"The Surface of Design"

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The Future
of the Image

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The Surface of Design

If I speak here of design, it is not as an art historian or a philosopher of technique. I am neither. What interests me is the way in which, by drawing lines, arranging words or distributing surfaces, one also designs divisions of communal space. It is the way in which, by assembling words or forms, people define not merely various forms of art, but certain configurations of what can be seen and what can be thought, certain forms of inhabiting the material world. These configurations, which are at once symbolic and material, cross the boundaries between arts, genres and epochs. They cut across the categories of an autonomous history of technique, art or politics. This is the standpoint from which I shall broach the question: how do the practice and idea of design, as they develop at the beginning of the twentieth century, redefine the place of artistic activities in the set of practices that configure the shared material world — the practices of creators of commodities, of those who arrange them in shop windows or put their images in catalogues; the practices of constructors of buildings or posters, who construct 'street furniture', but also of politicians who propose new forms of community around certain exemplary institutions, practices or facilities — for example, *electricity and soviets*? Such is the perspective that will guide my inquiry. As to my method, it will be that of children's

guessing games, where the question is how two things resemble or differ from one another.

In the event, the question might be formulated as follows: what resemblance is there between Stéphane Mallarmé, a French poet writing *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* in 1897, and Peter Behrens, German architect, engineer and designer who, ten years later, was in charge of designing the products, adverts and even buildings of the electricity company AEG (*Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft*)? On the face of it, this is a stupid question. Mallarmé is known as the author of poems that became increasingly rare, short and quintessential as his poetic art developed. The latter is generally epitomized by a contrast between two states of language: a crude state that serves for communication, description, instruction, and hence for a use of speech analogous to the circulation of commodities and currency; and an essential state that 'transposes a fact of nature into its virtual vibratory disappearance' so as to reveal the 'pure notion'.

What relationship is there between a poet thus defined and Peter Behrens, an engineer in the service of a major brand producing bulbs, kettles or heaters? Unlike the poet, Behrens is involved in the mass production of utilitarian equipment. And he is also the supporter of a unified, functionalist vision. He wants everything submitted to the same principle of unity, from the construction of workshops to the brand's logogram and advertising. He wants to reduce the objects produced to a certain number of 'typical' forms. What he calls 'imparting style' to his firm's output assumes the application of a single principle to objects and to the icons that offer them to the public: stripping the objects and their images of any decorative prettiness, of anything that answers to the routines of buyers or sellers and their rather silly dreams of luxury and sensual

pleasure. Behrens wants to reduce objects and icons to essential forms, geometrical motifs, streamlined curves. According to this principle, he wants the design of objects to approximate as closely as possible to their function, and the design of the icons that represent them to approximate as closely as possible to the information they are supposed to provide about those objects.

So what is there in common between the prince of Symbolist aesthetes and the engineer of large-scale utilitarian production? Two main things. First of all, a common denominator that serves to conceptualize what both of them are doing. Peter Behrens counter-poses his streamlined, functional forms to the overly ornate forms or Gothic typographies in favour in Germany at the time. He calls these streamlined forms 'types'. The term seems far removed from the Symbolist poem. At first sight it evokes the standardization of products, as if the engineer-artist was anticipating the assembly line. The cult of the pure, functional *line* in effect combines three meanings of the word. It resumes the old classical privilege of drawing over colour, while diverting it to other purposes. In fact, it places the 'classical' cult of the line in the service of a different *line* – the product line distributed by the unit of the AEG brand for which he works. It thus effects a displacement of the great classical canons. The principle of unity in diversity becomes that of the brand image which is carried by the whole set of that brand's products. Finally, this *line*, which is at once the graphic design and the product line put at the disposal of the public, ultimately destines both to a third *line* – i.e. the assembly line.

