

## Burroughs's Folios as an Archival Machine for Artistic Creation

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**Abstract:** In his article "Burroughs's Folios as an Archival Machine for Artistic Creation" Tomasz D. Stompor discusses the significance of archival material as a scholarly resource for the analysis of William S. Burroughs's cut-up experiments. Stompor retraces the history of the author's filing system as both a referential repository and a device for documentation and investigates its function as an experimental machine for the production of cut-up texts and layouts

**Tomasz D, SROMPOR**

### **Burroughs's Folios as an Archival Machine for Artistic Creation**

Every writer works with an archive of his own making and relies on it as a repository of materials organized according to their own necessities, either by filing systems, notebooks, scrapbooks, card indexes etc. William S. Burroughs is no exception to this simple truth, but in his case the archive was not only a device of documentation and reference, but also a crucial creative tool, especially during the period in which he was engaged with the cut-up experiments, for which a pool of source materials was a prerequisite. The size of this pool was documented by Edmund White in an essay about a visit to the Bowery bunker in 1981, where he describes Burroughs's creative practices by setting them in analogy to the processes of extractive industries: "I realized that for Burroughs writing is like mineral refining, many steps to extract from tons of dross an ounce of the precious substance. If so, then these scribbled-over pictures, these sleazoid sci-fi books, these files on weapons and epidemics, these *National Enquirer* stories on cancer and Commies—these were the slag heaps of his art. So pure is that art that no matter how cruddy or *recherché* the things he assimilates may be (the orgone accumulator, Scientology, Mayan control systems), they are eventually refined and transformed into his own stamped ingots" (White 109).

Although the archive played such an important role for Burroughs, it did not figure prominently as a scholarly resource, or even as a subject of research, until recently. Burroughs criticism was mostly dominated by poststructuralist approaches until the late 1990s (e.g., Lydenberg and Murphy as the most referenced examples of this trend), and stood in the shadow of the author's looming pop-culture iconicity that became cemented by biographies with sensationalist titles (e.g., Morgan; Caveney). The poststructuralist interpretations of Burroughs's work focused on such philosophical issues as the nexus of language and body/biology (see Lydenberg), or issues of Burroughs's position in the history of ideas (see Murphy). These approaches eclipsed the question of a material textual history of Burroughs' work almost entirely. This circumstance, combined with the myths enshrouding Burroughs's persona, continue to influence interpretations of his work and to fuel misunderstandings, not only about the origin and sequence of his publications, but also about the nature of the cut-up experiments, which through the neglect of materiality are often conceived of as a uniform technique, mainly in the form of the so called Cut-up or Nova Trilogy (*The Soft Machine* 1961, *Nova Express* 1962, *The Ticket That Exploded* 1964).

Fortunately, Burroughs criticism has shifted at the beginning of the twenty-first century toward a focus on artistic practices, materiality, and textual history, and shows an awakened attention for small press and magazine publications. The latter aspect is best represented by the website *RealityStudio: A William S. Burroughs Community* <<http://realitystudio.org/>>. This change might be described as a revisionist-materialist turn in Burroughs criticism that aims to reconcile interpretive scholarship and textual history (see Harris, "Not Burroughs's Final Fix" [2006], 1–2 and Schneiderman [2013], 54–55). Oliver Harris, who might be cited as the initiator of this turn, has foregrounded the importance of archival research for a critical understanding of Burroughs's work in numerous articles, in his monograph *William Burroughs and the Secret of Fascination* (2003), where he reconstructs the textual history of the early work, through his critical edition of the author's correspondence (1993), and recently also with new editions of the so called Cut-up Trilogy (2014). Another important figure in this field is Davis Schneiderman, co-editor of an influential critical anthology, *Retaking the Universe: William S. Burroughs in the Age of Globalization* (2004). He sums up this development in the following words: "Burroughs criticism in the 21st century is in the process of being shaped by material concerns. No longer are Burroughs's readers focused primarily on the legend of the 'master' as wife-killing junkie expatriate—finally, the way that Burroughs went about producing his work has become as important as his mythos, and essential to understanding it" (Schneiderman in a blurb for Stevens n. pag.).

