

THE CUBIST AND DADA ARTISTS'
USE OF TYPOGRAPHY IN COLLAGE

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INTRODUCTION

The modern term 'Collage', meaning pasted paper, started with the Cubists pasting paper onto canvas and paper in 1912. However, the first known origins of collage composition date from many centuries earlier. The earliest existent examples of pasted papers were done by twelfth-century Japanese calligraphers. They made picture poems by copying poems onto collaged sheets, pasted up from a number of irregular shaped pieces of delicately tinted papers. From its beginning, the technique of pasted papers, collage, was an ornamentation of text. Typography has always been a major part of most collage work. The Cubist and Dada artists use typography in many different forms in most of their collage work.

The Cubists found paper objects for their collages; these included labels, packages and newspaper clippings all containing typography. The visual energy of the typographic texture was at first regarded as an element of colour and texture but soon the typography was consciously manipulated by the cubists in the collages to communicate the artist's social statements. This meant that collage soon caught the attention of graphic designers and was readily translated into communication design.

This thesis will examine mainly the Cubist, but

also the Dada artists' use of type in collage. It will start from 1912 when Picasso first used pasted paper in his work. Both Picasso and Juan Gris used typography particularly through their use of newspaper clippings in their collages. Through the typography they communicated their ideas and thoughts on current issues and events to the world. When people look at a work of art they try to understand it. One of the main concerns of this thesis will be to look at the artist's choice of a particular piece of type and why he placed it on the page the way he did. Whether the piece of type is an old cinema ticket, a scrap of newspaper, hand rendered or stencilled type, an effort will be made to understand the reason the artist used it, whether it is broken up or torn. Also the thesis will consider why this use of words or printed papers taken from everyday life makes such a difference to the collage. It will look at their exploration of the most ordinary printed materials and their contribution to the finished result of the collage.

The artists whose work will be studied will include Pablo Picasso, Georges Braques, Juan Gris of the Cubists and Hans Arp, Hannah Höch, Raoul Hausmann and in particular Kurt Schwitters of the Dada artists. From the typographical experiments and the use of metaphors in cubist collage to the dry, precise, mechanical and also experimental type used by the Dada artists, it is hoped to give a graphic designer's point of view.

Chapter 1

This chapter will look at the historical background of early twentieth century Europe as it is important for understanding the background and use of typography in Cubist collages. It will examine the beginning of Cubist collages, also discussing the effect of current issues and events on collage, going into greater detail in chapter two. This chapter will also briefly examine the use of stencilled typography in collage. Most Art Historians, for example John Golding and Florian Rodari, look at Cubism and its representation of light and shadow, mass and void, flatness and depth. The thesis will briefly look at Cubism in this way and at Cubist collage in terms of form and texture. However, these writers, although they discuss an extremely important part of Cubist collage, neglect very much the typographic input into collage and its meaning. The writings of Robert Rosenblum, Patricia Leighton and Christine Poggi, contain relevant discussions on the typography in Cubist collage. This chapter and chapter two will take into account useful points and discussions that these three writers have made in their articles, which will also be briefly discussed later.

CUBISM - FORM, TEXTURE AND TYPOGRAPHY

Picasso and Braque, who had been working together since 1908, were greatly inspired by black African art with its realism and also the work of Cézanne.

Together they fought to replace the traditional method of perspective painting with the development of Cubism.

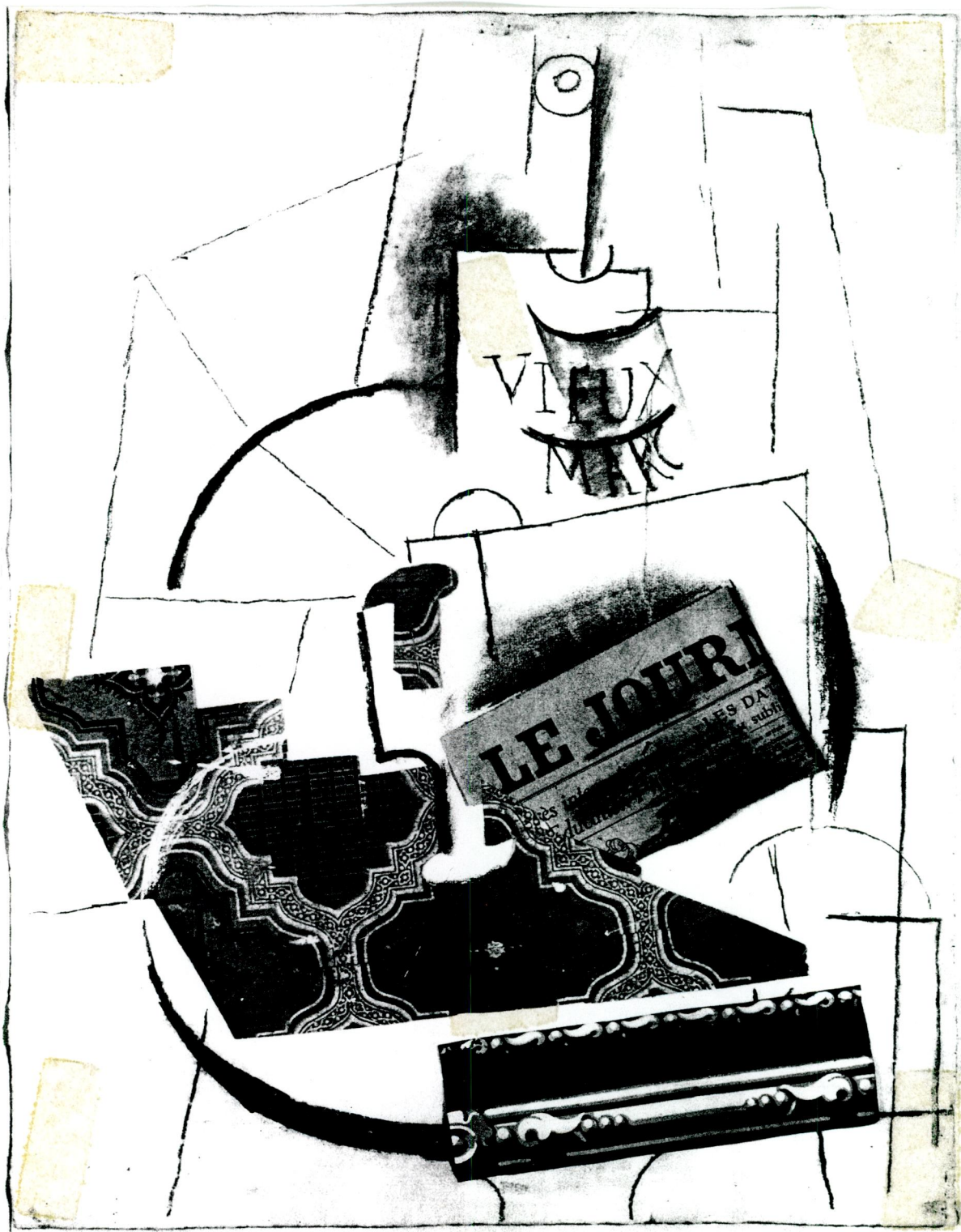
Douglas Cooper writes in his book:

The basic intentions of Braque and Picasso in creating Cubism was not merely to present as much essential information as possible about figures and objects but to recreate visual reality as completely as possible in a self-sufficing, non-imitative art-form. (2,P.49)

The picture space became compressed and fragments were pushed towards the surface. The forms in the composition projected outwards as if they were reaching out towards the viewer. A flood of disconnected pictorial forms was released all impatient to escape from the traditional restraints of painting. Picasso and Braque did not want it to be possible for the viewer's eyes to glide effortlessly over a painting until the meaning was recognized. The viewer's eye was made to search out with difficulty the meaning behind the work. Planes overlapped, angles jutted out unexpectedly, objects were flattened so that they coincided with the picture plane. The viewer was forced to notice the texture in the Cubist work. In 1912 the pasting of strips of paper, bus tickets, newspaper clippings, etc., onto the canvas became part of the composition. Collage was the logical culmination of the interest in stimulating textures and a further and complete rejection of the convention that a painter was supposed to achieve the

reproduction of texture by means of paint rather than by the short cut of applying texture itself to his/her canvas. In the years 1912-14 Picasso, Braque, Gris and the other Cubist artists rivalled each other in the variety and originality of their collages, combining pasted papers with drawing and painting.

