

# Yale French Studies

---

Editor's Preface: Legible/Visible

Author(s): Martine Reid and Nigel P. Turner

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Yale French Studies*, No. 84, Boundaries: Writing & Drawing (1994), pp. 1-12

Published by: [Yale University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2930175>

Accessed: 19/07/2012 21:00

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at  
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Yale University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Yale French Studies*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

MARTINE REID

## Editor's Preface: Legible/Visible

From the field of literature has come the question of the relationship between the written text and its timid counterpart, problematical opposite, and unacknowledged twin: drawing.

We do not wish to renew yet again the debate on text and image, but rather to concentrate reflection here on a point which is both obvious and obscure, which leaves some indifferent and yet is a sore point for others: a sort of blind spot which literary discourse has long neglected because of its apparently unquestioned desire to ensure that its own specific identity remain intact. But that desire has, perhaps, prevented it from inquiring, as it should, into the nature of the boundaries that such an identity necessarily implies, the reasons for their existence, and to what extent they can be crossed.

An answer to this question, which others too have raised, has gradually been formulated: it is a many-faceted, polymorphous reply the sole aim of which is to open up the paradoxical limbo that is the theme of this collection to the innumerable questions posed.

Thus it is that, after various opening remarks, reference will be made to the gesture of writing itself, to typography and to the absence of color which is a feature common to both the printed word and to the graphic representation that accompanies it. More specific analyses will follow which discuss the point of convergence between writing and representation in Stendhal, Verlaine, and a few others, Proust, Valéry, and Artaud. Finally, a few solutions devised by contemporary artists to reconcile writing and drawing will be mentioned.

In the sixties, literary criticism traded in the term *literature* for those of *text* and *poetics*. The author, as Barthes stated and many

others repeated after him, was dead.<sup>1</sup> For its part, literature too, and the *Nouveau Roman* in particular, was moving in the same direction, refusing commonly accepted authority, (auto)biography, character and decor, realism and reference alike. (The early writings of Robbe-Grillet and Ricardou are excellent examples of this.) The result was a certain terrorism which boldly rejected Sainte-Beuve and, in his wake, a host of persnickety successors, while casting aside any notion of history (whether it be that of the text or that of the author) and resolutely deciding to pay attention only to the text itself. It seemed that from then on the text was doomed to speak only of itself, an independent material serving as an intermediary between the author—now to be completely ignored—and the reader, who was just beginning to attract attention: “the birth of the reader must be paid for by the death of the author,” wrote Barthes (Barthes, 67).

With the reevaluation of the contribution made by the structuralists, the end of the seventies saw the confirmation of a precise evolution in at least two separate directions. First, the notion of the “text” was broadened considerably. Genette summed up the result of several years of hesitant fumbling, particularly with regard to lexical considerations, with the suggestion that to the concept of textuality should be added those of *transtextuality* (to include *intertextuality*), *metatextuality*, *paratextuality*, and *architextuality*. In other words, “everything which establishes an obvious or discreet relation [of the text] with other texts.”<sup>2</sup> He thus reestablished, in particular where transtextuality and architextuality are concerned, the relevance of raising questions concerning history and chronology, and finally put an end to the notion of the Text in proud isolation.

It was then that textual genetics came into being. Louis Hay stated in a recapitulative article that “[t]he method of textual genetics has emerged from a mass of empirical studies devoted to authors’ manuscripts. This research has gradually made it clear that, under certain conditions, such documents are apt to reestablish the genesis of the written works.”<sup>3</sup> As the term itself suggests, textual genetics is the

1. Roland Barthes, “La Mort de l’auteur” [1968], reproduced in *Le Bruissement de la langue* (Paris: Seuil, 1984), 61–67.

2. Gérard Genette, *Introduction à l’architexte* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), 87–88. These reflections are further developed and illustrated in *Palimpsestes* (Paris: Seuil, 1982), and in *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1986).

3. Louis Hay, “‘Le texte n’existe pas,’ Réflexions sur la critique génétique,” in *Poétique* 62 (1985): 150. See also the remarks in defense of textual genetics made by Gérard Genette and Michel Contat in *Le Monde*, 17 November 1989.

study of beginnings, of that which is the prelude, the germ of the written work, of rough drafts, of what Jean Bellemin-Noël has termed the *pre-text*.<sup>4</sup> It consists of the dynamic reconstitution of the process of textual production, and of a reflection on the origin of this. Thus it is necessarily as heterogeneous as the material that it is dealing with: "at times the trace of initial impulses, and the marks of distant memories in the form of jottings, notebooks, and diaries; at others, composed of preliminary documents such as projects, plans and scripts; or yet again, as the instruments of the work of composition itself such as sketches, early drafts and, in more general terms, rough copies [manuscripts], put one in touch with the polymorphous since the writing process goes beyond the linearity of the code and spills over into a variety of other spaces" (Louis Hay, 171).

Textual genetics reasserts the value of the active, fluid process that is the textual production of the writer "at work," the evolution of the writing towards its final form.<sup>5</sup> It does indeed take into account a history of the text, but it is the text's own specific history, that is, the chronology of its appearance in text form (and it may also seek to reveal the traces of the unconscious in this raw material).<sup>6</sup> And it goes still further: it watches out for signs of an energetic pen, or of a lazy one which hesitates, deletes, jots, scribbles, or draws. On this point, textual genetics is close to preoccupations of an aesthetic kind. It takes into account the figurative qualities of the writing, and the layout of letters and words on the page. It finds its complement in *grammatextuality*.<sup>7</sup>

That is not the only interest to be found in work which now calls for the use of the expression "the poetics of writing," as opposed to the "poetics of the text."<sup>8</sup> When faced with the manuscript itself, the critic, whatever his personal convictions concerning biography may be, can no longer ignore the question of the role of the author. Any attention granted to the pre-text "inevitably involves taking the writer

4. Cf. Jean Bellemin-Noël, *Le Texte et l'avant-texte* (Paris: Larousse, 1972) (on the editing of texts by Milosz).

5. Cf., for reference, *Flaubert à l'œuvre*, collection directed by R. Debray-Genette (Paris: Flammarion, 1980), and *Écriture et génétique textuelle, Valéry à l'œuvre*, selection of texts chosen by Jean Levaillant (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1982).

6. Cf. *Littérature* 53 (1983), on the unconscious in the pre-text.

7. Cf. Jean-Gérard Lapacherie, "De la grammatextualité," in *Poétique* 59 (1984), and also Jan Baetens, "Le Transcriptuaire," *Poétique* 73 (1988), 51–70.

8. Raymond Debray-Genette, "Génétique et poétique: esquisse d'une méthode," *Littérature* 28 (1977): 20. (The whole issue is devoted to the genesis of the text.)

into account.”<sup>9</sup> The manuscript specifically refers back to the person who wrote it, and to his day-to-day existence. It bears the mark, the imprint, the signature of his work. The author is there, in the manuscript, keeping watch and affirming his presence: he cannot be ignored any longer.

That is, in a few lines, all that need be said here on the theoretical status of the text: the debate is now open both to questions of a more general nature (via the categories listed by Genette), and of a more specific kind (textual genetics), as well as from both synchronic and diachronic standpoints. After long being eclipsed, the author is making a comeback<sup>10</sup> and so is his history—biographies of authors are more and more numerous, and the interest in autobiography has even reached authors of the *Nouveau Roman*. We should note, incidentally, that this is indeed a strange situation: it seems to be the combined result of the increased prestige of History (leading in particular to a transfer of interest from literary figures to historians), of an increasingly asserted narcissism coupled with the immoderate taste for “real life” promoted by the media, and also of a certain theoretical stagnation which the research in textual genetics has arrived at just the right time to conceal.

We are all aware of the narrative history of the disjunction which, from the very beginning, heralds the relation between writing and drawing. Some distant source of “good sense” (with the Greeks doing their best, in particular by the invention of the phonetic alphabet, not to get things mixed up) decided on the division of sciences and techniques, a vast operation of *schize* (sharing, division), which should make it possible to settle any kind of dispute by first clearly defining differences.

During the Renaissance, all the “extravagances” of the manuscript are brought together under the common denominator of typography.<sup>11</sup> Parallel to this forced sobering of writing, perspective strives to assign a structure to the visual space—a veritable corset determined by geometry and the precise limits of representation. This moment of clarification of identities, which is also the moment in which writing seems to

9. Jean Bellemin-Noël, “En guise de post-face: l’essayage infini,” *Littérature* 52 (1983): 123.

10. See Michel Contat’s remarks on this point in “La Question de l’auteur,” in *L’Auteur et son manuscrit*, ed. Michel Contat (Paris: P.U.F., 1991), 7–34.

11. This is what Antoine Compagnon has so aptly named “the immobilization of the text.” Cf. *La Seconde main ou le travail de la citation* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), 233 ff.

diverge definitively from drawing, is paradoxically the one in which these two modes of representation are used together to “conceal,” show, and confuse—since it is also during the Renaissance that the *cancellaresca*, those astounding pen games [*jeux de plume*], are invented. These too insist on giving letters a size which is derived from the anthropomorphic ideal canon used in painting.

Later on, there is no lack of responses to this arbitrary partition of practices. We are aware of the way in which Sterne and Mallarmé (to cite two of the best-known enterprises) play with [*jouent*] and challenge [*se jouent de*] literary space. The end of the nineteenth century sees the invention of the comic strip in which text and image work together on the semantic field. But the very status of this “ninth art,” in principle reserved for children, bespeaks the condition of a poor relative of drawing with respect to writing.

The twentieth century, thanks to this thundering, blistering conflagration of representation, produces, after a few movements which pave the way for its diffusion,<sup>12</sup> surrealism, which upsets in the most spectacular way the old imperatives of differentiation. Writers give their readers something to look at; they begin with illustrations for reading matter and end up making of their texts books of images.<sup>13</sup> Painters provide reading matter (or pretend to do so), take signifying writing as material for representation, and illustrate poems and tales.

Some among them—Michaux from his position as writer or Dubuffet from his position as painter—work with the entire spectrum, from visible to legible. The painters grouped under the label “art brut” for their part defy the dual institutionalization of writing and painting, refusing, through the obliqueness of admirable discoveries, the *schize* of writing and picture.

Words were to appear in pictures, not to provide explanations, to add details, or to reinforce their realism as had been the case before (the letter in the hands of David’s Marat), but rather to disturb it by forcibly introducing the signified (Miró’s “Une étoile caresse le sein d’une

12. I am thinking of the work done under the auspices of *Art Nouveau*—noteworthy for its ingenious typographical innovations, but unfortunately endless.

13. It is important to remember here to what extent the marriage of text and image provoked the mistrust of certain writers, Flaubert, for instance, who consistently opposed the illustration of his novels: “A drawn woman,” he writes, “looks like a woman, enough said. The idea of a woman is thereafter shut down, complete, and all the sentences in the world are useless; a written woman, on the other hand, makes one dream of a thousand other women,” *Correspondance*, III, ed. Jean Bruneau (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 1991), 222, 12 June 1862, to Ernest Duplan.

négresse"). Far from making things clearer by naming them, the presence of the legible was to be a source of confusion, decidedly complicating the vision of things by a mixing of categories.

But all this (in the end just a few things, and recent ones at that) cannot mask the weight of diverse cultural imperatives which are clearly understood, and this is the case with the assertion that one must not mix up the paint brushes [*s'emmêler les pinceaux*]. If there are a few exceptions, duly catalogued, they are precisely that, exceptions, and thus serve only to reinforce an unchanging division.

Since then, tautology has appeared as the surest means of preserving that order of things. What should one expect? That the writer should write, the painter paint, the reader read, that the spectator (now, there is a more ambiguous term—should one say the enthusiast, or the connoisseur?) should look on.<sup>14</sup> As far as writing and reading are concerned, where the "literate" eye is called upon to decipher a message in a given time, the question is one of legibility. Where painting and perceiving are concerned, and the movement of the eye over a painted surface (what kind of "literacy" is required for that operation?), visibility is the question. In all events, the basis of these practices is mimesis.

Writing is the reproduction of an established set of signs. That is how it remains in the domain of the legible. Illegible writing shows things to be what they are not. That is why it is "sanctioned" by whatever means possible (by various authorities, from school on). It is accused of trying to hide something, of being a disguise. It is "read" (by graphologists and others) as a gesture of refusal, as antisocial. It is at least an indication of the tenuous, fragile nature of this legibility of the most basic kind. It shows the legible to be a category that is forever under threat, forever in danger of disappearing, of becoming lost, *despite* appearances, in a paradoxical obscurity where writing can be seen and recognized, but can no longer be read. Illegible writing indicates in fact that the sign has been remorsefully eaten away by its own figurative nature, and that it does indeed take almost nothing at all for the figure to resort back to its status as a mere drawing.

14. Not to mention the fact that the writer may draw—this is true of a great number of Romantic writers—or the fact that the painter may write. But one has to keep busy. There is nevertheless one value judgment which immediately puts things in perspective by perpetuating a widely accepted idea: one cannot possibly draw *as well* as one writes, and vice versa. (The embarrassment caused by Fromentin or by Redon, who both hesitated between brush and pen, is an excellent example of this.)

As it follows the train of thought to which it gives body and movement, the writing process comes across as a work-form that is forever on the point of *drifting off course*. And it is there in the hazardous limbo between the legible and the visible that the illusory barrier between one domain and another is erased. And graphic representation appears: it appears during the pauses and hesitations of the thought process, when the pen can be caught accomplishing other gestures: additions, scribbles, and the excessive embellishment of letters, the transformation of words, lines, and inkblots into heads, animals (reviving some “mimological” effect),<sup>15</sup> or other, less creditable things—“the hand talks” says Dubuffet.<sup>16</sup> The visible returns and jostles with the legible: it is unpretentious, playful, useless, and it draws writing towards mocking, childish counterwriting.<sup>17</sup> “When I was young, says Colette, “I played with my writing and used my ignorance of art, as I did my lack of literary experience, to draw as I wrote. For example, if I stumbled on the word ‘murmur’ and hesitated about how to continue my sentence, I would add the tiny foot of a caterpillar to each of the even downstrokes of the letters. . . . I added the somewhat horselike head of the caterpillar to one end of the word and turned the final flourish into its tail. . . . Then, as well as the word ‘murmur’ I had the much prettier sign of the caterpillar. . . . Decorated as they were with insects and butterflies, I felt that my manuscripts were not ‘serious enough.’”<sup>18</sup>

That is not the only way in which the figurative may reappear in writing to the extent of masking it completely for a moment. All manner of figurative practices emerge and tirelessly struggle against millenary divisions; and in the process, they inevitably reveal the paradoxical framework of an exercise in legibility. Thus writing may explicitly give way to drawing, either accidentally (Valéry’s “absences” in his notebooks)<sup>19</sup> or voluntarily. The “objects” represented then are

15. Cf. Gérard Genette, *Mimologiques* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), and in particular, “L’Ecriture en jeu,” 329–49.

16. Jean Dubuffet, *L’Homme du commun à l’ouvrage* (Paris: Gallimard Folio, 1973), 34.

17. Cf. the remarks made by Serge Tisseron in this issue. On the “childish” character of Hugo’s drawings (specifically linked to drawings by his own children), see also Pierre Georgel’s remarks in “Portrait de l’artiste en griffonneur,” in *Victor Hugo et les Images*, ed. Madeleine Blondel and Pierre Georgel (Dijon: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1984), 74–138.

18. Colette, *L’Etoile Vesper* (Paris: Edition du milieu du monde, 1946), 180.

19. Cf. Serge Bourjea’s remarks in this issue and “Je viens absent de dessiner ceci . . . ,” *Poétique* 73 (1988): 71–82.

numerous—they are often enigmatic insofar as they are not those usually considered suitable for the representation of knowledge or memory in the true sense. Jacques Leenhardt points out, with reference to Stendhal, that the writer is thus able to reintroduce sensation into the heart of the cognitive process by the inclusion in his text of a concept-image.<sup>20</sup>

From these objects which the mind uses to convey perception by more tangible means and to fix it in the evolution of memory or reasoning, to the self-portraits, illustrations, and images which reinforce the writing and choose to represent the subject graphically as if to reaffirm the dominance of the visible over the legible (that is the case of the drawings to be found in the correspondence of Musset, and Proust, or in Maupassant's little "comic strips"), the road is long and the practices extremely diverse—it would indeed be a good idea for them to be listed in detail—and this just up to the point of the pure and simple autonomy of the former and latter gestures. Thus the shadow of different types of visibility is projected, from the proximity or even the very interior of the writing itself (the word "murmur" turned into a caterpillar) to more distant areas. And that shadow is also, in graphic terms, a movement from darkness to light (from what is scarcely represented to what is perfectly recognizable). It would seem that the *forced* gesture of writing, and the obligation that it represents contain, in spite of everything, this tiny explosive force which may come to the surface at any time, whether or not it takes the trouble to justify its doing so: "drawing keeps coming back."<sup>21</sup>

In the days of technical reproducibility, the book (and behind it the editor and commercial imperatives) no longer shows any interest in the gestures which brought it into being. To begin with, there is (until the typewriter becomes common property) the copyist. His role is to *make a fair copy*. This expression implies a dual task: on the one hand, he is to ensure that the writing is as perfectly legible as possible, or has regained its initial legibility (what criteria will he use? what calligraphic norms will he adopt?); on the other hand, he is to remove all trace of the writing process (the copyist, naturally, does not reproduce the crossings-out, or the inkblots, scribbles, drawings,

20. Cf. Jacques Leenhardt, "See and Describe: On a Few Drawings by Stendhal," in this issue.

21. "Drawing keeps coming back," notes Derrida. "Does one ever stop drawing? Can one ever give it up?" *Mémoires d'aveugle* (Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1990), 44.

and mistakes in the manuscript he is copying: a copy is not a photocopy). Forced legibility which may, at times, confuse signifier and signified and harm semantic legibility: "My copyist," wrote Flaubert to Bonnenfant, "makes some superb mistakes, he writes 'garçon de glace' instead of 'garçon de classe' and Adriatic 'légumes' instead of 'lagunes'; in other words, I'm going quite mad. . . ." (*Correspondance*, 611, 9 April 1856).<sup>22</sup>

Then there is the printing process, which ensures a maximum degree of legibility.<sup>23</sup> Curiously, when faced with the book as an object, the author no longer recognizes his own work. "The sight of my work [*Madame Bovary*] in print deadened my mind completely," noted Flaubert. "It seemed so flat. Everything looks so black. *I mean that textually*. That was a great disappointment—And it would take a quite dazzling success to drown the voice of my conscience crying out to me: 'It's a failure!'" (Flaubert, Letter to Louis Bouillet, 5 October 1856). And thus, once printed, Flaubert is no longer Flaubert in the eyes of Flaubert himself. And, worse still, its legibility has been lost. Everything is black, an ambiguous statement which evokes both the singular "color" of the printed character, and blindness. Flaubert now sees only blackness, just the blackness of the text, that is to say its total, and irreversible illegibility. It is a strange metamorphosis of the printed word that apparently condemns the writer to blindness (he no longer sees or recognizes his work) at the same time as it reveals his work to the public—and that certainly suggests to Flaubert some kind of phantasmatic reversal (the strangely "Oedipal" gesture of a father refusing to see the son he has engendered in his works).<sup>24</sup>

Valéry was to describe a very similar version of the same experience: "The writer's mind," he says, "gazes at itself in the mirror that the

22. Flaubert writes to Edma Roger des Genettes: "Madam, the copyist I engaged is Mme Dubois of 30, rue Saint Marc. I would advise your brother to fix the price beforehand, and to choose the type. The best type is that used for texts for the theater" (*Correspondance*, II, 626, Summer 1856[?]).

23. "The printed text," remarks Michel Thévoz, which is a paradigm of the ideology of representation, should ideally combine the metaphysical opposition that exists between the diaphanous signifier and the more consistent signified," *Détournement d'écriture* (Paris: Minuit, 1989), 16. The paradoxical significance of typography should, however, be recalled: the history of printer's type is proof of the desire to remain as close as possible to the style of handwriting (the invention of italics is in itself sufficient proof of this) while attempting to achieve maximum legibility. Cf. J. Peignot, *De L'écriture à la typographie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).

24. Is blindness the ultimate anchorage of the enterprise of writing (the blind Homer)?

printing-press provides for it. Then, if the paper and ink are well matched, if the face of the letter is attractive, the type-setting meticulous, the justification exquisitely proportioned, and the page well printed, the author is both embarrassed and proud. He sees himself covered with honors that he does not, perhaps, deserve. He thinks he can hear a voice that is clearer and louder than his own, an inexorably pure voice articulating his words and pronouncing them dangerously clearly, one by one. Everything that is weak, or bad, or arbitrary, or inelegant in which he has written speaks out too loudly and too clearly. Appearing in magnificent print is the mark of a judgment that is both precious and formidable (Peignot, *De L'écriture*, 88). The metaphor is that of a distorting mirror. The printed word here goes too far. The author can no longer recognize himself, or rather he can no longer recognize his own voice. Confusing the spoken with the written, Valéry affirms that the printed text gives words excessive clarity and force. The legible ("a far clearer, more precise voice") is now *too* legible. Such excess is perceived as a danger, and that danger is the danger of *detachment*. What the penstroke linked together, the printing press sets apart. The manuscript was a mirror of ink, an object both personal and personalized, but when it is transformed into print, that intimacy is shattered. By suggesting that the "real" (this is me) is to be found only in the manuscript, Valéry in his turn acknowledges the affective relationship which unites the author with his manuscript, and thus the curious threat represented by editor and publishing. That is how he refers to the essential ambivalence which lies behind the writing process: the proper (*my* writing) and property (*my* manuscripts) are sentenced, in order to justify their existence, to become public property at the cost of a mutilation which is felt to be not only dangerous, but painful.

The transformation from written to printed word is not merely to ensure the legibility—the dazzling legibility—of the text. This "forging process" (Peignot, 33) renews the age-old division and repeats the tautology. Unless it has a precise and significant pictorial dimension, a text is a text, that is to say that it exists to be read.

Take the example of Stendhal's *La Vie de Henry Brulard*. From the beginning, the author admits that his enterprise is scarcely legible; he plays along with that and even seems to make it the sine qua non of his writing—his writing is not legible, he sees it less and less distinctly (the lack of light in Rome in the middle of winter and his recent need to wear glasses). He does not see what he ought to write

any more clearly (as he remembers his childhood and recalls a few memories, all sorts of problems arise; no solution is possible, but writing and identity, images and autobiography are mingled). Stendhal constructs the only object which could “correspond” to this near illegibility in fact and essence: a barely intelligible manuscript, decorated with “drawings” (from the simple line to the self-portrait), plans, topographical readings, and engravings. A curious mirror which intermingles questions of legibility and visibility in a masterly manner, and, in its way, also proves that the ultimate consequence of any attempt at self-representation is disfigurement.

Take the case of Victor Hugo. His writing is constantly accompanied by graphics. These vary from the negation of the writing, quite simply its elimination (one whole page is entirely covered with black ink), to illustrations and theater sketches, not to mention the endless and remarkably varied scribbles (each inkblot appears as an invitation to pictorial representation), caricatures, playlets, etc. Here, it is the work in its entirety which acquires an incredible graphic dimension, with “penwork” that the author himself showed great interest in, as can be seen from the care he took with his notebooks and albums.

Take the case of Antonin Artaud. He draws well and a lot and produced, among other things, admirable portraits and self-portraits. He never ceases to comment on his figurative practice. Actually he insists on it: “after a certain day in October 1939, I never wrote again without drawing at the same time.”<sup>25</sup> The exchange mixture imposed between writing and drawing is not without the expression of a certain violence—as exemplified by “*sorts*”: pieces of paper covered with writing, then violated, aggressed by diverse graphic processes (superimposed drawings, scribbles, and erasures executed in very vivid colors), and finally perforated, torn, and partly burned.

These examples (I have chosen three at random) have caused considerable trouble for editors—publications prove that we do not know what to do with this *visible* in the text (at best the division is confirmed: text on one side, drawings as “album leaves” on the other). Trouble also for the critic, who often hesitates between two standpoints: the one being a rejection (drawing as anecdote), the other as “oversemantisation” (at all costs making sense of the most insignifi-

25. Antonin Artaud, *Luna-Park* 5 (October 1979), cited by Paule Thévenin in Paule Thévenin and Jacques Derrida, *Antonin Artaud, Dessins et portraits* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), 45. Several “*sorts*” are reproduced in this album (135–41).

cant figurative deviation). Defiance, error, anomaly—all drawings by writers are decidedly troublesome.

Every science, according to Michel Foucault, has its margins, and in those margins an immense and unavowable teratology is concealed.<sup>26</sup> Graphic representation is the teratology of literature and of the sciences of manuscript study which it has recently created. Thus, because of (or thanks to) the obstinate and obtuse presence of drawing in literature, there is a profusion of forms and figures, a multitude of monsters present in the literary field. "Defending the eye,"<sup>27</sup> they are just waiting for attention to be turned toward them.

—Translated by Nigel P. Turner

26. Michel Foucault, *L'Ordre du discours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 35.

27. Jean-François Lyotard, *Discours, figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1985), 11.