One can make out three sources of the various misunderstandings about the cut-up experiments: their perception through the prism of the trilogy, a neglect of artistic practice, and finally a disregard of their publishing context in small publications. If you want to cut up words, you obviously need them on paper, at least in the era of analog word processing of which we speak. Although Burroughs wrote many instructions and pedagogical how-to manuals for cut-up experiments, of which *The Third Mind* (1978) is a prime example, very little is known, and little attention was paid so far to how he really went about producing his texts. When reading the so-called Nova- or Cut-Up Trilogy our perception of the fragmentation of text is rather triggered through breaks on the semantic and grammatical levels. We do not actually pose the question how many cuts are in these texts, as they are masked by the

layout of the justified type format. Still, the question remains legitimate, as the reading experience of cut-up texts in such small magazines as *My Own Mag*, or such cut-up pamphlets as *APO-33*, and *TIME* (both 1965) differs significantly. (These rare examples can be accessed at: <<http://realitystudio.org/bibliographic-bunker/>>). These publications reveal the cut-up text as processual, and through the addition of images and variables of layout, confront the reader with a different kind of fragmentation. In brief, the cuts in these publications are more visible and they remind us of the fact that cut-up experiments were based on material operations.

Still, the cut-up experiments are as much about cutting as about assembling the fragmented variables into new constellations. In this respect, they can be contextualized in continuity with the montage traditions of the early twentieth century, not only through association with Tristan Tzara's recipe for a poem by pulling words from a hat (see Tzara and Picabia 64), as has been pointed out by various scholars, but more substantially in their methodology that can be briefly summed up as a three-step process of selection, fragmentation, and recombination (see Boon 144–51 for a detailed analysis of montage procedures). As Oliver Harris has pointed out in his introduction to the new edition of *The Soft Machine*, Burroughs's application of cut-up procedures was a perpetual tightrope walk between chaos and method (Harris, "Introduction" xii–xiii). This paradoxical relation between a contained chaos and an ordering framework is exactly what is at stake here, and it provokes another question and a second paradox that I want to explore in the following. The question is: How do the cut-up experiments rely on the archive as an ordering system but also as a machine for artistic creation? And the second paradox that derives from the dilemma of order and chaos pertains to the conceptualization of the cut-up experiments as a political project that claims a liberating agency from the chains of verbal conditioning produced by mass-media, advertizing, and formulaic patterns of communication.

In this essay, I follow the critical approach as described above, and foreground the significance of the material procedures involved in the cut-up experiments, and especially their dependence on material resources organized in a system of folios created during the period between 1963 and 1973. The reason for the neglect of archival resources in Burroughs criticism can be owed to the fact that these resources are not collected in one unified space, but are scattered throughout various special collections. Furthermore, the folios that I will address in particular were inaccessible to scholars until more than twelve years after the author's death, and were made available only in 2009 as part of the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and [US-]American Literature at the New York Public Library. These resources provide a deep insight into the artistic practices of William S. Burroughs that shed new light on our understanding of the cut-up experiments. This essay follows two main objectives. First, I retrace the development of Burroughs's filing system and the fate of these materials. The little information that was available to date about Burroughs's archival materials was limited to mentions in biographies, marginal publications (e.g., Shoaf; Bennett and Smith; Lopez), and gossip among scholars. This article offers a timely opportunity to summarize this scattered information, not in order to write a history of who owned what and when, but rather to outline the origins of Burroughs's preoccupation with ordering his materials, and their fate (for a detailed account of the convoluted history of Burroughs's papers, see Grauerholz). Second, as this filing system was not only a device of information storage but a crucial creative tool, I investigate the artistic practices involved in its application.

One of the persistent myths about Burroughs's creative process originates in accounts of his collaborative editing of *Naked Lunch* from a chaotic collection of papers together with Brion Gysin, Sinclair Beiles, and Allen Ansen (Miles 351). The myth is based on the assumption that apart from the material that was included in *Naked Lunch*, a great amount of excess material that has been referred to as the "Word Horde" (Lopez 3), formed the basis for Burroughs's later cut-up experiments. It is true that after having discovered the cut-up technique with the help of Brion Gysin in 1959, Burroughs experimented with the possibilities of shorter and longer texts that could be extracted from various montage procedures. This experimentation also involved the cutting-up of his own writings, both unpublished and published. In his introduction to the 2014 edition of *The Soft Machine*, Oliver Harris analyzes the origins of the "Word Horde" myth and cautions to reconsider the vague allusions to the size of this material, which alternate between "hundreds of pages" (Lopez 3) and "thousand pages of manuscript" (Watters 286). Harris argues that one should not overestimate the size of the excess material that Burroughs used in the writing of *The Soft Machine*, as this would devalue the existence of new material included in the text. The allusions to the "Word Horde" by Burroughs were intentionally vague, in order to promote his new radical literary technique and still retain a continuity to his previous writing (Harris, "Introduction" xvii–xx). The reason I bring up the myth of the "Word Horde" is that it creates a questionable image of a very prolific writer, who can rely on vast textual resources that he can release at will with drastic results, as the connotation of the "horde" as a tumultuous and potentially hostile mass might suggest. This image has undoubtedly contributed to the militant self-

