, without which a book would not hold together a single year: nor is it a poor creeping digression (which but for the name of, a man might continue as well going on in the king’s highway) which will do the business—no; if it is to be a digression, it must be a good frisky one, and upon a frisky subject too, where neither the horse or his rider are to be caught, but by rebound. (IX, xii, 48/433)

Like Piper, Sterne/Shandy attends to the novel’s “texture,” a term that indicates physicality as well as narrative structure. The act of “surveying” that texture is taking a summary picture, usually from a distant vantage point that would see the overall visual pattern instead of individual words. Indeed, Sterne would not characterize his book as being made with words; he says it is “necessary” to include “a good quantity of heterogeneous

matter” which could include different visual or physical materials (“matter”) as well as words, all mixed together. Without this mixture, “a book would not hold together a single year” — as if digression is the glue that physically holds the pages together (or creates “thickness”).

The result of adding a digression to the text is that the reader can no longer progress along “the king’s highway” of continuous print, which is well-maintained and easy to travel. Instead, “neither the horse or his rider are to be caught, but by rebound.” That is, the reader will not be able to follow the progression of the narrative in any familiar direction (and nor will the author). The movement of the text is only perceptible upon retrospective reflection, when the reader contemplates all that has been presented and creates new paradigms of sense to bind the information together. “By rebound” thus has the double reference of retrospection and book production.

3. *Displaced Prefaces*

The marbled page performs Sterne’s dialectic of digression and progression. It is a material digression; “heterogeneous matter” is one manifestation of the life and soul of reading. The random arrangement of lines in the marbling resembles Sterne’s organized chaos of digressive narrative lines: the paintdrop colors bump up against each other in the space of the marbled page represent the narrator’s “opinions” that bump up against each other during the course of the novel. Also, the fact that some colors appear on top of others is a visual parallel to the dual structure of digression and progression: while looking at the top layer of colors, there are also “faint designations” of others swirling below.

Sterne's placement of this page is deliberate. While many novels of the day were sold in sheets, since binding was not automatically a part of book production until the early nineteenth century, *Tristram Shandy* was only sold as a set of bound volumes, with the loose page glued and sewn into its proper place in volume III (Patterson 74-75).

Various critics have noted that the placement of the marbled page in the middle of the volume means that the patterns that are usually endpapers are now in the middle of the volume (Bony 21, Moss 194). This observation suggests several text-appropriate symbolisms. For instance, it reflects the Shandean habit of telling a story not from beginning to end, but in a hodgepodge way, because events are not in their "proper" places. The marbled page thus illustrates Victor Shklovsky's famous declaration, *Tristram Shandy is the most typical novel in world literature*" (57), in the sense that all fiction is artfully constructed — plot never follows a sequential timeline. The repositioning of the marbled page therefore mixes up the chronology that would usually place endpapers at the end, and the beginning, of a reading experience. Bony goes as far as to conjecture that the marbled page makes the narrative structure of the novel into a kind of mœbius strip, in which the inside and the outside of the book become each other in a conceptual conundrum. None of these analyses explain, however, why the marbled leaf is inserted in the *third* volume, nor why it is placed at that particular point in the text.

The theory of the out-of-place endpaper is specious because the original volumes of *Tristram Shandy* do not have marbled endpapers, nor do many books that were published at that time. In the eighteenth century, marbled paper did not commonly serve as endpapers. The production

process was too time-consuming; it was done by hand until mechanized marbling was “invented by a Frenchman named Meuglin in 1820” (Dailey iv).⁴² Handmade marbled papers occasionally bound blank notebooks, but they were generally reserved for decorative covers rather than hidden as endpapers (Patterson 83).⁴³

Marbled paper itself was not familiar to eighteenth-century readers, as evidenced by the necessity for the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce’s marbling contests. As de Voogd observes, “although little is known of marbling before 1766, when Richard Dymott claimed to have brought the process to perfection, one thing is certain: Sterne’s device must have been startling, totally original, and quite baffling” (“Accidents” 285).

It is more likely that contemporary readers would recognize the marbled page as a misplaced beginning of the novel, because Sterne calls it an “emblem of my work.” Scholars and writers often used emblems as symbolic epitomes to introduce a work; they could be short written pieces, images, or a combination of the two (Corbett and Lightbown 15). The emblem served as a metaphor for the work to come, but it was not a conventional illustration. As Alain Boureau writes,

Mastery of how emblems work should not be confused with the art of “reading” pictures. Unlike allegorical or descriptive illustrative

⁴² After the invention of marbling machines, the mass-produced papers were considered “inferior to the handmade variety” (Dailey iv); marbling historian Charles Adams even asserts that “marbling lost much of its fascination for the bibliophile and the creative bookbinder (422).

⁴³ Peter de Voogd casts further doubt upon the theory that the marbled page is primarily about disturbing the sequence of book elements: “endsheets were, before the marbling process was mechanized and marbled paper commercially available, seldom if ever marbled . . . It is only towards the end of the eighteenth century that the marbled endpaper becomes common in bookbinding” (“Accidents” 285).

images, in which a portion of all possible meaning is grasped out of a continuum of forms, the emblem produced a meaning (or a determined set of meanings) with nothing left over. The image was there merely to give material form to figures latent in the metaphor. (263)

Thus the marbled page is a visual metaphor whose entirety can be analyzed as a symbol for the work as a whole, although it is placed in the middle of a volume.

In the seventeenth century emblematic title pages contained images in which authors distilled the books' contents; the "emblem" was recognized as a prefatory symbol. As Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown report, "what contemporaries well knew, though we have forgotten it, namely that in these designs we are confronted with conceits of the author, represented at the front of his book in visual symbols that he himself had chosen and designed as its most fitting emblems" (1). In keeping with this tradition, Sterne masterminds his own "emblem," and readers would recognize this page as the misplaced preface to the work.

The marbled page is one of many prefaces that appear in volume III of *Tristram Shandy* instead of at the beginning of volume I. This page comes in the middle of Walter Shandy's reading of the fictitious folio, Slawkenburgius' *De Nasis* or *On Noses*. Slightly later, Sterne/Shandy complains that the bookbinder has sewn Slawkenburgius' prolegomenon, or "formal essay or critical discussion serving to introduce and interpret an extended work," in the middle of the book instead of at the beginning. The bookbinder puts the prolegomena "betwixt the analitical contents of the book, and the book itself" (III, xxxviii, /168). This could likewise describe the

placement of the marbled page, which the bookbinder places between pages of text and between sewn sections of paper.

We also find the “Author’s Preface” to *Tristram Shandy* in the third volume (chap. xx). If the marbled page is the visual representation of an ejaculation, as discussed in section B.2., it represents a different kind of author’s preface: it is the event that precedes Tristram Shandy’s life. It also explains his life emblematically: Shandy insists that his mother’s question to his father in the midst of sex justifies his odd character. Walter Shandy even says that actually Tristram’s problems began nine months before he was born.

But as with Slawkenburgius’ prologemenon and *Tristram Shandy’s* author’s preface, this preface — the ejaculation that is the preface to any person’s life — appears in the third volume. Perhaps this and the other displaced prefaces appear here because in one respect this volume is the first: it marks the beginning of the Dodsleys’ involvement in Sterne’s publishing project.

4. *Resequencings Make Readers “Think”*

The lines of narration that Sterne/Shandy draws at the end of volume VI purport to trace narrative digressions while they themselves disrupt the printed text (see fig. A.1).⁴⁴ They are another example of the “heterogeneous matter” that Sterne inserts in the text, but they express Sterne’s agenda of disrupting the reader’s “progress” more explicitly and straightforwardly than the marbled page.

⁴⁴Many of Sterne’s “special effects” appear towards the ends of volumes, such as the marbled page, the lines of narration, and a threat to tear out a page. These oddities create surprise, suspense, or awe, perhaps so that the reader will buy the next volume of the novel.

The lines move fitfully across the page, accompanied by the assertion that they represent the plot of the book: “These were the four lines I moved in through my first, second, third, and fourth volumes (VI, xl, 152-3/333, see fig. A.1.). Though the lines do illustrate Sterne’s general tendency to digress, Leonard Rogoff outrageously asserts (following Shklovsky) that the lines actually correspond to the trajectory of the “plot” (Rogoff 23, 37). This attempt to establish a direct correspondence seems too literal to apply to Sterne. After all, the lines parody the novelistic convention of creating a strictly sequential plot or a chronologically “linear” narrative. They do, however, make the reader think back over what has come before, to test the veracity of Sterne’s claim.

As Sterne/Shandy continues this chapter, the parody intensifies: he labels his fifth line with upper- and lowercase letters to indicate types of digressions (see fig. 1). He then identifies each one as if to explain it away: “By which it appears, that except at the curve, marked A. . . —and the indented curve B. . . . —I have not taken the least frisk of a digression, till . . .D. — for as for c c c c c they are nothing but parentheses . . .” (VI, xl, 152-53/333). Shandy muses that he may “at this rate. . . arrive hereafter at the excellency of going on even thus;

which is a line drawn straight as I could draw it” (VI, xl, 154/334). A line without digressions is the false ideal; Sterne mocks it by quoting various sources of praise for the straight line and asking his female readers to incorporate it into their clothing.

This *right line*,—the path-way for Christians to walk in! say
divines—
—The emblem of moral rectitude! says *Cicero*—

—The *best line!* say cabbage-planters—is the shortest line, says *Archimedes*, which can be drawn from one given point to another.—

I wish your ladyships would lay this matter to heart in your next birth-day suits!⁴⁵ (VI, xl, 154/334)

We have already learned from the cabbage planters that a completely straight line, with no digressions, is quite impossible in agriculture and by implication in narrative. The other praise for the straight line reads as elaborate sarcasm, as the “emblem” for the book as a whole is not the “moral” straight line, but the wild marbled page.

Sterne demands, “Who told the critics that the best, most serious (grave) way to write a book was straight forwards? My book is very serious indeed, and is written (as the lines of narrative show) parabolically, digressively, hyperbolically. . .” (in Loveridge 62).⁴⁶ The equation of a digressive approach with a parabolic and hyperbolic one reinforces the idea that visual elements are digressions; the parabola and hyperbola are graphic forms.

In this quotation, digressions also figure as strategies for avoiding death; the straight line of narrative is not only “serious” but also “grave.” Death is the inevitable “end” or “end of the line,” and a digression either seeks to deny that reality (as in volume VII) or postpone the line’s conclusion. The position of the body in the grave is immobile and horizontal, like that of the “line of GRAVITATION” (VI, xl, 155/334) that gets confused with the straight line of narrative he draws at the end of

⁴⁵ Anderson defines these as “Clothes worn at birthday celebrations, especially that of the monarch” (*Tristram* 334, n7).

⁴⁶ Loveridge does not say where he found this quotation. Though it corresponds to other sentiments in *Tristram Shandy*, I have not been able to trace it to the novel specifically.

volume VI. A story without digressions, as discussed earlier, results in the “cold, eternal winter” of death.

In addition to creating a narrative line that travels in any direction but “straight forwards,” Sterne contrives to resequence the book itself. He reorders chapters, misnumbers pages, and includes two blank chapters in volume IX to disrupt the reader’s expectations for how to proceed.⁴⁷ After he pledges to return to the blank chapters and fill them in, he pontificates, “All I wish is, that it may be a lesson to the world, ‘to let people tell their stories their own way’” (IX, xxv, 100/446, emphasis original). When a page lacks the specific structures of print, there are no boundaries to constrain the construction of narrative.

D. Unbounded Images Disrupt the Consistency of Printing

The emblem of the marbled page is qualified as “motly,” which in Sterne’s day could mean “varying in character or mood; changeable in form” (OED).⁴⁸ The page thus resists the closure of print; Alain Bony describes it as “a page that at first sight proclaims its irreducible heterogeneity” (16).⁴⁹ The original versions of the marbled page best perform this variety, for each iteration is unique. Even the recto and verso of the same leaf reflect changes that are emblematic of general narrative unpredictability.

Eric Rothstein notes that the marbled page could have been copied from *Le Spectacle de la nature* (1746), a nine-volume work that was included

⁴⁷ See also section E for further discussion of blanks and Sterne’s disruptions of book structure.

⁴⁸ As late as 1757, the sentence “So motley a creature is man; as mutable, as God is fixed” appeared in the *Centaur* (OED).

⁴⁹ “une page qui à première vue proclame son irréductible hétérogénéité.”

in Sterne's library. In this book, "Noël-Antoine Pluche . . . used it as an example of meaningless color unconnected to objects" (Rothstein 66, n6). In fact, eighteenth-century philosopher of perception Bishop Berkeley considered the possibility that people see objects precisely as meaningless color. He wrote in "A New Theory of Vision" that flat planes and solid objects are not really seen as such. Instead, "What we strictly see are not solids, nor yet planes variously coloured; they are only diversity of colours" (Berkeley clviii, 85). Sterne can therefore use his marbling to represent an infinity of objects, or to allude to the lack of solid plot line in the book. The narrative could go in any number of directions, based on the vagaries of the author. He tells the reader that his choices are uncontrollable: "But this is neither here nor there—why do I mention it?—Ask my pen, — it governs me, — I govern it not" (VI, vi, 18/292).

Now we see that the production method is essential to the symbolism of this page. Peter de Voogd erroneously asserts that Sterne used a comb to create patterns in the pigment ("Accidents" 284), but this technique prevents the infinite variety of patterns. Only a hand-splattering technique yields random shifts in each iteration and preserves the page's meaning of intractable change and the vitality of life.

The infinite possibilities in the page, and its impenetrability, are part of Sterne's concern with simultaneous progression and digression, reading and frustrations to reading. In the page opposite the marbling, Sterne/Shandy muses,

without *much reading* . . . you will no more be able to penetrate the moral of the next marbled page (motly emblem of my work!) than the world with all its sagacity has been able to un-raval [*sic*] the many

opinions, transactions and truths which still lie mystically hid under the dark veil of the black one. (III, xxxvi, 168/164)⁵⁰

Infinity and impenetrability are two sides of the same coin. This doubleness is embedded in the symbolism of the seventeenth-century emblematic title page (from which I argue that the marbled page derives, in section C.3., above).

The creators of emblematic title pages had a double agenda. First, they aimed to provide prefatory material that would introduce the book and interest prospective readers. At the same time, however, they kept the symbolism mysterious, so that the reader would need to guess the relevance of the images. As Corbett and Lightbown write, “the emblem was intended to be not so complete a puzzle as the enigma, yet at the same time not so plain that it deprived the ingenious reader of the pleasure of working out its meaning” (18). This dual goal was commonly “the anxiety of the authors” and not of the hired illustrators (34).⁵¹

This wish for participation on both the part of the author and the reader is part of Sterne’s narrative project: he divides responsibility equally between the author and the reader. But Sterne also echoes another reason that emblem-makers left the reader room to puzzle out their meanings: a wish to keep people at a certain distance from knowledge. Emblem-makers believed that:

learning was not for the vulgar, and should be hidden under veils so as to make it inaccessible to them, [but] those veils were not to be so thick and dark that the truths they concealed were totally obscured.

⁵⁰ Moss writes that Sterne had also written of “the dark Veil of . . . allegory” in *A Political Romance* (Moss 193).

⁵¹ The full thought reads, “A common feature . . . is the anxiety of the authors to be not so obscure as to be enigmatic nor so commonplace as to exclude all ingenuity of invention in the contriver or all ingenuity of solution in the reader” (34).

All these authors recommend a middle path between the occult impenetrability of the enigma and the tedious obviousness of the familiar. (Corbett and Lightbown 34)

The marbled page fits the definition of an emblem, not only because it simultaneously reveals and conceals its own significance, but because the technique of marbling was considered slightly “occult.” Production secrets were carefully guarded, as if they were alchemical formulae; marbled paper was almost mythically mysterious (Dailey ii).

The emblem-makers’ attitude bears an uncanny resemblance to Sterne’s own discussion of the marbled and black pages on the page opposite the first marbling. Sterne alludes to the black page as a dark veil; in their mystification of reading, these two pages are also two sides of the same coin. Just as the black page gives the reader no directionality, the marbled page gives many options for where to look and what to think. The passage preceding the black page leads back to marbling, as Alain Bony finds: “if one refers to I, 12, 27, one will find a textual association that is even more closely connected: Yorick, one reads, is buried ‘under a plain marble slabb’” (16, n6).⁵² The unmanipulated “Turkish” style of marbling makes the print resemble the patterns in marbled stone, such as the “marble slabb” underneath which the parson Yorick lies buried.

The marbled page and the black page are also constructed as dialectical forces: one has many colors, the other has none. The colors stand for the orgasmic genesis of life, the lack of color represents the final stasis of death and burial. The fabric of the marbled page is “motley” like a lively jester’s

⁵²“si l’on se réfère à I, 12, 27, on trouvera une association textuelle encore plus étroite: Yorick, lit-on, est enterré «under a plain marble slabb».”

costume (*OED*),⁵³ while the black page is a “dark veil” that signals the death of Yorick the parson. The fact that the name Yorick also alludes to the jester figure in *Hamlet* seals the point: the symbol of liveliness has died.

The representation of Yorick’s grave[stone], while it is contained within the same margins as the marbled page, is much more solid than the paper on which the marbling appears in volume III. There is only one possibility for reading death, but life is various and ever-changing. The description of the stone as “marble” therefore does not refer to its many hues and patterns, but to its rocklike impenetrability.

Sterne ends the story of Yorick’s life with a representation of a grave that is eerily gravelike. Black rectangles appear in volume I, on pages 73 and 74 of the first edition, and conclude the chapter (see fig. A.11. and A.12.). The black pages provoke an immediate, non-verbal apprehension of death that “can be, if only for a moment, poignant” (Moss 15). Their blackness and proportion makes them resemble a freshly dug grave. The fact that the ink is printed on the recto and verso of the same leaf of paper reinforces this similarity by creating the illusion of three-dimensional depth. The ink seems to penetrate the pages as if a void had been carved out of the paper. It is an illusionistic interruption of the text: this yawning black mark punctures the continuous fabric of the printing just as a grave is a surprising depression in the earth’s surface.

The black pages offer an unusual structure for reading: the structureless void. There is no linearity for the eye to follow such as in

⁵³Johnson’s dictionary of 1827 lists only one definition for “motley” — “Mingled of various colours” — and notes that the word is “supposed to be corrupted from *medley*.” Clearly the marbled page is a medley of pigments that contrasts with the lack of color in the black page; this is enough to conclude that the marbled page has a “moral” about the complexity of life just as the black page symbolizes, simply, death.

print; there is no other directionality such as might be possible in a drawn image. Only the margins of the rectangle indicate its relation to both Yorick's grave and to the text of the book. Thus the mind is free to invent interpretations or to follow whatever thoughts arise, especially in relation to the phenomenon of death. This opportunity to "free associate" is a digression from the usual sequence of reading, since words generally offer structures of meaning and visual direction that are more predictably constraining than the black pages' intractability.

The black pages' disruption of the sequence of reading is encoded in the words that lead up to its appearance. When Sterne describes Yorick's gravesite, he recounts that "not a passenger goes by [on the 'foot-way crossing the church-yard close by the side of his grave'] without stopping to cast a look upon it" (I, xii, 72/22). This phrase appears directly across from the first black page (fig. A.11.), and it allegorically describes the situation of the reader whose gaze must shift from taking in words to taking in the image of a black shape. The reader is the "passenger" who must travel "close by the side of the grave" while following the lines of words across the page. Each line is like a "foot-way crossing the church-yard" if the text area is considered as an enclosed space within the page, just as a yard is enclosed within a larger expanse of land. The reader cannot continue "without stopping to cast a look upon" the grave itself: the gaze changes from a linear progression across and down a page to a visual apprehension of a total image. This "look" disrupts the momentum of the textual progress; the black page functions as a colossal period (or "full stop") that halts the

progress of the eye, the chapter, and the life of Yorick the parson.⁵⁴ The sequences normally associated with continuous reading, writing, walking and living are all interrupted by the appearance of the grave (fig. A.12.).

In the graveyard scene where Hamlet encounters Yorick's skull, the contrast between memories of the past and the sensual experience of the present is so marked that it makes Hamlet feel ill. Sterne creates a similar disjuncture of time and disorientation for his readers. The black page, like the skull, assaults the senses⁵⁵ and brings us back to a present experience instead of letting us remain in fantastical reverie, whether that reverie is a memory of the life of Yorick the jester (for Hamlet) or a storyline about the life of Yorick the parson (for readers of *Tristram Shandy*).⁵⁶

The encounter with death, for both Hamlet in the play and for the reader of *Tristram Shandy*, is repulsive in the sense that it is impossible to comprehend. Yorick's skull has just been unearthed from the grave; the

⁵⁴ The narrative that leads up to the black pages — Yorick's friendship with Eugenius, the account of their conversation on Yorick's deathbed, and the look of his headstone in his church's graveyard — proceeds with very few narrative digressions, though it is itself a digression from Walter Shandy's thoughts upon securing a midwife for his pregnant spouse. It is possible to read this unusually lucid chapter with a sense of "being transported to a narrative world . . . away from the here and now" (Gerrig 3). The subsequent digression from verbal signs to a visual field, however, shifts the reader back to the experience of reading the book.

⁵⁵ The page is a surprising sight, while the skull gives off a foul smell.

⁵⁶ The jolt of the return is the most dramatic moment in Hamlet's speech; the memories contrast painfully with the perceptual reality of Yorick's skull. Hamlet murmurs, "He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it" (V, i, 167-69). Critics in many editions support the idea that Hamlet finds it difficult to accept the temporal contrast between his memories and his present experience:

'It' in this sentence, and in 'my gorge rises at it,' is used in reference to the idea of having been borne on the back of him whose skeleton remains are thus suddenly presented to the speaker's gaze, the idea of having caressed and been fondled by one whose mouldering fleshless skull is now held in the speaker's hand" (Clarke, in Furness ed., 396).

In *Tristram Shandy*, the black page is "presented to the speaker's gaze" to act like Yorick's skull: it is the unavoidable visual evidence of the end of a sequence, whether of life or of a story. It is also difficult to accept: it is not only perplexing (because it presents a different textual code to the reader), but it is the visual sign of Yorick's death (see above).

smell and feel of it are unmistakably mortal. The skull is so putrid that Hamlet says, "Pah!" (V, i, 181) and puts it down; it repels anyone who tries to get close to it. Death remains impenetrable; Hamlet cannot quite believe that all humans end up as skeletons. The reader of *Tristram Shandy* who encounters the black page sees what looks like a three-dimensional grave: the void of the black pages becomes a three-dimensional space that penetrates the plane of the page. This is an illusory spatiality; it cannot be entered the way Laertes (or Hamlet) enters Ophelia's grave. Nor can its meaning be definitively resolved; as Sterne/Shandy writes two volumes later, there are "many opinions, transactions and truths which still lie mystically hid under the dark veil of the black [page]" (III, xxxvi, 168/164).

Though this declaration undoubtedly carries a whiff of facetiousness (since it is impossible to push aside the "dark veil" of printed ink or of death), it also points toward the possibility that Sterne wants his readers to contemplate the infinite array of meanings that might be inscribed beneath the "dark veil" of ink. But Roger Moss concludes from this that Sterne uses a reference to death as a permanent digression; it cuts through all storylines. As Moss writes, "Meaning that belongs to books maybe unable to escape them, stuck under the surface of their communicative medium" (193). The ink that creates the black pages is the same ink that creates printed words. Any number of printed words could be buried within the ink of the black pages.

Unlike Moss, I believe that Sterne challenges the reader to continue, even in the face of an ultimately confounding digression like the black page of death. On the other side of this page, the narrative begins again with the midwife, who has the vocation of bringing new life into the world. The

death of storylines creates the opportunity to begin a new story. Yorick's death should not make the reader forget the midwife's existence — "that there is such a body still in the world" — and Sterne notes that "fresh matter may be started" as he continues with this part of the novel (I, xiii, 75/25).⁵⁷

Both the marbled page and the black page allow the reader a great deal of interpretive freedom; in this sense they are the answers to the flourish that Corporal Trim draws with his cane to express the unmarried male's sexual freedom. Peter de Voogd reports that there may be a more literal connection between the marbled page and Trim's flourish: a popular eighteenth-century marbling manual contains a picture in which the marbling trough has a snaking line drawn on it (fig. A.13.).⁵⁸ The line shows the path that a person should follow when moving through the colored medium with a stylus, in order to create a marbled pattern. De Voogd notes that Corporal Trim follows a similar path when he draws in the air with his cane. He asks, "Is it possible that . . . Corporal Trim's airy argument defining liberty . . . is thus related to the marbled page?" (De Voogd, "Flourish" 132). In addition to the common theme of freedom, a bawdy connection becomes more clear with Moss' remark: "*Tristram Shandy* begins with the suddenly randomized trajectory of a sperm, and I doubt if I am alone in finding myself reminded of this by the way the

⁵⁷ These effects are lost in reprintings of the novel. One edition leaves the black page out altogether; there is no sense of death as a cause for pausing in one's reading. Others print the information about the midwife before the black page itself, most likely in order to save paper and therefore printing costs.

⁵⁸ Though de Voogd does not prove conclusively that Sterne saw this image, he does note that this work, "Geoffrey Smith's *The Laboratory; or, School of Arts* (London: Hodges, 1738), [was] a work popular enough to go through its 4th edition in 1755 (and a 7th in 1810)" (130). Even notwithstanding the ubiquity of Smith's manual, the uncanny similarity between the sticks' paths in the two images suggests that there is a semiotic parallel between them.

flourish is drawn" (191). If the marbled page is an ejaculation, as discussed above, then the images can be related through their common visual allusion to this topic.⁵⁹

The three images of the marbled page, the black page, and Trim's flourish demand that the reader become a textual detective. Like the designers of emblems, Sterne delights in making his readers go beyond the usual process of reading text to uncover the meanings in his images. As the narrator comments on Trim's flourish, "A thousand of my father's most subtle syllogisms could not have said more for celibacy" (IX, iv, 18/426). Continuing to read the book will not yield the information that the image suggests.

Walter Benjamin, in "The Author as Producer," writes that physical traces can also be more expressive than textual representations. He writes that "the tiniest authentic fragment of daily life says more than painting. Just as the bloody fingerprint of a murderer on the page of a book says more than the text" (229). Of course, this fragment is an image as well as a physical trace, but the materials that make up the fingerprint are more immediately vivid expressions than a representative description in words or visual representations. The marbled page yields more clues to the infinite mysteries of life when it appears in its original embodiment.

E. Bodies in the Book

One of Sterne's techniques for disrupting the reading sequence is to continually foreground the body in the text. The physical aspects of reading

⁵⁹ On the other hand, however, the image suggests an alternative symbolism for the marbled page. The technique depicted involves the movement of a stylus through a medium — allegorically this represents an act of sexual intercourse.

become a focus: the bodies of characters become more palpable, and the bodies of the writer and the reader can also be seen in the narrative in the midst of interacting with the physical book. In the next section I will discuss the body of the book, which Sterne also highlights as a physically tangible object.

Symbolically, the asterisks often replace sections of text that deal with sexual topics, which are highly unsystematized. As Linda Hutcheon writes, "Usually, . . . the omissions are suggestive — sexually suggestive" (106). Their dancing on the page performs the sense of jumpy titillation that accompanies tittering discourse about sexual matters. Like the partial concealment of information that characterizes innuendo, the asterisks both conceal and reveal the sexual reference.

1. *Characters' bodies*

In addition to the marbled page representing Walter Shandy's ejaculation, other visual elements in the novel signal characters' body parts or physical presences. Sterne reappropriates the visible characteristics of the book structure and of several typographical marks to indicate the bodies of the people in the narrative. These physical allusions create an unusually vivid sense of the characters as living beings: this awareness changes the reading process because one must slow down in order to first understand and then to acknowledge the physicality that Sterne creates.

Uncle Toby, for instance, when he tells Trim of his fears of wooing the beautiful Widow Wadman, equates female anatomy with a military trench, and Sterne makes this metaphor physical by placing this conversation around the "trench" created between the verso and recto of the

open book. Toby declares, "I had rather march up to the very edge of a trench—" than attempt to woo the Widow Wadman. He makes this statement at the end of the verso of a page spread; immediately after this sentence the reader's eyes must cross the trench (called the "gutter" in printing terminology) that divides the verso from the next recto (see fig. A.14.). At the top of that page (VIII, xxx, 129/412), the "trench" becomes associated with female anatomy:

—A woman is quite a different thing
—said the corporal.
—I suppose so, quoth my uncle Toby.

Uncle Toby, whose entire frame of reference is built around military features, is not sure that the "trench" of a woman's genital area can be distinguished from the military trench. As he mulls over this conundrum, the reader sees the similarity between both of these indentations and the gutter of the open book. As Buzz Spector notes in *The Bookmaker's Desire*, "The topography of an open book is explicit in its erotic association: sumptuous twin paper curves that meet in a recessed seam" (16).⁶⁰ The pages of twentieth-century novels tend to be larger than the duodecimo-sized leaves of *Tristram Shandy*; Spector's allusion to buttocks reflects the roundness of the larger pages that spring from the gutter.

Sterne uses typography to indicate sexual anatomy as well: asterisks represent Uncle Toby's genitalia, which were wounded at war. Asterisks

⁶⁰Stephane Mallarmé also sexualizes the book structure, but he addresses the uncut edges of a freshly bound book, not the gutters. He writes, "The virginal foldings of the book are unfortunately exposed to the kind of sacrifice which caused the crimson-edged tomes of ancient times to bleed. I mean that they invite the paper-knife, which stakes out claims to possession of the book" (FIND PAGE #). Johanna Drucker quotes Mallarmé and is inspired to respond, "I dread the day I encounter some hideously literal book-sculpture image of these phrases replete with bloodstained paper and sexual imagery" (*Century* 44, n. 27).

resemble small battlefield explosions: Uncle Toby received his wound to the groin as a result of an explosion on the battlefield. Then, in volume IX (xxii, 80/442), asterisks replace a paragraph of text in which Toby supposedly tells Widow Wadman about the state of his groin; the marks punctuate the space in which Toby talks about his puncture wound.

Generally, however, Sterne uses asterisks to represent the female sexual anatomy, and occasionally male genitalia. The minor character Phutatorius, for example, gets a “chestnut hot into [his] ***-****” (IV, xxvii, 182/227), and many times asterisks replace words or entire paragraphs that hint at women’s sexual parts (II, 47/71; II, 49/72; II, 65/77, et al.). Dashes also replace text, but they generally do not signal sexual innuendo. Dashes can indicate the duration of body sounds, however, such as the footsteps of someone walking through the streets of Paris (VII, xviii, 62/351).

When Sterne’s dashes are regularized in modern editions, the physical dimension of their original irregularity is lost. For instance, the reader loses the dramatic reaction that the minor character Phutatorius’ has directly after noticing that a hot chestnut has dropped into an opening in the lap of his trousers during an important legal meeting. The dashes that follow his exclamation, “Zounds!” are arranged fitfully (see fig. A.15.), like the gasping breaths that undoubtedly accompany his pain. A jumpiness also appears in the dashes’ arrangement, in part because this event takes place during a meeting that requires a modicum of decorum: Phutatorius must contain his agony and therefore the dashes can represent the words he refrains from saying. In the Norton Critical Edition, the rows of dashes get redrawn as unbroken lines, so that there is no longer a physical sense of ragged breath or suppressed speech (see fig. A.16.). This appearance would

make more sense if Phutatorius were in a situation that would allow him to let out a long, uninterrupted, agonizing yell.

Sterne sometimes uses other marks, such as a cross, to indicate a character's physical embodiment. Though elsewhere the cross indicates a footnote (IV, xxix, 197/231), on page 62 (75) of volume II, chapter ix, the cross makes visible the act of Dr. Slop crossing himself (see fig. A.17.). A more finely proportioned type of cross signifies a woman's prayerful practice; Sterne's symbols represent gender distinctions as well as physical actions (V, i, 10/241, see fig. A.17.). These types of visual digressions give a reader pause: one must assimilate the unusual use of the symbol and then imagine the character physically performing the gesture.

2. *The Author's body*

One of the primary characters whose body becomes visible in the text is the narrator, who can also be considered the writer of the novel. During reading, the fact that the author (now meaning both the writer and the composer) has physically created the text is rarely a consideration. Neglecting this aspect of book production facilitates a reader's steady progress through the text. But the human machine of book production functions idiosyncratically, as Sterne is careful to point out in his invocations of the author's body.

Sterne's discussion of the writing process reveals the dialectic between the body and a regular rhythm of production. For instance, he opens volume VII by acknowledging the power that physical health, either good or bad, can have over a writer's best intentions to produce text regularly.

No—I think, I said, I would write two volumes every year, provided the vile cough which then tormented me, and which to this hour I dread worse than the devil, would but give me leave — . . . speaking of my book as a *machine*, and laying my pen and ruler down cross-wise upon the table, . . . I swore [the book] should be kept a going at that rate these forty years if it pleased but the fountain of life to bless me so long with health and good spirits. (VII, i, 1-2/335, italics original)

The book is a “*machine*” that can be operated, produced, or read according to a set pace. But non-mechanical obstacles such as an author’s “vile cough” could interfere with this regular rate; the author’s physical body can therefore dictate the rate of the reader’s reception of the novel’s succeeding volumes.

On the same page that Sterne refers to his book “as a *machine*,” (VII, i, 1-2/335), he signs each copy of the volume at the top of the page (see fig. A.18.). He also signs the first page of every copy of volumes V and IX; these signatures form an integral part of the text instead of being autographs for isolated book purchasers. His signature indicates the physical and actual presence of the writer’s hand; it is impossible to create with mechanical means. Though the sequential signing of each copy of the edition requires Sterne to become a signing machine, each signature is still unique. Like the marbled page, therefore, this mark documents the spirit of life that moves through the confines of the mass-produced book. The presence of the signature on the same page as the discussion of the book as a machine indicates the tension between these continually juxtaposed forces: the mechanism can never hold sway because the body is always present.

The author’s hand can insert or remove text from the book, through writing and erasing, and Sterne’s hand does both. Sterne uses the printer’s index, which is an illustration of a small pointing hand, to represent his

own hand highlighting moral statements (IV, xxv, 164/221) or simply calling attention to sentences (II, xii, 80/81) and phrases (III, xx, 109/147, see fig. A.19.). For example, the hand highlights the moral “Set a thief to catch a thief. ——” (VI, xi, 48/300). Critic William Holtz sees this technique as a literalization of a ‘gestural’ quality he sees in the novel’s punctuation; he writes, “Occasionally . . . Tristram’s gesticulating hand appears upon the page” (Holtz, *Typography* 252). The index reinforces the function of the dash, which for Holtz represents “the graphic expression of the nuances of gesture inherent in language at its best; . . . it constantly suggests . . . the *presence* of the talker” by indicating conversational inflection (“*Typography*” 251, italics original). The hand adds another register of inflection, but this time we see an imagistic representation of the writer/narrator’s physical presence instead of merely hearing the vestiges of human speech rhythms in the prose. While Holtz assumes that the hand belongs to Tristram, it could just as easily belong to Sterne.

In addition to calling attention to parts of the text by making them more visible (i.e., pointing directly at them), Sterne creates attentiveness by threatening to physically remove a page of the book. The narrator writes,

...if I thought you was able to form the least judgment or probable conjecture to yourself, of what was to come in the next page, —I would tear it out of my book.

END of the First Volume.

There are no more pages to read in the volume (aside from a blank leaf that follows the end of the printed text); it is as if Sterne has carried out his threat to tear out a page. The author’s physical control of the text takes on a realistic dimension in this passage; the reader can sense the interventionist

hand of the author tearing out the book page. Sterne uses that hand to foil the reader's expectations, to ruin the "vicious habit" of predicting what will come next. Instead of being able to project into the future of the text, the reader is faced with blank pages and the end of the volume, and with the recognition that the author's body has disrupted the habitual sequence of reading through the novel.

3. *The Reader's body*

Sterne encourages readers to recognize their own bodies, instead of sublimating them in the habitual experience of reading. He finds ways to highlight a handling of the book as an object, eye movement, and physical participation in the narrative's creation. Sterne's invocation of these elements disrupts the reader's usual pattern of taking them for granted.

Sterne opens his sixth volume with a reminder that the reader most likely sits while looking at the book. He invites the reader to use the book itself as a place to rest the body: "[W]e have got thro' these five volumes, (do, Sir, sit down upon a set—they are better than nothing)" (VI, i, 1/287, discussed in section F.3.). It is better to sit on the books than nowhere; Sterne implies that it is better to acknowledge the physicality of the books and the reader's body than to go on believing that there is "nothing" material about the reading experience.⁶¹

Sterne's page compositions often encourage a recognition of the reader's body in the process of interacting with the book. His frequent use of the footnote, for instance — Leonard Rogoff counts "approximately thirty-

⁶¹ The reader's hands are also part of the act of reading: Shandy mentions "these little books, which I put here in thy hands" (IV, xxii, 142/218).

one" footnotes in the novel (15) — forces the reader's eye to travel up and down instead of merely side to side. Footnotes create a vertical "line of sight [that] bisects the line of type" so that "the formal force of the page face can be multi-directional (Rogoff 43-44). Many footnotes in the book contain little vital information in terms of narrative supplement — for example, one quotes in Latin and credits "I know not who" (VIII, xxiv, 111/407) and another ends with "&c. &c." (VIII, xxvi, 117/409). Still, they interrupt and slow the reader's progress by making the eye move in many directions and preventing a straight line of reading.

Occasional lists also direct the reader's eye differently, and thereby encourage new modes of reading. When Michel Butor discusses lists in Rabelais' work (which often surfaces in *Tristram Shandy*), he notes that the vertical arrangement of the list makes possible a break in the logistical chain that generally characterizes horizontally arranged prose.⁶² The possibility of arranging lists according to extratextual devices, such as alphabetical order, "enables us to suspend any link between the order within the column and some objective order . . . it is the only way to create a truly amorphous enumeration, to suspend all conclusions which might be drawn ("Object" 47).⁶³ To direct the eye in unusual ways thus makes possible new interpretive possibilities.

A similar agenda lies behind Sterne's use of blank spaces: he leaves room for the reader to either write or draw "*in their own way.*" (see section C. for a discussion of this passage). This requires using their bodies, which

⁶² Butor acknowledges that the horizontal arrangement of prose is culturally specific. He writes, "The narrative, the essay, whatever might form a discourse heard from beginning to end, is transcribed into the West on a horizontal axis running from left to right. This, as we know, is merely a convention; other civilizations have adopted others ("Object" 44).

⁶³ Sterne in fact does include a list in alphabetical order (up to "R"); see VIII, xiii, /389.

will inevitably produce unique works, as with Sterne's own signature. Sterne leaves a space for the reader to insert a word of choice: when Shandy discovers that he has left his papers in a post-chaise, Sterne writes,

" I leave this void space that the reader may swear into it, any oath that he is most accustomed to——" (VII, xxxvii, 136/372). He also invites the reader to fill in a blank page in volume VI with a picture of the beautiful Widow Wadman: "call for pen and ink — here's paper ready to your hand. —Sit down, Sir, paint her to your own mind ——" (VI, xxxviii, 146/331; fig. A.20.). The blank spaces represent the possibility for a reader to generate information instead of automatically receiving it. Sterne requests the most familiar swear or a picture that comes from the reader's "own mind"; both invite the reader's individuality to be inscribed in the novel.

Mechanical reproduction loses its ideological tyranny when the reader can participate in the printed book's creation of representations. The reader becomes the author's partner in creating meanings, especially in the case of the blank pages. It does not matter that most readers will not actually draw or write in the blank spaces; Sterne's agenda is merely to disrupt the reading process and make the reader sense or imagine other ways of proceeding. By drawing attention to the reader's physical presence in the reading process, Sterne creates a model of cooperation between the reader, the book, and the author.

F. Verbal-Visual-Material Synesthesias: The Book's Body

Sterne often disrupts the easy flow of the eye across the page by emphasizing the physicality of *Tristram Shandy*; the book cannot remain a mere vehicle for verbal meaning. He uses composition techniques to call

attention to the visual appearance of words or their physical arrangement on the page or in the book structure. When words communicate through more than one mode at once, the unfamiliar synaesthesia reconfigures the reader's progress through the book and the overall understanding of Sterne's text.

The combination of words, images and materials throughout the book is encapsulated in the emblematic marbled page. Sterne commands his "unlearned reader" to "Read, read, read, read" the page (III, xxxvi, 168/164), though there are no words to read in a conventional way. Instead, it is necessary to interpret the visual image of the colored marbling and also to make sense of the material characteristics of this double-sided, specially crafted leaf. In spite of the fact that the marbled leaf was created separately and the page "tipped in," the replication of the margin structure (through the marbling process) creates a visual correspondence between the marbled pages and the pages of linguistic text.⁶⁴

Alain Bony writes that this passage, because it is juxtaposed with the page "that comes from the world of bookbinding" (18), entraps the reader into believing that 'it is impossible to get meaning out of books.' Since it is impossible to read the *material* of a book, Bony concludes, Sterne must be positing a disparaging view of the enterprise of reading altogether: the marbled page is a "sign of a truth that is destined never to leave the well of books" (27).⁶⁵ The "truth" will always remain inextricably bound into the

⁶⁴ See section A.3. for a full discussion of these aspects of the marbled page.

⁶⁵ "signe d'une vérité destinée à ne jamais sortir du puits des livres" (27). This does not necessarily mean that the truth is forever buried in the materials of *Tristram Shandy* itself; since the marbled pages reference a common element of printed books, Bony implies that the truth is always just out of reach, contained within some other book or spread among the whole of publishing so that the one "truth" can never be known.

material of the book. Roger Moss similarly concludes that the marbled pages “do indeed offer an allegory or emblem, of the meaninglessness of all inky marks upon paper, of the fact that books finally have nothing to offer” (194).

Instead of pointing towards a dead-end to meaning, or a disjunction between words and their material embodiments, I believe Sterne brings together the act of reading words with the perception of the book’s materiality. Sterne’s own practice of integrating the modes throughout the novel shows how readers can bring together the worlds of the mute material and the speaking story. By inserting a symbol of bookbinding within the text of the book, therefore, Sterne asks us to combine their codes instead of relinquish all faith in their accessibility. To be sure, there is a tension between our ability to interpret the marbled page and its deliberately veiled mystery, but this tension underscores the connection rather than obliterating it.

Sterne interrupts the flow of the narrative by “digressing” into the non-linguistic modes of visual elements and the materials that construct the book. These are perceived *tout à coup*, so they abruptly remove the reader from the strict process of reading one word after another. But the relationship between these modes is never oppositional: all of them are, after all, perceived visually. Sometimes the visual elements include the typography of the printed text itself.

1. *Physical/Visual Words*

Words are inherently images, in the sense that we look at them in order to read them. As Johanna Drucker writes in *The Visible Word*:

Experimental Typography and Modern Art, type functions synaesthetically; the letter is received simultaneously as a visual and verbal sign. Sometimes Sterne highlights the visual function of words in the novel by making the typeface stand out from the page of continuous text. This adds inflection (and humor) to his words; the same text written in a uniform style would communicate on only a denotative register. Instead of separating the signifying action of words from that of images, as do Primeau, Bony and Moss, Sterne's use of typeface brings these modes together synaesthetically.

Like other eighteenth-century writers, Sterne uses italics and capitalization liberally to inflect the printed phrases. Michel Butor, writing about this phenomenon in Rabelais, refers to the "two typographic 'colors': roman and italic" as different tones of voice in the text (52). This characterization corresponds with Sterne's own view of his text. As Shandy reflects, "Writing, when properly managed, (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a different name for conversation" (II, xi, 68/77). The varied tonality of the typeface adds an imaginary inflection to the words as they are read.

Sterne diverges from other eighteenth-century novelists' typographical habits, however, when he uses an Old English typeface to give isolated phrases a regal air. For example, part of a sermon on conscience that Corporal Trim reads to Uncle Toby, Walter Shandy, and Dr. Slop is printed thus: "Conscience has got safely entrenched behind the Letter of the Law; sits there invulnerable, fortified with **Cases** and **Reports** so strongly on all sides;—" (II, xvii, 121/93). The "Letter of the Law" does not just signify the exact rules of jurisprudence; it also literally refers to a typeface for legal documents. Its strong architectural lines appear invulnerable

compared to the usual text type; it therefore seems to fortify any assertion printed in that style.

Old English also signifies the “Letter of the Law” when Shandy includes portions of his mother’s marriage settlement in the text. Sterne prints key legal phrases in Old English, such as “**And this Indenture further witnesseth**” (I, xv, 87/28). Typography indicates a high-falutin tone, but it also punctuates the long text with a visual reminder of its legal status. Some of the words Sterne prints in Old English have no connection to legal discourse, however, such as “**And also**” (I, xv, 89/29). These phrases parody legal documents while visually indicating the presence of a foreign document in the book.

In these examples, the novel becomes a place to find a collection of diverse typefaces: this is the compositional equivalent of Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism in his book, *Discourse in the Novel*. According to Bakhtin, juxtaposed rhetorics of different socioeconomic or sociocultural groups typify novelistic style. Sterne creates “dialogism” by juxtaposing distinct class-identified discourses not just in the grammar of their rhetoric, but in the typeface of their rhetoric. Old English signifies a higher class of printed discourse that stands out against the unified print of the text page.

When Sterne uses Old English in his final volume, where he “turn[s] back to the two blank chapters” after chapter xxv, he is therefore commanding a higher-class, legalistic power to change the sequence of the novel’s chapters. Chapters eighteen and nineteen are first left blank; Shandy later returns to them but must distinguish them from the other chapters so that the game with sequence is clear. Their headings — “**The Eighteenth Chapter**” and “**Chapter the Nineteenth**” — are written out completely,

while other chapter headings use the more informal abbreviation "CHAP." and indicate the number with roman numerals. The Old English typestyle deviates from the typographical pattern of the other chapter headings, which shows that Sterne the composer is in command of the laws of sequence that govern his novel.

Scholar William Holtz is not alone in asserting that "Sterne's typographical devices . . . [reveal] the essential inadequacy of printed language" ("Typography" 252).⁶⁶ But Sterne's imagistic typography reveals the richness that is possible to convey on the printed page if the composer does not adhere to conventional textual appearance. Sterne is not just showing what language *cannot* offer; he is demonstrating what the book *can* offer. Sterne enlarges the activity of reading words by integrating them with non-verbal information and thereby communicating a richer narrative and a more complex composition.

2. *Page Layout*

When prose is read aloud, its layout is immaterial, but if the reader is looking at the page, words are necessarily perceived in the context of their visual presentation.⁶⁷ Sterne makes a general practice out of arranging elements within page margins so that they are "read" simultaneously as page-bound visual as well as verbal elements. This is the spatial equivalent of typography; words are read in the context of their placement in the page layout. By playing with the spacing of words on the page, Sterne forces us to

⁶⁶ Ronald Primeau also shortchanges Sterne's visual digressions by considering them merely a demonstration of the limitations of language.

⁶⁷ As Keith Smith asserts, "The page is irrelevant to its content only when words are perceived through someone else's recitation" (*Text* 44).

attend to the spaces as well as the words. This technique has the same effect as narrative digression: it alters the process of perceiving the book and makes the reader conscious of the book's deliberate construction.

In *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne occasionally inflects sentences by placing them in unexpected arrangements on the page. In volume II (xvii, 142/99), for instance, this one-sentence paragraph is centered between the right and left margins:

Corporal Trim read on.

The placement of the sentence makes it take on the tone of a stage direction. In volume IX (xxvii, 118/451), a one-sentence paragraph appears centered in relation to all four margins of the page.

MY uncle Toby's Map is carried
down into the kitchen."

This is the only sentence on this page; it forms a complete chapter. Still, it does not begin at the top of a page. Instead, Sterne illustrates the downward motion of carrying the map by locating these words lower than usual in the page layout.

Sterne sometimes combines words and images in an unusual arrangement for a heightened effect. When Shandy describes Yorick's grave, for instance, the words "ALAS, POOR Y O R I C K !" inscribed on the gravestone look monumental because Sterne places them in a box (see fig. A.21.). The drawing extends the communicative function of the language by supplying more information with which to build a mental picture of the scene. The visual digression, which Ronald Primeau calls "the tombstone effect," also makes the act of reading more difficult. As Roger Moss writes

about all of Sterne's visual digressions, "they contribute to the unfolding of the narrative, while at the same time blocking narrative progress" (195).

After this drawing of the gravestone, Shandy reports that all people who see the gravesite sigh and repeat to themselves the line, "ALAS, POOR YORICK!" as they pass. All are distracted from their thoughts by the appearance of the gravestone, just as the reader is momentarily removed from the print-based story of the novel. The second iteration of the line reveals the difference between the print context and the integration of word and image; the visual quotation of the line (which appears again in all capitals, centered between the right and left margins) seems a paler imitation of the inscription. The words' heightened significance is missing from their repetition outside of the box.

Corporal Trim's famous "flourish" that he draws with his cane also gains significance from its placement in the page. Trim traces the image in the air to finish his sentence, "Whilst a man is free——" (IX, iv, 17/426; see fig. A.2.), the image embodies freedom because it is not bound by the rectilinearity of print. Sterne leaves the catchword⁶⁸ off of the bottom of the page to amplify the digressive effect of the image.

In this example, page layout involves the arrangement of blank space in addition to the placement of textual material. Blank space is essentially an organizing feature; it separates words from each other and it gives the reader's mind space in which to rest. As book artist Keith Smith writes,

Every writer uses the space between words, between lines as pauses for rhythm. Layout of the page may also be a form of punctuation.

⁶⁸ In early printing, the first word of the page to come was printed in the bottom right corner of each page. The inclusion of this allowed the reader to "catch" the word before moving the eye or the hand; this facilitated the flow of reading. Catchwords also helped printers keep track of the proper page order.

The page is another means of organization. It is using the clustering of words and lines to reinforce the rhythm within the writing. (*Text* 16)

Throughout *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne offers an example of Smith's theory by leaving a line of blank space between paragraphs.⁶⁹ In spite of the small octavo size of his volumes, the pages therefore contain a surprising amount of white or blank space. Peter de Voogd characterizes Sterne's pages as "wide open" and asserts that "*Tristram Shandy* is one of those novels where blanks are as meaningful as text" ("Aesthetic" 388; 387). But the meaning in this case is not of the same register as linguistic meaning.

Sterne's constant use of blank spaces returns the reader's attention continually to the materiality of his novel. As bookmaker Keith Smith writes on page 220 of his guide to the *Structure of the Visual Book*,

Some would see the use of blank pages or a no-picture book as a conceptual piece, but

blanks bring attention to the physical page.

⁶⁹Leaving blank space in the page continues to be a rare strategy today, largely because it is still expensive. Rosemarie Waldrop, the main translator of Edmond Jabès' writings, tells the story (during a workshop on "Metaphors of the Book," University of Pennsylvania, 1994) of her late twentieth-century appeal to the University of Chicago Press to allow as much space between Jabès' aphorisms in English they had enjoyed in their original French publication. While she succeeded in garnering some space, the editor refused to replicate the original textual layout because of financial considerations.

Thus when critic Roger Moss calls Sterne's pages "empty" (199), this does not necessarily mean that they are devoid of literal physical substance. The printed or linguistic "emptiness" of a particular page lets the reader see that page more as material, or as a space to be filled with the imagination.

A suggestive example of using blank space as a textual feature appears in volume IX (IX, xvi, 65/437), when in a moment of high suspense, Uncle Toby "—whistled Lillabullero." In the original version, this declaration ends the chapter and the page, though it is only the fourth line printed on a recto (see fig. A.22.). The empty space that claims the rest of the page gives ample opportunity for imagining the chaos circulating in Toby's mind during this tune; the reader would by now be familiar with the fact that he whistles it only during stressful times to gain space for thinking.

Page size changes over centuries; this alone disrupts some of Sterne's visual games. Different page proportions affect the amount of text that can fit on one page, and few editors have seen fit to replicate the large amounts of blank space that add to Sterne's printed text. The images also change inflection when they are dwarfed by text or given less space. Thus while many of the dozens of reprintings of *Tristram Shandy* pride themselves on replicating Sterne's idiosyncratic punctuation, spelling, italicization, and capitalization, none of their editions matches the variety and whimsy of Sterne's page layout.

3. *Book Structure*

Sterne capitalizes on the structures of pages, chapters, and volumes to physically embody the narrative, and to heighten the expression in specific passages. These techniques require a physical awareness of the novel, which

impedes a reader's progress while fostering a multidimensional understanding of the narrative.

Even before the title page of volume one, we are faced with the fact that we are reading a textual object. The etching that appears opposite the book's title page illustrates a scene from volume two, and its caption indicates the exact page on which the scene appears. To turn to this page would require putting down the first volume and picking up the next one.⁷⁰ This strategy could be a clever marketing tool: readers might be more likely to buy the second volume after the first (they were published concurrently) for the gratification of finding the scene that the image depicts. But the separation between the "illustration" and the written scene that it illustrates also highlights the materiality of the work: parts of the text are physically separate from one another, and the text is embodied in volumes.

References to the volumetric organization of the book appear in every volume of the first edition. In volume two, the narrator wonders if the second half of a sentence will be written eventually "in the third volume or not" (II, vii, 55/73); the dedication of volume five refers to "the story of *Le Fever* in the sixth volume." And in volume one, Sterne is already making plans to add a map "with many other pieces and developments . . . to the end of the twentieth volume" (I, xiii, 77/25). The many references to other volumes within the text of any one volume make the reader constantly aware of the volumetric organization of text. In the

⁷⁰In most modern editions of the book, the reader need not switch volumes, because all the "volumes" of the original edition are combined into one book. In the Norton Critical Edition, the editors place a reproduction of this etching close to the words that describe the scene in the image, so that the etching functions as an illustration. The image no longer refers the reader to another place in the book altogether; the reader's progress is made easier by modern editors.

third volume, when Uncle Toby looks at a crevice in the wall, the text references simply “the word *Crevice*, in the fifty-second page of the second volume of this book of books” (III, xxxi, 147/158). Critics have often interpreted this phrase to mean that *Tristram Shandy* continually quotes other books, or that this work is about the process of reading a book, but the narrative context shows that it alludes to the volumetric structure of the book. In order to follow the reference, the reader must put down one volume and pick up another, just as when the frontispiece for one volume refers to a scene in another.

Printed text takes up real space, and Sterne’s acknowledgement of the physicality of the text makes it clear that *Tristram Shandy* is truly a “book of books” or a novel of volumes. Towards the beginning of Volume VIII, for example, when Tristram is on the brink of launching into another digression, a one-sentence paragraph interrupts him discouragingly: “Is it not enough that thou art in debt, and that thou hast ten cart-loads of thy fifth and sixth volumes still — still unsold, and art almost at thy wit’s ends, how to get them off thy hands” (VIII, vi, 19/384). He would prefer that, instead of staying in his cart, the books could be distributed to his readers. Indeed, the books do “stand” quite literally when Sterne invites the reader to sit upon a stack of the five volumes already read (see section D). A collection of volumes becomes a sitting stool, which though small (approx. 5 x 8 x 7 inches) certainly serves the purpose.

Sterne occasionally uses volume breaks and page breaks deliberately as interrupting devices in the narrative. The first volume ends, for example, in the middle of a story; Sterne creates more suspense by

threatening to tear out the page on which the resolution appears. The narrator writes that

...if I thought you was able to form the least judgment or probable conjecture to yourself, of what was to come in the next page, —I would tear it out of my book.

END of the First Volume.

There are no more pages to read in the volume (aside from a blank leaf that follows the end of the printed text); it is as if Sterne has carried out his threat to tear out a page. The reader is then stymied—Think ahead? Don't imagine? To have the volume end here seals the point; Sterne heightens the suspense about what is to be revealed by threatening to remove all further pages. Frustration, curiosity, and determination to unravel the story motivate the reader to continue to the next volume.

Shandy's threat to tear out a page does not just come at the end of a volume; it also ends at the bottom of a recto. The reader cannot be sure of what will happen next; the physical page conceals the situation's resolution. This becomes a Shandean trick that no critics have yet analyzed: Sterne often pays attention to the words that appear at the end of a recto (a page on the right hand side), so that turning the page takes on a heightened sense of drama. When Sterne asks the reader to "immediately turn back, that is, as soon as you get to the next full stop, and read the whole chapter over again" (I, 129/40), the "full stop" or period that appears at the end of that exhortation is located at the end of a recto. The reader's next move — turning the page forward to continue reading or back to follow Sterne's directions — is a physical action called for in the text. The reader is either obeying or disobeying the text's command; both actions create a self-

consciousness about the process of turning pages. In other editions, where the next chapter begins on the same page as the “full stop,” there is no sense of drama involved; the reader can continue ahead without the decision about which way to turn the page.

This type of game fulfills Sterne’s (or Shandy’s) “wish . . . that all good people, both male and female, from her example, may be taught to think as well as read” (I, xx, 133/42). This proclamation ends, again, at the bottom of a recto; it is followed on the next verso by five and a half pages of debate, in French and occasional Latin, upon the question of whether babies can be baptized in utero. A reader can be full of virtuous agreement with the goal of thinking as well as reading until turning the page and being faced with a dense French text on a topic of questionable importance; the kind of “thinking” that Sterne implies readers should engage in is mocked by the content of what he asks readers to contemplate, and by the fact that it is in another language.

Chapters, like pages, physically structure the experience of reading. Shandy foregrounds this device by constantly referring to what is coming in the next chapter, or what has been said in the last chapter, so that the reader senses the jumbled organization of the narrative. Shandy says that “chapters relieve the mind—that they assist—or impose upon the imagination—and that in a work of this dramatic cast they are as necessary as the shifting of scenes—” (IV, x, 97/204). The metaphor of the chapter as a theatrical device places it in the realm of the physical; it is not just a mental division for the reader. “A sudden impulse comes across me — drop the curtain, Shandy, I drop it — Strike a line here across the paper,

Tristram — I strike it — and hey for a new chapter?" (IV, x, 96/203). The book becomes a theater in which chapters are play scenes.

The director of the play is Sterne the composer. He emphasizes his responsibility in the passage that explains the motivation for skipping a full ten pages. This is no small trick; it throws off the chapter sequence and the pagination for the rest of the volume. Odd pages are now on the verso instead of in their usual place on the recto.⁷¹ Sterne begins a chapter,

—No doubt, Sir—there is a whole chapter wanting here—and a chasm of ten pages made in the book by it — but the book-binder is neither a fool, or a knave, or a puppy — nor is the book a jot more imperfect, (at least upon that score) —but, on the contrary, the book is more perfect and complete by wanting the chapter, than having it" (IV, xxv, 156/219).

Though the book seems marred by the strange pagination, Sterne maintains that it contributes to the greater "perfection" of the whole. With absolute authorial control, Sterne creates intentional errors in order to realize his goal of making the reader conscious.

