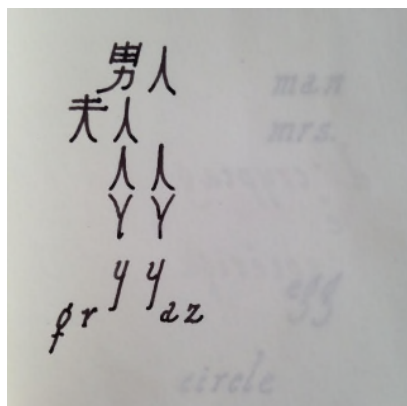
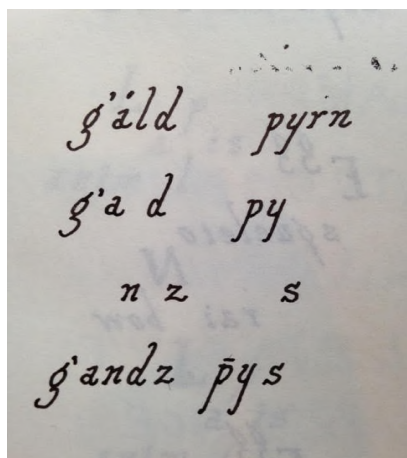


Reflecting on Mirrors of Passing Windows: How Tarot Feeds Alphabets *A Conversation between Paul Nagy and Enrique Enriquez*



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* The fate of simplified Chinese is to become transliterated Yiddish (man + mrs. = the egg inside the circle).

(gold + lead)

** Transliterated Yiddish allow us to melt into a goose's foot.

This conversation between Paul Nagy of tarothermeneutics.com and Enrique Enriquez of New York is to discover how Enrique's tarot practice has led to his notebook writings and what they signify.

Paul: I see your work and it bewilders me. I want you to guide me through what you're doing, rather than my riffing-off what I project you're doing.

Enrique: Lately I have been thinking about circles. First, in terms of how a pack of cards has a square-like shape that we turn into a circle when we shuffle them. Once set in motion things lose their sharp edges. That is what Life does to us.

Secondly, I have been wondering what is our social responsibility while we walk around the block. Our presence changes the landscape -even if momentarily- and the landscape changes us. We also lose our sharp edges as we move around. My own walk around the block includes one stop at my regular café. That is where I write every morning. I write down words that I find sensuous, in any language, even if I cannot understand it. This way of writing has nothing to do with personal expression. It is a mantic act, a game of chance, as I follow the patterns suggested in these words in search for visions.

How would you name what you do? Are you a poet or an artist, a philosopher or a designer?

People say I am a "poet". What I do seems indistinguishable from poetry so I am fine with that. That said, I don't see poetry as a literary event. One of the biggest shifts that took place on the 20th Century was the jump poetry took off of the page. I like to see Yves Klein "leap into the Void" as the visual representation of this:



Actions, performances, installations, happenings... those are poetic events. Most contemporary art consists on understanding the poetry of objects. An object charged with associations, placed next to another object charged with its own associations, would elicit meaning just as words do. There is a continuum there,

something we see earlier in Alfred Jarry for example: by aestheticizing eccentricity, the line between life and literature has been progressively erased. You don't just write about the sea, you look at the reflection of the sea in a mirror, like Czechoslovakian artists Lumír Hladík did in the 1980s, in a gesture that releases all the poems about the sea ever written. One can aspire at having a poetic stance in the world that has nothing to do with writing sonnets nor publishing verses.

That is what attracted me about the tarot in the first place. The visual language in the cards reveals an internal logic, not dependent on any external doctrine, but contained within the images in such a way that the symmetry between their parts reveals poetic images we read. We see how those streams of water being poured by the woman in The Star resemble the two dogs in The Moon, and we read: "*Water runs like wild dogs.*" If instead of the moon we have The Sun next to The Star, we read "*Water wells up like the embrace of twins.*" We find a suggestive image and we let it work on us. It takes the mind of a poet to decode it.

At a microscopic level, one single example of my writing can be seen as a visual poem. At a macroscopic scale, all these exercises allow me to blur the edges of things, making unexpected connections so one thing becomes another, and eventually all things come together. Through their interconnectedness things reveal their true meaning, making evident that nothing is permanent. Everything we do tries to answer one fundamental question: "*How to live?*" Religion, philosophy, art, and sports, these are all imaginary solutions to that question. I prefer to look at the world of forms.

I remember reading an essay by Henri Corbin about psychogeography. Chiefly it says that landscape shapes our thinking. In New York the landscape is extremely modified for a vertical life. So one does not only walk around the plane of the ground, but one can also enter the buildings and travel up and down great distances. The landscape then is very similar to a tarot card and having a pronounced vertical and horizontal dimension, even in the round, so to speak.

Yes, although I rarely travel upwards. The greatest work of poetry this city has generated is the concept of ‘air rights’. It basically means that you can sell the empty space atop your building to your neighbor, as a way to guarantee that you or your descendants will never build a taller structure, therefore occluding your neighbor’s view. All the poetry we consume consists on things we see after they were written. Every time we read a poem we are seeing the past. Air rights are a written guarantee of all the future glances your neighbor and his descendants may take through their windows. You are selling the possibility of seeing. A thing of beauty, probably created by a realtor, not by a student fresh from the Iowa Writers Workshop. Bureaucracy is the less understood form of human creativity.

Recently, the claim of Solomon in the Qur’an, “O people, we have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from all things. Indeed, this is evident bounty.” [Qur’an Verse (27:16)] is understood as an inviting to poetic, divine connection through nature, a new Green language, where words unite us in ourselves and in nature, “all things... evident bounty.” This imaginative affluence rather than impoverished human speech that isolates us from ourselves and nature. The language of birds calls us to a vision of union that encompasses the whole. It seems that this on-high, holistic perspective is a bird’s-eye-view, like the overhead, projective map, is implicit in the language of the birds.

Over-seeing, forswearing anecdotes over principles, bring us closer to knowing how to live.

Since I don’t own the space above my head I stay at ground level, hoping to change the landscape in a subtle way by sitting and writing in public. Since words are deconstructed and encoded into foreign languages, the writing remains private. The act of writing becomes an image. I have learned to see this as a daily performance piece.

Does this mean you are concerned with the minutiae of habitats, the words and letter inside the big book store?

Not at all. I have no faith in daily life.

I think this sentence, “The act of writing becomes an image,” is the heart of your word, notebook practice, “a daily performance piece,” based on the shapes of letters rather than their necessary sounds. Then the letters become images to move around.

Indeed. A friend told me that Congolese magicians speak in clouds instead of sentences. I felt I had wasted my entire life by not speaking in clouds! If you fragment the linearity of what you are saying, your words could be approached from different angles.

Sounds like your language of the birds is more a bird’s flight than a bird’s song.

What we call the language of the birds seems to follow the rules of analogical thinking, which are those of magical thinking: things that look alike, or sound alike, resemble each other and therefore affect each other. You will find that idea behind the work of many writers, from Giordano Bruno to Öyvind Fahlström.

I tried to detect rules that would get me closer to those clouds. Those rules have to do with finding symmetry within the word, or between two words, and letting this symmetry suggest an arrangement in which the word becomes a visual event.

How are these rules perspectival like maps or proscriptive like instructions or descriptive, like rendering?

They are an assembly kit for the writing of pure presence.

As place and gift, the present embraces the vibrancy of pure light, sound and form. Sound differs from vision. The eye and its gaze have long been the primary trope of European thought — what cultural theorist Luce Irigaray calls “the predominance of the visual, and of the discrimination and individualization of form.” This discourse privileges the visual as the purest and most important form of sense experience. Thus, vision encourages projection into the world, occupation and control of the source of experience; whereas sound “encourages a sense of the world as received, as being revelatory rather than incarnate.”

Music, as the refinement of sound, can be understood either as possessing or producing meanings, or as producing effects which cannot be explained in terms of meaning — that “music can affect us in ways that are not dependent on understanding something, or manipulating verbal concepts, or being able to represent accurately those experiences through language.” Music thus has a metaphysical dimension; where music affects the body, the distinction between outside — where the music comes from — and inside — where the music is felt — is radically called into question. Musicologist John Shepherd therefore describes music as a site of exchange, a shifting boundary between the outer and the inner.

Through analogies and homophonies, we comprehend the pull that forms that are alike feel towards each other.