presentation of the cut-up experiments as a political project of verbal liberation but it might also be put to use to envisage a textual economy of the cut-up experiments. Even though the mythified size of the previously existing textual material was in reality much smaller, in combination with the new material and through the cut-up processes of hybridization, Burroughs began breeding new hordes that rioted, and proliferated, but also required containment. In order to preserve this creative fermentation, Burroughs required a paradoxical order that allowed for transgression within his own limits.

Looking at the history of Burroughs's archival materials, one can make out two crucial moments of systematization. The first moment dates back to the early phase of cut-up experimentation. Burroughs's companion Ian Sommerville would prove a crucial figure in this undertaking. In 1963, Burroughs was staying with Sommerville in Tangier. They rented an apartment at 4 Calle Larachi in the Marshan district. Sommerville assisted Burroughs in ordering his material thematically in decorated folders. In an archival note, Burroughs describes the system: "I began pasting photos on the file covers to indicate the contents. It was in fact as it developed over the years an intricate and often faulty filing system based on associational networks ... Ian had built shelves along one wall on which the decorated files took their places. As to the content of these files and the writing produced at 4 Calle Larachi: It was during this difficult period that I began experimenting with newspaper formats and got in touch with Jeff Nuttall who was publishing *My Own Mag*" (*At Number 4*). This ordering system was similar to that of many collage artists and graphic designers who keep a so-called *morgue*, which is a collection of images sorted according to thematic categories. The associational networks mentioned by Burroughs that linked these materials were either contained visibly in these folders or in his head; many of them can still be traced and many cannot, because, although ordered and systematized, they were kept in constant motion.

At the beginning of the 1970s Burroughs was in financial trouble and decided to sell off his personal papers including his folios, correspondence, typescripts, and other materials. They were sold to a collector in Lichtenstein and therefore became known as the "Vaduz archive." As a preparation for this big sale, Brion Gysin and Barry Miles assisted Burroughs in assembling, organizing, and systematizing this collection (Grauerholz 6-7). This effort has provided scholars with the standard reference bibliography compiled by Barry Miles and Joe Maynard published in 1978 (Maynard and Miles), which lists only published material, and a very rare publication that allowed a glimpse into the Vaduz archive published in 1973 in London by Am Here Books (Burroughs, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the William S. Burroughs Archive Comp. by Miles Ass. for William Burroughs*). The latter provides the framework for the finding aid of the Burroughs papers at the Berg collection. The archival history and the provenance of this collection are very convoluted but I want to make one important distinction that will guide my argument, as the systematization of Burroughs's papers was an important moment of transition that transformed the status of this material from a creative into a documentary archive. While the systematization of Burroughs's papers prepared them for the assessment and appraisal by a potential collector and buyer and later for the use as a research resource in a scholarly archive, its basic structure was primarily determined by Burroughs's artistic practices. So, during the time when the materials were in Burroughs's hands, they remained a working tool that was in motion, its basic modes being rotation and fragmentation, whereas the systematization froze this movement in a catalogued position. Still, the collection of folders that Burroughs and Sommerville assembled in Tangier would later provide the basis for a large portion of the Burroughs papers in the Berg collection of the New York Public Library that can now be accessed by scholars and the creative mechanisms it once served can still be traced.