Yet Peter Behrens has something in common with Stéphane Mallarmé – namely, precisely the word but also the idea of a 'type'. For Mallarmé too proposes 'types'. The object of his

poetics is not the assemblage of precious words and rare pearls, but the layout of a design. For him every poem is a layout that abstracts a basic scheme from the spectacles of nature or of the accessories of life, thereby transforming them into essential forms. It is no longer spectacles that are seen or stories that are told, but world-events, world-schemes. In Mallarmé every poem thus assumes a typical analogical form: the fan that is flicked open and flicked closed, the foam that is fringed, the hair that is displayed, the smoke that clears. It is always schemes of appearance and disappearance, presence and absence, unfolding and refolding. Mallarmé calls these schemes, these abridged or streamlined forms, 'types'. And he will search for their principle in a graphic poetry: a poetry identical with the composition of motion in space, whose model is provided for him by choreography, a certain idea of ballet. For Mallarmé the latter is a form of theatre where what is produced is not psychological characters, but graphic types. Together with story and character disappears the operation of resemblance, in which spectators assemble to enjoy the spectacle of their own embellished image on the stage. To it Mallarmé opposes dance conceived as a writing of types, a writing of gestures, which is more essential than any writing traced by a pen.

The definition of it provided by Mallarmé enables us to identify the relationship between the aims of the poet and the engineer:

. . . the judgement or axiom to affirm as regards ballet – namely, that the dancer is not a woman who dances, for the following juxtaposed reasons: she is not a woman but a metaphor epitomizing one of the elementary aspects of our form – sword, bowl, flower, etc. – and she does not dance, suggesting by means of the

marvel of foreshortening or momentum, through a corporeal writing, what it would require paragraphs of dialogic as well as descriptive prose to express in written form. A poem freed of any scribal apparatus.

This poem freed of any scribal apparatus can be compared with those industrial products and symbols of industrial products that are abstract and separated from the consumption of resemblance and prettiness – the 'aesthetic' consumption which complements the ordinary course of circulation of commodities, words and currencies. The poet, like the engineer, wants to oppose to it a language of streamlined form, a graphic language.

If these types must be substituted for the decorum of objects or stories, it is because the forms of the poem, like those of the object, are also forms of life. This is the second feature that brings together the poet of the virtually nothing and the artist engineer manufacturing en masse. For both of them, types outline the image of a certain physical community. Behrens's work as a designer applies the principles of Werkbund, which dictate restoring 'style' in the singular, as opposed to the proliferation of styles plural bound up with capitalist, commodity anarchy.[1] The Werkbund aspires to a correspondence between form and content. It wants the form of the object to correspond to its body and to the function it is to perform. It wants a society's forms of existence to convey the internal principle that makes it exist. This correspondence between the form of objects and their function, and between their icons and their nature, is at the heart of the idea of 'type'. Types are the formative principles of a new communal life, where the material forms of existence are informed by a shared spiritual principle. In the type, industrial form and artistic form are

conjoined. The form of objects is then a formative principle of life forms.

Mallarmé's types involve similar concerns. The text on Villiers de l'Isle Adam where Mallarmé speaks of the 'meaningless gesture of writing' is often quoted. It is used to illustrate the theme of the nocturnal poet of silence and impossibility. But the phrase should be read in context. What does this 'meaningless gesture of writing' consist in? Mallarmé replies: 'recreating everything with reminiscences so as to prove that one is indeed where one should be'. 'Recreating everything with reminiscences' is the principle of the quintessential poem, but it is also that of graphics and the schematism of advertising. Poetic labour for Mallarmé is a labour of simplification. Like engineers, he dreams of an alphabet of essential forms, taken from the ordinary forms of nature and the social world. These reminiscences, these creations of abridged forms answer to the need to construct an abode where man is at home. This concern resonates with the unity of form and content of an existence aimed at by the concept of style in Behrens. Mallarmé's world is a world of artefacts that represent such types, such essential forms. This world of artefacts must consecrate the human abode, prove that one is where one should be. For, at the time when Mallarmé was writing, such certainty was in doubt. Together with the old pomp of religion and monarchy, the traditional forms of symbolization of a shared grandeur were vanishing. And the problem was to replace them so as to give the community its 'seal'.