The chapter's omission makes the book better, pages are composed with space, and all of these material defamiliarizations support Sterne's agenda of diverting the reader from moving through the text mechanistically. Sterne weaves these elements together, instead of using the materiality of the text as a way to separate language from other modes of communication. He asks, "How many millions of books in all languages, and in all possible types and bindings, have been fabricated upon points not half so much tending to the unity and peace-making of the world?" (III, xxxiv, 161/162). Sterne says that the books have been "fabricated," not

⁷¹ Many modern editions retain standard page numbering throughout this section. Thus the jokes of the skipped pages and the reversed pagination are lost.

“written,” for his books were composed using more elements than just words. The overall goal of his defamiliarization is to articulate a harmonic world view that is not apprehensible within the usual contours of plot, or the usual organization of printed books.

G. Mechanical Systemetization vs. Unpredictable Alchemy

We have seen that Sterne exploits narrative and composition techniques to highlight connections between the body, the physical book, and prose fiction. These connections yield a reading experience that challenges the practice, still common today, of reading “for the adventure” in an unselfconsciously sequential way. *Tristram Shandy* makes maintaining such a mechanical model of reading impossible, because the words are consistently (though not constantly) interrupted with digressions into the physical realm.

The digressions create juxtapositions without strictly codifiable meanings. The gaps and connections between them, or what W. J. T. Mitchell calls the “ruptures and cleavages” between words and images, must be perceived and/or created by each reader. The reader acts as the catalyst for the alchemical reaction; Sterne cannot mechanically put together all the parts on his own. He invites collaboration with the reader in his text:

But in this clear climate of fantasy and perspiration, where every idea, sensible and insensible, gets vent——in this land, . . . where I now sit, . . . in full view of my study window——if thou comest not and takest me by the hand——

What a work it is likely to turn out!

Let us begin it. (VIII, i, 1-2/380)

Sterne juxtaposes the mental and physical realms (indicated by “fantasy and perspiration”), but the reader must engage with the author’s text to make

connections that Sterne only suggests. The dialectic of the verbal narrative and the physical book only becomes activated in the presence of a dialectic between the author and the reader. And as with alchemy, the results defy prediction.

The reader often encounters moments in the text in which verbal elements share the stage with the physical book. In chapter xxviii of volume IV, for instance, when a hot chestnut falls into Phutatorius' lap through a hole in his trousers, a sheet of freshly printed paper soothes his scorched penis, and the effect of the paper depends both on its printing process and word content. When the paper is wrapped around the wounded organ, the fine and regular distribution of ink on the page serves as a cooling salve. It is more effective than either the damp paper alone or a direct application of the ink as a balm:

I would . . . trust your cure to such as simple thing as a soft sheet of paper just come off the press—. . .The damp paper, . . . though I know it has a refreshing coolness in it—yet I presume is no more than the vehicle—and that the oil and lamp-black with which the paper is so strongly impregnated, does the business . . . if the type is a very small one, (which it should be) the sanative particles, which come into contact in this form, have the advantage of being spread so infinitely thin and with such a mathematical equality (fresh paragraphs and large capitals excepted) as no art or management of the spatula can come up to. (IV, xxviii, 187-88/228)

A regular arrangement of words on the page and proper inking of small type will yield a salubrious distribution of the ink or "lamp-black." The indentations at the beginnings of paragraphs (and, as in the case of *Tristram Shandy*, the lines left blank between paragraphs) disrupt the consistency of the page composition, as do the larger concentrations of ink that result from including oversized capital letters in the layout.

This marks an outrageous use of the printed page: an object created for the mind now serves only the body. The words matter less than their arrangement and physical properties. But Sterne reintegrates material form and narrative content when Yorick, at the end of the chapter, warns Phutatorius against wrapping his wounded penis in the particular tract coming off the press, because it concerns concubinage. Upon hearing this, Yorick advises, "For heaven's sake keep out of that chapter" (IV, xxvii, 189/229) — this advice conflates reading with copulation. In fact, it is the very treatise that Phutatorius himself wrote on the topic. Since Yorick the parson was offended by its content, the narrator therefore speculates that he lobbed the hot chestnut into Phutatorius' lap.

In the above example, Sterne suggests but does not explicitly state a relation between the story of the hot chestnut, the printed page, and male genitals. Instead, the reader must connect the different information. This means that the reader relates with the book actively, which requires more perceptual effort than mere reading (i.e., receiving) one line of printed text after another. Digressions of all types keep the reader moving in many directions, and Sterne's simultaneous revelation and mystification of information keeps the reader from believing firmly in any consistent interpretation. The strategy of the book, like the alchemists' goal, remains elusive; its essence lies in the reader's discovery process rather than in the author's mind.

Sterne integrates the verbal with the physical so that the book no longer separates the reader's mind and body. Criticism of *Tristram Shandy* tends to reaffirm the split between the two, and between verbal and material ways of reading, by attending to either Sterne's narrative or his non-verbal

elements. Critics “have tended to keep the two rigorously apart” (Moss 180), without attending to the ways that Sterne’s physical digressions inflect the mental activity of reading the conventionally printed text. For instance, while most critics speak of “Shandeism” as a narrative strategy, Sterne writes that “True Shandeism . . . opens the heart and lungs, . . . forces the . . . vital fluids . . . to run freely . . . and makes the wheel of life run long and chearfully round” (IV, xxxii, 218-19/237). Yorick’s warning to Phutatorius, for example, suggests that the body could read. Of course it can, and does: only a body can engage in the physical process of reading a book. But this is usually figured as a visual experience, not a tactile one — the eyes do the work of reading, not the skin. Sterne, however, integrates physical sensuality into the activity that is customarily regarded as mental. The marbled page is the strongest emblem of Sterne’s integrative approach.

Many critics have concluded that Sterne’s technique aims to accurately depict “life” in all its complexity, but it simultaneously shows that “life” is ultimately impossible to represent. Sterne’s range of topics and rhetorical variety have inspired critics to extol the novel as either an exceedingly realistic catalogue of external reality, or a complete internal landscape of a Sterne’s or Shandy’s mind. De Voogd implies that the page could represent Tristram’s mind when he proposes that “*Tristram Shandy* is as it were a single painting, a portrait of Tristram’s mind” (“Accidents” 280). Virginia Woolf lauds the book: “We are as close to life as we can be” (“Sentimental” 79), and literary scholar William Piper exults, “Tristram has attempted to involve all possible elements of society in it as deeply as he could” (561). But the “realism” of this book, or the inclusion of diverse elements, extends beyond the narrative dimension. A full representation of

“life” goes beyond the mental realm of the mind or the abstraction of “society” — physicality (or as Sterne says above, “perspiration”) tangible enough to require a multidimensionally printed book.

Tristram Shandy shows the impossibility of ever achieving a satisfactory representation of reality. Since the reader must fill in the blanks, “reality,” even a fictional reality, becomes a co-creation rather than a representation. Though some criticism says that Sterne shows the limitations of language (Primeau), Sterne’s multimedia digressive structure shows the limitations of all forms of representation. Images do not illustrate; Sterne even *aims* to frustrate understanding. If the reader *could* understand, the narrator threatens, he would tear out the remaining pages in the volume.

The idea of “realistic” representation, in this case, is quite contrary to conventional ideas of realism or artificial order. Sterne’s version of realism is a multilayered, organic chaos whose structure is governed by chance and vicissitude as much as by design. In Howard Anderson’s view, this “reality” is “inconvenient” in the sense that it does not fit neatly into recognizable artistic forms. “By arbitrarily departing from conventions of customary narrative form in the epic, the novel, and the romance, Sterne insists that arbitrariness lies in the conventions themselves and that our allegiance to them is a sign of a preference for convenient artifice over inconvenient reality” (Anderson, “Reader’s” 967). Sterne’s project, therefore, invites the reader to surrender prescriptive notions of how reality, or a narrative, should be organized. The opportunity will then arise to “progress” into a more complex view of how the parts of life, or of *Tristram Shandy*, fit together.

Peter de Voogd, following William Hogarth's discussion in *The Analysis of Beauty*, would describe Sterne's vision of reality as a deliberate "'use of accidents' as a means to 'composed variety', to the paradoxical principle of accidental design, of carefully planned seeming chaos" ("Accidents" 281). Though *Tristram Shandy* is predictably unpredictable, I believe that Sterne leaves more room for slippage than De Voogd allows. De Voogd's formulation means that Sterne still controls when and whether the chaos occurs. But Sterne does not orchestrate the elements as carefully as de Voogd implies. He creates the frameworks in which forces can move — he delineates a physical frame for the marbled page and a conceptual framework in which his pen is ungovernable.

The overall message suffers if it lacks verbal, visual, or material elements, but the most important element in the textual production of meaning is the reader's engagement. This is always the case in reading; nothing happens until the reader picks up the book itself. Sterne pushes this fact to its limit by composing this book to be consciously self-reflexive. Through narrative discussion of physicality and through defamiliarization of the conventions of printing, *Tristram Shandy* comments upon its own making and its own status as a readable object.

If this book is an alchemical production instead of a mechanical one, it cannot have its aura stolen by the production process. It therefore has a special status as a work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. The handwork of the marbled page, and the force of "God" that drive Sterne/Shandy's pen, create works of life (*Tristram*) and of art (*Tristram Shandy*). In Walter Benjamin's theory of mechanical reproduction, artworks exude a special quality that derives from their uniqueness; this

book's uniqueness can be uncovered by each reader. "Progress," in this context, is not a linear motion through the author's text, but the reader's gradual apprehension of a multisensual whole.

*"[W]hen I shall have told [this tale], and my reader
shall have read it thro'—'twould be even high
time for both of us to shut up the book."
(IV, i, 74/197)*

Chapter II:

Embroidering Pictorialisms in *Kew Gardens*

Virginia Woolf comments in her review of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*, published in 1928, that Sterne's style was not generated by plot but by a "succession of scenes" ("Sentimental" 82). After quoting a particularly evocative excerpt, Woolf writes, "There are many passages of such pure poetry in Sterne. One can cut them out and read them apart from the text, and yet — for Sterne was a master of the art of contrast — they lie harmoniously side by side on the printed page" ("Sentimental" 82).

This description can apply to Woolf's own work as well as to Sterne's. It especially fits her mature fiction, which she began writing when she took over the composition and publication of her own texts.¹ This phase begins with the volume, *Kew Gardens*, Woolf's first solo publication under the imprint of the Hogarth Press. She conceived this book not only as a series of scenes, but as an illustrated book. Though surprisingly popular, *Kew Gardens* only reached its full potential as "a succession of scenes" in its third edition, published in 1927. Vanessa Bell's images on every page surround the words of the text, and make the book into a theater for word-image compositions.

¹ Here, and throughout this chapter, the word "text" refers to the overall work, and includes both written and visual materials. I will use "words" or "written text" to refer to a writer's contribution to the text, and "images" or "illustrations" to refer to a visual artist's contribution.

As Woolf's writing style shifts away from plot, she illustrates her book with images that complicate the text instead of merely decorating it. Illustrations are commonly defined as incidental additions to the words which re-present or repeat aspects of the written material. While they create a different affect for the work, and aid the reader's imagination, they do not significantly add to the work's interpretation, but mostly reify the author's words in image form. As Renée Riese Hubert, a scholar and historian of the illustrated book, writes,

The illustrated book has been modified by a constant series of experiments. Its basic patterns recurred up to the 19th century,² that is as long as the verbal and the visual retained their assigned space and function, confront[ed] each other on opposite pages or in horizontal juxtaposition. Illustration included both ornamental and stylized parts as well as full page interpretative plates often tending toward the painterly. They all aimed at enhancing the prestige of the text. The illustrations sought to give the visual equivalent of the words to which they were subservient. (Hubert, "Readable" 534.)

Even though the illustrations in nineteenth-century books were located alongside words, they did not communicate a separate meaning from that of the verbal text.

Of course, exceptions to this generalization exist, and illustrations can bear textual significance in addition to performing an ornamental function. J. Hillis Miller, in his book, *Illustration*, explores Phiz's illustrations of Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers* as "a good example of the way an illustration for a novel always adds something more, something not in the text" (102). While each etching depicts the events of a scene as Dickens wrote it, Phiz

² Though grammatically this phrase could place her analysis "until" the nineteenth century, I take her to mean "through" the nineteenth century. The examples she discusses in the rest of the paragraph following this quotation, which are situated in an art historical context with "Braque, Gris, and Picasso" (534), support my dating of her analysis.

uses Pickwick's stomach as a visual icon which seems to radiate light as if it is a sun. Pickwick becomes the central character in the image by visually evoking the center of the universe. Miller concludes that this strategy reveals the capacity of illustrations for retaining their own signifying power:

Each sign, whether graphic or verbal, brings something of its own into the light rather than copying, commenting on, or elucidating some other sign. Each sign is a separate sun. It brings its own light to light and irradiates everything from that new centre, as Pickwick's stomach (or Mr Weller's) does in Phiz's plates (110).

Miller's idea that images partner words by presenting parallel symbol systems is only one model for word-image interaction.

Laurence Sterne was acutely aware of the separate signifying power of the visual sign. He took literary production into his own hands, or at least oversaw the hands that did the work, so that his visual elements could symbolize the inexpressibility of life. But eighteenth-century novels, even the anomalous *Tristram Shandy*, contained very few images. Books from the nineteenth century onward, however, do often include illustrations.

While Laurence Sterne had had to hire printers and craftspeople to execute the designs and arrangements he imagined, authors from William Morris onward could, with some investment, purchase bookmaking equipment and learn to print respectably. At the end of the nineteenth century, the increasing availability of printing technologies enabled authors and artists to experiment with the looks of their books. In part because of the emphasis that Morris' Kelmscott Press and Stéphane Mallarmé's symbolist poetry placed on the appearance of the book, authors began to pay more attention to images, book covers, and typography in their works. In

England and France, early twentieth-century printing increased the use of images and found new modes of illustration.

The composition of the third edition of Virginia Woolf's *Kew Gardens* was different from anything the Press had printed. Book historian Douglas McMurtrie may have been alluding to this volume when he wrote in 1938, "Although the Hogarth Press has . . . developed into a publishing firm, the Woolfs continue to divert themselves, from time to time, with efforts at typographic self-expression" (McMurtrie 473). The third edition of *Kew Gardens* also differed from French *livres d'artistes* of the time, which tend to oppose word and image in a relation similar to that which Miller describes between Phiz' etchings and Dickens' fiction. Woolf's sister, Vanessa Bell, designed and decorated the volume; the result reveals not only the cultural context in which she is working, but the inadequacy of theoretical writings on word and image in our day (see section E. for a full discussion of this topic).

Bell's illustrations in the third edition of *Kew Gardens* are evocative; they do not denote any details of the written text but rather suggest images from Woolf's story. Critics have struggled to describe the relation between word and image here: Bell's designs "allude" to the words (Baccolini 116) as an "addition" to the text (Baccolini 116), or "the essay is a composite work, accompanied by decorative borders of floral and abstract shapes done by Vanessa Bell" (Torgovnick 125).

The most pithy summation, written by Diane Gillespie, invokes the terminology of Roger Fry's article on book illustration, which I will explore in more detail in section E. She writes, "Vanessa Bell's 'running commentary' complements this text in a variety of ways" (125). Bell's page

designs and decorations bring out new layers of meaning from the words, and these visual elements take on powers usually reserved for words. Her prominent images create an iconic vocabulary that functions separately from the written text, but this iconography is developed within the overall visual statement of the page. Bell's page breaks highlight the story's cinematographic structure and her use of typography foregrounds the words' visual appearance. Bell's edition of *Kew Gardens* complicates the customary opposition of words and images by composing them together into a visual whole.³

Bell interweaves images and words so that neither is subservient; the two modes signify collaboratively in her visual-verbal expressions. Though by profession Woolf is clearly a writer and Bell a painter, Woolf's words possess an imagistic quality and Bell's images go beyond the usual bounds of book illustration. Hence the phrase in the title for this chapter, "embroidering pictorialisms." Following Marianna Torgovnick, I have adopted the word "pictorialism" to refer to a style of writing in which the descriptions could be translated into visual images. Woolf's pictorialism, or ekphrastic writing, interweaves with Bell's imagistically pictorial illustrations. Together they represent Woolf's vision of the momentary or "scenic" nature of life.

A. The Illustratable structure of "Kew Gardens"

Woolf originally wrote the story of "Kew Gardens" in 1917, when she and Leonard Woolf were printing their first Hogarth book, *Two Stories*.

³ Bell's biographer notes that Bell determined these compositions through "much trial and error. Towards the end of the book she found she needed to try six or seven designs before she arrived at the one she wanted" (Spalding 221).

Though she had already written two novels by the time the first edition of *Kew Gardens* was published, the new story had a different style: it left realist conventions behind and focused instead on visual description.⁴ This “unalloyed perception” (E.M. Forster’s review) became her hallmark as she continued to write for The Hogarth Press.⁵

Kew Gardens is most often regarded as a “prototype” — or, more appropriately in a discussion of visuality, a “sketch” — for her future novels.⁶ But the story is not just Woolf’s literary work: all three editions (that were published as volumes) feature Bell’s images, which highlight Woolf’s pictorial style. In the first edition, Bell folds the story’s blending of inner visions and external descriptions into her images. In the third edition, she represents this duality in the first page’s illustration, and the story’s scene-based “cinematic” structure is reinforced in the page divisions.

⁴ The tone of Woolf’s first Hogarth writing is so unusual that when Katherine Mansfield subsequently reads *Night and Day* she is disappointed by Woolf’s return to a mode that her short story had challenged. Mansfield writes, “Yet here is *Night and Day*, fresh, new and exquisite, a novel in the tradition of the English novel. In the midst of our admiration it makes us feel old and chill: we had never thought to look upon its like again” (in Majumdar 82)! See also Alexander 125-26 for a summary of this critical reaction to *Night and Day* from Mansfield and E. M. Forster.

⁵ Significantly, Woolf’s visual experiments develop as soon as she begins printing and publishing her work herself at The Hogarth Press. The Press gave Woolf a freedom in her writing that she did not feel when she was being published by her half-brother Gerald Duckworth’s business, Duckworth & Co. Both Gerald and George Duckworth had sexually abused her; her half-brother’s editorial eye was particularly vexing to Woolf (see Willis 43-44).⁵ Duckworth’s supervision was stultifying; it was only when Woolf completely transferred her efforts to Hogarth that she was able to maintain and develop her new style of writing.

Duckworth’s publishing house printed her first two novels, conventional realist narratives called *The Voyage Out* (1915), and *Night and Day* (1919). Though The Hogarth Press was in operation when Duckworth published *Night and Day*, the Woolfs were not yet capable of printing anything as long as a complete novel. After this point, however, the Woolfs could publish fiction more easily, and they ended Woolf’s dependence on Duckworth. The break also marked the end of Woolf’s dependence on realist conventions.

⁶ This was true for Woolf as well as her critics. In her diary, she writes initial plans for a novel (*Jacob’s Room*) as the three prototypes of “mark on the wall, K.G. & Unwritten Novel taking hands and dancing in unity” (26 January 1920, quoted in Alexander 105).

Despite the importance of illustration in all editions of *Kew Gardens*, most recent criticism of this story addresses only Woolf's written text. The story of *Kew Gardens* follows four pairs of people — five, including the silent pair of children who accompany the first couple — who stroll along the paths at Kew on a hot summer afternoon, lost in thought or engaged in conversation. Between the scenes of these couples, a snail moves slowly through the dirt beneath the flowers in the garden beds dodging leaves and insects as it progresses toward a "goal" that is never identified. At the end of the story, the perspective widens to include an overall visual impression of the Gardens, and it also takes in the sights and sounds of the surrounding area.

This second story for The Hogarth Press expands and refines Woolf's experiments of "A Mark on the Wall," which was published in *Two Stories* along with Leonard Woolf's "Three Jews."⁷ In *Kew Gardens*, Woolf's scope

⁷ It is possible that Woolf wrote "Kew Gardens" as an answer to her husband's story; her impressionistic way of writing about Kew Gardens contrasts with his realistic way of writing about the same place. While Leonard Woolf writes with a dependable first-person narrator and clearly motivated plot developments, Virginia Woolf's perspective has no central source and people's actions are not so easily explained. (See Alexander 101-04 for a discussion of "Three Jews," and Alexander 109 about its relation to "Kew Gardens.")

Jan Marsh suggests that Woolf, instead, "took up the challenge" of writing "Kew Gardens" according to the vision for a story that Katherine Mansfield had articulated in a letter about the gardens of Garsington. Marsh quotes this letter, which could be describing "Kew Gardens" itself:

"There might be people walking the garden — several pairs of people — their conversations, their slow pacing — their glances as they pass one another — the pauses as the flower 'come in' as it were — as a bright dazzle, as an exquisite haunting scent, a shape so formal and so fine. . ." This would be, she continued, a kind of conversation set to flowers, musically speaking. (86)

This letter appears to be to Lady Ottoline Morrell; Mansfield wrote a similar one to Woolf (Marsh 86). It is unclear, however, whether Mansfield wrote her descriptions before or after reading Woolf's typescript for *Kew Gardens*; Marsh hints at both time frames. Still, the similarities between Woolf and Mansfield are not negligible: like Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude*, *Kew Gardens* is "written in a series of short sections without explanatory or linking passages; the reader is simply plunged directly into one fresh scene, one character's thoughts, after another" (Tomalin 162). Woolf and Mansfield were meeting about once a week during the time when The Hogarth Press was printing *Prelude*, despite Woolf's constant worries over

includes the musings and conversations of many people instead of focusing on one woman's stream of consciousness. Still, this earlier story already leaves plot aside and focuses on descriptions of settings and internal states. An unnamed woman probes the puzzle of a mark she sees on the wall opposite where she sits. Each current of her thought is cut short by a return to the image of the mark, which at the end of the story the woman (and the reader) learns is a snail.⁸ After the woman's realization at the end of "A Mark on the Wall," as a final punctuation mark, a woodcut of a snail appears (see fig. B.1.). Visual description is partnered with an image; the woodcut brings together the duality of the physical snail and the imaginary mark. Throughout both stories, vivid impressions predominate: E. M. Forster writes, "Mrs Woolf's two stories are visions" (qtd. in Majumdar 68).

Woolf's visits to Kew Gardens while she was writing the story confirm this sense of life as a series of impressionistic images. On 12 March 1918, she describes the gardens as a visual conglomeration. "I sat by choice on a seat in the shade at Kew; I saw two Heath butterflies; willows, crocuses, squills all in bud & blossom. Black clothes look like dusty palls. As for fur, it makes one laugh" (*Diary* 1:127). Images follow each other in swift juxtaposition, and thoughts ("look like dusty palls" and "it makes one laugh") receive as much attention as the physical details of the surroundings. This technique was described in 1920 by novelist W. L. George, who writes in his article "A Painter's Literature" that "[The painter's

whether she liked Mansfield or whether Mansfield liked her. (See Willis 20 for a summary of this relationship from their meeting in late 1916 through Mansfield's death in 1923 of tuberculosis.) They certainly had an influential — and competitive — relationship, but it is impossible to tell whether Mansfield's plans for a garden story directly inspired Woolf .
⁸ In both this story and "Kew Gardens," the snail has a similar valence of representing actual physical reality, which contrasts with the immateriality of thoughts.

novelists] make pictures of states of mind, and, by giving all the details of these states of mind, they end by imparting to all impressions the same value" (qtd. in Majumdar 83).

Perhaps it is this visual aspect of *Kew Gardens* that made both sisters so eager for Bell to illustrate it. The story, like this diary entry, gives as much attention to the scenes of people's fantasies as to external characteristics of the setting. The description of the flowers, the snail's world, and external gestures of the people at Kew are as important and as varied as the people's mental states. This equalized combination of attention to inner and outer worlds could well describe Bell's first illustration for *Kew Gardens*: She makes a woodcut that illustrates "the sugar conversation" (see fig. B.2.),⁹ in which it is difficult to distinguish the women from their surroundings. The image of the two women talking amongst the flowers is equally black and white.

Woolf liked this woodcut very much; it suited her theme. She writes to Bell in a letter that accompanies proofs of the first edition's woodcuts, that "my vision comes out much as I had it" (*Letters* 2:289). In Woolf's story, as in Bell's illustration, the reality of the Gardens is their lack of physical boundaries, or the tension between their presence and their dissolving.¹⁰ Colors blend in the sweltering heat of summer; people wander and then crumple in the shade of the trees, melting into grass and air.

⁹ Though many scholars have identified the woodcut as a "frontispiece," this term refers to the "picture or plate facing the title-page" (Holden 52). In *Kew Gardens*, this image is on a recto in photographs, and on a verso facing the first type page in a photocopy of the second edition.

¹⁰ E. M. Forster's review of the book notes that the visuality of the story overwhelms the usual distinctions between people and their surroundings: "[The flowers'] victory is over the eye: they cause us to see men also as petals or coloured blobs that loom and dissolve in the green blue atmosphere of Kew" (in Majumdar 69).

Thus one couple after another with much the same irregular and aimless movement passed the flower-bed and were enveloped in layer after layer of green blue vapour, in which at first their bodies had substance and a dash of colour, but later both substance and colour dissolved in the green-blue atmosphere. How hot it was! . . . men, women and children were spotted for a second upon the horizon, and then, seeing the breadth of yellow that lay upon the grass, they wavered and sought shade beneath the trees, dissolving like drops of water in the yellow and green atmosphere, staining it faintly with red and blue. It seemed as if all gross and heavy bodies had sunk down in the heat motionless and lay huddled upon the ground . . .

It is easy to see why, when Woolf originally sent this story to Bell, she described it as “a case of atmosphere” (*Letters* 2:257): this excerpt does not even include the kinds of physical details that help to define a setting. It is intensely impressionistic, however, and the visual cues are strong.

Harold Child, in his *Times Literary Supplement* review, quotes a passage from the story that includes the excerpt above, and remarks, “That [quotation], at any rate, is enough to give some little idea of the colour, the rhythm, the ‘atmosphere’, the ‘observation’ (as we call it, when for all we know or care it is pure creation), the suggestiveness of Mrs Woolf’s prose” (qtd. in Majumdar 67). The synaesthesia of the passage makes it difficult to pin down Woolf’s technique, just as it is difficult to separate the women from the flowers in Bell’s first illustration. Clearly there is “colour” in her writing, but to remove any excerpt is to lose the overall image. As E. M. Forster notes, “One cannot quote from this extraordinary story, because it is constructed with such care that the fun and the beauty—and there is much of both—depend for their main effect on their position in the general scheme” (qtd. in Majumdar 69).

It is more profitable to look at the story's structure as a whole composition. The story begins with a description of a flowerbed. There are four scenes of people: a married couple (with their two children), a pair of men (one older, one younger), a pair of older women (of the "lower middle class"), and a young man and woman. After each of the first three scenes, there are glimpses of a snail, and after the last couple moves out of view, the story moves back to a general description as quoted above.

In terms of perspective, the narration shifts back and forth from a broad view of the garden to a close-up view of the world beneath a leaf.¹¹ As Jane Novak writes in *The Razor Edge of Balance*, "'Kew Gardens' developed the structure of alternation which was to stabilize the loose narrative" (89). These alternating perspectives then open onto a final scene whose focus includes the city and the zeitgeist in which Kew Gardens is situated. This final expansion, absent from "A Mark on the Wall," supplies the context for the entire narrative. The perspectives are not balanced on a razor's edge; the alternation between the snail and the humans is able to rest, contained, within a larger totality.

Thus the structure of the story can be described as an oscillation of perspectives that finally can no longer be contained as a dualism. When both the humans' and the snail's perspectives are seen from the perspective of the larger society, their status as opposites melts away just as the people on the twentieth page "dissolv[e] like drops of water in the yellow and green atmosphere" of the humid summer heat.

¹¹ The organizing principle of alternating broad outer perspectives with specific inner visions is repeated in *The Waves*, when interludes describing an ocean panorama alternate with episodes of "dialogue" among "characters." The alternating structure in *The Waves* is underscored by the typography: the interludes are in italics while the episodes are in roman type.

On the first page of the 1927 *Kew Gardens*, Bell articulates a dualistic structure in her illustration. Flowers grow all around the page, and two appear, larger, just under the words (see fig. B.3.). Instead of drawing the one species from Woolf's description, with "heart-shaped or tongue-shaped leaves half way up and . . . a straight bar, . . . slightly clubbed at the end" Bell draws two different kinds of blooms. One has a stamen rising "from the . . . gloom of the throat" and the other has "heart-shaped or tongue-shaped" petals. Bell's flowers become a cartoon-like representation of male and female genitals.

While Bell's flowers do not represent exactly what is described in Woolf's words on that page, they do represent the larger trend toward dualities that will be explored throughout. Her pair of flowers foreshadows the pairs of people who will walk through Kew Gardens during the course of the story, and her combination of male and female will be arranged in all combinations. There will be misunderstandings between couples, just as there are differences on this page between the words of the story and the images that supposedly illustrate them. In short, there will be dualities of all kinds, and there will be the intriguing tensions that arise from those dualities.

At the end of the story, the dualities explode into the general context of the city hubbub. Avrom Fleishman describes this action as "serial presentation, with a significant final term" (Fleishman 57). He characterizes the story's movement as "gradual expansion or emergent creation" (Fleishman 56). He notes that there is a sense of "crescendo of the repeated word 'voices' [which] emerges as the final and triumphant term in the series of elements presented by the story" (Fleishman 56). The word "voices" at

the end of the story, however, has a mixed message: the people speaking in the garden are hardly speaking triumphantly. Their voices are absorbed in the noises of urbanity, of wartime London, and of the general motion of life. Though their words add to this motion, the “final” term of the story is the flowers, whose petals burst voicelessly into the air.

Fleischman’s summary therefore implies a teleology that is not fitting for this story. Instead of building a dramatic crescendo, the story merely expands its focus. In May of 1918, Woolf records in her diary this sense of Kew Gardens being part of a larger movement. She writes, “To the general loveliness & freshness was added a sense of being out when we should have been at home; this always turns things into a kind of spectacle. It seems to be going on without you. We sat under a tree, & became a centre for sparrow & robins, & pestered by the attentions of a gigantic aeroplane” (*Diary i*, 148, 6 May 1918). This account is a distillation of my characterization of the structure of Kew Gardens” — the entry begins with the duality of the external “loveliness & freshness” and the internal guilty pleasure of “being out when we should have been at home.” The next development is the dissolving of the duality in a larger focus: life “seems to be going on without you.”

The last sentence of Woolf’s diary entry describes the juxtapositions that characterize “Kew Gardens” as a narrative: different things happen in quick succession. Some critics have compared this technique to the quick cut of film; Winifred Holtby, writing while Woolf was alive, says that

To let the perspective shift from high to low, from huge to microscopic, to let figures of people, insects, aeroplanes, flowers pass across the vision and melt away—these are . . . the tricks of the cinema. . . . In *Kew Gardens* the external figures appear and disappear

with such brilliant clarity that we could almost photograph them from the words" (111).

Woolf is known to have called Holtby's book "wildly inaccurate" (qtd. in Novak 93), but the point about the "cinematic" style (as Novak agrees) rings true. The quick transitions from scene to scene in *Mrs. Dalloway*, for instance, were partly what inspired Eileen Atkins to write a screenplay from that novel (NPR broadcast, 12 March 1998).

Bell's use of frequent page breaks in the third edition of *Kew Gardens* makes the "cinematic" structure of the story become clear.¹² In printed prose, page breaks usually do not have any interpretive significance, but in *Kew Gardens* each page stops at the end of a sentence. Each page encapsulates either a unique moment in the story or provides the space for a transition between these episodes. As the perspective in the story shifts from one human to another, from a garden panorama to a snail's view of a leaf, the page breaks support the overall structure of the story.

Page breaks also underscore the small surprises that Woolf has written into her story. In the one page where the page ends mid-sentence, for instance, the break creates suspense: the young man is trying to discern some occluded thread of his companion's thoughts, and the page breaks just before he has a vision. At the bottom of the sixteenth page, "he felt that something loomed up behind her words and stood vast and solid behind them; and the mist very slowly rose and uncovered" — what? But the page ends here. On this occasion more than on any other page turn, we wonder what will be found on the next page: what will the mist uncover?

¹² It is not clear who has made the page divisions. Though Bell is responsible for the "design" of the book, the page breaks affect the length of the book and the flow of the story. A case could therefore be made for Leonard and/or Virginia having a say in the division of the story into pages.

The illustration on this page reinforces the concealing function of the page. The image looks like a curtain in a fancy theater (see fig. B.4.), as if the illustration or the paper itself is hiding the undefined thing that “loomed up behind her words and stood vast and solid behind them.” But the words are the curtain on this page; as the young people ask themselves, “who knows (so they thought as they pressed the parasol into the earth) what precipices aren’t concealed in [short, insignificant words], or what ridges of ice don’t shine in the sun on the other side? Who knows?” The page has printed on it the image of a curtain, and it also carries the curtain of language. What appears in books is never as “vast and solid” as what lies behind the curtains; even when we lift the curtain — i.e., turn the page — we realize that there are more curtains and confusions. The page (i.e., the leaf of paper) is like a curtain that rises to answer the question by revealing the contents of the next page.

After turning the page, we read, “—O heavens!— what were those shapes?” The dashes at the beginning of this phrase enhance the climactic resolution of the suspense, because they are a surprise to see in the middle of the sentence, and at the beginning of a page. They underscore the discontinuity in the reading experience during the page turn, especially because the words that follow do not answer the question; they ask a new one. The young man’s mind has shifted swiftly from thinking of his companion to being lost in a fantasy about the shapes of tea tables.

We expect to have our suspense satisfied, to learn what the young man now sees, but the seventeenth page contains more mysteries. The young man talks about “little white tables,” but are they real? The tables are illustrated at the bottom (see fig. B.5.), but incompletely and abstractly; their

tops are not solid circles and there is a shimmer around them. Still, the description and illustration indicate the tables' presence, and it is confusing to then read that "even to him it began to seem real" after imagining a "real two shilling piece" and a bill for their tea, and the people for whom this scene felt "real, all real." Is this a scene that they are experiencing, but which seems surreal to him? No; we soon learn that it is all in the young man's mind. "[I]t was too exciting to stand and think any longer, and he pulled the parasol out of the earth with a jerk and was impatient to find the place where one had tea with other people, like other people." The scene is not real yet. The real and the imaginary are opposed in his mind, though they are fused on the page.

The transition from the fourth page to the fifth page also creates a question that is not completely resolved with the page turn. On the fourth page, as the man walks along with his wife and children, he remembers the time, on the lake fifteen years prior, that he asked Lily to marry him (see fig. B.6.). There is some uncertainty about her answer, and the page ends at the peak of his suspense. "And my love, my desire, were in the dragon-fly; for some reason I thought that if it settled there, on that leaf, the broad one with the red flower in the middle of it, if the dragon-fly settled on the leaf she would say 'Yes' at once." Bell visually heightens the suspense: sweeping lines represent the dragon-fly's flight toward a blossom in the bottom right corner, and the word "would" hovers between its petals. If the dragon-fly "settled there," then Lily "would" — that is, she would marry him. The illustration does not reveal the outcome: the conditional word "would" settles on the flower instead of the definitive 'Yes.'

As we turn the page (see fig. B.7.), we expect to learn the resolution — did he marry her? The answer seems to be no, and yes. He did not marry her, but he did marry. The page begins, as others I have discussed, with an abrupt change in perspective: “But the dragon-fly went round and round: it never settled anywhere—of course not, happily not, or I shouldn’t be walking here with Eleanor and the children—Tell me, Eleanor. D’you ever think of the past?” The perspective has shifted from the past memory to the present scene of this family on the garden path. We learn that the man’s reverie, though it was about a marriage proposal, was not about his wife. We have only read about Lily, who he might have married if the dragon-fly had settled on the leaf. But this quotation reveals a shift from Lily to Eleanor. The reader is jolted into confusion — who is Eleanor?¹³ Clearly she is his wife; years have gone by, and they have children who accompany them on the path.

Confusion is generally resolved over time: there is a question, and information is revealed later that explains the confusion. In *Kew Gardens*, however, the confusions are not clear until after they have happened; they become resolved before the reader has even been sure what to be confused about. Bell uses page breaks to heighten the confusion, because a reader cannot skip ahead as easily to learn more information. Paper covers rock; the page obscures the reality of the situation.

¹³ This surprising shift back into the present is further indicated by an indented left margin on the line with the words, “—Tell me, Eleanor.” Aside from the indented margin, nothing differentiates his actual speech from his internal dialogue. The unusual placement of this line follows the man’s shift from thought to speech, from reverie to reality, and from Lily to Eleanor.

In the 1927 edition, Bell expresses the visual style of "Kew Gardens" in spatial and temporal terms. Each page not only highlights the scenelike quality of the narrative, but shows that each of Woolf's tableaux exists in a unique moment. Thus the story is an example of ekphrastic writing, in all of the meanings of that word.

The term "ekphrasis" refers, most generally, to "the verbal representation of visual representation" (Mitchell, *Picture* 152). A poem that describes or gives "voice" to a work of visual art is a classic example of ekphrastic writing; ekphrastic poems are a genre unto themselves. The principle behind this kind of poem, however, can be considered a general principle of writing. As Woolf writes in her diary, her work is to convey life's scenes into language. Literature becomes a stationary artwork that describes discrete units of time: "ekphrasis" can signify "a fundamental tendency in all linguistic expression . . . exemplifying the aestheticizing of language in what [Murray Krieger] calls the 'still moment'" (Mitchell, *Picture* 153).

Krieger's idea of the "still moment" conforms to Wendy Steiner's definition of ekphrasis as "the concentration of action in a single moment of energy" (*Colors* 41). Her definition focuses on the synchronic nature of ekphrastic writing rather than the visual; her examples show writing that "refers to the timeless" and is an "iconic embodying of stillness" (41). But this attention to temporality does not exclude visuality, especially in Woolf's writing. The description of a visual scene leads to a sense of temporal stasis, which in turn is the key to an experience of infinite time.

The story of "Kew Gardens," while it describes many scenes visually, also points toward the larger stillness in which the moments are situated.

Each page of the third edition is a space in which a single unit of actions and descriptions is contained. The pages are still part of the larger whole of the story; as with Lessing's "pregnant moments," action over time is distilled or hinted at in a single expression. Woolf's scenes (and Bell's pages) in *Kew Gardens* seem like incidental ripples in an ocean of timelessness: we see these "single moment[s] of energy" arise and dissipate within the "atmosphere" of a larger "reality." The episodes of "Kew Gardens" give way to Woolf's allusions to the larger world at the end of the story.

Kew Gardens, then, is an example of writing that removes itself from the linearity of time. The division of its descriptive episodes into autonomous pages in the third edition emphasizes the function of each page as an isolated moment. But the moments are each "still" — they are not arranged in a conventional time sequence. In part this is because of the characters' imaginary asides, but more generally the story seems to be a scene of life rather than a slice of life.

The lack of page numbers in all editions of *Kew Gardens* contributes to the sense of a story that hovers in time, or as E.M. Forster describes it, that "strays forward, murmuring, wandering, falling asleep" (qtd. in Majumdar 173). The book's first reviewer also remarks on the lack of page numbers, and concludes that the absence of temporal markers reinforces the sense that *Kew Gardens* is timeless. He writes, "When we have read these pages (they are not numbered, but we have counted ten of them), we are firmly convinced of the truth of 'Kew Gardens' . . . a work of art, made, 'created', as we say, finished four-square; a thing of original and therefore strange beauty, with its own 'atmosphere', its own vital force" (qtd. in Majumdar 67). Page

numbers signify a rigid sequence for readers to follow in time, but the “vital force” of this story shines in its own atemporality.

Most often, the story recounts events that take place in the “present moment” in Kew Gardens. On a few occasions, however, the time frame of a particular scene shifts temporarily into the past. At these moments, in the third edition, Bell indicates the shift by changing the visual frame of the page. Instead of containing all the words on the page in a rectilinear structure, the pages that diverge into memory or mental time-travelling have gaps along their margins.

On the fourth page (fig. B.6.), as on two others (the fifth and the eleventh, fig. B.7. and B.8.) that contain memories of other times, the image does not completely surround the words. As described earlier, this page is an extended reverie; the man remembers the time on the lake, fifteen years prior, when he asked Lily to marry him. The open margin on the right provides passage into the past, just as the open margin on the left, on the eleventh page, lets the old man slip into a demented series of associations.

The page itself registers a transition from the man’s thoughts of his past with Lily to Eleanor’s thoughts of her own past. There are two places where the right margin remains open: above, near the memories of the man (whose name we now learn is Simon), and below, beside the words of the woman as she begins to muse about the past herself.

On the eleventh page (see fig. B.8.), the gap created on the left looks like the result of a forty-five degree shift in the image. On the preceding page, the contour of the boundary is curved at the top (see fig. B.9.); this contour reappears on the right side of the eleventh page. It is as if the man has literally flipped his lid, shifted the line from the top to the side of the

page. Once the top has moved, it opens up the possibility for his thoughts to slip out sideways. The time can leak out of the boundaries of the present. In their new orientation, the curves also resemble the man's imagined waves on the Uruguayan shore.

B. Aesthetics of early Hogarth handprinting -- setting the stage

The Hogarth Press had a working philosophy of producing books that would be read, not looked at. As Leonard Woolf says in his autobiography, "We did not want the Press to become one of those (admirable in their way) 'private' or semi-private presses the object of which is finely produced books, books which are meant not to be read, but to be looked at" (244).¹⁴ In practice, however, the Woolfs took great care with the appearance of even their most literary editions. Leonard Woolf continues, "We wanted our books to 'look nice' and we had our own views of what nice looks in a book would be" (244).

Aesthetics played a foundational role in the Woolfs' interest in publishing, and their appreciation of printing as an art form influenced all of the editions of *Kew Gardens*. (In the early days of The Hogarth Press, they were enchanted by the process of printing, they emphasized the inclusion of visual images, and they put more than a slight effort into finding fancy covers for their publications. The third edition of *Kew Gardens* therefore fits into the Press' print history.) Bell's illustrations also bring out allusions to printing that are buried in Woolf's story.

¹⁴ The impact of the Press, as the Woolfs planned, was in the literary realm rather than the art or print world. This fact perhaps explains why The Hogarth Press is generally not included in surveys of small presses or fine printing in early twentieth-century England.

The Woolfs were both attracted to the idea of learning the art of printing some time before they bought their first printing press.¹⁵ On 23 March 1917, they bought their press after walking by their local printer's shop window and being enticed into the store by the sight of printing materials. As Leonard Woolf recounts,

Nearly all the implements of printing are materially attractive and we stared through the window at them rather like two hungry children gazing at buns and cakes in a baker shop window. . . . Before we left the shop we had bought a small handpress, some Old Face type, and all the necessary implements and materials for a sum of £19 5s. 5d. (169-70)

The Woolfs were "hungry" to satisfy their aesthetic desire to own bookmaking implements.¹⁶

During the early years of operation, printing features in many of Woolf's diary entries, and she writes several enthusiastic letters about it. On

¹⁵ On February 15, 1915 "she and Leonard went to Farringdon Street about a printing press" (*Diary* 1:39), perhaps to the same shop where they bought their press two years later. Late in 1916, they enrolled in a letterpress course at a London's St. Bride school of printing, but were not allowed to complete the course because of their age, class, and lack of union membership. (See Rosenbaum 5 and Leonard Woolf's *Autobiography* 169. See also Willis 13 for other places they may have tried to learn printing.) But their neighborhood printer encouraged them to teach themselves with a sixteen-page booklet that came with the press they bought from his store. (L. Woolf, *Autobiography* 170).

¹⁶ It is unclear which of the Woolfs originally suggested the purchase, or why. Peter Alexander reports that "Virginia had been talking since 1915 of doing her own printing, and Leonard took her seriously" (99). Leonard Woolf contends, in his autobiography, that he originally wanted to buy a letterpress for Virginia's therapeutic distraction from her writing, which was all-consuming (169). Many authors suggest that Leonard Woolf was also trying to distract his wife from the violent manic depression that had debilitated her (and frightened him) in 1915. S. P. Rosenbaum offers a different view: "According to Virginia, however, printing was to deflect the influence of the Fabian socialists Beatrice and Sidney Webb on Leonard" (5). He also notes that Leonard Woolf had suffered the indignity of publisher backing out of a contract on his 1915 book, *Co-operation and the Future of Industry*; self-publishing would allow him to avoid this problem (21). (Rosenbaum contends that Leonard Woolf's publishing problems were more vexing than Virginia Woolf's being published by her formerly abusive half-brother, George Duckworth; see section A. for the impact of self-publishing on Woolf's writing style.) For whatever reasons, it is clear that the project of printing interested them both very much. When Leonard Woolf recounts the story of buying the press, he cannot even recall which of them made the move to actually go into the printshop and inquire about presses and printing (*Autobiography* 169-70).

2 May 1917, for instance, about a month and a half after purchasing the press, Woolf writes to Margaret Llewelyn Davies that both she and Leonard Woolf were entranced by the process of bringing writing into print form.

After two hours work at the press, Leonard heaved a terrific sigh and said "I wish to God we'd never bought the cursed thing!" To my relief, though not surprise, he added "Because I shall never do anything else." You can't think how exciting, soothing, ennobling and satisfying it is. (*Letters* 2: 151)

The aesthetics of bookmaking included the "ennobling and satisfying" process of pulling a good impression, the "materially attractive" printing equipment itself, and of course the book as a finished object. For Leonard Woolf, the aesthetic extended to bookkeeping: his story above characteristically includes the exact purchase price of their startup materials.¹⁷ As printing became a viable business, Leonard Woolf continued to keep carefully designated records of expenses, payments, names of purchasers, etc. (see fig. B.10.)

Beginning with their first book, the Woolfs included images in their literary productions. The Hogarth Press' first publication, *Two Stories*, was illustrated with four woodcuts by artist Dora Carrington.¹⁸ (see fig. B.1.) Carrington's woodcuts pleased the Woolfs aesthetically, although they had some trouble printing them. Woolf's joy in the woodcuts and her insensitivity to their treatment are evident in this letter she wrote to Carrington on 13 July 1917.

¹⁷ See section C. for speculations on how the business context of The Hogarth Press affected the publication of the third edition of *Kew Gardens*.

¹⁸ Carrington, as she was called, was known to the Woolfs through her participation in their friend Roger Fry's Omega Workshops, and through her passionate yet platonic association with another friend from the "Bloomsbury" set, Lytton Strachey.

Dear Carrington,

We like the wood cuts immensely. . . .We have printed them off, and they make the book much more interesting than it would have been without. The ones I like best are the servant girl and the plates, and the Snail.

Our difficulty was that the margins would mark; we bought a chisel, and chopped away, I am afraid rather spoiling one edge, but we came to the conclusion at last that the rollers scrape up the wood as they pass, as sometimes the impression would be clean to start with, and end with smudges. Next time we must have them cut exactly round the picture by a shop. Nevertheless, we are both very much pleased, and think them a great acquisition[,] and they print very well.

. . .We are in treaty for a press . . . It is specially good at printing pictures, and we see that we must make a practice of always having pictures." (*Letters* 2:162-63)

Woolf is complimentary but cavalier; the results of her cheerful wielding of the chisel are clearly visible on the woodcut of the graveyard (see fig. B.1.). Despite Carrington's fondness for doing woodcuts (Hill 40), she understandably designed a cover for only one other Hogarth book.¹⁹ The difficulty with printing images also made Bell wary of trusting her work to them (Rhein 14).²⁰

Still, Carrington's woodcuts "helped establish the house style" (Hill 42), and for a while the Woolfs did "make a practice of always having pictures." Illustration, or "the touch of an artist" was something "which the Woolfs felt strongly about at the beginning of the Press but which had less importance later" (Rhein 13). Bell's work as an illustrator for the Press, however, became more important over time.

¹⁹ Leonard Woolf's *Stories of the East*, 1921. The architectural design for this cover may have inspired Bell to consider columns as a motif in the third edition of *Kew Gardens*; see section G.

²⁰ See section F. for a discussion of how this difficulty affected Bell's working relationship with The Hogarth Press.

The Woolfs enlisted the efforts of other Omega artists (and over a dozen others) over the years, most notably Vanessa Bell.²¹ For their aesthetic endeavors, from advice to woodcut illustrations, the Woolfs found a natural collaborator in Vanessa Bell. As early as 26 April 1917, Woolf asked Bell to “please experiment with papers” (*Letters* 2:150) in connection with a plan to print *Prelude* by Katherine Mansfield. Woolf considers her sister an artistic advisor to the Press from the beginning. After the first edition of *Kew Gardens*, moreover, Bell becomes the sole dustcover artist for Woolf’s books.

Woolf sent Bell a manuscript of “Kew Gardens” on July 1, 1918, and asked her to “design a title page” (*Letters* 1:257), and Bell wrote back two days later with ideas about woodcuts.²² With this interchange of letters, the

²¹Many other artists contributed cover designs, such as Trekkie Ritchie Parsons (later to become Leonard Woolf’s companion after Virginia’s death), John Banting, etc., and Hogarth employees such as Richard Kennedy (see Willis 383, Woolmer’s *Checklist*, Kennedy’s *Boy at the Hogarth Press*).

²²In her letter of July 3, 1918, she suggests an image after two paragraphs of gossip about servants and friends.

It’s a relief to turn to your story, though some of the conversation — she says, I says, sugar—I know too well! But it’s fascinating and a great success, I think. . . . I wonder if I could do a drawing for it. It would be fun to try, but you must tell me the size. It might not have very much to do with the text, but that wouldn’t matter. But I might feel inclined to do the two people holding the sugar conversation. (Bell, *Letters* 214)

Bell’s discussion of the sugar conversation casts doubt on Peter Alexander’s contention that this scene reveals Woolf’s disdain for people of a lower class (115-16). He writes, “The conversation is rendered like the clucking of hens. It is reduced to what Woolf saw as its essentials, and those essentials are almost intolerably trivial, egotistical (‘I says, I says, I says’) and futile. This is a view of the minds of the working class which tells us more about Virginia Woolf than about them” (116). Or Alexander’s comments tell us more about him. He focuses on what he sees as classism precisely at the most unusual and suggestive point in the story. Woolf uses an exchange of gossip as a modernist literary experiment in distillation, and one of these women has a perceptual epiphany on the following page. If Woolf is making fun of women “of their station,” she does not maintain this stance for long.

Bell’s choice to make this scene the subject of her illustration indicates anything but disdain for these characters. Her tone in her letter implies a rueful identification with the women’s conversation. She and her sister were constantly exchanging gossip themselves; Bell seems to ignore the class marker in the text in order to focus on the conversation’s effect on her

sisters entered into their first collaboration. Woolf's subsequent requests for as many images as Bell could manage were not fulfilled, but the idea foreshadows the profusely illustrated third edition.

The first woodcut, of the "sugar conversation" (see fig. B.2.) makes the sisters eager for more.²³ On 22 November 1918, after completing two woodcuts for *Kew Gardens*, Bell writes to Woolf that she would be "delighted" to do more woodcuts for *Kew* or any other book (Bell, *Letters* 219). She specifies, "Only send me the stories as soon as you can or tell me what to do pictures of. As they needn't be accurate illustrations, I daresay you can tell me what to do if the stories aren't ready yet. (But I'd like to see them.)" (Bell, *Letters* 219) Her drawing of the sugar conversation, she had predicted, likewise "might not have very much to do with the text, but that wouldn't matter" (Bell, *Letters* 214).

This way of illustrating became their mode, and it carried through to the production of the third edition of *Kew Gardens*. Bell's dustcover designs

own imagination. She finds the scene "fascinating" by focusing on the form and not merely the content.

Her letter to Woolf continues with her contention that the illustration could resemble her 1913-16 painting, "A Conversation," which depicts three well-dressed, upper-class women talking in an alcove, with flowers outside the window behind their heads. Bell gives the women in the sugar conversation as much dignity as the women in her own painting.²³ By 26 July 1918, Woolf sends Bell a copy of a proof with the entreaty, "I hope you will do as many more as you can both for that story [*Kew Gardens*] and for the one about the party [unpublished and unidentified]" (*Letters* 1:262). By 7 November, however, the request has been whittled down to one additional woodcut for this book, "if you would do one; but it ought to be small—about half the size of this" (*Letters* 1:289). They came to call this second illustration the "caterpillar" woodcut (see fig. B.25.). Bell created the illustrations at the same time as she was completing woodcuts for an Omega book of woodcuts, so she was becoming more proficient at the art; she sends Woolf proofs for feedback on 15 November 1918 (see Bell, *Letters* 218). Despite Woolf's move to reduce the number of woodcuts in the book, Bell still registers her enthusiasm for the idea of illustrating Hogarth publications (return to text above). On 22 November 1918, Bell writes that "these woodcuts make almost daily letters necessary" (*Letters* 219). In addition to the many letters, the first edition of *Kew Gardens* appears in more or Woolf's diary entries than any other Hogarth Press printing project (Rhein 15), perhaps because it was her first single-author Hogarth book. In any case, both sisters seem to have felt inspired by the project.

for Woolf's books generally bore a tangential relationship to the book, which Bell may or may not have read by the time she created the jacket illustration.²⁴ Still, the relationship between the sisters' arts was obvious: "Unquestionably Vanessa's designs added an important visual quality to all of Virginia's work (Willis 382). Bell could express an interpretation of what she understood to be the subject matter of the book, and the result generally provided a felicitous counterpoint to Woolf's writing."²⁵

Bell's unique cover designs grew out of a Hogarth tradition of using unusual covers. For the first edition of *Kew Gardens*, for instance, the Woolfs chose a marbled paper cover, one which Woolf is slightly miffed to see is imitated by others. Leonard Woolf writes in his autobiography about the care they took with finding attractive cover papers, starting with the publication of *Two Stories*.

We took a good deal of trouble to find some rather unusual, gay Japanese paper for the covers [of *Two Stories*]. For many years we gave much time and care to find beautiful, uncommon, and sometimes cheerful paper for binding our books, and, as the first publishers to do this, I think we started a fashion which many of the regular, old established printers followed. We got papers from all over the place, including some brilliantly patterned from Czechoslovakia, and we also had some marbled covers made for us by Roger Fry's daughter in Paris. (*Autobiography* 171)

²⁴ John Lehmann, The Hogarth Press' intermittent manager, confirms that these dustjackets were not the collaborative sisterly effort that people have assumed (26-27). He offers the evidence of an unpublished letter from Bell, written in 1931 about a cover for *Three Guineas*, that describes the history of the sisters' typical working relationship: "I've not read a word of the book – I only have had the vaguest description of it and of what she wants me to do from Virginia – but that has always been the case with the jackets I have done for her" (in Lehmann 27).

²⁵ See section E. for an analysis of how Bell's illustration for the first page of the 1927 *Kew Gardens* both misinterprets Woolf's description and offers a deeper commentary on the story.

Despite his statements that Hogarth was uninterested in the look of the book, Leonard Woolf seems proud of the pioneering role that their Press played in dustcover design. Hogarth historian J. H. Willis asserts that “Leonard Woolf had taken quiet pleasure in the unconventional form . . . of the early hand-printed press books” (155; see also L. Woolf’s *Autobiography* 240-41). The Woolfs’ attention to aesthetics did not go unnoticed; booksellers often grumbled about the unconventional size and appearance of Hogarth Press books (Willis 155; see also L. Woolf’s *Autobiography* 240-41).

Though even a simple, solid-colored cover could give the Woolfs aesthetic pleasure, they were not naively impressionable. Woolf writes in her diary that the completed volumes of Katherine Mansfield’s *Prelude* (1918) “surprised us . . . by their professional look—the stiff blue cover pleases us particularly” (*Diary* 1:165). But they found the prints Mansfield had sent them for use as illustrations — of “a cheerful woman framed with flowers and broad leaves on the front and the same woman on the back, with wilted flowers” (Rhein 41) by J. D. Fergusson — aesthetically revolting. After some negotiation with Mansfield, they printed a few copies with the images (mainly for Mansfield and her husband), and left them out for the rest of the edition (see Willis 24). Their discrimination with Mansfield’s woodcuts shows that they exercised their editorial authority over images as well as words. The Woolfs would not have published the 1927 *Kew Gardens* if they had believed it was aesthetically trivial.

The Woolfs’ attention to illustration and cover design contributed to the original critical success of *Kew Gardens*. In a review that transformed

the fate of Hogarth forever, the reviewer (Harold Child) discusses the wrapper and the woodcuts as much as he reviews the story. His first paragraph focuses exclusively on the paper that covers the book:

What in the world, one asks, on picking up this volume, can be the connexion between Kew Gardens and this odd, Fitzroy-square-looking cover? . . . What are Mrs Woolf and Mrs Bell going to find in Kew Gardens worth writing about, and engraving on wood and binding in a cover that suggests the tulips in a famous Dutch-English catalogue—'blotched, spotted, streaked, speckled, and flushed'? (qtd. in Majumdar 66)

The review establishes a connection between the first edition of *Kew Gardens* and the Omega Workshops, which were located on Fitzroy Square. Indeed, the Woolfs got many of the papers for their books through Roger Fry, as discussed above. But the salient point here is that Child's influential discussion of this book is framed by a discussion of its presentation as a visual object. The review concludes with a return to the visual aspects of the book: "the more one gloats over 'Kew Gardens' the more beauty shines out of it; and the fitter to it seems this cover that is like no other covers, and carries no associations; and the more one likes Mrs Bell's 'Kew Gardens' woodcuts" (qtd. in Majumdar 67).

The third edition of *Kew Gardens* capitalizes on the appeal of Bell's illustrative talents, but the look of this book is not just a result of its images. The edition also uses type unconventionally, and The Hogarth Press was historically not insensitive to the appearance of the letters on the page. Douglas McMurtrie, the venerable historian of printing, observes that "the Woolfs continue to divert themselves, from time to time, with efforts at typographic self-expression" (473).

In their early editions, the Woolfs were often sloppy in their printing and typesetting (Rhein 12).²⁶ The Hogarth's Press early inspiration from the Omega Workshops may have occasioned this sloppiness (see section G. for a discussion of the Omega Workshops), but the association with the exuberantly unconventional Omega also gave them an appetite for typographical experimentation in their books. Not all Hogarth Press publications were conventionally composed: "T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1923) required adroit spacing, and *Paris* (1920) by Hope Mirrlees was self-consciously modern in its typographical configuration, one line running vertically down the page" (Willis 34). The work could be done well; Eliot, for instance, thought that the Woolfs' edition of his poetry was "better than the American edition" (Willis 34). Occasionally, The Hogarth Press could and would take care with its typography.

Woolf's consistent presence at the typesetting station — she set type "every afternoon from two to four" (Spotts 267) — must have seeped into her creative consciousness, especially in the beginning when her efforts and learning curve were at their heights. It is not surprising, then, to detect allusions to typesetting in the text of "Kew Gardens."

Language, in printing, takes on material weight. Even the short word "it" on the fifteenth page, has weight because its letters are made of lead. On the sixteenth page, then, when the story muses over "short insignificant words" like "it," the description of "words with short wings for their heavy body of meaning" could be referring to the actual weight that these words carry, in addition to the figurative weight of their unarticulated meanings.

²⁶ Woolf's letter to Carrington above, and the descriptions of the first edition of *Kew Gardens* in section F., also attest to the Woolfs' inevitable, amateurish carelessness in their early printing.