Last December a friend of mine, an art teacher, told me that he had asked his students to draw an angel. Half of the class drew a head with wings. The other half didn't know what to draw. I think the second half was right. How can we tell if we

are in the presence of an angel? Think of Hildegard von Bingen, and Agnes Martin. Both seemed to have had these visions of geometric shapes and colors. To the 12th Century mystic those were celestial images. To the 20th Century artist they were ideas for paintings. Is there a difference? I would like to think that an angel is a presence that feels familiar, but whose forms we can't comprehend.

I think the unfamiliar angel is an unrecognized angle, a trajectory of lines the eyes blur in search of the visible. These invisible spaces, negative spaces seem one way you perform with the alphabet as musical notation that offer a choreography to otherwise imperceptible steps.

If a thing is the effect it produces in the world, an angel would be a state of grace. I have faith in useless things. That which has no purpose, will never disappoint.

The soul of words suggests a geometry that then becomes the meaning of the word.

What do you mean by the soul of words? Are you talking about the visual form of the word? Are you talking about the meanings of the word? Are you talking about both?

Vowels are the soul of a word, the air that animates the consonants. That belongs to the Language of the Birds' folklore.

Likewise, this geometry is it in the letters? Is it in the meanings of the words as they correspond to the letters? Is it to the sideways meanings of the letters as they may be transformed?

One single vowel is a dot, two vowels form a line, three vowels suggest a triangle, four vowels a square, and so on. This way, two words from two different languages with two different meanings could end up rendering the same visual ordering. This is not too removed from the idea of pairing words that sound alike. It all follows the same logic.

By looking for that universal language of forms where there is no metaphor, forms without anecdote, I lay the groundwork to map the recurrence of a sign, not as an intellectual projection of ourselves in the world, but as an external event.

In conventional mathematics two negatives cancel each other out, allowing some positives to peek through. Your notebook, and a pack of Marseille tarot cards as no question and no answer, then what comes of the reading of the random cards and the jottings in the notebook?

Your daily performance piece in your notebook, I think can have many ramifications, not only for yourself and what you do, but for what and how one shapes the meaning of these exercises as they, what? Regurgitate into new forms and potentials.

Once, a woman told me: "I know what you are doing. This is a performance piece and you are protesting. You sit while everybody rushes out. You write deliberately slow, by hand, while everybody texts quickly on their phones." I think she got me.

The deliberate pen to paper writing as a form of analysis of word-letter patterns that dictate their own significance outside their utility as making language serve memory. It seems you want us to follow you in a process but you rarely, from my vantage point, offer the key that stimulated your reflections. Are you sure you want us to follow you as some sort of puzzle needing decoding?

I don't want you to follow, I want you to be there. I want to write pure presence. My favorite moment in language is when the letter n and the letter u find each other. Both letters are symmetrical, one is open towards the ground, the other one is open towards the sky. They are Temperance's vessels. If the n follows the u they form the Spanish word un (one). If the n is followed by the u they form the French

word nu (naked). The n atop the u forms an egg. One + naked = egg. That is The World.

Wonderful!

If you are there, the word containing the n and the u fades away. All you know about that word, all you remember about it, gives space to the present tense of what is happening before you. You don't have to decode anything, just witnessing it.

On the other hand, I have had people ask me where to buy my notebook, thinking I am just filling-in some manufactured puzzle.

The fad of coloring books for adults. What is the meaning of so many people wanting to draw within preset lines?

We can't underestimate the pleasure of making things with our hands. There is something grounding about it. Even those who can't envision the big picture can rejoice in the touch of the pen over the page.

But this does not address this issue of whether are you a puzzle-maker or something else, and what is that?

Another woman approached me and said "I know what you are doing. You are meditating." Then another one: "I see you as a monk drawing circles in a zen garden. Leaves fall from the trees, erasing the circles, so you draw them again and again." I can't argue with any that. We all ought to make our own mirrors.

Reminds me of the well-known poem contest in the autobiographical chapter of the Sutra of Hui Neng, when the head monk wrote this poem to demonstrate his proficiency in Zen:

Our body is the Bodhi-tree,
And our mind a mirror bright.
Carefully we wipe them hour by hour,
And let no dust alight.

A kitchen porter and junior monk, poor and illiterate, Hui Neng, hearing this verse recited, asked a fellow monk to write this reply:

There is no Bodhi-tree,
Nor stand of a mirror bright.
Since all is Void,
Where can the dust alight?

Perhaps the mirror-images you so diligently ferret out of alphabets and letter-confluences is somewhere in-between these two extreme positions of pedestrian craftsmanship and anarchic emptiness?

Hui Neng Rips up Scriptures

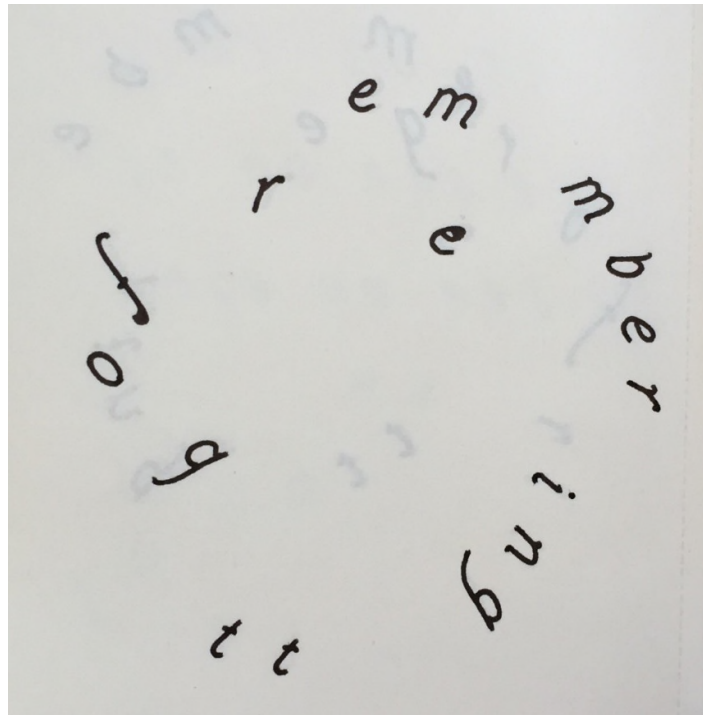


To write transparency one has to use both sides of the page. To write emptiness one has to mark its contours with letters. Neither side of the page is transparency nor any letter is emptiness. They are the means to make in-betweenness visible.

What some people overlook is that Hui Neng needed the context the head monk's poem provided to set up the reveal of his own level of understanding. So I still wonder to whom are you communicating, and what is it you want us to notice?

I am communicating with the world of forms through language. I don't write for a readership; I am the reader. The pen is the part of the eye that leaves a mark.

For a few years now I have been sending some of these things to a few people, via email. I take pictures of my notebooks just as other people take pictures of their trips. I only want the people who receive my pictures to know where I have been. Every December the *santeros*, in Cuba get together, cast their shells, and write down '*La Letra del Año*' (the letter of the year). This is their reading, what they see for the upcoming year. Nowadays they send this 'Letra' by email. In the emails I send, the letters of the page resemble the patterns of the cowry shells cast on the mat. Here:



Two circles, off-centered, one atop another, form the words '*remembering*' and '*forgetting*'. I said I write in many languages but in truth I write in the language of the symbolic world, which has two grammar rules: equivalence and exception. By '*equivalence*' I mean an alignment of forms that look or sound alike. By '*exception*' I mean a swerve in which the letters that fail to get aligned derail the whole structure.

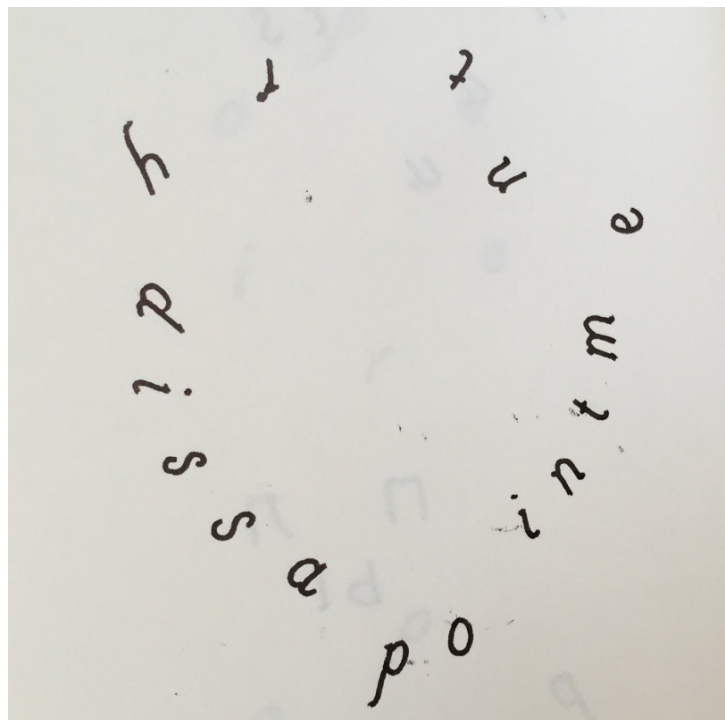
The words I write are just excuses for the transparency between them to come into being. The equivalence between '*remembering*' and '*forgetting*' consists on the letters both words share: *r, e, i, n, g*. One can't help but seeing the word 'reign' being hinted there. The exception between '*remembering*' and '*forgetting*' is made out of '*ember*' and '*fog*'. All those little sparks stand at the beginning of poetry.