A famous text by Mallarmé speaks of replacing 'the shadow of yesteryear' – religion and especially Christianity – by 'some splendour': a human grandeur that would be constituted by anything whatsoever, by assembling objects and elements taken at random in order to confer on them an essential form.

the form of a type. Mallarmé's types are thus a substitute for the sacraments of religion, the difference being that with them one does not consume the flesh and blood of any redeemer. Counter-posed to the eucharistic sacrifice is the pure gesture of the elevation, the consecration of human artifice and human imagining as such.

Between Mallarmé and Behrens, between the pure poet and the functionalist engineer, there therefore exists this singular link: the same idea of streamlined forms and the same function attributed to these forms – to define a new texture of communal existence. No doubt these shared concerns are expressed in very different ways. The designer engineer intends to revert to a state prior to the difference between art and production, utility and culture; to return to the identity of a primordial form. He seeks this alphabet of types in the geometrical line and the productive act, in the primacy of production over consumption and exchange. For his part, Mallarmé doubles the natural world and the social world with a universe of specific artefacts that can be the fireworks of 14 July, the vanishing lines of the poem, or the knick-knacks with which the private life is imbued. And doubtless the designer engineer would situate Mallarmé's project in Symbolist iconography – that of the *Jugenstil* which he regards as the mere decoration of the commodity world, but whose concern for styling life by styling its furnishings he nevertheless shares.

An intermediate figure might help us to think through this proximity in distance, or distance in proximity, between the poet Mallarmé and the engineer Behrens: a figure on the border between choreographic poem and advertising image. From among the choreographic spectacles in which Mallarmé seeks a new model for the poem, he selects that of Loïe Fuller. Loïe Fuller is an almost completely forgotten character today.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, however, she played an emblematic role in the development of a new paradigm of art. Her dancing is of a quite particular kind. Loïe Fuller does not trace figures with her feet. She remains static. She dances with her dress, which she unfolds and refolds, making herself a fountain, a flame or a butterfly. The play of spotlights sets this folding and unfolding ablaze, transforms it into fireworks and makes Loïe Fuller a luminous statue, combining dance, sculpture and the art of light into a hyper-mediatic type of work. She is thus an exemplary graphic emblem of the age of electricity. But her icon is not restricted to that. In her day Loïe Fuller was endlessly reproduced in every form. She appears to us as a butterfly-woman, exemplifying Secession style, in Koloman Moser's pen drawings. She is made into an anthropomorphic vase or lamp in art-deco creations. She also becomes an advertising icon; and it is as such that we find her on the posters of the Odol brand according to a simple principle: the letters 'Odol' are projected onto the folds of her dress in the manner of the light projections on the stage.

Obviously, I have not selected this example at random. This figure enables us to think through the proximity and the distance between the poet's types and the engineer's. Like AEG, Odol, a brand of German mouthwash, was a pioneering firm in research into advertising graphics, through the development of its own brand image. It thereby offers us an interesting parallel with the principles of design à la Behrens. On the one hand, its design approximates to them: the bottle is of a simple, functional design, that remained untouched for decades. But on the other hand, it contrasts with them: on the posters, the bottle is often associated with romantic landscapes. One poster puts a Böcklin landscape on the little bottle. On another, the letters 'Odol' outline a Greek am-

phitheatre in a landscape evoking the ruins at Delphi. Contrasting with the functionalist unity of message and form are these extrinsic forms of sensitization that associate utilitarian gargling with dreamlike scenes. But perhaps there is a third level where the antagonists meet. For forms that are 'extrinsic' in one sense are not so extrinsic in another. Odol's graphic designer in fact utilizes the quasi-geometrical character of the brand's letters, treating them as visual elements. The latter take the form of three-dimensional objects that wander in space, are distributed in the Greek landscape, and outline the ruins of the amphitheatre. This transformation of the graphic signifier into visual volume anticipates certain uses of painting; and Magritte did indeed draw inspiration from the Odol amphitheatre for his *Art de la conversation*, where an architecture of ruins is likewise constructed with letters.

