

**The Invention of the Bright Day  
(camera obscura)**

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Introduced by Sara Afonso Ferreira

and translated by Fernando Pessoa

No. 2





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Margarethe Wiig's collection of ABC books exhibited by courtesy of Tromsø Museum.

Peter Campus's *Double Vision* shown by courtesy of the artist.

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Blaker, 2015

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This report is dedicated to the memory of Ragnhild Hilt (1945–2014), who always gave us impulses to keep our spirits up.

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Thanks to:





## SECOND REPORT

... but books have always been in motion. It has been argued that it was the portability of scrolls that made two nomadic tribes—Jews and Arabs—turn away from worshipping heavy images of God and instead devoted themselves to a book. Today, curiously, we tend to picture books as something heavy, something to worship in a nostalgic mode, or simply leave behind. Can we picture books differently?

Exhibiting books is tricky. They tend to reduce to flat images of themselves when put inside display cases, and would rather be handled, entered, held open, paged through.

In the archive kept in the old dairy buildings in Blaker Guttorm Guttormsgaard walks around with a book inside his head: he imagines his archive as a book. Whenever he encounters an object or an image, the encounter triggers a story to be told. For visitors too, entering the dairy is like opening a virtual book, a memory palace under constant reconstruction.

The exhibition *The Invention of the Bright Day (camera obscura)* was one iteration of that virtual book. Here is its ABC:

A stands for ABC-books from far and near. At the heart of *The Invention of the Bright Day (camera obscura)* is a 350 year old book: John Amos Comenius' *Orbis Pictus Sensualium* brought forth "a world of things obvious to the senses, drawn in pictures" along with a revolution in the pedagogy of reading and writing.

B might stand for "book & image" in a variety of conjugations: an inner book structured by means of pregnant mental images as in the classical art of memory; handwritten bibles enriched with drawings; hand colored woodcuts from the infancy of print; ABC-books from all over the world; Thomas Bewick's pioneering xylographic books of natural history; the Greenlandic newspaper *Atuagagdliutit*, one of the world's first to include frequent color illustrations.

C stands for camera obscura, the device that depicts the bright day in perfect



perspective. The media philosopher Friedrich Kittler described the encounter between the camera obscura and the printing press as the first ever collaboration between two media technologies. According to Kittler, the joint forces of the printed book and linear perspective (developed by means of the camera obscura) had decisive effects: “The book became a medium in which technical innovations as such could take place. They could be stored, shared, and even advanced with the help of technical drawings in the text.”

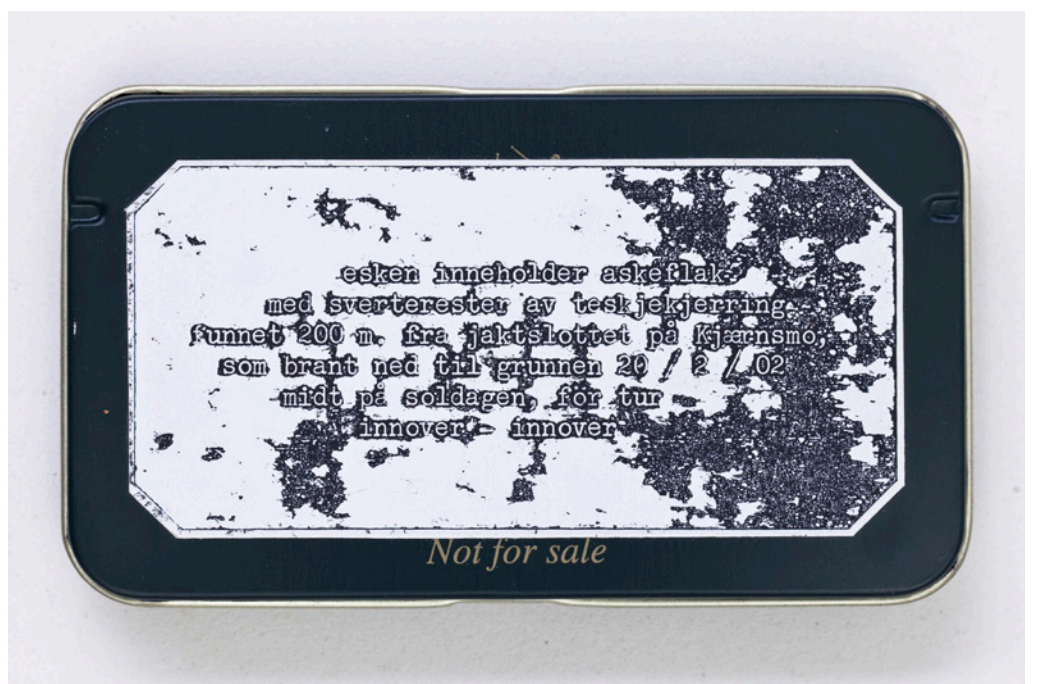
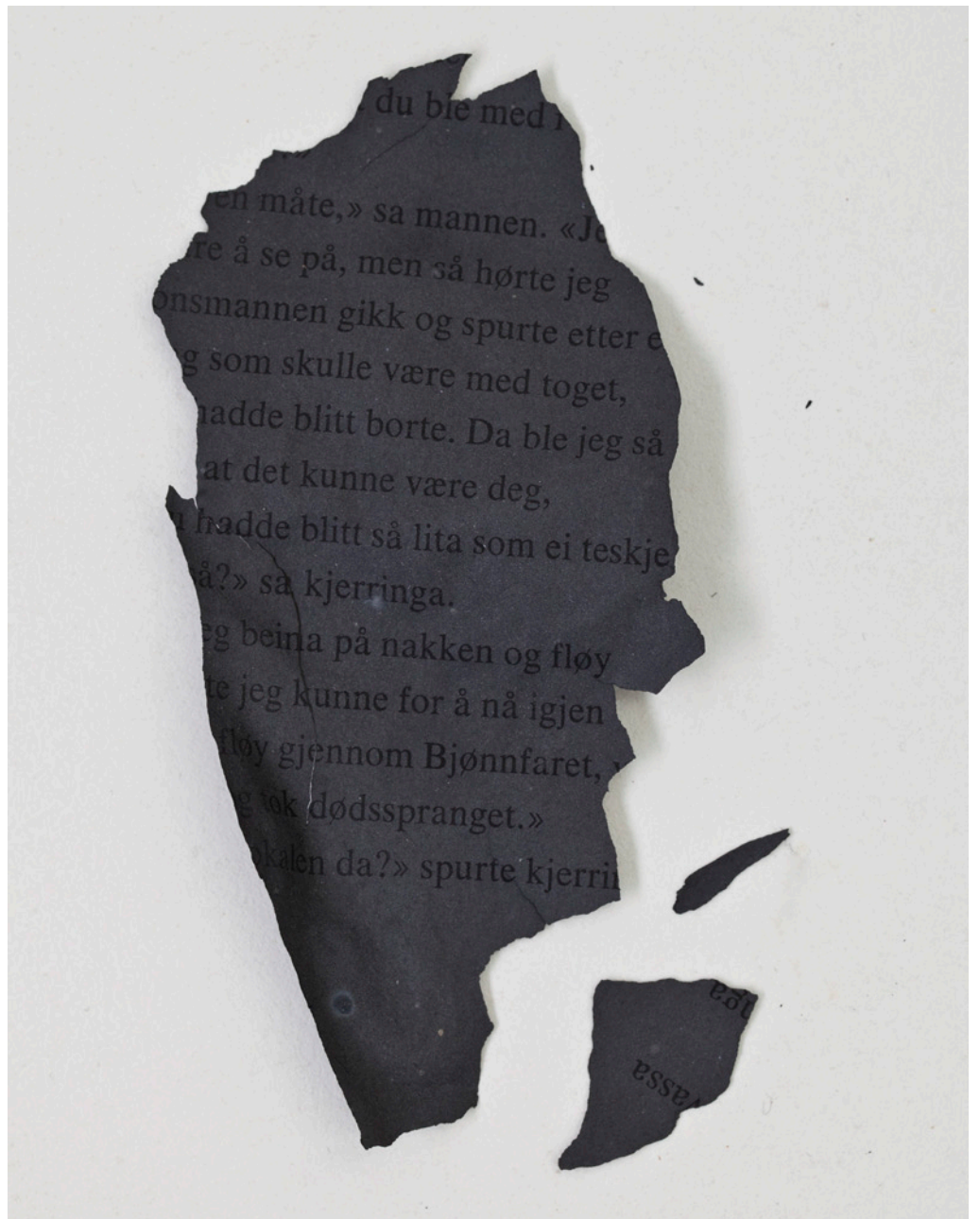
Yet the inventions of books are by no means restricted to the technical sphere. Consider the Soviet constructivist architect Yakov Chernikhov’s *Architectural Fantasies* (1933), a book conceived by its author as a “training ground for the imagination”. We still need such training grounds. Johanna Drucker has noted that e-books often demonstrate a superficial understanding of how paper books work: designers have seemingly been more concerned with imitating the iconic appearance of paper books (as though observing the phenomenon behind glass) than with developing formats which actually exploit the affordances of digital technology. It proves useful in this regard to study the printed book and its histories, as Drucker and Adrian Johns do in their contributions to this report. Such studies reveal that a book is not a static object, but something that opens itself up to a variety of interactions.

Some books contain pictures. All books project images of what a book is. Such images may or may not coincide with the material object of the book in question or with its contents. Consider *The Invention of the Bright Day* (1921) by Portuguese artist José de Almada Negreiros. *The Invention of the Bright Day* was the title of an open-ended device of heterogeneous materializations: a performance lecture, a handcrafted gift inscribed with green ink, an illustrated book, an exhibition. As Almada himself put it in the printed book published by his friend Fernando Pessoa, it proved impossible to include all the “steps towards the Invention of the Bright Day” in “the present edition”. His attempt to sync the temporality of life with the “fixity” of print led to comic relief, even to a “leftover” sentence.

Three decades later Ray Bradbury’s novel *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) depicted a TV society where books are banned: firemen are assigned to the task of book burning, while the people of the resistance memorize the classics in order to save them from the flames. The literalism here (repeating long texts word by word) betrays the degree to which this vision of what it means to keep something in memory is fundamentally informed by the Gutenberg technology. The art of memory in *Fahrenheit 451* is post-print in a double sense: both unthinkable without print and performed after its supposed extinction. As Mary Carruthers has made clear, the original *ars memoria* was, however, far less retrospective and iterative, more geared towards composing something new. In English as well as in Portuguese opposing meanings have been derived from the Latin “inventio”: invention/invenção and inventory/inventário. In like manner, for the classical art of memory, invention and memory were two sides of the same coin.

“What’s the point of affirming the deficiency of expression by archiving life in a literary way?” Almada remarked in a book from 1917 and went on to list all the new media technologies that challenged the primacy of print: film, phonography, the telegraph. Later he confessed to having burned the original. And so the book kept revolving inside his head.

Karin Nygård & Ellef Prestsæter





It is commonplace to refer to “the magic of books” or “the magic of reading.” If you search online for either of those phrases, you find millions of results. But what if printed books, back when they first appeared, really were magical? And what if reading, too, was seen as a magical activity? What could those phrases have meant then, and how could this magic have shaped the revolution wrought by the invention of printing?

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When printing was introduced into Western Europe in the 1440s, it did in fact emerge from the world of natural magic. Its inventor, Johannes Gutenberg, is a mysterious figure, but we know that he was brought up in the thriving mercantile towns of western Germany, that he came from an old military family down on its luck, and that he was probably trained as a goldsmith. That gave him exactly the combination of ambition, desperation, and skill characteristic of a class of wanderers prominent at the time. These wanderers sought to make fortunes out of their mastery of nature’s powers, often by making and selling marvelous machines embodying such powers. Gutenberg’s own initial project was of exactly this kind. He proposed to make tens of thousands of brooches for pilgrims headed for a religious festival at the old Carolingian capital of Aachen. The polished metal surface of each brooch, he claimed, would capture the



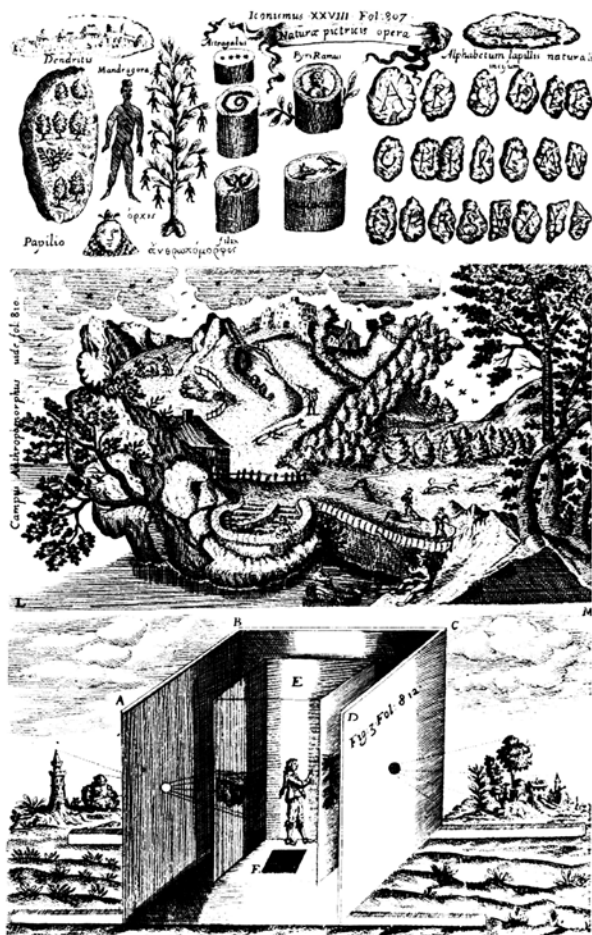
virtues that were emitted like light rays from a quartet of holy relics stored in the cathedral and revealed to the faithful only once every seven years. In other words, these devices—which were probably made using some kind of stamping technique—were machines to capture, store, transport, and reissue influence. When he realized that he had mistaken the date of the pilgrimage and consequently faced ruin, Gutenberg offered his disgruntled partners instead a new “art and adventure,” but still one based on a secret stamping machine. This was his printing press—as it turned out, a massively more consequential influence-recording machine.

The relative importance of printing is obvious in retrospect. But such experimental efforts were typical of what was a period of artisanal ambition. Many at the time were experimenting with impressing machines: coiners produced currency and medals, binders used presses to stamp designs on the panels encasing books, and carvers created woodblocks to make repeated copies of playing-cards and block-books like the *Ars Moriendi*. When asked, these artisans would describe their efforts in terms of a special knowledge of nature’s powers; natural magic was in effect the extension of artisanal expertise into the domain of science. And their objects were typically amalgams of different tools and techniques. Block-books, for example, incorporated manuscript writing and illumination as well as the images replicated from wood. The first “true” printed books were likewise amalgams. We repeatedly see in them printed characters combined with handwriting, rubrication, and even illumination. They should be recognized as the profoundly strange objects they were.

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But if printing was natural magic, so too was reading. In the mid-sixteenth century, as the printed book became the defining medium of its age, it spread the news of a device that rapidly became the standard model for accounts of what happened whenever a reader encountered a page. This device, the *camera obscura*, was another distinctive product of the skilled magic of the time. The most commonly cited account of the machine was the 23-year-old prodigy Giambattista della Porta’s phenomenally successful *Magia Naturalis*—a book that appeared in many editions and translations across Europe in the 150 years after its first publication in Naples in 1558, and that virtually defined the enterprise of natural magic in the late Renaissance. The camera obscura occupied a pivotal place in the work, marking as it did the book’s foray into “Mathematical Sciences.” It was the foremost of a series of light-manipulating “Geometrical instruments” that were, della Porta implied, ideal for introducing such sciences because “the truth of Mathematical Demonstrations should be made good by Ocular experiments.” Right at the outset, then, the camera obscura was held up as the model for rational, geometrical accounting.

What della Porta described was not the small, shoebox-sized contraption that one often thinks of today. It was a darkened room with a hole in one wall, fitted with a lens. (Della Porta seems to have regarded the lens as his own improvement to a device that was already fairly familiar.) The natural magician sat *inside* this “chamber” (hence *camera*) and viewed images cast from the lens onto a screen or the far wall. So far, so



Camera obscura and the tricks of nature (rotate the image and a face appears in the landscape). From Athanasius Kircher, *Ars Magna Lucis* (1646).



geometrical—although a proper account of it in such terms would be published only decades later, by Johannes Kepler. Indeed, it was lawlike enough to be used as an aid for painters, who could trace the projected image to help them portray reality. We know that Kepler, for one, used such a machine. And della Porta inaugurated what became the dominant European tradition for explaining human vision, when he remarked that the camera obscura was a model of the eye itself. This model resolved once and for all the old conflict between intromission and extramission theories, he noted, in favour of the former. “The image is let in by the pupil, as by the hole of a window,” della Porta declared, and was projected onto “that part of the Sphere, that is set in the middle of the eye.” There the imagination could apprehend it, forming the foundation of knowledge itself.

And yet... it was clear from the outset that the camera obscura also highlighted the fragility and capriciousness of such perception. This was for two reasons. First, human perceptions within the camera were not, in fact, determined solely by the rules of geometry, but depended on acclimatization. Della Porta noted that a viewer would not at first perceive any image at all inside the chamber because of what we would call afterimages, which were thought to display the anti-empirical power of the imagination. “You must stay a while,” he warned, because the “affection” in the eye made by light in the outside environment prior to entry would produce a stubbornly lasting effect. Kepler and others concurred, suggesting that it would take at least a quarter of an hour “until the images impressed by the spirits in the clear light of day might vanish.” And, second, the associations created by the natural-magical origin of the device persisted. In context, the images one *did* see in a camera were tricks and illusions. Again, imagination played a part here. Della Porta explained how to deceive viewers by casting images of children and animals (including lions, rhinoceroses, and the like) so convincingly that viewers “cannot tell whether they be true or delusions.” Kepler, less exotically, emphasized that seeing a truthful image depended on making quite careful arrangements. If the screen were too far from the hole, for example, then the extra detail wrought by magnification would be lost by dilution and illumination of the intervening air and dust. And a small hole would produce a clearer but weaker image. It would be hard to discern—“just as very small writing is hard to read by a weak sense of vision.”

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A paradox consequently lay at the heart of the printing revolution. Vision in general, and reading in particular, *should* be explicable in terms of the archetypal magical machine, the camera obscura. This lent it a geometrical, Euclidean logic, modeled on the most demonstrative of all forms of reason. It implied that a true reading would



be determined by the page itself, and would be common to all who encountered it. Readings were therefore *caused*, and could be predicted. Much ecclesiastical and state policy with regard to the press was based on this simple assumption. But the camera was a producer of illusions: careful management was required to ensure that its users received true illusions. So its use as a model for reading also implied that in practice readings would be many and varied. They would depend on context, on skill, on training, and on the power of the imagination. The implication was that reading in the end could *not* be Euclidean. Instead one had to think in terms of congeries of learned behaviours and constraints. And in fact one of the most impressive things about the printing revolution in early modern Europe is the proliferation of reading practices that accompanied—more, that defined—it. It was not only that more readers encountered more books than before. They encountered more *kinds* of books, and dealt with them in more kinds of ways. Suddenly, to be a successful citizen one had to work with bibles, indulgences, proclamations, newsbooks, almanacs, printed sermons, catechisms, pamphlets, medical recipe books, cookbooks—an extraordinary diversity. More importantly, the range of practices denoted by the term *reading* proliferated too. They extended from the scholarly poring over Aristotle at universities to the consultation of numerical tables for navigating the oceans. The remarkable thing was that printing facilitated this proliferation of both object and practice.

When we hail the revolutionary effects fomented by the invention of printing, this diversity of objects and practices is what we have in mind. And we duly lament the efforts of church and state to restrict them by various forms of policing and censorship. But the failure of those efforts is, by and large, their common feature. On the other hand, measures to uphold the power of reading were taken too, often in tandem with restrictions. An outstanding example is a law passed in Venice in the mid-sixteenth century ruling that if one printed a book with margins too small to allow annotation, or on paper too poor to take handwritten notes, then the entire impression would be seized and the privilege (roughly speaking, the copyright) lost forever. That severe repercussion signaled the importance placed by the Venetian Republic on the diversity of reading.