Similarly, the “falling words” on the thirteenth page could be falling because they have real weight; the woman could be watching their pattern as they fall just as Woolf watched her lead letters scatter onto the floor of the Hogarth pressroom.

Bell’s illustration on the first page of the story is a good example of how her illustrations bring out the references to printing in the text (see fig. B.3.).²⁷ One sentence appears on this page:

From the oval-shaped flower-bed there rose perhaps a hundred stalks spreading into heart-shaped or tongue-shaped leaves half way up and unfurling at the tip red or blue or yellow petals marked with spots of colour raised upon the surface; and from the red, blue or yellow gloom of the throat emerged a straight bar, rough with gold dust and slightly clubbed at the end.

This sentence appears in an opening in the upper center of Bell’s illustration; pieces of type (called sorts) are arranged in a central area of the opening in a metal frame (called a chase), generally leaving more margin below the type. The stalks of flowers arising from this flower-bed could describe the sight of hundreds of metal sorts of type rising from the press-bed during printing. Metal sorts have notches, called nicks, about two-thirds of the way up, and the letters appear, raised and in reverse, on the tops of the sorts (see fig. B.11.). The different letters are like a variety of flowers that grow straight up in the garden of the press-bed. They decorate the page with different impressions: printed phrases are like bouquets or clusters of flowers.²⁸ Thus this one sentence creates many analogies, and Bell’s

²⁷ I am deliberately saying “the first page of *the story*” to clarify that this is not the first page of the book.

²⁸ Thus the terms “colors of rhetoric” or “flowers of rhetoric” take on new meanings: in addition to referring to rhetorical devices, they can refer to the appearance of the sort or of the letters on the page.

treatment of it reinforces them: letters as flowers, words as flowers, and the story itself as a flower among the other flowers of Bell's illustration.

The activity of composing type itself is alluded to on the twelfth page (see fig. B.12.), where the two older women

. . . went on energetically
piecing together their very complicated
dialogue:
"Nell, Bert, Lot, Cess, Phil, Pa, he says, I says,
she says, I says, I says, I says—"
"My Bert, Sis, Bill, Grandad, the old man,
sugar.
Sugar, flour, kippers, greens,
Sugar, sugar, sugar."

This dialogue, which Bell dubs "the sugar conversation" before the publication of the first edition, leaves out most of the women's words.²⁹ As readers, we can "piec[e] together" contexts in which the women's words make sense: for instance, that they are talking about family members, recounting conversations, commenting on the elderly man they see walking ahead of them on the path in a strange manner (see the ninth and eleventh pages), and exchanging recipes or discussing meals eaten. In any case, their dialogue on the page was created by a typesetting process in which letters are pieced together to make words, just as these words must be pieced together to make sense. For a typesetter, any dialogue is meticulously complicated. Just as this dialogue calls attention to the information left out between the words, a compositor's attention to the spacing material between the words is as essential as assembling the type. When Bell places the last sentence of

²⁹ On the one hand, this could be Woolf's arch commentary: it does not take much energy for the reader to "piec[e] together" that "their very complicated dialogue" is merely simple gossip. On the other hand, the fact that the women themselves are "piecing together" their dialogue implies that there is some pattern behind their words that makes them add up to more than just gossip. Each name, for instance, is a synecdoche for a network of associations.

this dialogue along a different margin from the rest of the page, she acknowledges in visual terms the importance of empty space, both in the syntax of the dialogue and in the page composition.

C. *Kew Gardens* as a commodity; the business of the third edition

Kew Gardens was the title that created The Hogarth Press as a publishing business.³⁰ It was a landmark book for the Press in many ways: it was the first book to contain only Woolf's writing, the first book Bell illustrated, and their first book to be reviewed. The review appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, on 29 May 1919, and the Woolfs were flooded with orders; the 150 copies of the edition sold out by 31 May. In June, the Woolfs published a hasty second edition with the help of Richard Madley, an outside printer (Willis 12). Thus *Kew Gardens* became one of the first books to be (re)printed out of house.³¹ All of these developments sprang from a title that was only the Press' third public issue.³²

³⁰ The Press was named after Hogarth House, their residence and printshop at the time. The Press later moved with them to Tavistock Square, where the business operated from the basement instead of taking over the entire house the way it had at Hogarth. It retained the name of The Hogarth Press despite the Woolfs' several moves and the Press' changes of management. After Virginia Woolf's death and the buyout of Leonard Woolf's partner and manager, John Lehmann, Hogarth continued to publish books as an imprint of Chatto & Windus. Now, as the result of a further buyout that occurred after Leonard Woolf's death, "The Press . . . was eventually swallowed up along with Chatto & Windus, Jonathan Cape (who tried for years to buy out Hogarth) and various other publishers by the conglomerate called Random House UK" (Rosenbaum 11).

³¹ John Middleton Murry's *Critic in Judgment*, 1919, was printed out-of-house before publishing the first edition of *Kew Gardens* but after printing it. There was an interval of five months between printing and publishing so that the Woolfs could print other titles and issue them all at once.

³² The first two titles were *Two Stories* (1917), containing "Three Jews" by Leonard Woolf and "A Mark on the Wall" by Virginia Woolf, and *Prelude* (1918) by Katherine Mansfield. When Leonard Woolf's brother Cecil was killed in the war, the Woolfs interrupted the printing of *Prelude* to print a privately circulated volume of Cecil Woolf's poems (1918).

Thus the conditions were set that made possible the third edition of *Kew Gardens*. The Woolfs had been successful with the first and second editions of the book, and they were just beginning to establish a reputation with local printers as well as with reviewers. Still, the third edition would never have come into being without the Woolfs' cooperative efforts over time to nourish the ever-shifting organism of The Hogarth Press.

To operate and maintain a viable printing business takes dedication and the ability to steadily apply many skills. Fortunately, the Woolfs quickly became engrossed in their operation: on 26 April 1917, about a month after purchasing their first press, Woolf writes to Bell, "We get so absorbed we can't stop; I see that real printing will devour one's entire life" (*Letters* 2:150).

Printing is only one aspect of the successful operation of a publishing house, and even printing is made up of many tasks; the Woolfs divided the labor of literary production according to their skills and capacities.³³ Leonard Woolf suffered from a constant hand tremor which made typesetting difficult (Rosenbaum 6), so Woolf did most of the early typesetting.³⁴ For years, she set type "every afternoon from two to four" (Spotts 267). She also provided editorial judgments, and, most importantly, wrote books that were published by the Press.

Leonard Woolf also wrote for the Press and served as co-editor with his wife, but his other roles were more administrative. In the early days, Leonard Woolf took care of most of the machining, first in-house and later

³³ See section B. for an account of the Press' early printing days.

³⁴ This was despite Woolf's clumsiness, which once sent a case of type falling to the floor so that the pieces of type scattered around the room. She also often made mistakes (Alexander 99).

by arrangement with local printers. During the production of the first edition of *Kew Gardens*, for instance, Woolf recorded in her diary (on 4 March 1918), "L. took 4 pages to the printer today to print off. I being useless for this purpose went off to get into touch with London again" (*Diary* 1:121). Leonard Woolf generally handled negotiations with printers, as well as business contracts with authors and artists. He also kept detailed account books that showed who had bought each book, how much they had paid, and the dates of all transactions. He also kept records of the Press' finances, from petty cash to business expenses, and this practice assisted in the company's fiscal stability.³⁵ As J. H. Willis, Jr., a chronicler of The Hogarth Press, writes,

Leonard Woolf's operation of the press, with his passion for details, his meticulous accounting for every penny, his obvious relish for the minute particulars of all expenditures from stamps and glue to fonts of type, above all his canny budgeting and pricing, surely is as much a distinguishing characteristic of Hogarth as the presence of a great novelist with composing stick in hand, Virginia Woolf inky and determined. (Willis 16)

Willis' portrait of Leonard Woolf the business administrator working on an equal footing with Woolf the creative writer (and "inky" typesetter) proves that Leonard Woolf's fastidiousness was as important as Woolf's genius to the success of the Press. His financial sense certainly served the business well: "After [the profit gained from the first publication] The Hogarth Press was never in the red, although an individual title might not pay for itself" (Willis 16).³⁶

³⁵ Leonard Woolf's personal investment in accounting could terrify his employees: Richard Kennedy reports that Leonard Woolf could fly into a rage if the in-house petty cash book was inaccurate (71).

³⁶ Leonard Woolf's (and perhaps also Virginia Woolf's) savvy and business sense could be so uncompromising that it bordered on hardheadedness. When the edition of their first

A balance of presswork and economy allowed the Woolfs to publish books according to their aesthetic judgment. The Hogarth Press philosophy was to print literary works that the Woolfs deemed worthy of notice, even if those works would not be accepted by other printers (see L. Woolf *Autobiography* 170, 171). Leonard Woolf sums up that "We have never published a book for any reason other than a belief that it deserved to be published, . . . never published a book under the financial pressure of expenditure and overheads" (*Autobiography* 454).³⁷ Late in life, on 29 January 1968, he writes to a hopeful author that "I have always been against publishing any book which one thinks falls below a certain standard, merely because it will probably pay" (*Letters* 366). Critics have recognized that "The Woolfs published what interested them, kept their prices down, and made the book designs attractive but not elaborate" (Willis 42).

For their printing endeavors, from advice to woodcut illustrations, the Woolfs found a natural collaborator in Vanessa Bell. As early as 26 April 1917, a month after buying the first press, Woolf asks Bell to "please experiment with papers" (*Letters* 2:150) in connection with a plan to print Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude*. It is clear that Woolf considers her sister an artistic advisor to the Press from the beginning. Bell does not have the

publication was coming close to selling out, for instance, they charged even their closest friends more to buy it. As Woolf writes to Violet Dickinson,

"We are nearly at an end of our copies, and have raised the price from 1/6 to 2/. . ."

(*Letters* 2:165-66). Shrewd and tough-minded of Leonard and Virginia to raise the price for the last twenty-seven copies, and loyal of Dickinson, Fry, and twelve others to pay it.

There were no complimentary copies. Even Carrington [the illustrator of this volume] paid, the first to buy at the increased price" (Willis 18)

Though the Woolfs often printed works that their friends had written, they made their business work by not giving their work away to friends for free.

³⁷ See also Leonard Woolf's reaction to John Lehmann's idea late in life to publish something for money, and his letter to someone late in life turning down a manuscript and reiterating his principles.

opportunity to direct a book herself, however, until she, Leonard Woolf, and Virginia Woolf together arrange for the republication of *Kew Gardens*.³⁸

In 1926, the year before The Hogarth Press published the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, Woolf was concerned about the financial state of the Press. She complains to Bell about “the irregularity of the Press and the strain of its being such a gamble (I suppose we are certain now to have a loss next year)” (*Letters* 3:265, 5/19/26). Her concern was not founded in fiscal fact: an editor’s footnote to this letter states that “In fact The Hogarth Press made a profit of £27 in 1926” (*Letters* 265, n2). Woolf would have been well aware of this financial reality by the time Bell asked for an illustration project in early 1927. Still, illustrated books were expensive to produce, and the printing of the third edition of *Kew Gardens* alone totaled £64 — over twice the Press’ 1926 profits (see fig. B.13.). Woolf was aware of this kind of expense: early in the Press’ history, she had said that a book of woodcuts from the Omega Workshops was “very magnificent but fearfully expensive” (*Letters* 2:296).³⁹

But the Press was soon making money again. In May 1927, the sales from Virginia Woolf’s *To The Lighthouse* made it possible for the Woolfs to buy their first car in July (Alexander 153). The new cash flow also enabled The Hogarth Press in 1927 to print more titles — thirty-eight — than it had before or would again in a single year (Willis 134). The good financial situation also would have made it easier for the Woolfs to consider

³⁸ See section F. for a history of Bell’s difficulties with Hogarth in the interim.

³⁹ It is not clear whether she was afraid of the production cost or the selling price. Either expense, however, could have boded ill for the profits of the Press.

producing expensive illustrated books such as a new edition of *Kew Gardens*.

Kew Gardens was not the only costly book that The Hogarth Press published at this time. In October 1926, Roger Fry and Virginia Woolf both wrote introductions⁴⁰ to an expensive (42s) Hogarth publication of Julia Margaret Cameron's photography, *Victorian Photographs of Famous Men and Fair Women*.⁴¹ In the same month that they published *Kew Gardens*, the Woolfs issued what appears to be a gift book, Herbert Edward Palmer's *The Judgment of François Villon: A Pageant-Episode Play in Five Acts*. The deluxe edition of 400 numbered and signed copies⁴² is bound in "Red and black marbled cloth; imitation vellum spine lettered in gilt. Purple dust jacket lettered in black" (Woolmer 55). The Woolfs charged 25s for the book, a large sum at the time.

The new *Kew Gardens* was sold for 15s — still much more costly than most Hogarth Press books and books in general then. The dustjackets, which were illustrated by Bell, like all of Woolf's editions, were less elaborate than the covers for *François Villon*. *Kew Gardens* is therefore not as likely to have been planned as a gift book, a conclusion with which J. H. Willis concurs (366). But whether or not the new version of *Kew Gardens*

⁴⁰ Fry, who was still close with Bell, also contributed prefatory material to Charles Mauron's 1927 book on *The Nature of Beauty in Art and Literature*. Though this book was considerably less expensive than *Victorian Photographs* (3s6d, March 1927), the significance of its mention lies in the fact that at this time, Fry was working with Charles Mauron to translate Woolf's "sketches" from the previous decade into French (see his letter to Marie Mauron of 12/21/96 [598]). They translated "A Mark on the Wall" and may have also attempted "Kew Gardens" — Woolf's earlier work was resurfacing in the eyes of Fry and his associates.

⁴¹ Julia Margaret Cameron was Virginia Woolf's great aunt, and she developed a unique style of soft-focus photography in the early days of the art form.

⁴² Other records indicate that the Woolfs bound 475 copies of this publication (Woolmer 55). If this is true, its print run corresponds more closely to that of the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, so it makes an even more fitting comparison study.

was planned as a way to earn money for the Press, it was a guaranteed way to spend money.⁴³ In addition to the exceedingly high printing costs, it is unclear what fee they paid Bell for her design and decoration work.

Though illustrated books were costly to print, they were a good gamble: they generally sold well, especially during the holiday buying season. The Woolfs do not seem to have capitalized on these books consistently for this purpose, which is in keeping with their balance between strategic financial decisions and a primary focus on literary integrity. They published Roger Fry's *Twelve Original Woodcuts* in November 1921, in time for the holidays, but though that first impression was "gulped down in 2 days" (writes Woolf, qtd. in Woolmer 11), they did not issue the second and third impressions until 1922 (Woolmer 11). The following year, in November 1923, the Woolfs published Roger Fry's illustrated travelogue, *A Sampler of Castile*. Despite the high price of this volume (25s), the Woolfs had to issue more copies within a month of publication. Their reprint appeared, therefore, just in time for Christmas. The second reprint, in the following November, also fell in the holiday season. The third reprint, however, which appeared in October 1934, did not quite fall within the holiday time frame (see Woolmer 21).

The dates of these editions were hardly random; Leonard Woolf took special care in deciding when to republish books. He writes,

For the efficiency of publishing it is most important that the decision to reprint or rebind for every book on the list should be

⁴³ "Some copies were signed by author and illustrator" (Woolmer 60). This might indicate that they were trying to inflate the worth of the volume; both Woolf's and Bell's artistic reputations by this time were clearly established. But some copies of the early edition were also signed, at least by Woolf (see fig. B.31.). The signatures could have been for friends' volumes and tangential to the question of the book's worth.

made at the right moment and for the right quantity so that there is always in stock an adequate number of bound copies to supply the demand (while, at the same time, the publisher, for his own sake, does not print or bind more copies than he can sell. (*Autobiography* 313)

The Hogarth Press' deliberation in publishing times suggests that though the Woolfs may have planned to publish illustrated books for the holiday buying season, this timing was probably not their sole rationale for circulating these books.

The Woolfs did issue specifically designated "holiday" books, or at least Virginia Woolf planned to write them. One of their later Press managers, John Lehmann, reports that *Flush: A Biography* (1933) began as a literary lark for the holiday book-buying season. He recalls, "This was one of her 'holiday' books, *Flush*; originally conceived as a Christmas booklet, but soon developing into a full-length, serio-comic biography" (28). His remark implies that Woolf wrote many "'holiday' books" — *Kew Gardens* may have been planned as one of them.

The practice of issuing specially printed Christmas books was not unique to The Hogarth Press. In 1927, printing historian Stanley Morison notes with dismay that many publishers capitalize on the public's appreciation of illustrated books.

Every Christmas brings its stream of pretentious fatuities, the principle behind which is to spend a penny a copy on decoration and put another shilling on the price, and after all, with this ink, type and paper signifying nothing so much as ignorance, it is hard if the printer is told to accept it as "what the public wants." (*Review* 4)

Though the printer in the case of *Kew Gardens* was told exactly how to proceed, thereby preventing the "greater degree of co-operation between printer and publisher" (*Review* 5) that Morison believes would improve the

quality of these printed books, the decisions about its appearance were based on what the *artist* wanted rather than on “public” demand. Still, the volume does fit Morison’s description of a book that is expensive both to produce and to buy.

Even if the third edition of *Kew Gardens* was planned as a holiday publication, this does not completely explain its appearance. The third edition of *Kew Gardens* was published in November 1927, which would qualify it as a seasonal volume, but the announcement of its publication does not appear in the holiday advertising insert of the *Times Literary Supplement* of 24 November. In fact, no Hogarth Press advertisements appear in the holiday supplement at all, nor in the regular issue of the *TLS* on that date. Instead, a quarter-page advertisement for The Hogarth Press appears in the previous week’s issue, on 17 November 1927. The decision to publicize the edition with others before the holiday suggests that it was aimed at serious readers — those who were interested in Hogarth’s selection. The advertisement contains information about nine Hogarth titles, including *Kew Gardens*, and does not mention holiday specials.

The section of the advertisement about *Kew Gardens* reads, “The original edition, published in 1919, has long been out of print. The present edition is Crown 4to and limited to 500 numbered copies. The whole book has been designed and each page decorated by Mrs. Bell.” Though the advertisement notes that this volume is a reprint of a successful publication, *Kew Gardens* is not listed in the “Reprints” section of the subsequent issue (11/24/27) of the *TLS*.⁴⁴ Instead, it is listed in the “Literary” section, along

⁴⁴ This is not necessarily common: in the following week (12/1/27), a new edition of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* appears in the “Reprints” section, though the

with other new publications.⁴⁵ Though *Kew Gardens* is also only altered in terms of its illustrations, its classification in the “Literary” section indicates that the reprint status of the book is secondary to its artistic agenda. A change in a book’s illustrations can classify it as a reprint, but in the case of *Kew Gardens* the “reprinted” edition becomes a new literary expression.

Woolf must have granted permission for Bell to illustrate her story, because this new literary creation would circulate with Woolf’s byline. This permission could have been inspired by Bell’s letter from France, on 5 February 1927, asking for an illustration project. Bell writes, “I suppose you haven’t given any attention to a story for me to do drawings for? I could really do them here, as nearly all my evenings are solitary. . . . I have many hours which I could devote to trying to turn a penny or two” (Bell, *Letters* 306). In addition to having free time, Bell had no studio for much of her time in Cassis (at least after mid-February, when she and her companions had to move to a different house), and woodcuts and drawings were easy to do anywhere.⁴⁶

Her request to Woolf could have been a belated response to Woolf’s letter of 19 May 1926 about illustrating a book. Woolf’s tone is unusually dictatorial: “Mr Brace came — the American publisher. He says they would most warmly welcome a children’s story illustrated by Mrs Bell. Do for Gods

thumbnail review reveals that the book is altered only in that some of the illustrations are now colored (TLS 913).

⁴⁵ The first edition was listed in the “Literary” section as well. This is distinct from “Fiction.” E.M. Forster’s *Aspects of the Novel*, for instance, appears in the “Literary” section.

⁴⁶ See her letter of 22 February 1927 to Woolf: “So it will be alright I hope and we must do without a studio” (Bell, *Letters* 307-08). As Jane Hill notes about Carrington’s fondness for woodcuts, “They could be made almost anywhere and as Carrington was so often away from home they were a perfect outlet for her. Reasonably quick to do, they needed only simple tools and a small block” (Hill 41).

[sic] sake bestir yourself" (*Letters* 3:266). The third edition of *Kew Gardens* does resemble a children's book, though it was never issued by an American press.⁴⁷

After starting the project in motion, Woolf did not remain at the helm: Bell was the primary force behind this particular edition, with Leonard Woolf in the primary supporting role. In an October letter to Bell, Woolf implies that she is aware of the book-in-progress, but she cedes authority to Leonard Woolf. She writes, "Ring up and suggest your coming or our coming, there's a good Dolph. Leonard will discuss the proofs — he is going into it" (*Letters* 3:426, 10/5/27; this is the only direct reference to the project in her published writings).⁴⁸ Woolf was not Bell's main consultant at this point in the negotiations; this working dynamic was unusual and perhaps precarious (see section F., below).

By 1927, "Virginia's role in the Press was modest" (Spotts 268), since her writing was gaining momentum. Her fame as a novelist increased with the success of *To the Lighthouse*, which was published in May 1927. In the latter half of the year (when *Kew Gardens* was being reborn) she was "struggling to write a continuation of *The Common Reader*" (Alexander 154) and gleefully and furiously writing her "biography" of Vita Sackville-West, *Orlando*. She records that the fall of 1927 is associated with her new writing above all: "This I suppose is the backbone of my autumn — Orlando" (*Diary* 3, 164, 11/20/27).

⁴⁷ Significantly, Bell begins contemplating illustration projects at about the same time that Fry's article on book illustration was republished (1926). She most probably read it again in its anthologized form, for she was known to correct proofs for Fry's and Clive Bell's publishing efforts.

⁴⁸ Thanks to Jeannette Osthus for pointing out to me that Woolf will probably be present during this conversation between Leonard Woolf and Bell, since she asks Bell to schedule a visit for the three of them together.

Woolf could not have been completely unaware of the Press' activities, however, so it might be more than a coincidence that her plans for *Orlando* resemble the edition of *Kew Gardens* that was in progress at the time. She writes to Vita Sackville-West that "Orlando will be a little book, with pictures and a map or two" (*Letters* 3, 430, 10/13/27). By the time *Orlando* is published in 1928, it is a much bigger book than she had imagined. Nonetheless, its status as an illustrated book is quite possibly affected by the planning for *Kew Gardens*.

Planning the book is all that actually happened in-house; the Woolfs hired out for the type composition and printing. Woolf's usual roles in the Press — writing and typesetting — therefore did not apply to this reprint. She was again "useless" for the production of the third edition (as she notes in her diary that she was for printing off the first edition, discussed above). In general at this point, moreover, Leonard Woolf features much more prominently than Virginia Woolf in the day-to-day workings of the Press, as recorded in Richard Kennedy's memoir of his tenure there starting in 1928 (*A Boy at The Hogarth Press*).

It is Leonard Woolf, then, who arranges the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, and who plays a liaison between Bell and the prominent London engraver, Herbert Reiach, who was hired to print the book. Leonard Woolf writes a letter to Reiach to establish the procedures they will follow; he indicates that Bell had full aesthetic control over the volume. The printer's work would be approved at least by him, and maybe by others as well. He writes,

I have discussed the matter with the artist as we arranged. I think the best way to proceed is that you should first set and send us proofs which we will correct. You will then send us a revise, at least

four sets, pulled on good paper in final form. The artist will paste these up with her design to make complete pages from which you will be able to make blocks. The text and design will be printed on one side of the page only. I enclose a sample of paper which will do quite well for this book. (8/27/27, in Osthus, appendix; see fig. B.14.)

Who is included in the “we” who will correct the proofs? Though the most immediate antecedent in the letter is the pair of Leonard Woolf and Vanessa Bell, the word also stands for The Hogarth Press as a business entity. In that case, “we” could mean Leonard and/or Virginia Woolf. Since Woolf wrote the words, she might want to ensure the precision of the proofs. Bell would clearly have a stake in correcting the proofs; she would know which words’ placement would need to be changed in order to conform better to her designs. In any case, Leonard Woolf positions himself as an active party in the project: he supplies the paper (though it is impossible to tell whether he or Bell chose it). Leonard Woolf has already been in consultation with Bell: his instruction to Reiach to print “on one side of the page only” is the type of direction he would relay from Bell the designer.

This procedure is slightly different from that which Diane Gillespie imagines for this book. In the absence of communication about this project between the Woolfs and Bell in their published and unpublished letters (Gillespie 125), Gillespie speculates that after one or both of the Woolfs divided the story into pages, “Bell must have produced her designs for these textual units, and then Herbert Reiach . . . set the type within each design” (125). The letter from Leonard Woolf proves that Reiach did not have the final say in the layout of each page; instead, Bell arranged the type with her illustrations.

A detailed examination of the pages of this edition reveals Bell's hand at work. On the fourteenth page (see fig. B.15.), the lines of type sometimes dip into the right border; the exactness of the interaction between image and type comes from Bell's adjustments and not from the printer's typesetting. The lines are not bluntly cut off; they taper to rounded or sketchy ends, which shows that Bell did not merely paste the words into place over the illustrations. Also, on the fourth page, Bell draws around the words. For instance, a tree limb grows out of a blank space left at the end of a paragraph. The placement weaves in thematically: Simon asks Eleanor if she ever thinks of the past, and upon mention of this word, the branch begins to grow like reminiscences from the seed of a single memory (see fig. B.6.). The branch also leaves an open margin above and below to indicate the characters' imaginative travels into other times in their lives.

On the other hand, as Gillespie notes, there are pages that have jarring sections of blank space. The type on the eighteenth and twentieth pages seems to end prematurely, though the spaces after the ending phrases could be interpreted as significant pauses.

On the eighteenth page, the blank space follows the young man's curtailment of Trissie's wide-ranging fantasies (see fig. B.16.).⁴⁹ As the young couple walks along with the vague goal of finding a place to have tea, Trissie loses sight of this goal as she thinks about other possibilities and places. Woolf says she has "the oddest thrill of excitement in her voice" at this

⁴⁹ This action is not merely a reassertion of male dominance; on the third page, Eleanor "bore on with greater purpose" than her husband, Simon, who was "strolling carelessly . . . for he wanted to go on with his thoughts." Patriarchal gender dynamics do manifest, however, in the fact that Simon can continue musing uninterrupted while Trissie cannot; Simon chooses when to emerge from his reverie.

moment, but the thrill of letting her thoughts wander seems to be cut short by the young man's direction. She walks along,

. . . looking vaguely round and letting herself be drawn on down the grass path, trailing her parasol, turning her head this way and that way, forgetting her tea, wishing to go down there and then down there, remembering orchids and cranes among wild flowers, a Chinese pagoda and a crimson-crested bird; but he bore her on.

The abrupt phrase after the semicolon is followed by the large, ominously incontrovertible blank space. It is in that space that her thoughts will not continue; it contains all the places where she will not go, now that the young man is guiding her toward the tea that he is "impatient" (seventeenth page) to have. The story does not say whether the young man's will is an imposition or a welcome direction, but either way, the space stands for the flights of fancy that Trissie can no longer follow.

On the twentieth page, the empty space follows a sentence about the people who collapse in the heat; their bodies "lay huddled upon the ground, but their voices went wavering from them as if they were flames lolling from the thick waxen bodies of candles." Bell's gatherings of small marks in six droplike semicircles, along the bottom margin, illustrate this dual sense of weight and rising sound (see fig. B.17.). More marks collect at the bottom of each drop, as if gathered by gravity, and thin lines of marks rise up from the semicircles on either side of the page. Though these vertical lines look as though they could delineate margins for additional words that could appear between them, the image more fully connects with the written text because the lines are rising in empty space. The marks without words between them seem like the voices that are rising through the air in the park; the blank space takes on the substance of the humid atmosphere.

These analyses, though plausible, could also rationalize page designs that do not look as smooth and well-planned as other examples would lead us to expect. Bell was working in the tradition of the Omega Workshops, an arts-and-crafts collective that emphasized the joy in creation more highly than precision in craft.⁵⁰ Moreover, The Hogarth Press was known for its sloppy printing. As late as 1930, Woolf writes an arch letter to an unidentified patron that a handprinted copy of *On Being Ill* will certainly fall below all acceptable standards for printed books. "I agree that the colour is uneven, the letters are not always clear, the spacing inaccurate, and the word 'campion' should read 'companion'" (qtd. in Rosenbaum 16). The third edition of *Kew Gardens* could well be another carelessly joyful expression, but it is more likely that Bell composed this edition as attentively as she completed her paintings.

D. The integration of elements into a visual whole in the 1927 *Kew Gardens*

By Leonard Woolf's account, Bell directed the visual composition of the 1927 *Kew Gardens*. She integrated her images with bits of her sister's story to create a uniquely sensible arrangement for each page. The illustrations are not opposite pages of words; they are integrated around and between the words. The two elements are like the visual warp and the woof of an interwoven textual fabric.⁵¹

Bell designed an overall look for this book that would foster this general visual harmony. Only the rectos of each leaf contain printing — the

⁵⁰ There are even accounts of painted Omega chairs falling apart, though some commentators say that these rumors exaggerate the Omega's carefree creative spirit.

⁵¹ The etymology of the word "text," as Jerome McGann has noted in *The Textual Condition*, is related to the participle for weaving. (quote?)

versos of every page spread remain empty. This design lets the mind absorb one visual-verbal expression at a time, and there is space for the eye to rest before taking in new information. This practice is more common in books of prints than in literary works, but it makes sense in this edition which belongs to both categories. The design amplifies the function of each opening spread as a unique and unitary word-image composition. To further this effect, Bell omits page numbers and thereby removes the customary intrusion of numerical signs or sequences.⁵² Though this intrusion is slight, the absence of numbers allows a reader's attention to focus more deeply on the remaining signs.

The type in the 1927 *Kew Gardens* becomes part of the visual composition because of its size and spacing. It is considerably larger than the type in any other Hogarth Press book, and in most books of the time. It resembles, in fact, the type in a children's book, just as having an illustration on every page is common to that genre.⁵³ In the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, as in children's books, the large type increases the visual weight of the words, so that the type is better capable of balancing the images without being overwhelmed visually. As book designer Jan Tschichold suggests, "It is particularly difficult to find a suitable text block outline which agrees with bold woodcuts . . . A larger size of type may sometimes help to overcome the dilemma" (121). In making this change, Bell balances typography and illustration in a way that answers Roger Fry's 1926 critique of André Derain's illustrations for a book of Guillaume Apollinaire's poetry. Fry writes in

⁵² To retain the lack of page numbers *per se*, I refer to the pages of this volume by their place in the sequence rather than by an ordinal number.

⁵³ Woolf had asked Bell to illustrate a children's book in 1926 (see *Letters* 3:266), so this style may have been on their minds.

“Book Illustration and a Modern Example” that “The opportunity for what might have been a completely successful case of modern book production was just missed here. With so remarkable and original and also so dominating an illustrator as Derain the typography should have been adjusted to the colour and weight of the artist’s woodcuts” (226-27).⁵⁴ Though Bell is not using woodcuts, her illustrations and Derain’s have a similar weight and boldness.⁵⁵

In addition to increasing the type size, Bell balances the type with the images by requesting unusually large blank spaces between the words.⁵⁶ This violates usual practices of type arrangement. As Ruari McLean notes in his overview of modern book design, published some twenty years later,

An absolute principle of good typography . . . is that the words should be close together (not farther apart than the width of the letter ‘i’), since one of the virtues of a page of type is in its closely woven texture, which it will lose if the words are too far apart. (*Modern* 34)

This principle of type composition is geared towards unillustrated pages; if Bell had retained a “closely woven texture” in her type there would be two competing visual textures on the page. Her illustrations are open, not tight; blanks in the type area reinforce the relationships between words and images. The decision to use plenty of white space between the printed words and lines keeps Bell’s bold lines from overpowering the typescript.

When Bell makes the words of the title part of her illustrations instead of leaving them in typescript, the duality of printed words and

⁵⁴ I believe that Fry’s ideas in this article are central to Bell’s working method in this volume; I will discuss his theories in section E.2.

⁵⁵ The two artists were friends; they spent time together during Bell’s many extended stays in France. Derain also participated in Roger Fry’s exhibitions in London.

⁵⁶ This may have been Herbert Reich’s decision, or a decision that Bell and Reich made collaboratively.

“painterly” images is dissolved. The title page of *Kew Gardens* reproduces Bell’s brush and ink drawing of the words (see fig. B.18.), with two painted rows of dots that keep the page from being completely word-based. The first page of the story, likewise, includes a hand-lettered title in the same style as the writing on the title page (but perhaps done in a different medium; the lines in the letters are more uneven than those on the title page). Drawn words are more transgressive than largely printed words; though the latter makes words move closer to being imagistic, the goal of that move is to make them balance the images better: the binary opposition remains. The painted letter, on the other hand, brings words into the image’s domain; the modes mix. Though all letterforms can be considered artistic expressions, Bell’s inclusion of the words within the first page’s illustration blends word and image in a way that calls their distinction further into question (see fig. B.3.).

A counter-example of another book that balances blacks and whites on the page until words and images are confused is William Morris’ Kelmscott edition of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. This book, considered a masterpiece of Morris’ Kelmscott Press (1889-1896), matches a heavy typeface with dense illustrations. The result, in contrast to Bell’s *Kew Gardens*, is a book that is notoriously difficult to read. Though Morris aficionados tend to overlook legibility in favor of visual pleasure, critics generally agree on this ill effect of Morris’ design. As Douglas McMurtrie, one of the foremost historians of the book, summarizes,

Morris books are neither legible in their type matter nor convenient for handling in their format. They . . . are, first, exercises in decorative design and only secondarily, books intended for reading; that even if one endeavors to read them, the mind is

distracted from the sense of the author by spots or masses of decoration so insistent in area and color as to completely overshadow the text.

Even the most enthusiastic admirers of William Morris must admit that there is much of truth in these criticisms. (460)

In Kelmscott Press books, the type is illegible because the words cannot be visually distinguished from the images. Though Morris designed his Kelmscott fonts after fifteenth-century typefaces whose classic design he believed would be eminently legible, the typeface is so unusual in late nineteenth-century printing that it functions as an illustration as much as the images themselves. The thickness of the lines and the relative distribution of lights and darks is similar in both modes (see fig. B.19.). Morris' attempt to unite all elements in a visual whole creates a book whose function as a literary text is overwhelmed by the visual appearance of the pages.

The fact that Morris' work grows out of the Arts and Crafts Movement can help account for this bias towards the visual. Morris himself was a craftsman: he was known for his fabrics, interior design, wallpaper patterns, and stained glass as much as for his ornamented Kelmscott Press books. In this context, his books make more sense as crafted objects than as works of literature to be read. Morris admits as much when he claims that an illustrated book could potentially produce a work of art that is "second to none, save a fine building duly decorated, or a fine piece of literature" ("Ideal" 73). Literary quality remains separate from Morris' vision of fine printing, so it is not surprising that his pages are illegible.

Though Bell had also made crafts, and had been involved with Roger Fry's Omega Workshops,⁵⁷ her edition of *Kew Gardens* is much easier to read than any Kelmscott edition. Perhaps because she had been so involved with the writers of the Bloomsbury circle, she pays close attention to the literary import of each page. She makes sure that the words can be read easily, by increasing their type size and adding blank space, and she divides the story into pages according to the sections suggested by different passages. While book illustrations by definition attend to the words' significance, Bell expands the meaning of specific sections of the story. Still, it is common while reading this edition to be arrested by the sheer spectacle of a page.

The most significant example of Bell's skill in simultaneously dramatizing the story and creating a visual impact occurs on the thirteenth page. On this page, the image of a flower rises up in between the printed words into the middle of the page (see fig. B.20.). This composition, which comes about halfway through the book, stands out just as the marbled page is "le plus étonnant" of *Tristram Shandy's* visual games.

At first, the visual surprise of this page makes it impossible to proceed: the words of the text become less important than the overall visual impression of the word-image composition. Even if one returns to reading the words, the carnation calls attention to itself again when the sentences straddle the blossom. The entire page is suffused with the image of this flower, as if its blossom is exuding scent. In part, this continual return to the visual happens because Bell has broken a convention of book illustration: usually images do not penetrate the print area. As Diane Gillespie quotes, "Pictures should never be allowed to interfere with legibility, whether by

⁵⁷ See section G., below, for a discussion of the Omega Workshops.

dividing a line of text into two parts, or by encroaching on the type itself" (Williamson 272; qtd. in Gillespie 334, n34). Bell's image takes on a more powerful role than conventional illustrations: the thirteenth page commits both of these "errors" in order to perform the action described in this passage of the story.

The part of the story that appears on this page narrates this very switching back and forth between synchronic visual impressions and diachronic linguistic perception. "The ponderous woman"⁵⁸ stops walking and talking with her companion because she is arrested by the sight of a flowerbed. "So the heavy woman came to a ~ standstill opposite the / oval shaped flower ~ bed," just as a reader of this page looks at the carnation in its middle instead of continuing to read about the women's conversation. Fittingly, then, the woman "ceased even / to pretend to listen to ~ what the other woman / was saying. She stood ~ there letting the words fall / over her, ~ swaying the top part / of her body ~ slowly backwards / and ~ forwards, ~ looking at the / flowers. ~ " Likewise, the reader stops "pretending" to read what the women are saying, and instead looks at the flowers. "The flowers" include the printed words as well as the illustrations; all elements on the page are part of the arresting visual composition that grows from the pressedbed.

The description of the woman's actions also demonstrates the process of reading without linguistic comprehension. Just as the woman "sway[s] the top part / of her body ~ slowly backwards / and ~ forwards," the reader's eyes (at the top part of the body) sway back and forth, and the illustration at

⁵⁸ Her epithet connotes her contemplative bent along with her stoutness. Her heaviness also weaves into this page thematically, since the words address the idea that words fall down the page (or readers' eyes follow them down the page) as if they have real weight.

the bottom makes this motion happen more slowly than usual. Like the woman, the reader is “looking at the / flowers” — taking in what the words are saying and how the images look. The illustration reinforces the disruption of the reading habit: sentences are interrupted (shown in this quotation with slashes for line breaks and tildes for places where the eye must skip over a visual image in order to continue reading) so that we, like the woman, are continuously drawn back to the image of the flower. The end of the “looking at the / flowers ~ ” sentence is followed by a small image of a flower; it is a fitting punctuation mark.

The activities at the beginning of this page also become a metaphor for reading: she “looked through the patterns of falling words.” If we look at this page in its context in the book, it comes after a page in which flowers appear at the top margin. Here, the flowers fall around the side margins (like words) and then rise up in the middle. For us as readers, words only become patterns when we look instead of read. In this page of *Kew Gardens*, it is hard to resist looking at the words towards the bottom as a pattern, because they interweave so deliberately with the flower images.

Generally words can be said to be “falling” because we read them from top to bottom; our eyes fall down the page as we proceed. The flower symbolizes the ponderous woman’s being stunned (by visual impressions) into perception, and perhaps even into a sense of gratitude at the fact of being able to perceive. The perception yields a new lens through which she can see: “She saw [the flowers] / as a sleeper waking from a heavy sleep sees a brass / candlestick reflecting the light in an unfamiliar way, and / closes his eyes ~ and opens them, / and seeing the ~ brass candlestick again, / finally starts wide ~ awake and stares at the candle- / stick with all his ~

powers.” The new perception both stops her “progress” and makes her better able to appreciate what is before her eyes.

The effect of stopping in the middle of everything to sink into a new perceptual experience is like Woolf’s moments of being, or what I have elsewhere called her moments of reading (Schiff 178, 189). Most of the time, we are like sleepers: our perceptions are dulled by the “cotton wool” of daily existence, but occasionally a vision gives way to a surprising apprehension of the “pattern” behind all expression (Woolf, *Moments* 70-71). The effect of these pages, therefore, is not one of interruption that creates a larger sense of progress, as in *Tristram Shandy*. Rather, words and images are embroidered into a tapestry whose visual composition arrests the mind as well as the eye.

This summary of the woman’s/reader’s experience describes reading the 1927 *Kew Gardens* as a whole. The pages are inevitably riddled with images that demand attention, though none of them address questions of looking as directly as this one. The effect and function of this unique poetics of word and image are reflected in a statement made by Virginia Woolf herself. This is one of the very few references to the third edition of *Kew Gardens* in her writings. It appears on August 20, 1928, about nine months after the volume’s publication. She was writing a second thank-you letter to Ethel Sands who, along with Nan Hudson, had decided to send her a desk just when Woolf was giving up hope of having one. She is so overflowing with gratitude that she implies that letters to them will inevitably return to this one subject.

I can’t write to you—thats [*sic*] one of the ill effects of giving presents—because every sentence bursts into thanks and praise, which is against the natural tendency of my temperament. Its [*sic*] as

if you had to put a carnation in the middle of every picture. So I cant
[sic] tell you about the party where Lydia cried—but must end—
A million thanks and love to Nan and Ethel. (*Letters* 3: 520)

The image of the carnation⁵⁹ interrupts the activity of writing the letter, and the activity of writing in general. Just as visual images interrupt the sequence of plot in *Tristram Shandy*, the carnation (symbolizing gratitude) prevents Woolf from narrating the events of “the party where Lydia cried.” Instead, she writes, she “must end” the letter; production cannot continue in the presence of an overwhelming feeling. The visual image halts the outpouring of words or makes them saturated with a single tone: the visual interrupts the verbal.

But the story of the party is not a time-bound plot like the adventures of Tristram: it is a scene “*where* Lydia cried.” It is therefore fitting that Woolf writes, in her letter to Ethel Sands, that the interrupting carnation is “in the middle of every *picture*” — not in the middle of every *sentence*. Narratives are articulated in terms of scenes, not stories. As Woolf writes in her diary on 4 November 1918, “I keep thinking of different ways to manage my scenes; conceiving endless possibilities; seeing life, as I walk about the streets, an immense opaque block of material to be conveyed by me into its equivalent of language” (*Diary* 1:214). Life is not contained in time; it is a “block of material” that must be represented in a verbal medium in a way that most closely approximates a picture.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ The flower on the thirteenth page looks more like a carnation than other flowers in the book.

⁶⁰ It is perhaps no surprise, then, that all editions of *Kew Gardens* published during Woolf's lifetime were illustrated with Bell's woodcuts, and that Woolf put a high priority on illustrating the first books from the Hogarth Press. Bell's block prints aptly accompany Woolf's “block[s] of material.”

Ekphrastic description⁶¹ in literature is coded feminine, notes Steve Baker, because it interrupts the masculine-coded narrative sequence to sketch out a spatial domain. It is also considered ornamental to the plot, except in writing like Woolf's in which the "plot" is simply an aggregate of scenes. So while Sterne plays with narrative "progress" by creating many different plots and time frames, Virginia Woolf uses ekphrastic writing to make plot and time irrelevant. Woolf's words can be coded feminine, because their visual descriptiveness resists being constrained by a temporal sequence (see section A. for discussion).

In the thirteenth page, Bell's images can be coded masculine, because they refuse to stay subservient to the words. Throughout the book, she uses images to create a visual vocabulary: dead leaves are represented by areas of cross-hatched lines, and insects in flight are shown as spirals. Though most pages have an arch over the top margin, indicating the sky over the Gardens, the margin of the fifteenth page arches downward at the bottom (see fig. B.21.). This expresses the final action of the page: "The couple stood still on the edge of the flower bed, and together pressed the end of her parasol deep down into the soft earth."

Thus the 1927 *Kew Gardens* challenges the gendered divisions of word and image that Lessing had so carefully codified. Bell's visual embroidering of these two modes of pictorialism — literary and imagistic — brings the two extremes of his theory into a more complex relation.

⁶¹ For a full discussion of ekphrasis in Woolf's writing, see section A.

E. New dialectical relations

1. *Word and image*

The thirteenth page calls a truce in an often-rehearsed theoretical battle between the word and the image. Its composition of embroidered pictorialisms makes obsolete Lessing's rigid separation of the two modes, and reinstates a thread of the interreferentiality of word and image in classical writings.⁶² *Kew Gardens* also challenges the tendency, in writings on book illustration, to emphasize either the word or the image, or at least to separate the two modes. In the past century, Lessing's separations have not proved maintainable, even when critics veer to one side of the opposition or the other. In part, the shared context of the book structure makes a closer relation inevitable, but twentieth-century formalist (and later structuralist) experiments create a common ground on which the two modes can coexist harmoniously.

Stéphane Mallarmé's writings were known to the Bloomsbury group: Roger Fry translated many of his poems by 1918 and approached the Woolfs about publishing a book of them soon after (Fry, *Letters* 484-86).⁶³ His thoughts on illustration are a good example of the impossibility of separating words from images.

⁶² For a discussion of word-image relations in Aristotle and Horace, and the opposition of these modes in Lessing's *Laocoön*, see the section B. of the Introduction.

⁶³ The book was supposedly published in 1936 (Sutton 484, n3; Nicolson 439, n1), but it does not appear in J. H. Woolmer's exhaustive *Checklist of the Hogarth Press, 1917-1946*. Letters to the Woolfs in 1921 indicate that the book is nearing completion (Fry, *Letters* 508, 514, 516), but the project was delayed. A letter from Woolf, on 3 October 1922, was supposed to be "a bait to urge Roger Fry to complete the work" (Nicolson, 2:565, n2): Woolf writes, "I may point out that we've sold several copies of Mallarmé by Roger Fry" (*Letters* 2:565).

In response to an inquiry, Mallarmé writes that “I am for — no illustration”⁶⁴ because the word has a spiritual power to call forth all aspects of life. As Mallarmé writes in “The Book, Spiritual Instrument,” “words le[a]d back to their origin, which is the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, so gifted with infinity that they will finally consecrate language. Everything is caught up in their endless variations and then rises out of them” (82).⁶⁵ Illustrations are not necessary to create any kind of reader’s response; moreover, they deprive the reader of the joy of participating in the magical evocation.

This last assertion depends upon the meaning of the rest of Mallarmé’s sentence on why he does not favor illustration. It could read, as Miller translates, “I am for — no illustration, everything a book evokes having to pass into the mind or spirit of the reader” (67). This translation enables Miller to conclude that the illustration would interfere with the words’ ability to pass directly into the reader’s mind or spirit. His conclusion positions Mallarmé as making an argument about words and images belonging to time and space:

A book, it seems, has only so much magic energy. An illustration will drain this power off, leaving the book dead letter, short-circuited by the superior power of the illustration to make something present. The word evokes. The illustration presents. (67)

Miller’s conclusion is caught in Lessing’s dichotomy: the word “evokes” through giving hints of information over time. The image, in contrast, “presents” information all at once. This leaves no mystery in the text: the

⁶⁴ “Je suis pour — aucune illustration, tout ce qu’évoque un livre devant se passer dans l’esprit du lecteur” (“Illustré” 878).

⁶⁵ See my discussion of Bell’s illustration for the first page of *Kew Gardens*, in section B.

illustration, being an uncomplicatedly synchronic and spatial presentation of information, cannot work the magic of a diachronic verbal text.

But Miller assumes that Mallarmé is equating the functions of word and image, and he imagines that the illustration would be communicating to the reader instead of the words. A shift in the translation, and a consideration of other writings by Mallarmé, reveals an alternative interpretation of Mallarmé's bias against illustration. The verb "*se passer*" can mean "to take place," so Mallarmé's key sentence could read, "I am for — no illustration, everything a book evokes having to *take place* in the mind or spirit of the reader."⁶⁶ It is not that the illustration has a "superior power . . . to make something present" to a reader; rather, the illustration can distract the reader from imaginatively creating an interpretation from the words alone. The word "evokes" an experience that must be fully fleshed out, made "present" or actual, by a reader's imagination.

Mallarmé is afraid that this imaginative act would be jeopardized by the illustration.⁶⁷ The image would compete with the words, and the author would no longer wield full power to evoke all manner of experience in the reader.⁶⁸ His vision of this power is totalizing: "all earthly existence must ultimately be contained in a book" ("Spiritual" 80).⁶⁹ If everything

⁶⁶ Thanks to Suzanne Verderber for reminding me of this meaning of the word.

⁶⁷ See also Miller's discussion of Henry James' resistance to illustration, 68-73, 97.

⁶⁸ This dynamic resembles Freud's concept of castration anxiety, which often results in a fear of the feminine and a wish to obliterate it: "no illustration." The closest women get to Stéphane Mallarmé's books is in an analogy: Mallarmé believed that the uncut pages of a printed book were like a virgin's flesh, and that these "virginal foldings of the book are unfortunately exposed to the kind of sacrifice which caused the crimson-edged tomes of ancient times to bleed. I mean that they invite the paper-knife, which stakes out claims to possession of the book" ("Spiritual" 83). This physically violent image contrasts with the spiritual tone of his writing, or perhaps that spirituality is bought at the expense of respecting the physical plane.

⁶⁹ One could also call this vision of power oppressively patriarchal, if one accepts the gendered separation of word and image.

should be inscribed in discourse, then there is indeed no place for the image; Mallarmé could not admit illustrations into his version of the ideal book.

The irony of Mallarmé's theory is that his most famous poem, "Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard," has imagistic qualities even without a proper accompanying "illustration" (see fig. B.22.). The words spread across each page in cascades that resemble the scattering dice of the title. Mallarmé's own discussion of his poem exposes the contradiction, though Miller never mentions the poem and therefore sidesteps the irony.

[T]he work of art—which is unique or should be—must provide illustrations. A tremendous burst of greatness, of thought, or of emotion, contained in a sentence printed in large type, with one gradually descending line to a page, should keep the reader breathless throughout the book and summon forth his powers of excitement. Around this would be smaller groups of secondary importance, commenting on the main sentence or derived from it, like a scattering of ornaments. ("Spiritual" 83)

The arrangement of words is imagistic, and the smaller words act as decorations that adorn the large print of the main thought.⁷⁰ The reader uses all of this visual and verbal information together to create an interpretation, for "in the instance of reading, it is possible to 'read' one thing, and, at the same time, to 'watch' or sense another" (Kravis 161). Thus critics note that a reader of this poem "automatically 'grades' the words, applying shape and chiaroscuro to the sense he understands, as to the images he sees" (Kravis 220). Those images are the words and lines of print, which are "sometimes trailing across the paper like a drawing of the wake of a ship, sometimes grouped together like black dots on white dice, and sometimes more widely scattered like black stars in a white sky" (Chadwick

⁷⁰ The ornament is a particularly femininized type of decoration or illustration. See Steiner, "Postmodernism and the Ornament." Kant thought that ornament sometimes "injures genuine beauty" (62): like patriarchally defined women, they are non-essential, yet decorative.

13). The words on Mallarmé's pages, like those of Bell's *Kew Gardens*, have imagistic qualities in themselves (as discussed at the beginning of section D., above).⁷¹ Thus Mallarmé's wish to banish the illustration from the verbal realm is, by his own evidence, impossible.

Later in the twentieth century, long after the publication of the 1927 *Kew Gardens*, Hélène Cixous, argues for the illustration's power to supplement and "open" the written text. As Steve Baker describes Hélène Cixous' idea, "she suggests that visual imagery, and drawing in particular, might in a certain sense better allow us to get 'between the lines' of the artificially complete, 'finished' and orderly discourse of the *propre*" (254). In Cixous' version, the feminine illustration presents information that words are incapable of communicating, because images are not bound by the phallogocentrism of linguistic discourse.

While Cixous frames verbal language as a (masculinist) discourse that closes down interpretive options, literary theorist Wolfgang Iser claims that "gaps" in literary discourse already allow readers to determine their own meanings. Iser writes, "Indeed, it is only through inevitable omission that a story gains its dynamism. Thus whenever the flow is interrupted and we are led off in unexpected directions, the opportunity is given to us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections—for filling the gaps left by the text itself" (280). These gaps could be considered part of a masculinist discourse of control, since they are created or left by authors, but

⁷¹ Marcel Broodthaers brings this aspect of Mallarmé's work to the forefront in his 1969 edition of "Un coup de dés," in which he draws black rectangles (on tracing paper) to match the exact layout of Mallarmé's original text (see fig. B.23.). As Johanna Drucker remarks about this artist's book, "Broodthaers . . . elevates the structure of the work to a concept worthy of study in its own right, thus acknowledging Mallarmé's own fetishistic attention to this aspect of his work" (*Century* 115).

neither the authors nor the words themselves can determine the interpretive result of a reader's encounters with gaps of information or changes in style.

Cixous encounters a contradiction that seems to be the opposite of Mallarmé's: while he uses illustrations, she uses language. She holds out the possibility, however, for language to function in a more open way: the French feminist category of *écriture féminine* also outlines a way for linguistic discourse to step outside the realm of the *propre*. (See section A. for a discussion of Virginia Woolf's writing style in "Kew Gardens," which could be described as *écriture féminine*.) Cixous' description of open language applies to many modernist texts. Moreover, modernist language has already often been called feminine: "For some early modernist writers and their readers, "making it new" was synonymous with making it feminine" (Felber 23).

At first, Mallarmé and Cixous seem to hold opposite positions — one prefers words and the other images — but they both value texts that engage the reader in the process of interpretation. They also, for all their polarity, end up answering their own extreme positions with counterexamples. They are thus good examples of the "composing or settling (of differences)."

Another common thread in Mallarmé and Cixous is the relentless opposition of words and images, and their partnering in book illustration. If these modes are indeed considered masculine and feminine, their combination in book illustration symbolically enacts a compulsory heterosexual coupling.⁷² Whether Mallarmé derides the illustration or Cixous argues for its redemptive action, the image is always coded feminine

⁷² See Rich 51 for an articulation of this ideology.

and paired with a written text, which is consistently coded masculine. The relations between the two, moreover, reinscribe an ideology of masculine domination. As the editor of *The Studio* writes in the 1928 publication, *Modern Book Production*, "Illustrations, speaking generally, have been made subservient to typography" (1). This construction preserves a rigid power dynamic between the two, and it forbids the possibility of the image to gain power or the word to signify outside of time-bound discourse. In short, the twentieth-century ascent of the image and the category of *écriture féminine* can not be accounted for in many contemporary treatments of word-image relations.

Writers on book illustration from Lessing through the mid-twentieth century tend to oppose word and image as masculine and feminine codes.⁷³ While I recognize the utility of this symbolic framework, I want to be careful to preserve a separation between the categories of masculinity and femininity and their physical embodiments of male and female. Though the two writers I have analyzed happen to be a male and a female who privilege the masculine language and the feminine illustration, respectively, I do not mean to imply that their theoretical positions are biologically determined. This perspective would not last in any case, for their positions quickly lose their opposition and mutual exclusivity upon closer inspection: each extreme contains the other within it.

At this juncture, still, I must note that most of the people writing about and producing book illustration and design in the early twentieth

⁷³ See Mitchell, *Iconology* 109-13 for an explication of Lessing's unstated gender coding.

century are men.⁷⁴ Michael Rock and Susan Sellars state the case even more generally by removing historical limitation. They note that while the history of book design “claims to be non-ideological and value neutral, it is a fact that design has been controlled and produced by men” (qtd. in Baker 252). This generalization is not entirely accurate: in the first three decades of the century, there are few female bookmakers, though those few usually work in conjunction with men. Sonia Delaunay-Terk, for example, collaborated with Blaise Cendrars to create a famous fold-out book, *La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France* (Paris 1913, see Drucker, *Century* 50-51). Some page designs featured in the 1928 edition of *The Studio*, which collects and comments on modern book production, include work by female illustrators, binders, or book designers, though these women consistently collaborate with male authors, book binders, or illustrators. The gendered division of labor becomes significant in light of the unusual fact that in the 1927 *Kew Gardens*, both words and images are produced by women.⁷⁵

Though images are generally considered feminine, they can also be gendered according to their production methods, as outlined by J. Hillis Miller. As with the gendering of word and image, however, the division of printing processes into gendered categories soon breaks down under scrutiny. Miller’s theory goes awry because he assumes that all signification in book production is created by “fissure.” He ignores the mechanics of

⁷⁴ As anecdotal evidence, H el ene Cixous’ writings on illustration were unfamiliar to me until I found Steve Baker’s references to them.

⁷⁵ Leonard Woolf and Herbert Reich played the facilitating roles of administrative liaison and hired printer, respectively. See section C., above.

printing and fails to examine the processes behind different techniques of producing images. Most importantly, he conflates the initial production of the visual image and the process by which that image is reproduced on the page. The 1927 *Kew Gardens* uses many different modes of production; its prints (and all prints, as we shall see) are “masculine/feminine.”

Miller argues that an image, like a piece of writing, is made of semiotic marks produced by the masculine-coded act of carving a “fissure” or a “furrow” in a surface. He dissolves the differentiation between words and images by relying on Ruskin’s idea of inscription: “Ruskin makes the distinction problematic by relating both words and pictures to the primordial material act of scratching a surface to make it a sign” (Miller 75). He then argues that “Writing, the engraving of pictures in wood or steel . . . are versions of the same act of making incisive marks on matter that creates signs and their significances” (Miller 93).

In early twentieth-century letterpress printing, the word is no longer inscribed on the page through direct writing: inked metal sorts make impressions on the paper. Thus the process of printing words still conforms to Miller’s theory of fissures. The process of reproducing illustrations in book form, however, is not so easily accounted for. Engravings, a common method of book illustration at this time, creates marks on the paper through absences on the plate; they do not inscribe fissures in the paper.

While it is true that the lines of an engraving are carved into a metal plate, this fissure is not identical with a mark. The engraver inscribes a line that later will reproduce the imagistic mark. The fissure created is only an absence in which the ink will lie. During printing, ink that lodges in the fissures is drawn out by pressure, moisture, and suction. The mark on the

paper is made, therefore, from a recessed line, not by a protruding line. This process could be coded feminine, while the act of engraving the plate could reflect Miller's masculine coding of the primordial markmaking.

In a woodcut or linocut, on the other hand, the parts of the block that protrude do produce the marks, but this is the result of the artist creating "fissures" everywhere *except* where a printed black mark is to be transferred to the paper. In some cases, such as in Vanessa Bell's armchair woodcut for "A Haunted House" in *Monday or Tuesday* (1921, see fig. B.24.), this absence becomes the white "mark" in a black ground. In other cases, such as Bell's first woodcuts for *Kew Gardens*, (1919, see figs. B.2., B.25.), the white and black areas can function either as positive or negative elements. This is the reverse of Miller's formulation: the artist's effort produces an area that will lack ink. Still, the printing process involves impressing the untouched wood into the paper; this produces Miller's masculine furrow. Thus the production process could be coded masculine, while the creation of the original image could be coded feminine.

While the 1927 *Kew Gardens* is produced by engraving, Bell uses different production techniques to compose her images before they are made into engraved "blocks" (as Leonard Woolf writes) or plates. Most of the lines seem to be from woodcuts, though she would have had to carve much wood away. (Still, she would not have had to carve out the middle of every block; since she was pasting together her images with the typesetter's words, she could have cut out and pasted together the type and the images.) Thus Bell was mainly carving absences — but the title page is clearly created with brushed letters instead of carved. Several of the pages also contain brushmarks where Bell darkened some of the lines to make them more

weighty. Even in the space of one page, she would combine different modes of illustration.