This equivalence of the graphic and the visual creates the link between the poet's types and the engineer's. It visualizes the idea which haunts both of them – that of a common physical surface where signs, forms and acts become equal. On Odol posters, alphabetical signs are playfully transformed into three-dimensional objects subject to a perspectivist principle of illusion. But this three-dimensionalization of signs precisely yields a reversal of pictorial illusionism: the world of forms and the world of objects make do with the same flat surface – the surface of alphabetical signs. But this surface of equivalence between words and forms proposes something altogether different from a formal game: an equivalence between the forms of art and the forms of objects of everyday living. This ideal equivalence is rendered literal in the letters, which are also forms. It unifies art, object and image at a level beyond the things that oppose the ornaments of the Symbolist poem or graphic design, governed by the idea of

'mystery', to the geometrical and functional rigour of the engineer's design.

Here we perhaps have the solution to a frequently posed problem. Commentators who study the birth of design and its relationship with industry and advertising ponder the ambivalence of its forms and the dual personality of its inventors. Thus, someone like Behrens first of all appears in the functional role of artistic advisor to the electricity company; and his art consists in designing objects that sell well and constructing catalogues and posters that stimulate sales. In addition, he becomes a pioneer of the standardization and rationalization of work. At the same time, however, he places everything he does under the sign of a spiritual mission: providing society, through a rational form of labour process, manufactured products and design, with its spiritual unity. The simplicity of the product, its style corresponding to its function, is much more than a 'brand image': it is the mark of a spiritual unity that is to unify the community. Behrens often refers to the nineteenth-century English writers and theoreticians associated with the Arts and Crafts movement. The latter wished to reconcile art and industry by means of the decorative arts and the restoration of craft industry. To explain his work as an engineer-rationalizer, Behrens invokes the major figures in this movement, Ruskin and William Morris. Yet in the middle of the nineteenth century did not these two elaborate a neo-Gothic reverie, counter-posing to the world of industry, the ugliness of its products and the slavery of its workers a backward-looking vision of artisans combined in guilds, engaged in fine craftsmanship and making, with the joy and devotion of artists, objects that were to become both the artistic décor of the modest life and the means of its education? How, it is then asked, was this backward-looking, neo-

Gothic, spiritualist ideology able to nurture in William Morris an idea of socialism and a socialist commitment that was not some mere fad of an aesthete, but the practice of an activist involved on the ground in social struggles? How, passing from England to Germany, was this idea able to become the modernist-functionalist ideology of the *Werkbund* and *Bauhaus* and, in the case of Behrens, the ideology of functional engineering, in the service of the specific ends of an industrial combine?

An initial response consists in saying that the one ideology is a convenient cover for the other. The reveries of artisans reconciled with the fine craftsmanship and collective faith of times past is a spiritualist mystification concealing a quite different reality: submission to the principles of capitalist rationality. When Peter Behrens becomes artistic advisor to AEG and uses Ruskin's principles to design the firm's logos and adverts, the neo-Gothic idyll reveals its prosaic truth: the production line.

That is one way of explaining things. But it is not the most interesting. Rather than contrasting reality and illusion, mystification and its truth, it is better to look for what the 'neo-Gothic reverie' and the modernist/productivist principle have in common. It consists in the idea of the reconfiguration of a shared material world by working on its basic elements, on the form of the objects of everyday life. This shared idea can be translated into a return to craft industry and socialism, a Symbolist aesthetic, and industrial functionalism. Neo-Gothicism and functionalism, Symbolism and industrialism, have the same enemy. They all denounce the relationship that obtains between the soulless production of the world of commodities and the ersatz soul imparted to objects by their pseudo-artistic prettification.