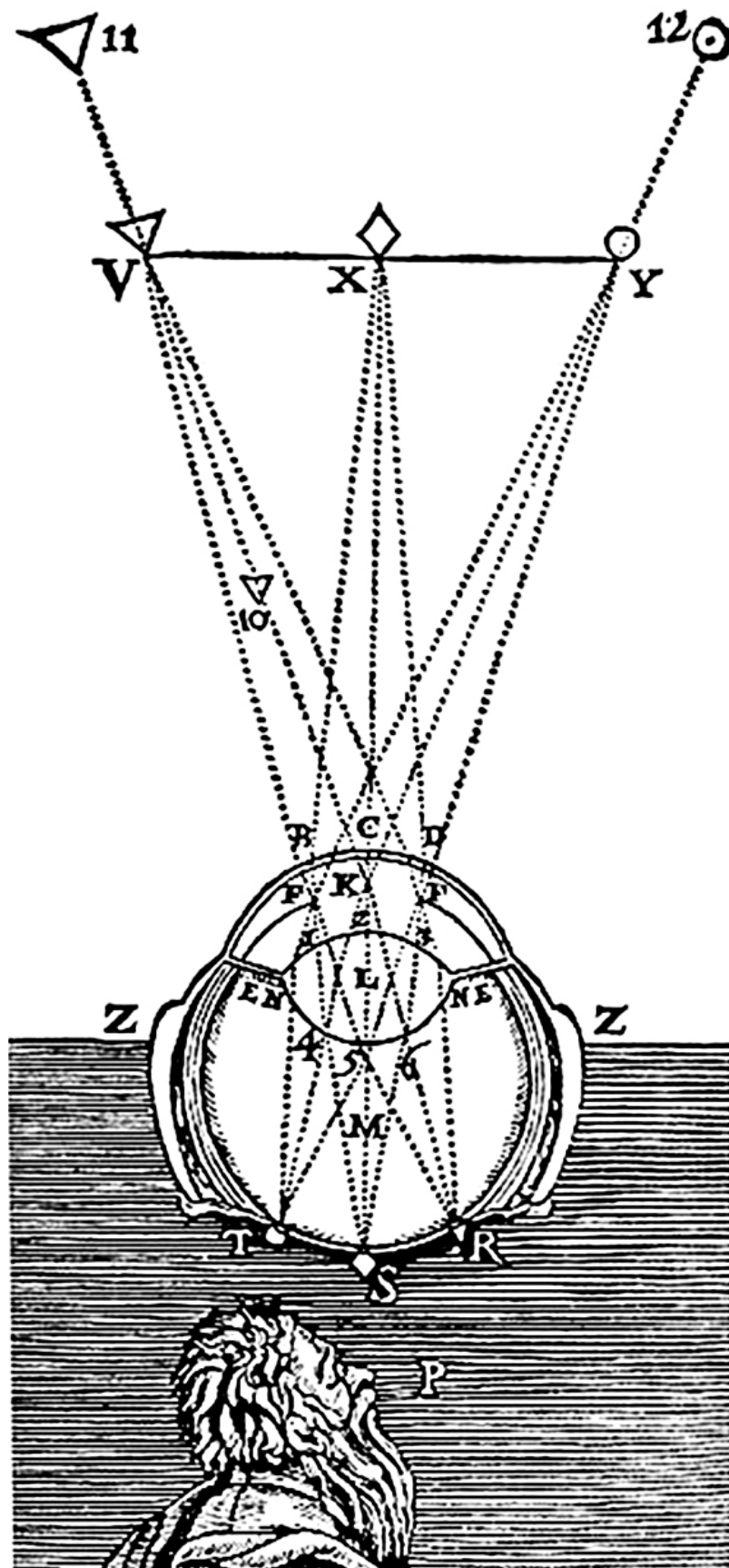
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And this gives rise to another paradox, this time centering on the media revolution that has taken place in our own age. Think back to the 1980s and 1990s. With digitization, books and reading seemed set to enjoy another age of proliferating objects and uses. E-books could be circulated at minimal cost, and could incorporate elements impossible to capture on the printed page: moving images, updated information, responses to critics. Reading could proliferate too. And so could its traces—the marks made by readers in the course of their engagement with the work, and which, in printed books from the fifteenth through twentieth centuries, form the raw materials from which historical accounts of reading itself can be built. In some ways this has indeed happened. But in practice it is all too often impeded. If you “buy” an e-book, what you may get is not a document at all, but an access protocol for a distantly held file. Programs like Adobe’s that are widely used in today’s digital publishing sector use these protocols as forms of DRM (Digital Rights Management), in principle to prevent piracy. But their restrictive effects are wider than that implies. For example, e-books may not be printable. And DRM may prevent readers from recording annotations at all.

So what in sixteenth-century Venice would have cost the publisher his copyright is

now imposed in the name of defending that same copyright. Then, diversity of reading prevailed over property; now, property prevails over diversity of reading. In effect, reading is reduced to *only* a kind of camera-obscura scanning process—minus the original magic. Perhaps there is a fantasy involved here too, in the very assumption that magic could be removed so completely from the act of reading. This “disenchantment of the page” may be as much an illusion as anything in della Porta. At any rate, the paradoxical result is that a medium that could facilitate a new proliferation in reading practices is being constrained to a drastic contraction of such practices.

We need to notice this. It is by no means a necessary result of digitization, and it can be countered. In order to bring the problem into focus, however, it helps to recall the lost magic of printed books and their readings. It is thanks to diverse, eclectic collections like Guttorm Guttormsgaard’s—collections that preserve not only books themselves, but the traces of their making and use—that this is possible today.



René Descartes exploring the camera obscura principle through the eye of a bull. From Descartes, *La Dioptrique* (1637).







The pictorial Latin textbook, John Amos Comenius's *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, was first published in German and Latin in 1658, and in English a year later. Its influence was felt for centuries as it was translated into every European language (arriving in Scandinavia with the publication of a Danish translation in 1672). By contrast to the rule-based approach of the standard Latin grammars of Donatus and Priscian, its pictorial format and descriptive method made it unique. Encyclopedic in its aims, the work is at once a lexicon, grammar, and source of knowledge about the world—and a picture book meant to engage young readers. The belief that education was the route to enlightenment and that learning might be universalized drove the progressive educational thinkers of the era. Comenius drew inspiration from the pre-Enlightenment pedagogical writings of Francis Bacon whose arguments in *The Advancement of Learning* (published in Latin in 1623) laid the foundations for his concept of universal knowledge, or Pansophy.

Comenius added the dimension of pleasure to the task of learning, an approach nearly unheard of in an era when childhood was a nascent concept, still struggling for differentiation from adulthood in miniature. The usual approach to the acquisition of literacy was through the catechism, bible excerpts, or the less than cheery primer verses that begin “In Adam’s Fall, we sinned All.” By contrast, the engraved pages of Comenius’s *Orbis Pictus* must have felt like a pleasure trip through a richly depicted land where the long-jacketed mentor strolled among the pictured groves and hillsides studded with vocabulary lessons. The illustrations for the many editions of this popular work were produced in sturdy woodblocks as well as more detailed copper engravings, though the iconography and imagery were usually preserved.

The pedagogical character of *Orbis Pictus* is indisputable. But as a work of epistemology, the book can be situated within other traditions of knowledge production and publication. From this perspective, the work belongs among the pantheon of Renaissance publications—treatises in architecture, anatomy, botany, arms, emblems, antiquities, cartography, perspective, and so on. Not only do such disciplines depend upon visual images as a primary mode of knowledge production and transmission, they each, in various ways, rely upon graphical ordering in the presentation. Above all, Comenius’s book is remarkable for its rationalized presentation, graphically coded, that both orders the world and assumes an order within it simultaneously. This mutual codetermination systemizes knowledge so successfully that its organizing principles disappear, and Comenius’s inventory of all that may be named and known, designated and depicted, becomes the demonstration and exemplar *sine qua non* of classificatory categories naturalized as visual knowledge. Following Aristotle’s dictum, that “nothing may be in the mind that was not first in the senses,” Comenius begins with a faith in the human capacity for perception as the key to discovering the order of the world—which is there to be seen, evident and apparent.

Knowledge and visuality are in dialogue in *Orbis Pictus*, whose title page proclaims





that it contains "A Picture and Nomenclature of all the chief Things that are in the world, and of Men's Employments therein." Comenius begins his text with an "Invitation" to the "World of Things Obvious to the Senses, drawn in Pictures." This opening gambit is staged as a conversation between Master and Boy. The former says "learn to be wise" and offers to "show thee all, name thee all." After this promise, the master pauses to introduce the components of his linguistic universe, and the final line in the opening Invitation reads, "Here thou hast a lively and vocal alphabet." Turning the page we are offered a two-page spread in which a twenty-four letter alphabet (lacking J and V) is presented as a guide for pronunciation of the sounds of the Latin tongue. Its presentation is surprisingly original. Comenius uses a quasi-mimetic principle, aligning the sounds of the alphabet with the utterances of animals. The letters speak their sounds in turn, but the names and characters are embedded in complex Latin and translated phrases: "Cornix cornicatur, a a" ("The Crow crieth") or "Anser gingrit ga ga" ("The Goose gagleth") and "Lupus ululat, lu ulu" ("The Wolf Howleth"). With the exception of the Wind, the Mouth, the Carter, and the Infant, all the agents of speech sound are animals. Their allegiance to the lettered world they exemplify goes without question, and these phrases are by far the most convoluted texts in the entire book—serving sound, sight, and symbolic purpose simultaneously.

The idea that all the basic elements of the world may be referenced through the image of the alphabet as a metaphor for a fixed sequence of code, the very alpha and omega of component parts, suggests that the rationalization of the senses merely replicates the already extant order of the world itself. In the *Orbis Pictus* a number of intellectual strains of thought are entwined simultaneously: the conviction that





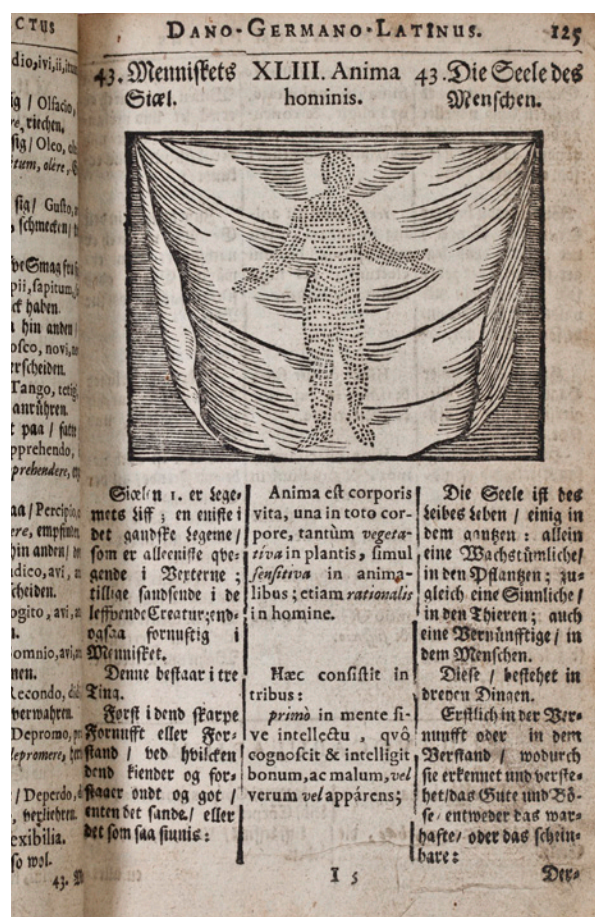
the encyclopedic book of nature is the sensible world, the commitment to a lexical (rather than syntactic) approach to instruction, an engagement with graphical forms of knowledge production, and a less obvious structuring principle in which alphabetic semiosis undergirds epistemological apperception.

Throughout the *Orbis Pictus*, the atomistic worldview prevails in spite of Comenius's commitment to a view of the universe organized by a single law: the world is full of things that can be listed, named, marshaled into view within one frame after another. The rationalization of sight, to paraphrase William Ivins, is usually understood within the practices of image production in the 15th century, such as the *camera obscura*, associated with perspective and its systematic production of spatial illusion and point of view. But the concept might also be applied to the emergence of ever-more sophisticated organizational principles in the graphical presentation of knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. The popular emblem books of Andrea Alciato (1531) and Cesare Ripa (1593) overlap the era in which the magnificent anatomical work of Andreas Vesalius (1543) makes a theatrical display of virtuosic visual knowledge, its suspended, poised, and posed corpses flayed and arranged in ways that make their information clearly legible. But well into the 17th century, visual knowledge is bifurcated, split between the emerging practices of empirical observation (aided by new optical inventions, the telescope and microscope), such as Robert Hooke's 1665 *Micrographia*, and those of medieval cosmologies, such as the *Utriusque Cosmi* of Robert Fludd, published between 1617–21, with its systems of harmonies, proportions, perfections.

The images in Comenius's works are humble by contrast. Mostly cut in line, and arranged with the awkwardness of overstuffed curiosity cabinets, they are composed to show each item named in the text. The compositions are wonderfully improbable, each page crammed with the specimens, but meant to suggest natural scenes. So the "flying vermin" image in Lesson XXVII contains bees, wasps, drones, beetles, butterflies, crickets, hornets, gnats, gad-bees, and glow-worms in a parade of critters who somehow all happened to show up in the same frame. Subtlety flees under such pressures.

Though Comenius invokes the alphabet, he eschews its literal use as a way to structure his book, and *Orbis Pictus* is organized by theme and topic in a cosmological hierarchy, not by the sequence of the letters. Still, a sense that this atomistic world and our knowledge of it conform to a semiotic principle of which the alphabet is the prime example lurks at every turn. What is the conception of the alphabet Comenius might have had in mind? The 17th century primers and "spellers" always displayed the letters, as well using the alphabetic sequence to order their verses or lessons. The aforementioned "In Adam's Fall, we sinned All," conveniently aligned original sin, the first man, and the first letter of the alphabet into a moral message followed by The Book, the Cat, a Dog, and so on in verse and image, reinforcing the order of things through association with familiar imagery drawn on contemporary life or the natural world.

Comenius's alphabet was the functional one that orders by habit, by familiarity, and use and on the surface he is far from the realms of the Kabbalists and Neoplatonists. But his cosmology borrows from classical and mystical traditions: knowledge equaled

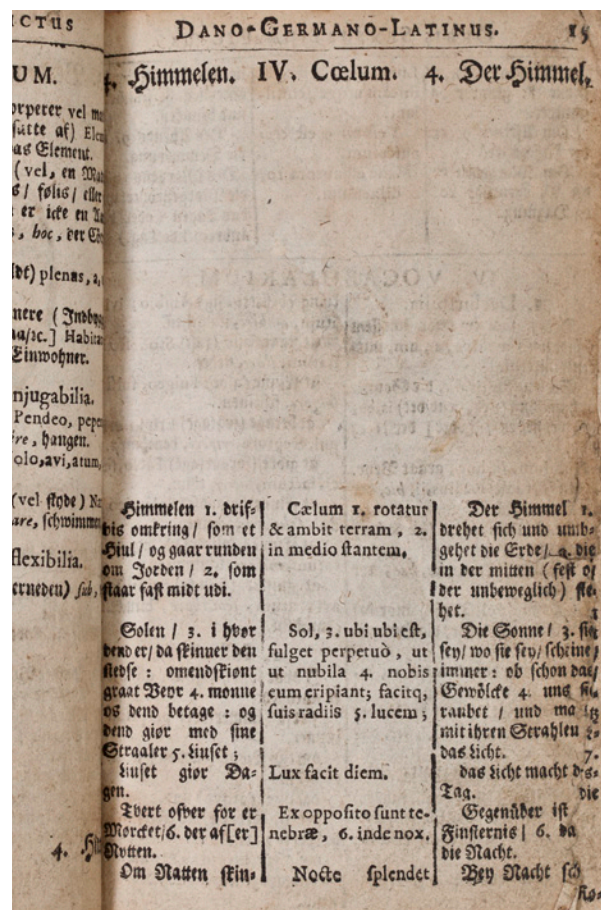
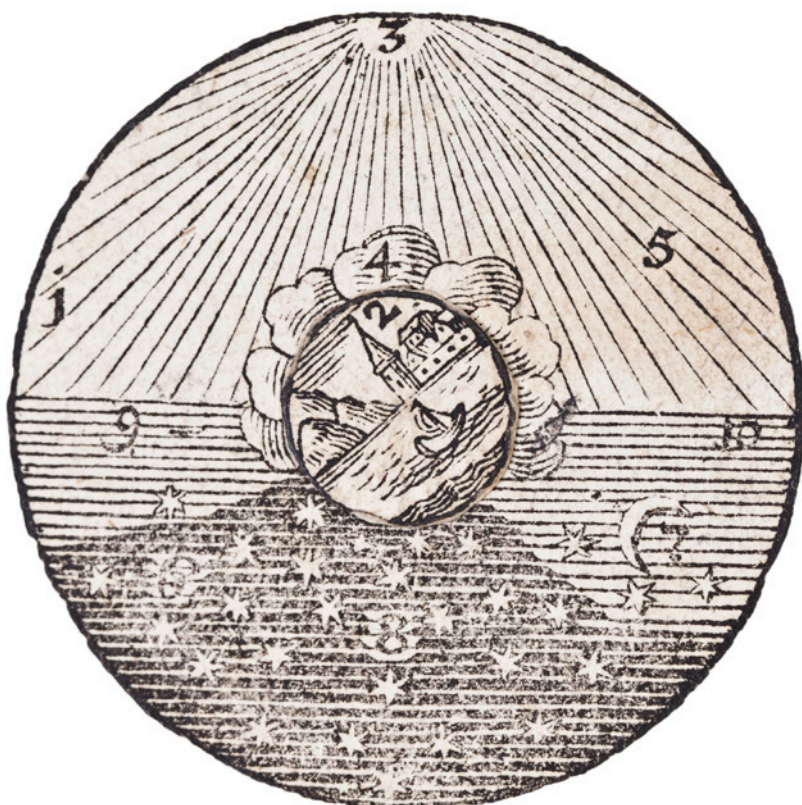






to orbit around the earth was later replaced by an image of the earth in motion and a statement qualifying the earlier map of the heavens “as the ancients used to think, for later authorities hold that the motion of the earth is about the sun.” Comenius’s lexicon is not merely an inventory of vocabulary, but a repository of knowledge in transition, even in his time. In Comenius’s world, the signs of life are the names for actual things, the expression of God is in every thing, and its place in the order of the world is a natural fact no matter how cultural the activity or pursuit in which it is found. No mystery haunts Comenius’s shadowless vision, and his conviction that perception produces no illusion, that the visible world is actual and its appearance presents evidence beyond doubt, allows his exhaustive engagement with its details and specifics to be enumerated endlessly. His worldview reifies an atomistic thing-ness of the universe as an alphabetic inventory, and he relies upon pictorial composition and verbal description to unify the components he assembles in his lessons. Encyclopedic and universal, knowledge may be made and rendered visible and self-evident—even of ineffable entities, such as the “soul of man”—and through such rendering a pedagogy of enlightenment may be made available to all.

Coda: Comenius’s commitment to the codex book was circumstantial and historical—the format served, but was also carefully orchestrated, as each edition struggled with the issues of correlation across languages and pictured objects. Graphical alignment could not always be achieved given the narrow columns and length of words, but this raises the question of how an *Orbis Pictus* might work in current technology. The use of augmented reality apparatuses, pads, pods, or other devices, through which interpretation can be layered onto the “actual” world suggests a collapse between the real and virtual that might be the further extension of Comenius’s page-as-portal. What might have

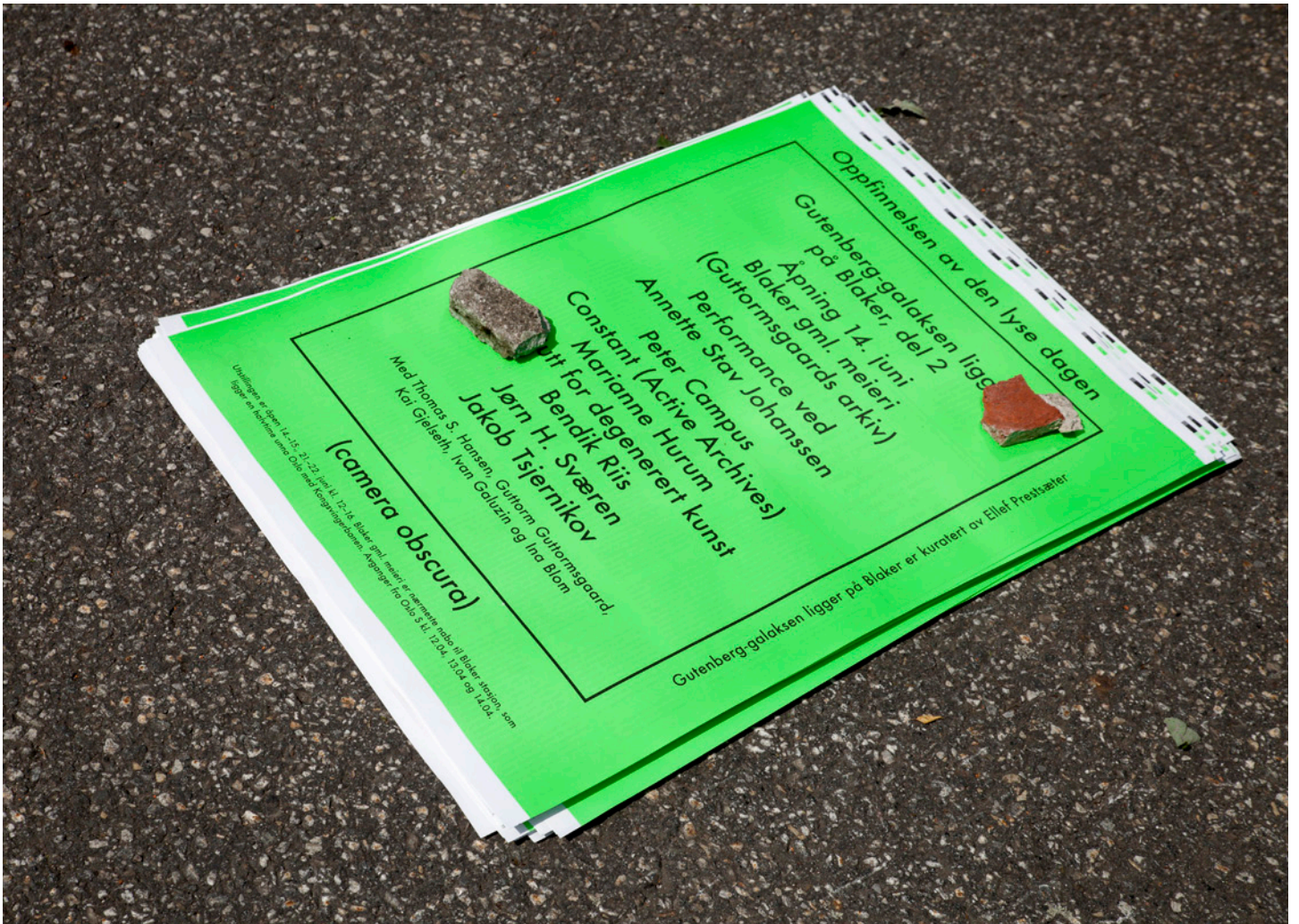


happened to Comenius's epistemological model if the haptic affordances and embodied cognitive dimensions of new media technologies could have been engaged? Or is the impulse towards increased degrees of simulation of experience actually a turn away from Comenius's engagement with the senses as a fundamental aspect of knowledge? Are the trickeries of a virtual sensorium different in character or just degree from the pictured images with which Comenius's pictured world makes an appeal to our recollection of perception and experience, not just our immediate senses? In Comenius's work we never mistake the page for the world, the thing itself for the thing depicted, and the integrity of cognition remains firmly grounded in a conviction that the eye can tell the difference between truth and its alternatives. If the frame of the image and of the page serve to demarcate the space of instruction and representation from that of the visible world, the same is true of the surfaces of our screen, and less of the augmentations that, increasingly, appear unframed, as signs apparently immediately available to our senses. Where, then, lies the distinction between the representation of things by signs and the apperception of signs as things in themselves, between the image of the world and the world itself? Would Comenius have remained attached to those frames that help cognize the world through its demarcation into the mediated and immediate zones of sensation? Or been content to unloose the distinction with the idea that knowledge arises from direct engagement through the senses? Would he have introduced his lessons on the iPad, for instance, with the statement that "This is a device. It frames the world." Or instead, "We see the whole world through this frame." Image appearing on a surface, or portal onto the world: the difference is everything.

