

The Figured Poem: Towards a Definition of Genre

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A poetological analysis of the genre of pattern poetry is presented which distinguishes among various forms of picture text composition, and attempts to classify the various sorts of carmina figurata typologically while dealing with the question of continuity and discontinuity of figured poems in ancient, medieval, and modern times.

I Poetological problems and preconditions

Recent years have seen an increased interest in the theory of literary genres, an interest reflected in the quality as well as the diversity of research being done on this subject.¹ Such favorable conditions do not, however, remove the difficulty of defining a particular literary genre, and the figured poem, about which very little has as yet been written, is a case in point.²

Anyone attempting to define the *carmen figuratum* descriptively — in terms of its historical development as opposed to a normative, ahistorical understanding of the genre — will face peculiar difficulty because no real history of the genus and no representative anthology (let alone a *corpus*) exists,³ and, indeed, most of the relevant material must still be lying, undiscovered, in libraries. This fact, along with the absence of specific literary-historical and theoretical studies,⁴ might seem to cast doubt on the wisdom at this stage of attempting a definition of the genre at all; but, on the other hand, it would seem illogical to embark on a quest for concrete examples of a genus of whose contours one has little clear idea. A mixed, deductive and, at the same time, inductive procedure would seem best under these circumstances, laying down the broad outlines of the genre as a sort of working hypothesis, but keeping these outlines so flexible that they are able to accommodate all the material that better acquaintance with the textual source might bring. This procedure is based, of course, on the premise that the figured poem, like the sonnet or the elegy, is a literary category in its own right and not just a typographical textual form; this need only be mentioned here for it will, as the very starting point of the investigation, be established in the course of the following pages.

Considered historically, the figured poem has always had artistic ambitions; it has always been a mixed poetic and art form. It would seem reasonable, therefore, to keep the notion of genre for this group of texts and to reserve the

concept of “text sort” for works which manifestly do *not* have this specific aim. Without wanting to claim any fixed place in the genealogy of literary categories for the figured poem, it may be worth pointing out that — in terms of the conventional triad of lyric, epic, and dramatic — it belongs rather to the lyric genre, albeit in a wider sense than that of Goethe’s *Erlebnislyrik*. Any concept of “lyric” which would include the *carmen figuratum* must have its roots in the lyric poetry of antiquity, of the middle ages, and of the early modern period and extend to occasional and formalistic poetry, too.

If one departs from this traditional model, one may be able to find a new generic principle in the distinction between aural and visual poetry, the latter calling not only on the power of reading, but, somewhat like the fine arts, on the power of interpretative vision as well. In this new system the figured poem, like other forms of visual poetry (e.g., epic visual texts⁵) would be allied to the drama or television play.

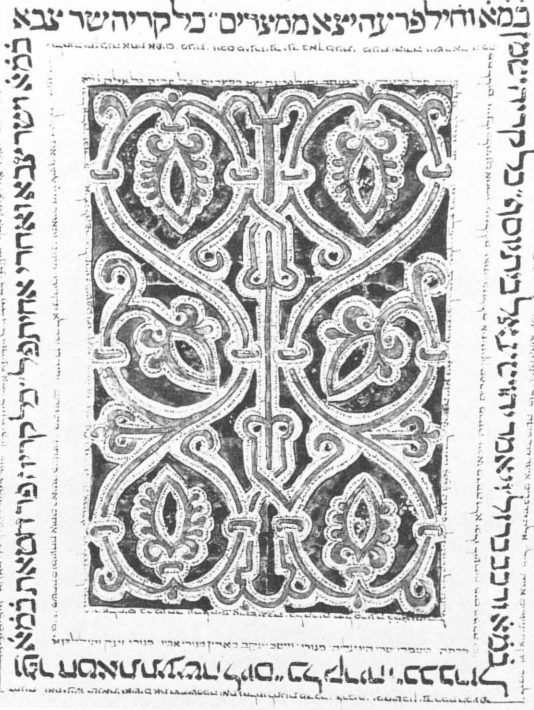
A further problem in the definition of the figured poem is, then, its mixed nature, not only on the literary level but also on the graphic or the pictorial. For being, as it were, on the border of two forms the *carmen figuratum* participates in the story of painting as well, although in contrast to strictly inter-medial forms or to works of (fine) art which have a textual ingredient, the literary character of the figured poem is always in evidence. Nevertheless, it is a methodological postulate that the definition of *carmen figuratum* must account both for the textual and for the figured or graphic aspects of the form. The figured poem is, finally, an international genre, extending far beyond the boundaries of European literatures to lyric writing in Turkish,⁶ Hebrew,⁷ Persian,⁸ Indian,⁹ and Chinese.¹⁰

II Definition and description

As I understand it, the figured poem is in the broadest sense a lyrical text (up to modern times generally also a versified text) constructed in such a way that the words — sometimes with the help of purely pictorial means — form a graphic figure which in relation to the verbal utterance has both a mimetic and symbolic function.

The decorative shaping of texts found in medieval codices¹¹ or in early printed texts¹² differs clearly from the *carmen figuratum* inasmuch as it generally lacks both artistic intention in the text which is manifestly renounced — usually a random piece of prose — and an aesthetic correlation between the textual and the graphic levels.¹³

The verbal substratum distinguishes the figured poem from the *numeri figurati* of ancient and medieval arithmetic¹⁴ as well as from the decorative forms of figured notation found variously in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.¹⁵ Its visual element distinguishes it from straightforward linear texts composed according to concealed patterns.¹⁶ The calligram which, especially in the rabbinical tradition of literal biblical exegesis (Masora) employs the technique of micrography (Figure 1), has a flexible written line and thus greater expressive potential, but it is not based on a verse-text nor does it aspire to any — or to any strict — relation between the verbal and the pictorial levels of



Leidensgeschichte unsers Herrn Jesu Christi.