There is one feature of the creative archive that I would like to focus on, because I find it particularly suitable in order to demonstrate its mechanics. During the time at 4 Calle Larachi, Burroughs started playing with the thematically assigned files that he listed in a note in November 1963 indexing the names of 13 files: "1. 'Annie Laurie'. 2. 'I am dying, Meester?' 3. Old showmen. 4. Verbal experiments. 5. Nova police. 6. Present Time. 7. Copies. 8. First drafts. 9. Material and derivatives already used but not exhausted. 10. Other voices. 11. Work in progress. 12. Boys will be boys. 13. Miscellaneous." (Burroughs, *Does This Format...? Untitled Typescript. [10 Leaves]*). It would exhaust the available space of this essay to go into the detailed contents of these folders, but it becomes apparent that they either contain drafts of previous and current material (e.g. "I am dying, Meester?" refers to a cut-up text published in *The Yage Letters*, "Nova Police" to the Nova conspiracy that is used as the narrative framework of the Cut-Up trilogy). In this note Burroughs also gives instructions on how to use these files. He suggests to rotate them according to a calendrical system of his own devising in order to create new intersection points between already existing texts: "For each of these files prepare a master grid. Omitting copies, first drafts and Present Time. The grids rotate through the Present Time grid in a permuted order. At the end of ten days, when each grid has passed through Present

Time once, other grids are prepared and processed, relevant material selected and returned to the appropriate file. We can regard a certain section of this calendar as a book to be assembled in accordance with arrangements of the master grids on any given date. This same arrangement applies to pictures. Select the pictures you want from a text. Go out and get those pictures" (Burroughs, "*Does This Format...*").

Now, this instruction requires some explanation concerning two aspects: the grids and "Present Time." First, the grids Burroughs refers to in this quotation are layouts traced from newspapers in which the boxes have been left blank. As he mentions in the archival note concerning the folders, Burroughs began experimenting with newspaper layouts during this period, and started publishing them in Jeff Nuttall's small magazine *My Own Mag*. These layouts developed into a semi-regular column called "The Moving Times." Burroughs became fascinated with daily newspapers, and especially their title pages, because they represented for him an example of a cut-up rooted in everyday practices, as he mentions in a letter to Brion Gysin from this period: "Newspapers are cut up by format. You read the adjacent columns while you read this column. You read cross-column whether you notice or not—start noticing. The newspapers and newsmagazines are cut ups. This is the secret of their power to mould thought feeling and subsequent events" (Burroughs, *Rub out the Words* 139-40).

It is debatable whether newspapers are really cut-ups, but Burroughs was right in his assessment, insofar as he described the newspaper as a hybrid medium that aims to portray a coherent view of reality. In its basic conception, the newspaper is a graphically hybrid construct, where you can find detailed body counts of recent military conflicts neatly fitted beside reporting on the last royal wedding. It has to be admitted that since the early days of newspaper publishing, the layout and the make-up of newspapers has become more systematic and ordered, but to this day front pages cover a large thematic variety of reporting. (Layout refers to the graphic arrangement of text and images on a page, while make-up stands for the thematic ordering and ranking of news items on a page). This mixture comes boxed in a standardized grid layout, sometimes even including images. Irrespective of these blatant contrasts, the newspaper aims at offering the reader a totality of perspective, opening a window on the events of the world, or as the motto of *The New York Times* holds it: "All the news that's fit to print" (this is the official slogan of the *New York Times* adopted by the newspaper in 1896 and printed until today beside its masthead; see Berger 117). If we think about the newspaper also as a device that marks a certain point in time with its various events, then each daily edition can also be understood as a leaf torn off a calendar. This brings us to Burroughs's notion of "Present Time" mentioned in this instruction. It is a concept Burroughs used frequently in dating his letters, but also a conceptual notion that informs the temporalities of cut-up experiments. "Present Time" is not an abstract idea of a general present, tied to a commonly validated measurement of time. It is rather the concrete spatiotemporal set of circumstances of an individual consciousness assembling or reading a cut-up layout. Burroughs makes his idea of "Present Time" even more explicit in his contribution to *My Own Mag* No.6, which is a layout "traced from the format of Time Magazine [*sic*] p.40 September 13 1963." In this layout several grids are left blank, except for Burroughs's instruction in longhand: "Put any picture that fits from your time into this time space. W.B." The comparison between the original layout and the published mimeographed version shows, in addition, that Burroughs left three fields of the grid as blank spaces to be filled with "any picture" (Burroughs, "The Burrough: Afternoon Ticker Tape" 7). Nuttall filled two of these fields with his own illustrations, and preserved one with Burroughs's instruction for perusal by the readers. Burroughs took his instructions very seriously, as his own archived copies of *My Own Mag* reveal that he inserted images of his own choice into the layout grids. These were mostly postcards, cut-outs from newspapers or magazines, but also photographic composites of his own. What Burroughs suggests here is not only a cross-pollination and permutation of already existing materials through shifting their spatial organization but also a scrambling of temporalities. He achieves this by applying a calendrical rhythm to the process, which shifts the multiple varying temporal coordinates to create a new temporality. One important consequence of this process is that past material continuously returns to be recycled, instead of being filed away and stored. This is also one of the reasons for the uncanny flashbacks that occur so often when reading a cut-up text.