By the transparency do you mean how the letters iterate parts of one another in various words? And are those iterations, the doubling and tripling of possible letters as the two images spin around each other, so that the special terms reign, leaving aspects of ember as a burning to put back together, a re-membering, returning of limbs to a torso of a

hacked body or word? And likewise the fog of forgetting which is also a form of forgetting, acquiring from a lack to receiving a letting go of the acquired?

'*Transparency*' refers to symmetry, and to how as two forms are aligned we can see through them. It also has to do with the pass of time expressed in the overlapping of pages in the notebook. The backward words you intuit on the reverse of the page could only have been read in the past. We see was, was written before, through what has been written now. '*Through*' is a suggestive sound here, since it contains the French '*trou*' (hole) and '*trouver*' (to find). That is what transparency is: finding a way thru.

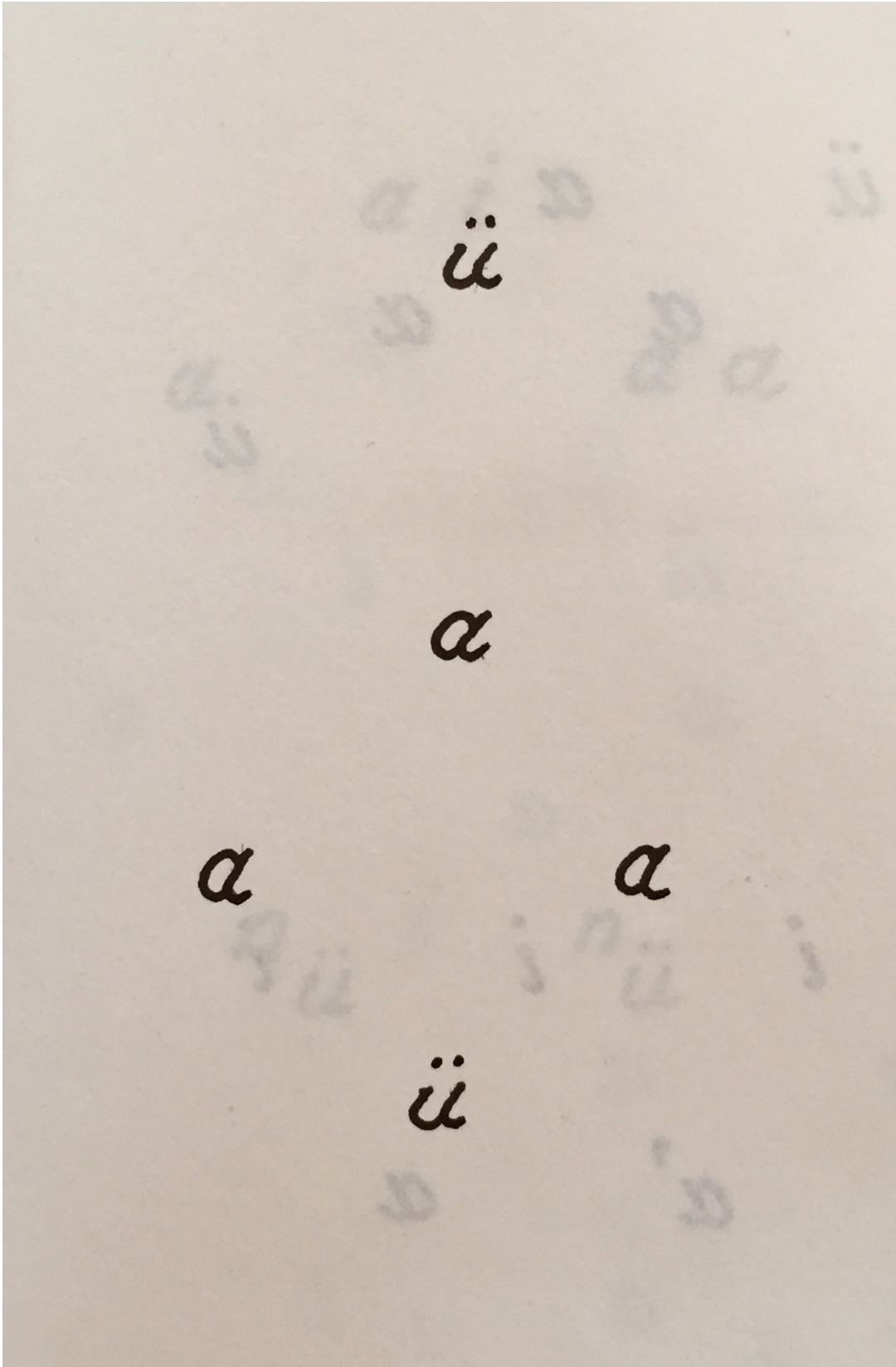
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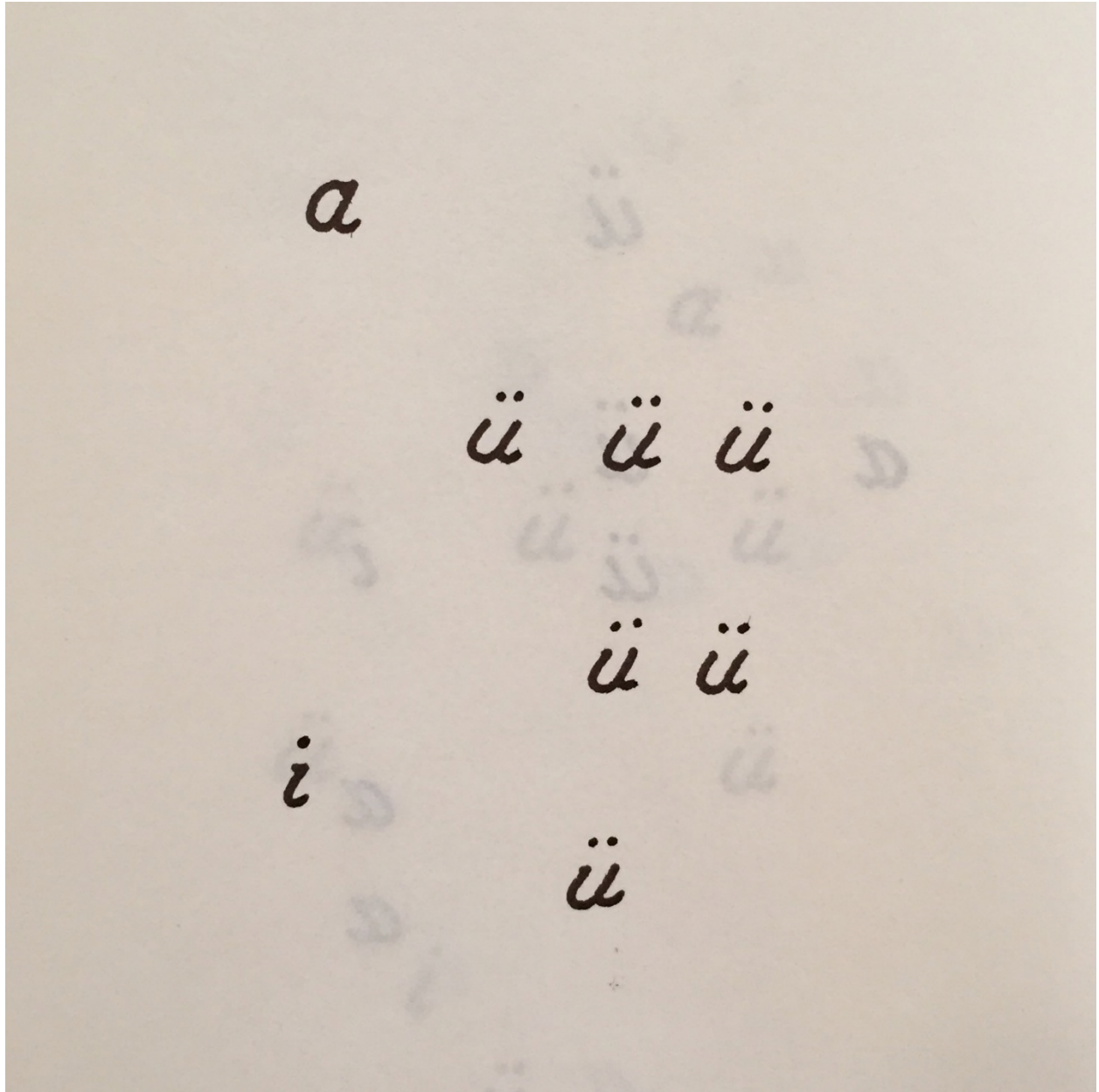