Bell's technique mixes the codes of masculine and feminine just as the 1927 *Kew Gardens* mixes words and images. Both appear on the page together, in a composition that makes sense as a visual whole. Later in the twentieth century, a theoretical discussion of the mixing of word and image becomes possible, without the domination of the masculine words or the recuperative championing of the feminine illustration. This new perspective can blithely rewrite the history of book design retroactively. In a catalogue essay for a Boston Museum exhibition called *The Artist and the Book, 1860-1960*, Philip Hofer writes, "Ideally, the illustrated book should be a harmonious combination of textual and pictorial elements, each significant, each of relatively equal importance" (qtd. in Bostick 61). This egalitarian perspective is facilitated, I believe, by an ideological framework that values the feminine more consistently than was common in early twentieth-century culture.⁷⁶

2. *Author and artist*

Once the word and the image have gained equal stature in the twentieth century, what is the nature of their relation? Roger Fry attempts to answer this question in his 1926 article, "Book Illustration and a Modern Example." This article, written originally for the *Burlington Magazine* and republished in Fry's anthology, *Transformations*, is the most important document on word-image relations to consider in relation to the 1927 *Kew*

⁷⁶ It is also in this context of seventies consciousness-raising that W. J. T. Mitchell was able to devise a theory of *Blake's Composite Art*, as he titles his book (1978).

Gardens. Bell almost undoubtedly read the article, as she was close with Fry⁷⁷ and was friends and colleagues with the people whose illustrations he critiques. Its principles map directly onto an analysis of Bell's edition; her decisions seem to grow from his challenges.

"Book illustration," Fry begins, "is a battle ground" (211). Word and image compete for attention, and though perhaps a common language of forms might someday be articulated, it is conceivable that words and images might never coexist happily in an illustrated book. In early twentieth-century England, a happy pairing was certainly a rare occurrence. As typographic historian Stanley Morison writes in 1927, "The collector will not find it easy to point to many English books of the past twenty years whose illustration and typography are agreeable to each other, and where the degree of artistic or technical excellence of both approximate to the best Paris work" (*Review* 14). Still, Fry does his best to create a standard for evaluating the success of book illustration. He concludes that the best illustrations acknowledge that word and image are separate yet related. He writes that "it may be possible to embroider the author's ideas or rather to execute variations on the author's theme which will not pretend to be one with the text, but rather, as it were, a running commentary, like marginal notes written by a reader" (213). In *Kew Gardens*, Bell's images embroider Woolf's text; this passage from Fry's article therefore contributes to the title for this chapter.

⁷⁷ Bell participated in Fry's Omega Workshops and in his Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition in 1912. She was Fry's lover for a time, and they maintained an artistic partnership as well as a close correspondence for decades. In addition, Bell was married to Clive Bell, who knew Fry from Cambridge, and they all socialized at Bloomsbury gatherings.

Instead of being bound into the author's frame of reference, a good illustration offers readers another way of looking at the words. The illustration is like a marginal gloss that all subsequent readers can see but are not required to read. Fry says that illustrations are better than marginalia, in fact, because they use a different symbolic system, so they are not as immediately distracting from the author's words. He writes that "of all . . . marginal commentators the draughtsman is the most discreet, for he is inaudible, he never puts an actual word into your head which might get confused with the words of the author" (213). Both the words and the images remain autonomous discourses and the author and artist retain independent signifying powers. When Fry says that an illustration can provide "commentary" for a written text, he implies that images can function as words, or that they at least have the same power as words.

But this independence creates the possibility for a conversation between the modes: the illustration signifies on its own behalf *and* comments on the words. This double function is easiest to achieve when the words of the text are already familiar to the reader. *Kew Gardens*, by the time Bell illustrated the third edition, was almost a decade old; Woolf's readers were either familiar with it already or familiar with more developed writings that Woolf had published in the interim. The story was perfectly suited for the kind of commentary that Fry describes; it was distant and familiar enough to withstand an illustrator's reinterpretations.

E. McKnight-Kauffer's illustrations of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which take up most of the article, are Fry's prime example of this strategy. Their modern lines contrast with the seventeenth-century origins of the text, but McKnight-Kauffer's symbolic designs correspond with

the quasi-mystical flavor that the *Anatomy* has for twentieth-century readers. Thus, Fry sums up, “while they remind us of the past they have the vitality of a contemporary creation” (222). The images point in many directions at once: at themselves as works of art, at themselves as parts of a page layout, at the author’s words as a visual reiteration of what is written, and at the author’s words as a visual commentary or counterstatement. Bell’s images perform all of these functions as well.

But *Kew Gardens* responds most directly to the last part of Fry’s article, in which he finds fault with his favorite book illustrations by Derain. While Fry believes McKnight-Kauffer’s images will look dated after some time, he says that “few modern book illustrations have seemed to me hitherto so stimulating as those executed some time before the war by M. Derain for “L’Enchanteur Pourrissant” of Guillaume Apollinaire” (224). Fry’s one complaint about this book is that “There has been no attempt at treating text and illustration as part of a single whole (226), a comment that reveals Fry’s conviction that indeed a formalist relation of word and image was possible. He recommends that “the typography should have been adjusted” to suit the bold lines of the woodcuts, a move that Bell makes in her edition (see section D. above).

Perhaps Fry’s ideas about the common ground uniting word and image arose from his translation work; he associated the two activities in his writing. In a letter to Marie Mauron, in which he discusses his preference for Derain’s woodcuts, Fry links the activity of translating Woolf’s early work with illustration. On 31 December 1919, he writes,

I’ve seen some woodcuts by your friend Joux, but they are not for me: I think they are clever and derivative. No, for me there have never been more beautiful woodcuts than those by Derain for

L'Enchanteur pourrisant by Guillaume Apollinaire (a poet I do not esteem, moreover). In Paris I made the acquaintance of Edmond Jaloux, who is interested in the translation of English books . . . in the chapter he showed me he had often gone wrong. It requires the collaboration of an English and a French person to do that. Charles Vildrac the poet . . . and I mean to do some translations that way; we are starting with a little fantasy by Virginia Woolf—I will send it to you when it's finished. *But you must learn to read English.* (Fry, *Letters* 477, italics original.)

Illustration is associated with translation in this passage; Derain's woodcuts lead to Fry's work with translating Woolf's "sketch" — certainly "A Mark on the Wall" (Cabot 46) and quite possibly *Kew Gardens* later — into French. It now becomes clear why Fry publishes his essay on book illustration in a volume called *Transformations*, a word he uses to suggest "all those various transmutations which forms undergo in becoming parts of esthetic constructions" (v). When a work of visual art becomes part of a page layout, it is transformed — translated — so that it functions both in visual terms and in another symbolic "language" that relates to book design and textual commentary. This is why a good translation "requires the collaboration of an English and a French person" — otherwise the result could end up lopsided, like the overly visual page layouts of Derain's Apollinaire illustrations.

Any act of representation can be seen as a translation, though it is not a "transformation" unless it is reformulating an already existing artistic expression into another medium or context. Woolf thinks of her writing, for instance, as translating the images of life into language. She writes in her diary during the production of the first edition of *Kew Gardens*, "I keep thinking of different ways to manage my scenes; conceiving endless possibilities; seeing life, as I walk about the streets, an immense opaque

block of material to be conveyed by me into its equivalent of language" (*Diary I*, 214, Monday 4 November 1918). Woolf sees life as "scenes," or images, and writing must approximate "an immense opaque block of material" — it is as if Woolf is talking about the reverse of the usual process of book illustration, in which language is translated into images.

3. *The sisters*

The third edition of *Kew Gardens* makes obsolete Fry's contention that word and image always are embattled, that the idea of book illustration yields a "no-man's land" (211). The ways that Bell uses illustrations dissolves the oppositions of word and image, masculine and feminine — and her efforts also soften the divisions that historically vexed her relationship with her sister. The combination of Woolf's writing with Bell's woodcuts is an objective correlative for an uneasy truce that the sisters struck in their own relationship.

Bell and Woolf had been competitive in childhood, and in adulthood their struggles involved everything from the appearances of their houses (Dunn 228) to their lives' major forces: artwork and family status. A main source of friction between the sisters as adults was that Bell had children and Woolf did not. As early as five months after Leonard and Virginia Woolf married on 10 August 1912, Leonard had decided that he and Virginia should have no children. His motivation remained mysterious to Bell, who was aware of Woolf's desire to be a mother as well as the family psychologist's belief that the plan would be beneficial (Dunn 190). Leonard's decision proved to be "an abiding grief for Virginia" (Dunn 191), one that she would return to in diaries and letters for decades. While critics differ as

to the factors leading to the “madness” and attempted suicide that Woolf suffered in the summer of 1913, these followed significantly on the heels of her realization that she would remain childless.⁷⁸

It was this frightening depression that supposedly impelled Leonard Woolf to buy a Press for Virginia’s distraction, and indeed writing and publishing became a substitute for childrearing in Woolf’s life. She thought of her book projects as children, especially when Bell’s growing family aroused her jealousies. Woolf realized that her envy of Bell’s motherhood abated only when she was in the throes of writing a book (Alexander 87). Even after many years, Woolf compared her literary success with what she imagined to be Bell’s maternal bliss. In 1929, for instance, she mulls over the success of *Orlando* in her diary, comparing her newspaper notices to the lack of mention of Bell’s exhibition at the time, and admits, “Then I think to myself, So I have something, instead of children, & fall comparing our lives” (*Diary* 3:217). She took solace in her acknowledgement by the media, as compared to her sister’s neglect.⁷⁹

The first edition of *Kew Gardens*, which was the first book that Bell illustrated, cemented the sisters’ artistic partnership through Hogarth. It was the occasion for Woolf to write frequent letters to Bell, and its printing

⁷⁸ Peter Alexander notes that “on one of the few occasions when [Woolf] did analyse the causes of her mental unbalance, in her diary on 25 October 1920, the first element she isolated was ‘Its having no children’. ‘Failing to write well’ came only third on the list, after ‘living away from friends’ (87). He also shows that Leonard Woolf was loathe to admit the correspondence: he “tried to avoid such probing questions by incorrectly placing Virginia’s suicide attempt in 1915, two safe years after his announcement of his decision” (89).

⁷⁹ For more detailed analyses of the sisters’ relationship, see Jane Dunn’s *A Very Close Conspiracy: Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf*, Diane Gillespie’s *The Sisters’ Arts: The Writing and Painting of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell*, and “The Sisters’ Arts: Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell” in Marianna Torgovnick’s *The Visual Arts, Pictorialism, and the Novel*.

inspired more diary entries than any other handprinting project (Rhein 15). The sisters also discussed the book, and each others' art forms, when they saw each other. The collaboration inspired Woolf to write to Bell about her ideas on aesthetics, and Bell started to read more literature (Spalding 166). It brought them closer together: Woolf writes to Bell after seeing the first woodcut, "I think the book will be a great success—owing to you: . . . and so I suppose, in spite of everything, God made our brains upon the same lines, only leaving out 2 or 3 pieces in mine" (*Letters* 2:289).

The *Kew Gardens* project also formed an occasion for Woolf to connect her work with visual metaphors. On 16 July 1918, recalling a trip to the National Gallery, she recorded in her diary that "pictures . . . appeal to my plastic sense of words" (*Diary* 1:168). This comes directly after her agonizing over having bought an expensive pen and paper that day: she was attending to words as materials.

The third edition of *Kew Gardens*, then, could be seen as a conciliatory gesture on Woolf's part. She gives over a piece of writing that had given her literary recognition and lets her sister do what she likes with it. In so doing, Woolf can no longer cast Bell (out) as the one for whom children and inferior painting must "suffice" while Woolf basks in critical praise. Woolf shares the limelight with her sister by stepping aside from the project. By giving Bell the dominant role in this publication, Woolf generally relaxes the hierarchies by which she conducted much of this relationship.

F. *Kew Gardens* atones for early quarrels between the sisters over printing

The third edition of *Kew Gardens* could also be a conciliatory repairing of two early quarrels between the sisters over Bell's woodcut illustrations for Hogarth. When the Woolfs began the Press, Bell asked Woolf if the Press would consider printing a book of woodcuts by Omega artists; the project went through many mutations before finally failing in 1918. Then, when Bell contributed her first woodcuts to the original edition of Woolf's *Kew Gardens*, the Woolfs printed them so poorly that Bell threatened never to work for Hogarth again. Though they through the quarrel with the result that Bell subsequently created all of Woolf's jacket designs, as well as designs for other Hogarth covers, the illustrations for the third edition of *Kew Gardens* gave her the unprecedented opportunity to have aesthetic control over a volume. The fact that it was the same book that had originally caused a row (over the issue of aesthetic control) suggests that the sisters were giving the collaboration another chance at success.

Bell's wish to print images with Hogarth traces back to the first Hogarth publication. As soon as Bell saw *Two Stories*, she wrote to Woolf full of compliments and an idea of printing woodcuts by Omega artists. After approving of the writing, Bell excitedly devised a detailed plan of how to proceed with getting some of her own woodcuts printed.

I liked Carrington's woodcuts. It has occurred to me, did you seriously mean that we might produce a book (I mean a pamphlet) of woodcuts? Both Duncan and I want very much to do some, and if you really thought it feasible, I should like to get a few other people also to produce one or two each and get together a small collection. Could this be arranged with your new press? and if so, how many could there be and what size? I would undertake to get the woodcuts, if you think it could be done, in the course of the next few months, or

whenever you hadn't anything else you wanted to print. It wouldn't mean much trouble for you, as there'd be very little letter press. (Bell, *Letters* 207-08)

This letter was written on 23 July 1917. Woolf wrote back three days later, "We should very much like you and Duncan to do a book of wood cuts—in fact we are getting a machine that is specially good for printing pictures, as we want to do pictures just as much as writing" (*Letters* 2:168). But Bell objected to the idea that Leonard Woolf wanted to retain the final say in matters of aesthetics. In September, Woolf devised a conciliatory plan: a series of woodcuts sold as a set or separately, with no binding. She noted in a letter to Bell that "Leonard thinks favourably of the plan, which seems to involve no aesthetic judgment on our part" (*Letters* 2: 179). Meanwhile, in late September, Leonard Woolf drew up a detailed contract that would cover a book arrangement (see fig. B.26.).⁸⁰

Optimism about the project soon turned to frustration when the bid for aesthetic control of the volume was unresolvable. Both of them had already shown considerable investment and planning: Bell had already asked Fry to work with her on the book (Spalding 165) and Leonard Woolf had typed out the aforementioned contract. The impasse may have left Bell, at least, slightly bitter: in an unpublished letter (dated approximately September, 1917), as Jane Dunn reports, Bell "withdrew from the plan, 'knowing what [Leonard's] taste in those ways is', as she explained rather loftily to Roger" (Dunn 160).⁸¹ Early the next year, despite the disagreement with Bell, Woolf is persistently hopeful about this project or one like it: she

⁸⁰ It is unclear from this contract, which names only Bell as the "artist," whether Vanessa was planned as the sole contributor to the project or whether she was named on the contract as the legal representative for an unspecified or as-yet-unassembled group of artists.

⁸¹ See also Anscombe 64.

writes in her diary on 25 January 1918, "We rather think of doing a little book of woodcuts, either after this book [Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude*] or at the same time, on our small press" (*Diary* I 113).

Roger Fry's Omega Workshops printed the planned book instead, as *Original Woodcuts by Famous Artists* (1918). Though Fry directed the project, this must have been a more pleasant arrangement for Bell than accepting or battling Leonard Woolf's authority. Fry was a visual artist who had already overseen the publication of three books;⁸² he was not likely to print carelessly or hack off the edges of a woodblock, as Woolf damaged Carrington's (see section B.). His love relationship with Bell was strong, and the Omega Workshops was in general a supportive environment for Bell's artistic expression. Jane Dunn, in her book-length study of the sisters' relationship, asserts that "For Vanessa, the Omega Workshops represented something analogous to what The Hogarth Press, more significantly and over a longer time, meant to Virginia" (234).

Over time, many of the Omega artists from *Original Woodcuts* published woodcut books for The Hogarth Press.⁸³ Those who were not involved in the Bloomsbury circle were overlooked, save E. McKnight Kauffer, who designed one of the wolf's head logos for the Press (Bell designed another). By 1927, Roger Fry and Duncan Grant had already been given opportunities to assemble entire volumes of their visual art for Hogarth. Though Bell was Woolf's sole dustcover artist in the intervening years, her edition of *Kew Gardens* marks a time when she is finally allowed to make a more significant visual statement.

⁸² *Simpson's Choice* (1915), *Men of Europe* (1915), and *Lucretius on Death* (1917).

⁸³ The illustrious group included Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry, Duncan Grant, E. McKnight Kauffer, Roald Kristian, and Edward Wolfe.

Woolf's communications with Bell about *Original Woodcuts* are uncannily connected to her thoughts about *Kew Gardens*. Upon first seeing a dummy of the book, she offers praise to Bell directly after updating her on the progress of the first edition of *Kew Gardens*: the paragraph sounds like a bait-and-switch. After asking Bell how many copies to sell and what to charge, she writes that *Original Woodcuts* is "very magnificent but fearfully expensive; I don't see how one's to buy it; and the sands are running out; soon it will be 15/-" (*Letters* 2:296-97). Woolf implies that she herself may not buy a copy of the book. At the same time, however, she includes Bell in the publication process of *Kew Gardens* in a way that had not been possible for the woodcut book:⁸⁴ it is as if the first edition of *Kew Gardens* is already trying to atone for the fiasco of *Original Woodcuts*. In a fitting twist, the amount of money that Woolf fears the Omega book will cost is the same amount that the Press eventually charges for the third edition of *Kew Gardens*.

The first edition of *Kew Gardens* was completed by December 17, 1918 (Willis 32), and Donna Rhein reports that "its printing was unbelievably poor" (15). "Apparently the Woolfs forgot to add their last name when setting the colophon, and on page 16 the statement "Printed by Leonard & Virginia at The Hogarth Press, Richmond" is changed by a cancel slip to 'L. & V. Woolf'" (Woolmer 6). Some copies of the book also print the final woodcut on a separate piece of paper and either paste it into a space in the

⁸⁴ Woolf also asks Bell, later in the letter, what kind of paper they should use for printing the woodcuts of *Kew Gardens*. Though she had consulted with Bell before on paper choices, the timing of this question gives it a new significance. In a letter of 9 December 1918, Woolf asks Bell how payments should be arranged for the *Kew Gardens* woodcuts by referring to the volume that Hogarth had been unable to publish: "I wonder what your arrangement with Roger for the Omega book is? We might go by that" (*Letters* 2:303).

page or paste it over another print of the same woodcut that was unsatisfactory (Woolmer 6).⁸⁵ The woodcuts were inked badly, a common problem for inexperienced printers (source). Woolf admits to Bell before publication that “we shan’t print the wood cuts nearly as well as Roger’s man [Richard Madley who printed the Omega books]; but apparently one ought to use a special ink, so we may get them a good deal better than those first proofs” (*Letters* 2:303). Then again, they may not.

The Woolfs’ inexperience proved disastrous, and Bell was extremely dissatisfied with the final printing of her woodcuts in the first edition of *Kew Gardens*. Woolf writes about Bell’s reaction in her diary on 9 June 1919,

Nessa and I quarrelled as nearly as we ever do quarrel now over the get up of *Kew Gardens*, both type & woodcuts; & she firmly refused to illustrate any more stories of mine under those circumstances & went so far as to doubt the value of the Hogarth Press altogether. An ordinary printer would do better in her opinion. This both stung & chilled me. (*Diary* 1:279)

Bell’s threat never to work for the Press again sent Woolf reeling into self-doubt and erratic action.⁸⁶ Bell must have also doubted the wisdom of continuing her association with her sister’s publishing venture: she had also been “stung” by their botched projects.

When the first edition of *Kew Gardens* sold out quickly, the Woolfs sent out for a reprint, and again an attempt to involve Bell in the process failed. The printer said he would charge extra to wait for her to return to London from out of town, so they went ahead without her input. The

⁸⁵ See also Osthus’ appendix for Peter D. J. Downs’ Conservation Report of 13 June 1983; Rhein 15 contains another Conservation Report.

⁸⁶ Woolf claims that her impulsive purchase of a bizarre and ultimately uninhabitable “Round House” was prompted by Bell’s complaint. Fortunately, the Woolfs were able to sell the round house and buy their final home, Monk’s House, within the space of a week.

second edition was better, since Richard Madley, who was known for his work on the Omega books (Willis 12), did the printing. But Woolf writes to Bell that Madley botched the paper covers, forcing her to recut them. She is pleased to issue a retort to Bell's recent criticisms: "a professional printer isn't necessarily infallible as you seem to think" (*Letters* 2:369). The sisters are continuing to feed the flame of their disagreements over *Kew Gardens*. Meanwhile, "[t]he second edition . . . sold out by the end of 1920 and was not reprinted" (Gaither xxiv).

In the years between these fiascos and the 1927 edition of *Kew Gardens*, however, several other factors made collaboration more palatable. Bell had carved woodcut covers for Woolf's books, as well as for other Hogarth publications, and the negotiations about them did not seem acrimonious. Roger Fry had published successful illustrated books with The Hogarth Press, and Bell must have followed these projects with great interest.

Twelve Original Woodcuts, a book by Roger Fry published in November 1921, went into three editions, all printed by the Woolfs at The Hogarth Press (Woolmer 11). This book, which sold quickly,⁸⁷ must have assured Bell that the Woolfs had learned to print woodcuts properly. Fry was living with Bell and her family in France in the latter part of 1921; undoubtedly she was privy to the negotiations between her friend and her sister about the book.⁸⁸ She also received two copies of the book as a gift from Fry.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Woolf writes in her diary on 25 November 1921, "Roger's woodcuts, 150 copies, have been gulped down in 2 days" (Diary II, 148).

⁸⁸ Fry writes a letter to Woolf from Bell's house, saying, "I send back the sample of paper for the cover of my woodcuts. I think it's excellent and wonder where you got hold of it. Is it Carrington? Thanks for the proofs; of course I don't like them now but find most people less

Fry wrote nine pages of introductory text for another book of pictures, *Living Painters: Duncan Grant*, which was published by The Hogarth Press in 1924. The book included twenty-four plates of Grant's pictures, and Bell helped Grant to design the cover. Fry also published a travelogue with sixteen drawings reproduced by collotype (see Hogarth advertisement reproduced in Willis 173), *A Sampler of Castile*, at The Hogarth Press in November 1923. Apparently Leonard Woolf was more willing to share control of the printing process by this time. Fry attests that he himself was "largely responsible for the printing of my book . . . I wallow in satisfaction" (*Letters* 549, 2/6/24, #542). Bell must have been watching his participation in his book's production, and the book's success, with great interest.

By the time Bell asked Woolf for a story to illustrate during her time at the Villa Corsica in Cassis, she must have been assured that The Hogarth Press could now print images respectably. When Leonard Woolf creates the contract that allows Bell to oversee the third edition, in August 1927, he finds a way to forestall Bell's complaints about a printer's bad work. Bell could pull her own prints so that she would be satisfied with their appearance. She could then assemble her final layouts with four good copies of a corrected text, supplied by a printer who followed her directions.

disgusted than I am" (*Letters* 516, 10/24/21, #507). Bell must have been among the people to whom Fry refers. Her approval of the images in the proofs also was proof of the Woolfs' capacity for printing images. And Bell was the recipient of Woolf's response to Fry's question about the cover paper: "By the way, Rogers [sic] cover paper was not designed by Carrington; I get it from a little man in Holborn; it is clearly an imitation of the Kew Gardens cover" (*Letters* 2: 491, 11/13/21, #1204). This remark creates a correspondence between Fry's woodcut volume and the early editions of *Kew Gardens*. A thread is thereby created that connects the earliest illustrated volume with this book and the *Kew Gardens* edition to come.

⁸⁹ See Fry's letter to Bell of 17 December 1921, in which he writes, "Leonard will be despatching you two copies of my book. I see that I've got to give away about half the issue. However, it's selling like hot cakes. Virginia believes the world's beginning to speculate on my death and consequent rise in prices. I think it's Leonard's magic touch that turns all to gold" (*Letters* 518, #511).

“From the very beginning Virginia seems to have desired Bell’s help with *Kew Gardens*” (Willis 31), and now the Woolfs had finally created an arrangement that would suit them all.⁹⁰

G. Formalism and architectural (book) design

The art movement of the day, among the Bloomsbury set, was Post-Impressionism. Roger Fry, a painter, was transfixed by Cézanne’s canvasses, where areas of color, thick black lines, and the arrangement of shapes replaced the Impressionists’ lack of contours and bold forms. He arranged two Post-Impressionist exhibitions in London to bring Cézanne and others to the British public. In 1910, Cézanne featured prominently, along with Gauguin and Van Gogh; in 1912, Matisse received the most attention (Harrison 63), along with Derain and Picasso (Watney 5). Vanessa Bell was also included in the Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition. In 1916 Fry opened the Omega Workshops, a guild-style cooperative for many artists from his circle to produce and sell work, from paintings to books, chairs to plates, and fabrics to interior decorations.

The Omega Workshops closed in 1919, just as the Woolfs’ Hogarth Press was getting underway. The first Hogarth books were influenced by the woodcut-adorned publications of the Omega, and the third edition of *Kew Gardens* also bears this influence. The Omega, in turn, grew out of William Morris’ Arts and Crafts Movement, despite Fry’s protestations that the goals of the two groups were divergent. Both groups aimed to dismantle the

⁹⁰ Bell’s correspondence with Leonard Woolf in the months immediately following the November 1927 publication of *Kew Gardens* is marked with respectful negotiations about layout. See Bell, *Letters* 326-27 and L. Woolf, *Letters* 231. The book project improved their working relationship.

divide between art and craft, and they therefore challenged the class divisions between high and low art (Thompson 87, Watney 100). Morris' workshops grew from a socialist agenda of creating beautiful utilitarian objects without resorting to industrial production methods which could alienate people from the work they created. Fry's motivation was more connected to the pursuit of a joyful spirit in the act of creation (Woolf, *Fry* 194). This philosophy derived largely from his philosopher-mentor, G. E. Moore, whose *Principia Ethica* calls for an appreciation of the states of consciousness that arise from enjoying beautiful objects as complex aesthetic wholes (Harrison 57-58).⁹¹ This formalism is less tied to a social agenda than Morris' aestheticism. Nonetheless, the workshops shared an interest in spreading the aesthetic joy that ordinary people could find in beautiful images.

Clive Bell wrote popular books about the post-impressionist philosophies that inspired Fry and the other artists of the Omega group. Though he and the artists were mainly concerned with painting, these ideas about art are worth considering, in light of the Omega aversion to differentiating among the arts.

In contrast to the traditional division between decorative arts and painterly arts, which manifested itself in the primary concern with the hierarchy of the arts placed in an inferior position to painting, the Omega Workshops insisted on the necessity of not differentiating among the arts, but on the contrary of applying the principles of one art to the others. (Baccolini 113)⁹²

⁹¹ Many of the members of this "Bloomsbury" circle had been students at Cambridge together, where they had debated matters of aesthetics with Moore.

⁹² "Contrari alla tradizionale divisione tra arti decorative e arti pittoriche, che faceva sì che le prime occupassero nella gerarchia delle arti un posto inferiore alla pittura, gli Omega Workshops insistevano sulla necessità di non differenziare tra le arti, ma anzi di applicare i principi di un'arte all'altra" (Baccolini 113). Thanks to Bonnie Gordon for help with the translation.

The philosophies that Bell learned from her husband's writings, though he mainly deals with painting, translate easily into the context of book illustration. Though Clive Bell has been criticized for his bald and overconfident simplifications, his work is useful for understanding the post-impressionist origins of formalism. (Post-impressionism, here, refers to the time period or artistic context in which the art was produced,⁹³ while formalism refers to the doctrine by which that art was produced or understood.)

Post-impressionist art brings attention to the underlying forms of a painting. That is, the painting is built on a foundation, or a structural composition, built with lines and/or colors.⁹⁴ Clive Bell, in his 1913 book, *Art*, calls these combined elements the "significant forms" of the image. All parts of a painting must function together as a harmonious whole. As Clive Bell writes, "This organisation of forms into a significant whole is called Design . . . this conviction that a work should not be good on the whole, but as a whole" (152).

The idea of looking at things "as a whole" became part of Woolf's vocabulary during the production of the first edition of *Kew Gardens*, and it was a permanent part of Bell's working process. On 15 July 1918, Woolf wrote a letter to Bell in which she praises Bell's first woodcut for *Kew Gardens* and expounds upon her "aesthetic views" (*Letters* 2:258-61). She describes her "disconsolate state" upon trying to find a slipcover that will make a chair more "harmonious" with an "exquisitely tinted" painting by

⁹³ This time period runs from the last Impressionist Exhibition in 1886 to the advent of Cubism, though it does not particularly admit the Fauvist or early Cubist experiments (see Watney 6-7).

⁹⁴ Clive Bell specifies that "Colour becomes significant only when it becomes form" (157).

Bell that is in the same room. Her summation of the situation engages formalist concerns with a synthetic visual composition: she writes, "I began to conceive the room as a whole, in relation to your picture" (*Letters* 2:259). The attention to the overall visual coordination of the composition can also apply easily to Vanessa Bell's work on the third edition of *Kew Gardens* (section D. is devoted to this topic).

Though Clive Bell's book was published long before Bell was to undertake the project of illustrating any of the editions of *Kew Gardens*, his principles were important to her aesthetics. As her biographer reports, "Vanessa was not only present on the many occasions when Fry and Clive Bell discussed [Post-Impressionist] aesthetics, but she also read *Art* in both manuscript and proof forms, herself correcting some of its errors. Its basic tenets provided the theoretical standpoint which she clung to all her life" (Spalding 115). Her images, both in painting and printmaking, are articulated with strong black lines, and she writes about her work in terms of balancing color and form within the frame of the painting (see Watney 40).

Clive Bell (like Roger Fry) discusses the structures of formalism with analogies to architecture. He writes that "To all are familiar those circumambient black lines that are intended to give definition to forms and to reveal the construction of the picture. For almost all the younger artists . . . affect that architectural method of design" (155-56). In a letter of 8 August 1919, Fry sums up this thesis: "Since Cézanne everything tends toward an architectonic construction" (*Letters* 456). These statements equate seeing "as a whole" with seeing "architecturally" — the overall visual composition

takes all of its elements into account, as an architectural construction must consider all facets of a building. To put it another way, the painting's composition must be solidly built, clearly designed.

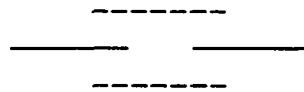
This approach can be mapped onto the problems of book design, especially as discussed in the writings of William Morris. In 1893, Morris delivered, and later self-published, a lecture on book aesthetics, called "The Ideal Book," in which he declared, "I lay it down, first, that a book quite unornamented can look actually and positively beautiful, and not merely un-ugly, if it be, so to say, architecturally good" ("Ideal" 67). An architecturally successful page is defined by the proper proportional relation of all elements in the page layout. An "architecturally good" book means that "whether the margins be small or big, they must be in due proportion to the page of letter" (qtd. in Thompson 159).

Since the architecture of the page includes all elements in visual harmony, illustration and other kinds of page ornamentation can be woven easily into Morris' discussion of margins and unornamented type. Morris' articulation of this concept bears a striking similarity to Clive Bell's formalist rhetoric. In "The Ideal Book," Morris writes,

We must remember one thing, that if we think the ornament is ornamentally a part of the book, merely because it is printed with it, and bound up with it, we shall be much mistaken. The ornament must form as much a part of the page as the type itself, or it will miss its mark, and in order to succeed, and to be ornament, it must submit to certain limitations, and become *architectural*; a mere black and white picture, however interesting it may be as a picture, may be far from an ornament in a book. On the other hand, a book ornamented with pictures that are suitable for that book, and that book only, may become a work of art second to none, save a fine building duly decorated, or a fine piece of literature. (72-73, italics original)

The image must correspond closely with the form and content of the words to forge an overall harmony of the page.⁹⁵ Morris calls this harmony in book design an “architectural arrangement” (“Ideal” 67).⁹⁶

Morris’ analogy between book design and architecture goes beyond the level of wholistic integration of elements on the page; he also compares those elements to actual parts of buildings. In his essay, “Printing,” (on page 64) Morris says that book designers should create a “general *solidity*” by assembling typographical elements as if they were construction materials. White spaces in the print area should be broken up, he suggests, “as in bonding masonry or brickwork, thus:”



Words do not only function as bricks in the visual construction of the page, but in their physical composition as well. In Morris’ time and in the early days of The Hogarth Press, the type in printed books was actually built into a metal frame called a chase, with lead letters and spacing material fitting together like bricks (without mortar). If the materials were not assembled

⁹⁵ Morris discusses this concept often, and many of his statements resemble formalist philosophies while they leave out references to architecture *per se*. For instance, “The essential point to be remembered is that the ornament, whatever it is, whether picture or pattern-work, should form *part of the page*, should be a part of the whole scheme of the book” (“Printing” 65, italics original). In his 1896 statement about the goals and philosophies of the Kelmscott Press, he reiterates, “I have always tried to keep in mind the necessity for making my decoration a part of the page of type” (“Note” 138). These statements emphasize visual harmony just as Clive Bell emphasizes Design.

⁹⁶ Morris’ references to architecture have special resonance: he was an ardent advocate of architectural conservation. His appreciation of the elegance and simplicity of fifteenth-century architecture fueled not only decades of volunteer political work, but also his love of fifteenth-century book production and his eventual development of a printing aesthetic and business.

tightly, they could fall out of the chase or wiggle during printing. This would cause defects in the printed page.

When printed, the word-bricks of Morris' books created awesome monuments. This is part of the aesthetic of the "ideal book" — the volume should awe the viewer who approaches it. Morris maintained that books should be like "cathedrals built of black type and strong white paper," (?), and his collaborator, Edward Burne-Jones, predicts that the Kelmscott edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* he is illustrating "will be a little like a pocket cathedral" (qtd. in Beckwith 48).⁹⁷ Presumably, the walls or columns of this cathedral are the areas of thick ornamentation that flank the words. Thus the beautiful structure of the book "enshrines" the literature contained within ("Ideal" 72).

In the 1927 *Kew Gardens*, words are enclosed (or "enshrined") in architecturally inspired illustrations, which become settings for the story that add inflection and mood. The visual style of each illustration works in conjunction with the words to create a unified expression, and Bell uses architectural elements as part of this overall "whole." Bell thus creates page designs that refer to architectural construction in a formalist sense and in a literal sense.

Two pages, especially, are framed by pairs of architectural columns. Bell's columns may have been inspired by Dora Carrington's woodcut book

⁹⁷ But the Chaucer volume is too big to be a *pocket* cathedral; Morris' prejudice for architecture has crept into the scale of his book production. This large folio (42.2 x 28.1 cm) sits "quiet and majestic on the table" (Morris, "Ideal" 72) like a piece of furniture. (Interestingly, the spacing material that surrounds the print area in the chase is called "furniture." This terminology supports the connection between books and buildings: the space of the page is filled in with furniture as if it is being arranged in a room. Good printers arrange their furniture elegantly.)

designs, which also featured columns. Bell was certainly aware of Carrington's work: she wrote to Woolf, "I liked Carrington's woodcuts" for the 1917 Hogarth Press edition of *Two Stories* (*Letters* 207). Carrington's woodcut frontispiece for the October 1917 Omega Workshops edition of *Lucretius on Death*, for instance, features columns with "the proportion of pre-Columbian architecture" (Hill 38) on either side of the title text (see fig. B.27.).⁹⁸ Also, her woodcut for Leonard Woolf's 1921 Hogarth Press book, *Stories from the East*, uses tropical trees as architectural elements on the two sides of the image (see fig. B.28.).

Carrington's compositions prefigure Bell's use of columns and trees on various pages of *Kew Gardens*, though Bell dares to incorporate the architectural decorations into the text pages instead of merely using them on the title page or cover. The ninth page (see fig. B.29.) is framed by thick, rectilinear, and unwavering columns to accompany the announcement, "This time they were two men." The image that frames the men's progress along the path contrasts with the two columns of wispy, undulating lines that, on the twelfth page, accompany the appearance of two elderly ladies (see fig. B.12.).

These are the only two pages in the book where the people in the pairs are of the same sex. Their columns can therefore reflect the gender of the people who are walking along on these two pages: as Joseph Rykwert writes in *The Dancing Column*, columns have been gendered in architecture since Vitruvius. Doric columns were fashioned after a 1:6

⁹⁸ This woodcut is most often attributed to Roger Fry, but Jane Hill maintains that it is the work of Dora Carrington (38-39). Whoever actually designed and cut the image, the argument about its connection to the images in *Kew Gardens* remains the same. Bell would have seen this work during her contacts with Roger Fry and her involvement with the Omega Workshops.

proportion derived from a man's footprint, while Ionic columns followed a 1:8 proportion to make the column more delicate and feminine (Rykwert 113-14). In addition, the Doric column had clear, unornamented lines while the Ionic column had curvy decorations: "A curved base . . . was put under the [shaft] and at the head they put volutes like pretty curls hanging down to left and right. The front they decorated with cimasia and festoons and let the fluting fall like the folds of a matronly robe" (qtd. in Rykwert 114). Thus the wavy lines of the twelfth page resemble the flowing lines of the Ionic column, while the men's columns on the ninth page have a Doric style.

The third basic style of column, Corinthian, connotes a virgin girl: it is slimmer than the other two kinds of columns and it has fancier decorations (see Rykwert 317-20). The style of this column is like the drawings that surround the words when the young couple is present. Bell's thin lines on these pages express the tentativeness with which these young people speak. On the fifteenth page, their dialogue is delicately, even painfully, restrained and hesitant:

"Lucky it isn't Friday," he observed.

"Why? D'you believe in luck?"

"They make you pay sixpence on Friday."

"What's sixpence anyway? Isn't it worth sixpence?"

"What's 'it'— what do you mean by 'it'?"

"O, anything—I mean—you know what I mean."

Long pauses came between each of these remarks; they were uttered in toneless and monotonous voices.

The idea that Bell's lines are drawn to suit this conversation is much more plausible, given her background in formalist design, than the suggestion that these were the more restrained images that Bell made upon her return to England from France. While it is possible that her style changed when she moved, it is impossible to determine the order in which she completed

the illustrations, so a conclusion based on their sequence in the book is unreliable.

The columns and line weights on the different pages give different feelings to the visual compositions of these pages. This result is the culmination of Clive Bell and Roger Fry's idea of significant form: the significance of the form was that the structural design of an artwork could communicate a specific mood. As Clive Bell writes in *Art* about how to create a desired effect,

But mere simplification, the elimination of detail, is not enough. The informatory forms that remain have got to be made significant. The representative element, if it is not to injure the design, must become a part of it; besides giving information it has got to provoke aesthetic emotion. (152)

These basic elements are made clear by the paring down of distraction, so that only the elements remain that contribute to the whole statement. In Bell's illustrations for the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, she simplifies her images so that objects are evoked impressionistically rather than being rendered in detail.

The post-impressionist or formalist mode of art production was not the only influence on early twentieth-century book production. At the time leading up to the publication of all three editions of *Kew Gardens*, there were two major trends in book printing. In England, on the whole, traditionalist typographers considered books as vehicles for words — here, printing was under the control of book designers. In France, many artists were beginning to use books as testing grounds for new uses of images — printing became an expressive art form.

The men who have been the arbiters of “good taste” in twentieth-century book design, such as Stanley Morison⁹⁹ and Jan Tschichold, maintain that the book exists to be read, and that typography, ornamentation, and illustration should be kept to a minimum in order to serve the goal of easy, pleasant reading. Morison, who was well-known among London printers, advocated a strict adherence to typographical conventions (Bostick 65); his position explains why “While book illustration was taking on a fresh look in the early twentieth century, book design and typography, with a few exceptions, remained static and traditional. . . .Perhaps no art form of contemporary times has resisted modernization as much as book design” (Bostick 62).

In France, however, where there was a print explosion, many artists were experimenting with illustrated books as art. The Bloomsbury set often went to France and were friends with Picasso, Matisse, Derain, and other poets and artists who were involved with book illustration. The practice was popular:

“The names of artists who tried their hand at book illustrating in the late nineteenth and first part of the twentieth century read like a who’s who of modern art – Arp, Barlack, Backmann, Brancusi, Braque, Chagall, de Chirico, Degas, Duchamp, Feininger, Gauguin, Klee, Leger, Maillol, Manet, Matisse, Miro, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Rouault, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vlaminch and Whistler – to mention only a few. Their use of the book medium was a true renaissance – not just a revival” (Bostick 62).

⁹⁹ In the twenties, scholar/printer Stanley Morison addressed his colleagues through columns in London trade magazines. These writings might well have been known to the Woolfs, because Morison was well-known among printers.

Perhaps the most important of all the pioneer work in the nineteen-twenties was the typographical researches of Stanley Morison (b. 1889). They were published as essays in a great variety of publications, mostly in England, Germany and France. . . . the most important essays . . . must have been read and digested by every practising designer and printer interested in his trade (McLean, *Modern* 43)

Many of these books, however, were finely printed *livres d'artistes* which replicate the standard separation of illustrations and written text. Even the books that Roger Fry analyzes in his article on book illustration maintain this divide. There were exceptions, however,¹⁰⁰ including the third edition of *Kew Gardens*.

These early twentieth-century printing experiments, including books that separate word and image, are still concerned about the interrelation of these elements within the larger context of the page and the book as an object. Matisse, for instance, wrote about this “balancing” in his writings about his own book illustrations.¹⁰¹

Though he considers his first “illustrated book” to be in 1932, five years after the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, Matisse had actually done artwork for books as early as 1909.¹⁰² In the project to illustrate a book of poems by Mallarmé — an ironic circumstance, given my discussion of Mallarmé’s aversion to illustrations — he writes that “the problem was . . . to balance the two pages —one white, with the etching, the other comparatively black, with the type” (107). When he used a linoleum cut technique for his illustrations of Montherlant’s *Pasiphäé*, the problem is the reverse: “How can I balance the black illustrating page against the comparatively white page of type” (108)? Matisse has two strategies: to make the lines of the drawing take up space in a way that will look balanced,

¹⁰⁰ See, for instance, the photographs and explication of *Facile*, a 1925 book by Man Ray and Paul Eluard, in Hubert, *Surrealism* 73-83.

¹⁰¹ I concur with Diane Gillespie’s impulse to look to Matisse as an inspiration for Bell’s work, as he was contemporary with the Omega scene. He was also acquainted with Bell and Fry.

¹⁰² Matisse believed that illustrated books included only “books which were the result of close collaboration between him and the publisher” (Flam 170, n3); when drawings were not specifically related to or meant for a particular book he would not consider those books to be in the same category.

and to consider “the engraved part and the facing type together so that they form a unit. Thus the engraved part and the printed part will strike the eye of the beholder at the same moment” (108).

These instructions could be describing the procedure that Bell has followed in the composition of the 1927 *Kew Gardens*. Her lines populate the page, and they form a unit with the type so that both, together, create a visual impression. The visual impression, Matisse concludes, is “an enriched harmony — I almost wrote ‘musical’ harmony” (109).

H. Word plus image equals music

An ideal collaboration between words and images results in more than just a combination of art forms; it is possible for the expression of the work to be more than the sum of its parts. As Matisse said, “Painter and writer should work together, without confusion, on parallel lines. . . . I wouldn’t say first violin and second violin, but a concerted whole” (qtd. in Flam 170, n2). Words and images can indeed work in concert — or in “consort” — this word is particularly apt because the lead pieces of moveable type are called “sorts.” They accompany each other, as in music, and as an orchestral composition combines many different instruments, the book combines elements to create a harmonic expression.

In a piece of music, however, the different instruments do not always play in harmony. The orchestral composition requires dissonance as well as harmony. The same could be said of the relation between word and image. As J. Hillis Miller says about the effect of Phiz’s illustrations of Dickens’ *The Pickwick Papers*, “The illustration, therefore, to some degree interferes with the text, as two melodies playing simultaneously sometimes harmonize and

sometimes do not seem to go together” (102-03). In any combination, there is necessarily friction, but this friction is what creates the music.

A friction of seemingly dissonant elements is not foreign to *Kew Gardens*: in Virginia Woolf’s philosophy, the totality of life can be summed up in a combination of supposedly opposite elements. The extremes of “granite and rainbow” contain the range of life between them, and the alternating parts of the story could map onto this range: the snail is the granite, because it lives in the dirt, and the flowers are the rainbow, because their many colors burst upward into the air.

The last page of the 1927 *Kew Gardens* illustrates this granite and rainbow structure all in one frame, and therefore encapsulates the story’s overall theme of combining elements to make a more complicated expression. Moreover, the written text on this page is about voices — it self-reflexively asks what the book can say, what kind of impact or music the people in it can make in the world.

The first sentence on the final page of the story muses over the variety of expressions that break the silence of the garden, but then realizes that this silence is just an illusion: behind it are the sounds of the city. Taken together, all the elements of the scene (people, sounds, flowers, city) combine and burst forth in the next (and last) sentence of the story:

But there was no silence; all the time the motor omnibuses were turning their wheels and changing their gear; like a vast nest of Chinese boxes all of wrought steel turning ceaselessly one within another the city murmured; on the top of which the voices cried aloud and the petals of myriads of flowers flashed their colours into the air.

The city forms a larger set of sounds that “ceaselessly” moves through the early twentieth-century urban atmosphere. These sounds are combined

with people's voices and the soundless expressions of the flowers. This page combines them all within a larger framework, as an orchestral composition contains all instruments without completely erasing the integrity of their distinctness.

Bell's illustration reproduces the description, with a spoked wheel below and the type and flowers above (see fig. B.30.). The wheel is, like the wheels of the omnibuses, the symbol of the city and the sounds of a mechanical, industrial society. The lines around the wheel cross each other; they represent the interconnecting murmurs of the city and the axles of machines. These images are the ground on which "the voices cried aloud" - — the words of the fiction are the voices themselves. Woolf's story gives voice to many characters; they do not have "wordless voices" but 'voiceless words' because they speak but do not make any real sounds. And finally, above all of this, "the petals of myriads of flowers flashed their colours into the air." The flowers in Bell's drawing form a heavenly arch; they are bursting voicelessly and wordlessly into a firmament of open air.

When the flowers open out into space, they demonstrate the inability of categories to contain the totality of life. The three sections of the page represent different aspects of twentieth-century existence: the machines of industrial society on the bottom, the voices and expressions of human culture in the middle (which are contained on either side by lines that come from the mechanization below), and the boundless forms of nature above. But nature cannot be contained in any framework; the flowers break out of the lines from below and look out towards boundless space, bursting into soundless song.

I. *Whither Kew Gardens?*

Most accounts of Virginia Woolf's life and work leave out the third edition of *Kew Gardens*. Even Edward Bishop's book-length chronology of Woolf's life, which is annotated with Hogarth Press publications, neglects to mention this edition. Since Woolf's career was by this time firmly established in the literary world, her critics have focused instead on her fiction of this time span — *To the Lighthouse* in early 1927 and sometimes *Orlando* in the following year. Literary critics generally ignore an edition of *Kew Gardens* that, from a purely literary standpoint, is merely a reprint of a story whose proper place in Virginia Woolf's writing career lies almost a decade prior.

A disdain for illustration could have contributed to the illustrated *Kew Gardens's* relative neglect as well. *Orlando* is not examined as often as Woolf's unillustrated fiction. Nor is *Flush*, which had nine plates and four line drawings in the first edition (Woolmer 116). Both of these are "serio-comic" books (Lehmann 28) whose illustrations render them less likely to receive critical attention. The convention of the time was that "All 'literary', 'anecdotal', or 'illustrative' art was anathematized" (Harrison 53-54).

Scholars on Vanessa Bell, the Post-Impressionists, and the Omega Workshops also neglect this work, perhaps because it was produced outside the Omega context and eight years after the Workshop's dissolution. By this time, Bell was seen as a painter and decorator. She and Roger Fry were designing interiors for homes (aside from their own and their friends'; see Harrison 150). Her earlier woodcuts receive closer attention from art

historians than her 1927 book illustrations, presumably since these works are more purely visual statements.

The critics who are most likely to discuss this edition are the historians of The Hogarth Press and writers who analyze the relationship between Woolf and Bell. For today's scholars of Virginia Woolf's fiction or Vanessa Bell's art production, however, there is little precedent for considering this unusual volume. Nor has it been reprinted since 1927, except in the most slapdash ways.

The third edition of *Kew Gardens* has been reprinted several times, presumably for library use. The photographic reproductions are flat by comparison to the 1927 edition, and they are printed on oversized paper for no apparent reason. Instead of centering the images, moreover, the margins are uneven so that each page has exceedingly large white spaces in the right and bottom margins. The cheap or library edition reprints, finally, contain no critical commentary to help modern readers put this work into context.

Folcroft / Darby Books (or whatever they're called), of Folcroft / Darby, PA, issued a reprint in 1969. While the top and left margins replicate those of the 1927 volume (1/2"), the right margin is aproportional (2") and the bottom margin is even larger (2 1/4 - 2 1/2"). The words "Darby Books" appear on the title page where Bell had written "published by The Hogarth Press."

The Norwood Editions reprint, of 1978, adds a second title page where they replace Bell's line with their own byline; they retain the original title page and credit themselves as well. Otherwise, this volume looks like a poor-quality photoreproduction of the 1969 edition on larger paper: a shadow (as from the edge of a page) falls across each recto, about 3/4" from

the bottom. Again, the top and left margins look reasonably accurate to the original (1/2"), but the right margin is wide (2") and the bottom is exceedingly large (3 1/2").

Richard West printed another library edition in 1980, in "A LIMITED EDITION OF 150 COPIES" and again on oversized paper (12 5/8 x 8 1/2). Though he centers the designs in the page, Bell's vision is still misrepresented: the top margin is over 1" and the bottom margin averages over 2". I have found one further reprint, similarly oversized, which does not even identify its publisher.

To my knowledge, a satisfactory reprint of this book has not yet been produced. This unique visual composition is practically lost: a work of art cannot signify at all when it is out of print, out of sight, and out of mind. The advantage to recirculating it now is that it helps to create a context for books, mostly created later in the century, that also slip through the disciplinary cracks because of their unusual combinations of words and images.

Chapter III: Treating Contemporary Artists' Books

London-based artist Tom Phillips, in a book that uses page layout to inflect words more profoundly than Vanessa Bell does in *Kew Gardens*, ponders how to read a book at the end of the twentieth century. On page 12 of *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel*, he suggests that books no longer function as we have come to expect:

question
whether the book is
this--
it is as
If it is
and
exists in the
purposes it
does

The book is no longer the familiar object that contains printed text; its effect on the reader defines its ontology. When conceptual artists engage with the book form in the late twentieth century, they defamiliarize its structure so that the reader must physically engage with the codex in new ways. Thus the book's "purposes" are different from those of *Kew Gardens* and other early-twentieth-century books, including *livres d'artistes*. As Johanna Drucker, one of the field's few critics, writes, "[A]rtist's books are almost always self-conscious about the structure and meaning of the book as a form" (*Century 4*).

The books I examine in this chapter retain the appearance of a conventional codex, but they interrogate the physical structure of the book more directly than examples from earlier chapters. Tom Phillips only organizes *A Humument* as a book for mass production and distribution. As a work of literature or art, it functions more as an amalgamation of discrete page units, like a pack of cards that has been shuffled, numbered, and bound together. *Sheherezade: A Flip Book*, by Janet Zweig (with words by Holly Anderson) requires the reader to animate the words by flipping through the pages quickly. Though the sequence is that of a novel, the words “move” through successive pages and the pace of reading fluctuates.

Artists’ books are part of a recent “book arts” movement that has developed from conceptual artists’ use of the book in the sixties to now include book sculptures and other works of visual art that resist conventional reading practices.¹ These developments come at a cultural moment in which new relationships between word and image are being negotiated in many media, from books and newspapers to the internet. As the curators of a recent exhibition on artists’ books from around the world note:

The urge of artists to make books — that is, to make art that exploits the book format, to make bookworks that are artworks — has been primarily motivated by the mass appeal of certain pop culture publications: newspapers, comic books, pulp novels, and samizdat manuscripts (to name a few). (Frank and Hoffberg 7)²

¹ Artists’ books are not merely books written by artists, books about artists’ work, or coffee table books that look aesthetically inviting. A book called *The Coffee Table Book* that has fold-down legs, however, perhaps qualifies as a commercial version of a bookwork as defined in section B.1.

² Even this text, which proclaims the connection between books and artworks, has an unusual layout on the page. Many exhibition catalogues borrow design ideas from advertisements or artists’ books.

Ultimately, I am interested in the experience of reading books that are dominated by images, a limit case of the visuality of the codex. But even less extreme cases are influenced by the image culture in which they are produced. The experience of reading affected by this visually-oriented context.

A. Reading words and images in late twentieth-century books and culture

Books are often set apart from mass cultural developments, but both publishers and artists integrate technological advances into their work. Also, the ascendancy of the image in twentieth-century media inevitably manifests in bookmaking. Artists' books offer a lens into all of these concerns.

Current anxieties about the rise of the image over the word neglect the persistence of the printed book as a cultural form and the word as a partner to the image. Critics refer to "our contemporary image culture" (Robins 5), and academic programs and anthologies of visual studies proliferate.³ News reports register widespread concern about young people's relative illiteracy, purportedly caused by the the ubiquity of visual entertainments such as television and the movies. But more books are now being published and purchased than ever.⁴

The widespread prevalence of images does not imply that words must lose their cultural position. Most images, Roland Barthes observes, are

³ Heller compiles a list of recent scholarship on visual culture; see A16.

⁴ Production and sales do not guarantee, however, that consumers are actually reading. Books, even entire libraries, are bought as interior decoration: the color of a book's jacket can hold more importance than its title. Books give a room a lived-in look because they symbolize the wisdom gained from time spent reading, and therefore time already spent living in the room of the home. When the book functions as furniture, looking at it stands for having read it. More precisely, showcasing the book makes one seem as if one has read it.

accompanied by words that help to determine the meanings of the images. Television and the movies are not silent, though their images are generally combined with spoken rather than printed words. In art galleries, where images supposedly speak for themselves, printed wall tags augment the viewer's experience. Barthes speculates that the rare case of an image without a word is an example of a pregnant pause in signification: "Images without words can certainly be found in certain cartoons, but by way of a paradox; the absence of words always covers an enigmatic intention" (38, n2). So in the mid-1970s, when Barthes was writing "The Rhetoric of the Image," he concludes that in spite of the abundance of images in mass culture, "we are still, and more than ever, a civilization of writing" (38).⁵ Since the 1920s, technologies such as movies, television, photocopiers, video games, computers, video cassette recorders, fax machines, electronic image scanners, and most recently the World Wide Web have been associated with promoting the image as bearer of cultural information, but images always combine with words in these media. The rise of the image in the twentieth century therefore cannot be examined at the exclusion of the word.

Still, critics often oppose books to 'visual' information technologies, and discuss reading as if it were a purely verbal activity. For instance, in *Language Machines*, an anthology about the materiality of literature and reading, Jeffrey Masten, Peter Stallybrass, and Nancy Vickers imply that the book stands out in relief against these forms of twentieth-century

⁵ In part, the perceived sea change from verbal to visual media may be a difference between French and American popular culture. Barthes, if he were writing today, might not see images everywhere. But Barthes' observation about the persistence of writing still holds true on both sides of the Atlantic: words are seldom completely absent from the images that circulate.

communication: "It is, no doubt, partly the emergence of new forms of cultural technology (film, TV, video cassettes, computers, CDs, the Web) that helps us to see the specificities and peculiarities of books and of reading techniques" (5). To position books as separate from these technological developments risks overlooking the ways that they interconnect.

When Masten, Stallybrass and Vickers contrast reading with experiencing other media, they imply that the book, as an 'old' form of cultural technology, remains relatively constant and unaffected by current developments. In the context of the late twentieth century, however, a discussion of "the specificities and peculiarities of books and reading techniques" must include books that have been influenced by the same contexts that have promoted the image. Instead of attempting to understand the contemporary reading experience by comparing the conventional book to other media, an inquiry into visually oriented books can reveal the uniqueness of reading in a cultural context where words and images proliferate in tandem, and where we have learned to "read" images as easily as print.⁶

Books, especially when they contain many images, cannot be so readily opposed to other communication technologies because book composers often use the same production methods that have revolutionized the media industry over the course of the century. Linotype,

⁶ Throughout the century (and in all of these media, plus billboards), the image has also gained importance as an advertising medium. Advertising also uses typography to capitalize on the imagistic qualities of language, but the "undoubtedly intentional . . . *frank*, or at least emphatic" nature of advertising images, as Roland Barthes terms it in "Rhetoric of the Image" (*Image* 33) classifies advertisements in a different category from the literary or creative materials that I am investigating in this project. My choices here follow those of critics such as Wolfgang Iser and Georges Poulet, and therefore can create more continuity with chapters that are clearly literary.

offset, photocopies, and computer desktop publishing make it easier to integrate the image with the printed text in unusual ways, or to produce an large-scale editioned book.

As other media share the role of bearing cultural information, the book is liberated from one of its most common purposes and can therefore be used for artistic experimentation. Critic Gerald Lange writes, “[A]s electronic information transfer increasingly relieves the book of its informational responsibilities, the book is freed from its utilitarian obligations” (68). When information is relegated to electronic media, the physicality of the book becomes aestheticized. Lange, again, supports this reasoning: “As we are increasingly taken over by electronic technology, we appreciate more the physicality of material-based ways of doing things” (68). While Masten, Stallybrass and Vickers figure this renewed interest in physicality as inherently “nostalgic” (11), I believe that it inevitably arises concurrently with the move towards less physically tangible media. Thus a concern with the physical book is a necessary counterbalance to electronic media rather than a look backwards.

To inquire into the status of the book and of reading, in the context of the visual milieu, is to engage questions of visuality as well as conventional textuality. At the end of the twentieth century, artists’ books integrate an awareness of the physical structure of the book with its visual properties and verbal messages.

B. Contemporary artists' books

1. Definitions and distinctions

Artists use books as containers for unusual combinations of word and image; they do not blindly follow old formulae. As Shelley Rice says in "Words and Images: The Artist's Book as Visual Literature,"

Possibly the most far-reaching innovation of artists' books is their juxtaposition of images and words on a page. . . . [G]enerally the cultural uses of words and pictures share some important characteristics: there is usually a direct relationship between language and images — one illustrating the other — most often in the service of a linear narrative. This straightforward relationship [between language and images], this norm, has been imitated, parodied, altered, undermined, and sometimes completely revamped in artists' books. (59)

Unfortunately, to describe artists' books merely by their hybridity of word and image does not distinguish them from other genres of artistic production that combine these two modes. In the late twentieth century, many types of book arts have flourished: the field ranges from handmade diary records to room-sized installations of computers that generate and shred texts. To delineate the category of "artists' books" from among the variety is a daunting task: as Johanna Drucker writes, "Most attempts to define an artist's book which I have encountered are hopelessly flawed — they are either too vague ('a book made by an artist') or too specific ('it can't be a limited edition')" (*Century* 14).