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## THE INVENTION OF THE BRIGHT DAY (CAMERA OBSCURA)

I went into an old dairy. I started to count the books that should be read and the years I had to live. It won't do. Even if I stop sleeping at night, I won't last to get through even half of the dairy. There must be other ways to save a person. If not, I'll be damned.

\* \* \*

I picked up a book of philosophy. Philosophy is the science of life. That's just what I needed—to add science to my life.

I read the book of philosophy. I achieved nothing, Mom! I achieved nothing.

They told me I would have to be initiated first. But I have only had one initiation, when I was put into this world in the image and likeness of God. Won't that do?

\* \* \*

I imagined there was a book for people, just like there are pills for the fever. A book as efficient as a pill. A tiny book with two pages, like a pill. A book that said it all clearly and quickly, like a poster, with address and date.

\* \* \*

In a display case was a book called *The Invention of the Bright Day*. Written a hundred years ago by a Portuguese! I think all books should be called that: *The Invention of the Bright Day*! Don't you think, Mom? In another display case was a book titled *A World of Things Obvious to the Senses, Drawn in Pictures*. Written in the old days by a Czech! The master wrote down everything he knew—that's why he was a master. The words were written for the sake of others as well. They learned to read in order to become masters—that was the purpose of learning to read in the old days.

\* \* \*

I went into a dark room. There was a little hole in the wall, Mom! On the opposite wall I saw the things that today's air put into focus. It was at that point I understood what it means to have eyes in the head.

The earth above, the sun below.

I followed all the hours of sunlight and those of shadow. When the night arrived, the sun and I agreed that we had had enough light for one day. Then sleep arrived. And it arrived on time. Before sleep, an image—a dotted human soul!

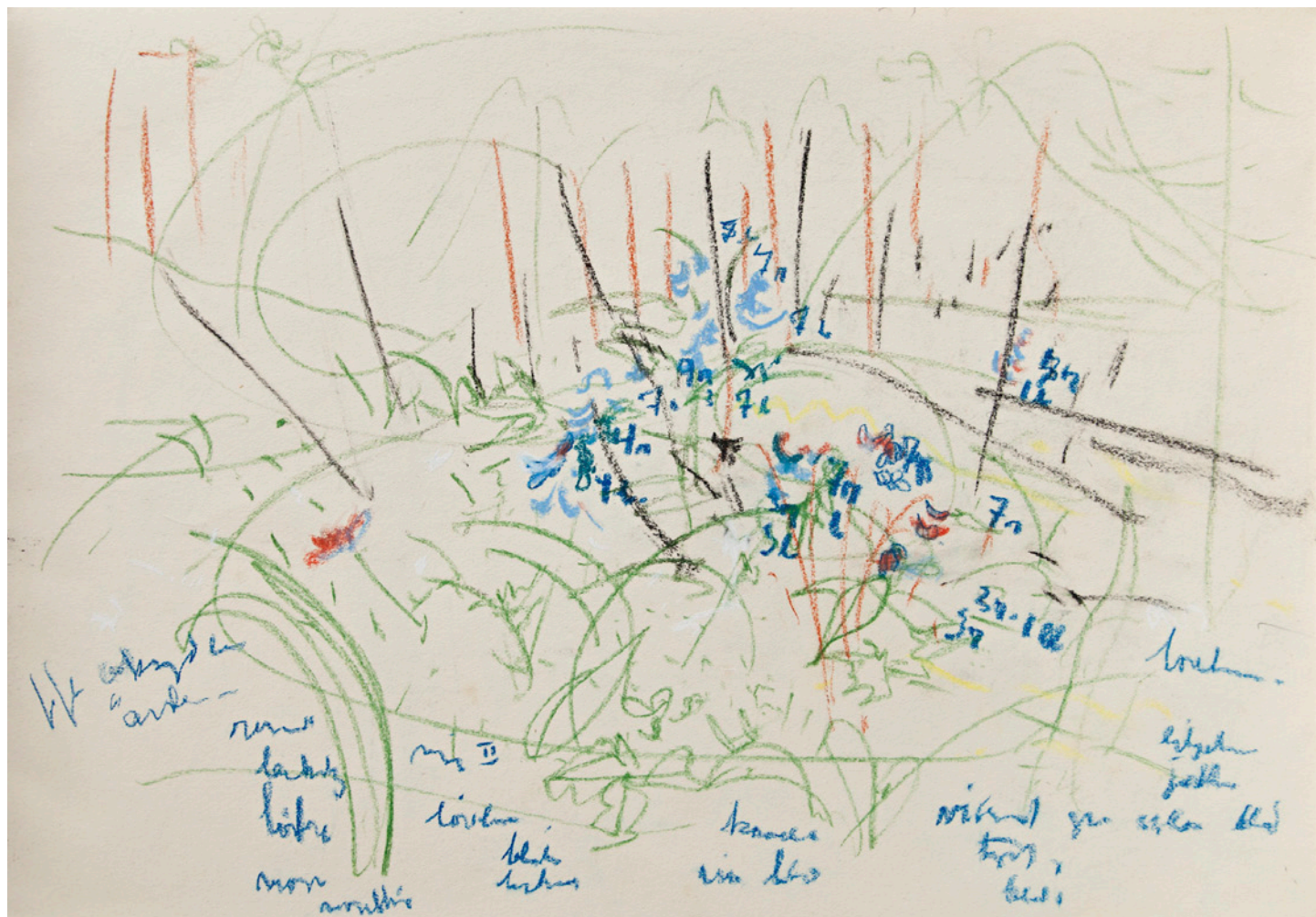
\* \* \*

I dreamt of a country where everyone was a master. Each and every one commenced by making a pen and then sat down to listen to the universe; they made paper from scratch and recorded confessions they received directly from the universe; afterwards they dived to the foot of the cliffs for the squid's black ink, letter by letter they designed types to compose words, and from the trees they created the printing press and bound

their discoveries safely together so that they could reach other people. This is how everyone became a master in this country. This is how the masters wrote the phrases that will save humanity.

\* \* \*

When I was born, all the phrases that will save humanity were already written. Only one thing was lacking—to save humanity.



Lördag 1 juli

KUNST OG DEKORASJONSMALER  
+ BENDIK RIIS +



## WHERE IS THE SOUL?

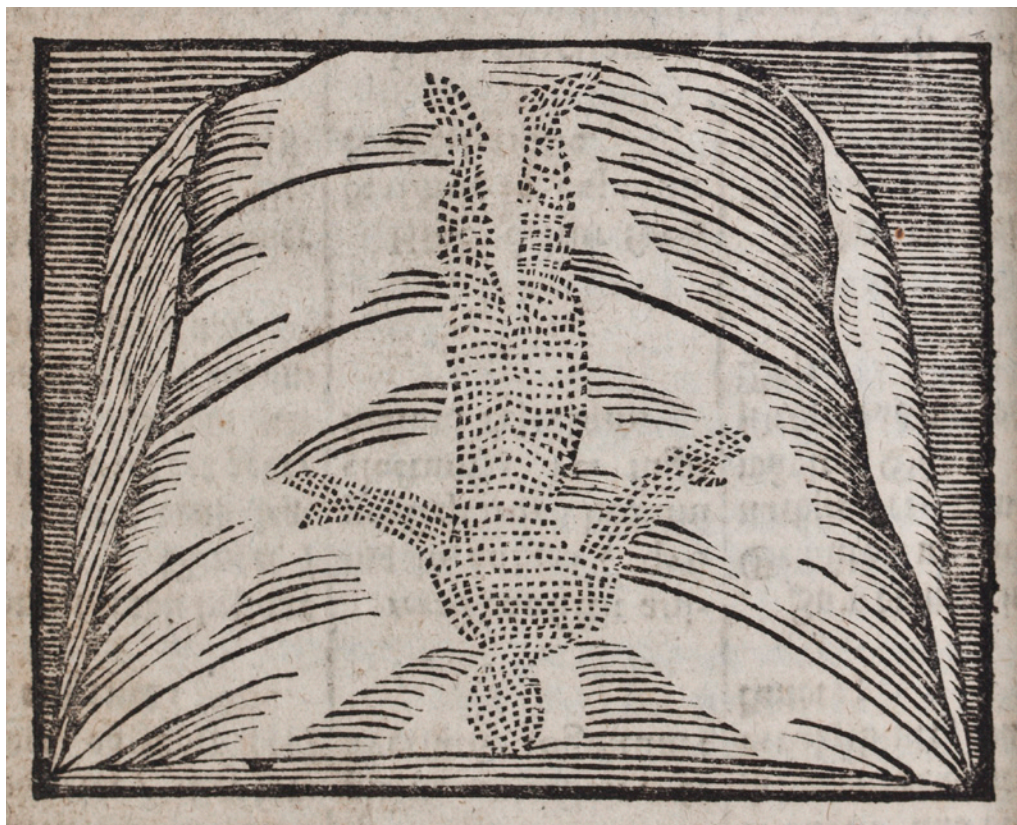
The German media philosopher Friedrich Kittler put it like this: “We knew nothing about our senses until the media provided models and metaphors.” When Athenian philosophers asked themselves what tool they used to philosophize, their answer was the soul—not the alphabet (as a more practically oriented mind would have assumed). However, when it came to explaining what the soul was, it was described in terms of a media technology: the soul was like the wax slate they wrote on, a *tabula rasa*.

In 1689 the British philosopher John Locke used the metaphor of the *tabula rasa* to describe the human, while at the same time referring to another media technology, the *camera obscura*:

[Sensations], as far as I can discover, are the windows by which light is let into this dark room. For methinks the understanding is not much unlike a closet wholly shut from light, with only some little opening left to let in external visible resemblances or ideas of things without: would the pictures coming into such a dark room but stay there, and lie so orderly as to be found upon occasion, it would very much resemble the understanding of a man in reference to all objects of sight, and the ideas of them.

A *camera obscura* was thus like a human without memory. Or inversely: a person was like a *camera obscura* with a certain capacity for storage.

In John Amos Comenius's book about “A World of Things Obvious to the Senses, Drawn in Pictures” there are no pictures of any *camera obscura*, but the picture of the human soul looks like a projection of a human body. “The human body is the best picture of the human soul”, someone said. Another replied, “The only thing you can know about



the soul or the human are the technical gadgets with which they have been historically measured at any given time”.

\*

For centuries the camera obscura provided the model for how the human eye works. By the early 1970s new media technologies enabled new kinds of modelling. In the words of Peter Campus: “The video camera makes possible an exterior point of view simultaneous with one's own. This advance over the film camera is due to the vidicon tube, similar to the retina of the eye, continually transposing light (photon) energy into electrical energy... It is easy to utilize video to clarify perceptual situations because it separates the eye-surrogate from the eye-brain experience we are all too familiar with.”

\*

Today Michael Murtaugh and Nicolas Malevé's work with Guttormsgaard's archive highlights the tension between the human eye and computer vision. In the probes presented on the following pages, they use SURF (Speeded Up Robust Features), an algorithm that locates “interesting points” in digital images. The SURF algorithm operates with purely statistical constructs that don't translate directly to human perception. Even if we train it to serve our purposes, the “interests” of the algorithm are very different from ours. In the second part of the experiment the algorithm produces an “imagined community” of things. In the first part the panorama of all the 6,000 features detected in a photograph of the back of a steel frame with moveable types and “blind material” (the image was used for the cover of Guttormsgaard's book *Lysten og hemmeligheten*) seems to picture the gap between statistical models and human perception. Or, does it rather ask us to trace the contours of a new human soul?



The following pages contain a selection of probes made with so called SURF features. SURF stands for Speeded Up Robust Features.

“For any object in an image, interesting points on the object can be extracted to provide a “feature description” of the object. This description, extracted from a training image, can then be used to identify the object when attempting to locate the object in a test image containing many other objects. To perform reliable recognition, it is important that the features extracted from the training image be detectable even under changes in image scale, noise and illumination. Such points usually lie on high-contrast regions of the image, such as object edges.”<sup>1</sup>

The first two images show the OpenCV<sup>2</sup> default output for the SURF algorithm applied to an image of an object in the archive of Guttormsgaard. The circles represent the “zones of influence” of the features.

The third image gives a panorama of the features of the same image organized by size.

The main interest of these features is that they may be used to compare different images and detect their similarities even if their scale or orientation differs. The algorithm works internally with different versions of the same image on which it applies a combination of blurring and sharpening effects. Each version is called a plane of the image. Working with these different planes of an image makes it possible to find connections between images even if some distortion has occurred. Due to this the algorithm is said to be “robust”.

The following sequence of images shows the zones corresponding to two matching features in two different images. They are shown side by side. Although very important in similarity detection, the zones of the image corresponding to the features are rarely shown as such. At first glance, what the features reveal is rather puzzling. They invite us into a very intimate detail of an image that we most likely would have overlooked. The juxtaposition of the two matching features can sometimes be understood by us “intuitively”—they “look alike”, while in other images, the traits that connect them seem to evade “visuality” and stay hidden in their mathematical morphology. Below each pair of features, you can see the two connected images and where the features are located in each image.

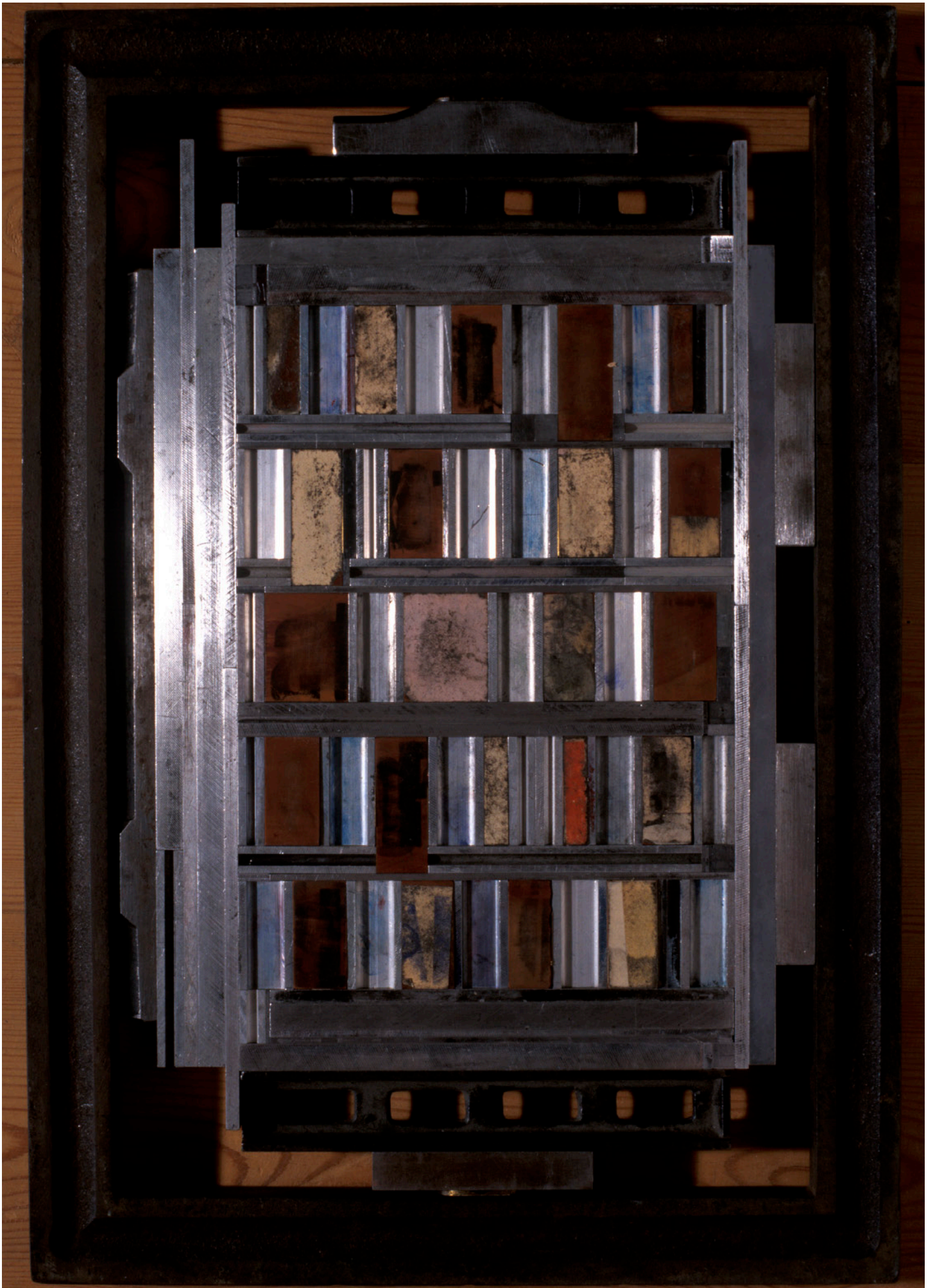
Additionally, a graph has been produced to show the relationships implied by the connecting features. For a large part the algorithm detects connections between different views of one and the same object. But more interestingly, it sometimes makes surprising connections, “seeing” unexpected affinities, introducing the little difference that questions its own authority when it comes to establishing homogeneous sets.<sup>3</sup>

1. The quotation is from the Wikipedia entry on SIFT (Scale-invariant feature transform). SURF is said to have been “partly inspired” by SIFT (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SURF>). The SURF algorithm has been patented by the firm Kooaba, later sold to Qualcomm. The regulation of software patents in Europe is still a hot debate and the different states interpret the regulations differently (France, for instance, rejects regulations altogether).

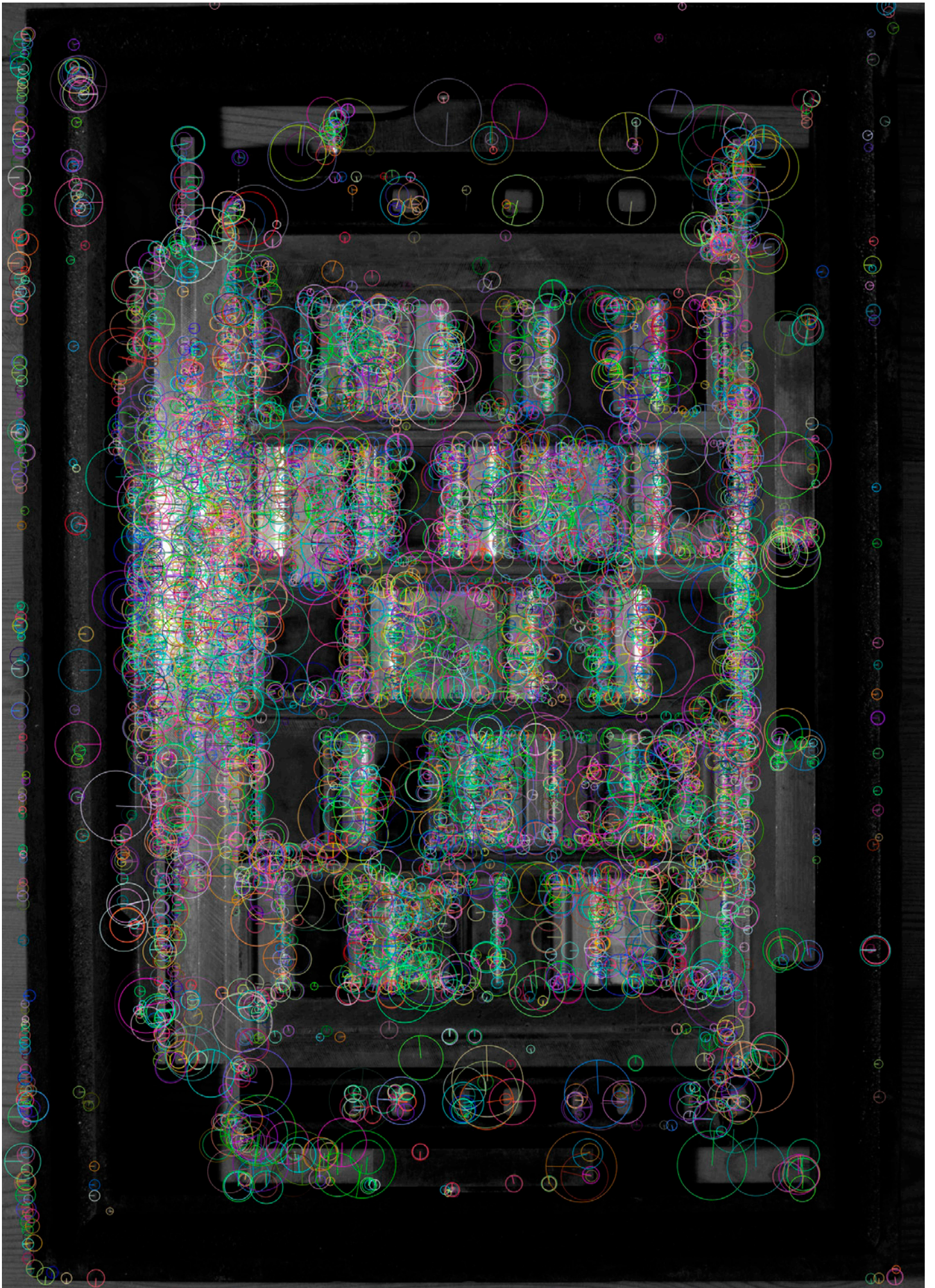
2. OpenCV (Open Source Computer Vision Library: <http://opencv.org>) is an open-source BSD-licensed library that includes several hundred computer vision algorithms.