The examples of layout grids featured in *My Own Mag* illustrate in miniature the basic principle of Burroughs's creative archive as a system of containers that can be related to each other in a performative arrangement of variables (texts and images) that can be shifted according to assigned geometric patterns. This rather general and abstract understanding of the relationship between Burroughs's cut-up layouts and his creative archive can be illustrated in more simplified terms by pointing to the most basic operation of a textual cut-up. The simplest cut-up operation is that of a rearrangement of a divided rectangular page with text into four parts (ABCD) by one vertical and one horizontal cut into a series of mathematically limited variations. As Burroughs came to refine his methods, he

would add text from other sources, sometimes refrain from cutting and rather use folds, and in the end only use selections from such an arrangement, and discard excess text. So the cut-up layouts and the system of folders are further developments of these basic operations by including intermedial factors (word/image), spatial arrangement, and temporality. The grids and the folders are not only containers, but also filters which sift particles of reality into new combinations. The end product thus reflects its sources and its methodology. In sum, the cut-up layout is a condensed reflection of the archival machine that helped to generate it.

The paradox between order and chaos, or between system and transgression that informs Burroughs's experimental practices and the use of his archive is accompanied by another disaccord that I want to emphasize. It is a conceptual discord in the way Burroughs theorized the potentials of cut-up experiments, or the political cut-up project. While pursuing the goal of cutting his way out of the linear chains of language, Burroughs amassed a vast storage of printed items that made his agenda of liberation, in fact, a bureaucratic enterprise tethered down with filing cabinets. It seems quite ironic that at the launching stage of his experimentation in his second cut-up publication *The Exterminator* Burroughs mentions the famous New York hoarders the Collyer brothers (see Faber) that were found dead in 1947 in their Harlem apartment: "Unsavory case of The Paralyzed Collier Brother.. The Walking Brother ... With 'stalie' shit—Double Order—and old newspapers HE constructed over the years a system of tunnels and nests which required the intervention of an air hammer after HE died ... in a cave in of Tunnel Five Ahua Ate Cumhu.. Insect Time" (Burroughs and Gysin, *The Exterminator* 13). This image of newspaper tunnels that imprisoned the hoarders with word garbage is used by Burroughs to set up the cut-up project as an antidote to the verbal conditioning of the newspapers but also against their measurement of time by association with the rigor of the Mayan calendar to which I will come back at a later point.

Although Burroughs's attempts to theorize the cut-up method begin to take form only slowly in *The Exterminator*, as he limits his programmatic claims to cursory lines strewn in among the cut-up static, the thematization of time and space as a dichotomy takes another central position beside the virus metaphor from the beginning of the experiments. This dichotomy can be already traced in the title of the second cut-up pamphlet. The title *The Exterminator* is open to multiple interpretations. In its most basic and literal meaning, the exterminator as a profession who destroys parasites can be linked to the "language is a virus" analogy, where the exterminator would be the cut-up artist who does not destroy language entirely but rather produces antibodies or vaccines in the form of scrambled verbal sequences which offer inoculation against verbal conditioning by the virus parasite. Taken apart into its Latin roots *ex* and *terminus*, the exterminator might be also interpreted as someone standing outside or beyond boundaries, and the dichotomous boundaries offered by Burroughs in *The Exterminator* are those of time and space. One of the programmatic lines, in which this dichotomy is demonstrated, is the following: "The Word Lines Keep Thee in Slots... The Word Lines keep you in Time... Cut the in lines" (Burroughs and Gysin, *The Exterminator* 5). Burroughs combines here the inverted biological model of the language of life, with the countercultural dialectic of inside and outside (the system, society, family, marriage, heteronormativity etc.) that became very widespread among the various social movements of the 1960s, as well as in the arts of that period.