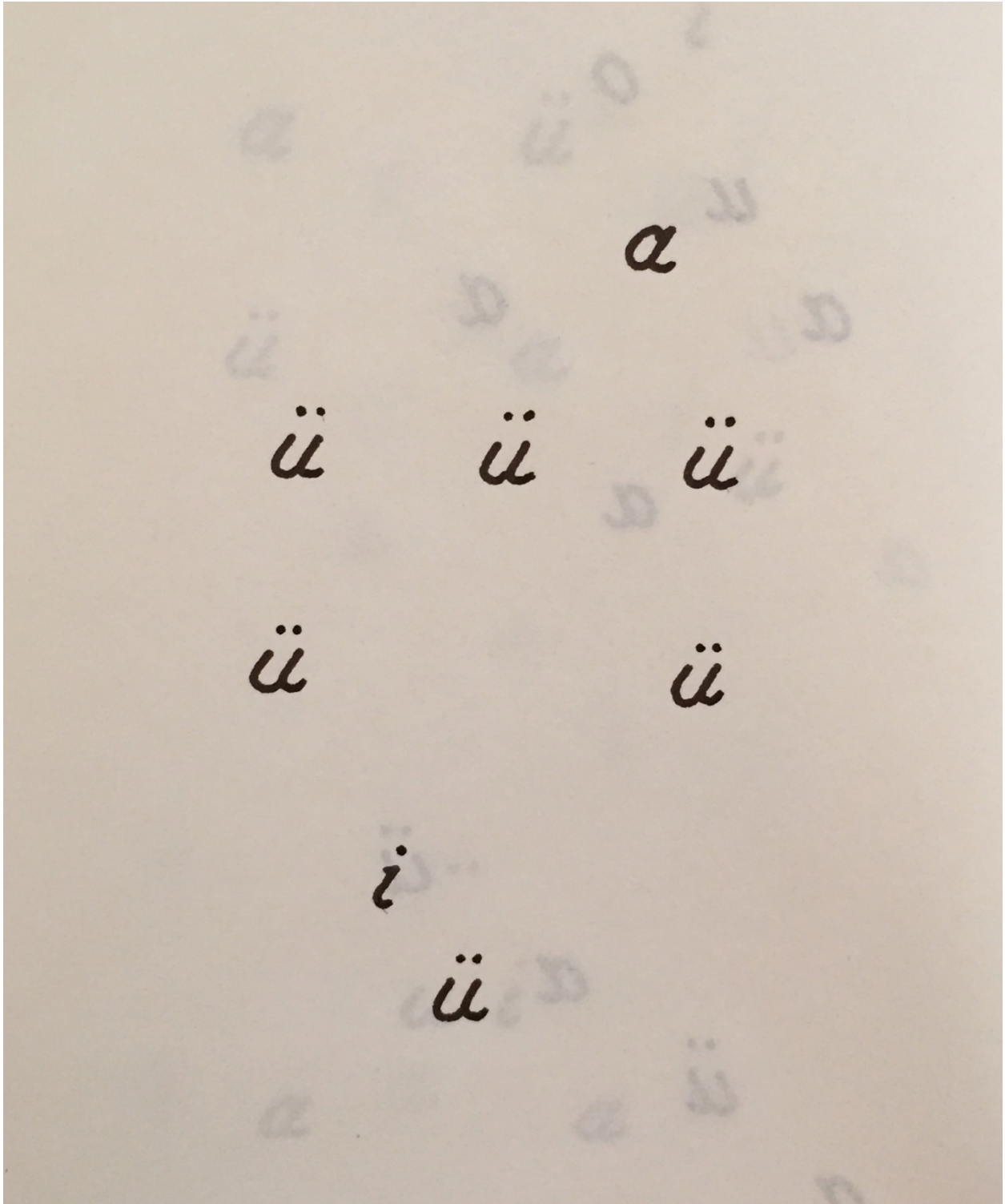
The word '*disappointment*' tries to form a circle, with the word '*poetry*' either breaking or completing it. I was reading the English translation of an Italian book. They spelled '*dissapointment*' wrong. That is how I saw the word '*poet(ry)*' in it right away. Is poetry the clinamen of disappointment, or disappointment the clinamen

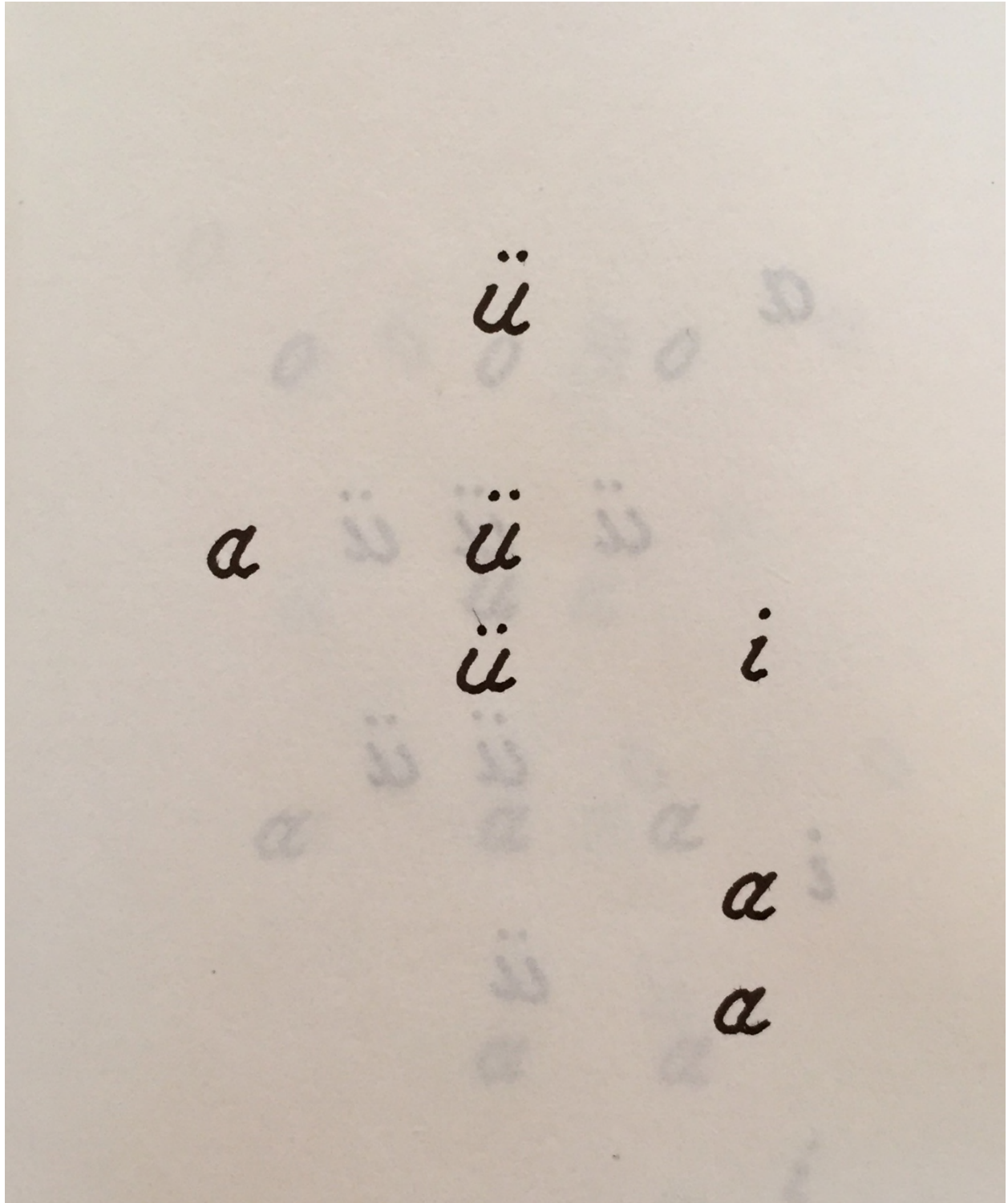
of poetry? We don't know. I am happy to outline a tension that could build up into an uncertainty. This is the kind of '*vision*' I speak of. The symbolic world affords us the possibility to disregard our physicality and move at random through material and metaphysical spaces. Language is a dreamscape, an orphic layer we overlap onto reality, where everything feels both foreign and familiar.