Drucker prefers to define the genre as a "zone of activity" that exists "at the intersection of a number of different disciplines, fields, and ideas" (1), such as typography, printing, image production, book design, and book binding. This cannot be prescriptive, however, because many artists' books leave out one or more of these activities. Though I am interested in the

artist's book's combinations of word and image, for instance, some examples have no images (such as Keith Smith's *Out of Sight* [1985], fig. C.1.), and others have no words (save on the spine, such as Michael Snow's *Cover to Cover* [1975], fig. C.2.). There are so many different varieties of artists' books, in fact, that there is constant debate over the definition of the form.

The topic of definition recurs periodically on the international internet discussion group, BOOK_ARTS-L, most recently with the wearied subject heading, "Definition of the artist's book (YES, again)" (March 1998). To avoid (or mock) the hassle, many commentators mention a catch-all definition such as "Books made by artists" (attributed to Lawrence Weiner, qtd. in Drucker, *Century 18*, n26; Hutchins; Lippard 53; Zweig 1), though many of them also criticize this tautology for its lack of specificity.⁷ Richard Minsky⁸ teases out detailed categories from the general subset of book art:

I never did like the term "artists' books" being applied to anything other than Visual Literature. If I want to see Artists' Books I go to the Printed Matter Bookstore (now at DIA), or to the Franklin Furnace Archive (now at MOMA). Mostly this means books by artists in which the content is visual or conceptual, usually in traditional commercial format (paperback, hardbound, spiral, wire-o, accordion, etc.). Some of these become "Book Art" objects as well, by using structure or materials which cause the physical presence of the book to be an integral part of the work. I further define things as "Structural Bookworks," "Livres Sculpture (or Book Objects, or Sculptural Bookworks)," "Typographic", "Fine Printing" (which includes all printing processes done finely, not just letterpress), and

⁷ Lucy Lippard, an early critic and publicist of the book arts movement, makes a similar suggestion: "If this sounds vague, you can fall back on the Duchampian prop: 'It's an artist's book if an artist made it, or if an artist says it is'" (53). The recourse to Duchamp is not trivial: see below.

⁸ Minsky founded the Center for Book Arts in 1974 in New York City. It was the first educational workshop/exhibition center in the country; since then many similar organizations have formed. They include the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (Minneapolis), the San Francisco Center for the Book, Pyramid Atlantic (Baltimore), Southern California Center for the Book (Los Angeles), the Pacific Center for Book Arts (Portland), Visual Studies Workshop (Rochester) and the Nexus Press (Atlanta), among others.

“Bookbinding.” I prefer the term “Book Arts” for the overall field which includes all these subcategories (and many others, such as Papermaking, Calligraphy, Matrix and Punch Cutting, Marbling, Book Repair and Restoration, Illustration, Page Design, etc.). (13 March 1998)

These classifications yield two main divisions of book art: artists’ books, in which the codex form is still somehow present, and “bookworks,” in which the book can be in a form (such as a sculpture or a performance) that is unreadable in the most common sense.⁹

Artists’ books retain some connection to a sequential movement through text, so they contribute to the project of elucidating the experience of reading prose in a way that bookworks cannot. As Johanna Drucker writes, “book-sculptures . . . don’t require the time commitment for the viewer that a book does, they are available as one-line object experiences (even if resonant with meaning, they provide a quick gestalt)” (“Critical” 4). Sometimes this gestalt can “very easily fall into the trap of the ‘one-liner’” as Phil Zimmerman warns (9). *Flat Beer* (Jane Freeman, 1987, see fig. C.3.), for instance, is a book of flattened beer cans bound together; the artist invokes the double meaning of the word “flat” but the work does not sustain a reader’s further engagement.

I am dismayed by the large quantity of artists’ books that seem to be, if not one-liners, few-liners. Janet Zweig, who is reluctant to take an artist’s book to a desert island for exactly this reason (“All Dressed” 1), insists that

⁹ Janet Maher, a book artist and professor of art, agrees that bookworks are not easily classifiable as books. She writes, “Regarding non-narrative, non-sequential, non-manipulatable works that are called books, I too have a problem. I want the experience of reading, and the idea of pages—even if they are a metaphor—if I am to consider something a book, even though I will go to great extremes to include works in the category. I especially like pieces that stretch pretty far as art, while retaining a conceptual hold to the book” (12 March 1998).

fine specimens exist. “Those worthwhile books [that are ‘engaging and intellectually demanding or genuinely amusing, not something feathered or gold-leafed or tricky’] are out there; it just takes longer than a glance to understand their value” (“All Dressed” 3). Books that require more than a glance generally contain enough text — verbal and/or visual — to warrant reading it over time.

I therefore confine this inquiry to artists’ books that combine words and images within the codex structure. Moreover, in order to maintain continuity among examples, I only consider works that contain machine-printed words and have been produced in relatively large quantities. This represents a small subset of the general classification of artists’ books, which includes one-of-a-kind works and editioned works, though the size of an edition can vary from a few to a thousand or more. Some are handmade; others are produced by machine, and some combine these technologies by using machines in handiwork or operating the presses by hand. Some maintain that the artists should control all elements of book production, but Janet Zweig questions why the number of artists working on a particular book should even be an issue. She writes, “Like a theater piece, a book is a major production; the more talent and skill that can be contributed to the production, the greater the gestalt. . . .Why limit the scope of the project because of an arbitrary limitation on the number or type of participants?” (“All Dressed” 1-2). I examine work that was both composed by the writer/artist and work that resulted from collaboration. In addition, Tom Phillips’ *A Humument*, like *Tristram Shandy*, uses both handwork and machinery.

2. Historical contexts

The term “artist’s book” gained currency in the 1960s and 70s, during the Fluxus and conceptual art movements that used the form liberally. The genre grew with the influences of movements from earlier decades such as concrete poetry, surrealism, lettrism, futurism, situationism, surrealism, dada, and symbolism. Some accounts of the genre’s development list early-twentieth-century French *livres d’artistes* as precursors to the later works, though this has led to confusion about nomenclature. Russian and Italian Futurist book productions also feature prominently.¹⁰

Though many artists made books in the sixties, the works of Ed Ruscha are most often credited with ushering in the current wave of book arts activity (Lippard 46; Phillpot 97).¹¹ Johanna Drucker laments that this “classic” reference (“Critical” 5), especially to his first book, *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations* (1962), has become a “cliché” (*Century* 11) in book arts criticism, because it implies a deliberate and specific genesis for a movement that actually evolved haphazardly from a number of concurrent influences.¹²

¹⁰ For investigations of the French early twentieth-century books, see Hubert, *Surrealism and the Book*. Susan Compton catalogues Russian book covers in her two books, and Johanna Drucker analyzes figures from France, Russia and Italy in her book on typography, *The Visible Word*.

¹¹ Others include Lawrence Weiner, Richard Kostelanetz, Dick Higgins, George Maciunas, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, John Baldessari, etc. See Phillpot, “Some Contemporary Artists and Their Books,” for a moderately detailed analysis of twelve first-wave book artists’ work.

¹² Ruscha is commonly cited as participating in the movement to democratize art by bringing it out of the galleries and offering it to consumers cheaply, but his widely distributed work does not substantially challenge the elitism of the mainstream art world. A low price tag does not guarantee populist art. As Johanna Drucker shows in “Critical Necessities,” Ruscha’s work conforms to the agendas of esoteric conceptual art that was prevalent at the time. Ruscha’s inexpensively produced editions have little in common with the more arguably “democratic” experiments being done concurrently with newly available photocopiers, for instance.

Of course, the impulse to begin the history of artists' books with Ruscha alone gives a skewed view of the genre, and leaves out a rich set of historical precursors. Clive Phillpot believes that Ruscha is best considered alongside Dieter Roth (also called Diter Rot; see Phillpot 102).¹³ Other historians trace back to Marcel Duchamp's 1934 "The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors Even" also called "Green Box" because of the color of the suede-paper box that housed the piece (Drucker, *Century* 98). In this work, readers sift through scraps of paper that contain Duchamp's reproduced notes for his piece, "The Large Glass." There is no sequence to the collection; readers move at their own pace, as if piecing together a textual puzzle.¹⁴

But to isolate specific artists or pieces misses the point: the artist's book movement grew from many sources. As Johanna Drucker writes, artistic book production has accompanied nearly all of the art movements of the twentieth century (*Century* 1). It is only in the latter half of the century that artists' books developed into an identifiably self-sufficient genre. At this point, the term is used to retrospectively describe many books that combine word and image (Lange 61).

The informal project of finding older examples of works that share characteristics with artists' books helps to situate the artist's book with its aesthetic forebears, though not in a cultural or ideological context. Dick Higgins has speculated that the category "might include the not-so-strange

¹³ Roth's work provides the grubby underbelly that is missing from Ruscha's high aestheticism, but his projects (which include collecting pieces of flat trash from the streets and preserving them in codices) are far removed from the realm of mass-produced works which are the focus of this project.

¹⁴ The piece was also published as a codex, composed by Richard Hamilton, with editions beginning in 1960.

but certainly unusual books of André Bayam, a Portuguese from Goa in India, who worked in the seventeenth century" ("Preface" 11). Peter Frank and Judith Hoffberg cautiously assert that "The earliest generally known and more or less generally accepted artists'-book-type works are the word-and-picture publications of William Blake in early 19th-century England" (13). In the history of twentieth-century book production, critics have also mistakenly applied the term to fine-press productions, such as French *livres d'artistes*.¹⁵

While applying the term retrospectively enriches a historical view of book art, it muddies the specificity of the contemporary genre, especially in the context of distinguishing between artists' books and *livres d'artistes*. The Museum of Modern Art's 1994 exhibition and accompanying catalogue, both called *A Century of Artists' Books*, focus not on artists' books but on their higher-class cousins (see Drucker, *Century* 15, n4; Lange 61, note).¹⁶ *Livres d'artistes* tend to be finely printed and therefore expensive books with images and/or written texts by famous artists. Though they contribute to the formation of artists' books, their fine materials often resist the close handling that artists' books invite.¹⁷ Their expensive papers are easily damaged, or in the tradition of William Morris' "ideal book," their scale is monumentally imposing (see Drucker, *Century* 4; Zweig "All Dressed" 2). Zweig sums up the difference between the artist's book and the *livre*

¹⁵ Janet Zweig demands, "It's time to draw sharper distinctions within the field" ("All Dressed" 3). The primary example for Zweig is a distinction between artists' books and finely produced books: "It's time for fine press books and artists' books to part company; they're not even cousins" ("All Dressed" 3).

¹⁶ Many of these books could also be classified in the category of *livre de peintre*; see Bloch 139.

¹⁷ Some of these precious books are classified under the category of *livre de luxe*, see Bloch 142.

d'artiste in a metaphor: “[Y]ou might say that one seems to be a verb, the other a noun” (“All Dressed” 2). The artist’s book invites a reader’s physical and mental engagement with the text, while the *livre d’artiste* remains a spectacle to appreciate from a slight remove. Johanna Drucker writes that “it is rare to find a *livre d’artiste* which interrogates the conceptual or material form of the book as part of its intention, thematic interests, or production activities” (3).¹⁸

Thus Drucker compiles an anthology, *The Century of Artists’ Books*, as a companion and a corrective to the MoMA catalogue.¹⁹ Drucker’s anthology offers a vast array of these more experimental artists’ books.²⁰ Rather than attempting in-depth analyses, she aims to bring a wide variety of texts into the public eye. Drucker’s survey of the field makes possible more narrowly focused analytical studies such as this one.

3. *Reading practices: Ed Ruscha*

I begin this detailed study with a consideration of various works by Ed Ruscha. I reinvoké Ruscha here not to repeat the gesture towards a historical teleology for the genre, but rather to use his work to demonstrate possibilities for an artist’s manipulation of the book form. Since Ruscha’s

¹⁸ She admits that this distinction, like all the definitions connected with this genre, is quick to break down: some *livres d’artistes* have a sense of themselves as book forms, and some artists’ books use letterpress and images to unconsciously replicate the old layout of finely printed works (5).

¹⁹ Drucker has been criticized for leaving out bookworks; all practitioners want their due in print. Though I am following her lead, my project does not aim at coverage of a field; my interest in the evolution of reading constrains my focus at this stage to artists’ books that retain the codex form. In future work, however, I plan to consider the reading of book sculptures.

²⁰ Many of Drucker’s examples could be categorized under more than one of her chapter headings. This observation can hardly be a criticism, however, when I have noted the enormous difficulty of creating stable categories in this field.

publications are generally accepted as artists' books, even by critics who disagree over other definitional details, analyzing his work can reveal constituent ingredients of reading in the artist's book format.

The pages of his first book, *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations*, fulfill the title's promise: they form a photographic compendium of twenty-six gasoline stations (fig. C.4.). At first, the captions accompanying the photographs seem to indicate an eastward journey from Los Angeles through Arizona, New Mexico, northern Texas and Oklahoma. But closer inspection reveals that the sequence is off; if Ruscha did travel this route, he doubled back frequently and took detours. The images do not imitate the teleology of a written chronicle or a real road trip; they represent a more haphazard approach to a chronicle.

Unless the reader consults maps or has a thorough knowledge of southwestern geography, the sequence of the trip is nebulous. The gas stations look like documentary landscape photographs, so their sequence is less important than the fact that they have been collected. The photographs are experienced as fragments of a whole; the reader can look at them in any order or look at only a subset.²¹ There are very few elements in the photographs that are not foreshadowed in the title. The absence of people, in particular, makes the images float in time because the concrete landscapes are not marked by the presence of living beings. The scenes hover in an abstract realm where they are defined by their relation to each other and to the title that unites them.

²¹ The title appropriately refers to the entire group as an aggregate, and its exaggerated literalism seems amusing. Ruscha's other books repeat this basic tactic: *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass* (1968) has photographs of exactly these subjects, as does *Thirty-four Parking Lots in Los Angeles* (1967).

Once Ruscha removes his images from a chronological sense of time, he plays with the reader's experience of them by experimenting with their physical presentation in the book. In *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass*, one or more blank pages come before each photograph (except that there are none before the one photograph that spreads across both sides of the opening). A reader experiences a rhythm in moving through the book that heightens the drama of seeing an image on the page; the sense of anticipation alters the time sensed in reading. Pages either do or do not contain images, and they alternate irregularly as the waves rise and fall in one of the pools.

Ruscha manipulates the physical structure of later books to further defamiliarize the reading experience. *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966) is bound accordion-style, and the reader can unfold all the pages into one long strip that represents the street itself.²² The buildings are labelled and shown in their proper positions relative to one another along the strip, so that those along the bottom of the paper appear upside-down (see fig. C.5.). A reader can travel on the Sunset Strip more idiosyncratically in this book than in physical reality: one can skip over half a mile of street by turning many folds at once.

Like Vanessa Bell, Ed Ruscha uses the page as a tool to divide the text into temporal units, but he gives the reader more power to manipulate that time structure. Bell works with fictional prose as a text, which dictates the sequence of reading more strictly than Ruscha's photographs. Readers of

²² In *Thirty-four Parking Lots in Los Angeles*, the structural change reads more like a humorous afterthought than an integrally significant gesture: the final photograph of the book extends onto a fold-out tab on the last recto. This "postscript" gains its effect by capitalizing on the fact that the reader will arrive at this last moment . . . last.

Ruscha's work have a more active role in creating the time of reading — both the sequence of pages and the sense of time experienced from the text.

C. "Treating" artists' books: theory and practice

The activity of reading artists' books such as those described above is playful because these works are not bound by old requirements. Artists' books foreground the image and attend to physical structure; these shifts place readers in a position unlike the one they occupied as readers of a verbal text. Since the image cannot be processed by a prescribed sequence, the reader is liberated to interact with the book more freely. It is not that words are better suited to depict events in time, as Lessing conjectures (91). It is more that words are read in a specific sequence, as dictated by grammar and the visual arrangement of the page. Images, as we have seen, can be processed in a more random order.

The technology of the codex is well-suited for random reading. Masten, Stallybrass, and Vickers note in *Language Machines* that when writing moved from the scroll to the codex, it became possible to flip pages to other parts of the text easily. Only personal desire and action governs the sequence of reading a stack of pages bound on one side. This ability to skip around in a book is particularly useful for reference books such as the telephone directory, the dictionary, and the Bible (Masten, Stallybrass, and Vickers 3-4). In books of fiction, however, the flow of the narrative generally does prescribe an order to reading.²³ Even when a story is

²³ There are, of course, exceptions to this generalization. *Hopscotch*, by Julio Cortázar, for example (and its derivative epistolary novel by Ana Castillo, *The Mixquiahuala Letters*), invite readers to mix up the order of the chapters to get different senses of the narrative. Children's "Solve Your Own Mystery" books ask readers to choose an outcome for a particular

interrupted, as in *Tristram Shandy*, or ekphrastically static, as in *Kew Gardens*, the reader moves page by page, from the beginning to the end of the book.²⁴

A book that demands sequential reading could be considered a concretization of Roland Barthes' idea of the "readerly" literary text. Barthes classifies texts according to how they act upon the reader: a "readerly" text is one that is so familiar to the reader that the perceptual experiences are comfortably predictable; a "writerly" text is constantly revealing new possibilities through rereading and reinterpretation. It is irrepressibly "plural," and awaits the reader's intervention: "The more plural the text, the less it is written before I read it" (10). The artist's book that disrupts the sequence of the verbal text can therefore be considered an extension of this characterization.

The writerly text can never be completely defined and codified, because its interpretations can proliferate endlessly in a boundless textual universe.

To read is to find meanings, and to find meanings is to name them; but these named meanings are swept toward other names; names call to each other, reassemble, and their grouping calls for further naming: I name, I unname, I rename: so the text passes: it is a nomination in the course of becoming, a tireless approximation, a metonymic labor (11).

Reading becomes an act of association, and of constant reinterpretation. It is no surprise, then, that Barthes writes two hundred pages of exegesis on a

situation. After making their choices, readers are directed to skip to different pages depending on their selections.

²⁴ Part of the transgressiveness (and the fascination) of these two books, in fact, is that they play with the reader's progress through the pages: *Tristram* tells a reader to turn back the pages and reread a chapter; the lack of page numbers in *Kew Gardens* gives each page a sense of being suspended in the book without a place in a time-bound sequence.

thirty-four-page story, Honoré de Balzac's "Sarrasine." Even this writing, he cautions, is only an *essai*, an attempt that is "arbitrary in the extreme" (13), based on one reader's experience and interpretations of the story at a particular time.

To extend Barthes' theory to artists' books, meaning is not only created by what the author, artist, and/or book designer puts into the material; the reader's decisions of where to turn, look or read create different interpretations. The patterns of progress that even the most "plural" literary (written) texts dictate no longer apply to books that foreground their structure and images; the reader must find a way to navigate the open system of the artist's book. As Barthes theorizes in *S/Z*, every reading becomes a kind of writing: by interacting with the book in a unique way, the reader helps to determine what the text "means." Readers gain much more power in this kind of interaction with the book. In the artist's book, as in Barthes' "writerly" literary text, "the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text" (*S/Z* 4).

I call this process "treating a book" to call attention to the reader's active role. The reader "treats" the book through a mixture of choice — which pages to read, when and how to read each page — and chance — the coincidences of how the book falls open and where the reader's eyes fall. I derive the term "treating" from Tom Phillips' artist's book, *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel*. British artist Phillips covers each page of his countryman W. H. Mallock's 1892 volume, *A Human Document*, with a painted scene or an abstract composition. He leaves some words (or parts of words) showing through the paint, and occasionally pastes onto a page

words cut from elsewhere in the book. This process yields a new set of words to be read on each page; Phillips has created a particular subset (or a "reading," meaning an interpretation) of Mallock's words by "treating" them.

The reader of this creation, likewise, samples from Phillips' work. Since the book does not create a continuous narrative, it is possible to glean a sense of the work from the subset of pages read during a particular reading session. The act of interacting with this book, or of reading artists' books in general, is a kind of "treating" that is similar to Phillips' method of "treating" this Victorian novel. The reader's interpretation depends upon which parts are read, and in what order, so the reader's actions become more important than when reading conventional books. This theory of "treating" books adds a physical component to Barthes' ideas about the reader's power over the "plural" or "writerly" text.²⁵ Barthes is more interested in the abstract "Text" than in the physical book, or "work" as he calls it.²⁶ Artists' books add an awareness of the physical structure in which the text exists and the activity of reading takes place.

The idea of "treating" also answers Dick Higgins' call for a language for discussing artists' books ("Hermeneutics" 9). His attempts to generate one lead him to Gadamer's idea of 'horizons': "it focuses on this interaction

²⁵ The physicality of the book can be significant in other types of book art as well. Breon Mitchell writes, "Unlike such multi-media genres as opera or film, the aesthetic experience of a *livre d'artiste* is simply missed unless the reader is directly and physically involved" (Mitchell 166). Mitchell's discussion of this point, however, shows that the physical interaction adds to the enjoyment of the paper; he discusses the materiality of the book in terms of sensual pleasure, not hermeneutic significance.

²⁶ Though Barthes does attempt to enact his theories in his writing, for instance in *S/Z* or *Barthes by Barthes*, these books only create a fragmented organization for the text; they do not attempt to find a the physical organization for the book that would put his theory into tangible form.

between what is out there and what you have here as a conveyor of meaning" ("Hermeneutics" 8-9). The book and the reader expect each other to offer particular types of engagement. Though this idea gives agency to both the book and the reader, it still leaves out the physical book. Elsewhere Higgins offers his clearest explanation of the problem; his prescription for solving it involves simply narrating the experience of reading.

Most of our criticism in art is based on the concept of a work with separable meaning, content, and style—"this is what it says" and "here is how it says what it says." But the language of normative criticism is not geared towards the discussion of an experience, which is the main focus of most artists' books. Perhaps this is why there is so little good criticism of the genre. . . . "What am I experiencing when I turn these pages?" That is what the critic of an artist's book must ask, and for most critics it is an uncomfortable question. ("A Preface" 12)

It is this project that I undertake through the examination of examples. In the remainder of this chapter, I investigate the idea of "treating" artists' books through two examples that continue exploring the combination of word and image as discussed in previous chapters, especially by using the image to challenge logocentrally prescribed reading habits.

In addition to Tom Phillips' *A Humument*, I discuss an American artist's book from the post-sixties book arts era: *Sheherezade: A Flip Book* by Janet Zweig and Holly Anderson (1988). These books both take up questions of sequence, chance, and reader's choice in a mass-market, mechanically produced codex format.²⁷ Neither of them require that a reader stop and take in the contents of each page sequentially; the perception

²⁷ Future projects may consider artists' books that are sculptures, books in alternative bindings (such as a box of "pages"), book installations and performance art, and perhaps hypertext.

of the “meaning” of these works shifts according to the reader’s “treating” of the books’ contents.

These examples build on already published works, either by revising the story and its presentation (*Sheherezade*) or by physically manipulating the earlier work (*A Humument*).²⁸ This relation to conventional text creates the opportunity to look again into questions of the continuity of language, and how words and images affect the reading experience when they are combined in unfamiliar ways within the familiar structure of the book.

Since Barthes relates the growth of the reader’s power to the “death of the author,” these examples interrogate conventional notions of authorship. I analyze the role of the writer and book composer in order to understand more fully the position of the reader in each one.

D. *A Humument*

Phillips started working on *A Humument* in 1966, and he has not stopped since. In the intervening years, this book “has become a canonical work” (Drucker, *Century* 109) in a field that has very little consensus about what constitutes its canon, and has been reworked and reissued in three editions.²⁹ The trade book versions of *A Humument* have gained

²⁸ Thanks to Janine Mileaf for emphasizing this point.

²⁹ This statement refers to the work of *A Humument* itself, which has been published in various editions. Phillips has also used Mallock’s novel for related projects such as an opera (“IRMA,” 1970, 1972, 1978), illustrations for his translation of Dante’s *Inferno* (1985), and hundreds of small-scale works of visual art that include cut-out bits of Mallock’s written text. He also has devised a work whose title and author are anagrams of his original text: *A Haunted Comma*, by H. W. Collam (Caws 7). *A Humument* itself has been published as *The Heart of a Humument* (a smaller book, 3 inches across and 4 inches tall, that treats only the central print area of the original text) and three editions of *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel* (1980, 1987, 1997). In this chapter, I quote from the first revised edition (1987).

unprecedented recognition among book artists and critics, making *A Humument* one of the best known artists' books. As Johanna Drucker writes, "Bright, vivid, funny, and ironic, the work is the definitive altered text in book arts" (Drucker, "Artists'" 31). Drucker's statement reveals not only the flavor of this text, but also its subclassification within the field of artists' books. While *A Humument* is well-known in the book arts community, it is not a definitive *artist's book*, but a "definitive *altered text*." Phillips alters the appearance of each page, but stays faithful to the basic structures of the page layout and codex structure.³⁰

Phillips' most direct inspirations for this project, as he writes in his endnotes to the book, are William S. Burroughs and structuralism. He modifies Burroughs' "cut-up" technique of juxtaposing fragments of words and images to dramatize principles of the philosophies he was reading about in "the pages of *TelQuel*," a journal for French thought in the 1960s. Phillips writes in his endnotes, "*A Humument* exemplifies the need to 'do' structuralism, and, (as there are books both *of* and *on* philosophy) to be *of* it rather *on* it" (italics original).³¹ The pages of *A Humument* demonstrate, instead of describe, the fact that language can be broken into many fragments, and those fragments (or *lexias*, to use Barthes' terminology) can be perceived separately and recombined infinitely.

The result is a more visually oriented text than the structuralist theories generally are designed to address. The most obvious extraordinary

³⁰ Altered texts can also include sculptural alterations of books, but these would be categorized as bookworks and not artist's books (see section B.1.).

³¹ Though Phillips himself obliquely references Lévi-Strauss and Derrida in his notes ("At its lowest it is a reasonable example of *bricolage*, and at its highest it is perhaps a massive *déconstruction* job..."), I prefer to discuss his work in terms of Barthes' ideas because Barthes is most interested in how texts function in relation to readers.

quality of *A Humument* is its visual richness. A foray into the book reveals colors and shapes on every page, surrounding selected words and sometimes creating patterns, landscapes, or domestic scenes. These images often relate to the words on their pages; when the character Bill Toge appears, for instance, there is often an image of his body.³²

I represent Phillips' visual arrangements of words with the following symbols:

/	end of a line within an isolated block of written text
//	beginning or end of an isolated block of written text
~	rivulet ³³ that connects isolated blocks of written text

Thus the words on the front cover (fig. C.6.) would be written:

// my poor little book / ~ very rich / for / ~ eyes //

Ideally, the symbols communicate a sense of the visual divisions between words, so that some of the feeling of the page layout can be preserved in its "translation" into prose.

The necessity of representing Phillips' work in a non-imagistic symbol system inevitably privileges the linguistic elements in the original text. In this book, however, each page functions as a self-contained poem-painting, whose elements are arranged more by whimsy than by correct grammar or conceptual logic. , so that A symbiotic relation between word and image gives an impressionistic synergy to many of the pages. This

³² Toge (and his body) only appears when Mallock has written the word "together" or "altogether" — these are the only words in English that contain this letter combination. On at least one page, however, Phillips isolates the letters of Toge's name in different words and connects them with a rivulet.

³³ In typography, a "river" is a white column that snakes down the page between words in many lines of text. Since they catch and distract the eye, book designers try to avoid them. Phillips finds pathways between the words (that might not have been readily visible on the original page) and uses them to create rivers that connect areas of text. Since these are not precisely rivers, since they most often would not catch the eye unless Phillips had isolated them, I will call them "rivulets" here.

interdependence is stronger than in the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, because here the drawn image determines where the words will be exposed, and the 1892 layout of the words of the page dictates the possibilities for Phillips' image. Phillips is constrained both by the positions of individual words that he chooses to isolate and by the overall shape of the original text area.

There are rare exceptions to Phillips' general practice of following the margins of the written text, but these usually follow the theme of a page. For instance, on page 145, the text reads, "the sound / in my life / ~ enlarges / my / prison / /" and the image represents the text area as a prison cell with bars on it (fig. C.7.). The colored area extends beyond the usual boundaries of the print by a curving line that connotes sound waves. Page 208 obscures all boundaries in a multi-colored wash of paint which covers the entire page and represents the blurring of boundaries during sexual relations (fig. C.8.).

1. *The bounded yet infinite book*

A Humument is a self-contained book, but it is difficult to draw boundaries around the project. Individual pages deal with incredibly diverse topics, but no one image or storyline is explicitly developed beyond the space of one page. Many pages explore philosophy, art, and poetry, often with a headiness that vacillates between inspired erudition and cheeky arrogance. English patriotism, or a critique of English patriotism, is a recurring motif. Though these threads of narrative suggest thematic continuities, there is no one way to sum up what the book is "about," nor is there an isolatable plot.

In this array of topics, character becomes a way to grasp at a vague sense of coherence. A man, Toge, is in love with a married woman named Irma, and their drama occasions many pages about love and sex. Mary Ann Caws describes Phillips' brooding on this topic: "Throughout the picture story of Toge and his trees and his loves, a kind of tenderness hovers over the narration, hilarious, sad, and infinitely moving, partaking of the genius of the child, the madman, and the poet" (9). At other points, however, Phillips writes with wry revulsion about sexual acts. For example, page 256 contains phrases such as "// the hiss of / her cheeks //" and "// gross / gross //." Page 73 is a lengthy account of sexual relations, peppered with the word "ugh" that Phillips pastes onto the page from elsewhere in the book. The account begins, ". . . He was ughughconscious of something ridiculo :s in her bed, ugh" and towards the end of the page "they renewed their ughugh various ugh, ughughuctions." Whatever tenderness characterizes Phillips' discussion of love is countered by his crassness about sex. Even the story about Toge and Irma can therefore take many unexpected turns.

The loosely connected web of associations in the book extends beyond the confines of any particular reading. This resembles Roland Barthes' description, in *S/Z*, of an infinite textual universe. Any particular literary text provides "entrance into a network with a thousand entrances . . . whose vanishing point is . . . ceaselessly pushed back, mysteriously opened" (12). Reading a text closely makes us more acquainted with the vast network, and paradoxically more acquainted with the fact that the totality of the network can never be ultimately understood or encompassed. While individual pages of *A Humument* offer reflections on various topics, they do not indicate what to expect on another page. Every page has an internal

structure, but no overarching final structure provides interpretive closure for the book as a whole.

A Humument embodies the infinity of Barthes' textual network in its composition technique as well as in its textual content: the project is a work in perpetual progress. Phillips is constantly creating new treatments for future editions, so the book cannot be discussed as a static object, a definitive text. In his endnotes to the 1988 edition, Phillips writes, "In order to prove (to myself) the inexhaustability of even a single page I started a set of variations of page 85: I have already made over twenty." In a notebook, Phillips imagines that this exercise could grow: he considers "trying to make as many variants of it as there are pages in the original version or something daft like that" (in *Caws* 15, n11). Since the topics are constantly changing as Phillips reworks pages, the sum of the pages, or what we might call the totality of this work, is constantly expanding. As Barthes puts it in *S/Z*, "there is never a *whole* of the text" (6, italics original).

Phillips' work is bounded by the book form, yet infinite because it is always growing. Susan Stewart remarks that the texts of conventional books generally contain an infinite set of associations: "The closure of the book is an illusion largely created by its materiality, its cover. Once the book is considered on the plane of its significance, it threatens infinity" (*Longing* 38).³⁴ *A Humument*, however, can hardly even sustain the illusion of closure. Its cover never closes completely, because it is never complete. As long as he is alive Phillips will reopen it to generate new treatments.

³⁴ These sentences are the epigraph for Buzz Spector's anthology, *The Book Maker's Desire* (1995).

2. *Fragments and Connections*

Phillips' working methods reveal the tension between infinity and physicality. He treats Mallock's text as a series of fragments, then repeatedly recombines the fragments according to correspondences that he sees or makes among them. While the actual words of any given page are finite and fixed, Phillips' options for how to arrange them multiply exponentially. The forces of fragmentation and connection define a pertinent dialectic of authorship — and readership — required in treating this book.

Phillips makes the fragmentary aspect of *A Humument* the subject of page 5 (fig. C.9.). Since this page is part of the book's original introductory chapter, it indicates that fragments are a metaphor for the treatment of language in the rest of the book. The words on this page are mostly obscured by the image of a piece of paper, which is colored in a light parchment yellow and inscribed with indecipherable red and yellow characters. Mallock's words are isolated with unusually sharp and jagged lines, which connote shards of broken glass or erratically cut paper. Phillips isolates words that speak of fragmentation: "broken" appears many times, as does its nonsense rhyme "poken," which is itself the fragment of a real word in Mallock's text.³⁵ The two appearances of the word "fragment" are connected across the bottom of the page by a jagged rivulet, suggesting that even when language is fragmented into incoherence, it is still possible to find ways to make patterns of sense from the pieces.³⁶

³⁵ Rhymes themselves are formed by fragmentation. The end of a word is broken off, and different initial sounds are added to create new words. This process demonstrates a structuralist treatment of language.

³⁶ The spaces between words could be considered a concrete representation of what Wolfgang Iser calls the "gaps" that always exist in narratives. While Iser means to explain the conceptual gaps that an author leaves in a conventional story for the reader's imagination to fill in, Phillips creates visual gaps in which readers must imagine the thread of connection

Fragments can be nonsensical, but all words are constructed out of combinations of letters that could seem senseless. Some pages fragment on the level of the letter, such as page 46. Toge is surrounded by “/~ the /~ last words /~ on earth, //” which are fragments such as “// utgro //” and “// ometh /~ ribble //.” Phillips implies that this radical fragmentation defines his own writing practice: on page 115, the top half of the page reads, “// A HUM~UMENT. / written by / His own / distraction, /~ hem /~ hey /~ hem /~ ding /~//”. Unconnected syllables are the building blocks of books and sense as well as of language. *A Humument* is composed through this oxymoron of breaking language down and recombining its parts.

While many pages speak of linguistic and syntactic fragmentation, others speak of the possible continuity of writing. Phillips even urges, amidst an urgently bright red, fire-like illustration: “// only /~ connect /~ toge //” (185). This modernist dictum is an exhortation to the reader as well as to Phillips’ main character. The process yields a new kind of sense-making: “You learn to leave out words and to make connections. (Gesturing)” (Burroughs 25). The fragmented language demands the reader’s continual effort to create coherence.

Phillips’ fragmentation represents his agenda for affecting the reader’s experience of the book and language. On page 75, where books iconographically line a shelf at the top of the page, one area of text reads, “// turn /~ disturb /~ look /~ look at /~ the volume, and turn /~ fuse /~ connected / places /~ disturb //.” Each commanding verb is isolated in its

that binds one word to another, whether through syntax or impressionistic association. As Iser writes, “the opportunity is given to us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections— for filling in the gaps left by the text itself” (280). Though I am appropriating Iser’s words here to mean something that he himself does not intend, the idea that the reader fills in a gap applies to the rivulets in *A Humument* as easily as to narrative sequence.

own line, which prevents the reader from following the usual sequences of print on the page. Phillips emphasizes the importance of each of the activities he isolates -- turn to the next word or page, look at the words and images, fuse them together in ways that disturb the conventions of reading. Phillips promises no end to this process; we fuse the unfamiliar elements into "connected / places" only to "disturb" them again with a new kind of page treatment.

3. *Writers in partnership; textual violence*

A deliberately random process of fragments and connections is Phillips' approach allows him to construe authorship as the process of arranging language, not generating it. This outlook grows from his original inspiration for the project, William S. Burroughs' "cut-up" technique. Phillips was originally inspired to alter a book after reading an interview with William S. Burroughs in the *Paris Review* (Fall 1965), in which Burroughs discusses his "cut-up" technique. In the interview, Burroughs talks about the new ways that texts can make sense if a writer literally cuts them up and recombines them in unexpected ways. He describes several techniques, such as reading across columns of words in a magazine article instead of reading down each column in turn, and calls them "exercises to expand consciousness, to . . . think in association blocks rather than words (22).

Though Burroughs is known mostly for his writing, he also creates word-image scrapbooks (fig. C.10.), in which he juxtaposes greeting cards, a restaurant review, photographs and a typescript generated with the cut-up technique. These combinations of word and image extend his idea of

creating “association blocks.” He writes, “Cut-ups establish new connections between images, and one’s range of vision consequently expands” (25). The images can be visual, or they can be verbal evocations — in either case, they can be recombined to yield new readings. Further, the “juxtaposition of word and image” mimics the irrational syntax that occurs in dreams and in some artworks (21).³⁷ The randomness of the arrangement can make the “meanings” seem hermetically concealed from the reader while simultaneously suggesting new meanings. In *A Humument*, combinations of language and images likewise evoke impressions and associations rather than denoting anything in particular.

When Phillips visually cuts up Mallock’s text, he liberates it from its original meaning, and though this “expands” the possibilities for interpretation, it also redefines the notion of authorship. Burroughs is aware that there are objections to the cut-up method of producing texts, because the work of art no longer issues from one source. He justifies his position by normalizing it: he equates his relation to old texts with any conventional writer’s relation to words in general.

People say to me, “Oh, this is all very good, but you got it by cutting up.” I say that has nothing to do with it, how I got it. What is any writing but a cut-up? Somebody has to program the machine; somebody has to do the cutting up. Remember that I first made selections. Out of hundreds of possible sentences that I might have used, I chose one. (30)

³⁷ These dream elements and word-image juxtapositions also appear in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499) or “Dream of the Soul in Love,” which is an influential inspiration for *A Humument*. This book is known for its illustrations, and for the way that word and image work together on the page. The original typography, by Aldus Manutius, features words that are arranged on the page in non-rectangular shapes, for instance an inverted triangle of lines that tapers to a point at the end of a chapter.

A writer is a creator of new arrangements, because all linguistic texts are newly created arrangements of existing words. Phillips chooses one out of hundreds of possible words and combinations of words to isolate in his word-image poem-paintings: language is always borrowed. As Rosemarie Waldrop writes, "The blank page is never blank. No text has one single author. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we always write on top of a palimpsest" (20).

Burroughs implies that the act of fragmenting another writer's text still preserves the integrity of the original images.

Any narrative passage or any passage, say, of poetic images is subject to any number of variations, all of which may be interesting and valid in their own right. A page of Rimbaud cut up and rearranged will give you quite new images. Rimbaud images—real Rimbaud images—but new ones. (25)

If every act of writing is another layer in a vast palimpsest, then not even Rimbaud could lay claim to having his own images. As for retaining, or borrowing, a quality from an earlier work, a cut-up may or may not be able to preserve that quality. Though Burroughs may retain the unity of a passage by Rimbaud, Phillips' practice of isolating blocks of nonsensical language destroys all trace of Mallock's original sense.

While Phillips does not treat Mallock's words as carefully as Burroughs discusses Rimbaud's, the Victorian author does remain part of the contemporary text. The first words of the Introduction express a sense of cooperation: "// The following / sing /~ I /~ a /~ book. ~ a ~ book / of ~ art /~~ of /~ mind / art // and / that /~ which /~ he / hid / reveal ~ I //" (1). Phillips says that Mallock has hidden something when in fact Phillips himself hides (i.e., obscures with paint) most of Mallock's words. The

opening phrase (quoted in the preceding paragraph), an allusion to *The Odyssey's* opening line of "Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story" (Fitzgerald 3), reveals that Mallock's words are not just obstacles to Phillips' meanings; they are also building blocks for the new work. Phillips leaves the original title on the first page, and then pastes a "treated" title just above it, to demonstrate that the new title is a modification of the original.³⁸ Phillips does "reveal" a new verbal possibility "hidden" in Mallock's text, though the act of hiding is usually more deliberate.

What must Phillips do in order to uncover the hidden story? This question is particularly significant because Phillips' position as an author is parallel to the position of a reader of *A Humument*. Phillips has remarked that the "hum" syllable of his title suits his sense that he is "exhuming" a story from Mallock's text, but this metaphor brings up unsettling images of gravedigging. Phillips acknowledges the pain that his alterations might cause (to the book or its author). In a note preceding the first page, he writes, "Self-evidently this work owes an incalculable debt to William Hurrell Mallock, the unwitting collaborator in its making. If supplementary fame accrues thereby to his name, may it compensate for any bruising of his spirit."

When Burroughs and Phillips make "cut-ups," they do violence to earlier texts. Unlike Burroughs, Phillips seldom makes actual cuts in the

³⁸ Mary Ann Caws reflects on Phillips' obscuration of the letters "AN DOC," "That the initial part of this lost or implicit untitling is the word "and" reminds me of Kurt Schwitters' collage around the word "Und" — a way of including everything, all possibilities forever potential and able to join all future encounters" (15, n12). Though Phillips maintains that the new title was formed by the coincidence of a paper folding in a configuration that blocked these letters, Caws' observation is consonant with Phillips' theme of inexhaustible variations. I would add that the obscured word, in this case, contains a gap — "AN D" — which further invites the inclusion of endless potentialities.

original. One of Phillips' few critics, Elizabeth Elsas, writes that Phillips' technique "retains the basic structure of the book, making his attack on the words much less violent than Burroughs' cut-ups" (9). His preservation of the physical form honors the original in a way that Burroughs does not. The connections between word and image in Burroughs' cut-ups still occur across (and thereby maintain) the divide between the two media. When Phillips, on the other hand, builds the image around the words of the original page, he establishes an interconnection that is not possible with Burroughs' original technique.

Phillips begins the book by discussing his position vis à vis Mallock with images of digging up Mallock's grave and lying down inside it. Phillips pastes the following block of written text above the title on the first page:

"// volume And / side I shall lie, / bones my bones //" (fig. C.11.).

Phillips constructs the present volume by lying alongside Mallock figuratively; he uses Mallock's skeleton of words (which are all that remains of Mallock's existence) to form his own skeleton of words (i.e., bones of the book). If the original text of *A Human Document* is considered to be the bones of the dead author, then Phillips continually reenacts the burial process by obscuring the words on page after page — burying the words under layers of paint.

Authorship is about revelation and its opposite: revealing some words requires burying others. Phillips dramatizes the burial process in the metaphor of graffiti on page 44 (fig. C.12.). He deals directly with the relationship between repression and revelation as a dialectic in his composition technique. Phillips scrawls over the page the cut-off graffiti letters, "M WAS HER." The phrase would be nonsensical if we did not

recognize the visual coding of graffiti; we can fill in the blanks to provide the familiar inscription, "M WAS HERE." The "M" has a double valence: it is the first initial of Mallock's last name and the last letter of Phillips' first name. "M" can stand for "Mallock," and since we already know that the word "HER" has an extra letter "E" at the end, we can also imagine that the "M" is preceded by "TO" to make "TOM WAS HERE." To be sure, both Mallock and Tom have 'been here,' or have played a role in forming this page and all others as well. But Phillips registers his presence here more forcefully than usual: this page is one of the few on which Phillips has written new letters on the page.

Graffiti writing, Susan Stewart notes in *Ceci Tuera Cela: Graffiti as Crime and Art*, is generally considered a criminal "dissolution of the boundaries of property" (*Crimes* 229). Phillips therefore enacts his "triumph over property and history" (*ibid.*) by claiming Mallock's text, by obscuring it with paint, so that "his" original meanings cannot be deduced. The graffiti writer's triumph is total, in this text as on buildings: "the public has nowhere to look, no place to locate an averted glance" (*ibid.*). All pages or places are touched by its stain. Still, Stewart concludes, the triumph is "fleeting" and localized; the graffiti will fade or be washed off the buildings.

"TOM" can also be a "WAS HER" — that is, a washer, one who washes away the words that have been on the page before. Usually graffiti writers have their words washed away; this inscription implies that the graffiti are paradoxically cleaning off earlier words. It is therefore fitting that the clearest words on this page are "// old brick / good-bye //." Phillips

establishes the words as bricks that used to construct the page.³⁹ He acknowledges that he is now discarding them, though he replaces them with images of bricks. Tom, the graffiti writer, washes away the old “bricks” of words with his transgressive marks.

Phillips then makes an “X” in the white spaces of Mallock’s original text. He “makes his mark,” or creates his signature, by moving in the negative spaces among the marks that already exist. He reads (or writes) between the lines — or here, between the words — in order to find and isolate his own meanings.⁴⁰ Phillips’ action on the page is sly: he can cut up the page visually without leaving a material trace, or he can create a mark from an absence.

4. *Choices and chances for the author and reader*

The progress of reading (or process of writing) this work is effected by a combination of choice and chance. Drucker observes that all altered texts have this property; the artist must make choices within the given situation of the original book. She writes of *A Humument*, “It is this relationship of overlay and latency, of invention and constraint, which gives the transformed book its tension” (*Century* 110). Phillips’ interest in chance operations reinforces this pervasive subtext for the work. Though usually

³⁹ Words on the page have been considered as metaphorical bricks in the construction of a page layout. In the 1928 volume called *Modern Book Production*, the editors discuss this idea in terms of lead type as opposed to printed words, but the idea is the same: “Printers’ types are, after all, but as the bricks or stones with which the edifice of the book is built up. They give colour to the surface of the page” (5).

⁴⁰ The idea that Phillips creates discourse out of an already existing text resembles Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism in novelistic discourse. That is, in a novel, many different voices are juxtaposed. But Bakhtin is interested in the frictions between the class-influence rhetorics of different speakers; there is little friction or juxtaposition between Phillips’ discourse and Mallock’s. Though Phillips uses Mallock’s words, the rhetorical flavor is all his own.

Phillips has chosen the words that remain, occasionally he takes an approach that echoes the artistic practices of John Cage. On page 99, for example, the page was determined by repeated coin tosses (Phillips, endnotes), in the tradition of the Chinese oracle, the I Ching (fig. C.13.).⁴¹ The word "chance" is pasted over the page twice, spliced together loosely ("// CHA // N // ce //" and "// CHA // nce //") from the random occurrence of those letters in words from elsewhere in the book. While Phillips remarks that the words left on the page, "// something // already //," connote a "faintly Jewish" impatience (endnotes), they also indicate the presence of the text that exists prior to Phillips' work. The chances function within that closed system.

Phillips' search for the right book to use, like his procedures for creating many of the pages, combines deliberation with chance. As he writes in the "Notes on *A Humument*" at the end of the book, "I made a rule; that the first (coherent) book that I could find for threepence (i.e. 1 1/4 p) would serve." Phillips' "rule" is arbitrary to a point, but after that point he retains the right to judge whether the book is suitable. A decision set the chance operation in motion, but he retained ultimate authority over the outcome. Mary Ann Caws recounts the process: "One day he went out with R. B. Kitaj, determined to spend threepence on some 19th century novel in the first place he saw, and found this object, which he has incessantly used thereafter as the source of his inspiration, taking constraint for commitment" (1). Phillips found W. H. Mallock's novel, *A Human Document*, in a pawn shop, a place that was auspicious because it "stands on

⁴¹ In the running head at the top of the page, the letter "M" is all that remains of the title. Even in a chance operation, Mallock's influence comes through.

Peckham Rye, where Blake saw his first angels and along which Van Gogh had probably walked on his way to Lewisham" (Phillips, endnotes).⁴²

Phillips does not treat the pages in numerical sequence; he proceeds in an order that relies more heavily on serendipity than on deliberation. He claims never to have read the book through from beginning to end, and that "you have not missed anything if you start with page 250" (Elsas, 14-15, 45). Still, the pages are bound in their original configuration, and Phillips does attend to specific pages' context within the original text. He creates pages that read like beginnings and endings, at least for the first and last pages of the book, and in the introduction.

At the beginning of the book, Phillips leaves the textual markers that indicate the beginning, such as the word "introduction" and the blank space above the title. Though he does paste bits of text into this upper third of the page, many other pages with chapter headings thoroughly prevent the reader from creating the sense of a beginning by obscuring this section with gouache. The image at the bottom of the page directs the reader into the rest of the book: an arrow points to the right, indicating the direction in which we must turn our attention in order to turn the page and proceed.

These markers indicate that Phillips tangentially connects the problem of reading this book with the problems involved in reading standard narrative. He achieves his transformation of the reading process within the context of a nineteenth-century novel. Therefore, *A Humument* interrogates the fixed, diachronic evolution of plot that is commonly associated with the book form. In the introductory section of *A Humument*,

⁴² Phillips has collected dozens of copies since this first purchase, in order to support his work.

Phillips refers directly to the reexamination of the book that he is trying to achieve. He writes on page 7,

// scribe / art of / the other hand, /~ you have /~ written a /
volume / inside out. /~ a / thrown / Journal /~ the /~ thick /
drama of /~ dead / progress, and / so the changes made / the /
book /~ continue // now / the / arts / connect //

The “art of / the other hand” could refer to the visual images that do not usually appear in verbal text.⁴³ When these arts interweave in such new ways, Phillips implies, the book as a form (or format) can “continue” to mutate and evolve. For “the changes made” to Mallock’s text are not just changes in verbiage, but in the visual arrangement and processing of words.

If Phillips is changing the terms by which we read a book, what is the book becoming? My final example offers a possible answer to this question. *Sheherezade: A Flip Book* (1988) makes a book into a movie. Though it proceeds from front to back, it plays with the timing of the conventional reading sequence. Words appear in this book in unexpected ways; in this sense, this book and *A Humument* are the obverse of the examples in the two earlier chapters, in which *images* disrupted pages that were dominated by words.

E. *Sheherezade: A Flip Book*

This book is a new treatment of the classic story of the *Thousand and One Nights*. In that story, an evil Sultan brings a different woman to his bedchamber every night, sleeps with her, and has her executed the next morning. When Sheherezade is summoned to the Sultan’s bedchamber,

⁴³ It could also indicate Phillips’ hand in the text as Mallock’s unseen ‘other’ hand. Alternatively, it could refer to the sinister side, the shadow component that lends *A Humument* its dreamy sequences.

she decides to thwart the Sultan's plans through her storytelling. If she can convince him to let her continue telling stories, she reasons, he will also let her continue living. She achieves her goal not just by telling him story after captivating story, but by inviting her sister to accompany her into the Sultan's bedchamber. At the end of every story, her sister asks for another, in case the Sultan does not, to ensure Sheherezade's survival for yet another day. The women working together outwit the Sultan, and Sheherezade's stories are eventually assembled into the book of the *Thousand and One Nights*.

Artist Janet Zweig and writer Holly Anderson work together like the sisters in the story, and the Sultan they outwit is the conventional expectations of the reader. As in a conventional narrative, *Sheherezade* derives its order from a story that unfolds, or words that appear, over the course of moving through the book. Anderson writes a handful of vignettes, that appear at fixed intervals throughout the volume.⁴⁴

Generally, readers expect to move from the beginning to the end of a text that is printed on the page in a familiar way. But this book does not follow this trajectory — instead, Zweig moves readers “through” Anderson's words to continue in the narrative. The words become legible and can only be “read” fitfully; the familiarity of the book structure is disrupted by this unusual approach to book composition. The act of flipping through this book (or through any flip book) casts the paper as a temporary and moving slice of an imagined three-dimensional space.

⁴⁴ The volume connotes the royalty of the original characters through its purple cover, with its title stamped in gold.

This book, like others of its kind, encourages readers to flip through the pages quickly from front to back. In most flip books, this process makes an image seem to move, but in *Sheherezade*, the words move. They get bigger and seem to draw closer to the reader, until the space inside one letter opens up. In the space that opens, a new story appears in what looks to be the “distance.” As it draws closer, it becomes legible, and then it too expands until the perspective again falls into the space of one letter and another text appears in the distance. The words are animated by the reader’s physical intervention of flipping through the pages. Seen up close with the help of computer technology, the words become images. In *Sheherezade*, unlike in books from previous chapters, it is impossible to distinguish the story from its illustration. The written text illustrates itself — the word *is* itself an illustration.

Sheherezade creates the visual effect of inviting the reader into an unstable three-dimensional space made of words. Instead of going from the beginning to the end of the story, this path leads into the middle. The word “Sheherezade” from the title page “grows” as you flip through the pages of the book (see fig. C.14.). We are reminded of the characters from the original story by seeing them move through in the process of the word’s expansion: “She” and “her” are *Sheherezade* and *her* sister, and then “he” — bigger, more menacingly powerful — is the Sultan. This observation explains why the word “Sheherezade” is spelled as it is — most English translations include a “c”: “Scheherezade.” The word expands until a space opens up within the second “e,” which is the vowel common to all three characters.

The “E” is also a symbol for visibility, because it is the first letter to appear on the stereotypical eye doctor’s vision testing chart.⁴⁵

This format performs the *Thousand and One Nights* structure of having one story follow another. More precisely, the words of each new story grow out of the middle of the last, just as the (Sultan’s) desire to hear another story grows from the pleasure of having just enjoyed one. This sequence of words growing into legible stories repeats five times in the course of the book, and its format suggests an organization of time that is different from that in a narrative based on a chronology of succession.

1. *Time flips*

Each story signals the approach of the next by naming the title of the upcoming story and creating anticipation by ending the page with a colon instead of a period. For instance, Anderson writes at the end of the third story, “Just listen to this story called ‘Bramble’:” and after telling the story (which is unfortunately not nearly as captivating as any of Sheherezade’s original stories), she writes, “She had seduced him by first telling him a story she called ‘The Bonfire’:”. This technique is based on the original stories’ propensity for signalling the beginning of the next story from within the frame of the last. For instance, the transition from “The Story Told by the Jewish Physician” sets the stage for “The Story Told by the Tailor” when the former story concludes,

The King, when he had heard this story, said, This is not more wonderful than the story of the humpback, and ye must all of you be

⁴⁵ Keith Smith notes that the second time the text expands, it goes into the word “move” — the words indeed move in ways that are exceedingly unusual for printed matter (*Structure* 179).

hanged, and especially the tailor, who is the source of all the mischief. But he afterwards added, O tailor, if thou tell me a story more wonderful than that of the humpback, I will forgive you your offences. So the tailor advanced, and said,— (Lane 327).

The story not only signals forward to the next one, but also contains the residue of the former story's past reference to it. In Anderson's writing, likewise, the frame stays aware of the past as well as the future. As each story is recounted, Anderson includes the phrase, "Or so it's been told." This sentence has several levels of meaning: it not only makes plain the fabricated nature of the story, but it implies that the story has been told before, at some other time. The device also recalls the original context of the *Thousand and One Nights* because it reminds the reader that Sheherazade has already told all of the stories before, and this book is simply retelling some of them. It also implies that storytelling itself has gone on forever.

Not only has storytelling been going on forever, but it will continue into the future as well. The final story (and last page) of the book implies that the process of generating words and stories can continue perpetually (fig. C.15.). A young girl digs up clay from the base of a tree, shapes it into letters, fires them until they are hard, and arranges them sequentially in a story.

As her story grew, the girl began to store the earlier paragraphs in numbered shoeboxes. When the boxes reached the rafters, her father started to complain about fire hazards. The story went on and on. She couldn't help herself. Soon she was putting paragraphs in plastic freezer boxes and burying them in the field behind the house. For all we know that story goes on still. Or so it's been told.

The story of Sheherazade, or the story that Sheherazade tells, or the story that Holly Anderson or her character tells — all of these stories could proliferate endlessly. They spread over the earth beyond our ability to

account for them. The last sentence of the quotation above, which is also the last sentence of the book, again reminds us that this account of story creation is itself a story, that the succession of stories stretches back as well as forwards.

Storytellers through the ages are all connected in the text: the first story that appears after the title page begins, "She was a storyteller much like me." The "She" in this sentence can refer to Sheherazade, who is a storyteller of the past; it can also refer to a character in the story who is now being replaced by the current storyteller. The current storyteller could be the author, or it could be a character who is not the author. In any case, "she's gone. . . . I showed up . . . and started telling her tales. I'm writing this for her." The unnamed woman stands for all women who have told stories and now rely on other women to continue them; the thread of continuity stretches out into the past and the future.

An image of the unnamed woman appears on the bottom corner of each verso. She wears a dress that could come from any decade of this century. As the pages flip, the woman takes off her dress and tosses it off the edge of the page (see fig. C.16.). She is not naked underneath, however, nor is she wearing a different new layer of clothing. Instead, she is wearing the same dress underneath. This sequence repeats five times, and the woman comes back to her original standing position each time a new written text becomes legible. This represents the predicament of Sheherazade: she goes to bed with the Sultan every night, an activity that generally requires removing one's clothing. This act connotes vulnerability, but Sheherazade does not succumb to this danger; she figuratively keeps her clothes on and

retains a layer of protection against his evil plans. Her security lies in knowing that narration will never cease.

The structure of the flip book visually represents this continuous textual production. The space that the flip book seems to open is actually groundless and constantly shifting. There is no sense of arriving at a destination, either in the space of the book or in the narrative: the illusory space that opens up in the story yields another story that also gives way. The space that opens up is the space within the ink of a word; it is not even the hole in the letter (called the “counter”) but the porousness of printed language itself. Language is not solid, although the printed word may carry an aura of historical weight or look impenetrable.

The type of manipulation that *Sheherezade* performs on the text disrupts the form of the text less violently than in *A Humument*. Though Zweig renders Anderson’s text unrecognizable, it is expanded, never obliterated the way Phillips permanently alters Mallock’s text. Both artists, however, physically manipulate existing elements to create compositions of interdependent visual and verbal elements.

The continuously shifting compositions of *Sheherezade* suggest that there is no stability beyond the surface of what we read or see on the page: there is always another dress, another layer of narrative. Just as the story will continue past the end of the book, we cannot foresee that the woman can do anything but continue to remove her clothing. Thus *Sheherezade*, like the text it derives from, is on one level “about” the process of narration.⁴⁶ It enacts a postmodern lack of closure, though it is of course

⁴⁶ Russian formalist critic Tzvetan Todorov “argue[s] that the ultimate subject of . . . *The Thousand and One Nights* is the act of storytelling, of narration itself” (Hawkes 100).

“bound” into the book form. The last page of text indicates that the story most likely continues. Anderson writes, “For all we know that story goes on still. Or so it’s been told.” The production of stories, and our travels through them, continues just as Sheherezade’s stories to the Sultan continue, trying to stave off the death of the storyteller, the end of the story, the last page of the book, the moment when the illusion breaks down.

F. Conclusion: New structures for reading

Artists’ books come in many forms, and one form does not teleologically supercede another. Just as the composers of *Tristram Shandy* and the third edition of *Kew Gardens* combined different aspects of the book format to serve their narrative purposes, each artist’s book makes unique demands on the reader. As Ulises Carrión writes, “In order to read the old art, knowing the alphabet is enough. In order to read the new art one must apprehend the book as a structure, identifying its elements and understanding their function. . . .The old art takes no heed of reading. The new art creates specific reading conditions” (Carrión 42-43). This immense variety of book-related artistic production reveals the individual responsibility that is called for in the cultural shift to postmodernism. In the context of this project, that responsibility entails being willing to engage in a continual rediscovery of the reading process.