It must be remembered that the 'neo-Gothics' of Arts and Crafts were the first to state certain principles which were subsequently adopted by the *Bauhaus*: an armchair is primarily beautiful if it answers to its function and, consequently, if its forms are streamlined and purified, doing away with the tapestries containing foliage, little children and animals that constituted the 'aesthetic' décor of English petit-bourgeois existence. Something of this passes into the shared idea of the symbol: the symbol in the strict — even advertising — sense *à la* Behrens and the symbol *à la* Mallarmé or Ruskin.

A symbol is primarily an abbreviating sign. It can be imbued with spirituality and given a soul. Alternatively, it can be reduced to its function of simplifying form. But both have a common conceptual core that authorizes all such moves. I referred to it in connection with the text by Albert Aurier that makes Gaugin's *La Vision du sermon* a manifesto for symbolism in painting. The mystical peasant women iconized in abbreviated forms, which Aurier makes into neo-Platonic symbols, are also the Breton women in headdresses and collars who featured as advertising icons on the boxes of Pont-Aven biscuits for almost a century. The same idea of the abbreviating symbol, the same idea of the type, unites the ideal form and the advertising icon.

There is thus a shared conceptual core that authorizes the shifts between the Symbolist arabesque and functional advertising symbolization. In similar fashion, poets or painters, Symbolists and industrial designers, make the symbol the abstract element shared by the thing, the form and its idea. The same idea of a descriptive composition of forms involves a multiplicity of practices and interpretations. Between 1900 and 1914, the graphic designers of Secession pass from the curves of poisonous flowers to rigorous geometrical constructs, as if

one and the same idea of the abbreviating symbol informed both practices. The same principles and the same thinkers of artistic form make it possible to theorize pictorial abstraction and functional design. Through a series of misunderstandings, these masters, like Aloïs Riegl with his theory of the organic ornament and Wilhelm Wörringer with his theory of the abstract line, became theoretical guarantors of painting's evolution into abstractionism: an art that expresses only the volition – the idea – of the artist, by means of symbols which are signs translating an internal necessity. But their texts also served as the basis for developing an abbreviated language of design, where it was a question of constructing not a visual alphabet of pure signs, but on the contrary a motivated alphabet for the forms of everyday objects.

This community of principle between sign and form, between the form of art and the form of the everyday object, given concrete expression by the graphic design of the early twentieth century, might lead us to reassess the dominant paradigms of the modernist autonomy of art and of the relationship between art forms and life forms. We know how, since Clement Greenberg, the idea of the flat surface has been associated with an idea of artistic modernity, conceived as art's conquest of its own medium, breaking with its submission to external ends and the mimetic imperative. Each art is said to begin to exploit its own means, its own medium, its own material. Thus, the paradigm of the flat surface has served to construct an ideal history of modernity: painting abandoned the illusion of the third dimension, bound up with the mimetic constraint, to constitute the two-dimensional space of the canvas as its own space. And the pictorial plane thus conceived exemplifies the modern autonomy of art.

The problem with this view is that this ideal artistic mod-

ernity never stops being sabotaged by infernal trouble-makers. Scarcely has Malevich or Kandinsky posited the principle than the army of *Dadaists* and Futurists emerges, transforming the purity of the pictorial plane into its opposite: a surface for a melange of words and forms, art forms and mundane things. People readily put this perversion down to the pressure exercised by the languages of advertising and propaganda. It was to be repeated in the 1960s, when Pop Art emerged to overturn the regime of two-dimensional painting, restored by lyrical abstraction, and initiate a new, enduring confusion between art forms and the manipulation of purposeful objects and the circulation of commercial messages.