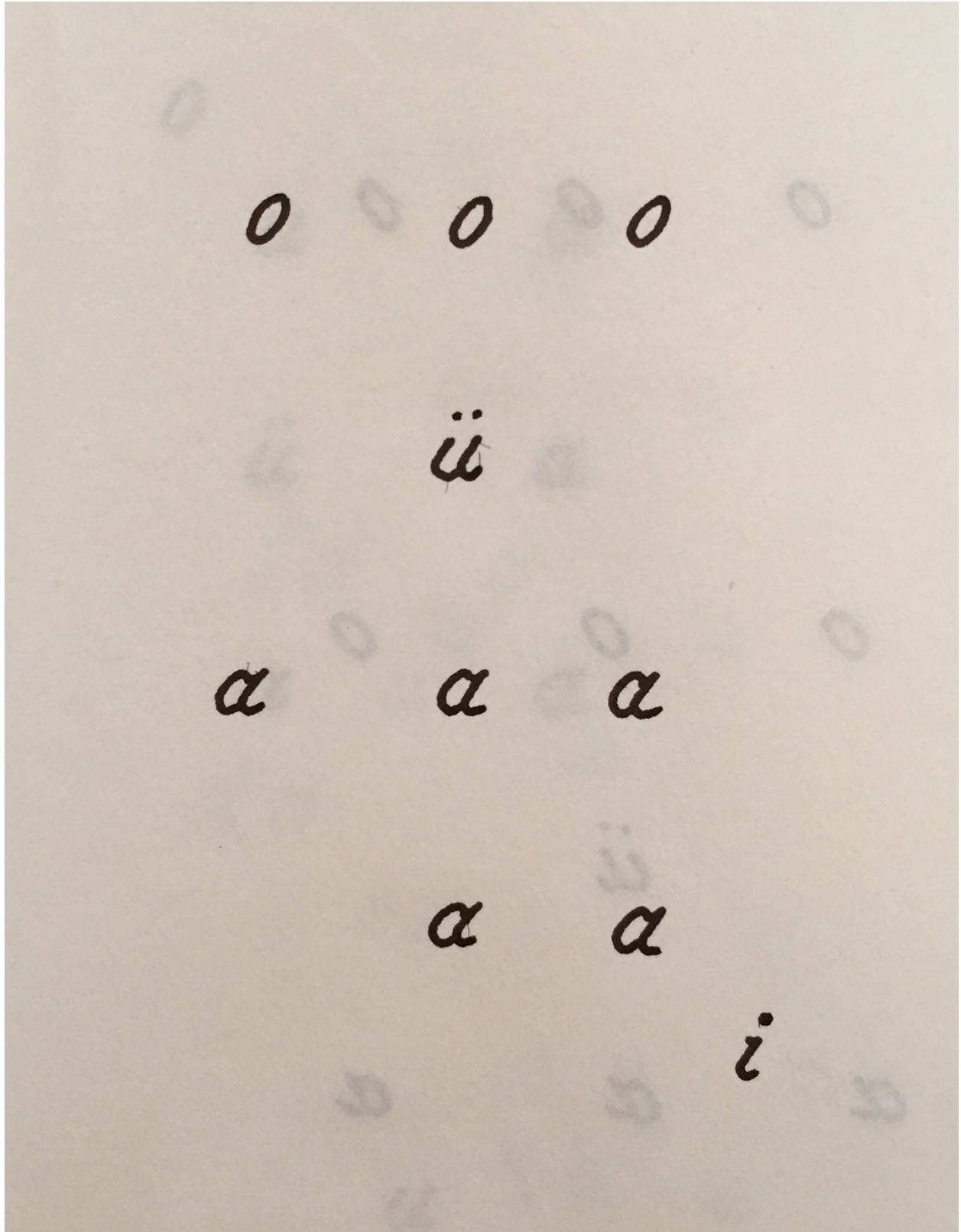
Those two examples are pleasant, but I am more drawn to things like these on the next several pages:



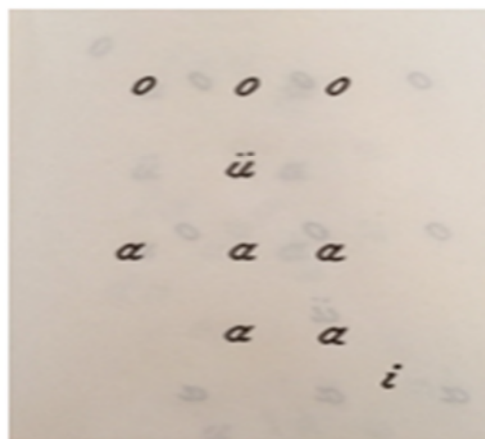
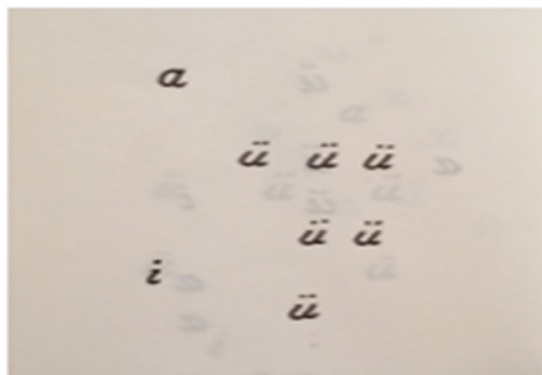
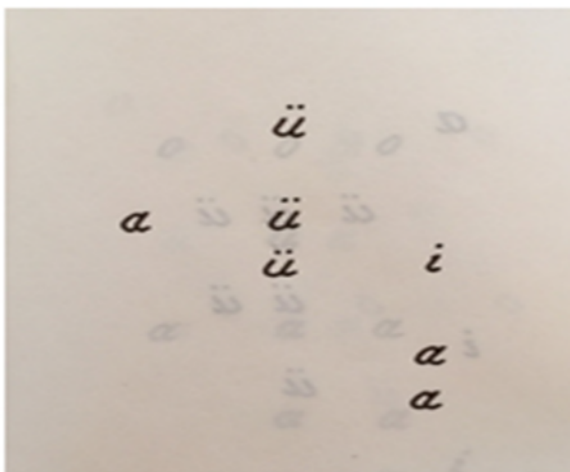
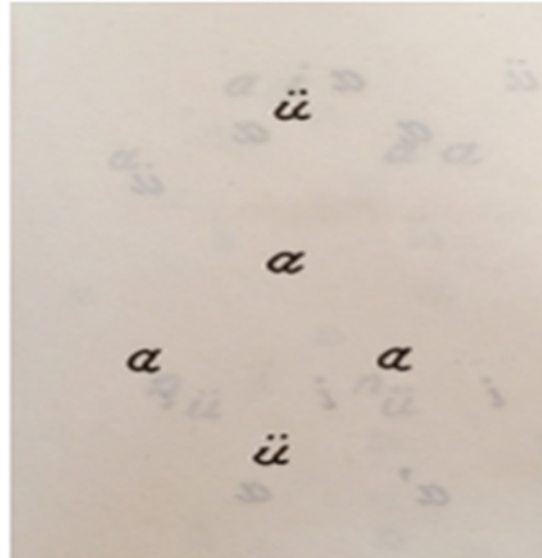
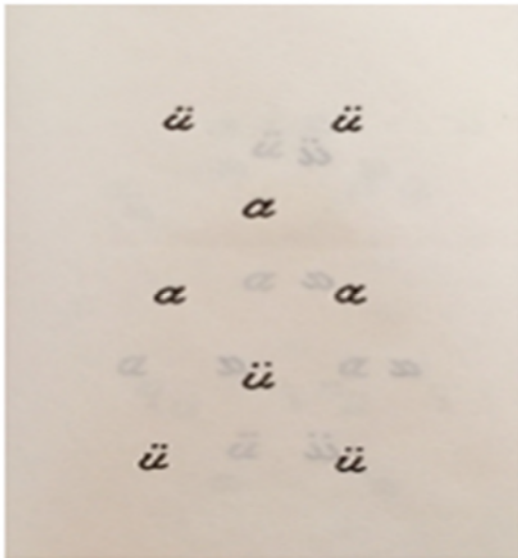








Reflecting on Mirrors of Passing Windows: How Tarot Feeds Alphabets



These are Wayuu words with all the consonants removed. The Wayuu are indigenous people who live in Northwest Venezuela. They practice their own brand of shamanism that relies heavily on dreams as their main divination form.