Colloquially, postmodernism has been equated with a destruction of meaning. But these artists’ books show that the only thing that has been destroyed is a sequence and coherence that has been represented by conventional fiction. Through materials as well as syntax, they narrate their own inability to tell a story in the usual way. Because the books are unable

to present coherence, the reader must individually find some other way of creating sense. These books therefore imply that in the postmodern context of a multiplicity of possible meanings, individuals must be aware of their situatedness, so that they can sense their power to “treat” books and determine their own meanings. Interpretation is inevitably and necessarily based on what is perceived, understood, and created.

Artists’ books also call upon the reader to connect the modes of word and image into new coherent frameworks. As visuality continues to gain purchase in the culture, it will become more important to become skilled in the reading methods demanded by these works. In a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, an article on faculty research describes Mark Taylor’s new book of cultural theory, *Hiding*, which was designed by Taylor in collaboration with graphic designers Michael Rock and Susan Sellars, and published at the University of Chicago Press. “Each of the chapters is designed differently, even with varying paper stocks and typefaces. Day-glo illustrations sometimes overwhelm the text; chapters run into each other; beginnings and endings are murky” (Heller, “Kant” A16). Though the book’s bright colors reveal the connection between its design and the aesthetics of hypertext (ibid.), the heterogeneous page layout has already appeared in the form of artists’ books.

The unusual design of this book (fig. C.17.) allows readers “to jump from place to place and make their own connections” (ibid.). It is clear to those who encounter *Hiding* that they cannot retain their old reading habits; they must direct their own paths through the text. The forward contains the instructions: “Don’t read *Hiding* as a book. . . . Instead, take it as a trip” (Miles 1). Of course, the trip is too much of a roller coaster for some: a

Washington Post reviewer says that the book's design left her "headachey" (ibid., A17).

It is inevitable that readers will get headaches from trying to puzzle out ways to read artists' books and their successors. These books present alternative models for knowledge as well as for page layout: when even the familiar structure of the codex can contain endless visual surprises, a conventional sense of coherence in a narration or an argument no longer pertains. Taylor writes about a model of electronic networks and the world wide web as a way to approach this postmodern structure of knowledge: "These webs and networks are characterized by a distinctive logic that distinguishes them from classical structures and dialectical systems" (325). This logic can be described as

a nontotalizing structure that nonetheless acts as a whole. Such a structure would be neither a universal grid organizing opposites nor a dialectical system synthesizing opposites but a seamy web in which what comes together is held apart and what is held apart comes together. (325)

The design of Taylor's book puts this theory into physical form: it brings together the visual and verbal modes that have so often been considered opposites. They retain their separation but cleave together in configurations that are not prescribed or predictable.

This project has shown that words and images have been combined in challenging and unusual book designs for centuries. In this epoch, when visual culture meets with a postmodern fragmentation of narrative, it is especially incumbent upon readers to develop strategies for treating the words and images that together form interconnected webs of expression.

The books demand that we persevere through the headaches, and promise new ways of organizing our thoughts.

APPENDIX A: Illustrations for Chapter I

Unless otherwise noted, all illustrations in Appendix A come from the earliest editions of Tristram Shandy owned by the Special Collections Department of Van Pelt Library, at the University of Pennsylvania.

fig. A.2. "Corporal Trim's flourish" in *Tristram Shandy* (IX, iv, 17).

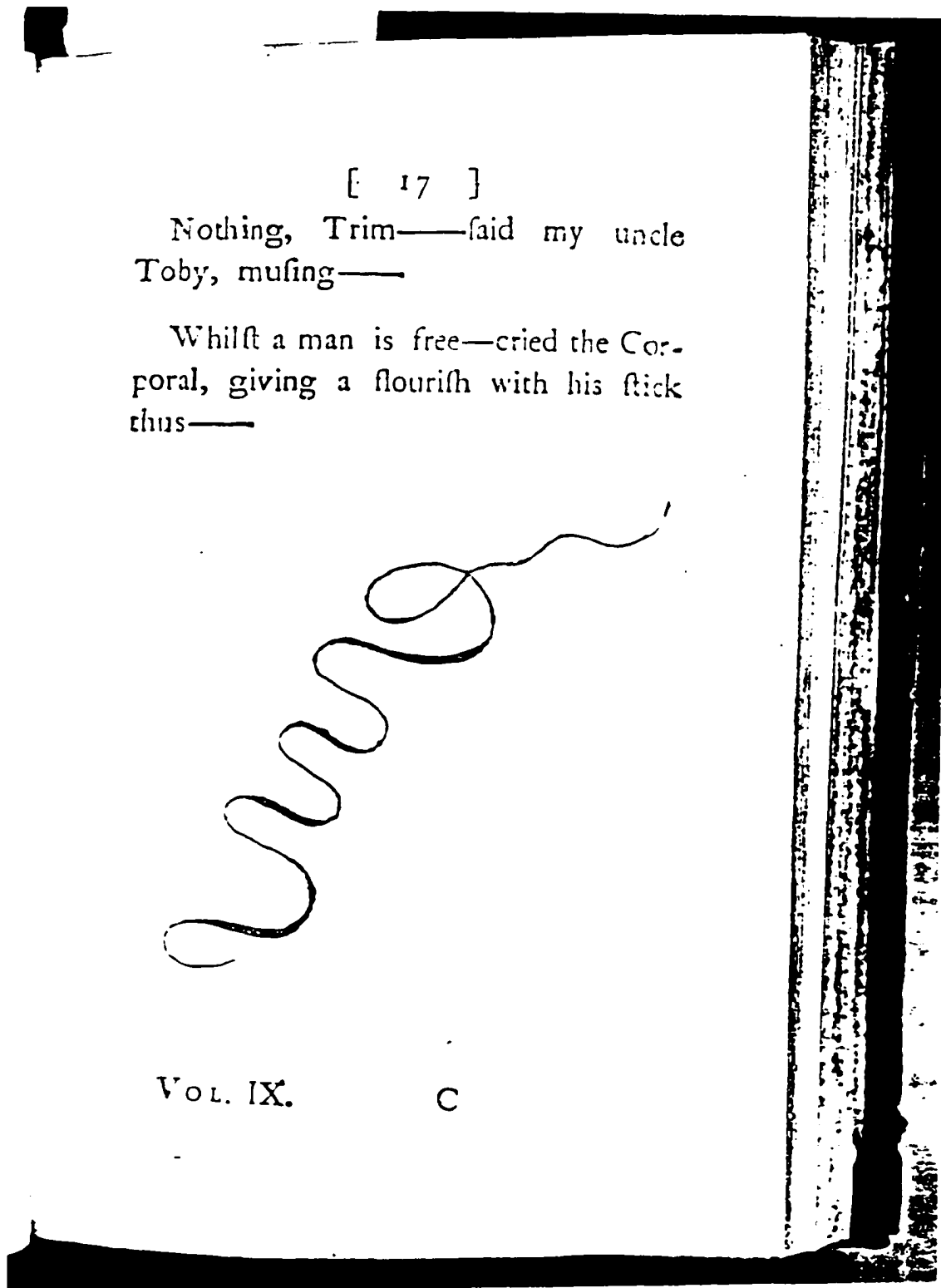


fig. A.3. A marbled page in *Tristram Shandy* (III, xxxvi, 170).

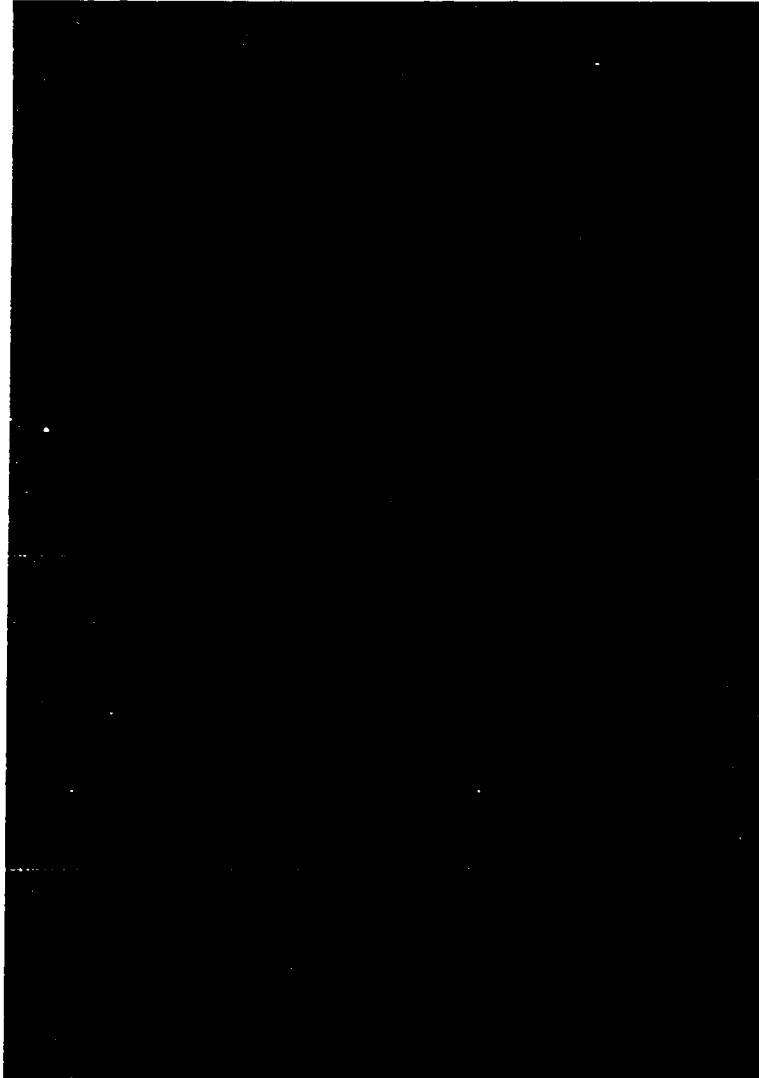


fig. A.4. Instructions to the bookbinder of later editions of *Tristram Shandy*

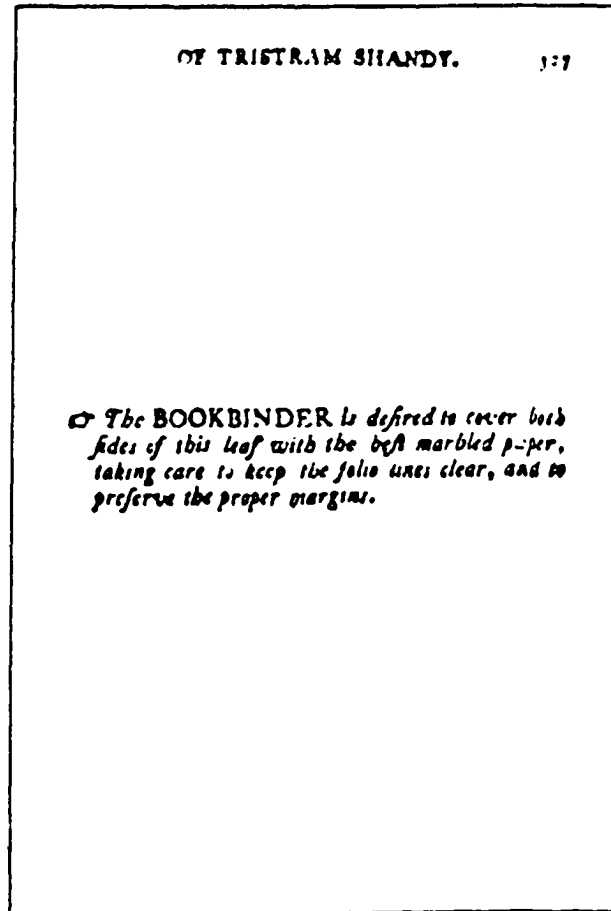


fig. A.5. Marbled page, Yorrick Deluxe Edition of *Tristram Shandy*.

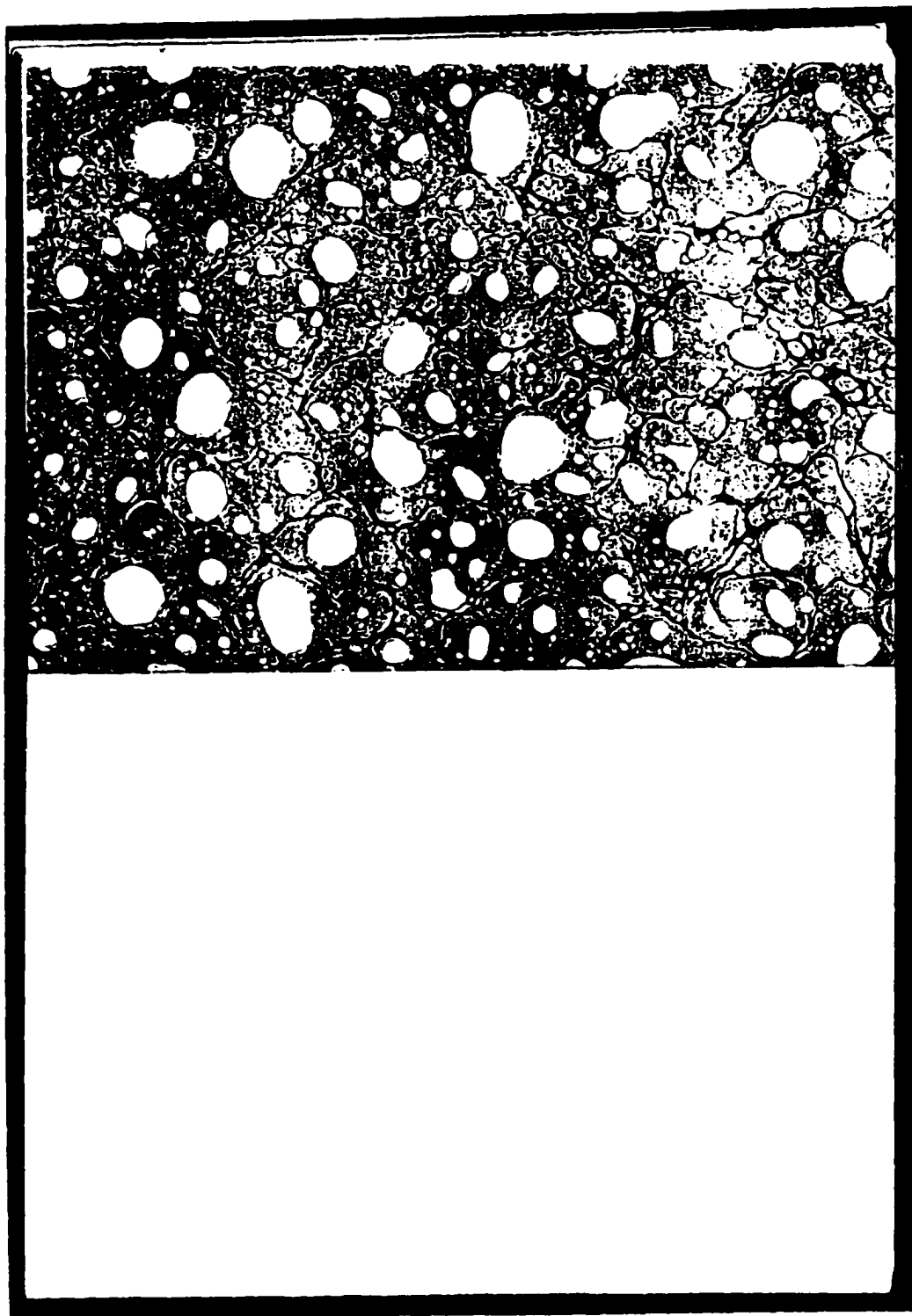


fig. A.6. Marbled page, Monk Edition of *Tristram Shandy*.

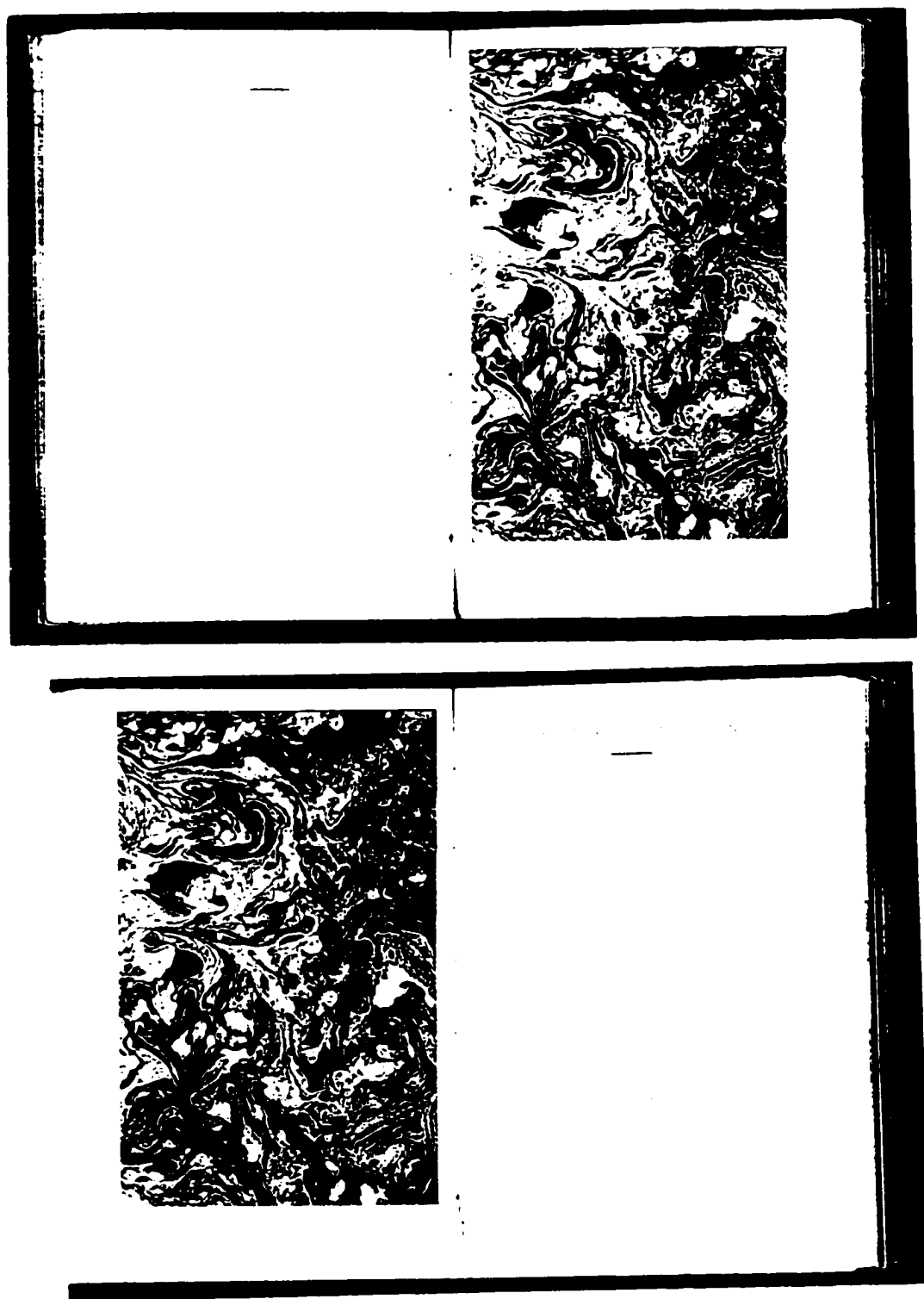


fig. A.7. Marbled paper made by swirling the pigments with a stylus.

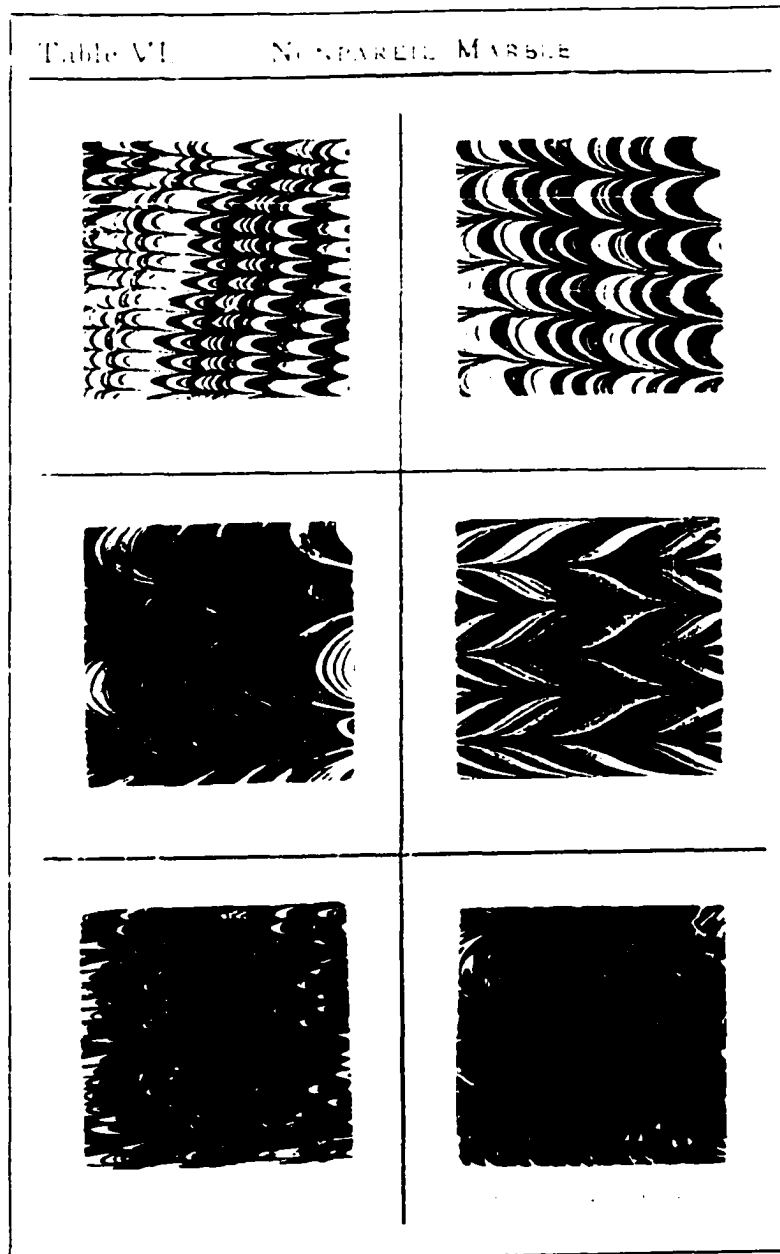


fig. A.8. Marbled page, first edition, with text (III, xxxvi, 169).

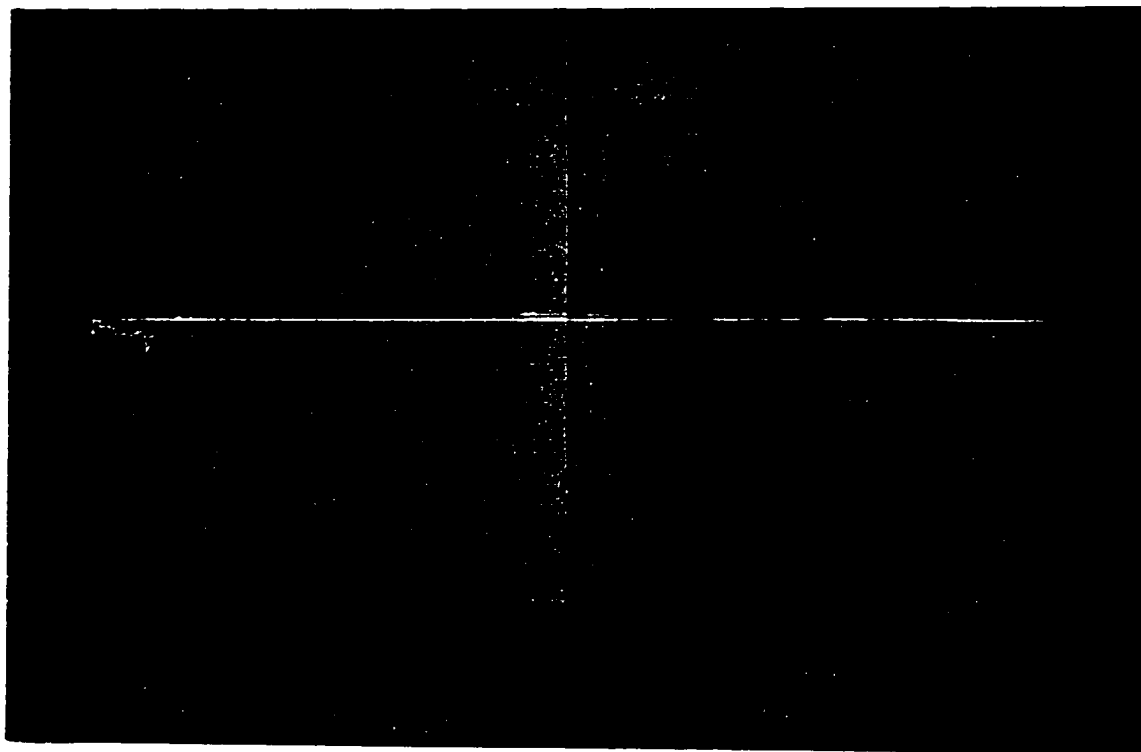


fig. A.9. Uneven asterisks in *Tristram Shandy* (IX, xx, 71).

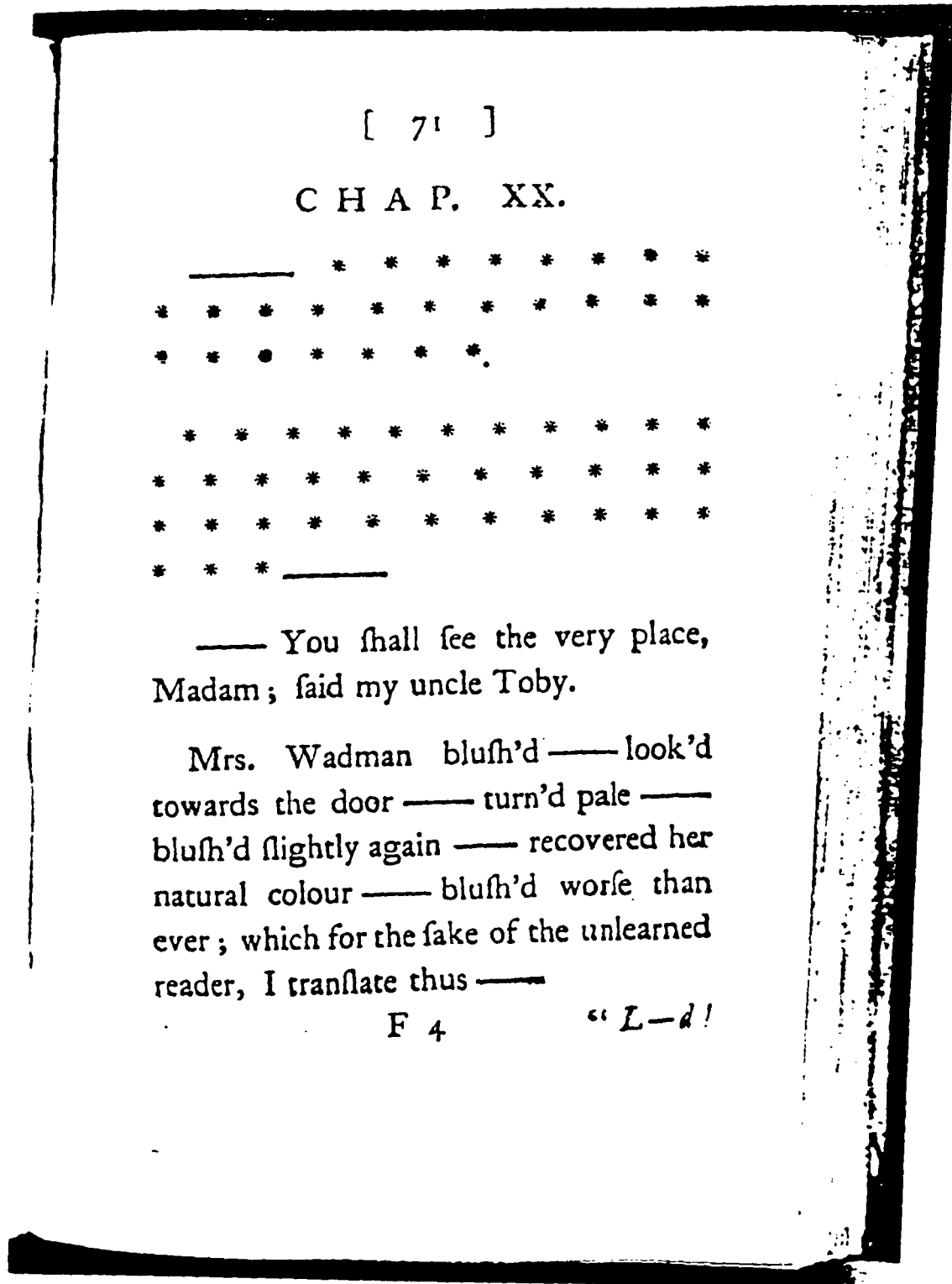


fig. A.10. Regularized asterisks (IX, xx, 440, Norton Critical Edition).

440 • *Tristram Shandy*

Chapter XX.

— You shall see the very place, Madam, said my uncle *Toby*.
 Mrs. *Wadman* blush'd—look'd towards the door—turn'd
 pale—blush'd slightly again—recovered her natural colour
 —blush'd worse than ever, which for the sake of the unlearned
 reader, I translate thus—
 "I—d! I cannot look at it—
 What would the world say if I look'd at it?
 I should drop down, if I look'd at it—
 I wish I could look at it—
 There can be no sin in looking at it
 —I will look at it."

Whilst all this was running through Mrs. *Wadman's* imagination,
 my uncle *Toby* had risen from the sofa, and got to the other side
 of the parlour door, to give *Trim* an order about it in the passage—

"I believe it is in the garret, said my
 uncle *Toby*—I saw it there, an' please your honour, this morning,
 answered *Trim*—Then prithee, step directly for it, *Trim*, said my
 uncle *Toby*, and bring it into the parlour.

The Corporal did not approve of the orders, but most chearfully
 obey'd them. The first was not an act of his will—the second
 was; so he put on his *Montero* cap, and went as fast as his lame
 knee would let him. My uncle *Toby* returned into the parlour, and
 sat himself down again upon the sofa.

—You shall lay your finger upon the place—said my uncle
Toby.—I will not touch it, however, quoth Mrs. *Wadman* to
 herself.

This requires a second translation:—it shews what little
 knowledge is got by mere words—we must go up to the first
 springs.

Now in order to clear up the mist which hangs upon these three
 pages, I must endeavour to be as clear as possible myself.

Rub your hands thrice across your foreheads—blow your
 noses—cleanse your emunctories⁵—sneeze, my good people!
 —God bless you—

Now give me all the help you can.

5. The bodily organs that give off waste.

fig. A.11. Black page, with text opposite in *Tristram Shandy* (I, 72-73).

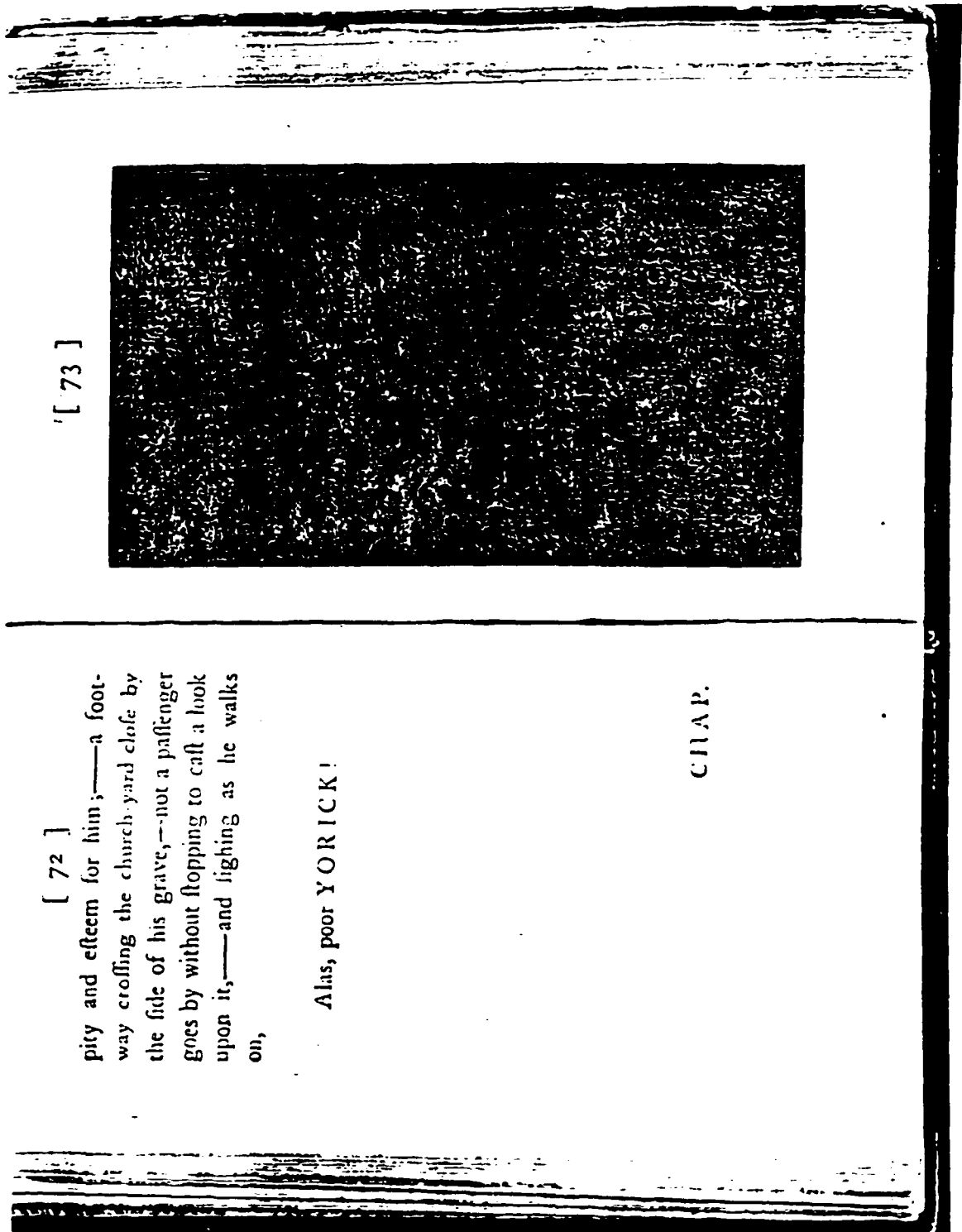


fig. A.12. Black page in *Tristram Shandy* (I, 74).

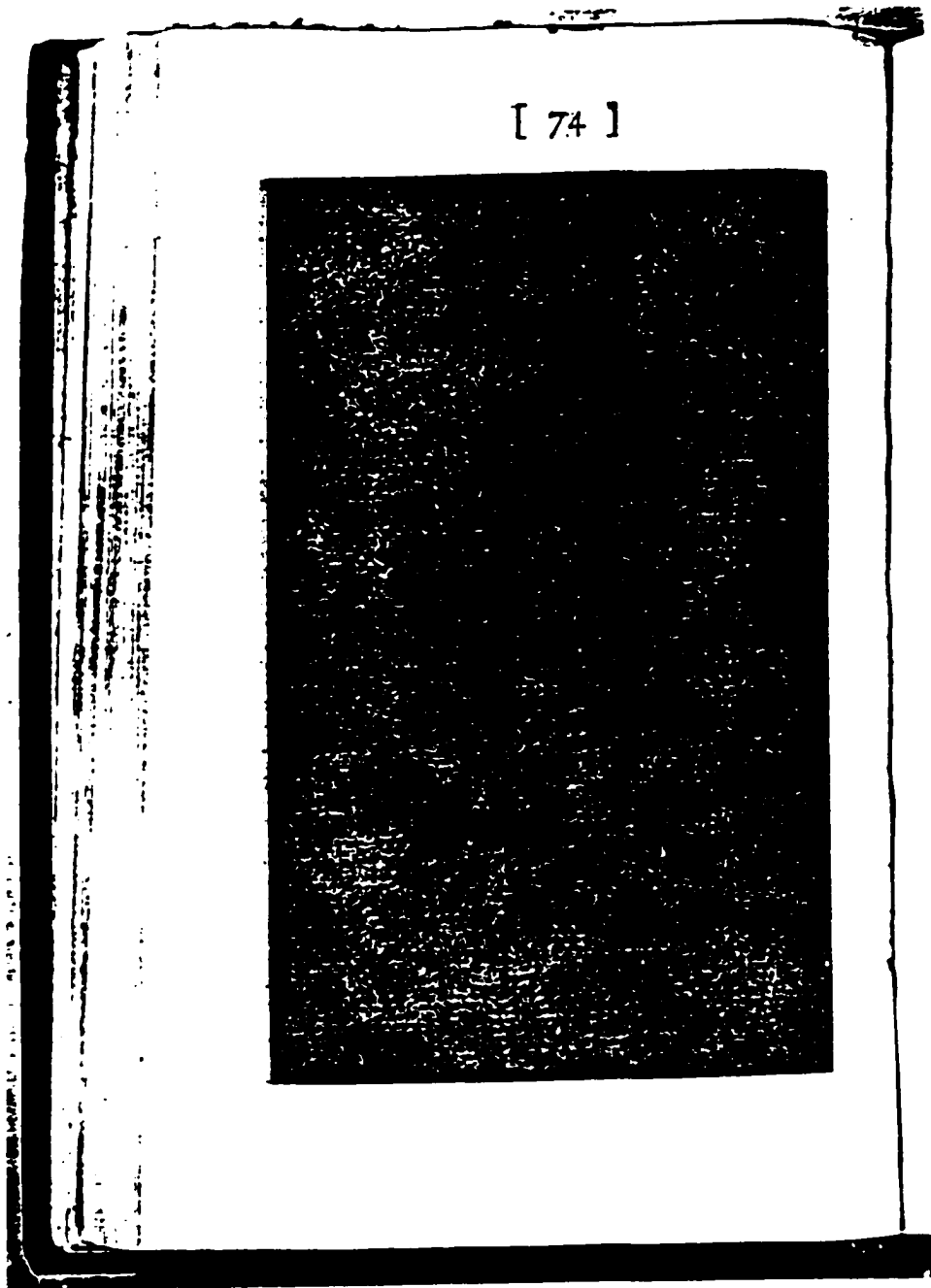
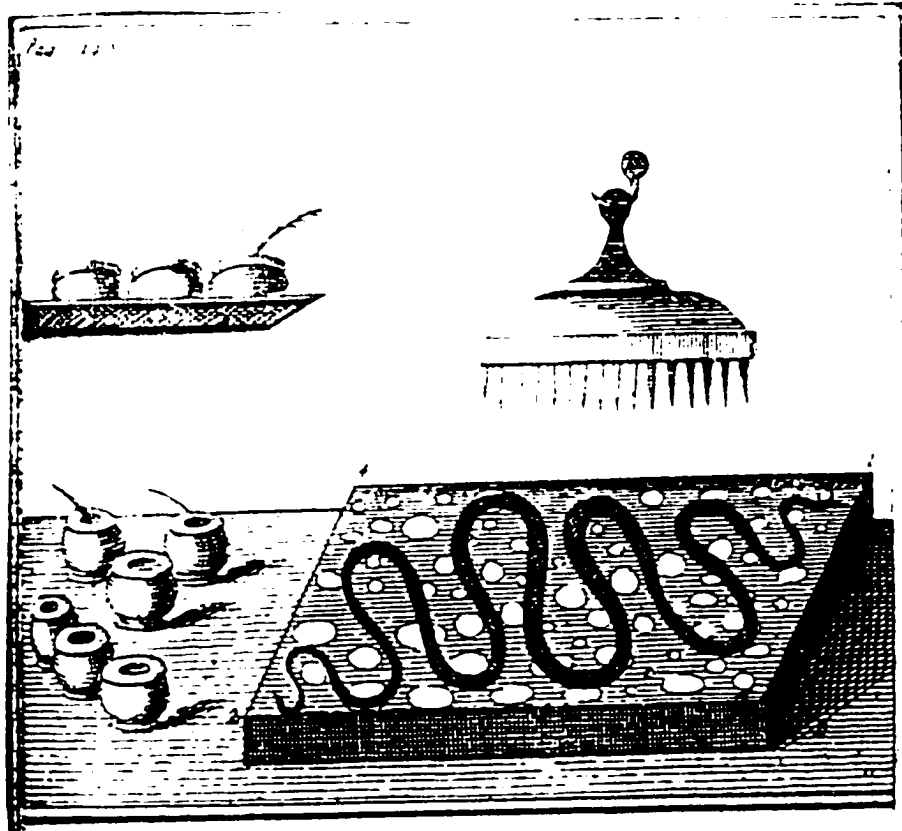


fig. A.13. Picture of marbling trough, from De Voogd, "Portrait" 130.



[128]

wear for his sake—and as soon as your honour is clean shaved—and has got your clean shirt on, with your blue and gold, or your fine scarlet—sometimes one and sometimes t'other—and every thing is ready for the attack—we'll march up boldly, as if 'twas to the face of a bastion; and whilst your honour engages Mrs. Wadman in the parlour, to the right—I'll attack Mrs. Bridget in the kitchen, to the left; and having seiz'd that pass, I'll answer for it, said the corporal, snapping his fingers over his head—that the day is our own.

I wish I may but manage it right; said my uncle Toby—but I declare, corporal I had rather march up to the very edge of a trench—

—A

[129]

—A woman is quite a different thing—said the corporal.

—I suppose so, quoth my uncle Toby.

C H A P. XXXI.

IF any thing in this world, which my father said, could have provoked my uncle Toby, during the time he was in love, it was the perverse use my father was always making of an expression of Hilarion the hermit; who, in speaking of his abstinence, his watchings, flagellations, and other instrumental parts of his religion—would say—tho' with more facetiousness than became an hermit—“That they were the means he used, to make his *ajs* (meaning his body) leave off kicking.”

VOL. VIII.

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It

fig. A.14. The "trench" in *Tristram Shandy* (VIII, xxx, 128-29).

fig. A.15. Dashes after "Zounds!" in *Tristram Shandy* (IV, xxvii, 168).

ZOUNDS! _____
_____ Z—ds! cried *Phu-*
tatorius, partly to himself—and yet high
enough to be heard—and what seemed
odd, 'twas uttered in a construction of
look, and in a tone of voice, somewhat
between that of a man in amazement,
and of one in bodily pain.

fig. A.16. Dashes after "Zounds!" in the Norton Critical Edition (223).

ZOUNDS!
Z—ds! cried *Phutatorius*, partly to himself—
and yet high enough to be heard—and what seemed odd, 'twas
uttered in a construction of look, and in a tone of voice, somewhat
between that of a man in amazement, and of one in bodily pain.

fig. A.17. Two types of crosses in *Tristram Shandy* (II, 62; V, 10).

What could Dr. *Slop* do?—He cross'd himself † — Pugh! — but the doctor, Sir, was a Papist.—No matter; he had better have kept hold of the pummel. He had so;—nay, as it happened, he had better have done nothing at all;—for in crossing himself he let go his whip,—

The queen went directly to her oratory, musing all the way, as she walked through the gallery, upon the subject; turning it this way and that way in her fancy——*Ave Maria* †—what can *La Fosseuse* mean? said she, kneeling down upon the cushion.

fig. A.18. Sterne's signature on the first page of Volume VII.

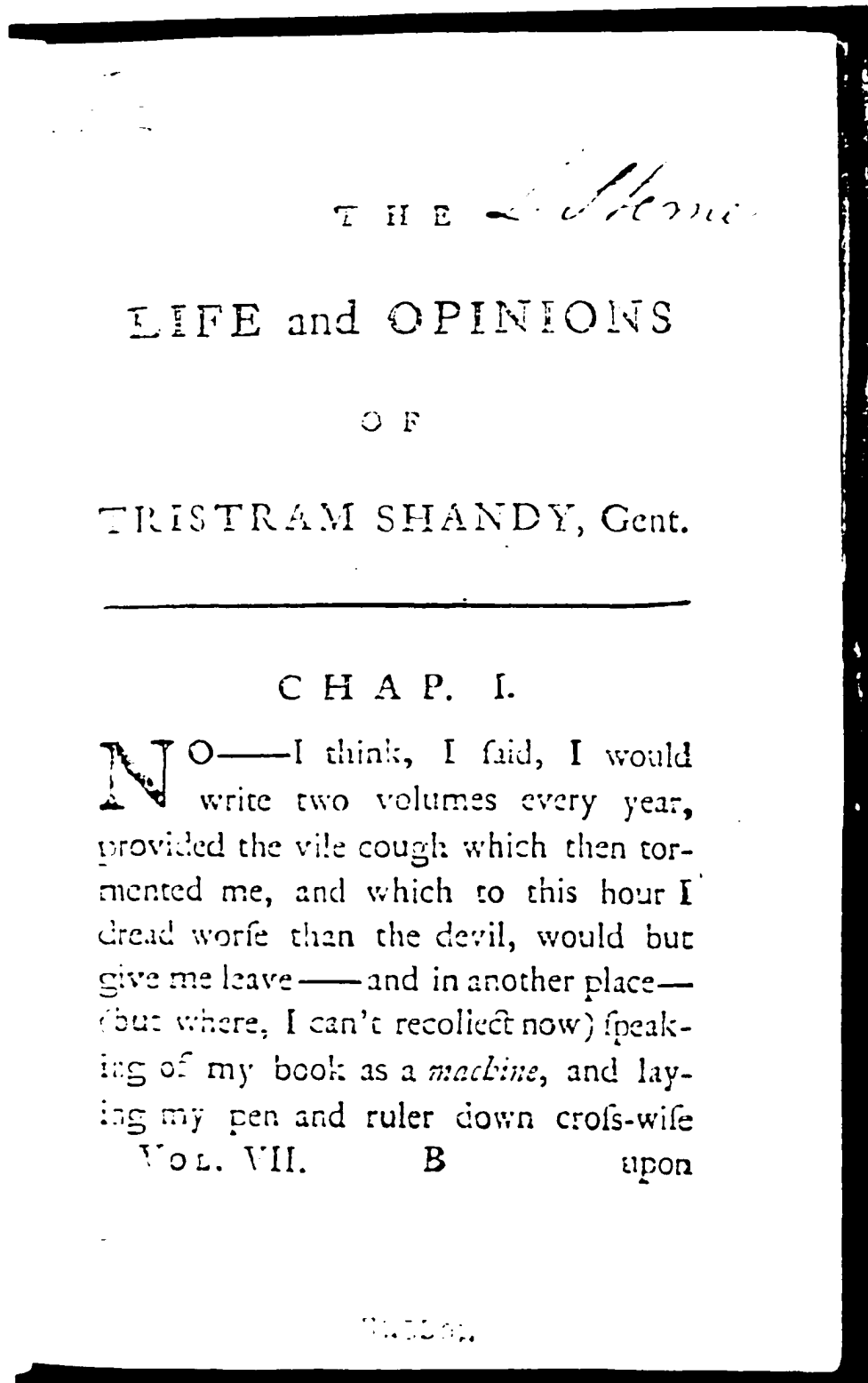


fig. A.19. One type of index finger in *Tristram Shandy* (III, 109).

As for great wigs, upon which I may be thought to have spoken my mind too freely, — I beg leave to qualify whatever has been unguardedly said to their dispraise or prejudice, by one general declaration — That I have no abhorrence whatever, nor do I detest and abjure either great wigs or long beards, — any further than when I see they are bespoke and let grow on purpose to carry on this self-same imposture — for any purpose, — peace be with them; — ✂ mark only, — I write not for them.

fig. A.20. The blank page, with text opposite in *Tristram Shandy* (VI, xxxviii, 146-47).

[146]

—And possibly, gentle reader, with such a temptation—*to* wouldst thou: For never did thy eyes behold, or thy concupiscence cover any thing in this world, more concupiscible than widow *Madman*.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

TO conceive this right,—call for pen and ink—here's paper ready to your hand.—Sit down, Sir, paint her to your own mind—as like your miltrels as you can—as unlike your wife as your conscience will let you—'tis all one to me—please but your own fancy in it.

[147]

fig. A.21. "Alas, poor YORICK!" in a box in *Tristram Shandy* (I, xii. 71).

[71]

closed them,—and never opened them more.

He lies buried in a corner of his church-yard, in the parish of——, under a plain marble slab, which his friend *Eugenius*, by leave of his executors, laid upon his grave, with no more than these three words of inscription serving both for his epitaph and elegy.

Alas, poor YORICK!

Ten times in a day has *Yorick's* ghost the consolation to hear his monumental inscription read over with such a variety of plaintive tones, as denote a general

E 4

pity

fig. A.22. Blank space on an undistinguished text page in *Tristram Shandy* (IX, xvi, 64-65).

[64]

poral was mounting up the three steps before the door — he hem'd twice — a portion of my uncle Toby's most modest spirits fled, at each expulsion, towards the Corporal; he stood with the rapper of the door suspended for a full minute in his hand, he scarce knew why. Bridget stood perdue within, with her finger and her thumb upon the latch, benumb'd with expectation; and Mrs. Wadman, with an eye ready to be deflowered again, sat breathless behind the window-curtain of her bed-chamber, watching their approach.

Trim! said my uncle Toby — but as he articulated the word, the minute expired, and Trim let fall the rapper.

1

My

[65]

My uncle Toby perceiving that all hopes of a conference were knock'd on the head by it — whistled Lillabullero.

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APPENDIX B: Illustrations for Chapter II

Unless otherwise noted, all illustrations in Appendix B come from the third edition of Kew Gardens (London: Hogarth Press, 1927).

fig. B.1. Four woodcuts by Dora Carrington, *Two Stories*, London: Hogarth Press, 1917.

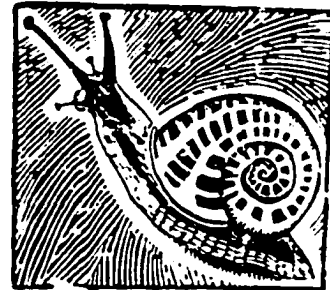


THE MARK ON THE WALL

By VIRGINIA WOOLF

It was the morning of the first day of the week, and the sun was shining brightly on the water in the garden. The water was so clear that the bottom of the garden was visible. The water was so clear that the bottom of the garden was visible. The water was so clear that the bottom of the garden was visible.

THE MARK ON THE WALL
 "Though" it is a great thing, the mark on the wall is not a great thing. It is a great thing, but it is not a great thing. It is a great thing, but it is not a great thing. It is a great thing, but it is not a great thing.



THREE JEWS

"God, I want to marry a girl—a really nice girl—but she's not one of us. Will you give me your permission and blessing?" "Well, I don't believe in it. Our women are so good, better than Christian women. Aren't they so beautiful, so clever, so good wives?" I know my poor mother. God rest her soul, used to say "My son, if you come to me and say you want to marry a good girl, a Jewess, I don't care whether she hasn't a Christian to her name. I'll welcome her—but if you marry a Christian, if she's as rich as Solomon, I've done with you—don't you ever dare to come into my house again." Well, I don't go as far as that, though I understand it. Times change. I might have received his wife, even though she was a Goy. But a servant girl who washed my dishes, I couldn't do it. One must have some dignity.

He stood there upright, stern, noble, a battered scarer, I said that, but immovable under his steady black coat. I couldn't offer him a shilling. I shook his hand, and left him brooding over his son and his graves.



fig. B.2. "The sugar conversation" woodcut by Vanessa Bell, *Kew Gardens* first edition, Richmond: Hogarth Press, 1919.



fig. B.3. First page, *Kew Gardens*.

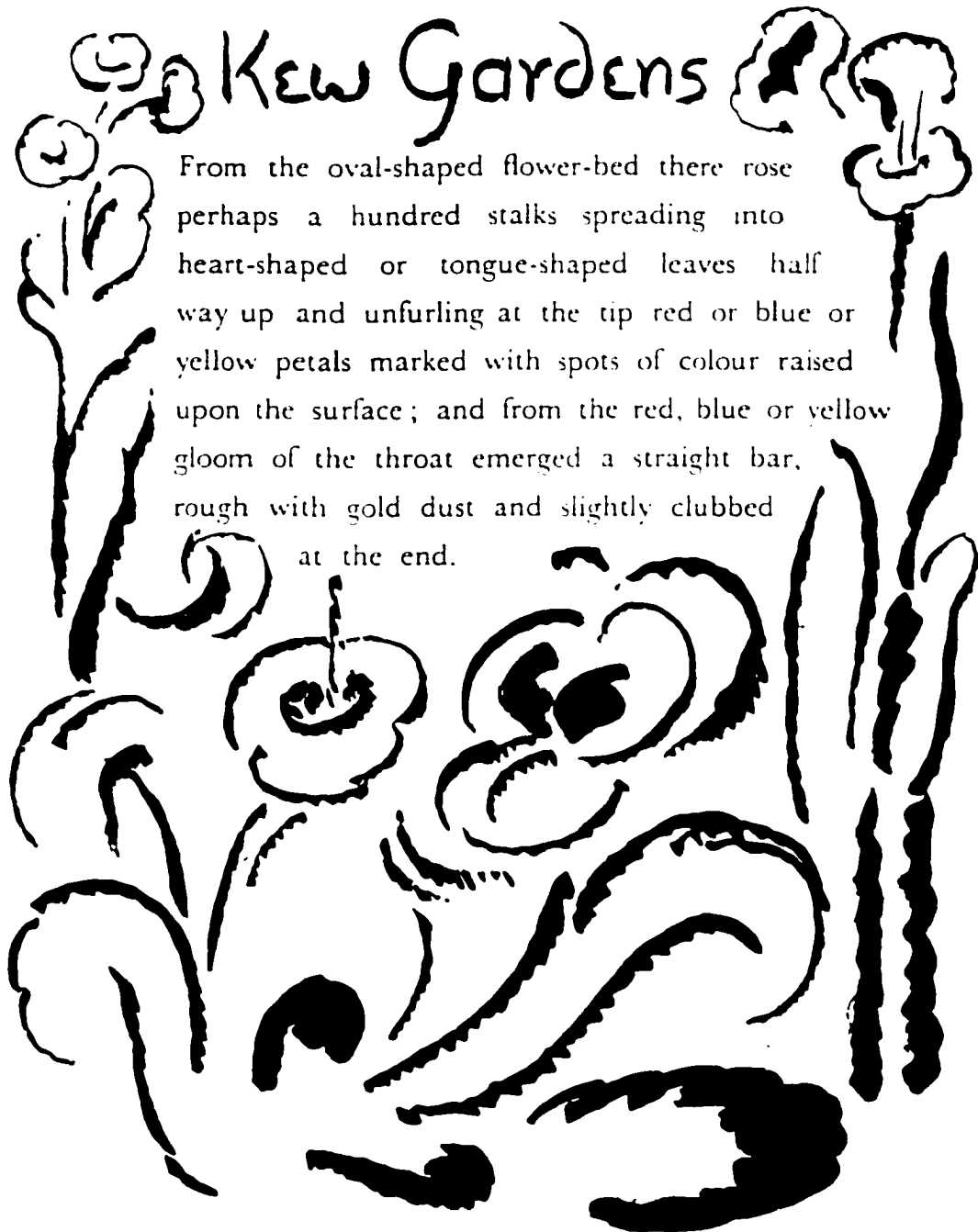
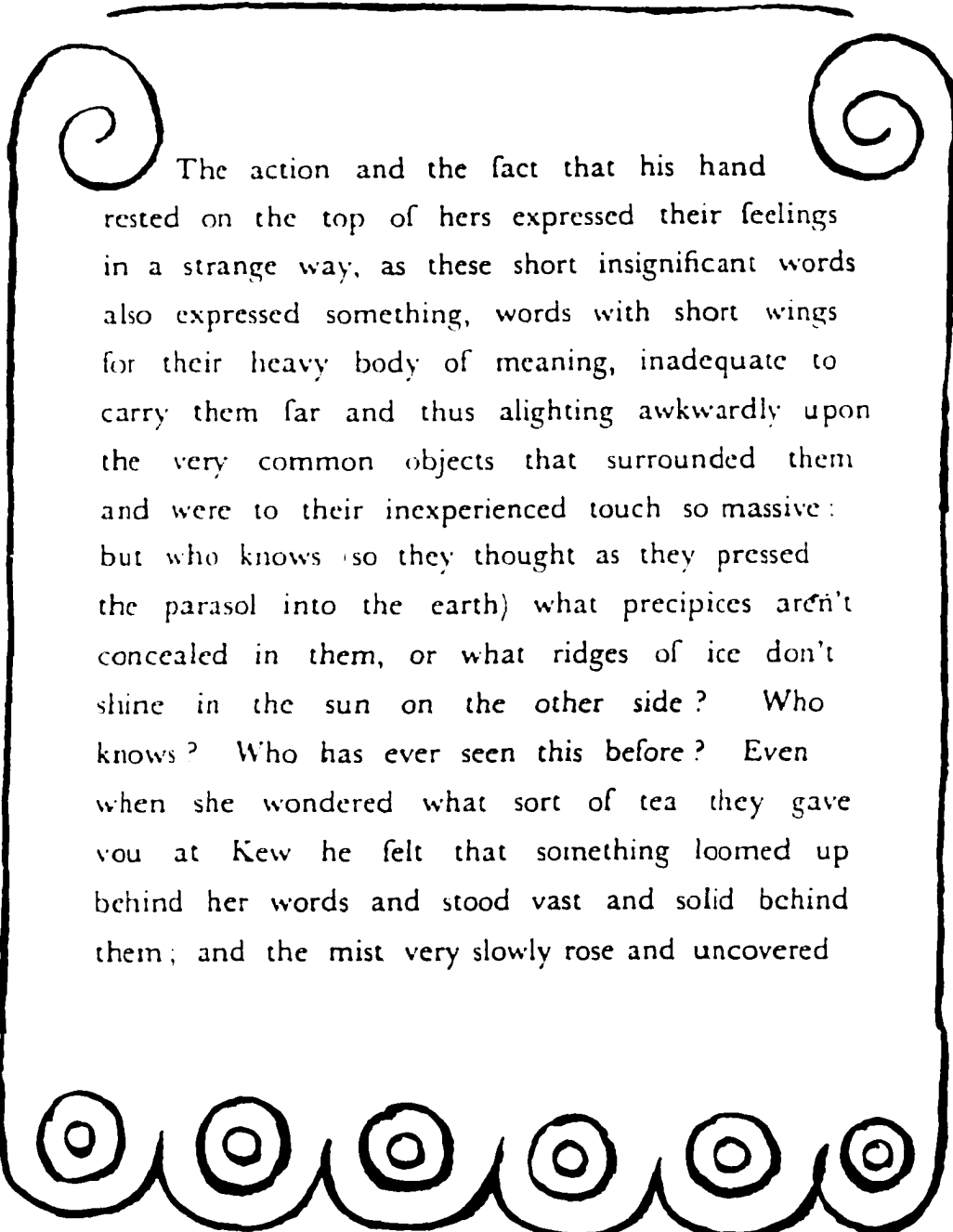


fig. B.4. Sixteenth page, *Kew Gardens*.