Perhaps we would escape these scenarios of diabolical perversion if we understood that the lost paradise never in fact existed. Pictorial flatness was never synonymous with the autonomy of art. The flat surface was always a surface of communication where words and images slid into one another. And the anti-mimetic revolution never signified renunciation of resemblance. *Mimesis* was the principle not of resemblance, but of a certain codification and distribution of resemblances. Thus, the pictorial third dimension had as its principle less the part of painting to be 'like poetry', to present itself as the theatre of a history and imitate the power of rhetorical and dramatic speech. The mimetic order was based on the separation of the arts *and* their connection. Painting and poetry imitated each other, while keeping their distance from one another. So the principle of the anti-mimetic aesthetic revolution is not some 'each to his own', confining each art to its own peculiar medium. On the contrary, it is a principle of 'each to everyone else's'. Poetry no longer imitates painting; painting no longer imitates poetry. This does not mean words on one

side, forms on the other. It means quite the opposite: the abolition of the principle that allocated the place and means of each, separating the art of words from that of forms, temporal arts from spatial arts. It means the constitution of a shared surface in place of separate spheres of imitation.

Surface is to be understood in two senses. In the literal sense, first of all. The community between the Symbolist poet and the industrial designer is made possible by the melanges of letters and forms effected by the Romantic renewal of typography, new techniques of engraving, or the development of poster art. But this surface of communication between the arts is as ideal as it is material. That is why the silent dancer, who unquestionably moves in the third dimension, can furnish Mallarmé with the paradigm of a graphic ideal, ensuring the exchange between the arrangement of words and the layout of forms, between the phenomenon of speaking and that of outlining a space. From it will derive, in particular, the typographical/choreographic arrangement of *Un coup de dés*, the manifesto of a poetry that has become a spatial art.

The same thing is evident in painting. Between Maurice Denis and Kandinsky, there is no autonomous purity that has been wrested, only immediately to be lost by melanges – Simultaneist, Dadaist, Futurist – of words and forms, inspired by the frenzy of advertising or an industrial aesthetics. 'Pure' painting and 'impure' painting alike are based on the same principles. I previously alluded to the reference by promoters of design to the same authors – Riegl or Wörringer – who legitimate the abstract purity of painting. More generally, the same idea of surface grounds the painting that puts expressive signs of 'internal necessity' on the 'abstract' canvas and the painting that mixes pure forms, newspaper extracts, metro tickets or clock cog-wheels. Pure painting and 'corrupted'

painting are two configurations of an identical surface composed of shifts and melanges.

This also means that there is not an autonomous art on the one hand and a heteronomous art on the other. Here too a certain idea of modernity translates into a scenario of diabolical perversion: the autonomy wrested from the mimetic constraint was immediately corrupted by revolutionary activism, enrolling art in the service of politics. This hypothesis of a lost purity is best set aside. The shared surface on which forms of painting simultaneously become autonomous and blend with words and things is also a surface common to art and non-art. The anti-mimetic, modern aesthetic break is not a break with art that is a slave to resemblance. It is a break with a regime of art in which imitations were simultaneously autonomous and heteronomous: autonomous in that they constituted a sphere of verbal or visual creations not subject to the criteria of utility or truth operative elsewhere; heteronomous in so far as they imitated in their particular order — in particular, through the separation and hierarchy of genres — the social distribution of position and worth. The modern aesthetic revolution effected a break with this dual principle: it is the abolition of the parallelism that aligned artistic hierarchies with social hierarchies; the assertion that there are no noble or base subjects and that everything is a subject for art. But it is also the abolition of the principle that separated the practices of imitation from the forms and objects of ordinary existence.

Accordingly, the surface of graphic design is three things: firstly, the equal footing on which everything lends itself to art; secondly, the surface of conversion where words, forms and things exchange roles; and thirdly, the surface of equivalence where the symbolic writing of forms equally lends itself to

expressions of pure art and the schematization of instrumental art. This ambivalence does not mark some capture of the artistic by the political. 'Abbreviated forms' are, in their very principle, an aesthetic and political division of a shared world: they outline the shape of a world without hierarchy where functions slide into one another. The finest illustration of this might be the posters designed by Rodchenko for the aircraft company Dobrolet. The stylized forms of the plane and the letters of the brand are combined in homogeneous geometrical forms. But this graphic homogeneity is also a homogeneity between the forms that serve to construct Suprematist paintings and those that serve to symbolize both the élan of Dobrolet planes and the dynamism of a new society. The same artist does abstract paintings and makes instrumental posters; in both cases, he is working in identical fashion to construct new forms of life. This is also the artist who uses the same principle of homogenization by flatness for collages illustrating Mayakovsky's texts and for off-centre photographs of starts in a gymnastic display. In all these instances, the purity of art and the combination of its forms with forms of life go together. This is the visual response to the theoretical question I posed. In it the Symbolist poet and the functionalist engineer confirm the shared character of their principle on one and the same surface.