Nan den kam, **U**nd er in'n gangen; Dort hat er voller **F**urcht und **E**ram **S**ein **L**eidn angfangen. **E**r schmeigt vor **A**ngst und hat: **D**er **m**ücht von ihm **g**ehen. „Doch, **V**ater! ist es möglich nicht, **S**o mag dein **W**ill' **g**eschehen!“ **S**ieh da! ein bracht ihm **T**reib; **D**och **J**ehad kam von ferne **M**it einer großen **J**udenschaar, **M**it und . **D**em war sein **M**eister lieb — **E**r zog sein mit **E**lten **U**nd **h**ieß das dem **W**alchs ab; **N**ur konnt' es **h**ellen. **D**ies aber **s**oll' die **J**udenross' **N**iet **g**rausamer noch **m**öchen. **S**ie banden ihn mit fest, **V**erhöheten ihn mit **L**oschen. **S**o bracht man ihn zur **E**stadt hinaus, **W**o ihn die **f**rauen; **E**in mit der **W**aage gar, **I**hn in zu **s**chlagen. **D**er folgt dem **M**eister nach, **W**as ihm nun **w**erd' **g**eschehen; **I**n **K**aisers **H**of hat die **W**aage **D**er'm ihn **g**esehen, **W**o er sich **w**iderste seine **U**nd **s**ing gleich an zu **s**agen: **O**s er **w**ohl **d**ie'n **M**enschen **k**enn? **W**enn's **w**oche **m**är, **s**oll' er's **s**agen. **D**och sagt: „**A**ch **f**inn' ihn **n**icht!“ **U**nd **s**ing auch an zu **s**chwören; **D**er **H**erlan **s**ah ihn **g**nedig an; **S**chon **l**ieß der sich **h**ören. **A**ls **m**an ihn zum **P**ilatus **b**racht, **K**onnt' er **k**ein **S**chuld **n**icht **f**inden; **J**edoch **b**efahl er, daß man ihn **A**n **e**ine **I** **s**oll' **b**inden. **M**an gab ihm und **S**treich, **W**om **h**ieß zu den **D**oß er **a**hemüthig an der **I** **H**at **m**iederzinsen **m**üssen. **A**ls **n**un **v**ordet das **G**eißeln **w**ar, **W**odurch sein **L**eid **j**eristet, **D**a hat man **e**inen **D**ornen **I**hn **s**chändlich **a**ufgeriegt. **S**tatt **e**ines **m**usste er **M**it **e**iner **w**ollen. **P**ilatus **s**prach **d**as **W**erfel aus **U**nd **b**rach den **v**or **a**llen. **D**a **b**rauchte **n**an **e**in **s**chweres **D**as er **s**elbst **m**usste **t**ragen, **U**nd **f**ührte ihn zur **E**stadt hinaus **M**it **S**tecken und mit **S**chlagen **D**ie **h**obte man **n**ammete **A**n **a**llen **D**orten **s**challen, **S**ei mit **d**em **s**chweren **S**ehet **e**ist zur **E**rde **f**allen. **M**an **b**racht' das **h**ier's **M**arterkruz, **A**ls ; **E**in **N**agel **w**ar auch **d**abei. **O** **s**prech' **e**ntzeller **L**ammer! **A**ls **a**uf den **N**ickhieslag **m**, **T**ragt man **a**us' ihn **m**echer, **U**nd **b**eset **d**ann mit an **S**ein' **K**reuzfächten **O**elieder. **D**rei **w**olle **S**tanden, **H**er! **K**itz! **W**o die **g**roßten **S**chmerzen. **D**arum, **o** **S**ünder! **w**en' **d**aran, **U**nd **n**imm **e**s **n**ief zu **h**erz! **D**urch's **L**oos der **W**eltler **l**ich **D**ie in die **K**riber, **W**ie's in der **b**eitragt und **S**t. **L**ucas und **so** **w**eiter. **I**n **se**inen **f**erben **W**erten er **D**em **k**ittern **D**urk und **k**laget; **M**it **G**alt' und **E**iß **g**efällt ein **D**at **se**in **D**urk **g**elabet. **D**ie **n**un **v**erlor den **G**lanz, **A**ls **J**esus **w**ollte **s**terben; **D**er **w**ar **g**anz mit **g**efläßt, **D**em **j**um **V**erderben. **E**s **w**ollte **s**elbst der auch **D**ie **T**raungrüt **b**eweißen: **M**an **h**ab den **m**itten **d**urch **W**en **s**elbst **n**un **g**ar **j**erreiben. **N**achdem **n**un **a**lles **w**ar **v**ollbracht, **S**ein **L**eidn **h**ald **j**u **E**nde, **E**mpfah **i**r **se**in **l**ieben **O**el **I**n **se**in **W**ater . **N**ach **d**ie'm **u**nter **e**t **se**in **Ke**in **W**ort **k**onnt' er **m**ehr **s**prechen; **D**er mit **a**ller **W**ittigkeit **D**as **h**im **n**un **t**hat **b**erehen. **L**angius **s**am **mit** **se**inem **H**at **h**im **d**as **d**urchstochen, **W**odurch **se**in **h**erzbar **H**erz **j**u **u**ns **er** **g**elassen. **M**an **h**atte **d**iese **V**ein **I**n **n**ief **e**mpfunden, **U**nd, **h**ehend **n**ächst **d**em **do**, **f**ührt **se** **s**elbst **a**lle **W**unden. **M**an **n**ahm **ih**n **man** **v**om **h**erab, **A**ls **T**helen **h**essen; **O** **h**erz, **C**hrist! **die** **Z**ähren an, **Die** **se** **d**abei **v**eressen! **M**an **h**at **ih**n **e**in **g**elast, **W**en **a**usgaham; **M**it **S**olden und mit **S**perren'n **K**am'n **h**in **die** **h**eil'gen **Str**assen. **S**chon **a**ber **w**ar **e**in **O**rt **n**icht **D**er **L**eidn **m**ehr **v**orhanden. **E**in **d**ort **v**erfündet **h**o'n. **E**r **se** **v**om **O**rt **e**mpfanden. **A**us **L**ieb' **h**ie **und** **ist** **G**ott **D**en **K**reuzestab **g**elorden. **U**nd **h**at **und** **n**un **die** **H**immel **D**urch **se**in **e**rmorden. **A**men.

Figure 1. Illuminated page of a Hebrew bible with Masora text as frame and micrographic bible text on either side of the interwoven gold figuring (Ms. Heb. 4^o 790, fol. 114^r; Jewish National Library and University Library, Jerusalem; Burgos 1260).

signification.¹⁷ Non-metrified texts are again found in medieval diagrams such as the *arbor consanguinitatis* or figures of the cosmos¹⁸ or in the allegorical images of Joachim of Fiore¹⁹ which, for this reason, cannot be counted as figured poems. The so-called “calligrammes” (1912-17) of the French poet G. Apollinaire may be subsumed under our definition as modern forms of the figured poem, the principle difference from traditional models being that their texts are not versified in the conventional manner.

Most avant-garde concrete poetry lies outside the bounds of the figured poem. This is true not only for the purely phonetic products of sound poetry, which pose no problem here, but also for the pictorial texts which step over the boundary into graphic art, or again, for constructs whose textual element is not any way mimetic. These reservations do, however, still leave a considerable amount of concrete poetry whose optically-composed texts (often called pictograms) may be included in the genre; indeed, their lineage is frequently evident in the traditional figures (tree, pyramid, etc.) to which they allude.

The figured poem often shares the enigmatic, coded structure of the pictorial riddle or rebus²⁰ (Figure 2); it does not, however, either wholly or partially replace linguistic units with pictures which the reader then has to decode conceptually, but creates a single picture or complex of pictures either solely or primarily by arranging the written text.

In the figured poem the text manifestly takes precedence over its configuration — we are dealing with a *poetic* genre, not with a genre of fine art — and this distinguishes it from the monumental epigram, in which the text is a subordinate element of the artifact. This must, of course, still allow for the influence of monumental inscriptions, arranged symmetrically on a vertical axis, on figured poems especially of the *epicedium* variety.

The emblem — with its generally triadic structure of *motto*, *pictura*, and *subscriptio*²¹ — differs from the figured poem in the paratactic relation it establishes between image and text (Figure 3) where the *carmen figuratum* creates a structural synthesis. This is not to deny that the relation between *pictura* and *subscriptio* in the emblem has a lot in common between figure and text in visual poetry.

The figured poem has frequently been confused with the so-called “picture poem” (*Bildgedicht*) on the grounds that baroque poetics often referred to figured poems as “picture-rhymes” (*Bilderreime*) and, indeed, some *carmina figurata* are concerned with pictures. The morphological difference, however,

Figure 2. Anonymous rebus with typographic text and printed colored woodcuts ca. 1820/30 (H. Vogel, *Bilderbogen, Papiersoldat, Würfelspiel und Lebensrad* (Leipzig 1981) fig. 112).

is entirely clear: G. Kranz²² has established beyond a doubt that the "picture poem" is one which describes pictures, and such poems are rarely figured.

The species of figured poem which develops a second textual level ("intext") as the main figured component over and above the normal text represents an extension of the acrostic technique of letter compilation, and in this respect such poems have been allied to the mannered versification (*versus retrogradi*, anagrams, acrostics, etc.) for which E. Kuhs has coined the generic term "letter poetry" (*Buchstabendichtung*) and which, she claims, has the power to form a genre of its own.²³

As for E. Kuhs herself, she excludes figured poems altogether from her theory of "letter poetry"; A. Liede, on the other hand, understands them, along with other mannerist forms, as being a sort of nonsense poetry.²⁴ The serious intention of most of these poems, with their mythical or allegorical levels of signification, would seem to confute this notion. Liede's strict generic distinction between *versus cancellati* and *carmina figurata*²⁵ appears equally inappropriate in view of the close typological as well as historical connection between the two forms, although it must be observed that intextual forms, such as acrostic, *mesostichon*, and *telestichon* which lack a developed figurative structure cannot be counted as figured poems. However extensively many figured poems may employ additional artistic letter compilations and however close the relation may be between the literary form of the *chronostichon* and of the grid poem (the chronogram has a numeral intext, and the grid poem a verbal one), these other forms manifestly lack the mimetic quality which is a constitutive element of the genre of figured poetry.

III Types of figured poem

Having defined and delimited the genre of figured poetry vis-à-vis related categories and forms (while not, of course, denying the existence of mixed forms), we are now in a position to typify the various manifestations of the genre, taking account of their historical sequence.

1 The outline poem

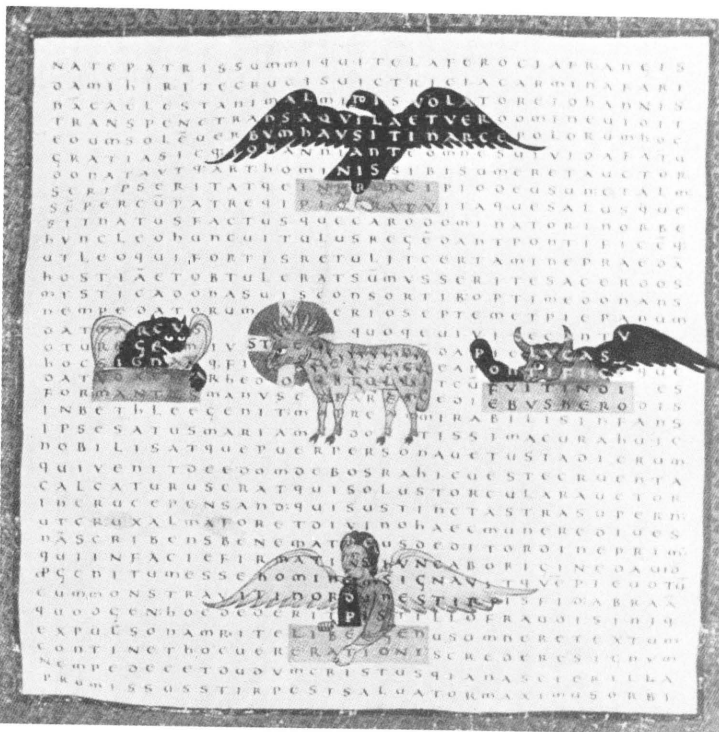
The wing poem of Simias of Rhodes (Figure 4) is an example of the earliest type of western visual poetry.²⁶ The figured text consists of twelve lines in choriambic meter divided into two equal and symmetrical prosodic blocks. Lines 1-6 lose one metrical foot per line, and lines 7-12 gain in the same fashion: there is, thus, an exact correspondence between lines 1 and 12, 2 and 11, and so on.²⁷ Graphically this results in a pair of wings which, in accordance with the strict mythical utterance of the poem, symbolizes the god Eros, who is addressed not only visually but also verbally (lines 6 and 9). Eros is not, however, depicted in the conventional manner of the putti as a tender, playful god of love but as the demiurge of the universe with all the connotations of a mythical soteriology, his theogony being thematized according to the distinctive teaching of the Orphics.²⁸

CASTALIDES DOMI NOVIA TVTVMTRADIT EPALMAM
CONSTANTINVS HABET BELLORVM VIRE TROPHEVM
VINDICE SVBDEXTRARENDENS FELICITER ORDEM
CONSILLI SITERVM SVS DENS ET CVNCTARE FERRE
ROMATI BELLIS CVMSAEYALINNECTARE PESISIT
VINCLAVIGIVIR TVS MITSNONARMATINHOS TEM
SICMAGNOPACIENS DOCVIT CERTAMINE PARCENS
QVIDPIETAS DONET POSTDIRAPIAMINECLEMENS
VNCMIHI IAMTOTODACILESHELICOMACAMAENE
NITITITE CONEPOSITASITITEMPORAMITIPALMAS
NECTITITE DEMETRIS VIRITVVM CARMINA ET OMNES
CONCINITEVTFRVCTV FELIXETPINCIPEDIGNA
DETSTIRPECANTASTEXENS QVAVSPAGINAVERSY
HINCVOVEATITVLOVOTORYM CARMINA POLESN
PIERHOSMIHI PHOEBETVODENVMINEPRAESTENT
FONTES CASTALIAETYSILICETIREPERAGRANS
MENSIVACELSA PETEYALVMSIZANGEREVERSV
MVSAVELPITANTOIAMVNC SVBPRINCIPETAETA
LAVDIS DONAIFERENS RESONANS INIGNIARAMIS
VINCENTVMIVSOSAVDAXMIHIFIDATRIVMPHOS
ETERITVMIVITISTOTREDDERENOBILEPALMAS
AONEDVMQVAVSILLEFLVENSALITVNDARI GATAS
SANCRESALVSMVNDIARMIS INSIGNIBVSARDENS
CRISPRAVIS MELIORTEGARMINELAETAESCUNDO
CLIOMVSA SONANSTAFATVVLCHRRAIVVENTAE
NOBILETVDECVS PATRITVQVEALMEQVIRITVM
ETSPESVRBISERISHOSMENSISCARMINECAESAR
TVVINCENS PACISGRATISSIMAFOEDERASEMPER
INDVLGET FACILIS GENTES ADVNGEROGANTES
FACQVETVIVISGAVDENS VIRITVIBVS AVCTIS
CONSTANTINVS ITEMGLAVSORBIS GLORIA SAECLI
ROMVLEVM SIVS VXL MENS INCLITAFRATRYM
NOBLITASPRAVIS VEMEMORABILIFAMA
RESTITVIT VICTORCAESAR NOMENQVE DECVS QVE
SANCTE PATER RECTO SVPERVMVICENNIALAETA
AVGVSTOETDECIESCRESCANT SOLENNIANATIS

*In hac pagina per omnes partes Tricenis septene lrae sunt. & de ximo scripta Species Palme in qua sul
 ma duo primi Ramu qz breues videbant nec Versu poterant implere aduqzta est lra
 per directu & per obliquu Castalioi versu locus concluditur per unu ead lrae prima
 cumu manere & lra vltima primi Versus coi manere Secundu Ramu per obli
 quu descendens & ascendens sicut Versu Constantino sicut vne in carne & lra
 per tertiu Ramu ad eque per obliquu descendit & ascendit hic Versu Me
 vocat ausa nouus Metris manere Leos Per quartu Ramum ad eque per obliquu
 descendit & ascendit hic Versu Linte sub parva crescit vniqz Ramus per mediu
 primu descendit a media lrae primi versus usqz ad xeda vltimi hic versu Reddat ut m
 ixtus Musaroni (omne Versus)*

Figure 5. Grid poem of Optatianus Porphyrius in the form of a palm with commentary, from "Codex Guelferbytanus" 9 Aug. 40 fol. 12V; Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

Figure 6. Imago-Poem of Hrabanus Maurus with symbols of the evangelists and of the lamb of God ("Codex Bernensis 9," fol. 11V; Burgerbibliothek Bern).



2 The grid poem

The outline poem possesses only one textual level, and its structure is determined by varying line lengths and frequently also by varying meter. It does not often use additional pictorial material, nor does it observe the principle of letter counting; in these respects it contrasts with the grid-poems of the Roman court poet under Constantine the Great, Optatianus Porphyrius, which are constructed on an equilateral or rectangular text-surface into which colored *versus intexti* are set. These are formed in the manner of an acrostic, albeit a highly complex one, into a figurative network of words which is both mimetic in shape and symbolic in meaning.²⁹ While in the outline form the *figura* is constituted by the simple text alone, in the grid poem it is the intext rather than the square or rectangular base-text which determines the figure, both in its mimetic and its symbolic dimensions. And, in contrast to his Greek models, Optatian uses an identical meter, the hexameter, for the base text and the *versus intexti* and arranges this meter in letter-sequences of exactly equal length, with the result that the poem looks like a highly sophisticated mosaic of letters. An example is the poem ("Carmen IX") which Optatian sent from exile to Constantine on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of his reign, the *vicennalia* in 325 (Figure 5).³⁰

In the rectangular base-text the poet praises Constantine for his victory over the party of Licinius and extols his mildness towards the vanquished (1-8); he then calls on the gods to aid his own poetic undertaking, and in so doing, he emphasizes the difficulty of writing in *versus intexti* (9-22). There follows a *laudatio* of Constantine's son Crispus which pays tribute to the dynastic principle (23-30), and finally, the poem closes with a reference to the celebration which occasioned it, calling on the gods to further and to defend the rule of the Emperor Constantine.

The intext is worked into the figure of a tree with branches arranged symmetrically on either side of the vertical axis. In the text as in the commentary which it contains Optatian refers to this as a palm tree, with all its complex symbolism, both Christian and pagan. Living at the watershed of these two worlds, the poet invokes the palm as a sign of victory (*bellorum . . . tropaeum*, line 2)³¹ with its roots in the cult of Apollo, but at the same time, makes an unmistakable Christian reference to the palm as a symbol of virtue and salvation (*virtutum . . . palmam*, line 1).³² He may draw, in addition, on the political heraldry found on coins commemorating Constantine's *vicennalia*,³³ and, finally, he refers the palm poetically to his own poem of praise.

The first three lines of the intext — which are to be read in each case in descending order from the upper-left point of the branch to the trunk and, then, ascending to the upper-right point of the opposite branch — contain an invocation to the muses to assist the poet in making a *palma poetica* in honor of the Emperor Constantine (*Castalides, versu docili concludite palmam*). There follows an invocation of the god Apollo, whose support is particularly needed in view of the formal novelty and daring of the intextual structure (*Constantine fave; te nunc in carmina Phoebum/ Mens vocat, ausa novas metris indicere leges*). The last pair of lines in the tree figure, which constitute the

lowest two branches and the trunk, refer to the perfect symmetry of the *figura*, with its branches of exactly eighteen letters each (*Limite sub parili crescentis undique ramos/ Reddat ut intextus Musarum carmine versus*).

3 The intextual imago-poem

In his superficial adaptation of Christianity to a secular purpose Optatian remains a poet of the last phase of the ancient world; the learned theologian, Hrabanus Maurus, on the other hand, places his visual crossword poems wholeheartedly at the service of the Christian religious system. While assimilating Optatian's type of intextual grid poem, he is at the same time creating a new type which, because of its increased use of pictorial techniques, I should like to call the *imago*-poem; for the intexts in this type are inscribed in fully-drawn pictures, as in the fifteenth poem of the cycle *De laudibus sanctae crucis* (Figure 6),³⁴ which may serve as an example.

This is a *carmen quadratum*, written in hexameters, which incorporates in its graphic design the symbols of the four evangelists (angel = Matthew, lion = Mark, ox = Luke, eagle = John) and of the lamb of God (following *Apoc.* 4, 6-9, and 5, 6) in a cruciform figure.³⁵ The commentary adjoined by the author himself indicates the hierarchical ordering of these symbols to the four ends of the cross according to Hrabanus's understanding of the various christological perspectives of the four evangelists. Thus Matthew, who depicts Christ's human nature as the descendant of a family of man, takes the position at the foot of the cross; Mark, whose lion symbol indicates the *regia potestas*, and Luke, who emphasizes the priestly dignity of Christ, take the right and left arms of the cross, respectively, while John, whose Prologue soars like an eagle to the highest heights of divine contemplation, takes his position at the head of the cross. The representation is completed by the *agnus Dei* at the center of the cross which, in accordance with the iconographic convention of harmony, underlines the unity of the four gospels *in Christo*.³⁶

The individual symbols of the evangelists contain intexts which inform the reader about their respective christological attitudes; the rectangular tables placed between these symbols contain, in each case, a significant quotation from the gospel concerned. Thus:

1. Matthew (angel). a. picture: *Matthaeus hunc hominem signavit in ordine stirpis*. b. tablet: *Liber generationis* (Matt. 1,1).
2. Mark (lion). a. picture: *Marcus regem signat*. b. tablet: *Vox clamantis* (Mark 1,3).
3. Luke (ox). a. picture: *Dat Lucas pontificem*. b. tablet: *Fuit in diebus Herodes* (Luke 1,5).
4. John (eagle). a. picture: *Altivolans aquila et verbum hausit in arce Johannes*. b. tablet: *In principio erat verbum* (John 1,1).

The central image of the *agnus Dei* contains three different intexts: a. on the cross in the halo: *YOS* (in Greek, son). b. on the halo without a cross and on the head of the lamb: *Septem Spiritus Dei* (*Apoc.* 5,6). c. on the body of the lamb: *Ecce agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi* (John 1,29).

Thus, the sign language of the poem can be differentiated into the following groups: 1. Base text in hexameters. 2. Intext — explication of the evangelists' symbols plus quotation. 3. Pictures — colored pictures of the evangelists' symbols plus inscribed tablets. 4. Order of figures — cruciform lay-out.

It is characteristic of the *imago*-poem that the intext employs fully pictorial techniques of drawing and coloring; simply to color the letters of the intext would be insufficient. Thus, of all the forms of figured poetry, this is the closest one to fine art, in the case of Hrabanus' poem to the early medieval art of manuscript illumination.³⁷

4 The spatial line-poem

In the late Carolingian and Ottonian periods a new type of figured poetry arose, using as its basic structure the cross, the square, the triangle, and the circle.³⁸ In contrast to the Greek outline poem which uses an unbroken surface, this form uses for the first time the unmarked page as background of the geometrically formed lines of text, a technique later to be developed in the spatialist creations of concrete poetry. Although the spatial line-poem only has one textual level and does not use a closed block of letters, it does show some affinities to the grid poem. The complexity of its lines and their frequent crossing recalls the intextual structures of the *carmina cancellata*; indeed, the reader is often compelled to turn the text around in the act of reading. The technique of the spatial line-poem calls for the repetition of the same letter at the various crossing points of the text — this too is a typical grid technique — and such letters are often rubricated and calligraphically marked. The verse forms are, therefore, as a rule so constructed that the same letter occurs at the beginning (*homoioarcton*), in the middle (Leonine rhyme), and at the end (*homoioateleuton*).

An example of this type of poem is found in an eleventh century gradual. It consists of a great wheel in the center of which stands a square which, in itself, contains a lozenge (Figure 7). The spokes of the wheel lead out from an "O" at the hub, cross the corners of the square at the letter "T", and meet the circumference of the circle again at the letter "O". This circumference consists of eight short verse-lines (1-8) which, written in capitals, are to be read in a clockwise fashion starting at the top left-hand corner of the figure. They contain a song in praise of God as guide and director of the world and guarantor of the cosmic *ordo*.³⁹ There follow eight verse-lines (9-16) of cosmic imagery inscribed in the spokes of the wheel;⁴⁰ these lines run from the circumference to the center and are to be read in a clockwise direction beginning in the middle at the left.

The four hymnic lines (17-20)⁴¹ are inscribed in the lozenge, to be read again clockwise from the center-left of the figure. The question certainly arises here whether the praise of God is not becoming a praise of a temporal Lord, although none is explicitly named in the text.

This question is not laid to rest by the final four lines of the text (21-4)⁴² which are inscribed in the square, beginning at the top-left corner. In particular, the frequently repeated letters "O" and "T" allow no certain interpretation. If the

text is primarily a panegyric of a temporal ruler, they might be read as the initials of the addressee, possibly one of the Ottonian emperors; if, on the other hand, praise of God is the predominant or sole theme of the poem, the combination of these two letters may be read as a symbolic reference to the sign of the cross ("T") by whose means the divinity established his reign over the *orbis terrarum* ("O"), especially as cross and circle or wheel are essential constituents of the text.

Whatever the solution of this particular hermeneutic problem may be, it may be taken as established that the species of the spatial line-poem is determined by a structural triad of unmarked page-surface, complex figuration of textual lines in geometric form, and a tendency to mark and thus emphasize certain letters, this being connected with the symbolism of names.

5 *The cubus*.

Like magical squares and figured spells, the *cubus* can only with certain reservations be counted as a figured poem,⁴³ for the verbal element is by no means always a versified text: frequently it is simply a name or a prose sequence, as in the earliest examples of the species in the illustration of Greek epics (*Tabula Iliaca*) from the first century AD.⁴⁴ Nevertheless there are numerous poetic texts in this form (Figure 8), of which the Baroque literary preceptor Christian Männing says:⁴⁵ "To the lovers of poetry the *cubus* is a *carmen labyrinthum*, which leads into a maze and is read to the left and to the right, upwards and downwards, cross-wise in breadth and length. The whole art, however, consists in the center-most letter which is set large, and from this there issue all the arteries into the other lines."

Like the grid poem, the *cubus* is formed on a rectangle of strictly counted letters, each having a fixed and unchanging position. Poetically the intention is to confuse conventional reading expectations — at first sight the mosaic of letters seems like a labyrinth — and to present the restricted verse corpus in as many readings as it can possibly maintain.⁴⁶

This delineation of the various species of figured poetry in which the relation of figure to text has been the leading criterion does not claim to be a complete typology, nor does it deny the existence of mixed forms or the possibility of adducing other criteria of specification. Thus, a semantic approach might distinguish between text, intext, and meta-text; a graphical approach might divide static from kinetic and two-dimensional forms; and the criterion of *mimesis* would separate geometric from realistic and from letter constructions. Further groupings are possible according to textual categories (e.g., wedding or burial poems), verse structures (isometric, polymetric, and ametric poems), type of poetic work (figured strophes, complete poems, entire cycles), or relation to tradition (e.g., in the early modern period the imitation of classical models or of christian medieval models, or independent invention).

IV Continuity and discontinuity in the history of the genre

From the *technopaegnia* of the Hellenistic period right down to the visual mimetics of concrete poetry there is an impressive degree of continuity in the genre of figured poetry; of this there can be no doubt, whatever work remains to be done on the historical and literary affinities and dependencies of as-yet undiscovered source material. One need only observe the sense of tradition which informs the great innovators and theorists: Optatianus Porphyrius composed outline poems after the classical patterns of Dosiadas and Theocritus alongside of his own highly original grid poems, and Hrabanus Maurus refers in his cycle of cruciform *imago*-poems and grid poems to Optatian; the Baroque literary preceptor Sigmund von Birken, himself a producer of *carmina figurata*, traces the contemporary image-constructs (*Bildgebände*) back to Theocritus⁴⁷ and Guillaume Apollinaire, one of the great forerunners of concrete poetry, knew the ancient as well as the Baroque models of the form. The opinion of earlier scholars that the late Carolingian period saw a break in the continuity of the genre can no longer be maintained, for not only have many Ottonian *carmina figurata* — including a whole series from Spain⁴⁸ — come to light, but the unbroken manuscript of Hrabanus' poems down to modern times has been established, and indeed the contribution of the high and late middle ages to the history of the genre has been documented in compositions by Peter Abelard⁴⁹ and Nicolò de' Rossi.⁵⁰

The continuity of the spatial line-poem in the fourteenth century is attested strongly by the *Liber de distincione metrorum* of 1363 by Iacobus Nicholai de Dacia, which contains various poems of this type, among them a *carmen figuratum* in wheel form (see cover) which, dealing with the theme of death, places the letter M, the initial of the word *mors* ("death"), in the intersection of the verse sequences.⁵¹

The contention of this essay that figured poetry constitutes a genre in its own right is tacitly confirmed in many baroque treatises in poetics, which denominate "picture-rhymes" (*Bilderreime*) as a full-blooded form; it is confirmed, too, by the early collection of figured poetry into anthologies. Thus, Alcuin gathered into a collection, which was then presented to Charlemagne, the poems of Optatian alongside other grid-poems by writers of the Carolingian court;⁵² and the Greek models of the genre, although from different authors, were collected together in a separate part of the *Anthologia Graeca*, as they were, too, in many manuscripts both of the *Bucolics* and of Theocritus, where they are even listed separately in the title — a sure sign of the structural affinity of this group of texts.

New discoveries from the eighteenth century have also confounded the formerly widespread view that the genre had fallen into abeyance around 1750; and even the nineteenth century is recognized to have made an important contribution to visual poetry in works such as Victor Hugo's "Les Djinns"⁵³ or Stephan Mallarmé's "Coup de Dè",⁵⁴ which stand out from a tradition otherwise represented only in the faint eddies of individual epigonal *carmina figurata*,⁵⁵ devotional or mystical graphology,⁵⁶ and figured caricature.⁵⁷ Both

Hugo's and Mallarmé's poems, the one conventional and other revolutionary in effect, fulfill the essential criterion of the genre, the structural integration of lyrical text and patterned form.

In contrast to most figured poems before 1900, Apollinaire's "calligrammes" are not written in traditional metric form. This, however, should be ascribed rather to the fact that they are modern poems than to their being figured, although it could certainly be argued that their visual quality is a specifically modern way of assuring the poeticity of a text which lacks conventional meter.

Apollinaire's figured poem "La cravate et la montre"⁵⁸ dispenses with meter, versification, and rhyme but stands nevertheless in the historical tradition of the *carmen figuratum* (Figure 9). Its mimetic, one-dimensional text, with no intext and no supplementary pictorial detail, is recognizable as a modern version of the outline poem, for which the words themselves form a picture, and for which the combination of two object-symbols in one poetic construct is by no means unusual. Indeed, for all his modernity in the choice of objects, Apollinaire places himself at least indirectly in the tradition of the Baroque visual poem, which had cultivated the type of the clock-poem, albeit in the form of the hour-glass. Moreover, while the necktie symbolizes the constricting forces of bourgeois society on the "civilized" and domesticated man, who is called upon by the poet to throw them off, with his tie, if he wants to breathe the air of freedom, the figure of the clock formulates the unmistakable Baroque sentiments of the *carpe diem* and the *memento mori*.⁵⁹

Apollinaire's substitution of enigmatic images in verbal form for the numbers of the clockface — e.g., 1 is a heart, 2 is the eyes, 5 is a hand, 7 is the week — recalls on the one hand the replacement of numbers by concrete symbols in Indian tradition as well as that of many peoples who have no abstract numerals,⁶⁰ but is, on the other hand, reminiscent of the methods of medieval and Baroque number-allegorizing, the difference being that it reverses the usual interpretative procedure, setting up the *significatum* as the sign of the conventional *significans*. Thus the replacement of the figure 9 by the nine muses at the nine openings of the body has its parallel in the allegorical encyclopedia of numbers of Petrus Bungus (Bergamo, 1599) who, albeit in different places, interprets the number 9 both as the *musarum numerus* and as referring to the *humani corporis foramina*.⁶¹

That the poem is based on a number structure is as germane to the conventions of patterned poetry as is its use of anagram and *notarikon*: letter-poetry is, after all, typical of early modern visual poetry. The technique of *gemetrie* (letter-number symbolism) and the influence of the cabbala may be exemplified in the forms which replace the figures 6 and 4 on the clock-face. Instead of the 6 we have the anagram "Tircis," with its six letters, its allusion to the English word "six" (here "sic") and its palindromic reference to the English phoneme sequence "secret" (here "sicrit"), itself perhaps an illusion to "sex."

The number 4 is replaced by the cabbalistic tetragram AGLA, a magic formula found on amulets and talismans, whose letters, read as a *notarikon*, stand for the Hebrew prayer of thanksgiving, *Ateh gibor [gebir] Le-Olahm Adonai* ("Thou, O Lord, art eternal and almighty"). Apollinaire's poem is, therefore,

linked to the tradition of *carmen figuratum* not only graphically but also in the detail of its word and letter play.

Claus Bremer's visual poem "Taube" (German, "dove") of 1968,⁶² with its mimetic graphical form and its stylized (albeit not in the traditional sense metric) base-text (Figure 10) shows quite clearly the characteristics of the tradition of figured poetry as well as that of the concrete poetry of which Bremer both theoretically and practically was a pioneer. The figure of the dove contrasts pointedly with the war-like utterances of the text, with their rhetoric of endurance and sacrifice: "Risk everything — deserve- in the end to gain everything- dare all- blow up the bridges behind you — the cry of war cuts off all retreat to life and death- wage a war without cease-fire, without retreat, without compromise- to win is to accept that life is not the highest good."

The antithetical relation of figure to text reveals in heavy satire the way in which a fascist propaganda and politics of war may cloak itself in the slogans of peace, if, indeed, the dove is to be read as mimetic. Bremer uses the formal techniques of multiple word repetition and division, the former underlining the monotony of war-propaganda, the latter opening up verbal allusions and suggestions (" . . . abbrechen, abbrechen, abbr chen, abbr . . . / . . . erreichen, erreichen, er hen er . . ."). The word sequence recalls military columns, and the lines of punctuation are like machine-gun fire. In its structural unity of stylized text and emblematic graphology, this poem too is a *carmen figuratum* of the outline poem type.

However novel may be the claims of modern visual poetry and the influences (of linguistic semiotics, of advertising, of the new media like photography, film, television, for example) which have come to bear on it, it nevertheless reveals in many instances a structural continuity with the genre of figured poetry. Historically speaking, the difference between Claus Bremer's textual image and a Baroque image-construct is no greater than that, for example, between a Greek *technopaignion*, with its polymetric rhyme and its roots in mythology, and one of Optatian's grid poems, with its double text strata, its isometric rhyme, and its Christian sentiments. Other products of modern concrete and post-concrete poetry, however, even though they may use visual means in the presentation of linguistically-based texts, cannot, at least inasmuch as they do not reproduce any sort of real object or even semantic sequence (some poems, for instance, are constructed on non-semantic letter series), be counted as figured poems; this does not, of course, mean that these poems show no similarities to or influences from the genre. But to order them generically and historically into a more comprehensive poetic theory, if visual poetry is heeded, deserves its own appropriate study.⁶³

1. Introductions to the contemporary discussion may be found in K. W. Hempfer, *Gattungstheorie, Information und Synthese* (München 1973) and in the collection of essays edited by W. Hinck, *Textsortenlehre- Gattungsgeschichte* (Heidelberg 1977).
2. It seems symptomatic that none of the theoretical discussions of the genre question treat, to my knowledge, of figured poetry.
3. Useful collections are: K.-P. Dencker, *Text-Bilder, Visuelle Poesie International* (Köln 1972); D. Higgins, *George Herbert's Pattern Poems: In their Tradition* (New York 1977); A. Hatherly, *A Experiência do Prodígio, Bases Teóricas e Antologia de Textos-Visuais Portugueses do Séculos XVII et XVIII* (Lisboa 1983).
4. Cf. U. Ernst, "Die Entwicklung der optischen Poesie in Antike, Mittelalter und Neuzeit, Ein literarhistorisches Forschungsdesiderat," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift* 26 (1976) 379ff; and U. Ernst, "Europäische Figurengedichte in Pyramidenform aus dem 16. und 17. Jahrhundert, Konstruktionsmodelle und Sinnbildfunktionen," *Euphorion* 76 (1982) 295-360; and U. Ernst, "Zahl und Maß in den Figurengedichten der Antike und des Frühmittelalters, Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung tektonischer Bauformen," *Mensura, Maß, Zahl, Zahlensymbolik im Mittelalter* (Berlin 1984) ("Miscellanea Mediaevalia," 16,2) 310-32; and the study by G. Pozzi, *La parola dipinta* (Milano 1981).
5. Cf. K.-P. Dencker's biography of Andreas in: *Am Anfang war das Wort* [exhibition catalog], Städtische Galerie Lüdenscheid [ed. U. Obier] (Lüdenscheid 1984) 31.
6. J. A. Redhouse, "A turkish circle ode by Shahin Ghiray," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18 (London 1861) pp. 400-15; M. Aksel, "Das Schrift-Bild in der türkischen Kunst," *Anatolica* 1 (1967) 111-7.
7. Cf. I. Davidson, "Eccentric forms of Hebrew verse," *Students Annual of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America* 1 (1914) 84.
8. Cf. F. Rückert, *Grammatik, Poetik und Rhetorik der Perser* (1874; Osnabrück 1966) 152ff.
9. On Sanskrit figured poetry, cf. K. N. Jhā, *Figurative poetry in Sanskrit literature* (Delhi 1975); S. Lienhard, "Enigmatisk vers och carmina figurata i sanskritdikningnen," *Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Årsbok* (1983) 79-87.
10. Cf. for example, H. Franke, "Kulturgeschichtliches über die chinesische Tusche" (München 1962) ("Proceedings of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences, philosophical-historical division," 54) fig. 16.
11. Cf. P. Lehmann, "Figurale Schriftflächen" (1924), in *Erforschung des Mittelalters* 3 (Stuttgart 1960) 60-6.
12. R. Diehl, *Figurensatz in Frankfurter Drucken der Renaissance und es Barock* (Offenbach 1951) 7.
13. Thus in the Arabian tradition the versified text of the Koran is often arranged figuratively, but the combination of figure and rhyme does not form the sort of unity demanded of figured poetry.
14. Cf. U. Ernst, "Kontinuität und Transformation der mittelalterlichen Zahlensymbolik in der Renaissance," *Euphorion* 77 (1983) 289ff.
15. Cf. J. Bergsagel, "Cordier's circular canon," *Musical Times* 113 (1972) 1175-7.
16. Cf. B. Garbe and G. Garbe, "Ein verstecktes Figurengedicht bei Daniel von Czepko, Das treuhertzia Creutze als Krypto-Technopnugnia eines Hymges von Venantius Fortunatus," *Euphorion* 69 (1975) 100-6.
17. On the *Masora figurata* cf. L. Avrin, "Hebrew Micrography: One Thousand Years of Art in Script," *Visible Language* 18 (1984) 87-95.
18. Cf. the *arbor cognatum* in the Codex Bernensis 263 (Isidor, Etymologiae) f. 14f and the diagram of the world with an axial T-shaped map in the Codex Bernensis 212 / I (Cassiodor, Institutiones) f. 109f; cf. O. Homburger, *Die illustrierten Handschriften der Burgerbibliothek* (Bern 1962) fig. 14 and 74.

19. Cf. Joachim de Fiore, *Liber figurali* (Torino 1953).
20. On the rebus, cf. E.-M. Schenck, *Das Bilderrätsel* (Hildesheim 1973); N. Feran, *I rebus* (Milano 1977).
21. Cf. W. Harms, "Emblem / Emblematik," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 9 (1983) 552ff.
22. G. Kranz, *Das Bildgedicht* 1 (Köln 1981) 7.
23. E. Kuhs, *Buchstabendichtung, Zur gattungskonstituierenden Funktion von Buchstabenformationen in der französischen Literatur vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Heidelberg 1982).
24. A. Liede, *Dichtung als Spiel, Studien zur Unsinnspoesie an den Grenzen der Sprache* 2 (Berlin 1963) 190-204.
25. A. Liede, loc. cit., 190.
26. Cf. H. Beckby's edition, *Die griechischen Bukoliker* (Meisenheim am Glan 1975) 334.
27. Cf. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Griechische Verskunst* (1921; Darmstadt 1962) 126.
28. Cf., G. Wojaczek, *Daphnis, Untersuchungen zur griechischen Bukolik* (Meisenheim am Glan 1969) 67ff.
29. Cf. U. Ernst, "Zahl und Maß", loc. cit., 315ff.
30. Cf. G. Polara's edition, *Publili Optatiani Porfyrii Carmina* 1 (Roma 1973) 37.
31. Cf. M. Claesen, "Le palmier, symbole d'Apollon," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge* (Roma 1938). Cf. H. Danthine, *Le palmier — dattier et les arbres sacres dans l'iconographie de l'Asie occidentale ancienne* (Paris 1937).
32. On Christian symbolism, cf. the remarks of G. Klameth, "Von der Sykomore der Hathor bis zur Wunderpalme des Pseudo-Matthäus und von der i-w-Pflanze bis zu den Blumenwundern der äthiopischen Marienhymnen," *Festschrift für P. W. Schmidt* (Wien 1928) 336ff; G. Anichini, "Palma ed Olivo," *B. Amici Catacombe* 9 (1939) 58-61, which goes into the Christian symbolism of the palm in the catacombs; and J. Gräf, *Palmenweihe und Palmenprozession in der lateinischen Liturgie* (Kaldenkirchen 1959).
33. Cf. the commentary of G. Polara, loc. cit., vol. 2 (Roma 1973) 65.
34. Cf. the editions of Hrabanus Maurus, *De laudibus sanctae crucis* Pl. 107, 207f.; facsimile edition of the Codex Vindobonensis 652 (ÖNB) (Graz 1973) f. 20v.
35. On the deeper sense of the poem, cf. the remarks of A. Mott, "Die Kreuzessymbolik bei Hrabanus Maurus" ("Fuldaer Geschichtsblätter") *Beilage zur Fuldaer Zeitung* 4 (1905) 182ff.
36. J. von Schlosser, "Eine Fuldaer Miniaturhandschrift der k.k. Hofbibliothek," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen* 13 (Wien 1892) 12 cites iconographic parallels "in the codex aureus of St. Emmeran in Munich (f. 65) which goes back to Alcuin, and in the Bamberg bible (f. 339) which derives from the same source." On the same poem in the ms. 223 (f. 20v) from Amiens cf. A. Boinet, "Notice sur deux manuscrits carolingiens à miniature exécutés à l'abbaye de Fulda," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 65 (1904) 364.
37. Hrabanus depended on the help of a painter, in his case his fellow monk Hatto, to add the pictorial detail of his *imagines*.
38. Cf. the anonymous poems to King Odo of Paris (died 888) and his queen Theotrada in N. Fickermann, "Eine karolingische Kostbarkeit zwischen Figurengedichten der Zeit um 1500" *PBB* 83 (Tübingen 1961/2) 49ff. On a poem of Eugenius Vulgarius in the form of a geometric pyramid, cf. U. Ernst, "Poesie und Geometrie, Betrachtungen zu einem visuellen Pyramidengedicht des Eugenius Vulgarius," *Geistliche Denkformen in der*

Literatur des Mittelalters ([Festschrift for] F. Ohly, Munich 1985) 321ff. Cf. also the poems of Uffing von Werden in the *MGH. Poet. Lat.* 5, 3, 629-31, printed there without *figura*.

39. Text following *MGH. Poet. Lat.* 5, 3, 666f., 1-8:

Omnigenum pater a soliO
Omnia providus ethereO
Ordine temperat eximiO
Opere condita quaeque suO.
Obligat <et> regit imperiO
Organa, quae dedit ipse suO
Omne, quo moderante bonO
Orbe tonas, pater, amplificO.

40. 9-16:

Ordine tam vario disponiT sidera caelO
Omnipotens niTido super exTans ethera fanO.
Offerat his servo paTrem cum corde serenO
Obice disrupTo mentisque Tumore fugatO
Omnia, que nato rogiteT cum pneumate sacrO,
Occupat aTque suo mare quod Tam gurgite vastO
Orbita, quod tanto replicaT per tempora gyrO,
Occasum cerTo prefigit limiTe PhebO.

41. 17-20:

Tua filius ecce refudiT Tolerans mala, qui bona noviT.
Tibi conditor omnia subdaT, Tua quodque benignitas optaT.
Titulus reprobantis labescaT, Thalamus pietatis adhiscaT.
Tibi formula laudis resultaT, Tua gloria lausque crebrescaT.

42. 21-4:

Te, rex, terra tremiT, Tibi laudes pangere glisciT.
Te freta cuncta pavent, Tibi Tartara genua curvanT.
Te pius abba coliT, Tua psallere munera possiT,
Te recolens vigeaT, Tua quam pia gratia ditaT.

43. Cf. C. Doria, "Visual poems from Greek magical papyri," *Kaldron* 3 (1977) 2-5; H. Hofmann, *Das Satorquadrat, Zur Geschichte und Deutung eines antiken Wortquadrats* (Bielefeld 1977).

44. G. Lippold, "Tabula Iliaca," in *RE* (Pauly-Wissowa) 2, 8 (Stuttgart 1932) col. 1886ff.

45. J. C. Männling, *Der Europäische Helicon* (Alten-Stettin 1704) 130.

46. On sub-species of the *cubus*, cf. G. Caramuel de Lobkowitz, *Primus Calamus ob oculos ponens metametricam, quae variis currentium, recurrentium, adscendentium, descendendum nec non circumvolantium versuum ductibus, aut aeri incisus aut buxo insculptos aut plumbo infusus multiformes labyrinthos exornat* (Roma 1663) pl. 20; and cf. G. Pozzi, op. cit., 152.

47. Sigmund von Birken, *Teutsche Rede-bind und Dicht-Kunst* (1679; Hildesheim 1973) 144.

48. Cf. M. C. Díaz y Díaz, "Vigilán y Sarracino, Sobre composiciones figurativas en la Rioja del siglo X," *Lateinische Dichtungen des X. und XI. Jahrhunderts* [Festschrift for W. Bulst] (Heidelberg 1981) 60-92.

49. Cf. M. Oudot de Dainville, "Vers attribués à Pierre Abélard," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 87 (1926) 236f.

50. *Il Canzoniere di Nicolò de' Rossi*, ed. F. Brugnolo (Padova 1974) vol. 1, 142-6.

51. Iacobus Nicholai de Dacia, *Liber de distincione metrorum*, ed. A. Kabell (Uppsala 1967) 162:

Metrum precedentis figure scilicet metrum a centro circuli/
sive ab axe rote pertransiens

Mors renouat fletuM, Mors est mare felle repletuM;
Mors premit audaceM, Mors odit denique paceM.
Mors facit omne maluM, Mors mergit remige maluM,
Mors superauit AdaM. Mors! es mala! quid superaddaM?
Mors minuit risuM, Mors temptauit ParadisuM;
Mors dat meroreM, Mors tollit ab orbe decoreM.
Mors infert penaM, Mors ponit vbique sagnaM;
Mors refouet belluM, Mors est penale flagelluM!

Metrum minoris circuli.

Mors necat infanteM, Mors trudit ad ima giganteM;
Mors spoliat vesteM, Mors infert vlcera, pesteM.
Mors frangit bullaM, Mors sugit ab osse medullaM;
Mors dat singultuM, Mors rodit verme sepultuM.

Metrum circuli maioris.

Mors genus exosuM, Mors est monstrum viciosuM;
Mors vocat ad guerraM, Mors destruit undique terraM.
Mors scopam, vangaM, Mors portat tela, falangaM;
Mors arcum, scutuM, Mors ensem gestat acutuM.

52. D. Schaller, "Die karolingischen Figurengedichte des Cod. Bern. 212," in *Medium aevum vivum* [Festschrift for W. Bulst] (Heidelberg 1960) 22-47.

53. On V. Hugo's poem "Les Djinns" (1829) cf. R. Massin, *Buchstabenbilder und Bildalphabete* (Ravensburg 1970) 204-7.

54. On Mallarmé, cf. D. Schwarz, "Visuelle Poesie? Skizze nach Texten von Stephane Mallarmé," in *Visuelle Poesie*, Ausstellungskatalog, ed. K.-P. Dencker (Dillingen 1984) 7-10.

55. Cf. for example Adolf Bäuerle's beaker poem in *Wiener Allgemeine Theaterzeitung* 11 (14. November 1818) 137.

56. Cf., E. D. and F. Andrews, *Visions of the Heavenly Sphere, A study in Shaker Religious Art* (Charlottesville [Virginia] 1969) fig. 3 ff., pl. II ff.

57. Cf. the exhibition catalog ed. by G. Unverfehrt, *La Caricature* (Göttingen 1980) pp. 33 and 37.

58. Text following *Oeuvres complètes de Guillaume Apollinaire*, ed. M. Decaudin (Paris 1966) 3, 183.

59. Cf. W. Raibles illuminating treatment in *Moderne Lyrik in Frankreich* (Stuttgart 1972) 92-4.

60. Cf. the remarks of K. Menninger, *Zahlwort und Ziffer, Eine Kulturgeschichte der Zahl* (Göttingen 1957) 129f: "The Indians have cultivated this method of substituting sense-images for numbers: this 1 is 'moon'; 2 'eye' or 'arms'; 4 'dice-throw' or 'brother', for Rama in Indian poetry had three brothers, or 'era'; 7 'head' for the head has seven holes."

61. Petrus Bungus, *Numerorum mysteria*, ed. U. Ernst (Hildesheim and New York 1983) 346 and 517.

62. C. Bremer, *Texte und Kommentare* (Steinbach 1968) unfoliated.

63. An interesting and promising study in this respect is C. Weiss, *Seh-Texte* (Nürnberg 1984); J. Adler throws considerable light on the historical evolution of forms in his essay "Technopaigneia, carmina figurata and Bilder-Reime: Seventeenth-century figured poetry in historical perspective," *Comparative Criticism Yearbook* 4 (1984) 107ff.