Their words have lots of repeated vowels. In the language of the birds, vowels are the soul of words. Here I chose words related to the otherworld, words I forgot but are still there, contained within the letters. I forget every single word I write, leaving it to the words to remember their own meanings.

However, the souls have bodies, the consonants, closed sounds to the vowel's open. They complete articulate sounds but not symmetrically. Vowels can be enunciated, whereas consonant sounds need assists from vowels to be spoken. The body brings closure, limit and definition to the souls, which bring motion, emotion and life to the body. Vowel sounds also have a reach into silence, the otherworld, where forgetting is a natural subsistence.

In some languages you only write the consonants. There is something beautiful in the implication of breathing life into a word. Here I took the consonants out of the word. You can't breathe a soul into these words. Perhaps you can do the opposite and embody them.

There are two gestures of encrypting in these examples. Encryption is a gateway to mystery, and mystery a reminder of the fact that 'we' aren't the last word, nor the first. There is more to life left unsaid. Here I am working with a rare language, unknown to me and to most people I know. There is something quite remarkable in the act of translation, a word that means both converting one thing into another, and moving a thing from one place in space and time to another. In fact, as soon as we translate a word it ceases to be in our reality. It has crossed the border, becoming estranged from us. This is a conceptual motion that manifests physically as we retrace the word's shape.

Would you say this is a depiction of something? And if so what is it depicting or disclosing? Representation through the letters is a translation out of meaning into what?

There is no representation nor description, only latency.

The second encryption happens as I take the consonants off the words. In this case, the structure suggested by the vowels alone seemed pristine enough. I seek configurations that would have words acting like the angel in the Annunciation; so these words will reveal themselves as beings in their own right that say: "Don't be afraid!"

In all these examples we can see how the space between words is a realm we can inhabit. To me, this interstitial space is the equivalent of the shamanic 'otherworld'. One travels to the space in between letters to retrieve a vision. There is a sense of pure beauty in these words that exists away from reason and from language. Writing language out of language is an enticing thought.



What about this postscript image of a dog?

The dog is sleeping. In the realm of language an image is a resting place. We don't have to verbalize an image to experience it. I am drawn to the notion that forms unite and ideas divide.

By forms so you mean the shape? Or way of performing an exercise, or prescriptions or norms, or a representation of three-dimensional geometrical figure? Or indeterminate form, an algebraic expression that cannot be used to evaluate a limit? Or a differential form, a concept from differential topology that combines multilinear forms and smooth functions?

I mean any material one uses to crystallize a stance.

I drew a dog, a French Bulldog, perhaps to remind me of the fact that I have had a life-long engagement with drawing; or to suggest that each letter one traces is a portrait of the letter, which is a 'thing' in the world, just like a dog is.

Last year I drew a fly and a bee, but those were punctuation marks.

So is drawing a stretch or a retreat?

Drawing is a mother tongue, the chronic dialect of memory.

For your hand and eye?

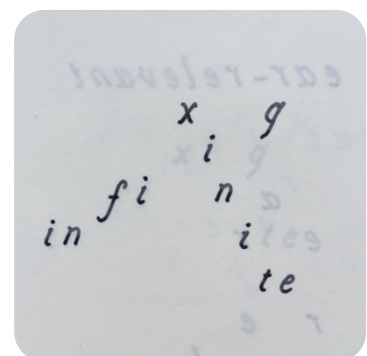
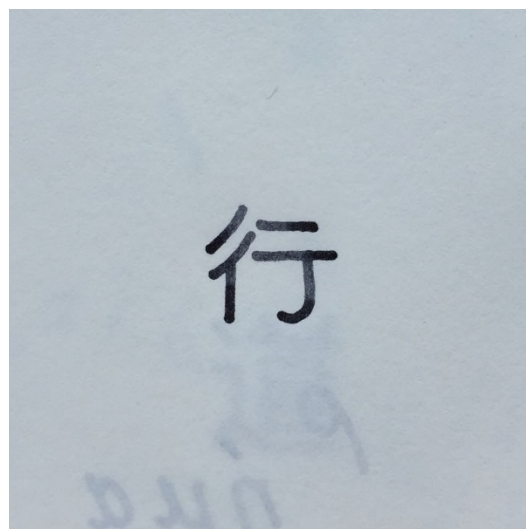
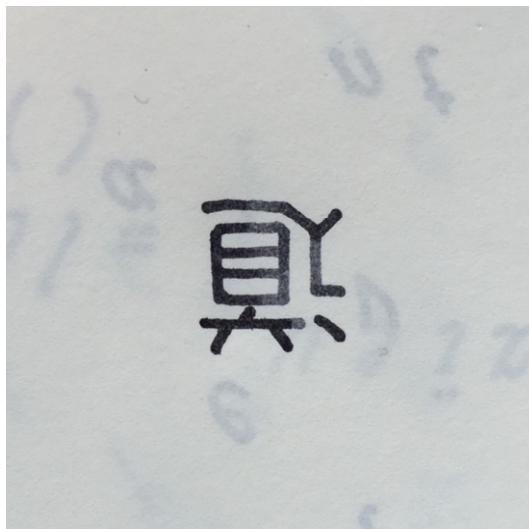
For the hand as the mind of the eye.

Where does the abstract think?

I don't know. I only know that, from the point of view of my daily performance, drawing would be too transparent.

Too, facile? Too fascicle, little parallel bundles of visual associations?

In the past two days I have sat next to a guy who was writing in Chinese, and a guy who was making abstract pencil drawings in his notebook. In a city like New York I am rarely the only person writing in a cafe. I simply do it in a repetitive, recurrent way, through which I hope to reach symbolic speed. By this I mean to become subtle, like an image floating in the memory of the city. Now, for a non-Chinese speaker like myself, ideograms and abstract drawings are equivalent in that I could see what these two men were doing, but I couldn't tell what they were thinking. If you see me drawing a dog, you know I am thinking 'dog'. On the other hand, turning words into clouds attempts to reach that quality I was talking about before, of something that feels familiar but seems unrecognizable.



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Does every letter require a portrait? Little caricatures requiring faces? And perhaps letters are disjunctive interstices for the sounds of words and the fact of things?

Writing is portraying. Now and then I try my hand at other alphabets: Armenian, Hebrew, Tamil, Sanskrit, etc. The hand that slides while writing 'abc' hobbles along when tracing other signs. Everything looks clumsy. I don't know the face of those letters, I have no memory of them. Then I go back to our alphabet and I realize that writing all those other shapes got my hand looser. Those are issues of handwriting that inhabit the problematics of drawing.

Perhaps these babble of scripts is inviting your eye to entertain hidden geometrics of form?

Words are beautiful events.

The geometry hinted by the words becomes an intersection between all languages that brings about René Guenón's definition of the Language of the Birds as the "*Science of rhythm*". My notebook and my tarot deck are the same object placed in two different pockets. I wanted to invent my own form of divination, to decant the essence of tarot cards into the alphabet, so its continuous permutations would return back those beloved images, without sentimentality. What kind of divination could speak to a person like me, who has no questions? It has to be one which provides no answers.

Is there a conversation between these two items in your pocket? And does that conversation require that each listen to the other, the way Don Quixote listens to Sancho Panza? Or is the notebook, tarot mix full of soliloquies disguised as stimulus and response?

The work in the notebooks started with the tarot's names as printed on the cards and became an extension of the homophonic and anagrammatical properties of those names. Once I choose to express myself in language, this work became independent from the tarot. It responds to the same poetic logic as the tarot, but it doesn't address its thematic nor its motifs.