The Cubists had given up landscapes and portraits and had begun concentrating on rendering objects that one can pick up, objects that fit into the hand. It was a return to reality in painting, declared by the random forms cut out of wallpaper, torn from the newspaper, or the use of wine labels, etc. Typographic elements in particular were introduced in a familiar way. In fact, the typographic elements in many of their collages are often the most immediate things that are recognizable to the eye. The worn state of these elements, the cut-up fragments of the daily newspaper or a daily bus ticket, were magically revitalized in the unexpected environment of the Cubist drawing. In Picasso's collage Bottle of Vieux Marc, Glass & Newspaper (Illus. 1) the hand lettered label of the liquor bottle is confounded with the machine printed title of the newspaper; the shape of the goblet is echoed in the pattern of the wallpaper. These shuffled realities are arranged with sharp angles and bluntly textured patterns. Picasso's choice of collage objects tends to be more evocative than Braque's

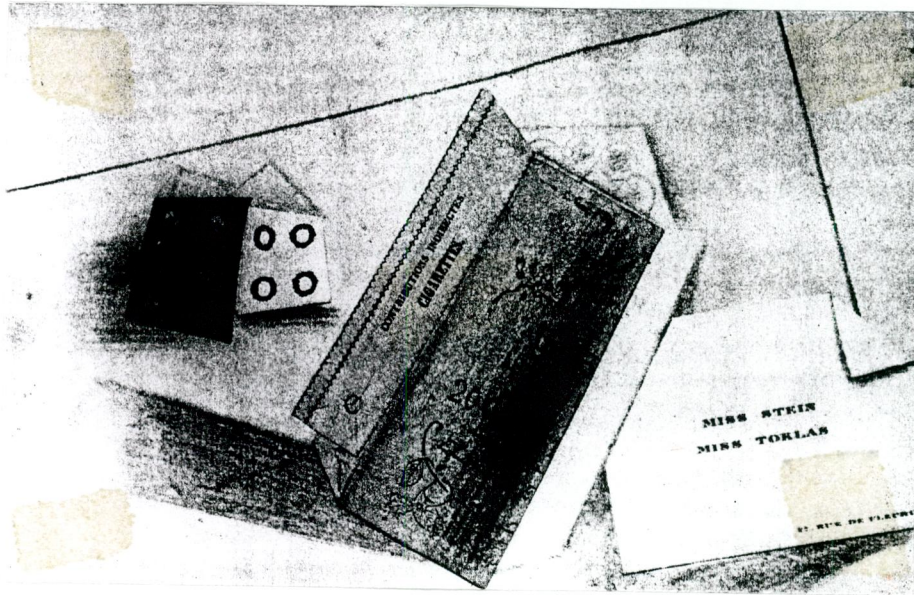


(Illus. 1) Bottle of Vieux Marc, Glass and Newspaper, by Picasso.



and very like the unrelated collections of materials of Dada Collage that were to come. For instance, the 1914 collage Still Life With Calling Card by Picasso (Illus. 2) is very similar to collages by Hans Arp (Illus. 3) or Kurt Schwitters, with its great richness of shape and texture and the use of different materials like calling cards and cigarette packets. In Braque's collage Glass, Carafe and Newspaper (Illus. 4) the use of newspaper can be seen with its masthead spelled out, but there the lettering serves simply to identify form and plays no structural role in the composition. However, in a great many of the collages done from 1914, the use of words, letters and figures was not purely for their contribution to the texture and form of collage. The Cubists treated them not simply as formal elements but chose those with an associative relevance to the subject of the picture, so that they contributed to the meaning of the presentation. By the summer of 1912 both Picasso and Braque had made Cubism a language in which they were not only able to recreate forms, volume and space in a new way, but in which they were able through the use of typography in many of their collages to communicate their messages in a very strong and powerful way.

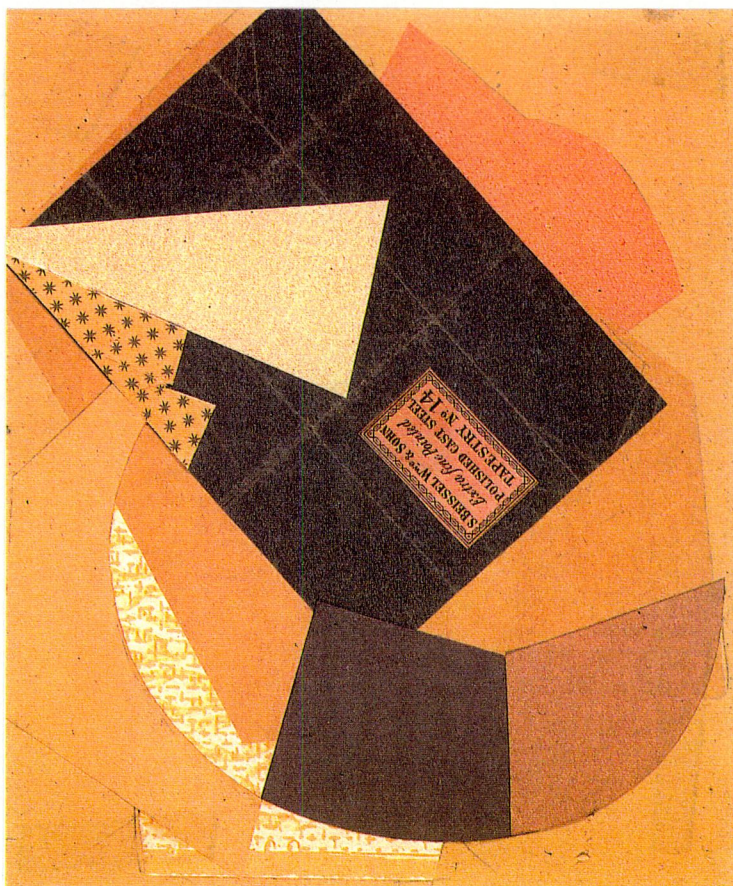
Robert Rosenblum in his article Picasso and the Typography of Cubism discusses the subject matter of printed words and papers in Cubist collage rather than



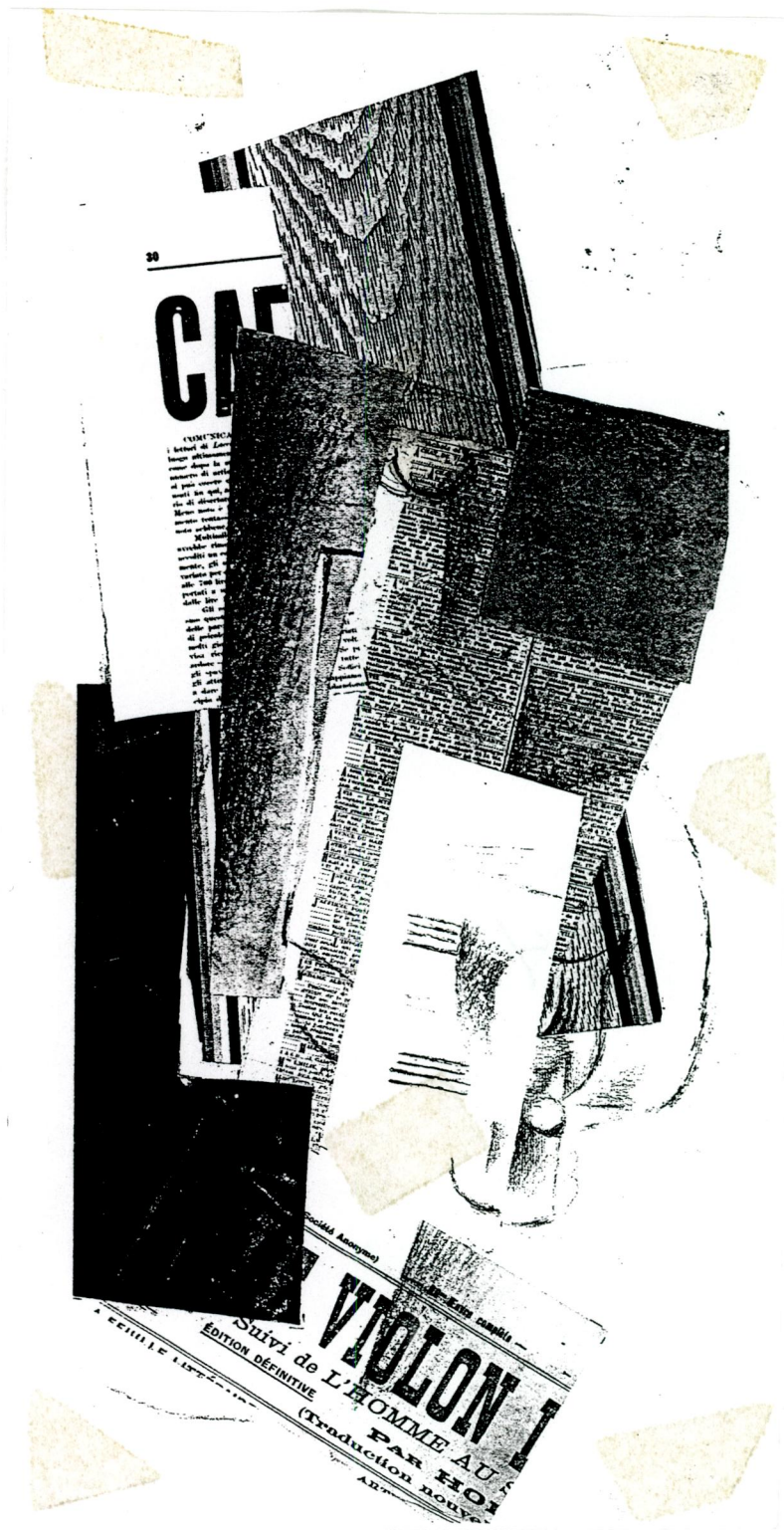
(Illus. 2) Still Life with Calling Card, by Picasso.



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(Illus. 3) Untitled, 1915, by Hans Arp.



(Illus. 4) Glass, Carafe and Newspaper, by Braque.



dealing with a formalist interpretation of it. He looks at different levels of meaning in the collages beyond their space, texture and colour. He looks at possible puns and the use of wit and irony. In particular, his ideas on the cubist use of the newspaper name Le Journal in their collages will be examined. Patricia Leighton in her article Picasso's Collage and the Threat of War, 1912-1913 also discusses the use of newspaper in Cubist collage. Building on the work of Robert Rosenblum, she explores the newspaper text in Picasso's Cubist collages of 1912-1913. Her study mainly points to the impact that anarchist ideas had on Picasso's work and how they helped form Picasso's view of himself as an artist in society. For Leighton, the use of newspaper in these collages is not merely there for the purpose of introducing colour and texture, but is instead a way to integrate anarchist issues into Picasso's art. She also looks at how Picasso shared ideas and themes with other artists (Braque and Gris), poets (Apollinaire) and political theorists with whom he associated in his early career.