3. The SURF algorithm doesn't try to emulate high-level human perception; it doesn't try to “understand a scene”. It detects zones that have specific statistical characteristics. Measures may be taken to avoid unexpected connections to further increase the convergence between the algorithmic output and what would correspond to human judgement.

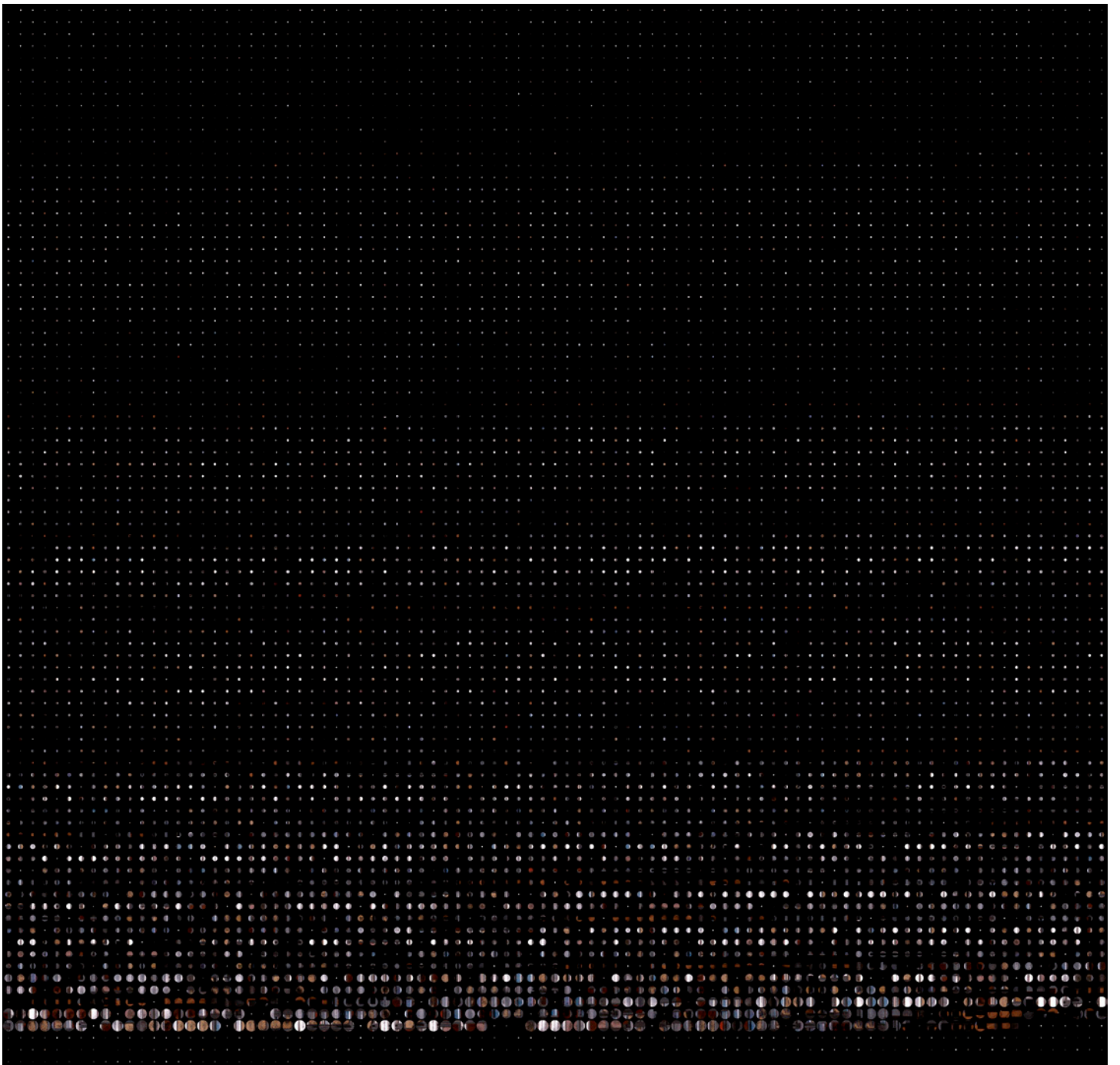








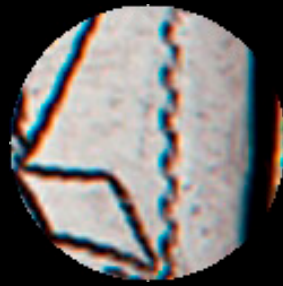


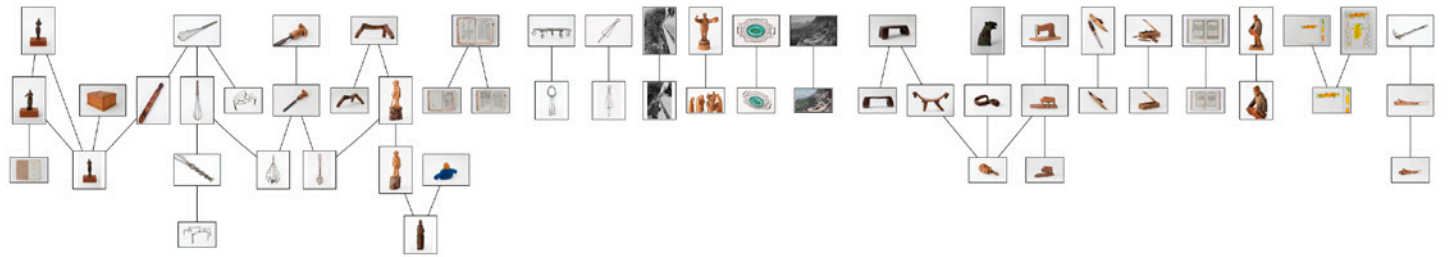
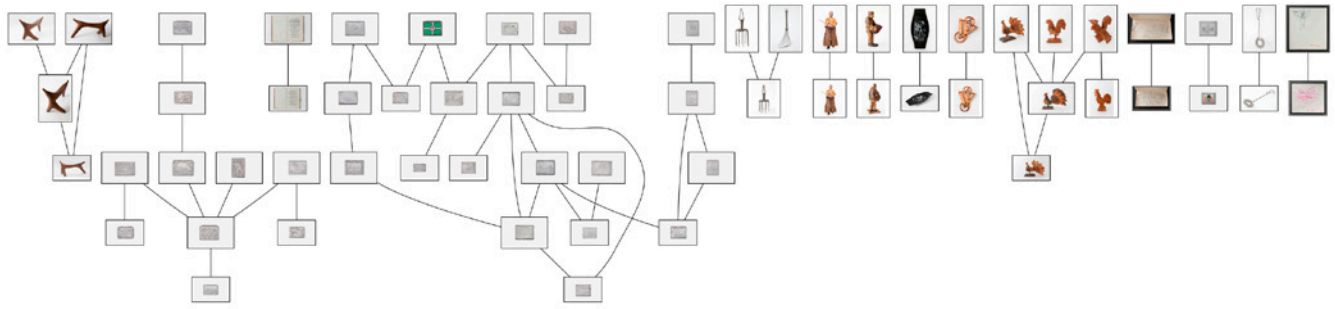
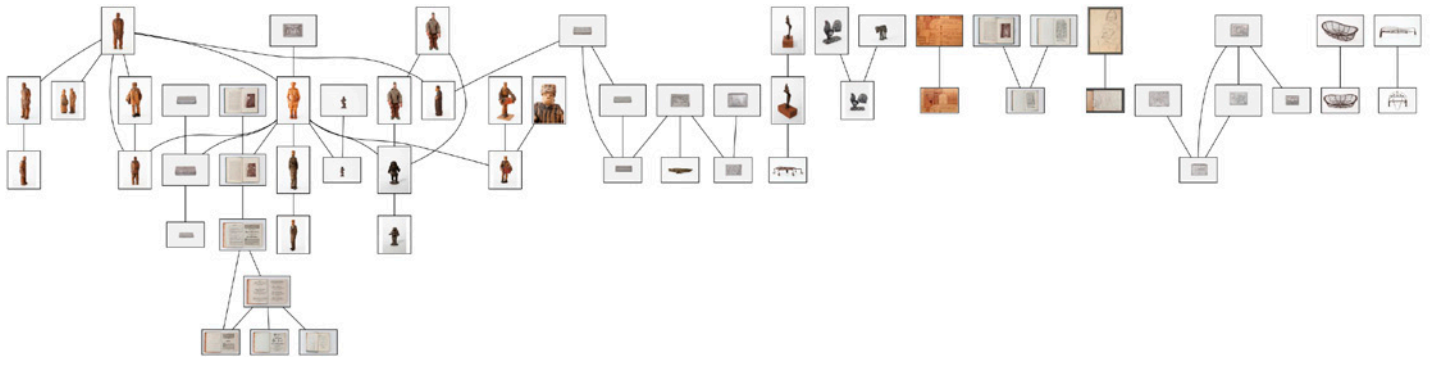




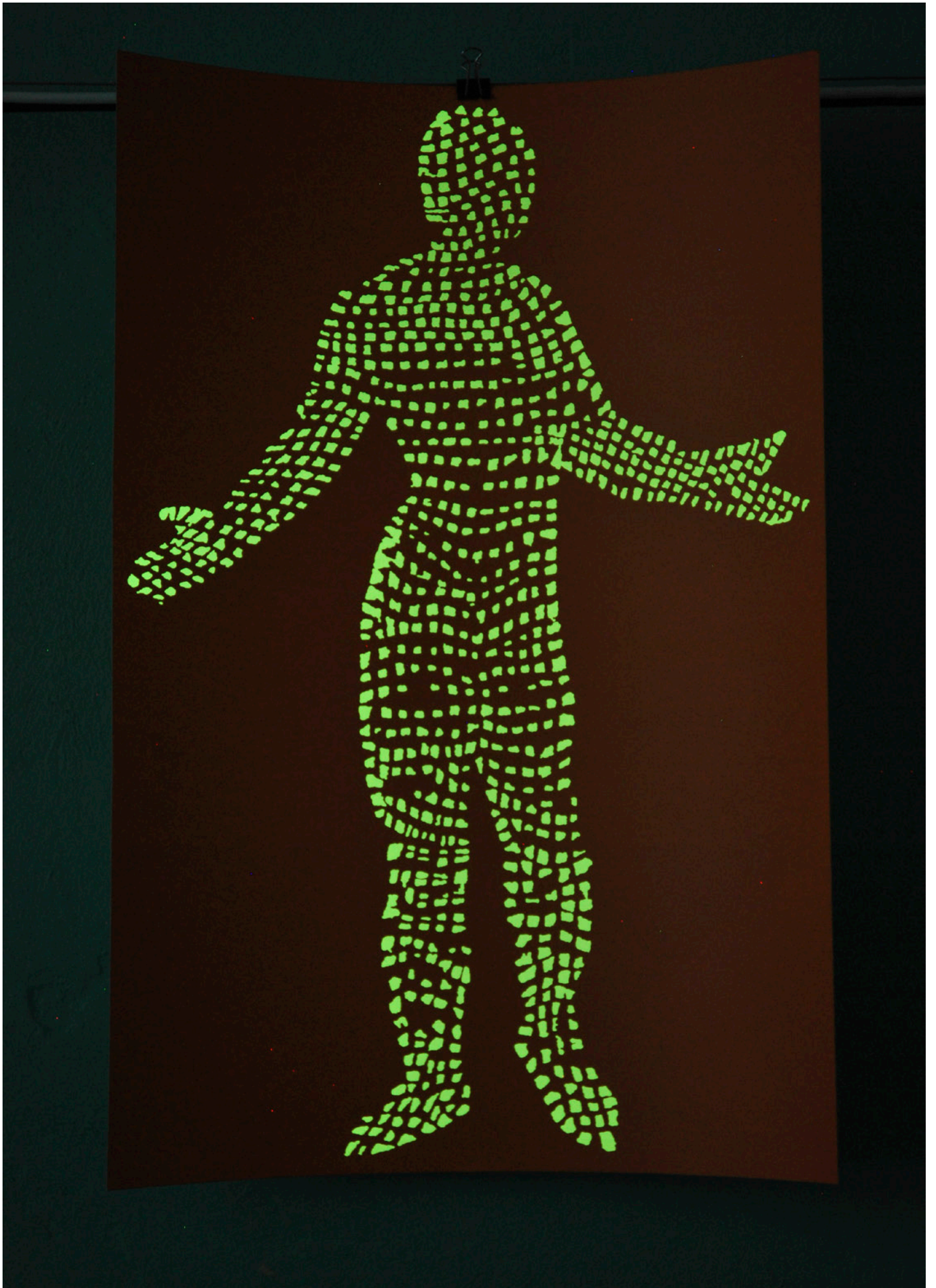


















This text is an excerpt from *The Autobiography of Video: The Life and Times of a Memory Technology* (forthcoming in 2016 on Sternberg Press, New York). It is the coda to a chapter called “Video Life”, which deals with video as a technological life form and argues that early video brought about new ways of understanding life, social memory, and political action.

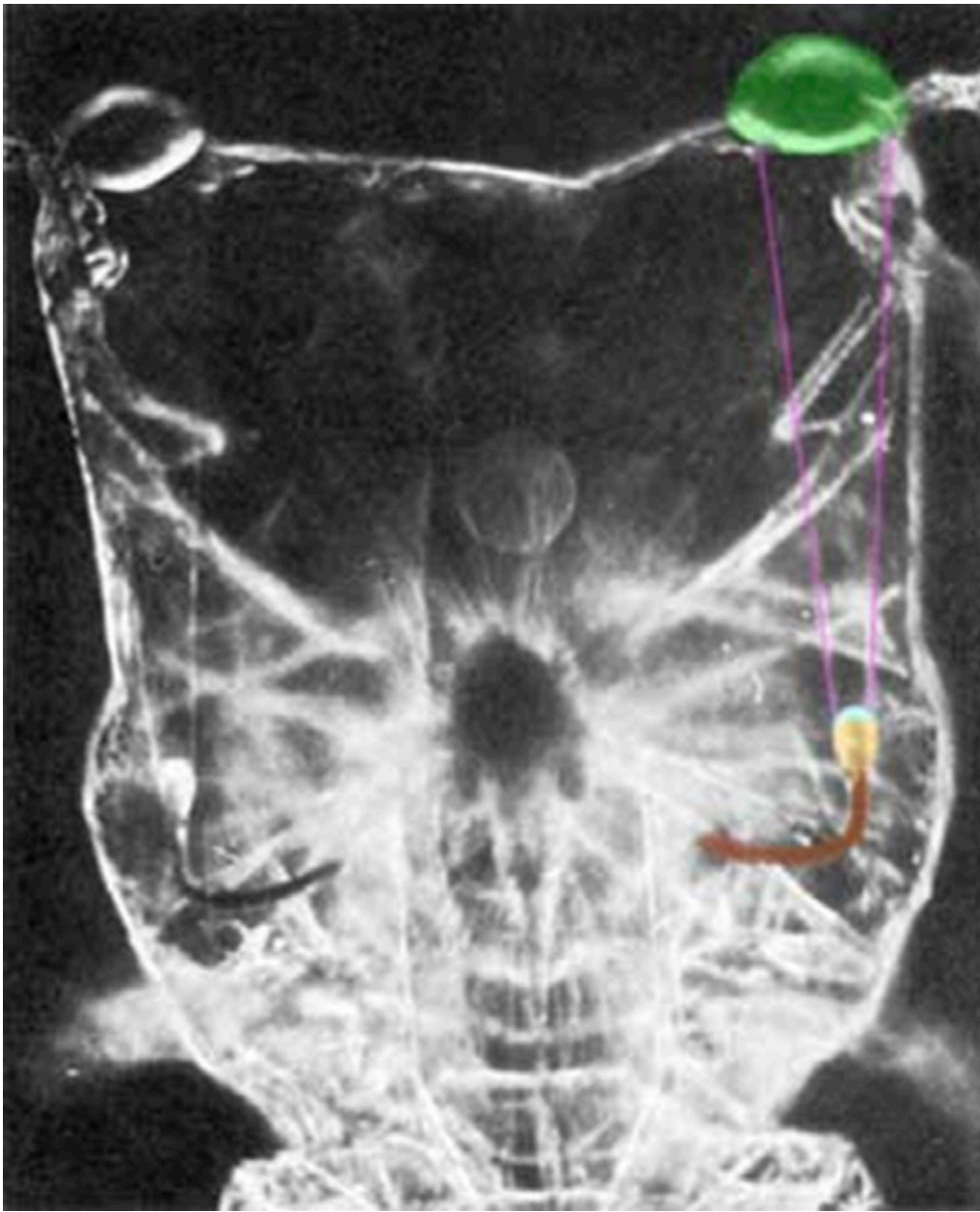
Sometimes video went looking for other living beings with which to identify. One such exploration took the form of a quasi-scientific demonstration that referenced recent researches in marine biology. In the summer of 1963, Richard Langton Gregory, Helen Ross, and Neville Moray spent a few weeks in the bay of Naples examining sea water, hauled from 200 meters depth, drop by drop in a microscope. Their hope was to find a rare animal described in 1891 by biologist Sellig Exner, but never seen since. The team had almost given up when “she”—the object of the researchers’ desire—suddenly appeared, “incredibly beautiful, perfectly transparent—so no veil hid the secrets of her eyes”.<sup>1</sup> As it turned out, “she” was the object of not just scientific but also technological desire. For the secret of the eye that was now finally revealed—at the historical moment of television’s breakthrough into general culture—was that it seemed to be a televisual eye: “possibly a single channel scanning eye, like a simple mechanical television camera, feeding information of spatial structure down a single neural channel in time.”<sup>2</sup> Copilia, a copepod of about 3 mm in length, living in subtropical waters, is remarkable for her eye structure, which consists of an anterior lens connected by a delicate cone-shaped membrane to a posterior lens far inside the animal’s body. This posterior lens is attached to a bow-shaped structure that contains the photosensitive elements, and that is engaged in a continuous lively movement independent of the static anterior lens. It was this independent movement in the posterior part of the eye that made Gregory and his team understand it as a form of scanning, swiping across the image plane of the anterior lens. Exner had described the double lens system and the peculiar movement, but had at first not even seen it as an eye, since he did not understand how it could possibly function.<sup>3</sup> The principle of image scanning invented in 1884 by Paul Nipkow was still esoteric knowledge, and it was only in 1930, with John Logie Baird’s first television, that the implication of Nipkow’s rotating discs with spiral lens arrangements was fully understood. By the early sixties, however, the concept of televisual scanning was familiar enough and contributed significantly to the excitement about Copilia—among other things because scanning functions are highly *unlikely* in the optical systems of living beings. The retina of a human eye is a densely packed mosaic of more than a hundred million light-sensitive receptors that transmit patterns of retinal images in parallel through the million fibers of the optic nerve. This principle of simultaneity contrasts greatly with televisual “seeing”, which is based on the scanning of a scene and the sending of information spread out in time down a single channel. This operation requires fast-acting components which are generally not found in living organisms but are standard in electronic engineering.<sup>4</sup> The discovery of Copilia’s scanning system created a concrete link between a “live” signaletic technology and the realm of living organisms: A televisual “body” did in fact already exist, but—contrary to the cinema-inspired tendencies to see video as a parallel to the human eye—there

1. Richard L. Gregory, introduction to reprint of R.L. Gregory, H.E. Ross, and N. Moray, “The Curious Eye of Copilia,” (*Nature* 201, 1964, 1166-1168), published on [www.richardgregory.org](http://www.richardgregory.org).