I refuse to have my engagement with the symbolic world confined to telling people if they should order the fish or the chicken. In the eyes of the public, once we took predicting the future off the table, the tarot's purpose became blurred. Any explanation of the tarot that opposes fortunetelling has us spiraling into vague notions that often sound unconvincing. Chris Deleo's documentary, [*Tarology*](#) [DVD 2011], was an attempt at an alternative. The movie allowed the viewer to experience the tarot as a tool for a poetic stance in the world, while doing its best at taking the cards off the table. Books, lectures, talking and thinking about it are also part of the tarot's social dimension. This conversation is another example of how the tarot can become a bridge for two people to talk about the symbolic world.

Tarot cards have the unique quality of being spoken images. That may also be their downfall. An image is a presence, not an absence. As a presence, an image is an affirmation. An image of death doesn't mean 'not death'. In a tarot reading we use language to cancel the images out. "Death is not death, it is transformation." By talking the images down, we lessen their intensity, so they fit our own bias. That way, an image will most likely leave us unchanged.

Perhaps you mean here that some people read the tarot images in ways that cancel out their evidence? However, there must be a discipline of naming the images in what they do and how they point that does not diminish the autonomy and seriousness of the images that speak? I think that's what you're trying to do. Death is the card with no name, and so, to presume it is death just because it has been named in many decks does not mean that the Grim Reaper, if that is what we wish to name the image on the card, is in fact the opener to radical possibilities?

How can we reach that point where the images speak? I would venture that the intelligence of someone looking at tarot cards ought to be closer to the intelligence of a carpenter or a dancer, a spatial, wordless intelligence. The cartomancer has to take himself out of the equation so every person could have their own secret experience of the images.

Though there are many common misperceptions of the public about what a tarot reading may be. And that many readers will allow the client any bias they bring to the reading to stand unquestioned, the fact is that most readers will understand that they are not reading to predict the future but rather a way of reframing the present. The present is what is at hand. It is what is near, in reach of the client now to see otherwise, to reconsider and perhaps to reconfigure motives and potentials.

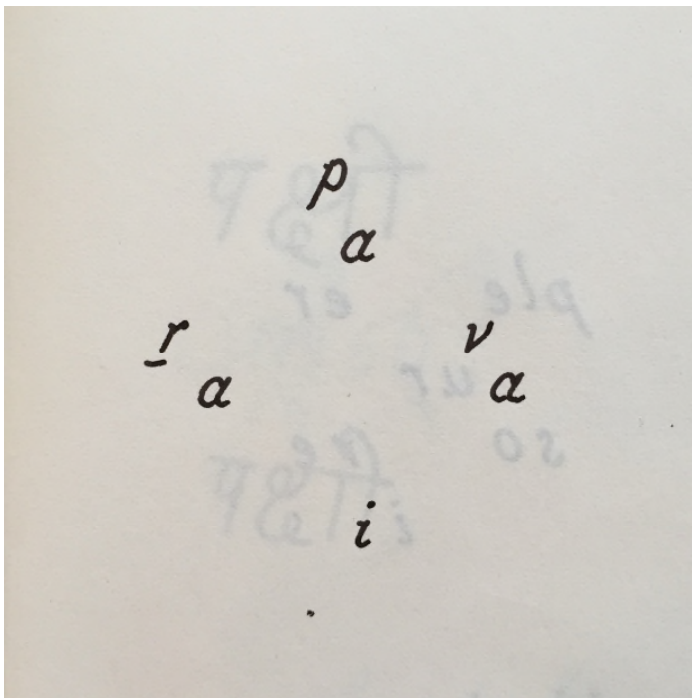
The tarot didn't enter the culture by offering to reframe the present. It did so by promising to lift the veil of the 'now'. Once we decided not to honor that promise, because we find it untenable, the tarot became a less exciting game. Outside predicting the future, and except for a quicker, tailored, experience in a cultural context whose expectations set up a highly suggestible mindset, there is nothing the tarot can offer that art and poetry won't provide.

It would seem to depend upon how we each take the fall of the cards. Likewise, in your notebook lettering, you deal with a variety of substitutions or graphically represented, value- place or space reordering, based on a number of repetitive elements. These arrangements you suggest are not based on the sounds of the words but on the formal elements of the letters themselves.

My whole point is that the thing is its own meaning. Once I write these words down I forget what the words meant. The visual arrangement takes over, and becomes the meaning of the thing I wrote.

I am not sure I have touched upon what you mean as essential to your understanding of explanation as “the thing is its own meaning.” How do we arrive at this point? You’re asking for some radical leaps for someone to grasp what you’re doing here, as I see it.

Whenever I met somebody from a different country I ask them their word for bird. That is the only thing I have ever collected. A woman gave me a word for bird in Tamil, a language from southern India: ‘*paravai*’ (பறவை). I wrote the word



around the rhomboid suggested by the three vowels ‘a’ and the vowel ‘i’, with the consonants following the gravitational pull of the vowels:

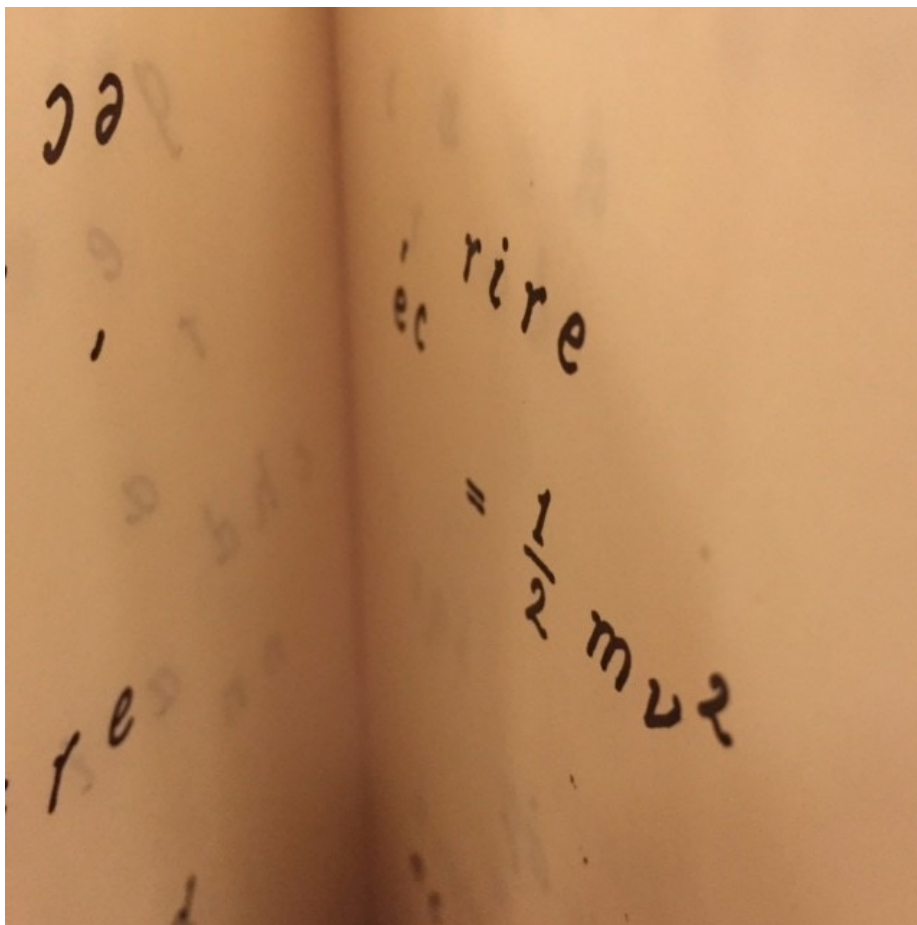
Now my writing of the word exists in the world. It has its own reality, which is both ‘bird’ and something outside of ‘bird’ at once.

We start with the word. Then the word becomes a series of letters. Then the series of letters becomes neither its word nor its particular series, but seems to take upon itself an inherent restructuring based only on the shapes of the letters.

The other day at the supermarket I was talking to the lady standing in line behind me. After the usual "What do you do?" her first question was: "Do you write prose or verse?" I told her "no".

She was looking at the pictures of my notebooks in my iPhone and asked: "But do you still maintain the sound of words?" I told her a story about Johannes Brahms, who once remarked that the most beautiful experience of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony he ever had happened while lying on his sofa, looking at the score. The graphic on the page was the masterpiece, he thought.

Let me attempt to decode this recent picture from your notebook.



The habit of my mind wants to read the characters as representing something, and in this case I am oriented to the repetition of 're' and 'r', 'er', etc. The visual conjecture that I am reading two half pages that, in this case, mirror one another with the code = $\frac{1}{2} MV^2$ as a way of decoding what I am seeing. One-half seems to denote half a page and a form of mirroring.