I will also consider the writing of Christine Poggi who, in her article Mallarmé, Picasso and the Newspaper as Commodity, makes some interesting points, as Rosenblum and Leighton have done on the use of newspaper clippings in Cubist collage. Chapter two will be looking in

particular at some of the points Poggi discusses on Picasso's collage Still Life: Au Bon Marché (Illus. 23).

Some of the main points which will be considered in Chapters one and two are the influence of newspaper reports on Cubist collage as well as the significance of ordinary objects, e.g. cigarette packets, bottle labels, advertisements, in Cubist collage in terms of both content and form. It will also look at the function of typography in the collages and will consider, in particular, Picasso's use of newspaper in his collages as a purely textural effect as well as its function of communicating important contemporary issues. It will consider what the newspaper represents in Cubist collage, whether it represents the newspaper or the news it contains.

The political and economic state of early 20th Century Europe was a great influence on the Cubists and their work in collage. For example, during 1912 and 1913 Picasso made between 80 and 100 collages. In 52 of these newspaper clippings were used and over half of this text related directly to the Balkan Wars and the political and economic state of Europe.

A brief consideration of the historical background starting from 1912 when the first Cubist collage was created will provide a useful starting point.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

November 1912 marked the beginning of the first Balkan War when Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro went to war against Turkey. Panic broke out and it showed up on the front pages of newspapers all over Europe. The people in Paris were reading eye-witness accounts of battles between Bulgarians and Turks in their daily newspapers. Most of what they read in these news reports from the front was horrific. There were graphic descriptions of the dead along the roadside, killed in battle. Journalists who were walking the roads through the battle fields wrote detailed reports of the Cholera epidemic that had hit the Turkish army and wiped out thousands. Readers also read about the march of the Serbian army through snow and ice, and about the famine in Andrianople under Turkish siege. The newspapers also reproduced copies of speeches which had been given to crowds of 40,000 or more by pacifists, anarchists and socialists at street demonstrations organized by the left wing. They spoke out against the threat of a general European war, which reports from the first Balkan war clearly represented to them. Picasso, Braque, Gris and other fellow Cubists working in Paris at that time were part of the readership of these daily news reports, reading them in their studios or at the café.

THE BEGINNING OF COLLAGE

Picasso and Braque's acceptance of all objects for their possible use in a work of art resulted in the first Cubist collages made between 1912 and 1914. They are credited jointly to both Picasso and Braque who were working closely together at the time. Picasso and Braque's friendship was to result in a most unusual and intensive collaboration, collage being one of the most important things to come out of the friendship. Picasso was the first to use disposable elements of everyday life - labels, calling cards, wallpaper, fabrics, etc. But most importantly, what he used more than anything else in his collages was newspaper clippings.

THE EFFECT OF CURRENT ISSUES ON COLLAGE

Anarchist ideas and the current issues and events of the Balkan wars played an important role in Picasso's use of newspaper clippings, not only influencing his choice and placement of news items in collage but also inspiring him to actually start using the clippings in his art. He used the newspaper clippings in the most literal way, examples of which will be discussed later. In very few cases is the newspaper in the collage rendered illegible. The clippings are often wittily tied to the Cubist images of the caf  s where arguments and discussions of these political issues took place. Many Cubist collages of Picasso, Braque and Gris bring us

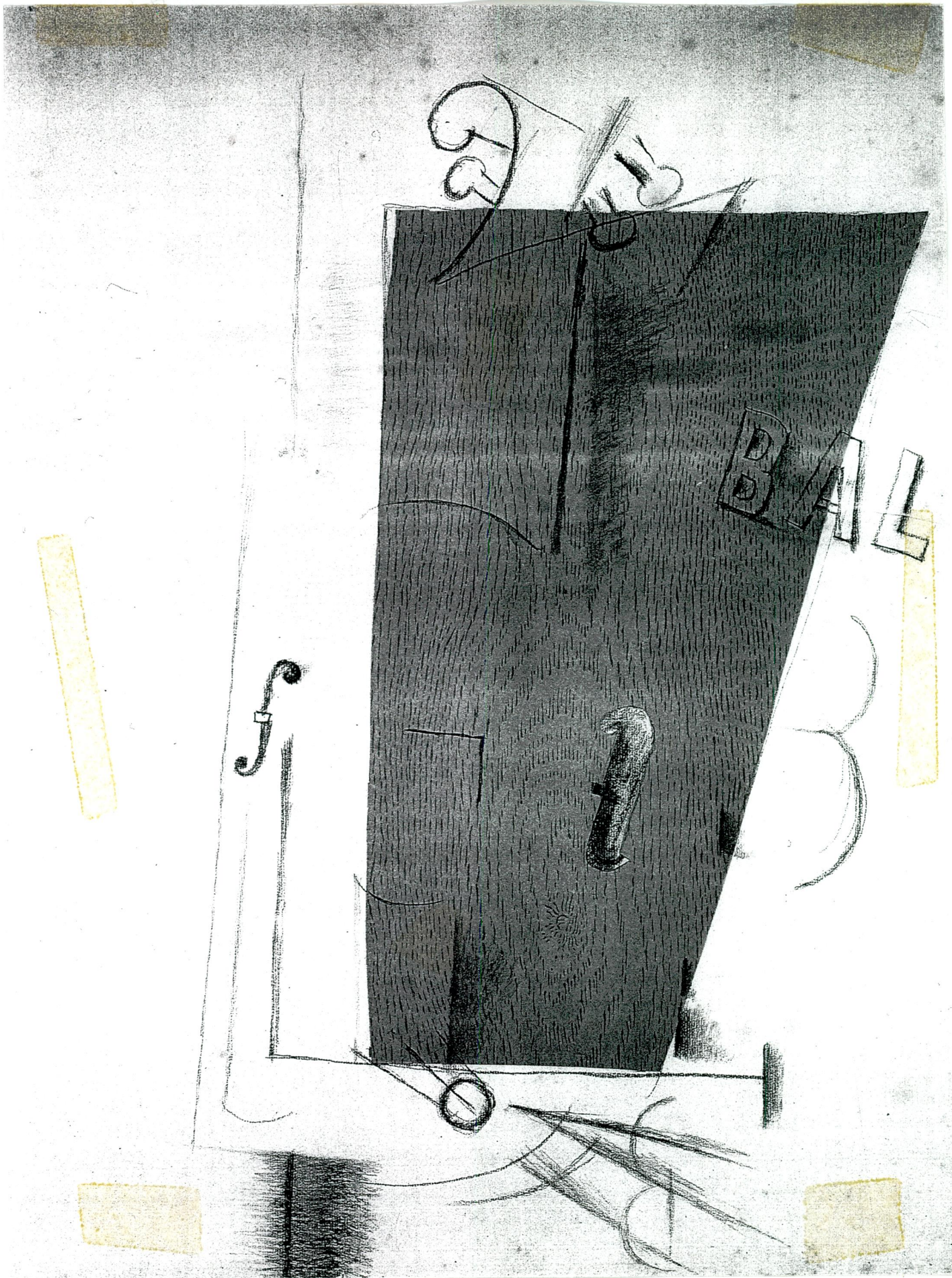
into a world full of tables, liquors and newspapers

As was mentioned before, reports on the Balkan wars and other news on the state of Europe at that time make up more than half of the newspaper clippings in Picasso's collages from 1912 - 1914. Picasso explored these issues by quoting material with the news clippings he selected. A close look at many of the newspaper clippings shows them not to be randomly selected bits of printed matter for textual effects but reports and accounts meticulously cut and carefully pasted to preserve legibility of events announcing the coming of the First World War and the anarchist and socialist response to them. A reading of these clippings in Picasso's collages reveals them to be reports and accounts of events with special political meaning, making up a journalistic diary of the period. Robert Rosenblum makes an interesting point in his article when he points out that the word 'Journal', the name of a newspaper which Picasso uses in many of his collages and which will be discussed later, also means the word 'diary'. Picasso and other Cubists' use of newspaper represents their continued interest in the affairs of the world. Patricia Leighton points out that Picasso's collages were his direct response to the events of the first Balkan War and that he strongly communicates his anti-war feelings through them.