2. R.L. Gregory, H.E. Ross, and N. Moray, “The Curious Eye,” 1166.

3. Richard L. Gregory, “See Naples and Live,” in *Odd Perceptions*, (London: Routledge, 1986), 162.

4. Gregory, 1986, 163.



"Photomicrograph of *Copilia quadrata* showing the whole of the body, from above, but not the tail. The anterior lenses (shaded green) are seen somewhat out of focus; the posterior lenses (shaded pale blue) and the opaque pigment (shaded pale yellow and brown, but actually orange) of the photoreceptors are seen in sharp focus. These 'scan', apparently across the image planes of the anterior lenses. The specimen is living and unstained." (R.L. Gregory, H.E. Ross and N. Moray, "The Curious Eye of Copilia", 1964)



was no scientific reason to see this body as specifically human.

A return expedition to Naples in 1972 yielded new insights about Copilia's body. She (for only the females of the species have a scanning eye) did not eat, but appeared to run on stored energy, like a battery. Moreover, she had no heart: when she was not scanning, she was impossible to distinguish from dead specimens. For Copilia, life was tantamount to scanning: the scanning movement was key to her function as a purely reproductive machine. Thanks to her TV-eye she was able to detect the flashing green light emitted by the males of the species (who have little to no vision).<sup>5</sup> Her video camera was in other words structurally coupled with his light source, and like a battery-driven camera, she only came to life when actually recording and transmitting. In fact, the perfect transparency that had so delighted Gregory when he first found Copilia in 1963 also seemed to add to her technicity. Her body presented itself like a technical drawing or circuit diagram, all internal functions clearly visible in the electron microscope without need for dissection.

Copilia's eye was so to speak discovered by television: In a 1986 essay, Gregory uses this story as an example of the way in which scientific discovery depends on cultural events and contexts.<sup>6</sup> Yet television did not have much use for Copilia. It was not interested in scanning per se, nor in the mechanisms of vision and its role in the organism/environment relation, since its main worry was rapid high-fidelity transmission of closely controlled cultural contents. Video, however, appropriated Copilia's body soon after her reemergence on the biological scene, and for this purpose *hi-fi* was not a requirement. After all, Copilia's eye was only able to take in nuances of black and white, not unlike the early handheld video cameras. The mediator of this appropriation was Peter Campus, who had a background in experimental psychology as well as documentary film and television production, but settled on video after having been impressed by the "directness" of the blurry low-fi transmission from the 1969 Apollo moon landing.<sup>7</sup> Soon after—in 1971—a similarly low-fi signal stream was used to establish the vision in action of the small marine scanner creature—a mode of vision that Gregory and his team could only infer. *Double Vision* shows, on a single monitor screen, the superimposition of the visions of two separate cameras that are recording simultaneously—each camera functioning like a separate eye in a binocular vision system. Copilia's vision form the point of departure for the production: both camera eyes are engaged in lively and non-coordinated action, continuously scanning back and forth. And they find the light flashes they are living for, which in this case do not come from the male Copilia but from the windows of what appears to be a New York loft space—the natural habitat of numerous early home video cameras.

The simulation of Copilia's eye was not a random event. A typewritten card with the inscription "1. Copilia"—like the label for a laboratory sample—opens this section of the tape, and is followed by a series of similarly labeled sections, indicating systematic experiment: "2. Disparity", "3. Convergence", "4. Fovea", "5. Impulse", "6. Fusion", and "7. Inside the Radius". Each label designates video's appropriation of a different modality of binocular vision, its efforts to identify with specific optical/neurological operations in living beings. "Disparity" explores binocular vision in motion, where the images of the room created by each camera eye are not fully fused to achieve stereoscopic depth, but are imperfectly superimposed so as to generate a hallucinatory doubled space, corresponding to the effect of separate eyes refusing to converge. In contrast, convergence signifies the activity of two eyes attempting to focus on an object

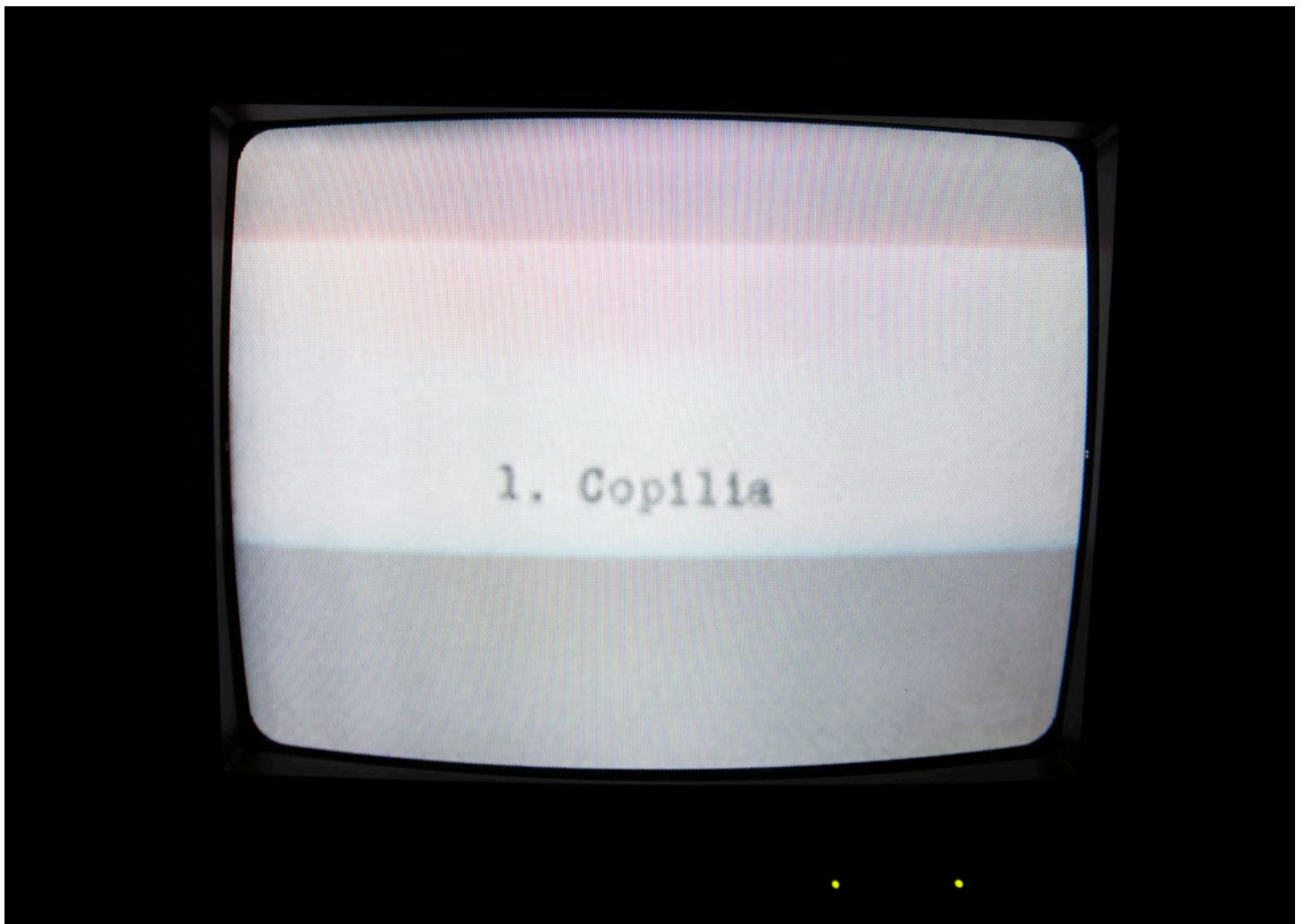
5. Gregory, 1986, 165–69 (Gregory tells that he was fairly sure that he saw mating, but did not dare to report this as a scientific finding at the time).

6. Gregory, 1986.

7. "Television had very definite rules—how you should change the image every eight seconds being one of them—but all of a sudden we saw raw video footage beamed from the Apollo moon landings, and I liked it a lot better. It was more direct and truthful". Campus, quoted by Ossian Ward in "Peter Campus on Video Art", *Time Out*, Feb. 28, 2008.

less than 25 feet away: the closer the object, the wider the angle of convergence and the more intensive the muscular activity involved in achieving stereoscopic depth and sharpness. Appropriated by video, "Convergence" turns out to be a camera with two lenses observing the doubled image of Campus walking away from the camera and back again, gradually adjusting the lenses to produce one sharp image: coupled with the camera, Campus so to speak provides the muscle power needed for perfect convergence.

As the series of experimental appropriations progresses, however, video increasingly imposes its own particular ways of seeing: Neurological operations are recaptured through various forms of technical inventiveness that expand and transform the sense organs as we know them. "Fovea"—named after the tiny depression in the retina where you find the greatest concentration of the bright light receptors that facilitate the sharp central vision necessary for reading and all other focus on detail—is presented as a tiny oval of light in the center of the screen, containing the image of Campus slowly turning, video camera in hand. The oval is a focused constant among the hazy, rapidly flowing images of the loft space; the images Campus's camera is recording. The sharp focus of the fovea functions as an autobiographical operation in which video sees its own recording activity at once separate from and embedded in the electronic space it produces. "Impulse", for its part, evokes the way in which both biological and electronic eyes transform light into electrical energy. Yet, the 10 million rods and cones issuing an enormous number of simultaneous electrical impulses to the brain operate on a different principle than the electron beam of the video camera tube that transforms the light intensity on the tube surface into a continuous series of voltages. In "Impulse",





video seems to survey the evolving intensities of its own signal modulation thanks to camera feed from an oscilloscope that is superimposed on the image feed from a spontaneously moving camera. Showing how video handles every minute light change, it foregrounds not just a key feature of video's eye function but—as importantly—a key condition of its memory, which is that of chasing intensities in real time.

The sections named "Fusion" and "Inside the Radius" round up *Double Vision's* progressive extension from biological to media technological eye functions. The two-camera simulation of binocular vision persists, but it becomes increasingly difficult to associate its effects with visual functions in known organisms. In "Fusion", point of view comes from opposite sides of the loft space simultaneously: impossible for animal bodies to achieve, but no problem at all for a live two-camera video system. And in "Inside the Radius", the view to parts of the loft space is at once obstructed and facilitated by a monitor standing in the center of the space like a piece of furniture, its screen showing what its compact body hides, as if the apparatus was a transparent frame. What takes place here is no longer simply "seeing" but an act of mental abstraction, a "framing" of illusion that associates video vision with thinking in general.

*Double Vision* anchors video in the world of living beings by identifying its scanning eye with that of *Copilia*, the simple marine organism. And for the duration of the tape, video stays within the black and white environment of the TV animal, which cameos as the blurry loft spaces of early video art. Even so, it soon becomes clear that video's eye-brain has multiple other features, features that not only align video with more complex organisms, but that complicate the boundary between biological life and the capacities of strictly electronic forms of life. Ultimately, the highly reflexive life-forms animating *Double Vision* presses towards the question that haunts a modern biology increasingly dependent on so called biomedica—meeting points between biological and technical systems. With the frontier of biological knowledge hovering uncertainly between genetic and computer codes, between the wet "in vitro" world of organic samples and the "in silico" world of information processing, how, exactly, is life as such to be defined? What is the minimum requirement for something to be called "living"?<sup>8</sup>

Molecular biology called that requirement "memory", or the ability to persist through time. And throughout its intimate association—or identification—with "life" issues, bodies, and processes, video consistently (and optimistically) defined life in terms of memory technology and its guaranteed surpluses of temporal existence. But, the very effort that was invested in this association also show the metaphysical stakes of the project. (...) As video continued to explore its own life powers, its peculiar "take" on time and temporality was, as we shall see, a decisive, if duplicitous, strategy.

8. See Eugene Thacker, *Biomedica*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004) for a comprehensive discussion of this topic.



In short, we can say that leaves  
(of plants) became leaves  
(of books)—while plants of the  
field, forest, and meadow became  
the content of optical media.

Friedrich Kittler (on the connection between perspective representation,  
the camera obscura, and Gutenberg technology)



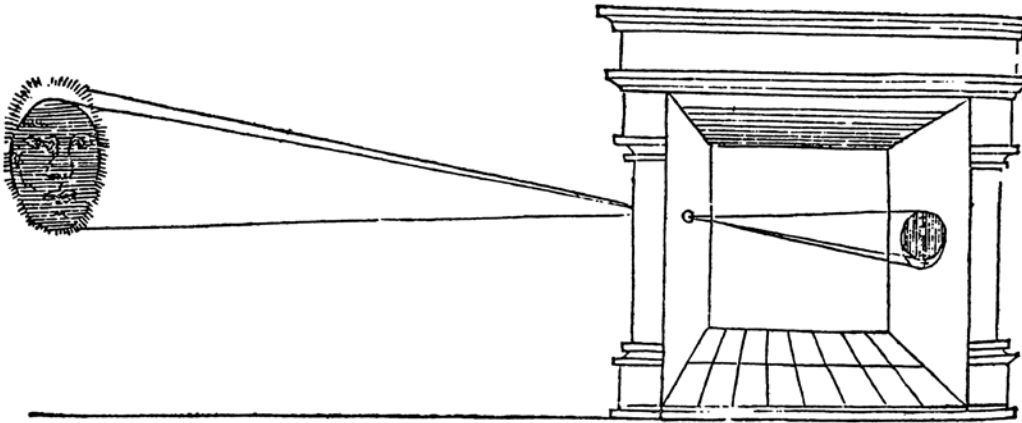




In the foreground: Marianne Hurum's *Stretcher (Locus #1)*. On the roof to the right of the tall birch tree is a weathercock depicting Benny Hill: *Hill Seen from Afar (After Roman Ondák)* by Institutt for degenerert kunst.







The principle of the camera obscura has been known since antiquity. Observing the sickle-shaped light spots appearing on the ground during solar eclipses, people realized that they were in fact images of the sun disc, brought about by small openings in the foliage above. In the 10th century Arab opticians studied the phenomenon systematically and used a camera obscura to observe solar eclipses. The oldest known drawings of the printing press and the camera obscura date from 1499 and 1545 respectively. The printers are haunted by death, while the sun, somewhat distressed, ends up in the shade.



The notion of a text as a building has its origin in the art of memory. The art of memory belongs to classical rhetoric and concerns the memorization of texts and speeches. The memory techniques are based on places and images. The text is broken down into images which are linked to a fictitious or actual place in the mind. The images symbolize both topics and words and phrases. The places should be easy to envisage, preferably from one's own life and work. Public spaces and buildings and private houses and homes. Baths face west and bedrooms and libraries face east, writes Vitruvius in his ten books on architecture. Rooms for paintings and the like, where the light should not shift with the sun, face north. The same building may be used to memorize various texts. The building is the form and the content is shifting. The progression through the building is the course of the narrative. The speaker moves from image to image through the rooms, first to commit the text to memory and then to reconstruct it. A long story demands many rooms or large rooms with space for many images. The rooms should not be too bright or too dark, and the images should not be placed closer or farther away from one another than thirty feet; for we do not see clearly what is too bright or too dark, too close or too far away. This is how art imitates nature. The images are more mannered. They must be out of the ordinary, for the everyday is forgotten, while the extraordinary remains in memory. Naked bodies, bloody and filthy, with crowns and cloaks. A solar eclipse instead of a sunrise. Striking resemblance. These are recommendations and not examples. There are no example collections relating to the art of memory, just an odd explanatory image in scattered rhetorical handbooks. The following is from an imagined defence speech, from the textbook *Ad Herennium*, attributed to Cicero but not by him. A man has been accused of murder by poisoning, the motive is presumed to be inheritance and there are many witnesses. Image: the poisoned man is lying ill in a bed. The defendant is sitting at the bedside, he has a cup in his right hand and wax tablets in his left, and a ram's testicles on his ring finger. The cup symbolizes the poisoning, the wax tablets symbolize the inheritance, the testicles symbolize the witnesses—the Latin 'testiculus' is a derivative of 'testis', witness. A scrotum is evidence of virility. Imagine an entire house of such images. It resembles more a cabinet of curiosities from the Baroque than a harmonious whole from Classical Antiquity. Purses were made of rams' testicles in Roman times. It may suggest that the witnesses have been bribed. The author leaves it open. I imagine the book as a building. A page is a room. The front is the façade. If the following are the only words on a page:

loves me

Then there is nothing else in this room. You may stop and consider this, or move on. Images in other rooms will throw light on images in other rooms again.

loves me not

This is not about prose, but poetry, and not the individual poem, but the collection or suite.





Two portraits by Bendik Riis of the artist's own mother: *Virgin Marie* (1950) and *Thora Marie Riis* (1958).





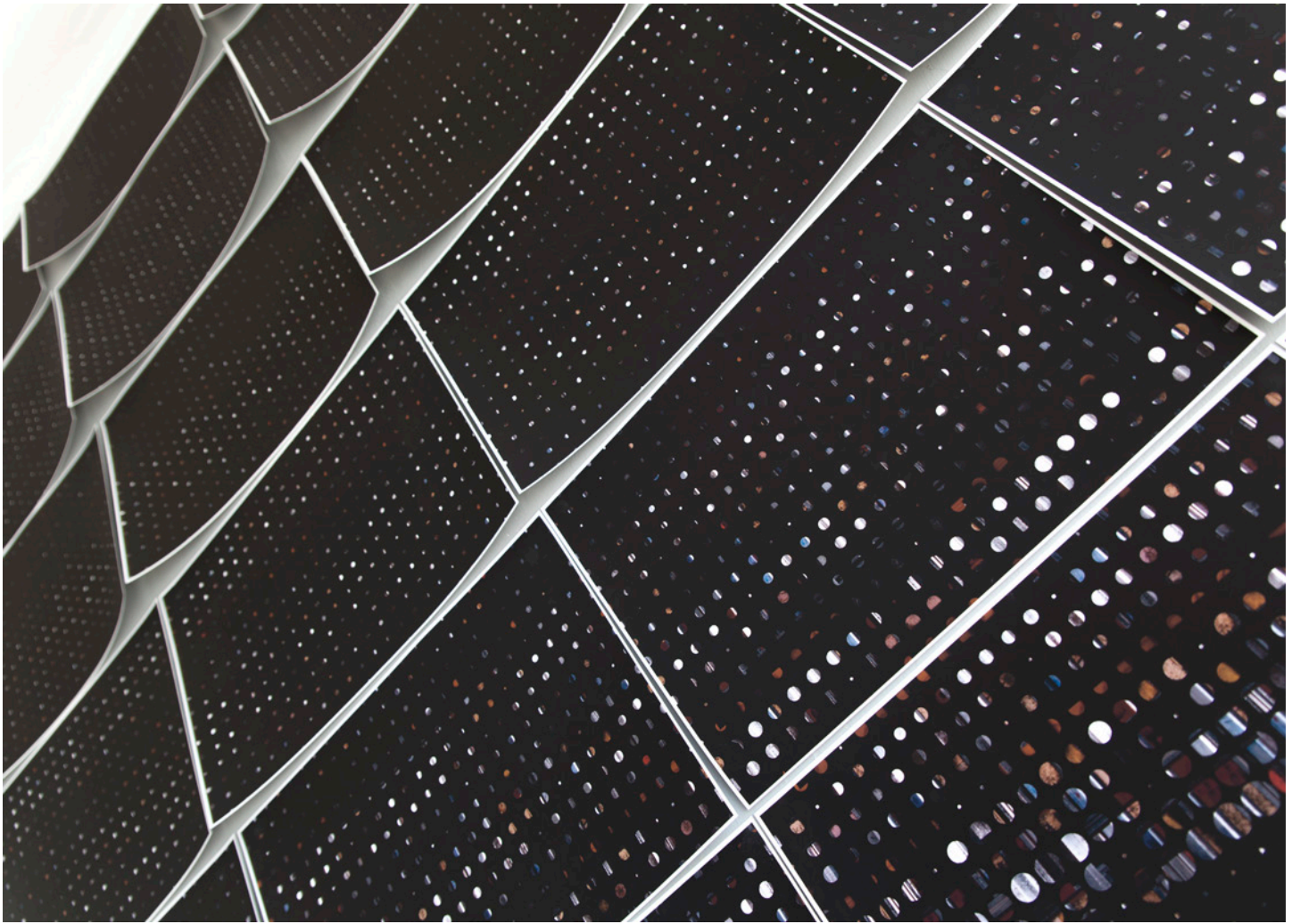
It is Thursday morning the 5th of September 2013, I am standing by the window next to the balcony on the first floor of the old dairy at Blaker. In the window frame before me, leaning against the windowpane, are three rizas which have arrived with the mail from an auction house in Århus. The word riza is Russian and designates a metal cover protecting an icon. An icon is an image of a saint in the Orthodox Church. A riza covers the whole image with the exception of the heads, hands and feet of the holy. It lays bare the skin and conceals everything else. It is strange, I have seen images of saints where the surface of the painting is almost empty, only heads and hands are depicted. They float in the thin air. They are made to be covered up. A riza is often made of a precious metal, it shall both honour the image and protect it, from soot and dirt and touch. The believers light candles before the images and they kiss them and run their fingers over them. The images hang in icon corners in homes and in churches at designated places. Christ is enthroned to the right of the Royal Doors, the double doors at the centre of the iconostasis, the image wall separating the nave from the sanctuary, the congregation from the clergy, in an Orthodox church. The Mother of God, Madonna with the Child, is depicted on the opposite side. The Royal Doors lead to the altar, they are closed to the congregation, which can only see into the sanctuary when the doors are opened at certain points in the liturgy. I am standing looking at the three rizas in the window frame before me, they conceal nothing, there are no images behind them, the holes in the metal covers radiate with daylight. Yet I can envisage the images, I recognize the outlines, the stylized figures, recurring in the art of the Orthodox Church: two heads, one leaning towards the other—it is the Virgin again, with her son in her lap, she bends her head towards him and he looks at us and lifts his hand to heaven. I remember another figure, a strongly simplified story, from a stone church on a mountain ridge in the north-west of Spain, on the border between Galicia and Castilla y León. The moss-grey building lies behind a wall against the road, I went over to the low door at the foot of the bell tower and pushed it open. I went in and looked around me, the room was small and austere, with wooden benches and whitewashed stone walls. On the side walls, at regular intervals, hung fourteen simple wooden crosses. They symbolize the Way of the Cross, the Way of Suffering, the fourteen stations of the Passion of Christ, from when he is condemned to death till he dies on the cross and is taken down and laid in the tomb. The fourteen scenes are portrayed in most Catholic churches, as paintings, memorial tablets or sculptures along the walls. I have seen frescoes from floor to ceiling and marble groups the size of men, irreplaceable. Here, on the other hand, in this rural church, high up under heaven, simplicity reigned. The fourteen crosses looked the same, nothing distinguished them from each other, no Roman numerals carved into the woodwork, nothing. I have never seen a simpler depiction of the Way. The radical simplification speaks of a common, deeply rooted imagery, people knew the Passion, they carried it with them, fourteen wooden crosses were enough to evoke the series of images in the mind. I stand before the first cross and see Jesus being condemned to death. I stand before the second and see Jesus taking up the cross. I stand before the third and see Jesus falling for the first time beneath the cross. And so on, from cross to cross throughout the room. I go anticlockwise, in accordance with tradition, from the north side, the Gospel side of the



altar. I think fourteen empty niches in the walls would have evoked the same images, and I would have been uncertain if there were fewer or more. I stop at the repetition and I recognize the number. I have another memory from this borderland, from a room at a guest house behind the Benedictine monastery in the mountain village of Samos. A day has passed, it is early afternoon, my father stands unsettled in the bathroom door and asks me if I can cut his toenails. I am old and stiff, I cannot reach down, he says. I say yes and he gives me the scissors and sits down on the bed. I sit on the floor. I put his feet in my lap and we fall silent. I am grateful for this memory. I went to work carefully, I remember the uneasiness and the intimacy and the concentration on the task, the soft resistance of the nails and the dry clicks when they gave in. I remember the silence that followed and the bells that chimed for vespers, I went to the church along the massive stone walls, the monastery in Samos is among the largest in the Western world. I went in and sat down and waited. I thought about the small things, and the last things, all this to come. A young novice lights the candles. The monks gather, dressed in black and bent with age, they sing with cracked voices. So it shall always be. I closed my eyes and asked for time.