In his famous 1965 interview with Conrad Knickerbocker for the *Paris Review*, Burroughs not only gave an in-depth account of his writing practices, but also gave a glimpse of the dimension of his own source materials and of his archival method of writing: "*I need it all.* [emphasis in the original] I brought everything. That's why I have to travel by boat and train, because, well, just to give you an idea, that's a photographic file (*thud*). Those are all photographs and photographs. When I sit down to write, I may suddenly think of something I wrote three years ago which should be in this file over here. It may not be. I'm always looking through these files. That's why I need a place where I can really spread them out, to see what's what. I'm looking for one particular paper, it often takes me a long time and sometimes I don't find it. Those dresser drawers are full of files. All those drawers in the closet are full of files. It's pretty well organized" (Knickerbocker 34-35). For now, let us bracket the question as to how well these files were organized, and just note that the cut-up experiments relied on a mass of resources, so that in order to be able to cut, Burroughs had to immerse himself in a flood of word and image from which he would draw, cut, and recombine. The liberationist proselytizing that accompanied the early cut-up publications, as well as the later *Electronic Revolution* (1971) and the book of methods *The Third Mind*, appears very paradoxical given the fact that in order to cut yourself out of words and time, you had to collect and expose yourself to tons of word and image ballast that kept you in place.

In the *Paris Review* interview, Burroughs indirectly compared his own filing system to Henry Luce's *Time Life Empire*, which he deemed a profoundly evil media machine geared towards the control of the

masses. He grounded his judgement by associating *Time Life* with his rather creative interpretation of the Mayan calendar as a means of control that dictates the rhythms of the year (Knickerbocker 35). Around 1969 in London, Burroughs refined his rotating system by adding to the master grids his own calendrical count of 10 months of 23 days duration while retaining the reference to the current Gregorian year count. As Burroughs explains to Gysin in a letter from this period, the months of this calendar carried invented names, e.g.: "Terre Haute, Marie Celeste, Bellevue, Seal Point." These names were either taken from some of his thematic files, or were new inventions. "Marie Celeste" refers for example to a file with clippings and images on maritime disasters that Burroughs collected. "Bellevue" might refer to New York's notorious psychiatric hospital, where in 1946 Joan Vollmer, Burroughs's common-law wife was committed. Burroughs himself gives a different reference in the same letter: "Old pullman cars used to have names like Point Pleasant Bellvue [sic] ETC." (Burroughs, "T.I.s. WSB to Brion Gysin"). As with his earlier dating habits that marked his correspondence with such labels as "present time," "past time," "short time" etc., Burroughs began using the names of his invented months in correspondence, especially with Gysin (Bill Morgan, introduction, Burroughs, *Rub out the Words* xxxii). Picking up on Oliver Harris's keynote lecture at the 2014 European Beat Studies Network conference in Tangier to commemorate Burroughs's centenary, one might say that Burroughs not only worked on creating an imaginary geography but also on an alternative temporality (Harris, "Shift, Spit, Cut: A Genetic Geography of *Naked Lunch*"). This rotating calendrical system that shifted his files through grids assigned with invented month names was meant to produce points of intersection, new imagery, and divination of new meaning from correspondence. In a larger context, one might say that like most avant-garde artists of the twentieth century, Burroughs thus created a radically subjective spatiotemporal realm that at least in his artistic practice allowed him to subvert what Horkheimer calls "instrumental reason" (21-24).

What conclusions can be drawn from this archival machinery? Even in their current appearance as archival "dead matter," Burroughs's folios can give us an idea of the incessant motion of his creative processes that mark the cut-up experiments as open-ended, future oriented matrices that invite its readers to seek out their personal intersection points. Contrary to the established conception of the cut-up experiments as a universal and uniform technique exemplified by its commodified end product the Cut-Up Trilogy, a look at the archive offers a different picture altogether. It proves that we cannot grasp the cut-up experiments without taking into account the procedures involved in their production and the source materials from which they were extracted. In the folders, we can not only find a resource for scholarly research but works of art in themselves, as they not only allow researchers to recreate the provisional and fluctuating nature of cut-up experiments, but especially in that moment when the maze of references becomes untraceable and leaves the reader puzzled, it invites them to relate to it according to a system of their own devising.

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