2 SENTENCE, IMAGE, HISTORY

1 The exhibition *Sans commune mesure*, curated by Régis Durand, occurred in September–December 2002, in three separate sites: the Centre National de la Photographie – where this text was delivered – the Musée d'art moderne de Villeneuve d'Ascq, and the Studio national des arts contemporains de Fresnay.

2 Michel Foucault, 'The Discourse on Language', trans. Rupert Swyer, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Pantheon, New York 1972.

3 Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, Allen Lane, London 1969, p. 151.

4 Editorial note: a *charcuterie* is a shop, rather like a delicatessen, where a variety of meat products – also called *charcuterie* – such as pâté, salami, blood pudding and so forth are sold.

5 Blaise Cendrars, 'Aujourd'hui', *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 4, Seghers, Paris 1974, pp. 144–5, 162–6.

6 Jean Epstein, 'Bonjour cinéma', in *Oeuvres complètes*, Seghers, Paris 1974, volume one, pp. 85–102.

7 Cf., in particular, Flaubert's letter to Mademoiselle Leroyer de Chantepie of 12 December 1857 and the letter to George Sand of March 1876.

8 Sergei Eisenstein, 'Les vingt piliers de soutènement', in *La non-indifférente nature*, 10/18, Paris 1976, pp. 141–213.

9 I am grateful to Bernard Eisenschitz for identifying these elements.

10 Cf. Louis Aragon, *Le Paysan de Paris*, Gallimard, Paris 1966, pp. 29–33.

11 Foucault, 'The Discourse on Language', p. 215. Cf. Althusser on the same theme of the sentence that has already begun: 'I look back, and I am suddenly and irresistibly assailed by *the* question: are not these few pages, in their maladroit and groping way, simply that unfamiliar play *El Nost Milan*, performed on a June evening, pursuing me in its incomplete meaning, searching in me, despite myself, now that all the actors and sets have been cleared away, for the *advent* of its silent discourse?' (*For Marx*, p. 151).

12 See Elie Faure, *Histoire de l'art*, Le Livre de Poche, Paris 1976, volume four, pp. 167–83.

13 See *La Fable cinématographique*.

3 PAINTING IN THE TEXT

1 Clement Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory 1900–1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge 2001, pp. 754–60 (here p. 756).

2 Denis Diderot, 'Le Salon de 1769', in *Oeuvres complètes*, Le Club français du livre, Paris 1969, volume eight, p. 449.

3 See *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1998, volume one, pp. 168–9, 597–600 and volume two, pp. 885–7.

4 Marcel Proust, 'Within a Budding Grove', in *Remembrance of Things Past*, volume one, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1983, p. 893.

5 Edmond and Jules Goncourt, *French Eighteenth-Century Painters*, trans. Robin Ironside, Phaidon, Oxford 1981, pp. 115–17.

6 G. Albert Aurier, *Le Symbolisme en peinture*, L'Échoppe, Paris 1991, pp. 15–16.

4 THE SURFACE OF DESIGN

1 The bases of the thinking of the *Werkbund* and Behrens are analyzed in Frederic J. Schwartz's book *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War*, Yale University Press, New Haven 1996.

5 ARE SOME THINGS UNREPRESENTABLE?

1 See Jacques Rancière, *L'inconscient esthétique*, Galilée, Paris 2001.

2 Robert Antelme, *The Human Race*, trans. Jeffrey Haight and Annie Mahler, The Marlboro Press, Marlboro (Vermont) 1992, pp. 9–10.