## THE MIGRATIONS OF A REINDEER

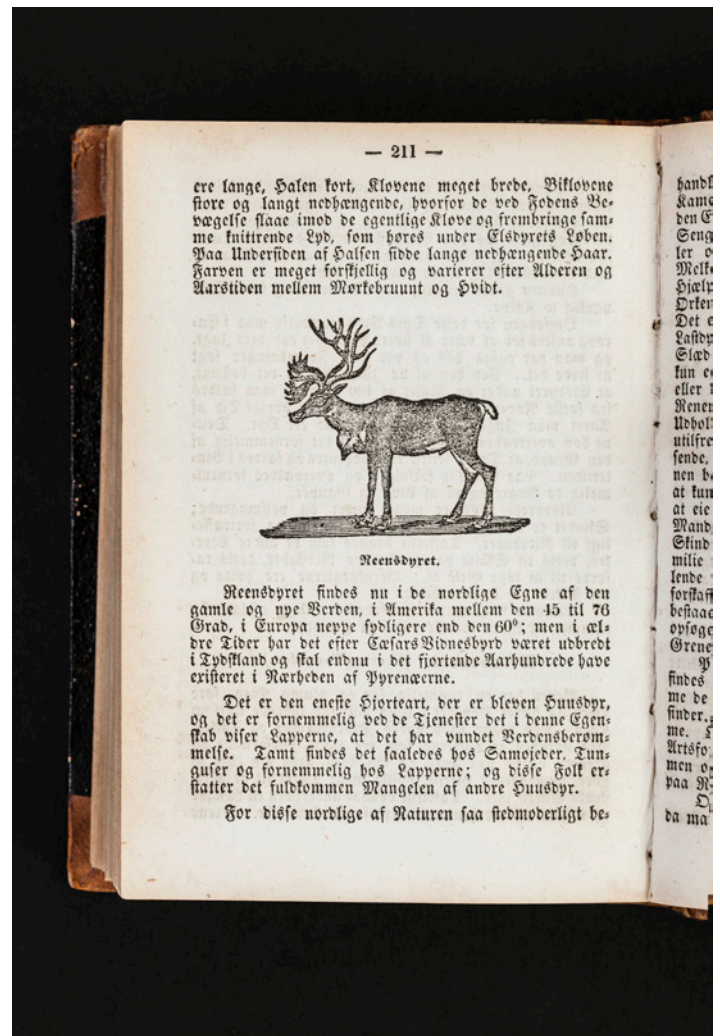
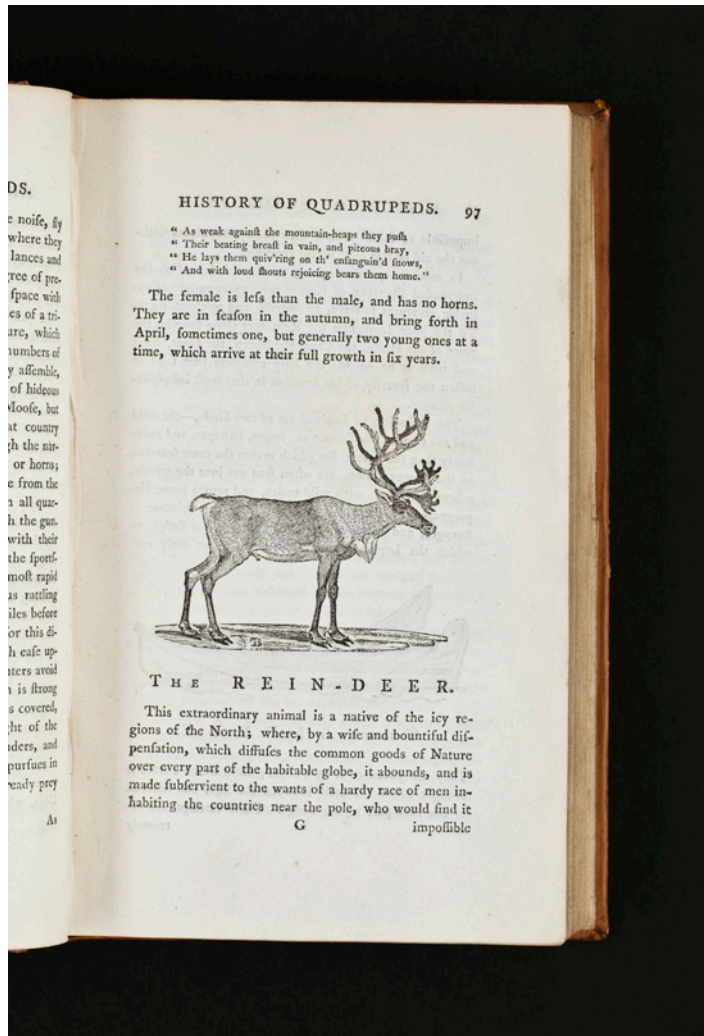
In 1789 Thomas Bewick created a copperplate engraving of a reindeer for a book documenting the travels of a nobleman: *A Tour through Sweden, Swedish-Lapland, Finland and Denmark*. Bewick himself never went to the Nordic countries, but because the expedition brought home five reindeers (in addition to two Sami women) to England, Bewick could still claim that the picture was “drawn from the living animal”. The landscape in the background was in other words not drawn after nature in the same sense as the animal. The displacement of the reindeer actually led to its premature death, as the animal was unable to survive on the unfamiliar diet of green, British grass. One year later, when the reindeer reappeared in Bewick’s book on quadrupeds, it was engraved in wood. Here, it appeared abstracted from its natural surroundings, as though the book, rather than “the icy regions of the North”, was the animal’s proper habitat. Wood engraving enabled a much more dynamic integration of text and images in printed books than copperplate engraving. The technique made it possible to produce large print runs of relatively cheap books full of high quality illustrations. Bewick’s images had an impressive reach and were spread through many and large print runs as well through more or less authorized copying. In the year of 1844 Bewick’s reindeer got as far north as Christiania (now Oslo), through Peder Christian Asbjørnsens *Natural History for Young People*. Asbjørnsen made it clear that the reindeer is unlikely to be found “further south than 60°” (although he mentions that the species in ancient times allegedly “existed



*The REIN-DEER.*  
Drawn from the living Animal



close to the Pyrenees”), but the particular specimen is—both as living animal and depiction—more widely travelled than this description acknowledges. Of course there is nothing remarkable about the fact that a work of natural history contains pictures that are not drawn after nature (in Bewick’s *A General History of Quadrupeds* all the exotic animals that were not available in zoos or natural museums are drawn after pictures in other books). In this case, however, the native reindeer had to make a detour to Britain before appearing in print up north. Having traveled to England, posed for Bewick, fed on green grass and then departed, the reindeer returns to the Nordic countries as its own image. On its way back to Norway the animal has rotated 180°, as if to emphasize the journey’s nature of return (although anyone who has experimented with potato printing will realize that the inversion hardly signifies a change of course ...).



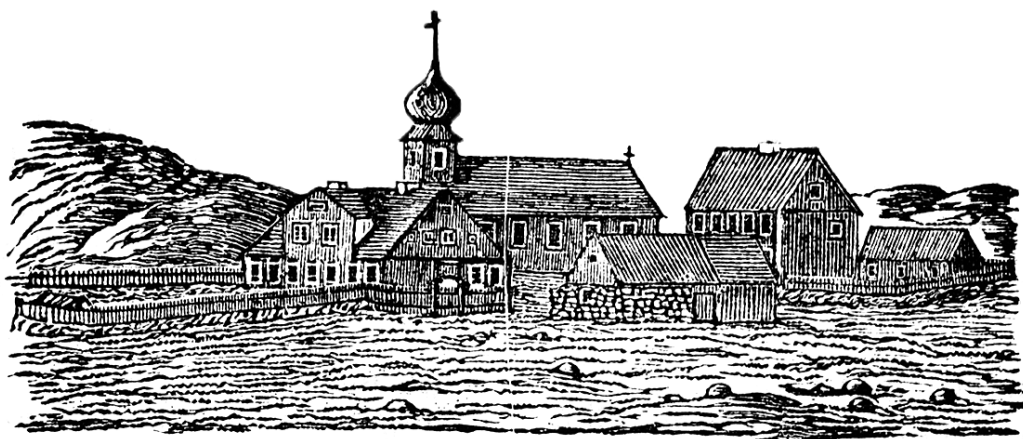
## ENGRAVING LIGHT

In 1839, often referred to as the year photography was born, Bewick's former pupil John Jackson demonstrated the method of his master, using the dramatic light effects of Rembrandt as his test case. As the illustrations make evident, the engraver would begin by lowering the wood in what would be the lighter areas of the image and only subsequently cut the lines.

John Jackson's *Treatise on Wood Engraving, Historical and Practical: With Upwards of Three Hundred Illustrations, Engraved on Wood* (London, 1839).







## ATUAGAGDLIUTIT.

A stands for Atuagagdliutit, Arqaluk, and Aron:

Atuagagdliutit means «distributed reading matter» and is the name of Greenland's first newspaper, established in 1861 by the Danish administrator Henrik J. Rink. Four years earlier he had set up a printing press in Nuuk. Rink thought a printing house would be useful both for the purpose of colonial administration as well as for the cultural identity of the natives. The building housing the press is depicted in the vignette of *Atuagagdliutit*, together with the church and the local school. Rink instigated the writing down of the Inuit people's oral legends and published four small volumes of these stories in Danish translation as well as in the original Greenlandic.

Arqaluk is the Greenlandic name of Lars Møller, who started to work as an apprentice in Rink's printing house when he was 15. In 1874 he became the second editor in chief of *Atuagagdliutit*, a position he held until his 80th birthday. Møller edited, typeset, printed, bound and distributed the newspaper, in addition to contributing texts and lithographs. In 1861 he was sent to Copenhagen for an eight-month lightening course in book production. During the stay, which would be his only journey outside of Greenland, he got the chance to meet the Danish king. The following exchange is reported to have taken place:

—As a matter of fact this is the first time I see a Greenlander.

—It is also, as a matter of fact, the first time I see a king.

Aron of Kangeq had to give up sealing due to tuberculosis. He rose from the sick bed and became a frequent contributor to *Atuagagdliutit* with pictures that earned him the reputation as the island's foremost image maker.

B stands for bringing "Accounts of different subjects it would be interesting to hear about", *Atuagagdliutit's* telling subtitle. Amongst other things, the first editions included news about the ships visiting Nuuk in 1860, the electric telegraph, excerpts from the diaries of Poul Egede (the first missionary to Greenland), geographical descriptions, as well as material on "Fuel in Greenland" and "The Old Scandinavians in Greenland". Later the newspaper would serialize *Robinson Crusoe* (sic), and both the opening of the Suez

Canal as well as the Arctic achievements of Fridtjof Nansen were given due coverage.

D stands for distribution: *Atuagagdliutit* connected a population that was small, yet scattered around the world's biggest island. Once a year the issues would be bound together and distributed freely to reading circles across the country. Europeans had to pay.

D follows B, as C is not used in Greenlandic. If you think that the history of the book follows a straight line, you will have to learn to read anew. An incunable is a book from the infancy of print, prior to the year of 1500. The printing press arrived late in Greenland, 400 years after it was invented by Gutenberg. In the outskirts of the Gutenberg Galaxy Greenlanders and Danes were nevertheless able to create a sensation: by means of an old-fashioned manual press they printed one of the world's first newspapers with frequent color illustrations. *Atuagagdliutit* is a textbook case of the role of the printing press in the creation of what the historian Benedict Anderson calls *imagined communities*. According to Anderson a national community is something imaginary. Few of its members actually know each other or meet face to face, but an "image of the communion" lives in the head of each of them. That a community is imagined does not make it unreal. The point is not to distinguish genuine from fictional associations, but to compare the «the style in which they are imagined».

*Atuagagdliutit* is worthy of stylistic study. Many of the pictures of Aron and Arqaluk depict the encounter between Greenlanders and other cultures. In the first issue of the





paper Aron shows us "The great steamboat Bulldog, the Englishmen and Americans' ship Nautilus and other ships in Nuuk 1860", while another print depicts the encounter between Inuits and American expeditionists. Moreover, the images are themselves cultural encounters, marked by European techniques, motives and conventions (both paper, ink and linear perspective had to be imported from Europe). On the pages of *Atuagagdliutit* distant ideals were transformed into Greenlandic images. "Kûgssuak" means the great river and is one of Arqaluk's lush European idylls. It is only now when the ice has started to melt that we are able to see this as a picture that one day may resemble Greenland.



*Avanngâmiut Amêrikamiunut pissut*

dlugo  
Tai-  
at si-  
aling-  
ekara-  
kivfai  
ngnik  
irput.  
sigssu-  
aluar-  
nâra-  
rpor,  
taliar-  
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akor-  
to ta-  
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Nânu-  
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t mar-  
malig-  
riarâ-  
iraok;  
taler-  
manuv-  
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ânga-  
gilât,  
iartâi-  
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gseri-





Angeltleguak, Bulldog, Tubitt, Amerikermat, Amerissat, Neutilus, adiatto, amarsuit, Neungme, 1860

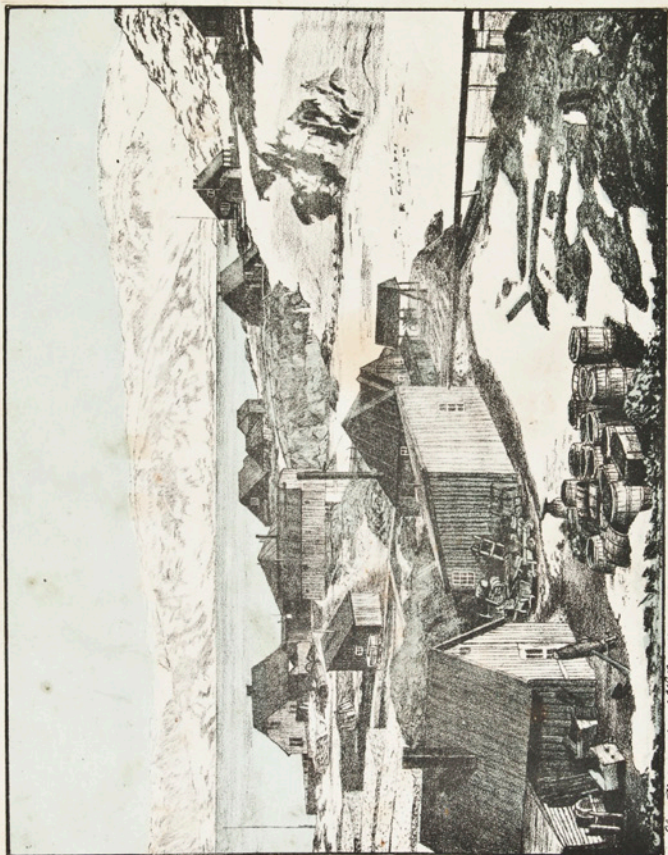




KÜÇÜK SUAK



*W. G. Smith*



*View of Iglood*

ИГЛОД  
оренбургский уезд  
Ильменский уезд

*From Photograph of W. G. Smith*



## THE ALPHABET AND THE CITY

Even though Yakov Chernikhov's "architectural fantasies" were not meant to be realized, he regarded the fantasies an inevitable part of any architect's working process. They were a "training ground for the imagination" and should not remain "immaterial conceptions in the head of the architect". After WW2 Chernikhov developed a modular system enabling him to make mathematical analyses of all kinds of types and writing systems, from Russian alphabets and classical Latin fonts to Egyptian hieroglyphs, Geez, Persian cuneiform writing, Phoenician, Hebraic, and so on. On the pages of Chernikhov's books the construction of letterforms appears as a continuation of the attempt to imagine the cities of the future.

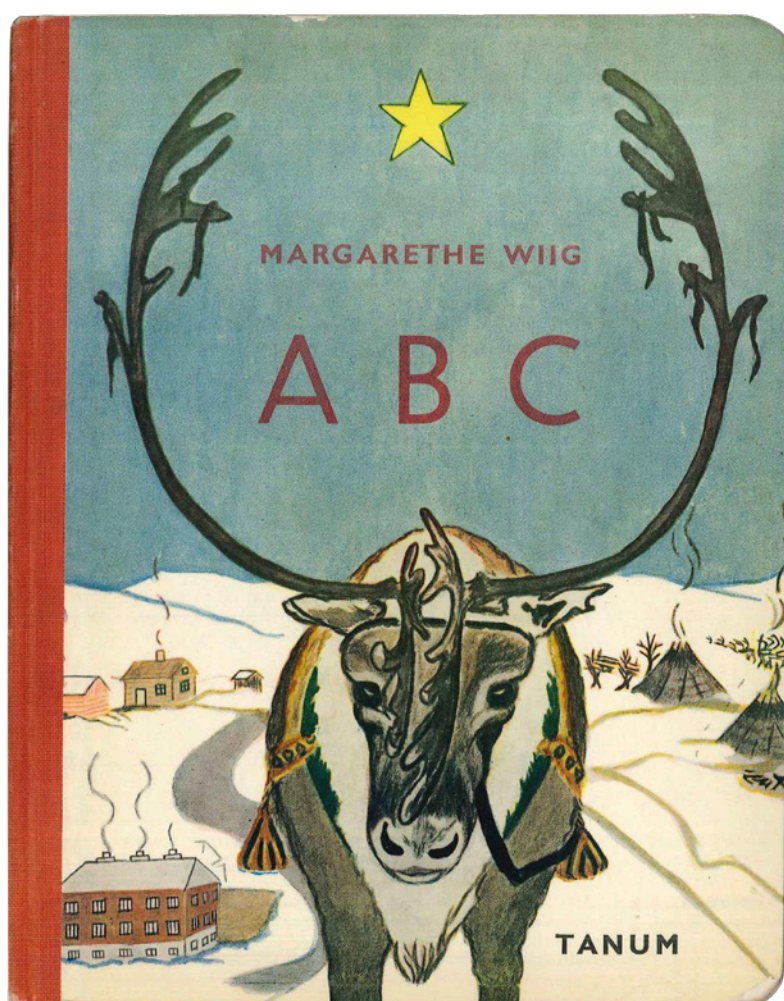


## WHAT DOES THE MOSQUITO SAY?

And that's the end of the cock's tale ... In H.C. Andersen's story "The ABC book" (1858), the traditional cock of the genre stages a loud confrontation with a new ABC: "I talked well, I crowed well! *that* the new A.B.C. book cannot do after me! it will certainly die! it is dead already! it has no cock!"

When Margarethe Wiig published her Sami-Norwegian ABC in 1951, the cock which conventionally adorned ABC-books (as a symbol of vigilance) was replaced by a reindeer. Wiig's own collection of ABCs inspired her when making the book. Her collection contains more than 200 books from all continents, with a special emphasis on minority languages such as Sami, Rhaeto-Romanic, Celtic, Maori, Zulu, Native American tongues, Tibetan and Greenlandic. Like Comenius, Wiig held the opinion that children should learn to read their mother tongue first (rather than Latin or Norwegian, respectively). Finding words beginning with the same letter in both Sami and Norwegian could be a real challenge: "the letter 'I' seemed like a hopeless case, until Knut Hamsun came to the rescue by writing: 'The mosquito buzzes: Iiiiiii.'"

Whereas Wiig collected ABC-books that display the world's linguistic variety, the painter Bendik Riis got the idea of developing what he called "The New Universal Image Alphabet of the World", to be presented in a book of poems and pictures. The concept is described in a sketch book from 1943, where he drafted two of the poems, about "Brevduen" [the carrier pigeon] and "Rosen" [the rose]. The universal alphabet, in other words, began with his own initials ...













## THE INVENTION OF THE BRIGHT DAY

Introduced by Sara Afonso Ferreira

In May 1920 Almada welcomed the Lisbon public to “an exhibition of drawings / paris 1919–1920” (the show opened on May 22 at the Teatro de São Carlos), announcing at the same time the lecture “INVENÇÃO do DIA CLARO” (INVENTION of the BRIGHT DAY).<sup>1</sup> The lecture, which was meant to enlighten the public “on the motives of Almada’s art,”<sup>2</sup> and whose title also extended to the “picturesquely designated”<sup>3</sup> exhibition, was, however, not realized as announced.

As the exhibition was poorly received by the press (it was said to be “an impressive and startling madness”<sup>4</sup> while Almada was described as “a ten year old kid” whose scribbles were “dilatations, contortions, and extreme stylizations comparable to the cubism of Picasso or the intuitive scrawl of the doorkeeper’s son”<sup>5</sup>) as well as by the public (visitors even spat on the exhibited works), the painter decided to hold his tongue. When Almada finally gave his lecture on March 3 1921, at the Liga Naval, it was thus at a remove from its original context. Nine months later, in December 1921, he published the book *A Invenção do Dia Claro* on Olisipo, the new enterprise of his friend Fernando Pessoa.

As it evolved and expanded through fragments over time, the multifaceted project of *A Invenção do Dia Claro* (an exhibition, a lecture, and a book), became the (drawn, performed, and printed) manifesto of Almadian Ingenuity: a po(i)etics through which the

1. The invitation to the exhibition and the lecture is conserved in the Espólio Diogo de Macedo, held at the Art Library of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (DM 341/93).

2. *O Século*, June 22, 1920, p. 2.

3. *O Século*, May 24, 1920, p. 2.

4. *A Capital*, May 28, 1920, p. 1.

5. *A Capital*, May 27, 1920, p. 1.



artist tried to retrieve an innocent, puerile, and primitive reality of incessant creation.

The documents assembled here bear witness to the hybrid and fragmentary origin of *A Invenção do Dia Claro* and its double vocation as an exhibition/performance turned into a book.

The self-portrait which was reproduced in the printed book may originally have been part of the exhibition, where the painter presented his newly discovered source of inspiration and invention: children's art. Later on, this source was reasserted in the parts of the book that touch directly upon artistic creation, namely "The Flower" and "My Turn".

Two manuscript abbreviated editions of *A Invenção do Dia Claro* exist, both in a handwriting that imitates printed letters. The manuscripts are dated April 1921 and dedicated to Lalá and Tareca. These documents relate *A Invenção do Dia Claro* directly to "The Five Colors Club", a group formed by Almada and four young ballerinas (including Lalá and Tareca) in the wake of the ballet *O Jardim da Pierrette* in 1918 (Almada did the choreography and costumes for the ballet). The club was the site of experimentation and play: it was in this community that the Almadian Ingenuity germinated.

The typewritten transcription (by Fernando Pessoa) with handwritten corrections (by Almada) of the (today lost) manuscript of the first part of *A Invenção do Dia Claro*, as well as the work's partial and rudimentary translation into English by Pessoa, bear witness to the close collaboration between the two poets in the making of the book, which was wrought as an object with its own distinctive features: the singular (graphic and textual) composition of poetic fragments are accompanied by a dedication, quotations, epigraphs, and a drawing. And even though the structure of the printed lecture follows that of the performed one very closely,<sup>6</sup> the text has clearly undergone changes reconcilable with a Pessoan influence.

6. The programme distributed at the time corresponds to the structure of the book, except for an "Intenção" [Intention] which in the book would be substituted by a fragment entitled "O Livro" [The Book].



para a lala  
leitura das linhas da  
mão da lala:

A da Vontade  
A que Quer  
A difficilima  
A clarissima  
A que vê

Lisboa 7 de Abril  
1921

ahmada



José de Almada-Negreiros

N15/1

A Invenção do dia claro

escripta de uma só maneira para  
todas as espécies de orgulho

e  
seguida das demarches para  
a invenção

Ensaio para a iniciação  
de Portuguezes na reser-  
vação da pintura.

Paris



(Rimbaud) <sup>N15/1</sup>

" Tous savons donner notre vie  
toute entière tous les jours.

Béniissons la vie!

Saluons la naissance du tra-  
vail nouveau.

Le monde n'a pas d'âges, l'hu-  
manité se déplace tout simple-  
ment.

Je ne suis pas prisonnier de  
ma raison.

Dieu fait ma force et je loue  
Dieu.

Splendeurs des villes.

Point de Cantique - Tenir tou-  
jours le pas gagné! "



A Invenção do dia claro

N15/1

I parte

ANDAIMES

E  
VÉSPERAS



# A conferencia improvisada

N15/1

Minhas senhoras e meus senhores:

Mulheres e homens são as duas metades da humanidade — a metade masculina e a metade feminina.

Ha coisas inteiras feitas de duas metades e aonde não se pode cortar ao meio para separar essas duas metades.

Exemplo: a humanidade com a metade masculina e a metade feminina.

São duas metades que deixam cada uma de ser uma metade se não houver a outra metade.

A linha que passa de facto por entre estas duas metades é parecidissima com o ar por dentro de uma esponja do mar, secca.



## Acerca do homem e da mulher N15/1

Lembro-me de uma oleografia que havia lá em casa. A oleografia estava cheia de amarelo do deserto. O amarelo do deserto era mais comprido do que a vida de um homem se não fosse o galope do Cavalo ou de o arabe rapta a menina loira.

Na oleografia havia uma palmeira. A palmeira era tão pequena como a esmeralda do anel da menina loira. A palmeira era assim tão pequena porque estava minúsculo longe. Era em direção à palmeira que ia a correr o cavalo.

Havia outra oleografia quando já tinham chegado à sombra da palmeira. O Cavalo estava como morto por terra. O arabe, êne, ainda nun-



ca tinha estado caçado — tinha a  
menina loira nos braços, como a  
esmeralda estava no anel.

Eram três as oleografias.

Na terceira oleografia estava  
côsiuha a menina loira a dar  
de mamar a um menino verdadei-  
ro.



## Ácerca das trez oleografias <sup>N 15/1</sup>

Estas trez oleografias explicam muito bem como se pode ser Senhora e como se deve ser homem. As Senhoras como a menina loira. Os homens como o arabe.

Um homem — saber raptar  
uma Senhora — merecer ser  
raptada.

Exemplo de homem que sou-  
be raptar: o arabe.

Exemplo de Senhora que me-  
receu ser raptada: a menina  
loira da oleografia.

Ser o arabe para desencantar  
a menina loira,  
ser a menina loira para  
que haja o arabe.



# Atenção

N15/1

Mas não falémos sem alicerces.

Nós não estamos algures.

Nós estamos aqui dentro d'esta sala onde eu estou a dizer a Conferencia — o chão, o tecto e quatro paredes. Vocês e eu.

Para nos orientarmos melhor, aqui onde estou fica sendo o Norte, lá no fundo da sala o Sul, Este ali e Oeste d'aquela lado.

Que isto fique assim bem combinado entre nós, de tal maneira que, quando eu chamar Sul aqui ao lugar onde estou, Vocês se levantem, protestem e digam que não, que o Sul é lá no fundo da sala.



## A INVENÇÃO DO DIACLARO

escripta de uma só maneira para todas as especies de orgulho

I parte — Audaines e Vésperas

pag. 1

### A CONFERENCIA IMPROVISADA

Minhas Senhoras e meus Senhores:

Mulheres e homens são as duas metades da humanidade -- a metade masculina e a metade feminina. Ha coisas inteiras feitas de duas metades e aonde não se pode cortar ao meio para separar essas duas metades; exemplo: a humanidade com a metade feminina e a metade masculina. São duas metades que deixam cada uma de ser uma metade se não houver a outra metade. A linha que passa de facto por entre estas duas metades é parecidissima com o ar por dentro de uma esponja do mar, sêcca.

### A ACERCA DO HOMEM E DA MULHER

Lembro-me muito bem de uma oleografia que havia lá em casa: a oleografia estava cheia de amarello do deserto e o amarello do deserto era mais comprido do que a vida de um homem se não fosse o galope do cavalo onde o arabe rapta a menina loira.

Na oleografia havia uma palmeira. A palmeira era tão pequena como a esmeralda do anel da menina loira -- a palmeira era assim tão pequena por estar muitissimo longe. Era em direcção á palmeira que o cavalo ia a correr.

Havia outra oleografia quando já tinham chegado á sombra da palmeira. O cavalo estava como morto por terra. O arabe, esse ainda nunca tinha estado cansado -- tinha a menina loira ao colo, como o anel estava no dedo da menina loira.

Erã tres as oleografias. Na terceira oleografia o arabe já não estava. Estava só a menina loira a dar de-mamar a um menino verdadeiro. O arabe tinha voltado prá primeira oleografia.

### A ACERCA DAS TREZ OLEOGRAFIAS

Estas trz oleografias explicam muito bem como se pode ser senhora e como se deve ser homem -- um homem como o arabe, uma senhora como a menina loira. Um homem, saber raptar; uma senhora merecer ser raptada. Exemplo de homem que soube raptar: o arabe. Exemplo de senhora que mereceu ser raptada: a menina loira da oleografia. Ser o arabe para desencantar a menina loira, ser a menina loira para que haja o arabe.

### ATTENÇÃO

Mas não falemos sem alicerces, nós não estamos algúres, nós estamos aqui dentro d'esta sala onde eu estou a dizer a conferencia: Vocês e eu, o chão, o tecto, e quatro paredes. Para nos orientarmos melhor, aqui onde estou fica sendo o Norte, lá ao fundo da sala o Sul, Este ali e Oeste d'aquelle lado. Que isto fique assim bem combinado entre nós de tal maneira que, quando eu chamar Sul aqui ao logar onde estou, vocês se levantem, protestem e digam que não -- que o Sul é lá no fundo da sala.

Fim da primeira pagina do original.

~~NOTA: AS~~



### AS PALAVRAS

O preço de uma pessoa lê-se na maneira como gosta de usar as palavras. Vê-se nos olhos das pessoas -- as palavras dançam nos olhos das pessoas conforme o palco dos olhos de cada um.

### VIAGENS DAS PALAVRAS

As palavras teem moda. Quando acaba a moda para umas começa a moda para as outras. As que se vão voltam depois, voltam sempre e mudadas de cada vez. De cada vez mais viajadas. Depois dizem-nos adeus e ainda voltam depois de nos terem dito adeus. Enfim -- toda essa tournée maravilhosa que nos põe a cabeça em agua até ao dia em que já somos nós quem dá corda ás palavras para elas estarem a dançar.

### HISTORIA DAS PALAVRAS

As mulheres e os homens estavam espalhados pela terra molhada. Uns estavam contentes, outros estavam cansados -- os que estavam contentes abriam a bocca, os que estavam cansados também abriam a bocca: ambos abriam a bocca. Houve um homem sosinho que se poz a espreitar esta diferença -- havia pessoas alegres e outras que estavam tristes. Depois ainda espreitou melhor: todas as pessoas eram alegres, duravam alegres algum tempo, depois não sabiam aguentar-se alegres, começavam a cansar-se e vinha-lhes o sono; quando acordavam eram outra vez alegres -- como o Sol.

Homens e mulheres estavam tristes ou alegres conforme a luz para cada um -- mais luz alegres, menos luz tristes.

O homem sosinho ficou a pensar n'esta diferença. Para não se esquecer fez uns signaes n'uma pedra.

Este homem sosinho era da minha raça; era um Egyptio. Os signaes que elle gravou na pedra para avaliar a luz por dentro das pessoas, chamam-se hieroglifos.

Mais tarde veiu outro homem sosinho que tornou estes signaes ainda mais fa-  
ceis. Fez vinte e dois signaes que bastavam para todas as combinações que ha ao Sol.

Este homem sosinho era da minha raça, era um Phenicio.

Cada um dos vinte e dois signaes chama-se uma letra. Cada combinação de letras uma palavra.

### O valor das palavras

Ha palavras que fazem bater mais depressa o coração -- todas as palavras -- umas mais do que outras, qualquer mais do que todas. Conforme os dias. Conforme os logares e as posições das palavras. Segundo o lado d'onde se ouvem, do lado do Sol ou do lado onde não dá o Sol.

Cada palavra é um ~~pe~~ pedaço do universo, um pedaço que faz falta ao universo. Todas as palavras juntas formam o universo.

As palavras querem estar nos seus logares.

### ANNIVERSARIO DAS PALAVRAS

Todos os dias faz annos que nasceram palavras. Festejar todos os dias o nascimento das palavras.

### NÓS E AS PALAVRAS

Nós não somos do seculo d'inventar as palavras, nós somos do seculo d'inventar mais uma vez as palavras que já foram inventadas.

### AS PALAVRAS E EU

Gasto os dias a experimentar logares e posições para as palavras. É uma paciencia de que eu gosto. É o meu gosto.

Tudo se passa aqui pelas palavras -- e todos os gostos.

Collei algumas d'estas paciencias para vos mostrar. São estas as palavras que trago aqui. ~~Não estão~~ Ainda não estão promptas -- são pedaços de coisas aqui e alli, como um rapaz novo, como uma rapariga nova. Como os cavalos quando ainda são pequenos -- vê-se já que se trata de um cavalo mas também se vê que ainda não está concluido -- as pernas cresceram mais depressa do que o tronco, e a cabeça muito grande é que já está do tamanho em que ha-deu ficar. ~~Aguenta~~ Aguenta-se tudo de pé provisoriamente -- ainda não está prompta, vê-se perfeitamente que ainda lá não está o cavalo todo.

Fim da segunda pagina do original



## A INVENÇÃO DO DIA CLARO

escripta de uma só maneira para todas as especies de orgulho.

Pag. 3.

Agarrei uma mancheia de palavras e espalhei-as em cima da mesa. Ficaram n'esta posição:

### PARABOLA.

A humanidade abriu alas -- as duas grandes alas da humanidade. Uma á direita, a outra á esquerda. Em baixo a terra, em cima o sol.

Vae acontecer qualquer coisa -- os que passam vão mais depressa, e outros já estão á espreita.

As duas grandes alas da humanidade lá estão as duas em frente uma da outra. Não levantem os braços! Não virem as cabeças!

Ainda não chegou o homem-que-sabe-viver. As duas grandes alas da humanidade querem ver com os olhos da cara o homem-que-sabe-viver. As duas grandes alas da humanidade não querem senão ver com os olhos da cara o homem-que-sabe-viver. Em baixo a terra, em cima o sol.

Jesus-Christo desce sósinho por entre as duas grandes alas da humanidade.

As duas grandes alas da humanidade estendem os braços para Jesus-Christo.

Uma das alas acusa a outra ala, e esta acusa aquela.

Jesus-Christo desce sósinho por entre as duas grandes alas da humanidade sem se aproximar de uma nem da outra.

As duas grandes alas da humanidade.

Jesus-Christo passou por entre as duas grandes alas da humanidade sem se ter aproximado de uma nem da outra. E passou.

Em baixo a terra, em cima o sol.

Fim da pag. 3 do manuscrito



## A INVENÇÃO DO DIA CLARO

escripta de uma só maneira para todas as especies de orgulho

Pag. 4.

### UMA CRUZ NA ENCRUZILHADA

Quando acabou a parábola as duas grandes alas da humanidade desconjuntaram-se. Havia uma cruz na encruzilhada. Um por um toda a humanidade passou aos pés da cruz. A cada um que passava dizia o Christo de marmore :

"Em vez de eu ter morrido numa cruz por ti antes eu tivesse pegado na lança que me abriu o peito para com ela te rasgar os olhos da cara. Para deixar entrar claridade para dentro de ti, pelos buracos dos teus olhos rasgados."

"Tudo quanto eu te disse ficou escripto e é tudo quanto ainda hoje tenho para te dizer. Se me fiz cruxificar para t'o dizer, porque não te deixas cruxificar para saberes como eu t'o disse?"

"Não posso por mais que tente livrar uma das mãos, pregaram-m'as bem, como se préga um cruxificado; não posso por mais que tente livrar uma das mãos, para te sacudir a cabeça quando vieres ajoelhar-te aqui aos pés da minha cruz."

"Se fosse o teu orgulho de joelhos, ainda era o teu orgulho, mas são as tuas pernas dobradas com o peso do ar."

"Não estejas para ahi de joelhos como um que não sabe perguntar de pé. Ou fica para ahi para sempre para que os outros vejam de que feitio é o pobre."

"Tenho ambas as mãos tão bem pregadas (tão mal pregadas!) que não posso arrancar da tua cabeça uma mancha de cabelos, com força, com dôr, de proposito, para pensares porquê, para que não esqueças porquê."

"Não tenho uma das mãos livre para te empurrar d'aqui da minha cruz até ao teu logar lá em baixo na terra."

"Levanta-te, homem! No dia em que tu nasceste nasceu no mesmo dia um logar para ti, lá em baixo na terra. Esse logar é o teu -- o teu logar é a tua fortuna -- o teu logar é a tua gloria. Não deixes o teu logar vazio nem te deixes para ahi sem logar. Não te aleijes a procurar outras fortunas que não terás -- ha só uma para ti, é a unica que ha para ti, não serve senão para ti, não serve para os outros, é por isto que ela é a tua fortuna."

"Porque vieste ajoelhar-te aqui aos pés da minha cruz? Porque a tua cabeça encheu-se de duvida!?. Tanto melhor! Aproveita agora que tens a duvida dentro da tua cabeça! Aproveita a sorte de teres a duvida dentro da tua cabeça! Não te fatigues de teres esta sorte!"

"Não tenhas medo de estares a ver a tua cabeça a ir tão claramente para a loucura, não tenhas medo! Deixa-a ir até á loucura, ajuda-a a ir até á loucura! Vae tu tambem em carne e osso conhecer pessoalmente a loucura! Vem ler a loucura escripta na palma da tua mão! Fecha a tua mão, agarra bem a loucura dentro da tua mão! Senão, se te canças de ter a duvida dentro da tua cabeça e te pões a querer fugir da duvida por medo da loucura; senão comesas desde já a desbastar a fantasia que cresceu no logar marcado para ti lá em baixo na terra; um dia a loucura virá por sey proprio pé bater á tua porta, e sem mãos para a esganar. Porque a loucura já será maior do que as tuas mãos, ambas -- porque a tua loucura poderá mais do que tu com as tuas mãos, ambas. E a loucura fará de ti tudo quanto ela quizer, de castigo, por tu não teres sabido fazer d'ela o que tu devias saber querer!"

Fim da pag. 4 do original.



## A INVENÇÃO DO DIA CLARO

escripta de uma só maneira para todas as especies de orgulho

*Fim do dia*

Pag. 5.

Um por um, toda a humanidade ouviu o Christo de mármore falar assim. Havia oliveiras á beira da estrada para a gente se encostar. Antes de chegar a casa havia um chafariz pra matar a sede. Eu não sabia que um chafariz tinha tanto que ver: Havia muitos soldados por causa das raparigas a encher as bilhas. Depois o sol começou a ficar muito encarnado por detraz das dunas, muito encarnado, e deixou-me sósinho em cima do muro.

Do lado do mar ouvia-se uma nora para puxar agua. O boi tinha os olhos guardados para não entontecer. Os alcatruzes subiam por um lado e desciam pelo outro lado -- como hontem. A musica da nora só tem uma volta. Todos os dias. Amanhã tambem os alcatruzes da nora vão subir por aqui e descer por lá. Todos os dias. Em baixo a terra, em cima o sol. Quando olharam para traz a cruz da encruzilhada já estava muito longe. Era necessario acertar a vista para a reconhecer. Mas era sem duvida ela, a cruz inconfundivel -- a cruz onde cabe um homem inteiro e de pé.

Fim da pag. 5 do original e fim da 1ª. parte.



INVENTION OF THE BRIGHT DAY

Written in one style only for all sorts of pride <sup>every</sup>

PART I - Eves and Scaffoldings.

<sup>Improvements</sup>  
THE IMPROVISED LECTURE.

Ladies and gentlemen:

Women and men are the two halves of mankind - the male half and the female half. There are whole things made up of two halves and where we cannot cut through the middle to separate those two halves; (for) instance, mankind with the female half and the male half. They are two halves which cease to be a half if ~~the other half~~ there isn't the other half. The line which really passes between these two halves is very much like (a lot like) the air through a sea-sponge, (dry). (when it's dry).  
*at the middle*

CONCERNING MAN AND WOMAN.