COLLAGE AND STENCILLED TYPOGRAPHY

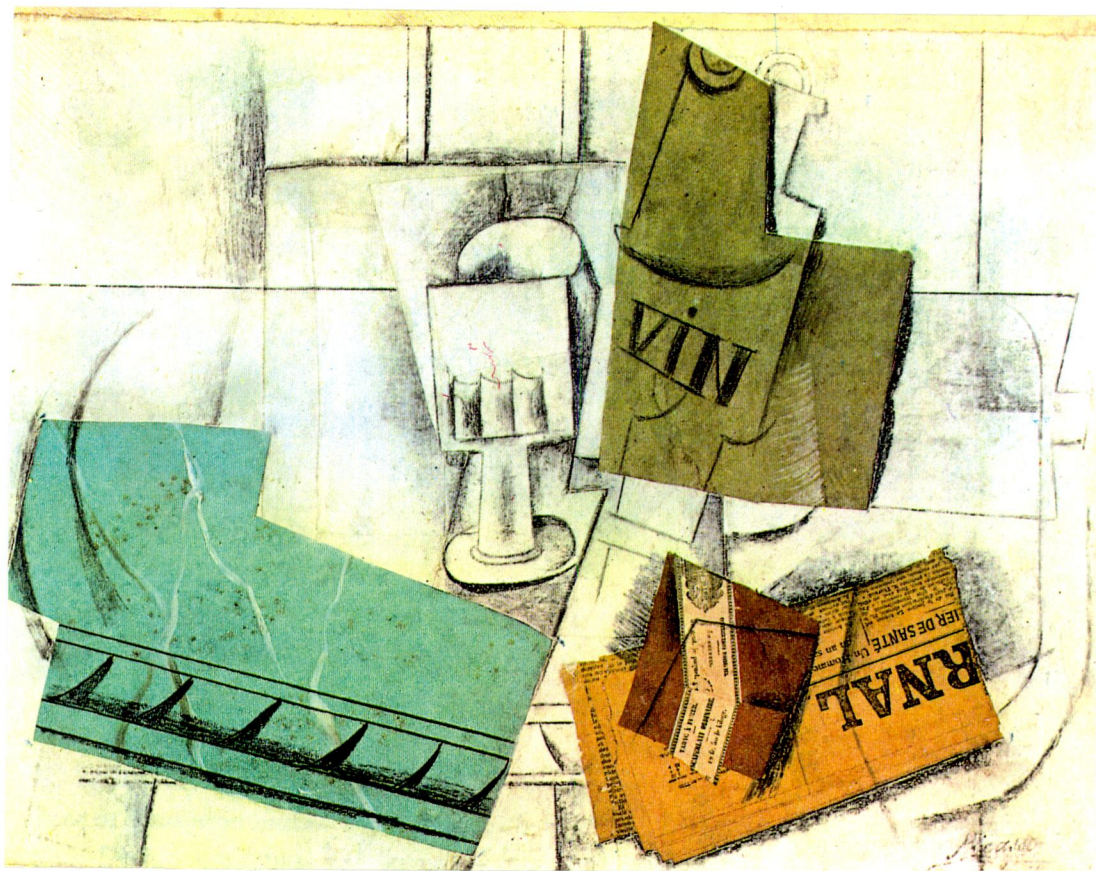
Braque and Picasso introduced stencilled typography into their painting in 1910-11. An example is Braque's Violin Still Life With Bal (Illus. 5). Originally their reason for this stencilling was to assert the flatness of the picture plane, as was the pasting of bits of newspaper onto the canvas or paper introduced in 1912. This was also to enrich the texture of their work. However, they soon became aware that typography could contribute greatly in many other ways to their collage work.

The techniques of stencilled typography and composition with collage are closely linked by the ways in which they are commonly used, and they are often found to be used together, for example Illus. 5 and Illus. 6. Stencilled typography is created by dabbing paint or charcoal through a paper or metal mask and originally it was used in commerce to label crates for shipment and later by the military as a means of rapid identification (possibly why it appealed to the Cubists). Just as the materials of collage were the materials of everyday life, so too were the stencil letter forms. Each method, collage and stencil typography, has strong connotations of a spontaneous communication medium. The use of stencilled typography and collage in relation to both form and placement reveal the existence of the designer's hand in the development of the composition.



(Illus. 5) Violin Still Life with Bal, by Braque.





(Illus. 6) Still Life with Newspaper, by Picasso.



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Chapter 2

This chapter will study the collage work of Picasso, Braque and Gris, looking at their use of newspaper names in collage, in particular the use of the name Le Journal. It will then move on to discuss the Cubists' use of newspaper clippings in collage. It will examine closely their use of typography through newspaper in the collages, also looking at the ideas and themes the type communicates. Picasso's collage Still Life: Au Bon Marché will be considered in detail.

NEWSPAPER NAMES

The Cubists used many newspaper names in their collages. These included Le Moniteur, Le Matin, Le Figaro, L'Indépendant, Le Quotidien, Excelsior, the Spanish newspaper Eir Diruvio and the new Italian futurist periodical Lacerba. The one used most often, particularly by Picasso and Gris, was Le Journal. Le Journal was a mass circulation republican daily. It was the ideal newspaper for using in the café settings of their collages and for bringing in the widely publicized war news. The readers of Le Journal constituted Picasso and Gris's immediate society and were also the same audience whom they expected to read as well as to contemplate their collages.

In not one of the collages does the full name Le Journal appear. The letters are constantly changing in each of the collages. Examples of the use of

Le Journal can be seen in Picasso's Guitar, Sheet-music and Wine Glass (Illus. 7), Newspaper and Violin (Illus. 8), Bottle of Vieux Marc, Glass and Newspaper (Illus. 1), The Violin (Illus. 9), Bottle, Glass and Newspaper (Illus.10) and Siphon, Glass, Newspaper and Violin (Illus.11). This last collage mentioned Illus. 11 contains the longest version of Le Journal used by Picasso and Gris. This free and lively collage has the full word Journal hanging in the air together with a siphon, wine glass and violin upon a drawn table top. In this collage the newspaper is actually identified by its name and the news clippings from it are used to represent the siphon, glass and scroll of the violin, possibly symbolising how the issues of the world had become very much a part of their world in the café, as both Patricia Leighton and Robert Rosenblum point out in their articles. Two examples of Juan Gris's use of Le Journal are the collages Breakfast (Illus.12) and Glasses and Newspaper (Illus.13).

In every one of these examples by Picasso and Gris, Le Journal is broken up into smaller parts and smaller words often changing its meaning. They had discovered that the common name Le Journal could take on many new meanings. For example, in Picasso's Still Life with a Bottle of Vieux Marc (Illus. 1), Le Journal becomes Le Jour meaning the day. Another



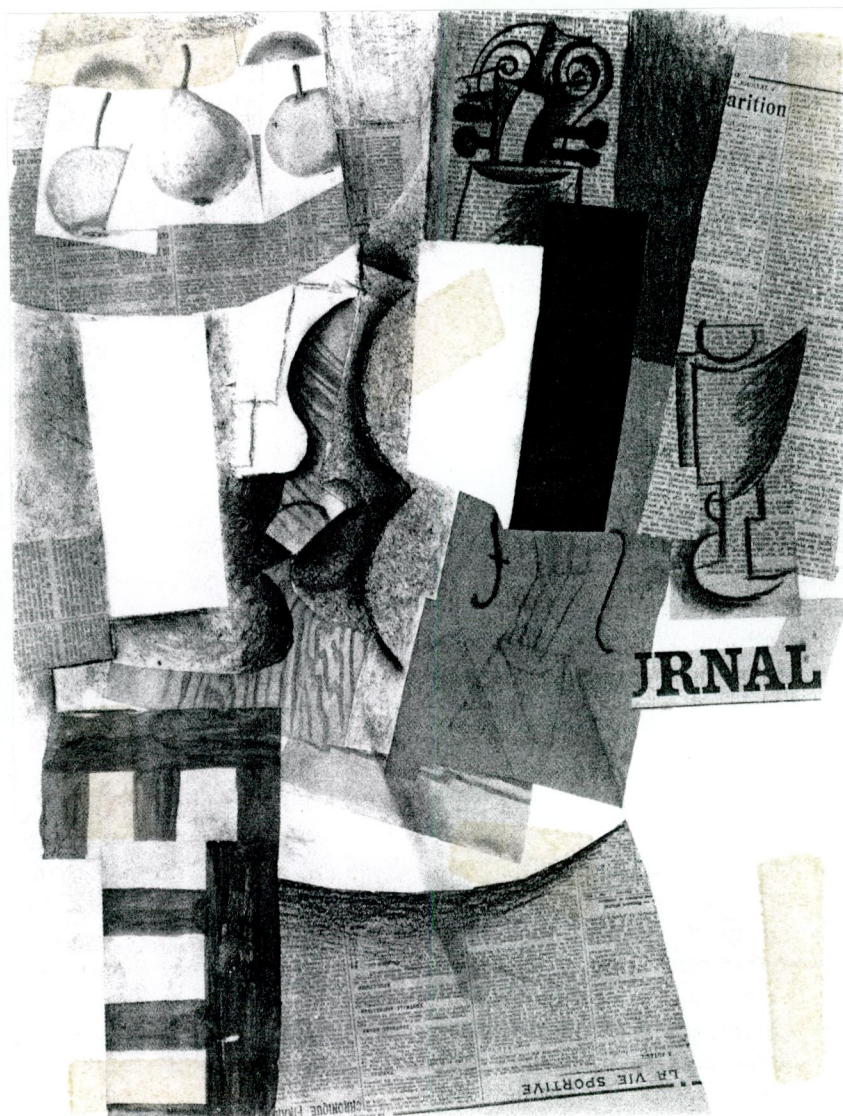
(Illus. 7) Guitar, Sheet-music and Wine Glass, by Picasso.



