

International Conference « Biblioclasm : destroying/creating Books ? »

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This is not a call to "destroy books". The question is no less relevant. "The biblioclastic attitude goes back to the night of writing," says the book historian Lucien X. Polastron. And indeed the destruction of books seems to be as old as the invention of libraries. It is often considered in historical, sociological and political terms. Today these questions are all the more important because the technical mutations of the communication and the edition are involved in a "third revolution of the book" which badly masks the ghost of the "end of the book".

"Destroying books" seems to be an impossible formulation because it is a kind of ban in art and literature, where the question of biblioclasm, and even biblioclastic practices, are very present. Doesn't the modern novel begin with the destruction of Don Quixote's library? Isn't the artist's book partly based on the paradox of "bibliophiles... biblioclasts", to use the subtitle of the 1974 issue of the *Chroniques de l'art vivant*, in which Lyotard summoned "hundreds of biblioclasts" of the time... among them Michel Butor?

Bibliophilia/biblioclasm: is it really a strict opposition? Respect for books, even the love for them, even the passion they can inspire, should be at the heart of writing and reading. In doing so, they can lead to backlashes against the book if it deviates from an organic fusion between container and content. Bibliophily and biblioclasm are concerned with the very question of creation and the confrontation between its ideals and its material mediations.

In fact, it is the materiality of books and the difficulty of taking it into account that is at issue. On the one hand, because of the literary approach, which tends to dematerialise the text for the benefit of the work. On the other hand because of the current ideology of technology which misleadingly identifies the digital mutation as a "dematerialisation", and in turn evokes a celebration of the book-paper in the edition and the detour on the social networks.

The issues and forms of these paradoxical and problematic relationships with books will be explored in the literary field and through its relationships with other arts in various areas and at different times, inscribed in the long term but likely to intersect with each other. The following themes may be explored.

1. -Terminology and lexical research. What are the competing concepts (autodafé, biblioclasm, bibliolythia, destruction, end of book(s)...)? Nineteenth-century dictionaries and bibliophile manuals reveals a persistent semantic ambiguity between some of these terms, which also vary according to time and context. Is the book a special case?
2. -Ideology and art. Does the status of books lead to an articulation of ideology and art? What denunciation of the auto-da-fé, which condemns books and their authors to the same destruction, by art? Is it necessary to define the biblioclasm by their ideological stakes?

3. -History and historical readings. The history of destruction highlights some specific events. What kind of historiography is possible in this field? How do we take into account the intertwining of periods in practices (technical archaisms of artists' books since the 1970s, anthropological ambitions of contemporary performances...)?
4. -Typologies and variations of biblioclastic practices/bibliophilic practices. They sometimes refer to metaphors but also to bodily performances and, more generally, to the consideration of the materiality of the book's medium (burning, tearing/cutting, disassembling/unbinding, staining/maculating, closing/wrapping, eating/assimilating...) and of the collection to which it may belong (collecting/dispersing...). Is biblioclasm always voluntary? Is it possible to reject this notion by taking into account the degrees of material damage? Can the concept of biblioclasm be applied indiscriminately to any kind of printed medium? Are periodicals and other ephemera (posters, leaflets, etc.) excluded, as they are excluded from definitions of book?
5. -Privileged arts and literary genres. Narrative seems to be in the majority, but through what filters and with what competitions? What about theatre but also cinema and other visual arts? What about the transpositions of novels into the visual arts (Fahrenheit 451 being a crucial but not exclusive example).
6. -Publics concerned. The different productions certainly involve different networks of production and reception. But should we oppose them (artist's books versus popular editions, adult audience versus albums and children's literature...) or explore the articulations between these worlds, in favour of the relationship with the book? What about the place of the avant-garde? What about the specificity of the treatment of these practices in books for young people but also when works for adults are transposed for young people?
7. -A biblioclastic corpus. If a certain number of recent anthologies (*Bibliomanies*, 2010, or *Les Fous de livres*, 2011) do indeed readily exploit the vein of bibliophilia and the sensual intoxication it provides, a kind of taboo remains around its counterpart. The emphasis on canonical works is a way of making many other references disappear, which this programme aims to bring to light, if not to list.

Scientific committee : Anthony Glinöer (Sherbrooke University, Canada), Isabelle Krzywkowski (Université de Grenoble Alpes), Isabelle Pantin (ENS Paris), Louisa Torres (BnF/INHA), Hélène Védrine (Université Paris-Sorbonne, Cellf). **Please send your proposal before January 15th 2024 to marine.le-bail@univ-tlse2.fr; benoit.tane@univ-tlse2.fr.** The scientific committee will be attentive to the international and interdisciplinary dimension of the conference (academics and book professionals) and to the place given to doctoral students and young scholar.

An exhibition will be held at the Municipal Library (Magali Vène co-org.)

Special Guest speakers : Alberto Manguel, Lucien X. Polatron