The action and the fact that his hand rested on the top of hers expressed their feelings in a strange way, as these short insignificant words also expressed something, words with short wings for their heavy body of meaning, inadequate to carry them far and thus alighting awkwardly upon the very common objects that surrounded them and were to their inexperienced touch so massive: but who knows (so they thought as they pressed the parasol into the earth) what precipices aren't concealed in them, or what ridges of ice don't shine in the sun on the other side? Who knows? Who has ever seen this before? Even when she wondered what sort of tea they gave you at Kew he felt that something loomed up behind her words and stood vast and solid behind them; and the mist very slowly rose and uncovered

fig. B.5. Seventeenth page, *Kew Gardens*.

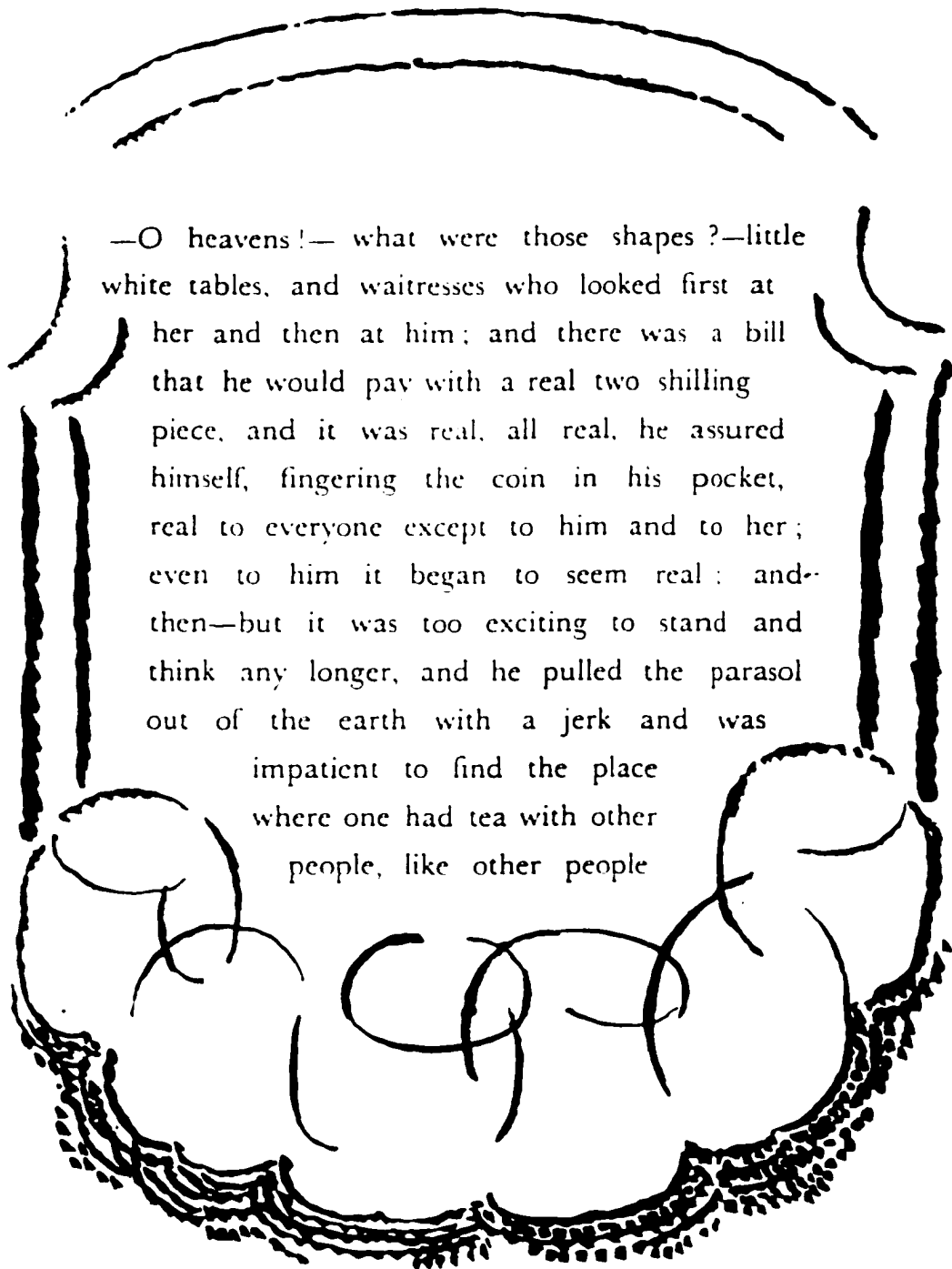


fig. B.6. Fourth page, *Kew Gardens*.

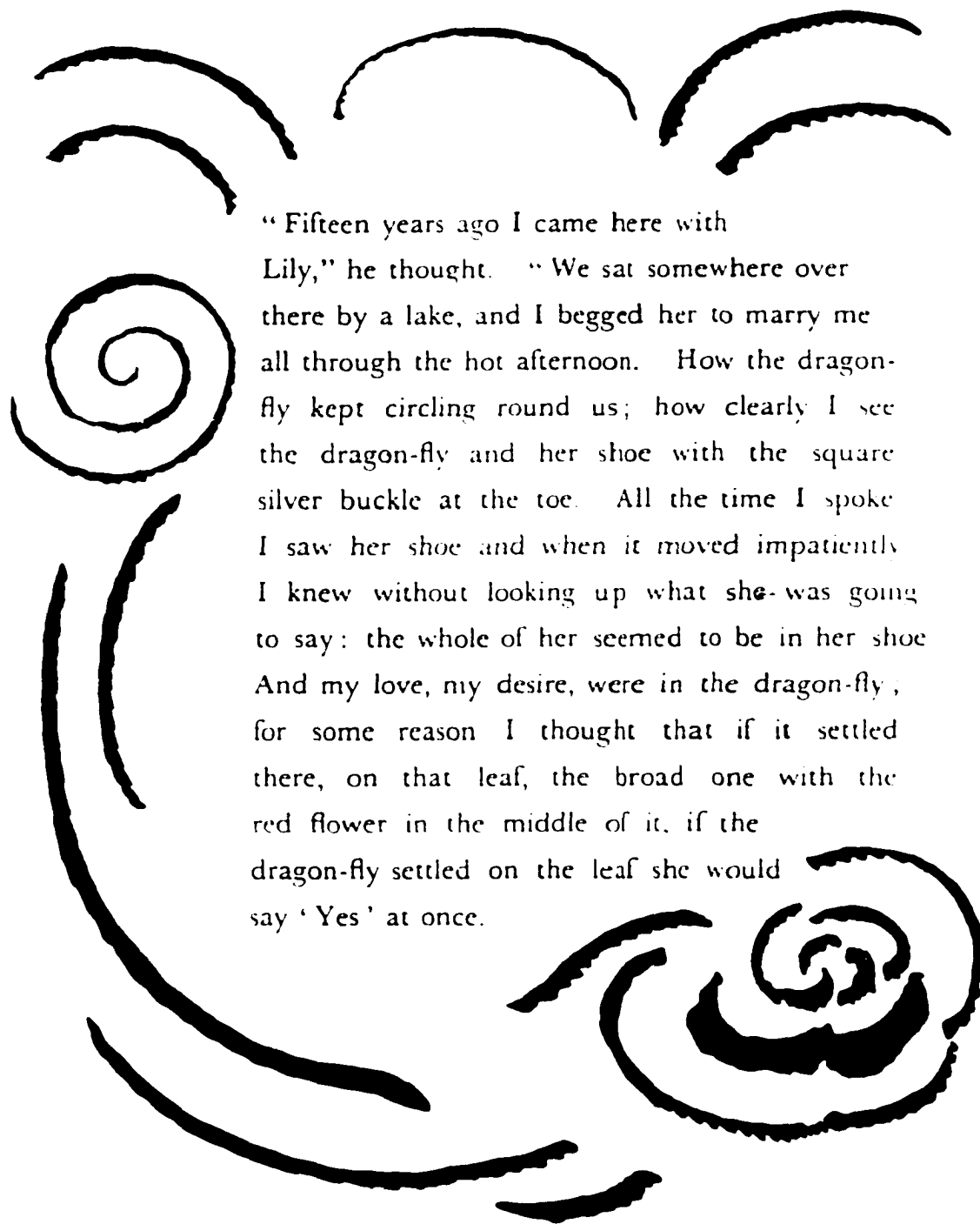
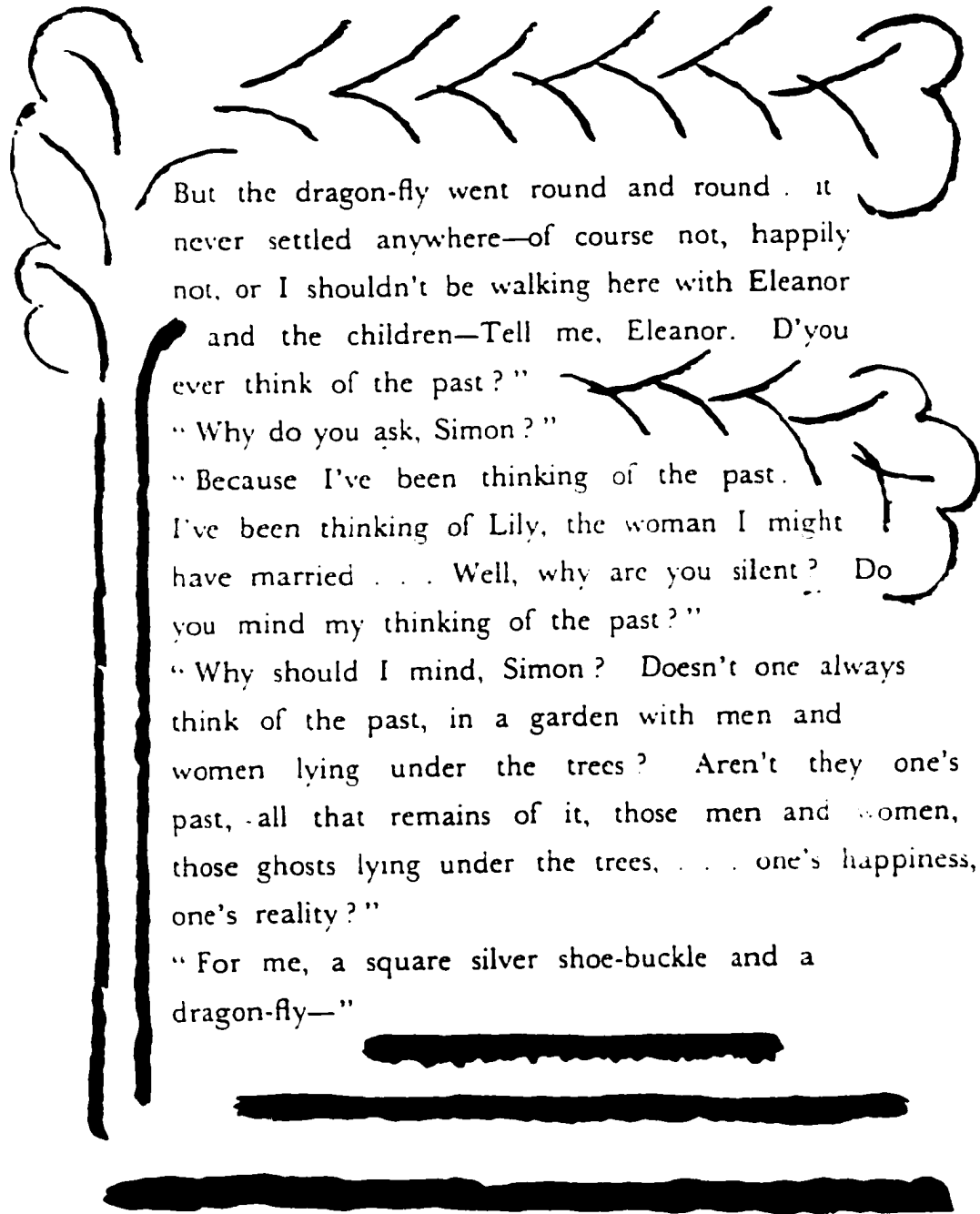


fig. B.7. Fifth page, *Kew Gardens*.



But the dragon-fly went round and round . it never settled anywhere—of course not, happily not, or I shouldn't be walking here with Eleanor and the children—Tell me, Eleanor. D'you ever think of the past ? ”

“ Why do you ask, Simon ? ”

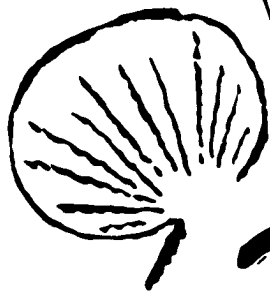
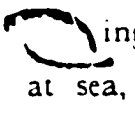
“ Because I've been thinking of the past. I've been thinking of Lily, the woman I might have married . . . Well, why are you silent ? Do you mind my thinking of the past ? ”

“ Why should I mind, Simon ? Doesn't one always think of the past, in a garden with men and women lying under the trees ? Aren't they one's past, -all that remains of it, those men and women, those ghosts lying under the trees, . . . one's happiness, one's reality ? ”

“ For me, a square silver shoe-buckle and a dragon-fly—”

fig. B.8. Eleventh page, *Kew Gardens*.

Here he seemed to have caught sight of a woman's dress in the distance, which in the shade looked a purple black. He took off his hat, placed his hand upon his heart, and hurried towards her muttering and gesticulating feverishly. But William caught him by the sleeve and touched a flower with the tip of his walking-stick in order to divert the old man's attention. After looking at it for a moment in some confusion the old man bent his ear to it and seemed to answer a voice speaking from




it, for he began talking about the forests of Uruguay which he had visited hundreds of years ago in company with the most beautiful young woman in Europe. He could be heard murmuring about forests of Uruguay blanketed with the wax petals of tropical roses, nightingales, sea beaches, mermaids, and women drowned at sea, as he suffered himself to be moved on by William, upon whose face the look of stoical patience grew slowly deeper and deeper. 

fig. B.9. Tenth page, *Kew Gardens*.

He was talking about spirits—the spirits of the dead, who, according to him, were even now telling him all sorts of odd things about their experiences in Heaven.

“Heaven was known to the ancients as Thessaly, William, and now, with this war, the spirit matter is rolling between the hills like thunder.” He paused, seemed to listen, smiled, jerked his head and continued:—

“You have a small electric battery and a piece of rubber to insulate the wire—isolate?—insulate?—well, we’ll skip the details, no good going into details that wouldn’t be understood—and in short the little machine stands in any convenient position by the head of the bed, we will say, on a neat mahogany stand. All arrangements being properly fixed by workmen under my direction, the widow applies her ear and summons the spirit by sign as agreed, Women! Widows! Women in black—”



fig. B.10. Page of Kew Gardens accounts, from Leonard's first Hogarth Press Account Book (Osthus, appendix).

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Kew Gardens (cont)

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fig. B.11. Diagram of metal type, in Adrian Wilson, *The Design of Books*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993.

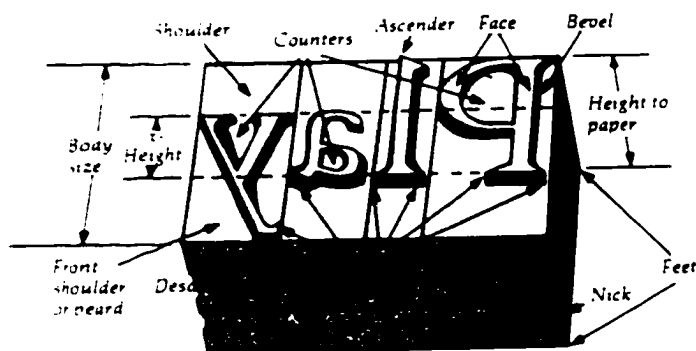
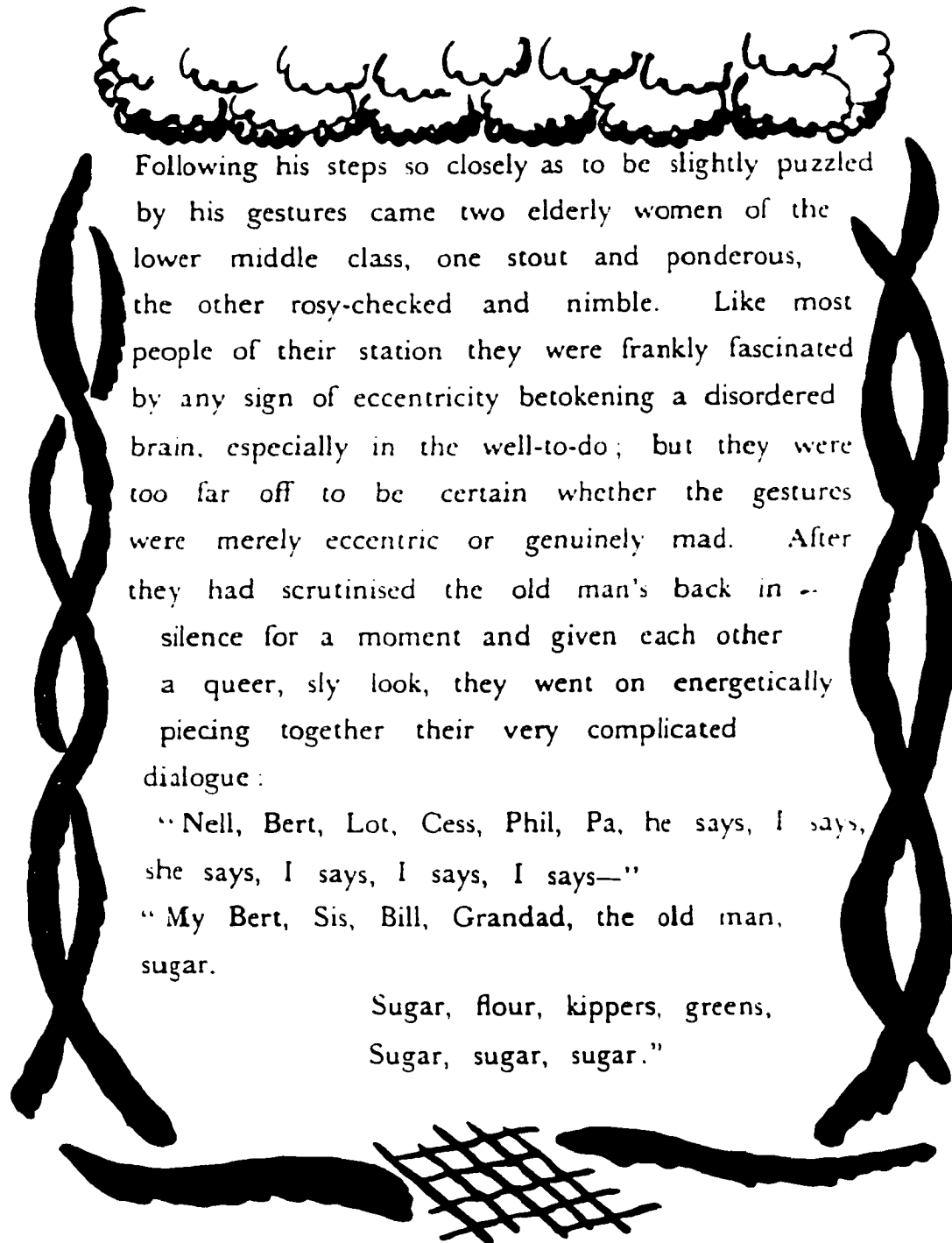


fig. B.12. Twelfth page, *Kew Gardens*.



Following his steps so closely as to be slightly puzzled by his gestures came two elderly women of the lower middle class, one stout and ponderous, the other rosy-checked and nimble. Like most people of their station they were frankly fascinated by any sign of eccentricity betokening a disordered brain, especially in the well-to-do; but they were too far off to be certain whether the gestures were merely eccentric or genuinely mad. After they had scrutinised the old man's back in -- silence for a moment and given each other a queer, sly look, they went on energetically piecing together their very complicated dialogue:

“Nell, Bert, Lot, Cess, Phil, Pa, he says, I says, she says, I says, I says, I says—”

“My Bert, Sis, Bill, Grandad, the old man, sugar.

Sugar, flour, kippers, greens,
Sugar, sugar, sugar.”

fig. B.13. Letter from Herbert Reich to Leonard Woolf about the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, 30 August 1927 (Osthus, appendix).

Managing Director
PERCY R. BLACKMORE



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MAGAZINE, BOOK, COLOUR
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PROCESS ENGRAVERS

Estimate

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The Hogarth Press,
52 Tavistock Square, W. C.

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KEW GARDENS BOOK.

To setting up 23 pages of type, ~~XXXXXX~~
submitting proofs for you to paste in
originals for block making, supplying
paper, and printing 7 formes of
4 blocks and 4 blanks including Title
and half title.

500 copies £64.

Blocks to be changed at the usual
schedule rates.

This Estimate is based on today's current cost of production and on the usual trade conditions stated
overleaf. Should the cost have risen since the date of this estimate, the price will be increased.

fig. B.14. Letter from Leonard Woolf to Herbert Reich about the third edition of *Kew Gardens*, 27 August 1927 (Osthus, appendix).



Herbert Reich Limited
43 Belvedere Road
S.E.1

27 August, 1927

Dear Sirs,

WOOLF: KEW GARDENS

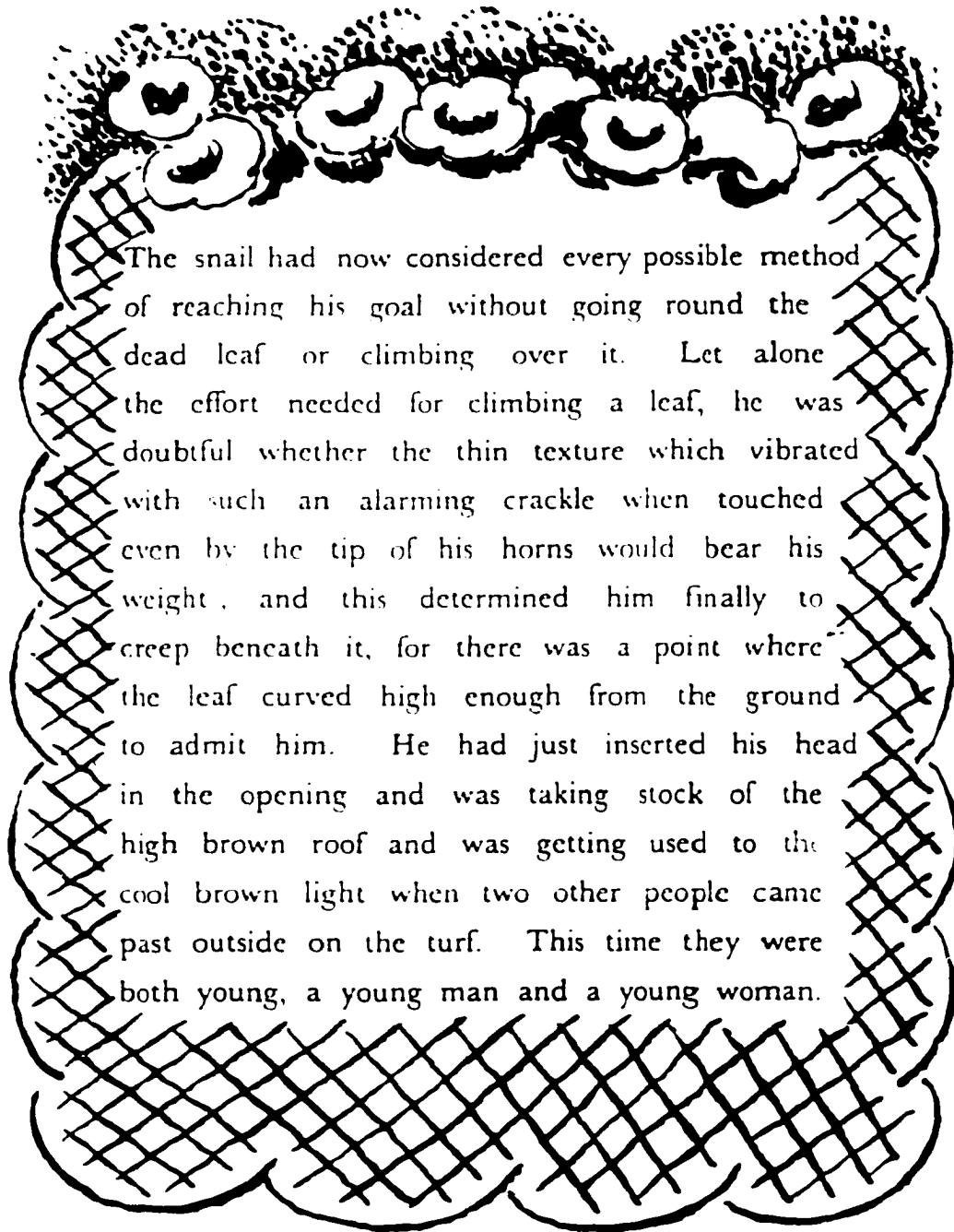
I have discussed the matter with the artist as we arranged. I think the best way to proceed is that you should first set and send us proofs which we will correct. You will then send us a revise, at least four sets, pulled on good paper in final form. The artist will paste these up with her design to make complete pages from which you will be able to make blocks. The text and design will be printed on one side of the page only. I enclose a sample of paper which will do quite well for this book.

In your estimate please allow for half-title and title page the design of which will be sent later. I return the two sheets of copy which I took with me.

Yours faithfully

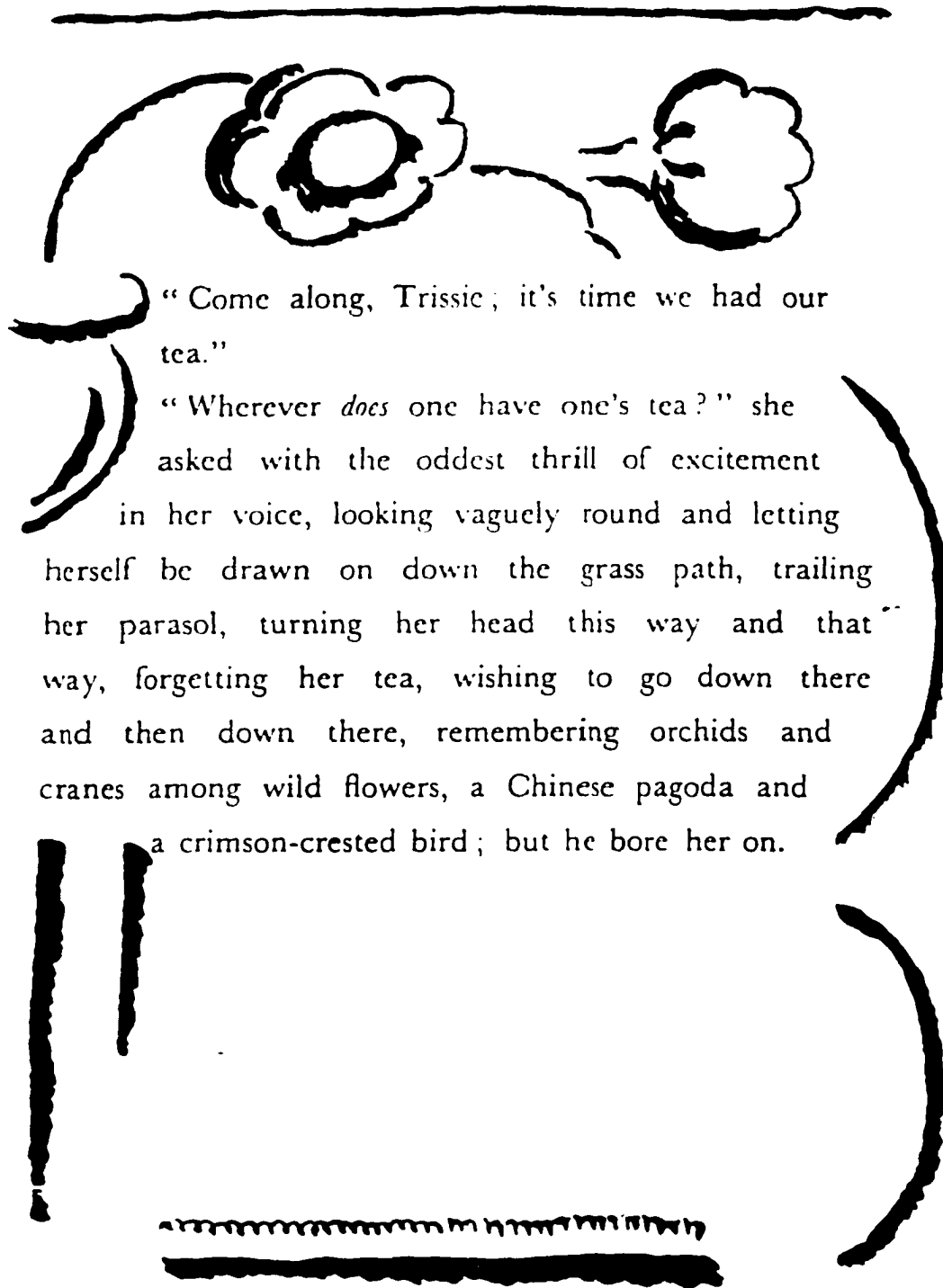
Sent by hat
AW 37
8

fig. B.15. Fourteenth page, *Kew Gardens*.



The snail had now considered every possible method of reaching his goal without going round the dead leaf or climbing over it. Let alone the effort needed for climbing a leaf, he was doubtful whether the thin texture which vibrated with such an alarming crackle when touched even by the tip of his horns would bear his weight, and this determined him finally to creep beneath it, for there was a point where the leaf curved high enough from the ground to admit him. He had just inserted his head in the opening and was taking stock of the high brown roof and was getting used to the cool brown light when two other people came past outside on the turf. This time they were both young, a young man and a young woman.

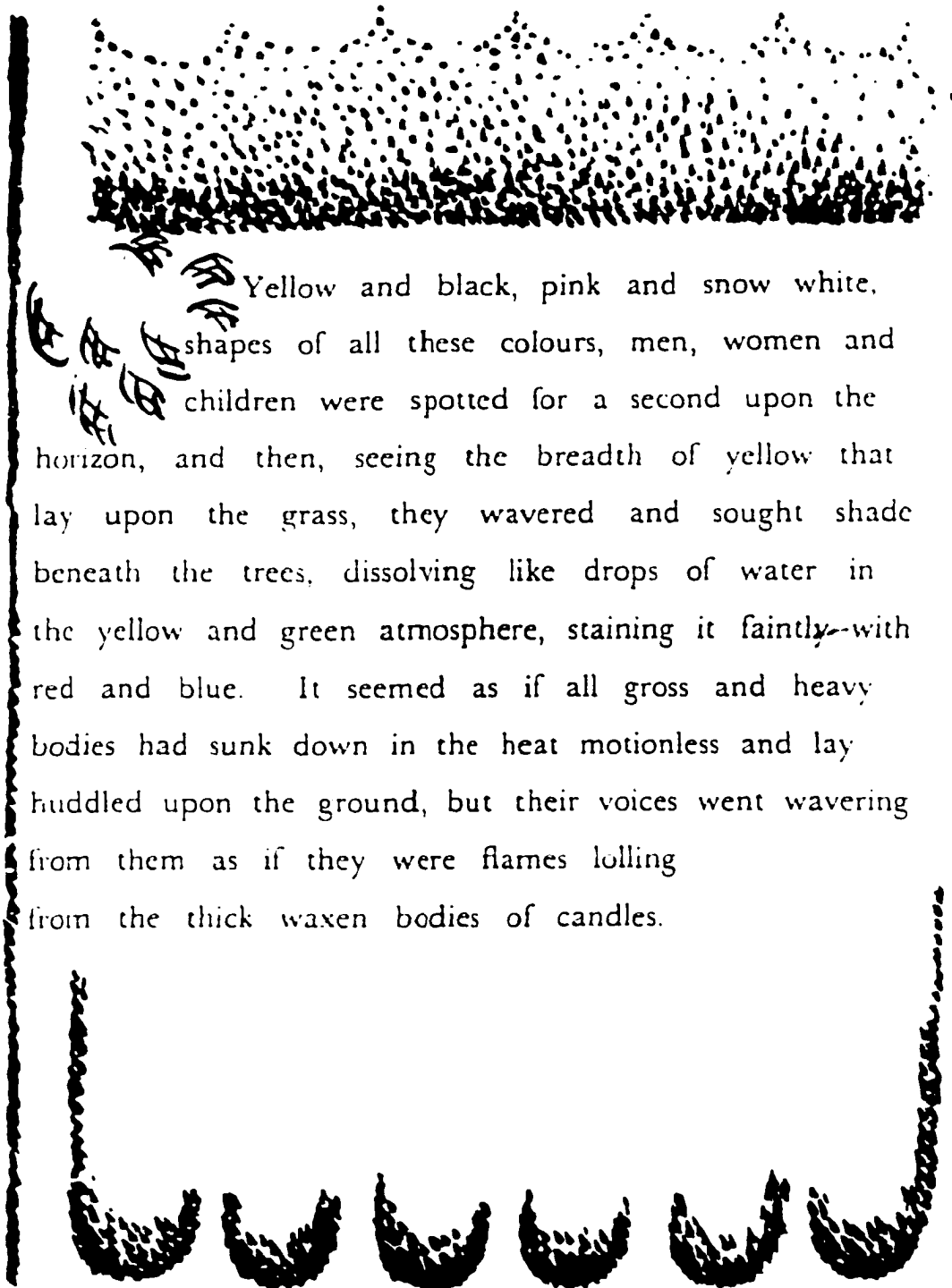
fig. B.16. Eighteenth page, *Kew Gardens*.



"Come along, Trissie; it's time we had our tea."

"Wherever *does* one have one's tea?" she asked with the oddest thrill of excitement in her voice, looking vaguely round and letting herself be drawn on down the grass path, trailing her parasol, turning her head this way and that way, forgetting her tea, wishing to go down there and then down there, remembering orchids and cranes among wild flowers, a Chinese pagoda and a crimson-crested bird; but he bore her on.

fig. B.17. Twentieth page, *Kew Gardens*.



Yellow and black, pink and snow white, shapes of all these colours, men, women and children were spotted for a second upon the horizon, and then, seeing the breadth of yellow that lay upon the grass, they wavered and sought shade beneath the trees, dissolving like drops of water in the yellow and green atmosphere, staining it faintly with red and blue. It seemed as if all gross and heavy bodies had sunk down in the heat motionless and lay huddled upon the ground, but their voices went wavering from them as if they were flames lolling from the thick waxen bodies of candles.

fig. B.18. Title page, *Kew Gardens*.

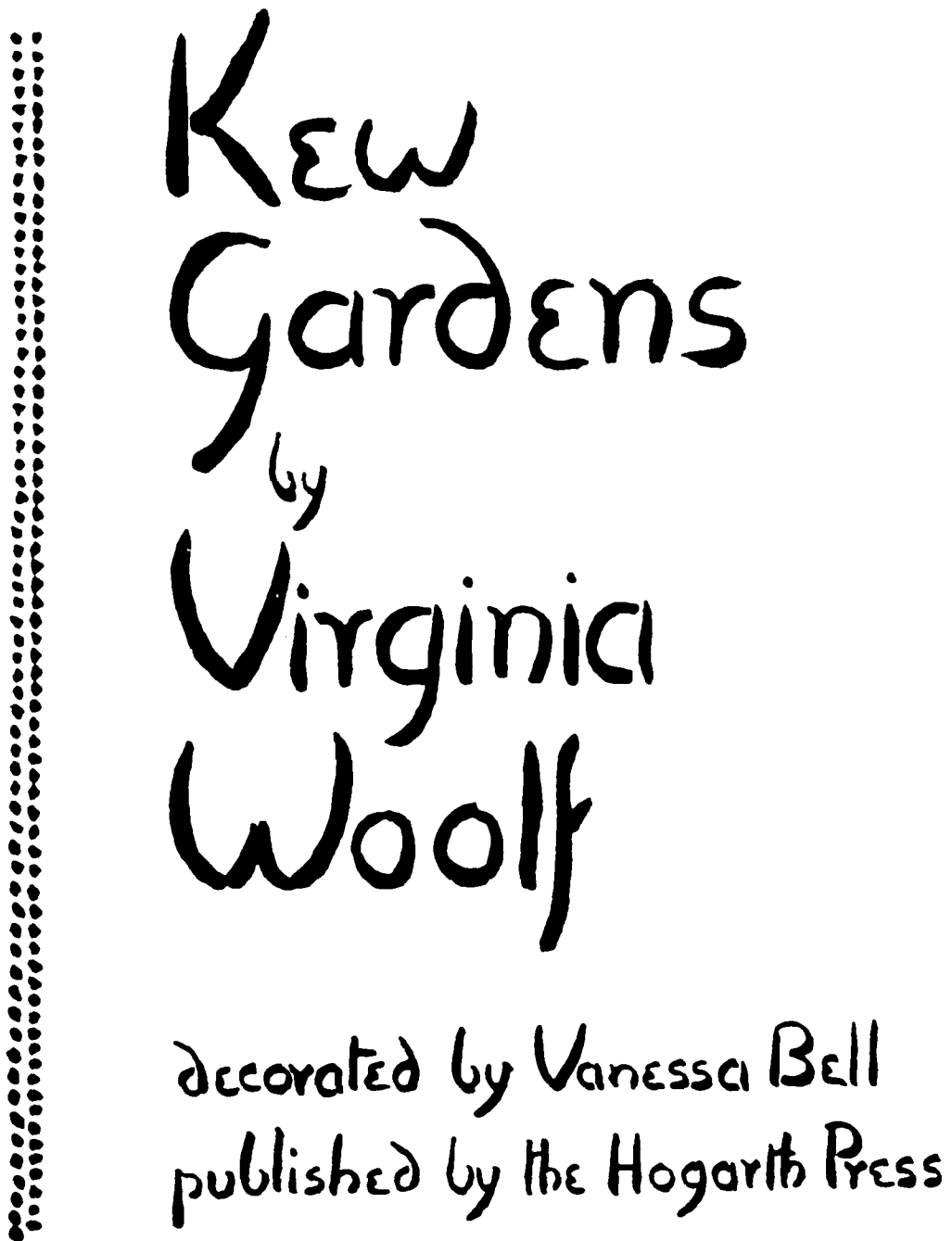


fig. B.19. Page from *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, Newly Imprinted*. William Morris (Castleman, 105).

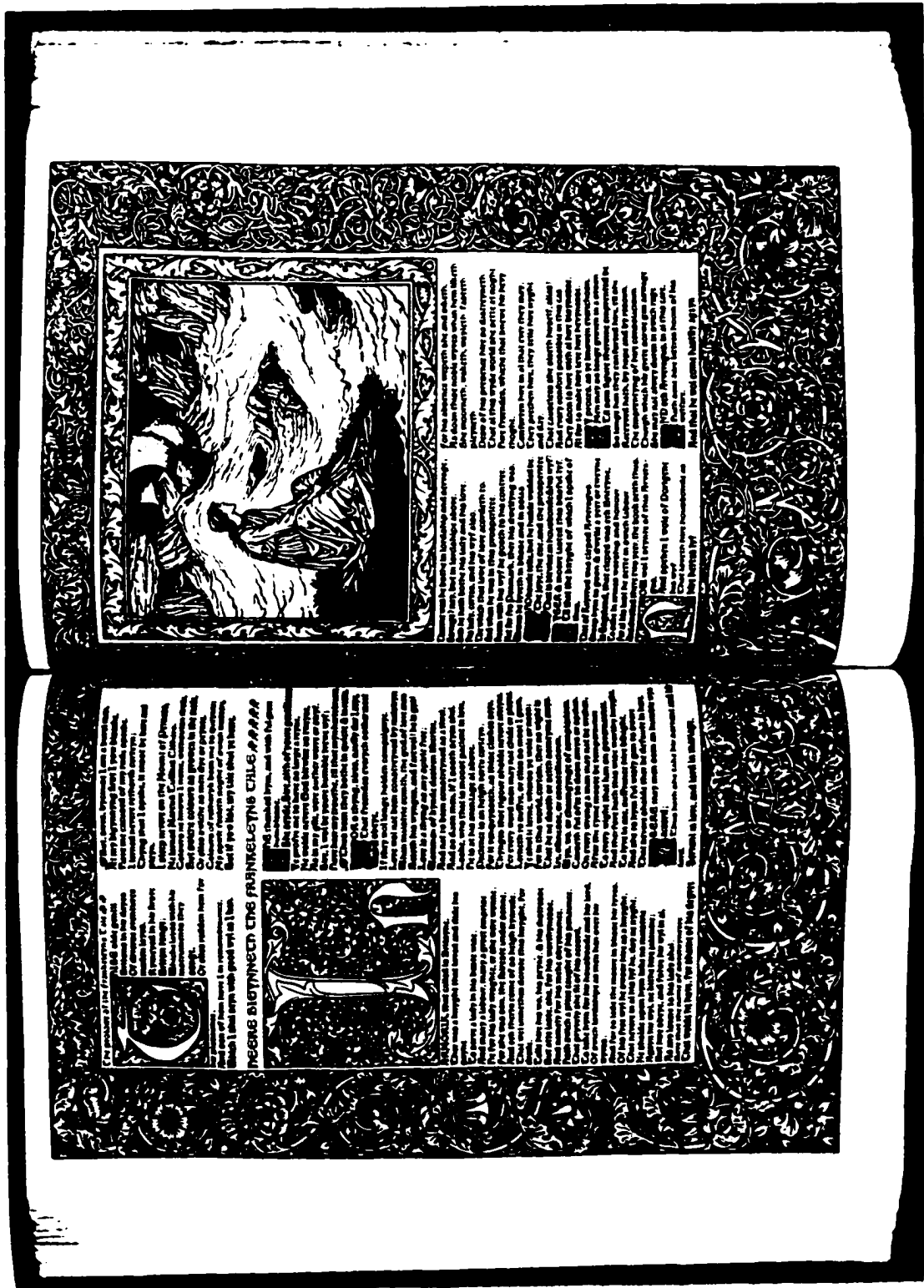


fig. B.20. Thirteenth page, *Kew Gardens*.

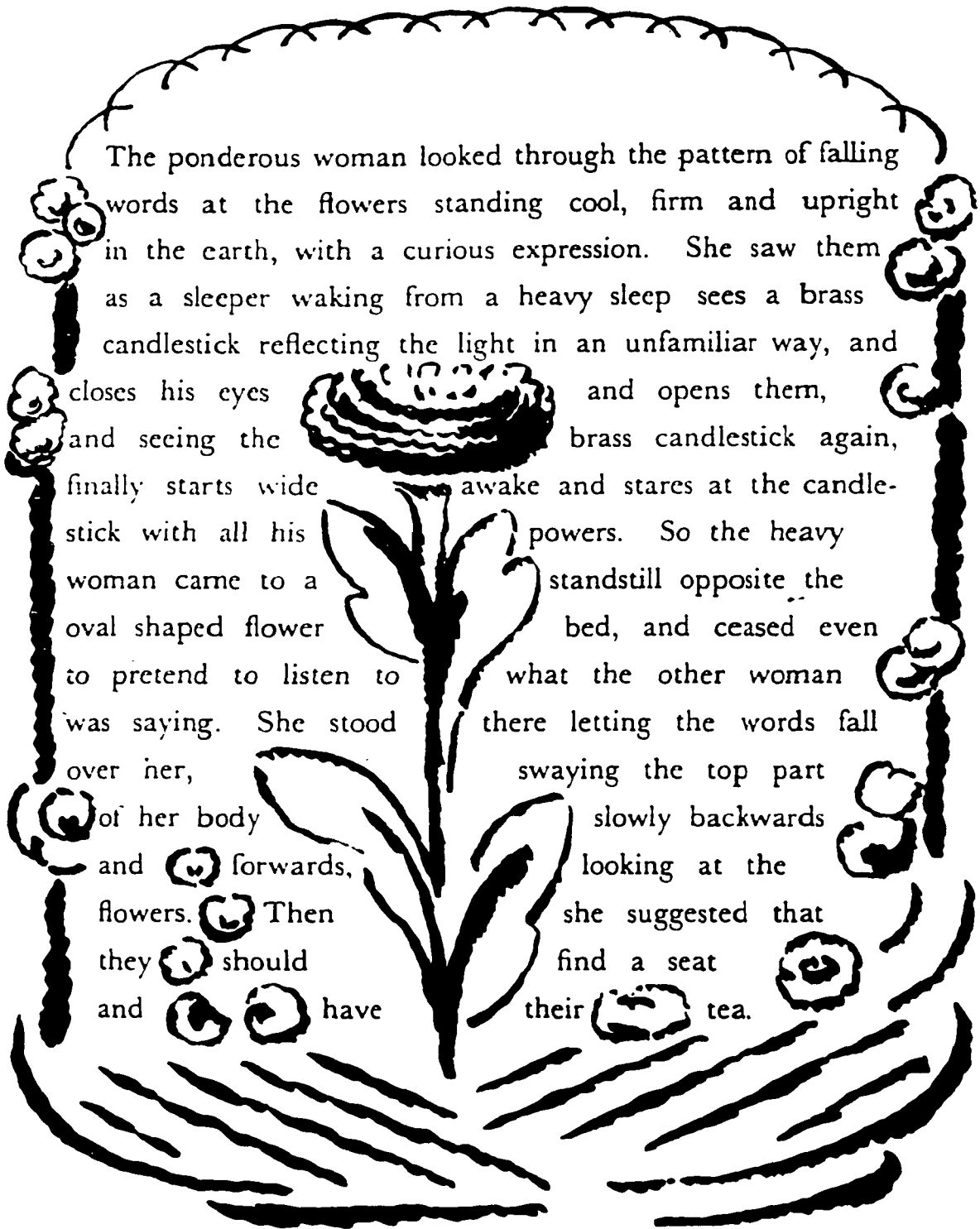


fig. B.21. Fifteenth page, *Kew Gardens*.

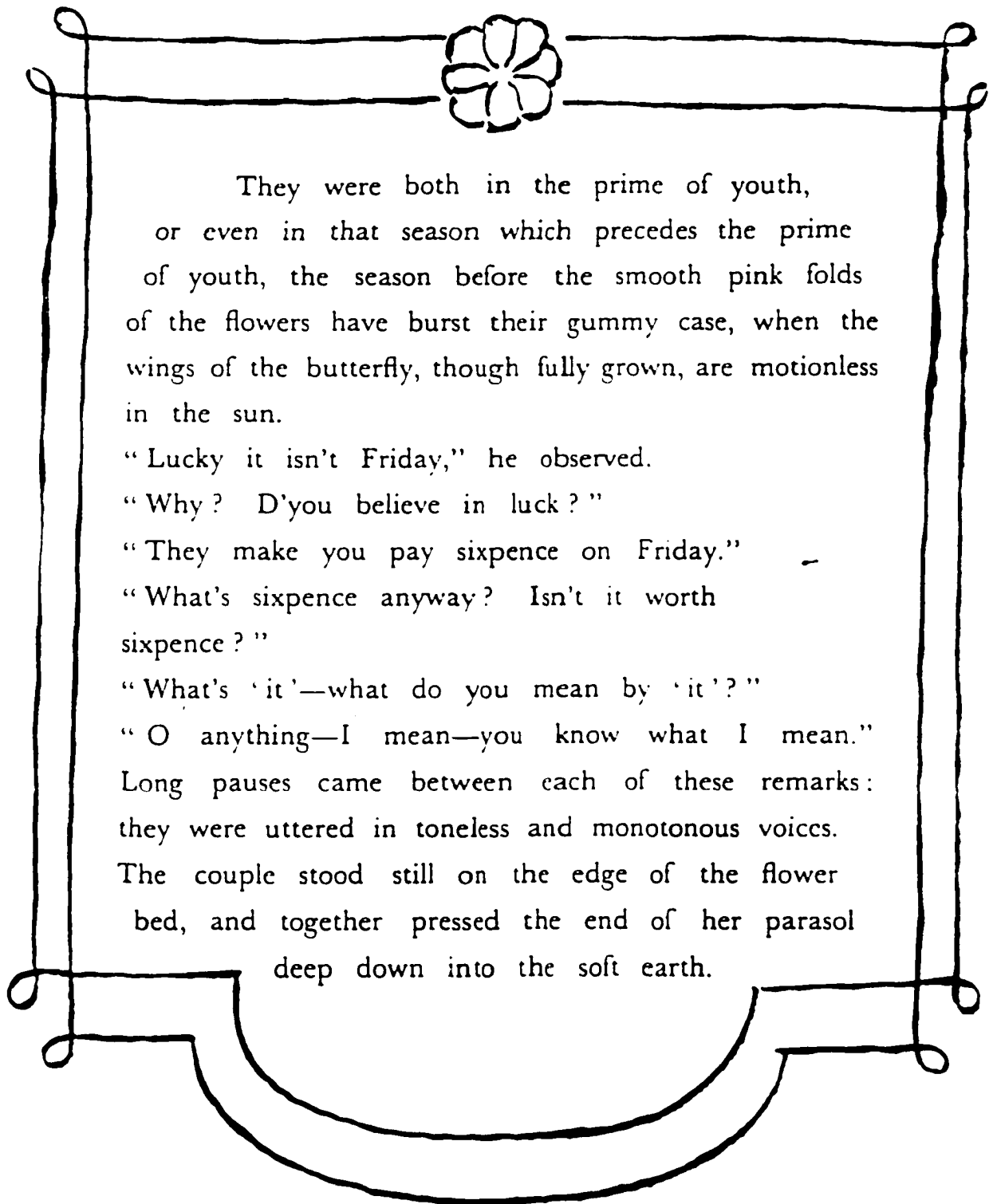


fig. B.22. Page from Stéphane Mallarmé, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*, reproduced by photo-engraving after the 1914 *ne varietur* edition of the N.R.F., Paris (Cohn, appendix).

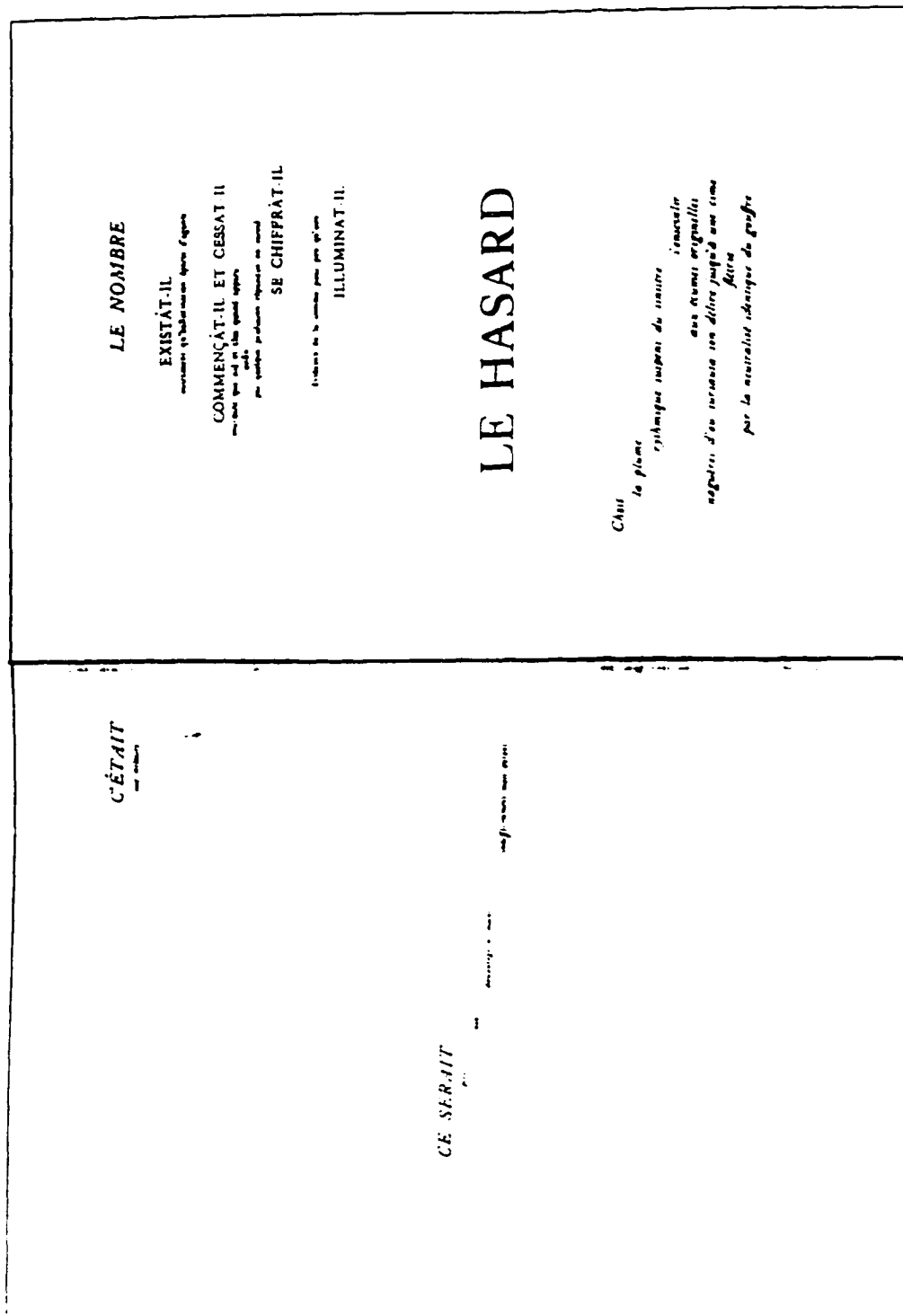


fig. B.23. Page from Marcel Broodthaers, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*, Antwerp: Galerie Wide White Space, 1969 (Castleman, 164).

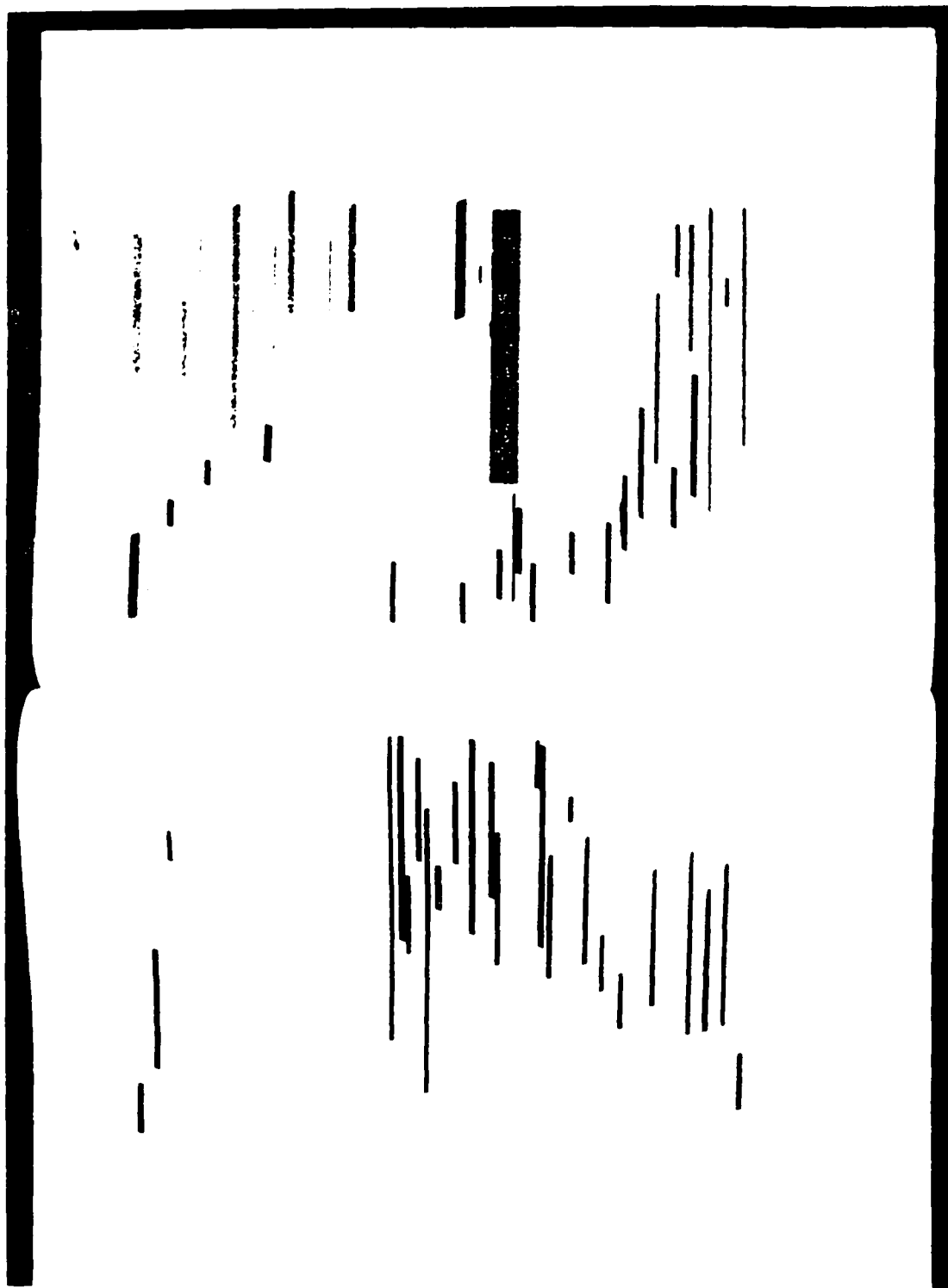


fig. B.24. Vanessa Bell's woodcut illustration for "A Haunted House," in *Monday or Tuesday*, London: Hogarth Press, 1921.