I remember very well an oleography which I had (there was) at home: the oleography was full of yellow of the desert and the yellow of the desert was longer than the life of a man if it wasn't (were not) for the gallop of the horse ~~where with~~ where (on which) the Arab abducts the golden-haired maiden. In the oleography there was a palm-tree. The palm-tree was (just) as small as the emerald on (of) the ring of the golden-haired maiden - the palm-tree was so small as that (like that) because it was (on account of being) so very far away. It was towards the palm-tree that the horse was running. There was another oleography (print) when they had already come to the (reached the) shade (shadow) of the palm-tree. The horse was like dead on the ground. The Arab, he had never been tired - he had the golden-haired maiden ~~on his horse~~ (in his arms), just as the ring was on the finger of the golden-haired maiden. There was three oleographies. (The oleographies were three). In the third oleography ~~there~~ Arab wasn't there. There was only the golden-haired maiden giving suck to a real (true, accurate) baby. The Arab had returned to the first oleography.

CONCERNING THE THREE OLEOGRAPHIES.

These three oleographies explain very well how a lady must be and how a man must be (how one ~~is~~ ought to be a lady and how one ought to be a man))) - a man like the Arab, a lady like the golden-haired maiden. A man, able to abduct; a lady, worth being abducted. Example of a man who knew how to abduct: the Arab. Example of a lady who was (proved) worth being abducted: the golden-haired maiden in the oleography. To be the Arab to be able to ~~lead~~ <sup>lead</sup> away (?) the golden-haired maiden; to be the golden-haired maiden, so that there may be the Arab.

ATTENTION



But don't let us speak without foundations, we are not(just) anywhere, we are here inside this hall where I am saying (speaking) the lecture: you and I, the floor, the ceiling, and four walls. To get all notions better (to take our bearings better), here where I am will be the North, there at the bottom of the hall, the South, East this side, and West that other side. Let this be quite settled (upon) between us (ourselves) so that when I call South this place where I am, you all get up and protest and say no - that the South is (over there) at the bottom of the hall.

End of the first page of the original

JOSÉ DE ALLADA-NEGREIROS

*Transcribed into English by P.P.*  
*English Transcription by P.P.*



WORDS.

The price of a person (man) can be read in the way he likes to use words in. It is seen in the eyes of people - words dance in the eyes of people according to the stage of the eyes of each.

TRAVELS OF WORDS.

Words have (a) fashion. When the fashion ends for some of them the fashion begins for the others. Those which go away ~~come~~ ~~back~~ afterwards always come back afterwards and each time more travelled. Afterwards they say good bye to us and come back yet (again) after having said good-bye. In fine (well) - all that marvellous tour that makes our heads go round till the day when it is we at last that wind up words for them to be dancing.

HISTORY OF WORDS

Women and men were scattered all over the wet earth.



CONFIDENCES

Mother! the oleograph is pilling the yellow of the Desert on top of (all over) my life! The yellow of the Desert is longer than a whole day!

Mother! I wanted (would like) to be the Arab! I would like to abduct the golden-haired girl. I would like to know how to abduct.

Give me a horse, mother! Up to the emerald-green palm-tree! And the ring?

My head grows soft in the sun on the shifting sand(s) of the Desert! My head is as soft (now) as my pillow.

There are some signs inside my head like the signs of Egypt, like the signs of the Phœnician. The signs of these have already antecedents and I have still to go to life.

There are no walls so there may be (a) road! There are no walls so stick placards on (to put placards on)! There is no hand in black ink pointing - this way!

There is only shadow of the sun on the orange-trees on the other bank, and ~~the~~ sleep comes stolen (???) every night. (and the sleep that comes every night is stolen on the way)

Mother! The stars are lying. They shine when they lie. They lie when they shine. Are they shining, or lying?  
I was just going to spit up to heaven!

Mother! my star is mad! I drew the Mad Star in the (raffle)

Mother; give me a horse! I am the gallop already! There is a palm-tree, Mother! What does a ring mean? It has an emerald.

Mother, I want to be the three oleographs!



Second Part  
The Voyage - or What cannot be foreseen

Eternity exists, but not so slowly  
(The Blue Square, 1917)

PARIS AND I.

One day it was my turn to go to Paris. A passport was necessary. They wanted to know my profession. I was thunderstruck! I thought a moment so as to speak the truth and I told the truth: Poet!

They didn't accept that. They also wanted to know my state. I was thunderstruck! I thought a moment so as to speak the truth and I told the truth: Boy (child). They didn't accept that also. And so to get the passport I had to say exactly what was necessary to get the passport, that is (to say) a profession that exists! and a state that exists!

DEPARTURE FOR PARIS

When I left the neighbours gave me the best possible advice: Behave yourself!

PARIS

In Paris all things are flesh and blood - the Sacré-Coeur, the Seine and the Eiffel Tower - the houses, the people, Sundays and the other days. There is in Paris a Tarpeian Rock which is not made of rock; it is made of Sundays and of other days.

I

When I say I, I do not refer simply to myself but to everyone who can fit into the way in which the verb is used in the first person.

LIBERTY

When I entered the city I remained alone in the middle of the crowd.

All around the doors were open. The crowd entered naturally through the open doors. Over the doors there were signboards where they had pasted that word that goes up - Liberty!

I went in at one door. I went in like a fish-hook.

It was a rat-trap. Mother! it was a rat-trap! If I had gone in like a needle I could have come out like a needle, but I went in like a fish-hook, I made real blood, I'll never forget. It happened exactly. I twisted my kidneys (?) on account of the rat-trap! I still remember the word - Liberty!

Mother! I am going to tell you how it was.

There were two equal jars. One had a lovely liquor (?) The other seemed to have just water. One contained happiness,



eternity exists, but not as slowly  
(The Blue Square, 1917)

PARIS AND I.

the other did not contain happiness. It was just luck. The  
house was full of people. Nobody wanted to be the first to be  
I think I thought of something to say to speak the truth. I

Afterwards they began to drink the fluid (?). They said  
such happy things! Warm things that fill the whole head and  
leave the eyes wide-open! I saw them, Mother! They were swell-  
ing visibly (?). I swear I was to speak as to speak the truth.

Those who drank from the other jar did not amuse anybody.  
They went away at once. And nobody thought any more about them.  
Only those remained who liked the liquor (?). I remained  
with these. I also drank the liquor. You can't imagine, Mother!  
I never rose so high! Higher even than the verb to win (to  
gain, to get)!

DEPARTURE FOR PARIS

There was a frog which had come in at the same time as I.  
The frog was also swelling. When I left the neighbour-  
hood, afterwards, when it was almost as big as an ox, the frog  
burst. Poor thing! Like long ago, in Latin.

PARIS

Then I began at once to slip down from right up there,  
where I had climbed up to; from higher up than the verb to gain  
To slip, to be necessary to slip, to want absolutely to  
slip (slide), to be very difficult to slide, to hurt a lot  
to slide, to slide. The verb to unswell!  
The verb to unswell lasts a long time. At the end of the  
verb to unswell there is the earth again, here below.

I

When I say I, I try to find out the end of the second part I  
who can fit into the way in which the verb is used in the first  
person.

LIBERTY

When I entered the city I remained alone in the middle  
of the crowd.  
All around the doors were open. The crowd entered natu-  
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but I went in like a fish-hook. I made real blood, I'll never  
forget. It happened exactly. I twisted my kidneys (?) on ac-  
count of the rat-trap! I still remember the word - Liberty!

Mother! I am going to tell you how it was.  
There were two equal jars. One had a lovely liquor (?)  
The other seemed to have just water. One contained happiness,



Confidences.

Mother! my breast aches. I hit my breast against the state  
which has got the verb to gain on top. I can't remember how it  
was. (I can't imagine how it was) I was going along so happy!  
I was going along thinking of you and of the verb to know and  
of the verb to get (gain). Everything was being so easy! I was  
already fancying what your joy would be when I came back home  
with the verb to know and the (verb to) have (get, gain), one in  
each hand!  
My breast hurts a lot; Mother! Pass your hand over my  
head!

Mother!

I won't return to the city without going with you! so the  
city may be nice. Went two to go arm in arm, and to go about  
walking like that; to see how all things are set in the city  
on account of you and of me and of the others who go about  
arm-in-arm. (and) very far away. I was right

Mother! I feel that half you know of what is necessary to  
know, tell that half you know so well, so I may think of the  
other half.

If there were only men and jugglers (acrobats...) I  
would go and fetch the other half, but the jugglers are dressed  
like men and the men are dressed like jugglers, both are  
dressed in (just) the same way, I don't know which are the men  
or the jugglers, and they also don't know (it) - there are  
only harlequins (lozenges)

Mother!

When I was coming home the crowd was going in the oppo-  
site direction. I had to make myself still smaller and more  
slippery, so as not to go in the wave.

I asked where they were going so much together like that,  
and so swingingly. They answered me: Forward! ahead!  
They were going forward! they were going ahead!  
I thought a lot about the crowd. (again?)

My guardian angel said to me: It's over! The crowd has  
passed, it passed in a quarter of an hour. The crowd is only  
that which (passes in a quarter of an hour) it's over! There  
's no more to see! Come away!

My guardian angel is always saying to me: What are you  
waiting for? Come on, come away! Begin now! Begin now thinking  
about your presence.

I like earthworms? (I like earthworms?) I don't know what my guardian angel wants me to guess in  
these words. The gardener's cloak was lifted with

At other times my guardian angel asks me to be his guar-  
dian angel. The red rose smells white.

Mother! When I see pink it seems to me they are pink to me.  
I woke to-day all turned forward. Like that, as you under-  
stand it, Mother!

I saw the things of the air that there were, the things  
that were focussed with to-day's air. Remembrances are already  
whole (entire), false minutes are very few.



...my breast against the stars  
I made all the sun-hours and all the shade-hours. (?) When  
the night came I was in agreement with the Sun as to what was  
happy! since the morning till there having been light enough to-day.  
Afterwards sleep came. And sleep came in time. Before sleep  
there was still one image - a sleeping lion. (Really) there is not better earned sleep than  
that of a lion sleeping with signs of blood still on his paw,  
like the lions on the stairways we go up through after  
the battle!

THE PORTRAIT OF THE STAR WHICH GUIDED THE PRODIGAL SON IN HIS RE-  
TURN TO HIS FATHER'S HOUSE  
On the beach a little girl asked me if I was rich. She  
was on all fours and very far away (and) asking me if I was rich

Every morning I went to play with the neighbours in the  
shadows of the church. After lunch the shadows were on the other  
side.

If there were only men and women  
When the little girls ran in the garden their hair and  
their dresses remained behind (hung behind)  
The orange-girl had a lovely voice to sell oranges. Peo-  
ple used to stand with the oranges in the hands listening to  
her.

The orange-tree near the (mill) (water-wheel) knew me  
already - it just pretended that it was the wind that made it  
move.

I asked where they were going so much together like that  
I think that rainy days are more sincere. On rainy days  
I use to think that it is not only I who live worried. After-  
wards it is the smell of the wet earth that makes me happy  
(?) again.

Sometimes I go on (?) thinking of things. I have never  
seen. I suppose they are (they only exist) very far, in other  
lands!

I am waiting to grow up to see if what I think is true.  
I will kill myself. I will kill myself. I will kill myself.  
about your presence.

I like earthenware (? oxen more than real oxen.  
The gardener's cloak was lined with blue.  
The red rose smells white.

When I see pink it seems they are referring to me.



*almada*

# A INVENÇÃO do DIA CLARO

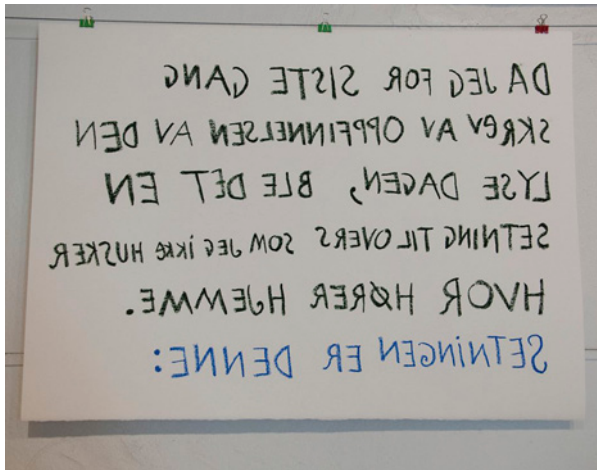
Escrepta de uma só maneira para todas as espécies de orgulho, seguida das demarches para a Invenção e acompanhada das confidencias mais intimas e geraes.

Ensaio para a iniciação de portuguezes na revelação da pintura

Com um retrato do autor por elle-proprio  
primeiro milhar

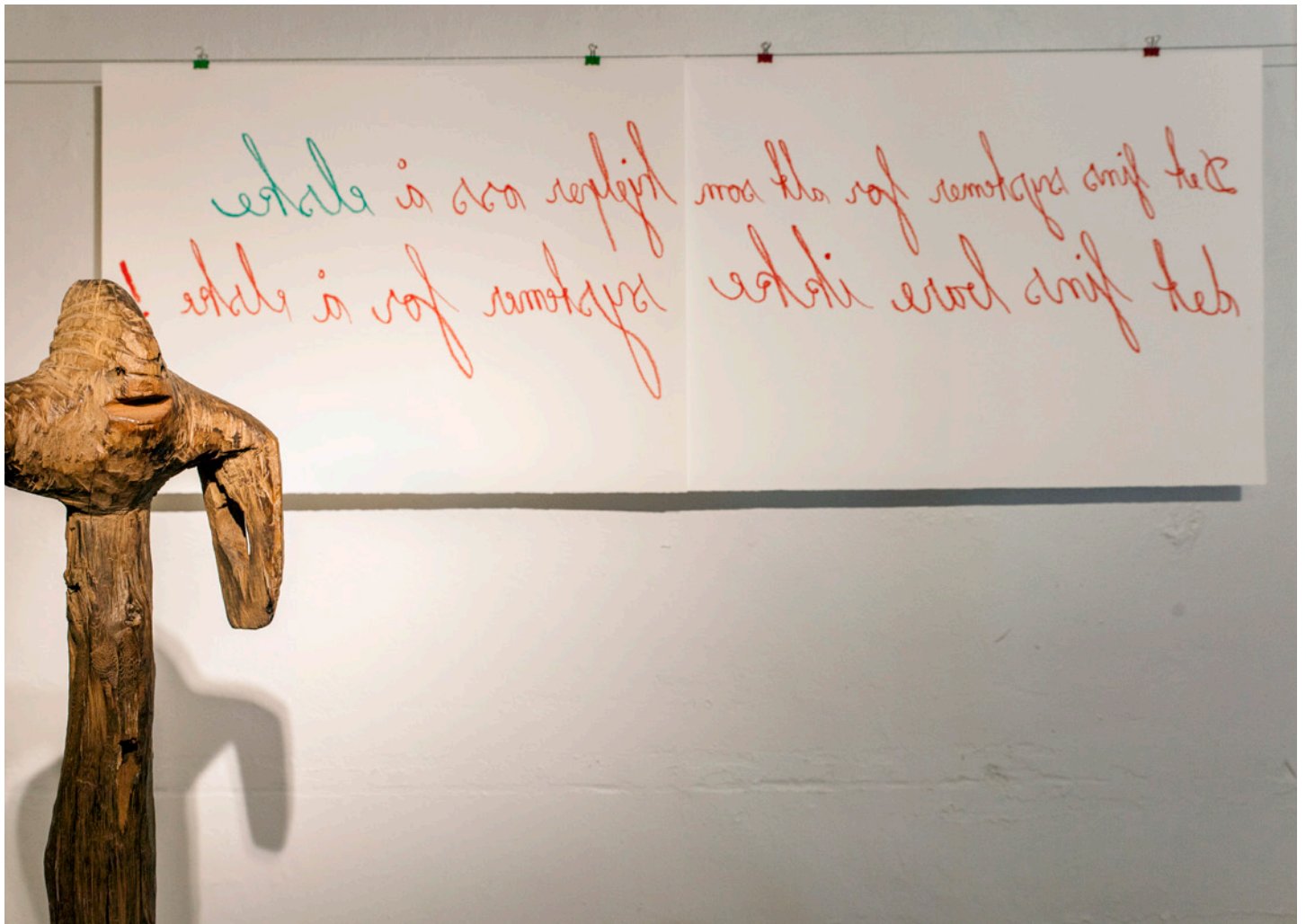
LISBÔA  
"OLISIPO" APARTADO 145  
1921





When I for the last time copied the *Invention of the Bright Day*, a sentence remained and I could not remember where it belonged. The sentence goes like this:

There are systems for all things enabling us to love, yet there is no system of love!

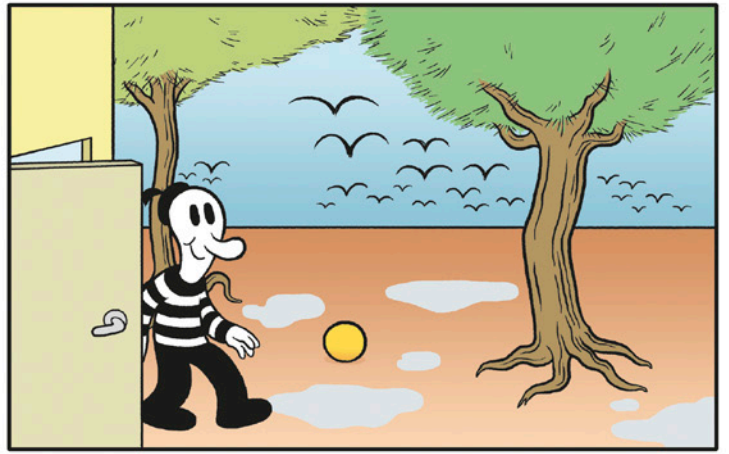
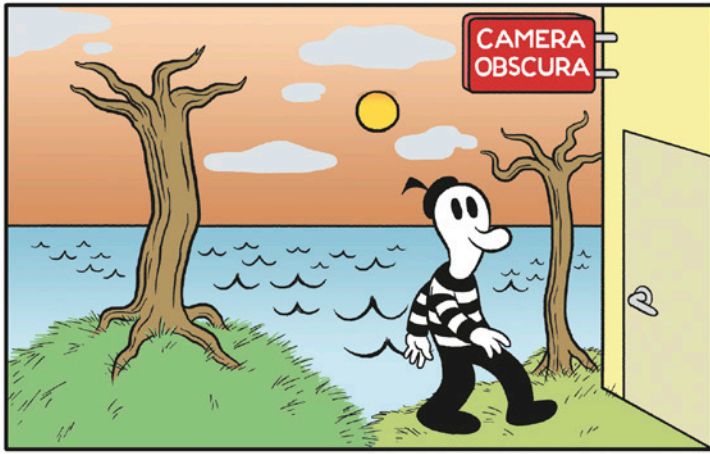




CATALOGUE  
(INCOMPLETE)

- A *The Octavo Nature-Printed British Ferns*. 2 vol. Nature prints by Henry Bradbury (London, 1859).
- B *Teskjekjerringa* (451 redux).
- C Torah scroll. 200-300 years old.
- D Fossil. Around 50 billion years old. Found near Longyearbyen.
- E Portable icon (Russian).
- F *The Book of Common Prayer*. Text and illustrations in copper-plate engraving (London, 1717).
- G Coptic Bible (Ethiopia). Around 200 years old. Handwritten on parchment.
- H Coptic Bible (Ethiopia). Around 200 years old. Handwriting and drawings on parchment.
- I Leaf from *Geistliche Auslegung*. Printed by Johann Zainer in Ulm, ca. 1485.
- J Leaf from *Barth de Sacchis Chronicon*. Printed by Rizius in Venice and Bern, 1492.
- K Leaf from *Heiligleben, Winterteil*. Printed by Günther Zainer in Augsburg, 1471.
- L *ABCEDA*. Poems by Nezval Vitezslav, photo collage and typography by Karel Teige (Prague, 1926).
- M Leaf from Schedels *Weltchronik*. Printed by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg, 1493.
- N Leaf from Joh. v. Cubes *Gart der Gesundheit*. Printed by Konrad Dinckmut in Ulm, 1487.
- O Leaf from *Herbarium*. Printed by Leon Vicenza in Leon, 1491.
- P Leaf from *Neunte Deutsche Bibel*. Printed by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg, 1483.
- Q Leaf from Joh. v. Cubes *Gart der Gesundheit*. Printed by Peter Schoeffer in Mainz, 1485.
- R Leaf from Joh. v. Cubes *Gart der Gesundheit*. Printed by Hans Schönsperger in Augsburg, 1483.
- S Leaf from Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Printed by Benalius & Capcasa in Venice, 1491.
- T *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*. John Amos Comenius (Copenhagen, 1686). Illustrated with wood engravings.
- U Handwritten Quran with commentary. 200-300 years old. Purchased in Cairo.
- V Doctrines and commentary. 15th century. Purchased in Cairo.
- W Handwritten Quran with commentary. 200-300 years old. Purchased in Cairo.
- X Handwritten book of black magic. Parchment. Purchased in the mountains of Morocco.
- Y *Della simmetria dei corpi hvmani*. Volume four of Albrecht Dürer's work on human proportions, illustrated with wood engravings (Venice, 1591).
- Z Typeface textbook by friar Vespasiano Amphiareo (Venice, 1556).
- Æ Genealogy book for Sultan Suleiman 1. 16th century.
- Ø *A Invenção do Dia Claro*. By José de Almada Negreiros (Lisbon, 1921)
- Å Coptic Bible (Ethiopia). Handwritten on parchment. Rucksack cover in leather. Ca. 200 years old
- 1 Bendik Riis: «Det Nye Universelle Værdens Billed Alfabet» (1943).
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