This one started with Marcel Bénabou's: "*écrire c'est tracer deux lettres et puis rire*" ("Writing consists on tracing two letters and laughing"). This is: *écrire* = *é* + *c* + *rire* (to laugh). In French, ec (Ec) is an abbreviation for Kinetic energy. With ec as a common root, 'rire' mirrors ' $\frac{1}{2} MV^2$ '. Writing + laughing + movement becomes the formula for the entire work in the notebooks, so, I decided to show the notebook.

Here you are in New York City, Manhattan, Greenwich Village, walking around the streets, stopping off at bookstores and coffee shops, meditating upon the letters and words of artists, taking particular words from various languages and looking closely at their graphic representation, allowing that graphic representation to become its own imaged presentation. I attempt to cobble together a view of symbol as a juncture box between self-identity, a facility for language and things in a world. You seem, on the other hand to...What? How would you describe yourself between occult and surreal or Oulipo?

Greenwich Village Skyline





Sometimes when you are riding the subway you see another train running parallel to yours. You can see the people in the other train. You can also see your own reflection on the other train's window. Even if a reflection put you in the other train, you know it won't take you where you are going. That's how I feel about poetry, the occult, and the tarot; but I know that when I am writing in my notebook, in public, I become Vieville's astronomer.

We know that Vieville's astronomer is in the act of observation and also perhaps measuring both space and time. Do you see your own movement towards trance as a movement within space and time? And are your writings, some means of constructing a new measure from the bricolage at hand?

A friend astutely pointed out that the Jacques Vieville's tarot is all about looking up, and The Marseille tarot is all about looking down. Most of the characters in the Vieville seem to be looking upwards, our astronomer included. In the Marseille's counterpart to this card, *Lestoile*, we have a woman looking down, pouring water. I like this reversal where by writing down letters they become stars.

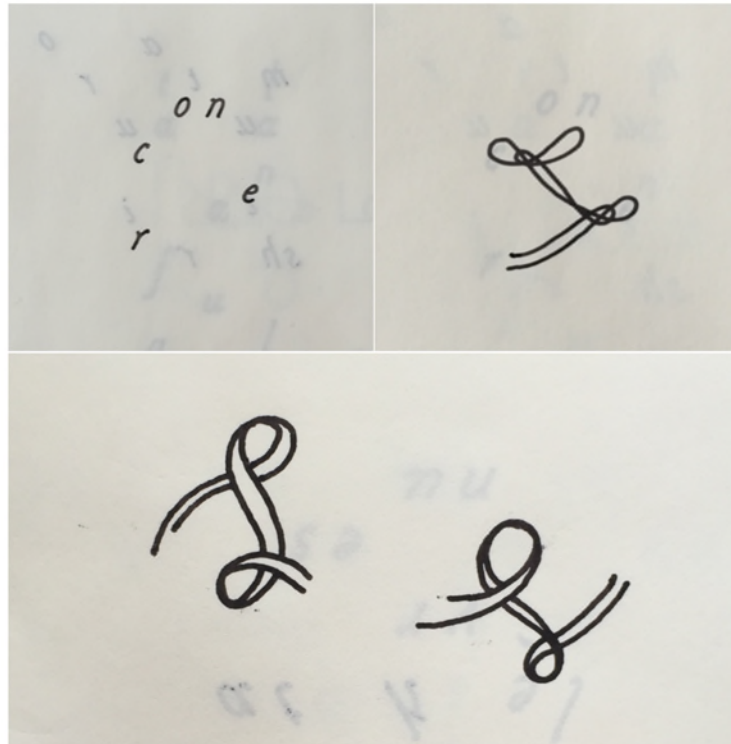


I am taken with this image of the subway train passing. You see the passengers through the windows in the passing train. You also see yourself reflected in the mirror of the windows. They pass by but your reflection stays steady in the window. The question I wonder about is, is it so simple that the poet, the occultist, the tarotist are moving in another direction and you are moving? In an opposite direction? Is it a simple opposition? Or is it merely your point of view? By that I mean do you define a telos the way a poet may set out to compose a poem? What do you see your end to be?

Poetry is a vehicle, the tarot is a vehicle, occultism is a vehicle. I am careful not to be limited by the scope of the available rides. When I write, I am as aware of Aleksei Kruchenykh's *Zaum* as I am of Austin Osman

Spare's *Sigils*. I am aware of Fulcanelli reading stones as texts, and Lawrence Weiner setting texts as stones. The interstices between all those worlds are equivalent to the distance between the page and the tip of the pen.

The work is the act of writing, not what is written. By acting in the crossroad between the limited area of the notebook on the table and the boundless realm of language, I experience language happening but I cannot share that experience, only its remnants left on the page. Look at these three pieces for example:

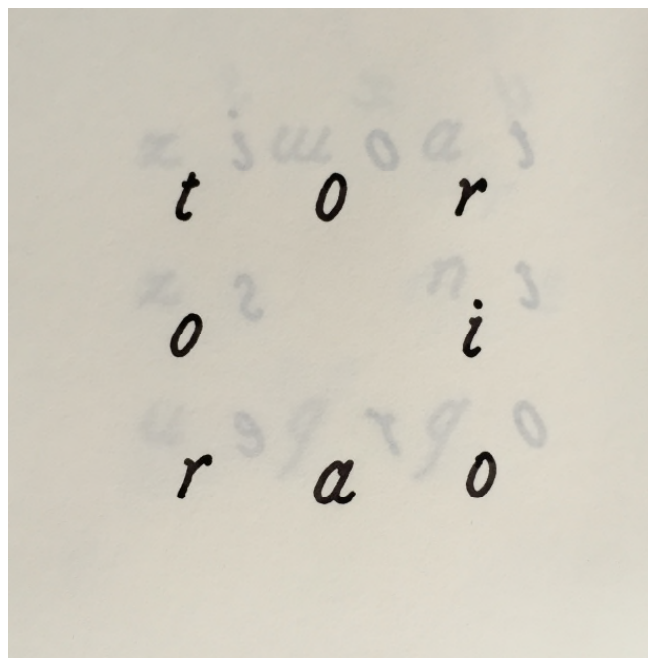


The Spanish word '*reconocer*' (to recognize) is a palindrome. Along with anagrams and homophones, palindromes form the basic grammar of the language of the birds. I constantly wonder if those strategies could be pushed a little bit further from the conception we have of them as 'games'. In this case, half of the word was rearranged in such a way that, by following the motion of the letters on the page, from the bottom to the top and back, you not only read the whole word but get the back and forth sense of a palindrome. The second image is my tracing of the movement of the eye over the first one. You can actually see the first image behind the second one. In Spanish we would call such arabesque an '*orla*' which, in turn, is somehow close to the Russian word for '*орла*' (eagle). Here we have a pleasant chain of thoughts that cognate the flying of the eagle to the act of reading. Both are arabesques and forms of recognition. The second image ends up looking like a strange L, part of an impermanent alphabet drawn by the movement of the eye and concealed within the act of seeing. To see such an alphabet one would have to become the eagle that oversees one's own seeing. The third image also shows some arabesques. I like that inherent tension of something that is both abstract

and concrete, and suggests the crystallization of the movement of the eye turned into a visible form.

My experience while going through the writing of the word '*reconocer*' cannot be transmitted by the actual traces on the page, and even when this 'spell' will turn you into an eagle, you won't know it. I think that is how things are supposed to work. We have to make peace with the fact that everything that is not explicitly said is still there, even if nobody can retrieve it back. By looking at this after the fact you can only address the visual aspects of these words, entering the timelessness of images, where I am present and absent at once.

One expects that something would be revealed. Here for example:



The Spanish word '*oratorio*' (oratory) is set on a square in such a way that by reading it the eye draws a circle in the way one is taught to draw a circle: by tracing one half (*ora*) and then the other one (*torio*) in two opposite gestures. That realization is the meaning of this specific operation. Additionally, the pieces of this word bring '*rotor/rotar/rotatorio*' to mind. Since we started this dialogue I have

been finding once and again this motif of movement (in this case the eye's motion) turning the square into a circle. I am not looking for it, there is no urgency, it is presented to me by chance. This is what I mean by the "recurrence of the sign", as a continued invitation to ponder on a specific aspect in the life of forms.

I have faith in the power of such small gestures to sustain me through my daily life. The reason why I find explaining these things to be futile is precisely because I have no reason to believe that those in need of explanations will share such faith.

fin



Enrique Enriquez

Paul Nagy



A Gallery of Notebook Pages:

