

It means, in the heart, 'your word is good enough'. Here, in the end, Logos and Spirit converge. Logos makes the promise, Spirit brings it to pass, in and through the very agony that most threatens its loss.

This is why, in the end and at the deepest, there is no goal, no point, no justification, for cleaving. It resists all explanation, theological, psychological and scientific.

Cleaving cleaves in order to cleave. This is sufficient.

To say more, now, would be cheating.

And cleaving is the only honest thing in existence.

Rebecca BLOCKSOME

# Ut Pictura Poesis: Word and Image in Early Modernism

W. J. T. MITCHELL, in his book *Iconology*, dissects the *ut pictura poesis* tradition in art criticism, which attempts to find points of similarity between painting and poetry – points of contact or transference between the two arts. Taken at face value, it seems like a slightly perverse pastime, since in general painting and poetry – or in a larger frame of reference, words and images – superficially have many more differences than they do similarities. In fact, they are often regarded as two entities in opposition to each other, each one laying claim to a particular territory: painting to the natural world, space and vision; poetry to the world of ideas, time and audition.<sup>1</sup>

MITCHELL goes on to argue that this is an artificial dichotomy; there is no essential difference between text and image,<sup>2</sup> and in fact works of art which incorporate aspects of both texts and images are the *rule*, not the exception<sup>3</sup>. Further, he identifies two periods where the borders between art and language were especially porous: XVIII<sup>th</sup>-century romanticism, and XX<sup>th</sup>-century modernism. Both these statements directly contradict conventional wisdom, which alleges that modernism in particular aggressively tried to eliminate any connection with the literary world. This argument has been expressed by, among others, Rosalind KRAUSS: "Surfacing in pre-war cubist painting and subsequently becoming ever more stringent and manifest, the grid announces, among other things, modern art's will to silence, its hostility to literature, to narrative, to discourse. As such, the grid has done its job with striking efficiency. The barrier it has lowered between the arts of vision and those of language has been almost totally successful in walling the visual arts into a realm

1 MITCHELL W. J. T., *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago, 1986. 47–48.

2 MITCHELL W. J. T., *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago, 1986. 49.

3 MITCHELL W. J. T., *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago, 1986. 155.

of exclusive visuality and defending them against the intrusion of speech.<sup>4</sup>

According to this analysis, the most significant aspect of modernism is formalism, and in particular abstraction. By de-emphasising or eliminating the subject through abstraction, modern art also destroyed any literary allusions or narrative functions which might have contaminated the purity of the visual. Formalism meant the absolute sovereignty of the visual image, taken as an instantaneous perception of a crystallised moment: space, time, and meaning itself were subjected towards this end.<sup>5</sup> Form was the bearer of meaning, in and of itself. This can be understood in the context of semiotics, which traditionally divides symbolic forms into three types: the *icon*, which resembles what it represents; the *index*, which bears some actual physical connection to what it represents; and the *sign*, which has only an arbitrary or conventional relationship to what it represents. According to these divisions, images fall into the category of icons, and words fall into the category of signs<sup>6</sup>.

Under modernism, according to a strict formalist critique, both media – text and images – were assigned certain realms which they were best suited to depict based on their semiotic strengths and weaknesses, and were effectively barred from attempting to cross or circumscribe those boundaries. Conversely, however, there was a great deal of actual art done during the period of modernism that integrates text and image – in fact, it was during this period that groundbreaking work was done in the synthesis of the two forms, especially in the visual poetry of early modernism. This is the work which forms the basis for the rest of this paper.

But before we examine it, it might be fruitful to first theorise a bit about how such work was created, in defiance of the conventional analysis. In fact, while formalism did act to delineate the differences between various modes of representation, it also carried implications that made such crossover work possible. As formalism emphasised the actual visual qualities of a representation rather than its referent, the image was no longer secondary to the “real” world. In fact, the image began to be appreciated in its own right. The two-dimensionality of the canvas was emphasised and exploited, rather than being forced

into an illusion of three-dimensional space. Images came into their own as images, not mere copies of a greater reality<sup>7</sup>.

Likewise, the written word throughout history has played a secondary role to the spoken word: writing is generally construed as a copy – and in most cases, a poor copy – of spoken language, which is the primal form of the word. But with the rise of formalism, attention was given to the actual written shape of the word; for the first time it could assert its own primacy, not as a copy of the spoken word, but as a completely different entity with a different function and different signification<sup>8</sup>. Thus words and images *as forms* were free to intermingle and mutually transgress each other’s territory, opening up a whole new space for hybrid “imagetexts”. MITCHELL coins this term in *Picture Theory*, his sequel to *Iconology*, to designate composite works (or concepts) that combine image and text. His idea is that meaning is not specific to the medium, that words and images interact with and reinforce each other, and that there is no such thing as a pure medium.<sup>9</sup>

## I. Symbolists: Stéphane Mallarmé

We can examine the beginnings of this hybrid form as expressed in modernism with the circle of symbolist poets working in Paris in the latter part of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. The symbolists took as their aim the presentation of sensory experience, and toward this end they were especially fond of using music and colour imagery in their poetry. Perhaps most importantly, though, they drew a distinction between purity and clarity of language. Their goal was purity, but they felt the most pure language was also an obscure one, one not easily accessible to everyone<sup>10</sup>.

One key figure in this circle was Stéphane (Étienne) MALLARMÉ (1842–1898), who during the course of his work became concerned not only with the imagery in the poem, but also its concrete appearance on the page. He felt text should have a material image in its own right, not merely serving as a vehicle for the conveyance

7 JAY Martin, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley, 1993. 180–181.

8 DERRIDA Jacques, *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore, 1976. 52.

9 DILLON George L., *Writing with Images: Towards a Semiotics of the Web*. 2003. In HYPERLINK “<http://courses.washington.edu/hypertext/cgi-bin/12.228.185.206/html/wordsimages/wordsimages.html>”

10 JAY Martin, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley, 1993. 176–177.

4 KRAUSS Rosalind E., *The Originality of the Avantgarde and other Modernist Myths*. In MITCHELL W. J. T. (ed.), *Ut Pictura Theoria: Abstract Painting and the Repression of Language*. Critical Inquiry 1989/2. 349.

5 MITCHELL W. J. T. (ed.), *Ut Pictura Theoria: Abstract Painting and the Repression of Language*. Critical Inquiry 1989/2. 351.

6 MITCHELL W. J. T., *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago, 1986. 56.

of propositional content. His groundbreaking work in this respect is *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance), first published in 1897. A revised version, which is now authoritative, was published in 1914, but it was the earlier version which was to have such an impact on the shape of typography in early modernism<sup>11</sup>.

The subject of the poem is a shipwreck, with various themes of risk, action and decision running through the narrative. No “image” is present, but the typography plays an important role in conveying the meaning of the poem. The typeface and spacing are varied across the book spread, with larger, bolder type indicating the most important words or motifs. The white space conveys silence. As there is no syntax or grammar to hold the words together, it is only their arrangement on the page that guides the viewer or reader through the text. The layout affects the pacing of the narrative as well, with close-set type or large gaps requiring the viewer to speed up or slow down reading<sup>12</sup>. Throughout the text the typography serves not to reinforce or illustrate the meaning; rather, it runs perpendicular to the semantic meaning, altering or contradicting it<sup>13</sup>.

Nearly three quarters of a century later, Jean-François LYOTARD (1824–1898) was still captivated by MALLARMÉ’s revolutionary approach to text. He wrote in *Discours, Figure* (1971): “When the word is made thing, it is not to copy a visible thing, but to render visible an invisible, lost thing: it gives form to the imaginary of which it speaks.” He regarded MALLARMÉ’s work as a hybrid discourse or figure, which “expresses through its blanks, its body, the folds of its pages”<sup>14</sup>. Thus, for LYOTARD, the most profound insights in *Un coup de dés* are, first, that the word is a reality with no iconic form; and second, that what is not represented is as important as what is represented.

11 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 9.

12 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 10.

13 JAY Martin, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley, 1993. 179.

14 LYOTARD Jean-François, *Discours, Figure*. In JAY Martin, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley, 1993. 179.

## II. Cubists

The symbolists’ textual experiments were naturally integrated into the next major style to arise in Paris – cubism. Several poets within the symbolists’ sphere of influence moved on to form the nucleus of the cubist circle; thus from the very beginning there was a literary aspect to cubism, and text and image were tightly interwoven in their work.

### 1. Guillaume Apollinaire

The artist-poet most responsible for this connection was Guillaume APOLLINAIRE (Wilhelm Apolinary KOSTROWICKI, 1880–1918), also a writer and art critic. In addition to being a member of the symbolist circle, APOLLINAIRE wrote the first definitive classification of cubist artists in *Les Peintres Cubistes* (1908)<sup>15</sup>.

In his own work, he was particularly influenced by the “antinarrative simultaneism” of cubism – the depiction of an object from several perspectives at once, giving the implication of time, but without a specified viewing order. Starting from this point, APOLLINAIRE hit upon a verbal-visual equivalent: different ideas and perceptions could be juxtaposed haphazardly to give the same impression as a simultaneous experience in life. The eye would take in all these various elements and recombine them instantaneously into a single perception, as in life<sup>16</sup>.

The *Calligrammes* (1918), his most famous work, were inspired by Asian calligraphic writing systems, where the character for the word visually resembles what it represents. Contrary to MALLARMÉ, he used the form of the words to mimic the subject and reinforce its meaning, rather than altering or contradicting it. His *Animated Landscape* of 1914 presents four impressions of single entities: *house* (here is the home where were born the stars and the gods); *shrub* (this shrub ready to fruit is you); *lover’s kiss* (sleeping / together / you are separated / my members); and *a cigar* (lit, smoking)<sup>17</sup>. All four taken together give the idea of a single event or memory, a true simultaneous narrative. The first two calligrams present complete sentences or thoughts, while the third presents a disjointed thought, and the fourth has no thought at all, merely a sense impression. In

15 COOPER Douglas, *The Cubist Epoch*. Oxford, 1976. 108–109.

16 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 14.

17 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 14.

this way the poetic form mimics the sensory capacities of its narrator, allowing the reader to more fully identify with and immerse herself or himself into the narrator's experience.

*Il Pleut* (It is Raining), from 1916, continues the same practice of mimicking the subject, but in this instance it is an action rather than a concrete object being mimicked. But in *Venu de dieuze*, created in 1915, APOLLINAIRE rejects this mimicry in a radical departure from the *Calligrammes*. The poem no longer imitates the subject's form, but instead integrates various elements from musical notation to interact with the text. The musical symbols each have meanings in and of themselves, and these meanings add additional layers of meaning onto the words themselves in a sophisticated interplay of text and image.

## 2. Pierre Albert-Birot

A second important artist from the cubist movement was Pierre ALBERT-BIROT (1876–1967). Although not as famous as APOLLINAIRE, he was vitally important behind the scenes: in 1916 he founded the review *SIC*, which ran for three years and was the primary outlet for his and APOLLINAIRE's work. ALBERT-BIROT was a printer as well as an artist, and the final expressive forms of many works of visual poetry from this period are due to his technical genius in typesetting<sup>18</sup>.

ALBERT-BIROT was heavily influenced by MALLARMÉ's work, but he was also very concerned with the sound as well as the shape of the poem. These dual interests can be seen in his *Poème à crier et à danser* (Poems for Declaiming and Dancing), from 1917. The work is composed of five parts, all of which were intended to be recited as well as read on paper. The first part, *Chant I*, has the subtitle *Essay in Pure Poetry*; it comprises not words but sounds, foreshadowing Dada poetry, and it also introduces the aspect of multiple voices into the poem<sup>19</sup>. But while the auditory form is clearly important, the visual form is not less meaningful: ALBERT-BIROT pays careful attention to visual rhythm and symmetry in the layout, and even adopts APOLLINAIRE's imitation of subjective form in *Metro*.

*Landscape Poem* from 1919 takes a completely different approach, similar in many ways to APOLLINAIRE's *Animated Landscape*. This poem reflects no concern with the sound, but only with the visual image. As with APOLLINAIRE's work, ALBERT-BIROT is presenting a



<sup>18</sup> BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Pierre ALBERT-BIROT. In HYPERLINK "<http://www.ubu.com/www.ubu.com/sound/ALBERT-BIROT.html>."

multifaceted experience comprising several discrete impressions: “Behind / there is the sea / And behind the sea / there are houses [...] I love my wife [...] I invite / birds / to sing for her [...] I lavish her with caresses / each spring [...] I am very noble and sacrifice myself for others [...] I am also sometimes very gay / yet am not often looked at”<sup>20</sup> The difference, however, lies in ALBERT-BIROT’s more integrated approach, with the lines of text leading the eye from one element to the next instead of presenting four complete but separate images for contemplation. As can be seen in the house windows, where words are broken in the middle to fit the necessary shape, ALBERT-BIROT no longer perceives words as units: the form clearly takes precedence over the semantic meaning.

### III. Italian Futurists

Outside of Paris, the Italian Futurists were calling for a complete revolution in literature, art and society – they wanted to wipe the slate clean and start again from a radically new foundation. While familiar with MALLARMÉ’s groundbreaking work, they rejected it as being too decorative and precious, too static<sup>21</sup>. Instead, they sought a more dynamic, direct means of communication, using essential “free” words as ammunition, which would impress themselves immediately on the mind, resulting in pure, unmediated communication.

#### 1. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

Their ideals were clearly set forth in the 1913 manifesto by the movement’s leader, Filippo Tommaso MARINETTI (1876–1944). MARINETTI called for the creation of a new language, under the motto *parole in liberta* (words in liberty). He wrote: “The futurist will begin by brutally destroying the syntax of speech. He wastes no time in building sentences. Punctuation and the right adjectives mean nothing to him. He will despise subtleties and nuances of language. Breathlessly he will assault your nerves with visual, auditory, olfactory sensations, just as they come to him. The rush of steam-emotion will burst the sentence’s steam pipe, the values of punctuation, the adjectival clamp. Fistfuls of essential words in no conventional order. [...] With words-in-liberty we will have: Condensed metaphors. Telegraphic images. Maximum vibrations. Nodes of thought. Closed or open forms of movement. Compressed

analogies. [...] The speed of sensations. [...] The plunge of the essential word into the water of sensibility.”<sup>22</sup>

MARINETTI was by far the most prominent of the Italian Futurists, and his work set the style for the movement. The two most important characteristics were *visual onomatopoeia*, words that look as well as sound like what they mean; and *synæsthesia*, where texts appealed simultaneously to all five senses. In contrast to Dada poetry, the language of the futurists always retained meaning, although sometimes just barely. They also frequently inserted mathematical symbols into the text, each of which had a significant meaning above and beyond the mere replacement of words. Above all, the form was a part of the content, and the content created the form<sup>23</sup>.

The first major work in this radical new language was MARINETTI’s epic poem of 1914, *Zang Tumb Tumb*. This novel-poem describes the siege of Adrianopoli during the first Balkan War. As a long work, it retains by necessity some stylistic conventions, including a predominantly linear textual layout. The text itself, however, is not linear but rather composed of sentence fragments; the staccato word spacing helps the reader deal with these abrupt transitions. Typographically, most experiments concern the size, arrangement on the page, font, and spacing; MARINETTI, however, also includes an occasional typographic illustration, for example a captive Turkish balloon<sup>24</sup>. Frequent lists operate outside the narrative, eliciting a direct and personal relationship with the topic, in keeping with the futurists’ aspirations for unmediated communication.

MARINETTI’s later works include collage and drawn elements and nearly take on the appearance of abstract paintings. Several such examples can be seen in his 1919 work, *Les mots en liberté futuristes*. One scene, *Après le Marne, Joffre visita le front en auto* (After the Marne, Joffre toured the front by car<sup>25</sup>), shows a winding journey through mountains, valleys and battlefields. In addition to words describing the setting, there are onomatopoeic words mimicking the noises of the war and the car. Several mathematical symbols and numbers appear, possibly representing casualties from the battle, in forms suggesting a cemetery. Another scene from the same work, *Bataille à 9 étages* (Nine-storied battle), takes on an almost diagrammatic form. The scene shows mountain peaks, a valley and a

22 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 20.

23 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 21–25.

24 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 24–27.

25 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 28.

20 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 19.

21 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 9.

lake, with a description of the battle taking place at various heights. The story is told both visually and in words, but it is much less emotional, less chaotic, than was typical for the Italian futurists<sup>26</sup>.

## 2. Armando Mazza

Although MARINETTI was clearly the giant of the movement, several young Italian futurists also did important work in the new typographic style. Their work was showcased in *Lacerba* (1913–1915) and *L'Italia Futurista* (1916–1918), two reviews that covered everything from art to politics to society. With a circulation of around twenty thousand, mostly from the working classes, they truly introduced futurism into daily life in Italy. The young futurists continued to work in the shadow of MARINETTI; their style is generally similar to his, although it tends to be more dense and complex, meditating almost impressionistically on the subject matter of the poem<sup>27</sup>.

Armando MAZZA's *MARINETTI* provides a good illustration of just how great the master's influence was among the futurists. Written as a sort of homage, the poem describes MARINETTI in glowing terms: "genius explosive container of enthusiasm / imperial cyclone of lyricism"; "footballer of reactionary skills, stalker of women and enemies"; "S.O.S. of futurist will radiating to infinity"; "maker of wars and revolutionaries, gymnast vaulting on the rings of the stars, on the ocean". The poem does, however, show originality in form, using words as parts of a greater word to make up the letters in MARINETTI's name<sup>28</sup>.

## 3. Angelo Josia

*Kisses in a Cemetery*, by Angelo JOSIA, is notable for being one of the few examples of Italian futurist poetry not related to war. The poem describes a lover's tryst in a graveyard, abounding in imagery both of the lovers and of the setting: "Veins pulsating in harmony, alternating with the desire of kisses. Distant bells tolling folly of crosses. Idyllic rustle of cypresses. Ragged shadows. Shall we not die? The dawn of the world is my sunset. Let's take advantage of the silence of the dead to kiss her, walking on a carpet of green skeletons." The typography follows the line of the narrative to build

26 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 31.

27 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 117.

28 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 146.

to a climax, then gradually recedes; this can be seen especially in the pulsating ("flo flo flo") which appears both at the beginning and the end of the poem<sup>29</sup>.

## IV. Russian School Futurists

The Russian School Futurists shared the revolutionary ideals and interest in words and poetry of their Italian counterparts, but still there were important differences between the two groups. The Russian group formed later than the Italians, and they were a bit wary of them; some Russians even disliked the name *futurist*, feeling that it was foreign to them. In contrast to the Italians, who were interested primarily in the expressiveness of the text, the Russians were concerned more with visual excitement. They were also not nearly as enchanted with the machine, which was manifest in the form of their work: while Italian futurist poetry was virtually always typeset, the Russian equivalent was predominantly handmade<sup>30</sup>.

Russian futurist work appeared primarily in the form of *handmade* books, usually a collaboration between two or more poets and artists – the writing and illustration were generally done by different people, reflected in the characteristic formula of text *plus* illustration, rather than text *as* illustration in the Italian style. Influenced by Russian folk art and cubism, the style of these works was intentionally "primitive" and painterly. The handmade aesthetic was carried through each element of the book, from different page sizes and papers to disunified lettering styles, sometimes changing even on the same page; occasionally rubber stamps were added to the handwritten text. More than fifty such books were produced during the movement's lifetime<sup>31</sup>.

### 1. Velemir Khlebnikov

One of the biggest names working in this style was Velemir KHLEBNIKOV (Велимир ХЛЕБНИКОВ, 1885–1922) a poet and artist known especially for his invention of *Zaum*, a transrational language that bordered on the Dada-esque. *The Three*, from 1913, with front and back covers designed by Kazimir MALEVICH (Казимир МАЛЕВИЧ, 1879–1935), is a typical example of the Russian futurist style. Overall it is much more restrained than the Italian works;

29 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 149.

30 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 32.

31 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 42.

typographic elements play with the punctuation, size and layout, but still the cubist-influenced illustration is dominant<sup>32</sup>.

The 1914 *Te li le* (decorations by ROZMANOVA), shows further experimentation: the title and some poems are in *Zaum*, and, more importantly, colour is used throughout the work. Previous works of visual poetry, both by cubists and Italian futurists, tended to work in a monochrome (black) colour scheme<sup>33</sup>. While this was necessitated by the constraints of typesetting in printed works, in the handwritten pieces it was more a matter of convention; thus the Russian futurists were the first to free type from its traditional monochromatic presentation.

## 2. David Burliuk

Other artist-poets worked in a style closer to the Italians – for example David BURLIUK, (Давид БУРЛЮК, 1882–1967) whose *Tango for Cows* from 1914, with poems by Vasily KAMENSKY (Васи́лий КАМЕНСКИЙ, 1884–1961), shows many typographic similarities with the Italians. The poems are typeset rather than being hand lettered, and it uses type as illustration rather than type plus illustration. The handmade book aesthetic, however, is still characteristically Russian: it is printed on the reverse side of wallpaper scraps.

Not a single narrative, *Tango for Cows* is rather a collection of poems, most of which consist only of nouns and adjectives; thus no reading order is given to the viewer, who must let her or his eye wander through the text<sup>34</sup>. Various vignettes include *Childhood*, *Cabaret*, *Telephone Conversation*, and *Flight over Warsaw*. The latter is designed to be read bottom to top, fading out as the airplane lifts off. The text of this poem consists of meaningful sentences, but the beginnings and ends of words are cut off to fit the visual form<sup>35</sup>.

## 3. Ilya Zdanevich

Another significant artist from the Russian school was Ilya ZDANEVICH (Илья́ ЗДАНЕ́ВИЧ, 1894–1975), who worked between 1918 and 1923. An artist and printer, like ALBERT-BIROT, his work shows an astonishing command of typesetting. It exists somewhere on the border between futurism and Dada, as oftentimes the

meaning is confused or apparently destroyed. ZDANEVICH, however, maintained that his work always had an underlying sense: “Nothing is left to chance, everything, down to the last minor detail, has a tight, mathematical precision.” His 1923 work *Le-Dantyu as Beacon* demonstrates this complex layering of elements and meanings with typographical finesse. It is an epic poem about the adventures of Le Dantyu, in reality an obscure Russian avant garde artist; the main theme is the relationship between nature (reality) and art<sup>36</sup>.

Allegedly written for recitation, the typography overcomes the poem’s vocal form. Several printer’s symbols are used throughout the text, each with its own pronunciation given in a table at the beginning. In other places the largest or boldest letter indicates the stressed syllable, particularly in unfamiliar words – the text comprises real Russian words spelled unconventionally, plus the translational language of *Zaum*. Each speaker, indicated in the margins, has a different voice: one speaks in all vowels, another with no vowels, a third with a lisp and vocal clicks, others in a coarse Russian dialect. Each and every page number throughout the sixty-plus page book has a different form. Various effects include the use of printer’s ornaments to compose letters, as well as the arrangement of text like a musical score, showing the various speakers entering separately or in unison. The earliest version also had a system of horizontal and vertical lines to indicate the pitch and dynamics of the voices in a highly complex scheme<sup>37</sup>.

## V. Echoes and Repercussions

ZDANEVICH’s work provided a natural bridge between the work of the Russian futurists and Dada poets such as Tristan TZARA (Samuel ROSENSTOCK, 1896–1963), Hugo BALL (1886–1927) and Kurt SCHWITTERS (1887–1948). The Dada artists used typography not to enhance meaning, but to destroy it. They were particularly concerned with sound and explored the phonetic value of words and letters both visually and vocally<sup>38</sup>. MALLARMÉ’s work in particular inspired a generation of concrete poets, especially the Noigandres circle in Brazil and the great Mexican poet Octavio PAZ (1914–1998)<sup>39</sup>.

Conceptual artists such as the Art & Language group in the

32 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 43.

33 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 32.

34 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 46–47.

35 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 49.

36 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005.

37 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 50–69.

38 BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 70–71.

39 Greene Roland, *The Concrete Historical*. In *The Harvard Library Bulletin* 1992/2. In [www.ubu.com/papers/greene.html](http://www.ubu.com/papers/greene.html).

United Kingdom, or contemporary U.S. artist Jenny HOLZER (1950–), borrowed the ideas but not the forms of these early image-text experiments; in their work, the word overtakes the image and stands in its place. Similarly, the surrealism of René MAGRITTE (1898–1967) demonstrates a complex and uneasy relationship between image and text and their modes of signification<sup>40</sup>. And finally, the forms of the Italian futurists found their way into the world of advertising – perhaps a touch of irony, as they were created for subversion and ended up a mainstay of consumer society. Francesco DEPERO for one, though, said he was delighted to see his work “plagiarised on every street corner.”<sup>41</sup>

From all these examples it is readily apparent that, in fact, texts and images do not have to define themselves in opposition to each other: they can harmoniously coexist in a single work of art, and they can even fruitfully challenge the roles which they have traditionally played, whether those be assigned by nature or convention. The work of the early moderns was pivotal in opening up this space for exploration, and it continues to be relevant today in the postmodern quest to understand the processes of signification.

Holger LAHAYNE

# Religion, Democratic Society and the Individual in Lithuania

*We are now entering the age of post-secularism: religion is back in the public sphere. Even Richard RORTY has proposed a new public religious faith. He has come to accept that all competing worldviews are ultimately competing commitments to some orientation-giving faith, and that no conflict between worldviews can be resolved by an appeal to reason or objective standards of truth.*

*At their core, all worldviews require faith and hope. But RORTY favours a rather vague public faith, which he calls “romantic polytheism”. In modern secular democracies, poetry should take over the role that religion has played in the formation of individual human lives.*

*Yet RORTY’s vision of a new kind of faith is profoundly anti-clerical and anti-ecclesiastical. There may be, according to RORTY, congregations of believers, but the Church as an institution or public voice is potentially dangerous for democratic society, as RORTY wrote in *The Future of Religion* (with Gianni VATTIMO).*

*For him, U.S. democracy itself serves as a kind of substitute for the Church. The civil religion of democracy there, however, emphasises only relations between people and not between us and God.*

## I. Philosophical Grounding

It is not a non-theistic religion, not a vague theism or a demythologised Christianity we need. “Christianity, and nothing else,” Jürgen HABERMAS said, is the source of our Western achievements such as democracy. Any kind of religion will not help. It is not Islam, not Buddhism, not paganism and not Confucianism. It is Christianity (keeping the Hebrew/Jewish heritage) and its idea of the *individual* which made democracy possible.

<sup>40</sup> Dillon George L., *Writing with Images*. 2003. In <http://courses.washington.edu/hypertext/cgi-bin/12.228.185.206/html/wordsinimages/wordsin.html>.

<sup>41</sup> BARTRAM Alan, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*. London, 2005. 22.