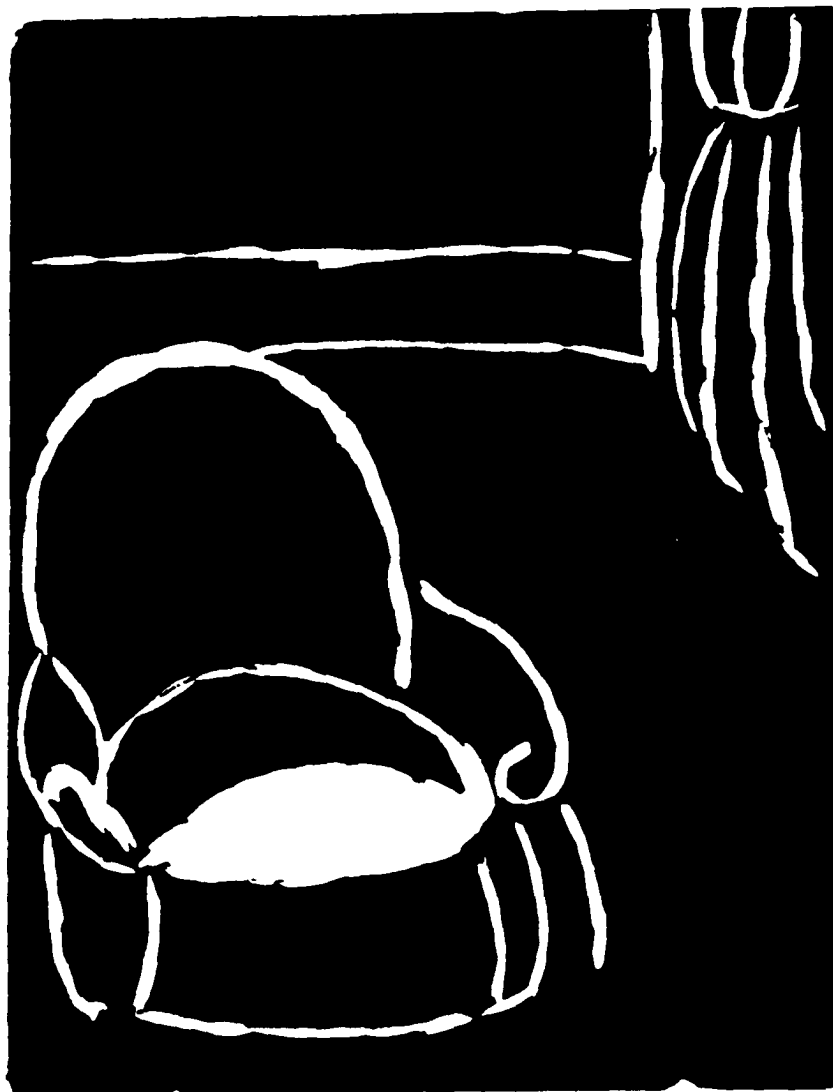


fig. B.25. "Caterpillar woodcut" illustration by Vanessa Bell, in *Kew Gardens* first edition, Richmond: Hogarth Press, 1919.

wavering from them as if they were flames lolling on
the thick waxen bodies of candles. Voices. Yes, voices.
Wordless voices, breaking the silence suddenly with
such depth of contentment, such passion of desire, as
in the voices of children; such freshness of surprise
breaking the silence. But there was no silence at
the time the motor omnibuses were turning their wheels
and changing their gear, like a vast nest of Chinese
boxes all of wrought steel turning ceaselessly one with
another the city murmured, on the top of which the
voices cried aloud, and the petals of myriads of flowers
flashed their colours into the air.



Printed by L. and V. Woolf at The Hogarth Press, Richmond.

fig. B.26. "Memorandum of Agreement" for a book of woodcuts, c. September 1927 (Osthus, appendix).

Memorandum of agreement between Virginia Woolf and Leonard Woolf, on the one hand, hereinafter called the Publishers, and Vanessa Bell, on the other, hereinafter called the Artist.

1. The Artist grants to the Publishers an exclusive license to print two editions of a book of woodcuts. Each edition shall not exceed 300 copies. The number of copies to be printed and published at any one time shall be in the discretion of the Publishers, provided that the license to print shall expire and the wood-blocks shall be handed back to the Artist six months after the date of publication of the first edition.

2. The Artist shall supply the Publishers with 12 wood-blocks. ~~After the wood-blocks are handed over to the Publishers for purposes of reproduction, all details as to printing, paper, covers, title-page &c., shall be in the absolute discretion of the Publishers.~~ *in the discretion of the artist provided that a sum to be paid to the Publishers, after consultation with the Artist, to be arranged.*

3. The Publishers shall pay to the Artist for the first edition 2/- for each printed page of woodcuts, and for the second edition 1/- and when printed 10/- for each printed page of woodcuts, if 300 copies are printed, and if less than 300 copies be printed, then a payment decreasing in proportion to the decrease in number printed.

4. The published price of the book shall be 3/- net. Alternative to 3, (strike out whenever clause be rejected before publication)

5. The Publishers shall pay to the Artist within six months of the date of publication 50% of the net profits on the edition or editions, net profits being reckoned as the sum arrived at by deducting the actual expenses of postage, paper, ink, and all other materials used in producing the book from the gross receipts derived from sales.

5. In clause 2, 12 wood-blocks shall be interpreted to mean a number of wood-blocks sufficient to fill 12 printed quarto pages of the size 11x8 1/2.

fig. B.27. Dustcover from *Lucretius on Death*, woodcut by Dora Carrington, London: Omega Workshops, 1917 (Hill, 38).

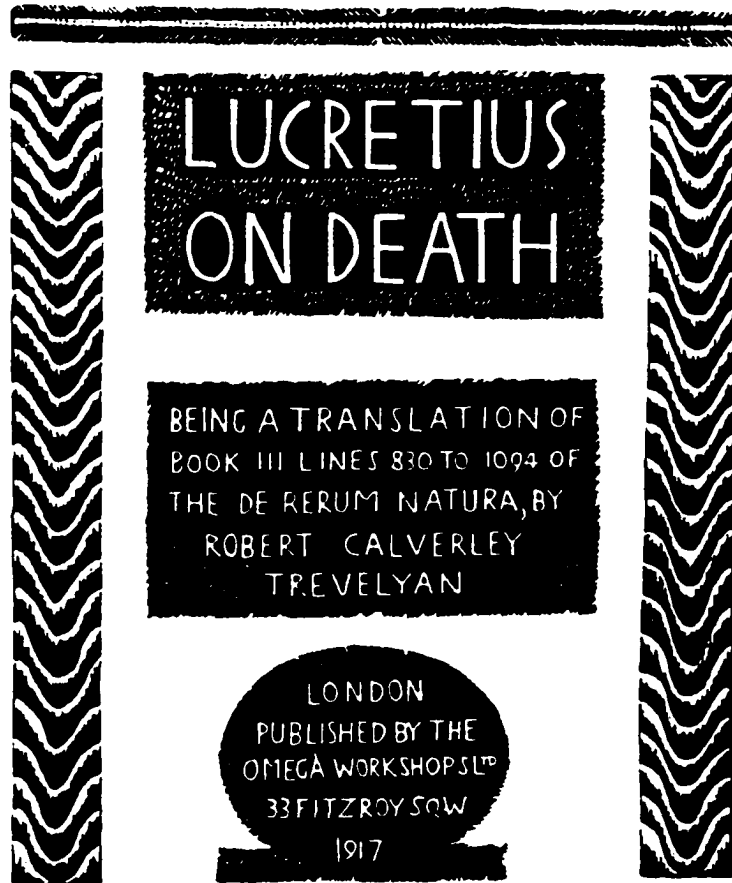


fig. B.28. Dustcover from *Stories of the East*, woodcut by Dora Carrington, London: Hogarth Press, 1923 (Hill, 68).

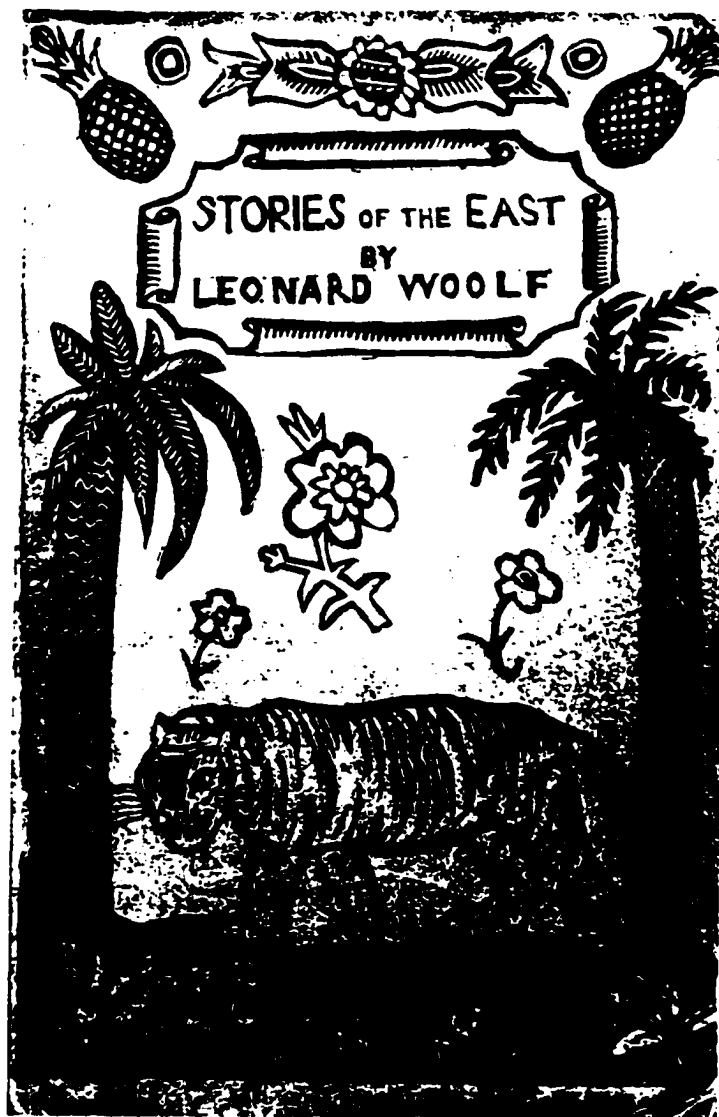


fig. B.29. Ninth page, *Kew Gardens*.

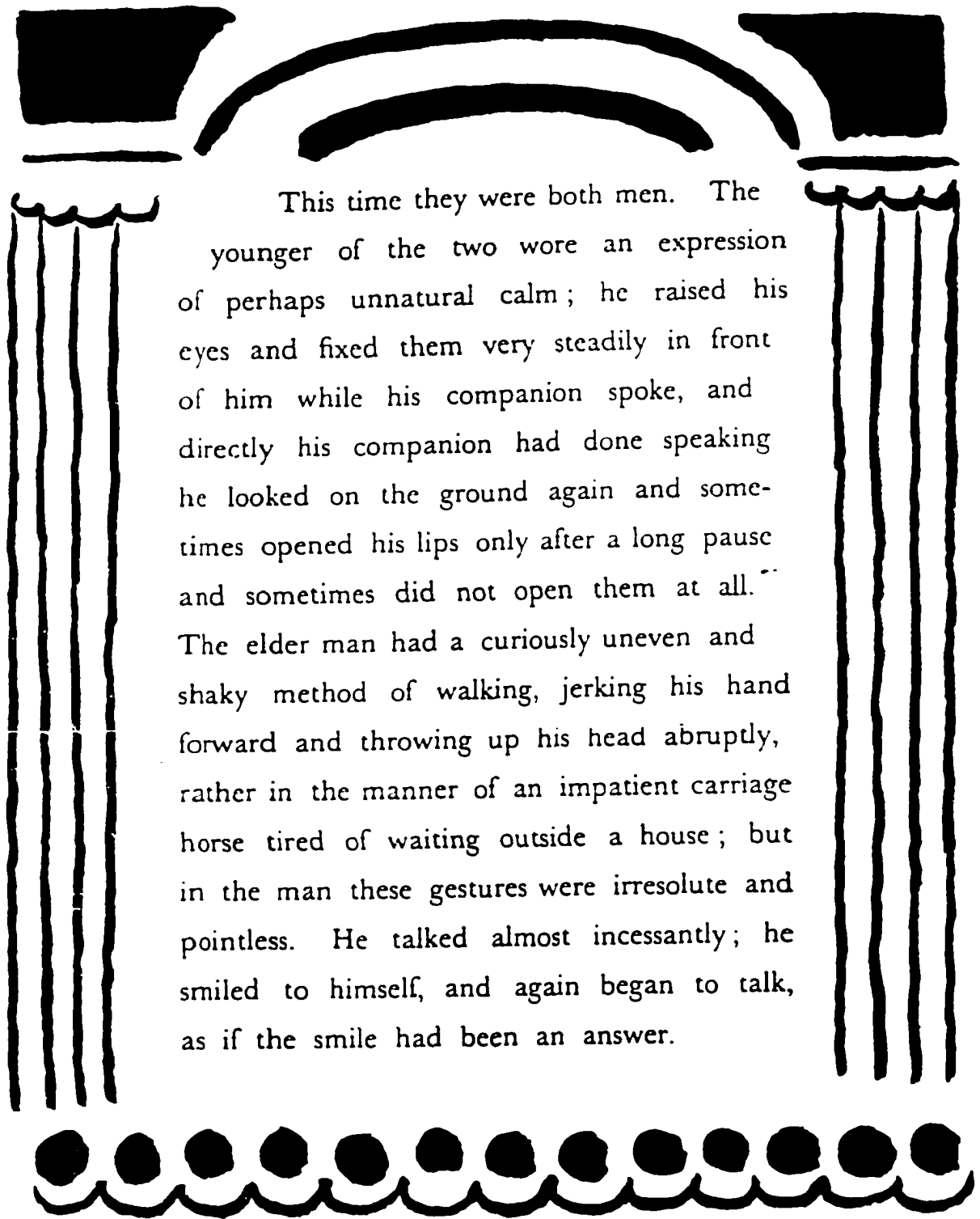
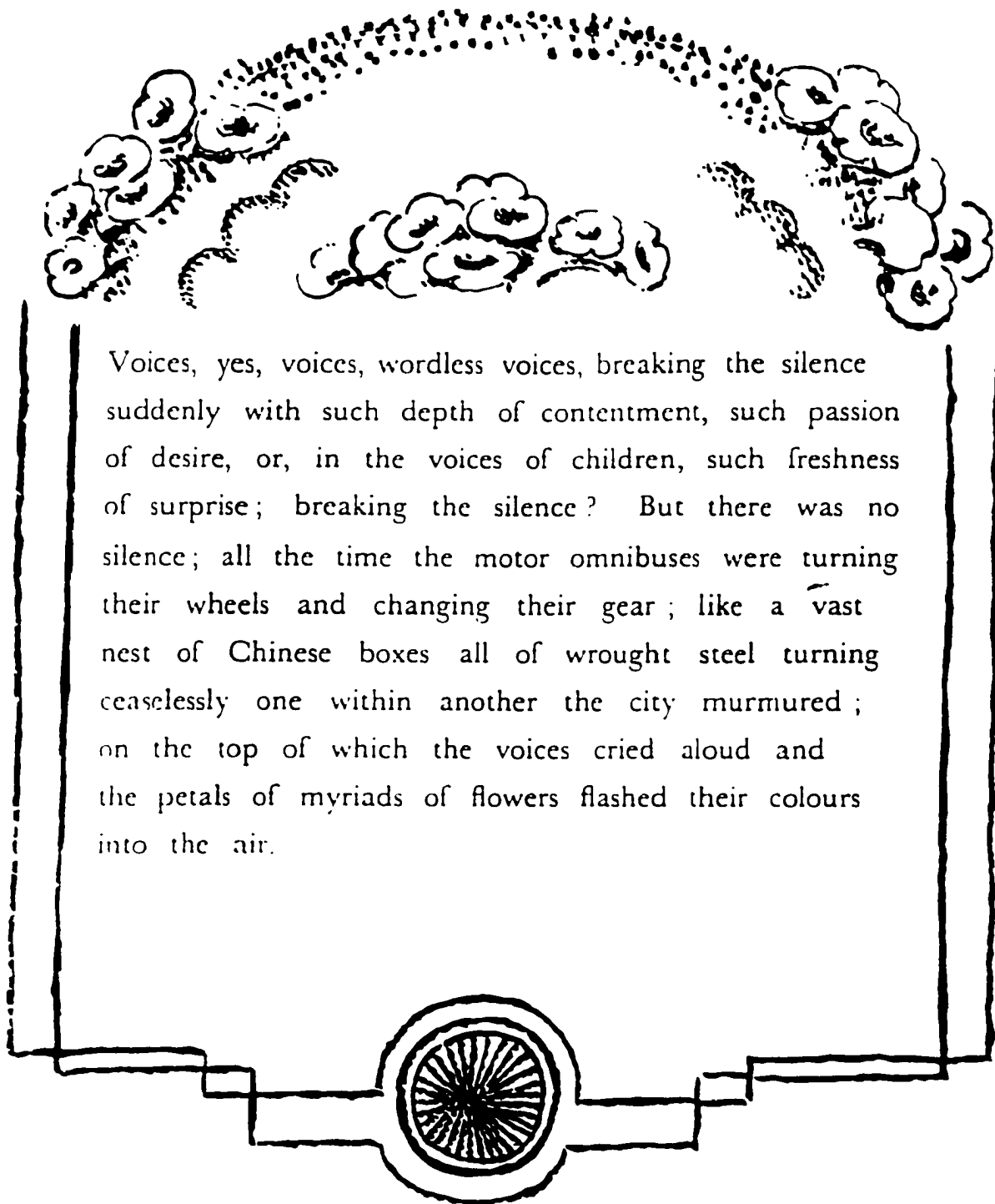


fig. B.30. Last page, *Kew Gardens*.



Voices, yes, voices, wordless voices, breaking the silence suddenly with such depth of contentment, such passion of desire, or, in the voices of children, such freshness of surprise; breaking the silence? But there was no silence; all the time the motor omnibuses were turning their wheels and changing their gear; like a vast nest of Chinese boxes all of wrought steel turning ceaselessly one within another the city murmured; on the top of which the voices cried aloud and the petals of myriads of flowers flashed their colours into the air.

fig. B.31. Early edition of *Kew Gardens*, signed by Virginia Woolf,
Richmond: Hogarth Press, 1919 (Rhein, fig. 12).

Virginia Woolf.

KEW GARDENS

BY

VIRGINIA WOOLF

HOGARTH PRESS
RICHMOND
1919

APPENDIX C: Illustrations for Chapter III

Unless otherwise noted, all illustrations in Appendix C come from the first revised edition of A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987).

fig. C.2. Pages from *Cover to Cover*.

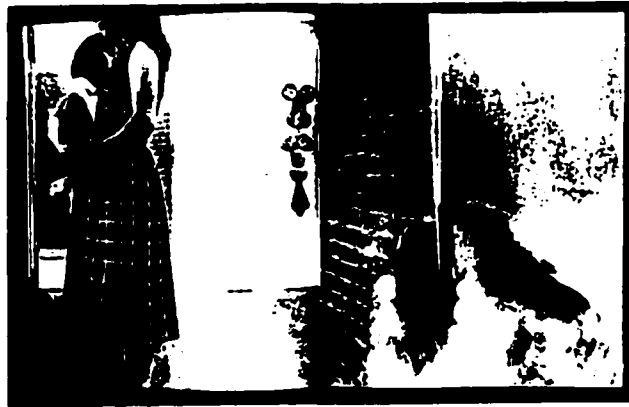
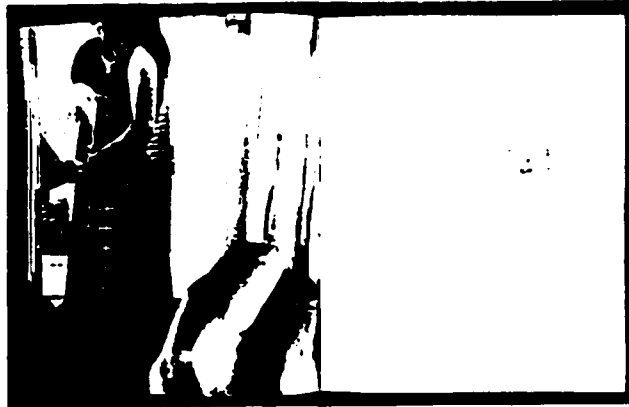


fig. C.3. Pages from *Flat Beer*. In *Books & Bookends: Sculptural Approaches*. Forestville, MD: Anaconda Press, 1990, p. 14.

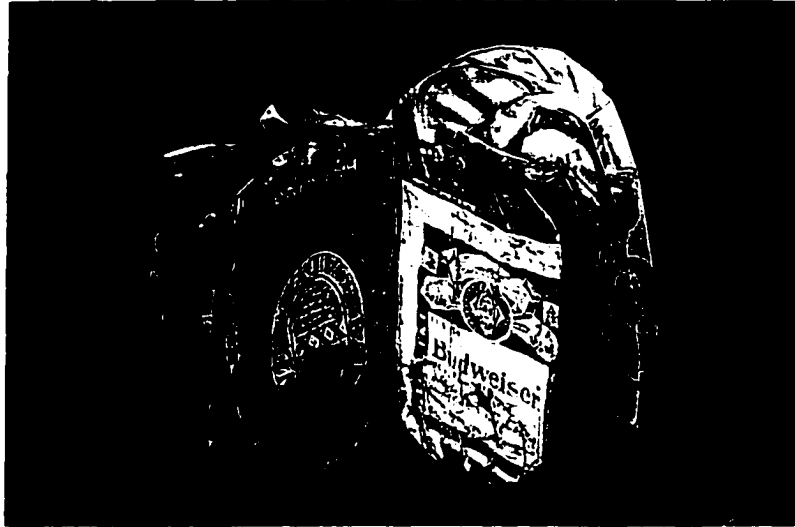


fig. C.4. Pages from *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations*.

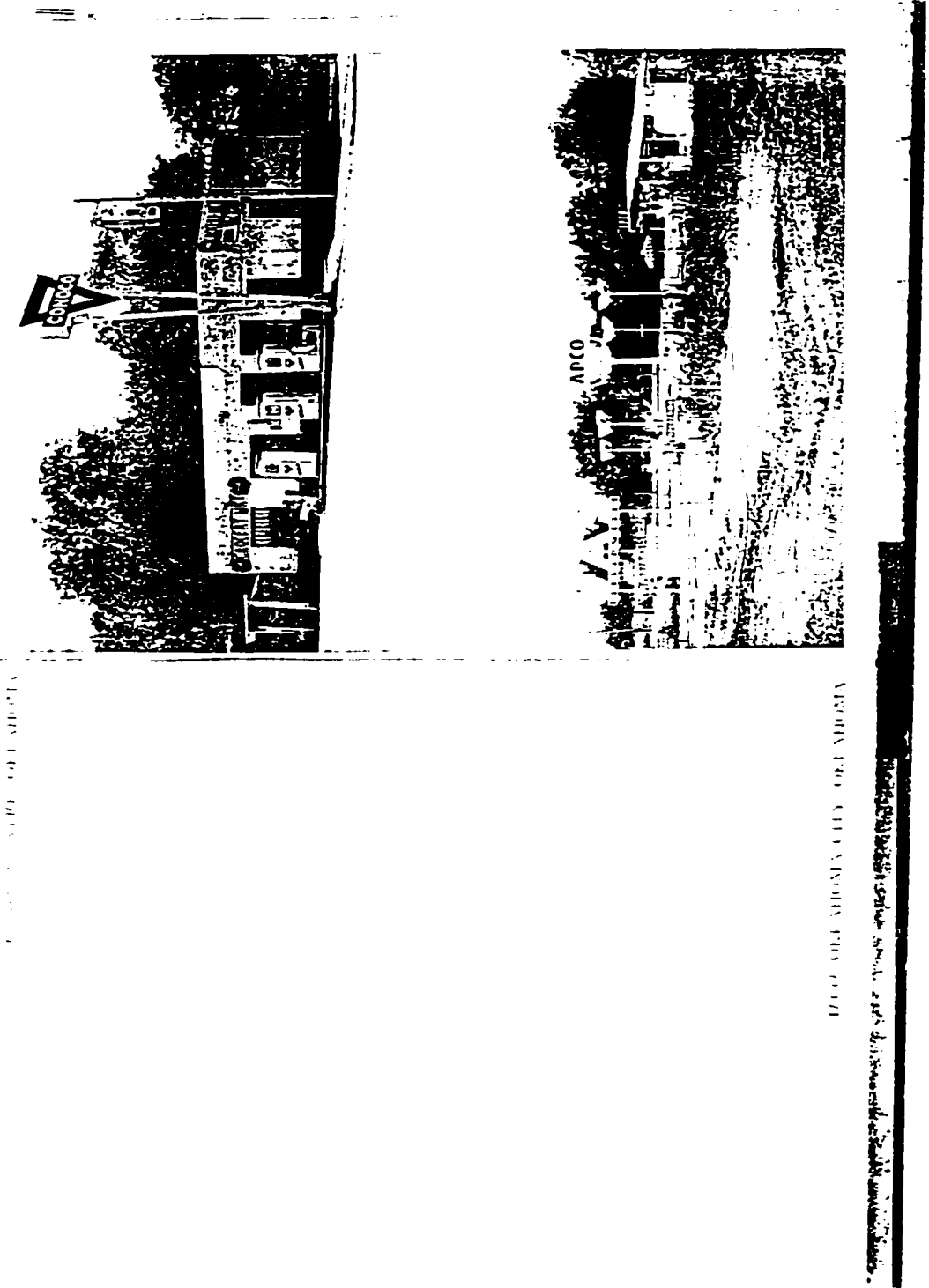


fig. C.5. Opening from *Every Building on the Sunset Strip.*

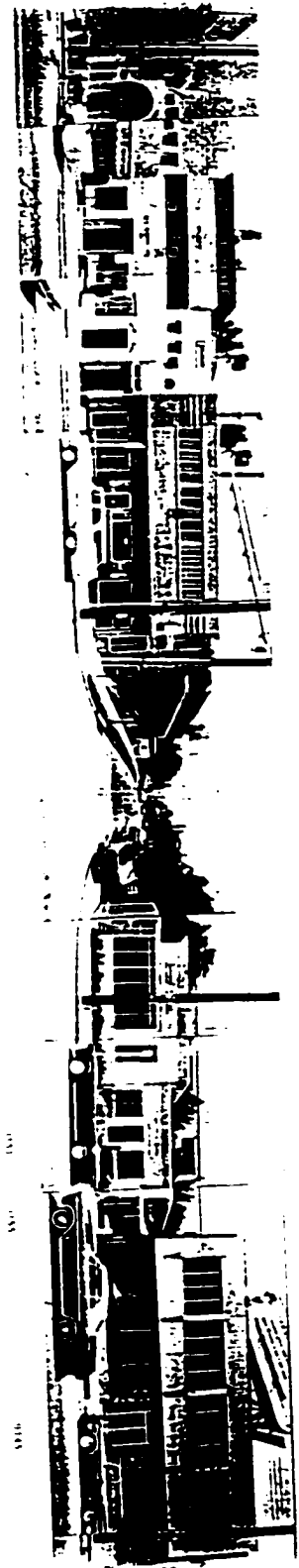
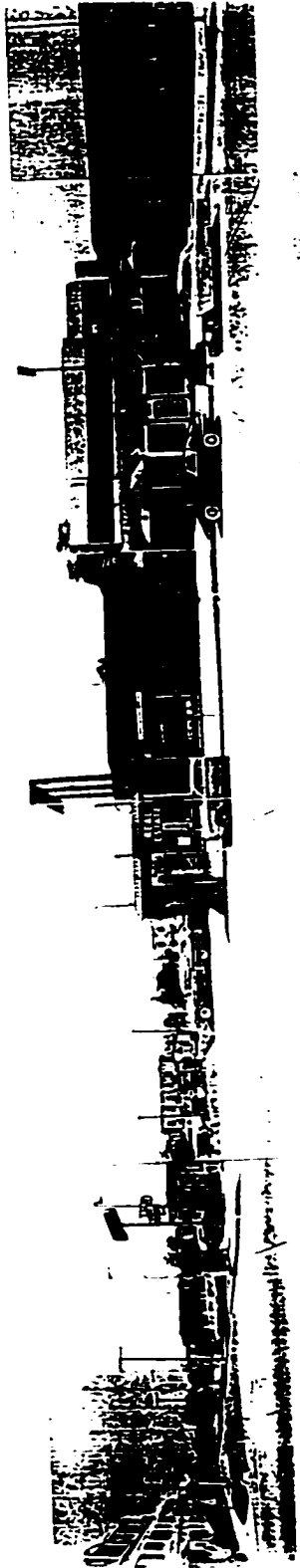


fig. C.6. Front cover, *A Humument*.

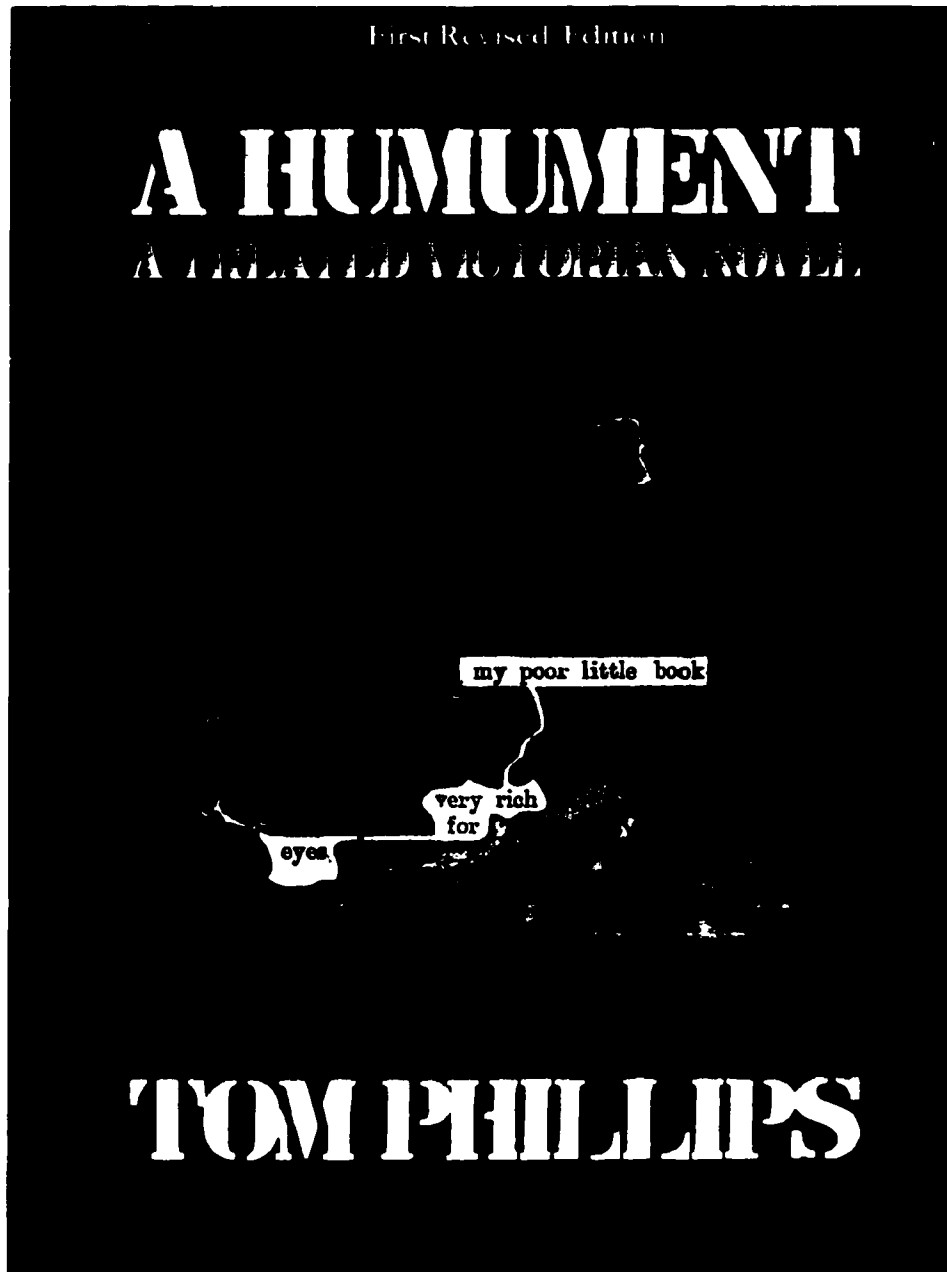


fig. C.7. Page 145, *A Humument*.

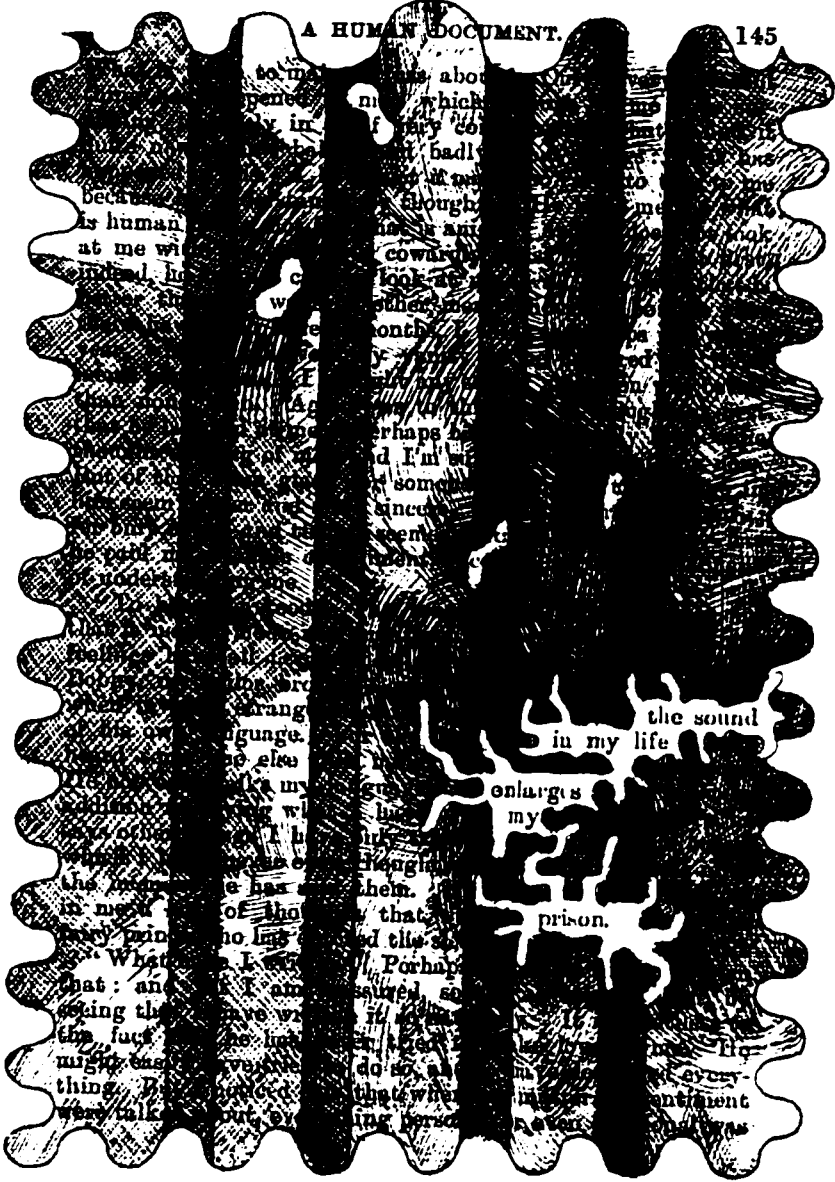


fig. C.9. Page 5, A Humument.

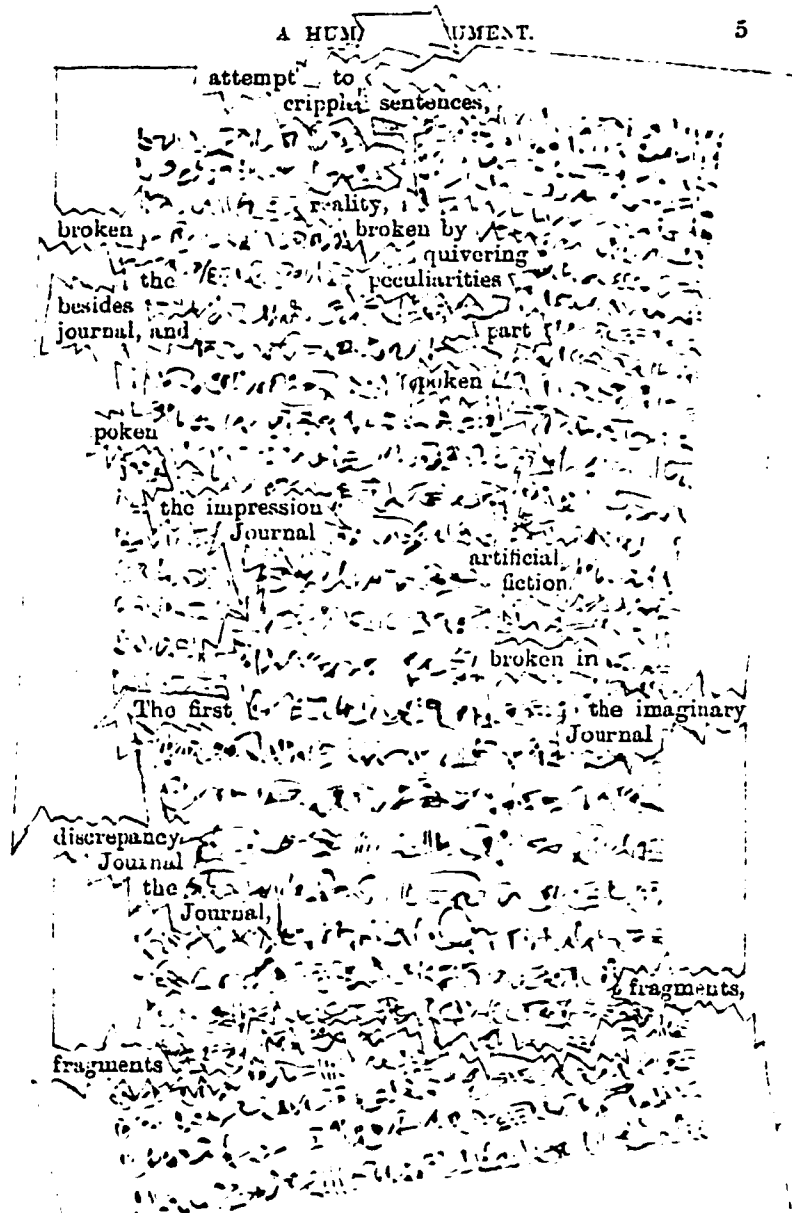


fig. C.10. Page from a word-image scrapbook, William S. Burroughs (from *Paris Review*, Fall 1965).

C 1000 100

Some displacements of a sedate and celebrated rose garden but ideal for the province of a quiet river-view restaurant

Best Wishes on Your Retirement

What in Horton Hotel Rue
Vernet San-San Martine
Zapiola The Swan Last Day
de Ooto Principe di Castel
Home it Chicago von Koepen
Countess Gay Gudehill
Count Randy Anne Puss Rose
Mary Gressedick Haled
Miguel Garcia de Gordon
Hell does that mean????
On the scene photographs
by William Born Field
Retarded Children Project
Inc Famous Barr Post St.
Louis Magazine 52 just
outside the barbecue corn
all see cherie Guggenheim
Theresa Riley Nancy Roger
sponsored from top to
bottom excitingly randy
young St. Louis citizen's
bismontennial salute

(His Ednence John, all see
cherie Guggenheim, St. Louis
Louis Cardinal Designate
Olmond Theresa Riley
Nancy Roger thanks for
you gracious (sponsored
from top) ticking message
looked 8 minutes bottom
excitedly randy Victorian
younger with such hair
to see the young St. Louis
citizens gay happy goats
and monkey's ~~REMEMBER~~
bismontennial salute randy
at home!

Miguel de Gordon waters
last Thursday in Hell
(does that mean off
stage Fete Dieu, Principe
di Hell on the scene
photographs The Swan
La "car??) William born
last day field, your a long
retarded children project
vieded way from St. Louis.
I like, Famous Barr Post St.
Preghet had not thought



Richard
Halliburton
what 'n
Hotel rue
Elliot
this music
on the
Martine
waters
(off stage
The Swan
Last Day)
vieded
phophet
in di
castle
St. Louis
clock
ticking
Victorian
gay happy
randy at
home

Meet me in
the shooting
gallery/hick/
Quiet the
roses/hick/
Ship scenes
necessary/
hick/
Signed



Thanks for your gracious
message..looked 8 minutes
younger with such hair too
goats and monkeys

Death Magazine 52 had
andons so many outside the
barbecue Castle



A REPORTER

Page from Burroughs' *St. Louis Journal*.

fig. C.11. Page 1, A Humument.

volume And
side I shall lie,
bones my bones

A HUM [REDACTED] UMENT.

A HUMAN DOCUMENT.

INTRODUCTION.



fig. C.12. Page 44, *A Humument*.

44

A HUMAN DOCUMENT.

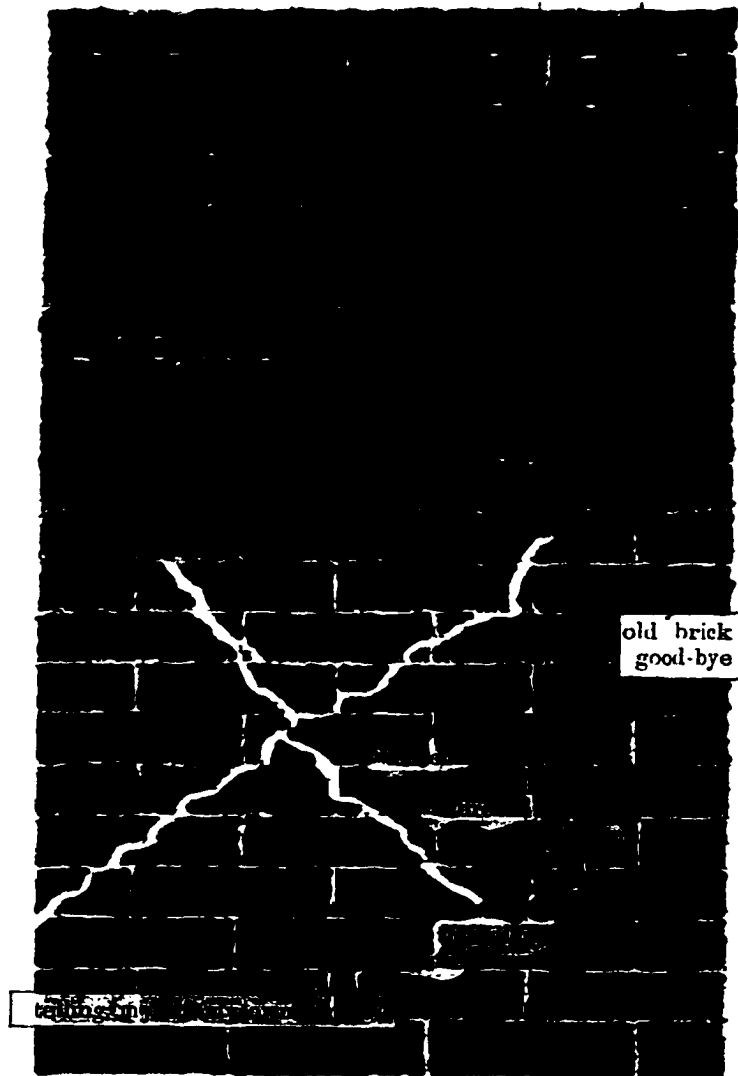


fig. C.14. Selected pages from the first fifth of *Sheherezade: A Flip Book*.

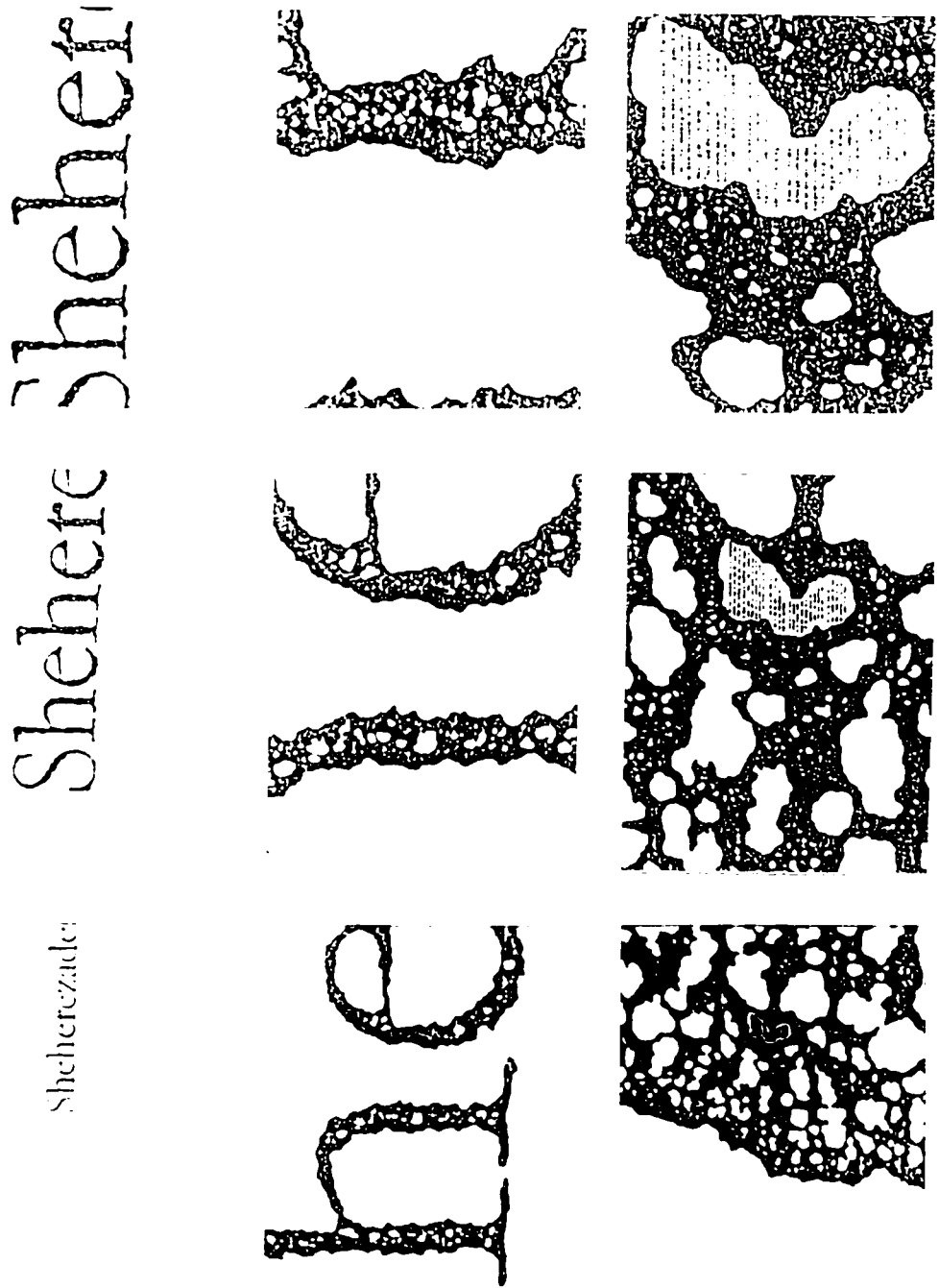


fig. C.15. Last page of *Sheherazade: A Flip Book*.

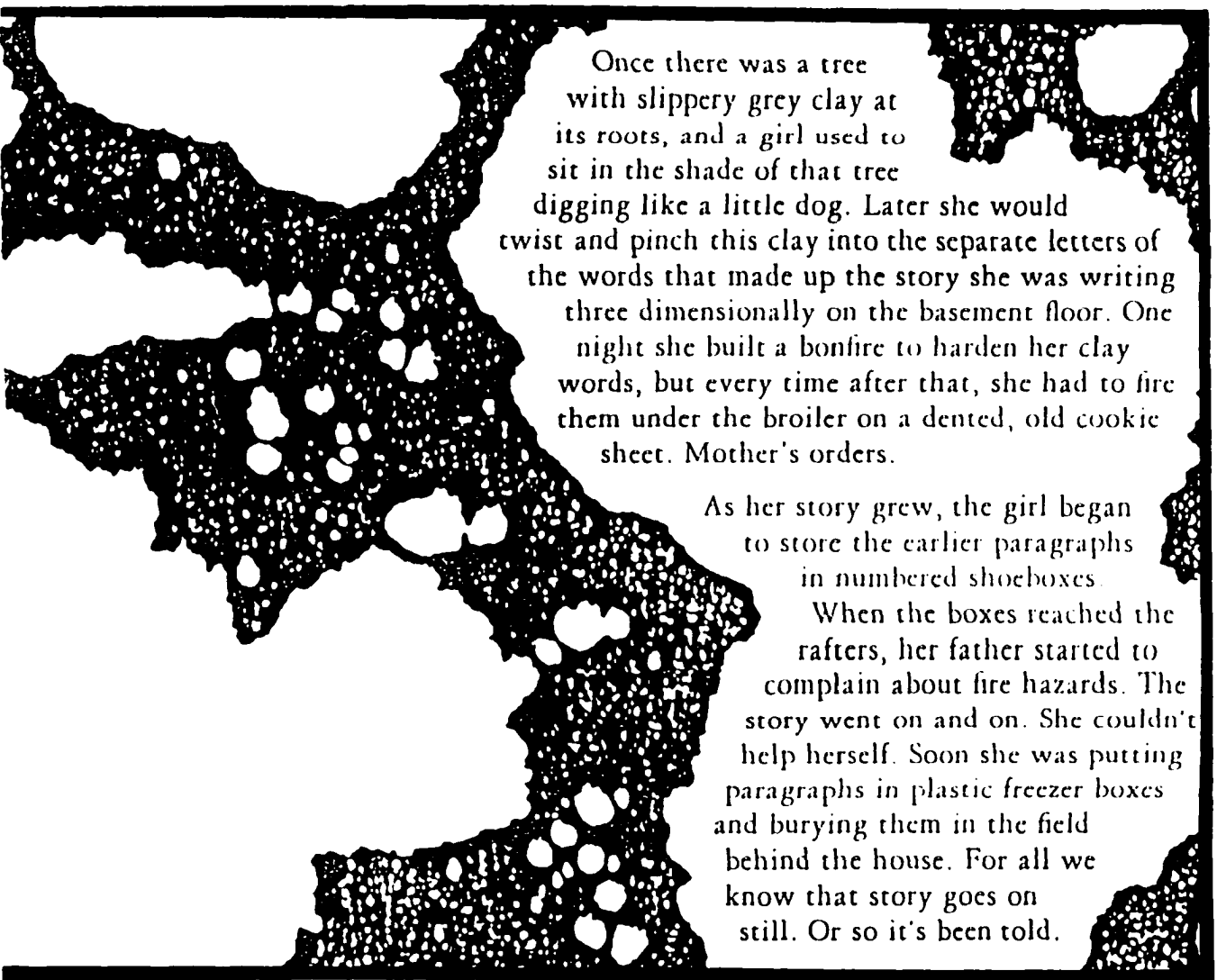
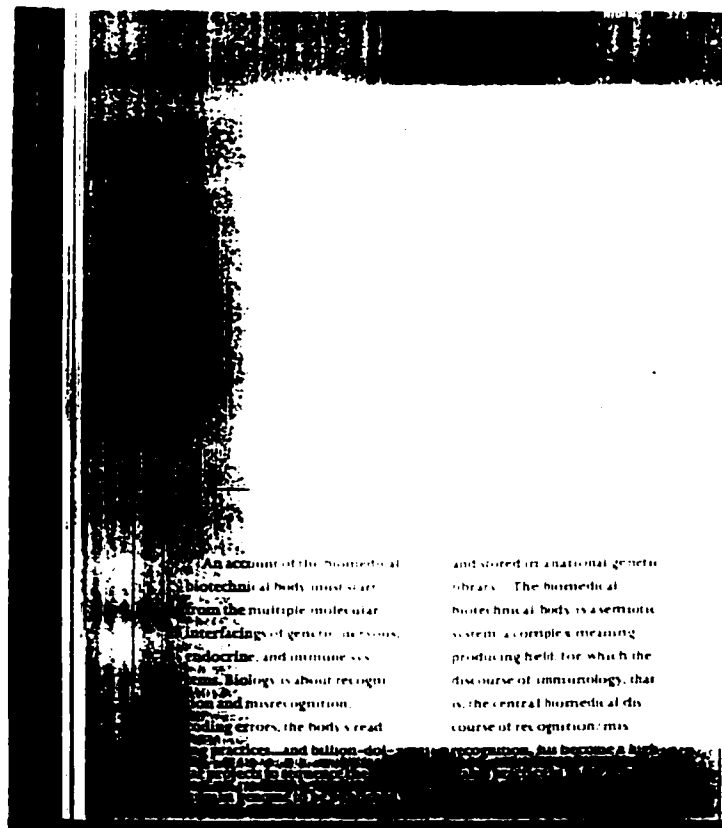
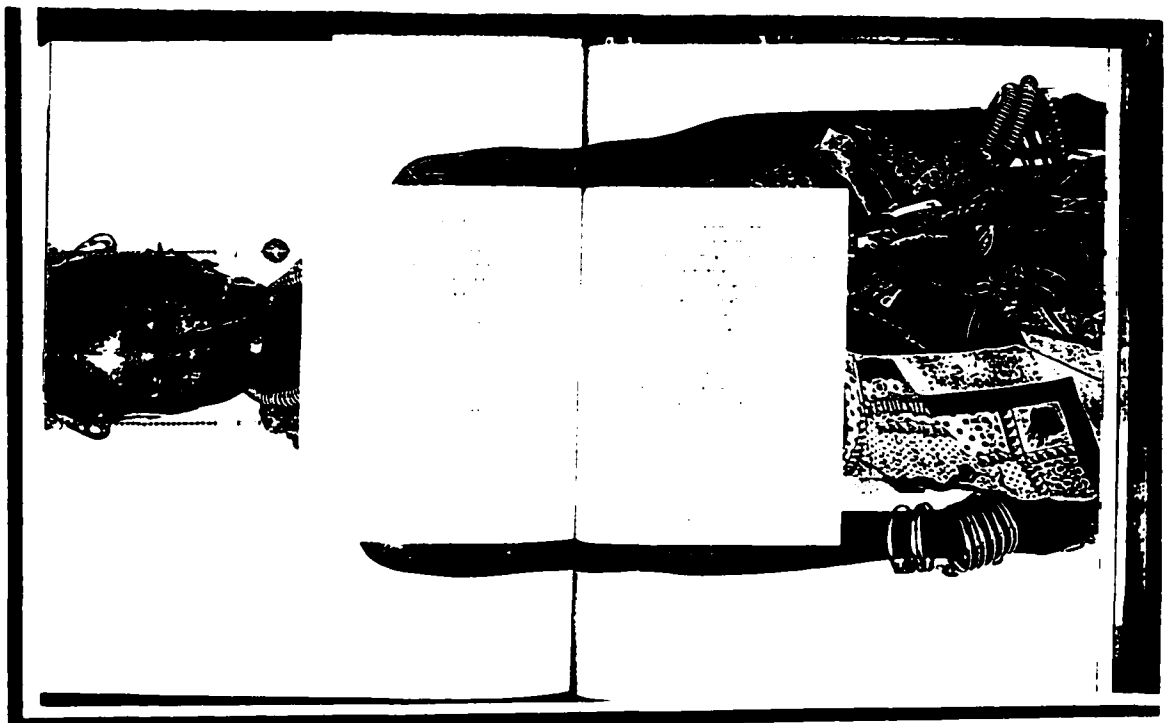


fig. C.16. Selected images of the undressing woman from *Sheherezade*.



fig. C.17. Pages from *Hiding*, by Mark C. Taylor.



An account of the biomedicine
 biotechnical body must start
 from the multiple molecular
 Interfacings of genetic, infectious,
 endocrine, and immune sys-
 tems. Biology is about recogni-
 tion and misrecognition.
 Coding errors, the body's read-
 ings, and billion-dollar
 and stored in anatomical genetic
 libraries. The biomedical
 biotechnical body is a semiotic
 system, a complex meaning
 producing field for which the
 discourse of immunology, that
 is, the central biomedical dis-
 course of recognition/mis-

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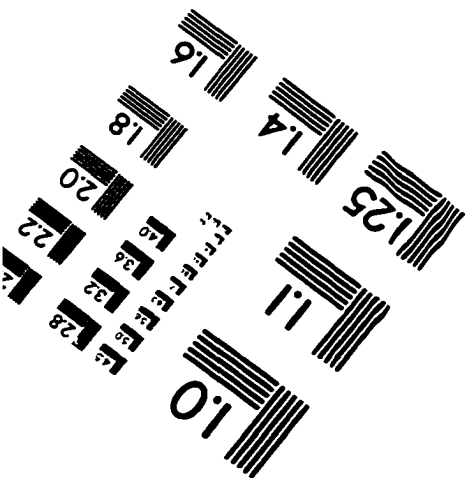
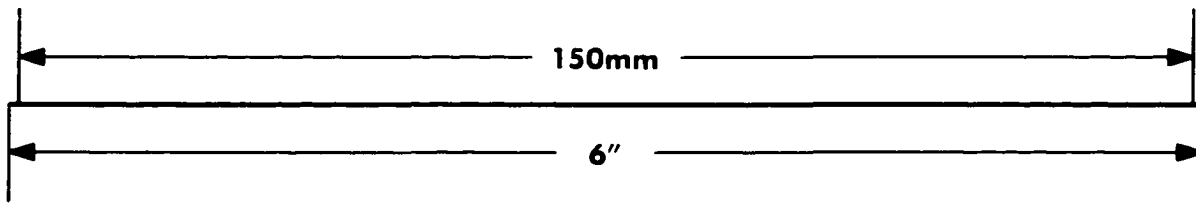
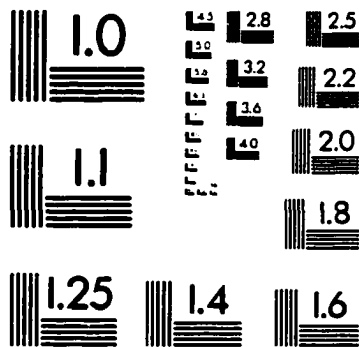
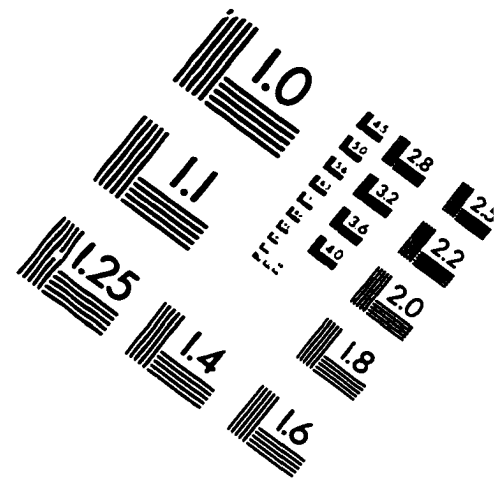
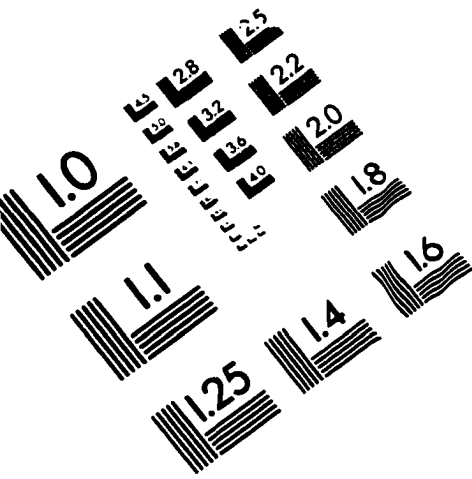
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