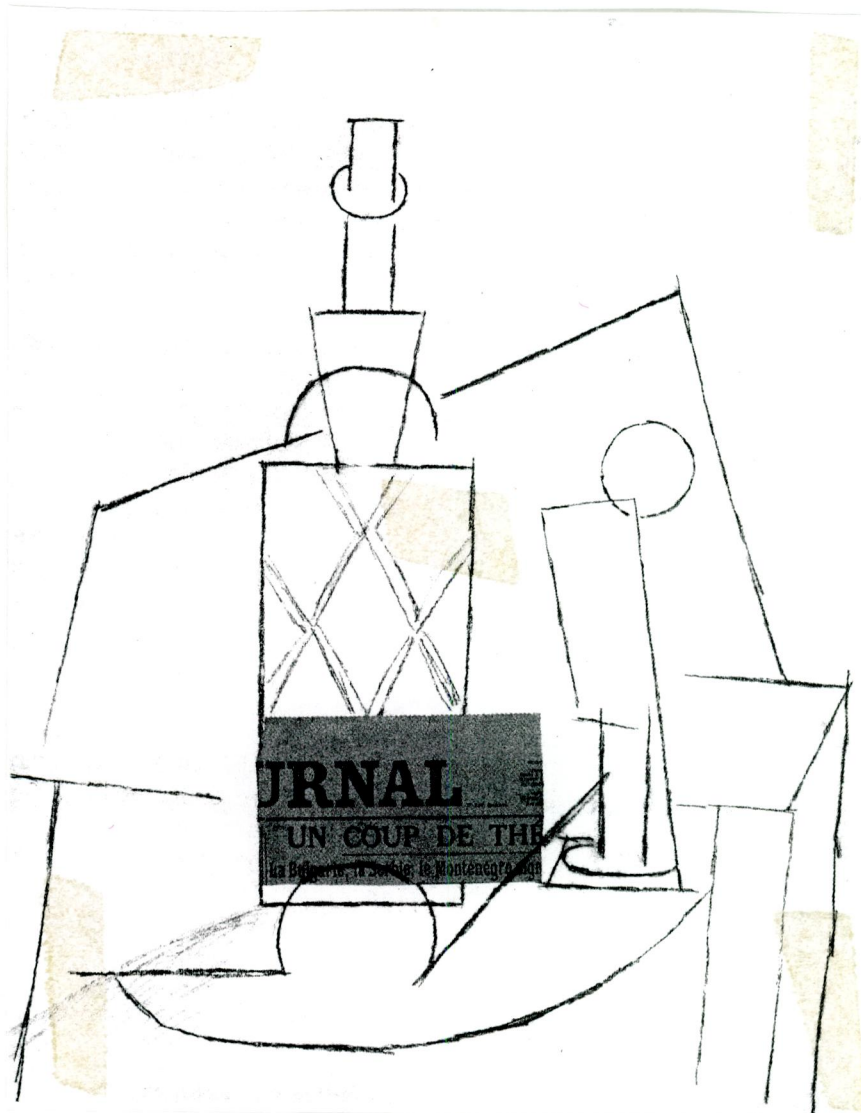


(Illus. 8) Newspaper and Violin, by Picasso.





(Illus. 9) The Violin (Violin and Fruit), by Picasso, 1913.



(Illus. 10) Bottle, Glass and Newspaper on a Table, by Picasso, 1912.

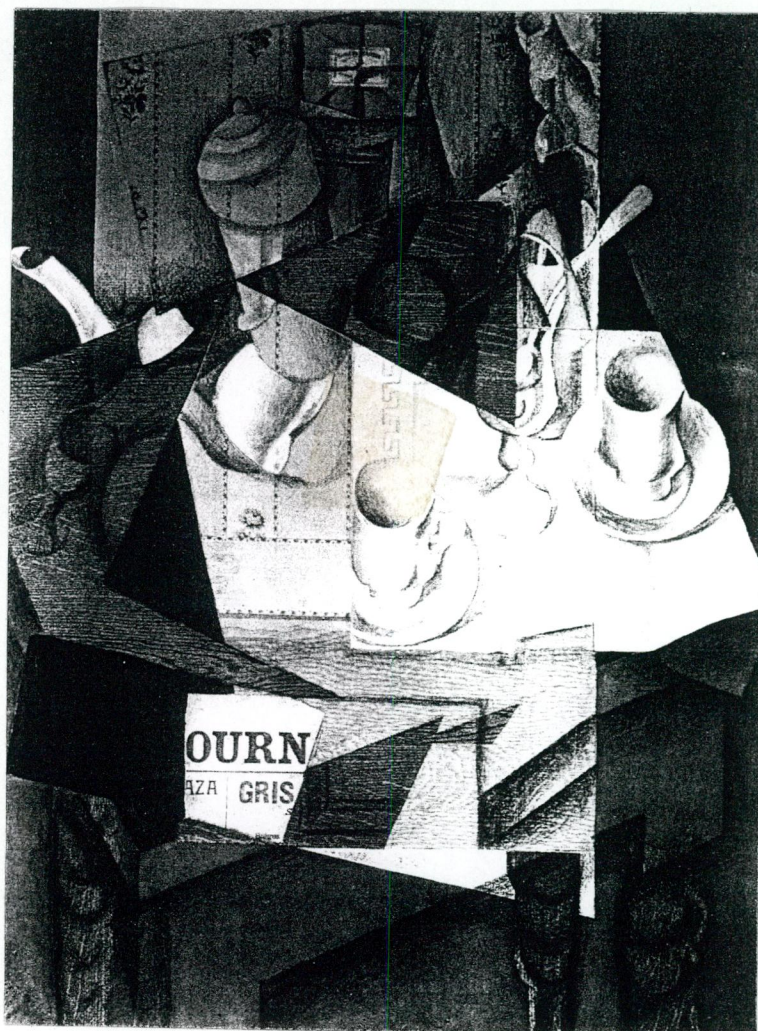


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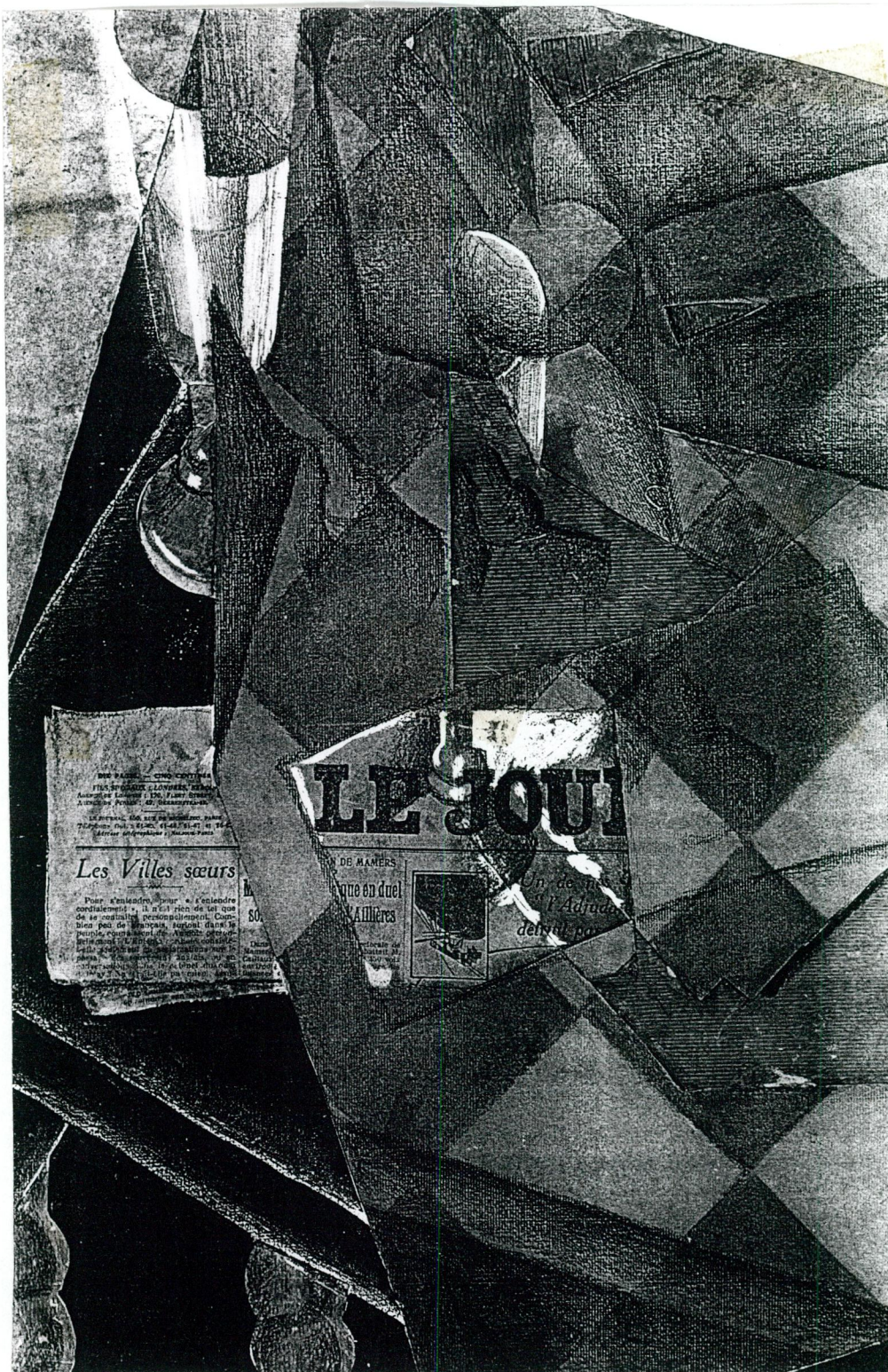
(Illus. 11) Siphon, Glass, Newspaper and Violin, by Picasso.





(Illus. 12) Breakfast, by Gris.





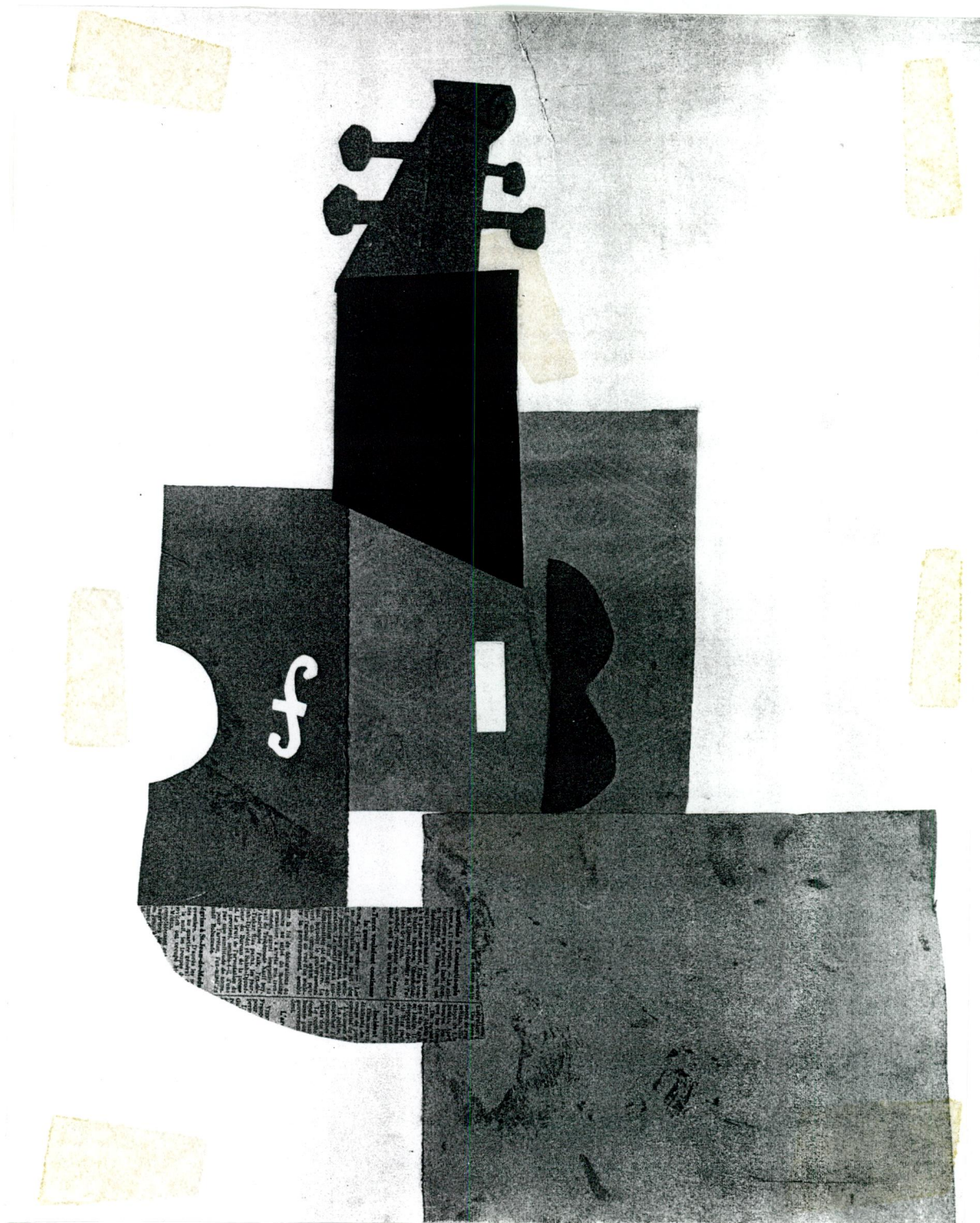
(Illus. 13) Glasses and Newspaper, by Gris.



verbal pun he used is in Illus. 7. Here the word Journal becomes Jou a word that comes from the verb Jouer - to play. This is one of the concepts appropriate to many of the Cubist collages, for not only were they dealing with news issues but they were becoming very involved with the use of type in their work and playing around with the type, experimenting all the time.

THE USE OF NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Picasso's first use of newspaper clippings was in November 1912 in either his first or second experiment with collage, in Guitar, Sheet-music and Wine Glass (Illus. 7). This collage has a headline from Le Journal concerning the Balkan war. We read La Bataille s'est engagé (the battle has begun), referring literally to the Balkan war but which also can be interpreted as the beginning of the challenge of collage itself as a new pictorial form. In his second collage using newspaper, Violin (Illus. 14), the newsreport used describes the Montenegrin army's occupation of Saint-Jean-De-Medua and discusses the Turks' eagerness to continue fighting. His third collage using newspaper, Bottle of Suze (Illus. 15), has a newsreport with accounts of the wounded and detailed descriptions of battle movements when the Serbians advanced forward to Monastir in Macedonia. The text also considers how



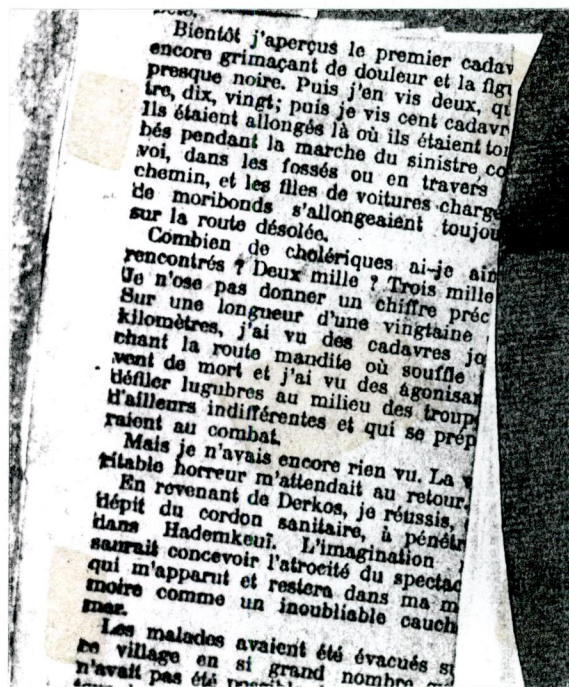
(Illus. 14) Violin, by Picasso, 1912.





(Illus. 15) Bottle of Suze, by Picasso.





(Illus. 16) Detail from *Bottle of Suze*, by Picasso.



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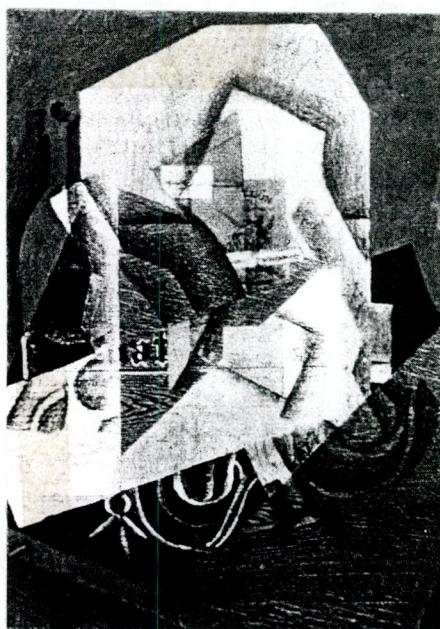
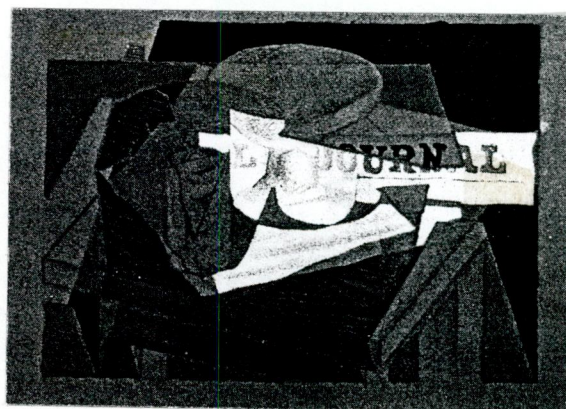
long Andrianople might hold out against the famine. There is a large amount of newspaper clippings used in this collage with much about battle movements and many horrific descriptions of war's victims. Patricia Leighton has included in her article one of the actual newsreports Picasso used in the collage. It is an account of the cholera epidemic among the Turks.

Before long I saw the first corpse still grimacing with suffering and whose face was nearly black. Then I saw two, four, ten, twenty; then I saw a hundred corpses. They were stretched out there where they had fallen during the march of the left convoy, in the ditches or across the road, and the files of cars loaded with the almost dead everywhere stretched themselves out on the devastated route. (11, P.126)

This was among many of the vivid descriptions of war included in this collage. It is interesting to see the way Picasso has certain newsreports turned upsidedown. This symbolises, one would imagine, a world turned upsidedown, a world in a mess. Also included are reports of speeches from a socialist, anarchist and pacifist meeting which 40,000 to 50,000 people attended. These newsclippings, in particular, stand for Picasso's anti-war feelings, while many of the others simply show us the terrible tragedy of the Balkan war (war in general). These reports when introduced into the composition of the still-life collage, threaten the everyday pleasures of wine and

music in a wallpapered room, the artist's peaceful world. All three of his first collages create this feeling of the peacefulness of their lives, in different ways being threatened by the war. The articles Picasso includes in his collages reflect his awareness not only of the forces making war but also of the opposition's argument against participation. They point out the reasons to refuse to fight or to have anything to do with the madness of war.

Juan Gris, after making a living as political cartoonist, had joined Picasso and Braque in 1911. He developed his own unique Cubist style. Gris's use of newspaper clippings is different from Picasso's. Gris would combine cut out letters to form false headlines. Picasso's use of newspaper clippings of reports from the Balkan war was not unnoticed by Gris. It was Picasso's work that inspired him to use newspaper headlines and texts of political and military events, revealing his own feelings on such issues. Patricia Leighton mentions Gris's obsession with the war. In his collage Still Life with Newspaper (Illus. 17), the folded front page of the May 3 edition of Le Journal is used. On the newspaper is an illustration and report about an explosion at Verdun. The Package of Coffee (Illus. 18) shows a battle map of Ulm. Other collages done by Gris contain reports



(Illus. 17) Still Life with Newspaper, by Gris.

(Illus. 18) The Package of Coffee, by Gris.

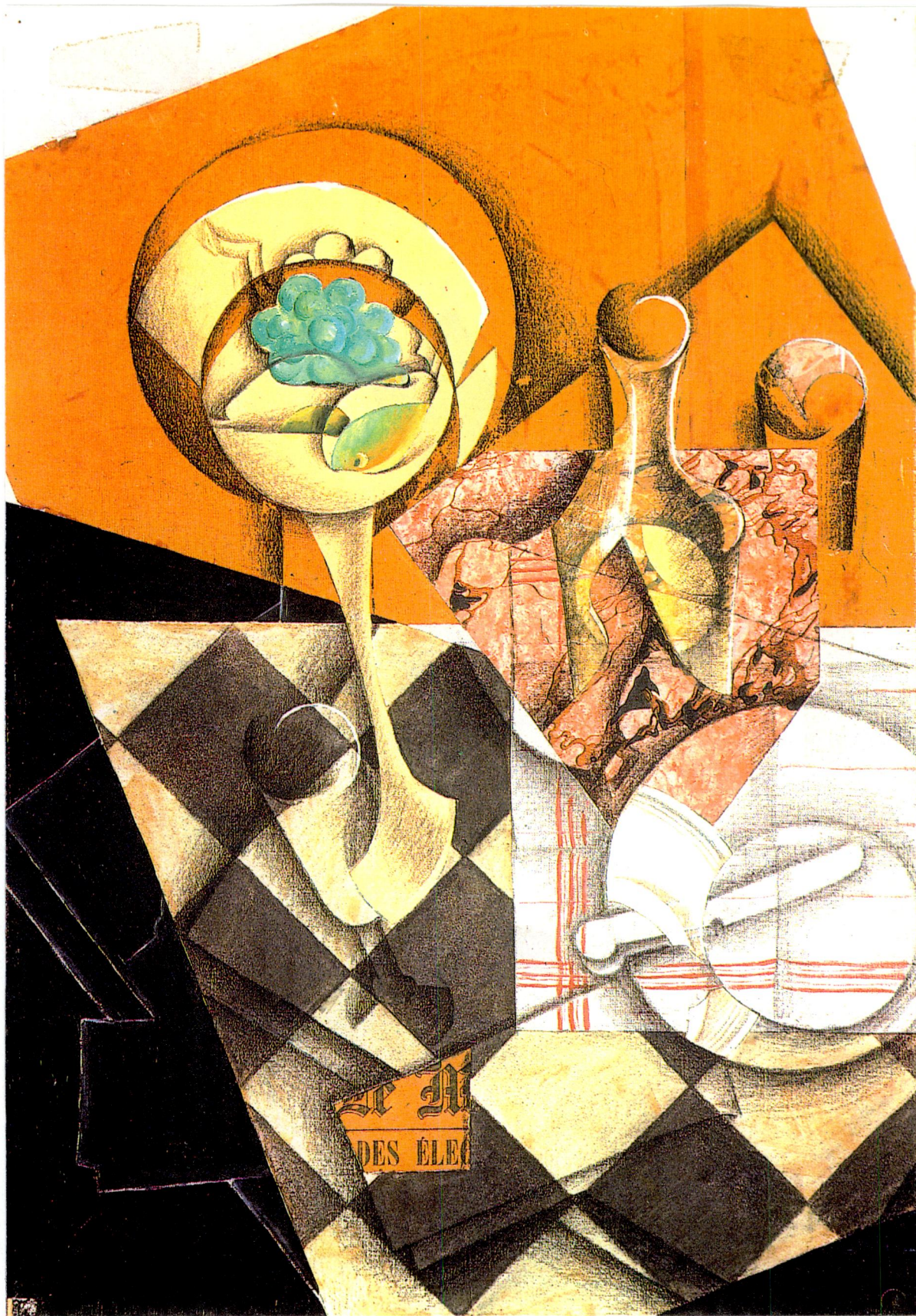


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about the Balkan war and mastheads of newspapers including Le Journal, Le Matin (Illus. 19/20) and Le Figaro, all representing political attitudes towards events.

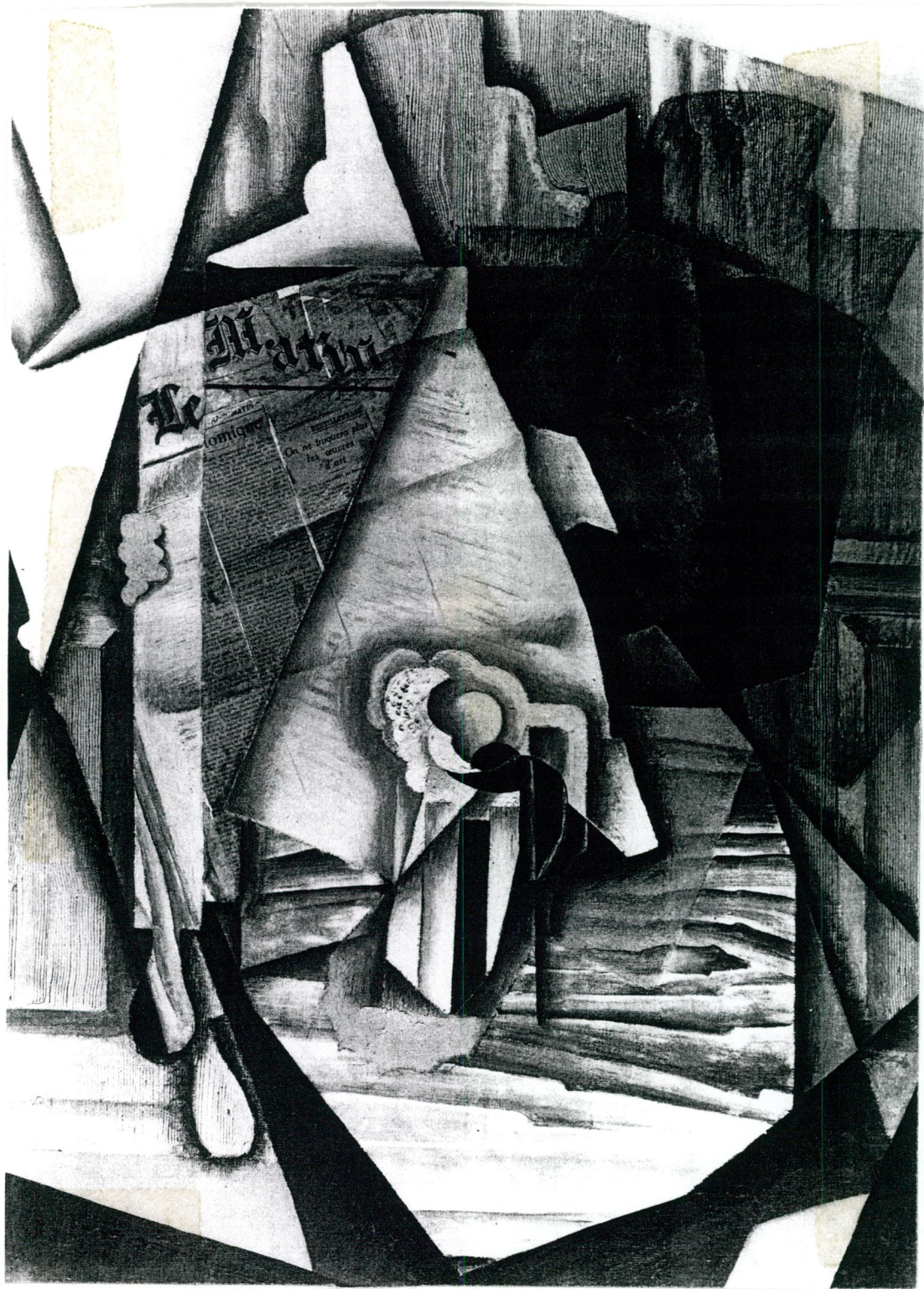
Most of his other collage work is more light-hearted. Gris often patiently and extremely carefully cut out letters to create false headlines with much humour behind them. He created a headline with his own last name in Breakfast (Illus. 12).

Braque first used newspaper in his collages a whole year after Picasso. In contrast to Picasso's way of using newspaper, Braque's use of it was mostly for its textural effect. In Glass, Carafe and Newspaper (Illus. 4) and Bottle, Newspaper, Pipe and Glass (Illus. 21) created in 1913/14, his use of newspaper can be seen. However, in only 17 out of a total production of 65 collages did Braque use newspaper clippings, compared with Picasso's use of over double the amount. Unlike Picasso and Gris, few of Braque's collages are political statements. Most of the clippings are used in either an amusing or witty way. Braque's use of type was certainly highly witty but in my opinion it often seems lacking the expressive strength of the political themes used repetitively by Picasso and Gris. For example, in his collage Still Life with Guitar (Illus. 22).



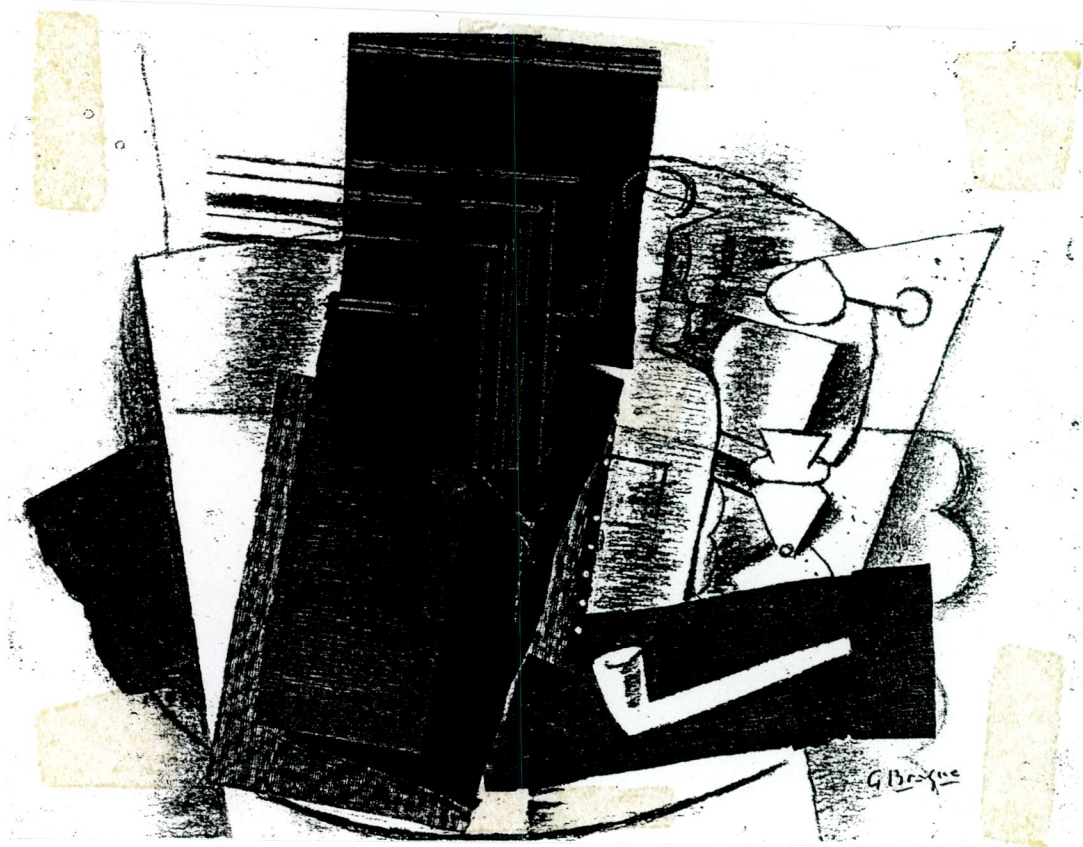
(Illus. 19) Fruitdish and Carafe, Gris, 1914.





(Illus. 20) Man at the Café, by Gris.



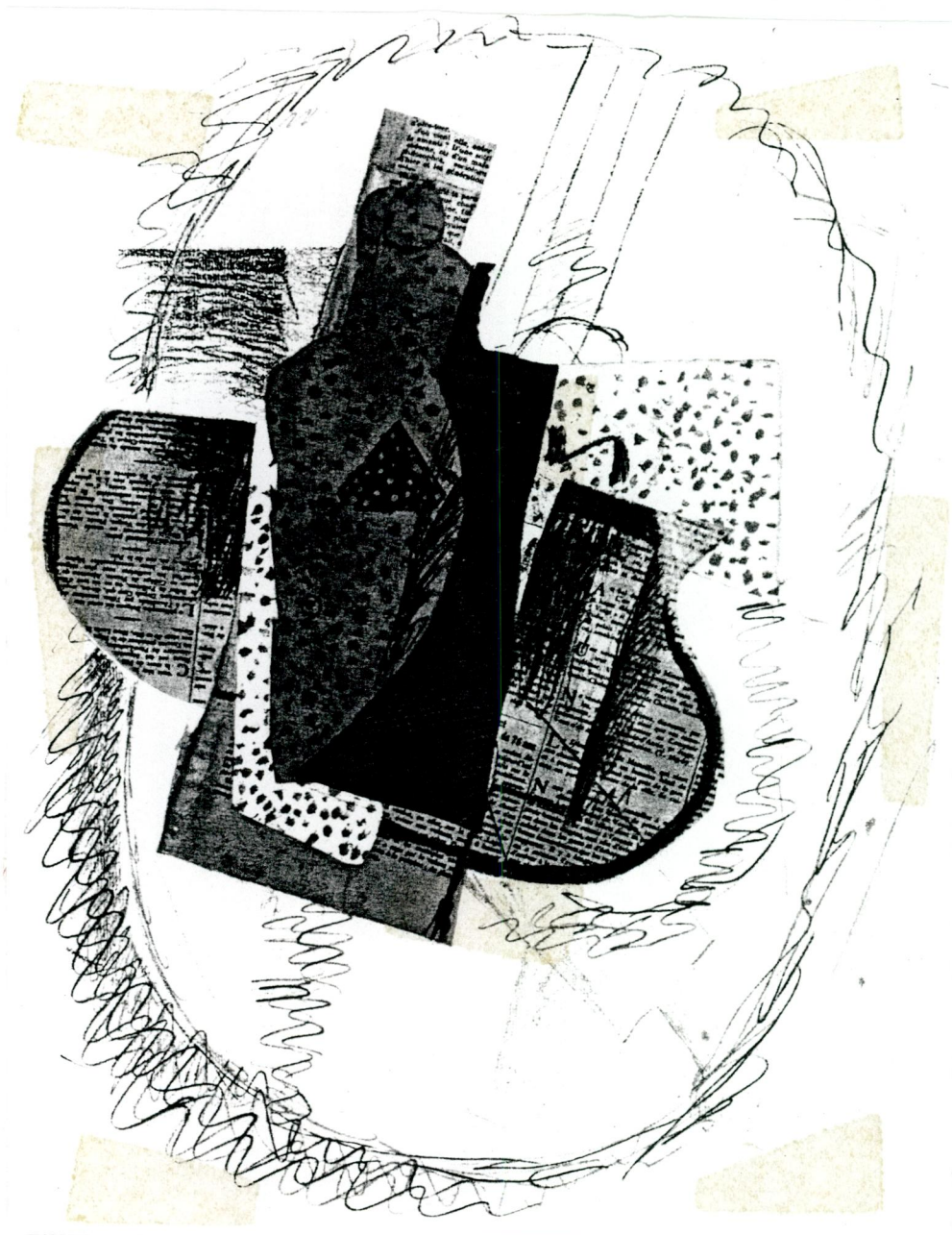


(Illus. 21) Bottle, Newspaper, Pipe and Glass, by Braque.



GOHRSMÜHLE

(1904)



(Illus. 22) Still Life with Guitar, by Braque.



Although the structure and handling of this composition is more complex than it appears, his use of newspaper (typography) in this collage is purely for texture and form. Although there is typographic imagery used, there is no message or political theme to be obtained from this collage. Braque simply wanted to develop the visual side. In many of Braque's collages, the contour of the objects in his still life would be drawn with apparent clumsiness. Sometimes colours would be allowed to spill over forms that were meant to contain them and at other times the colours do not meet the lines meant to contain them. This gives us the feeling that Braque's objects have a certain transparency relative to one another (Illus. 5).

Overall, both Picasso and Braque were moving towards a flatter, simpler and more decorative type of collage. Picasso's work was becoming increasingly more varied and inventive, combining a sense of wit with a new feeling of gaiety once he moved away from his political themes to more light hearted ones. Braque's work remains more static and calm, although he gives freer expression to his enjoyment of the physical properties of the different materials with which he was working. Gris's work tended to be more complex and refined (Illus. 19) compared with Picasso's (Illus. 14).

STILL LIFE: AU BON MARCHÉ (Illus. 23)

A collage which has a very interesting use of newspaper clippings and advertising is Still Life: Au Bon Marché (Illus. 23). Picasso did this collage in early 1913. Christine Poggi makes some interesting points about it in her article. According to her, the theme of this collage is 'The Promiscuity of the Commodity'.

This collage like most of Picasso's other collages was created with materials from the commercial world. Newspaper and wallpaper are the main materials used. It would appear that Picasso's reason for choosing these materials and using them in the way he did was because he knew that they would get the message across which he wanted to convey. As it happens, there is more than one possible message (meaning), which will be discussed later. Referring back to the collage, one can see a collection of pastings that advertise two famous Parisian department stores (these substitute for Picasso's usual use of newspaper with the title Le Journal). Picasso has used the advertisements from the department stores La Samaritaine and from Bon Marché. La Samaritaine is placed at the top and Bon Marché at the centre of the collage.

The main image Picasso has put together in this collage, takes up one third of the collage, from top



(Illus. 23) Still Life: Au Bon Marché, by Picasso, 1913.



GOHRSMÜHLE

1871

to the bottom in the centre is an image made up of several pieces of newspaper clippings including the two advertisements already mentioned. This image is of a typical middle class female who, as Christine Poggi points out, is shown as both object of desire and consumer of goods in this collage. I agree with this point. The top half of this image is an actual commercial drawing of a properly dressed lady, cut off at the waist. The bottom half of this image of a woman is suggested by the label of the lingerie and broderie department at the Bon Marché. Below that again we see inserted into a gap in the wallpaper background and slightly cutting into the lingerie advertisement are the words 'Un trou ici' (a hole here). An interesting point raised by Christine Poggi relating to this collage, and in particular the image Picasso has presented of a woman, is about the department store salesgirls which Picasso's image could easily represent. Writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were suggesting that the salesgirls at department stores while away from the security of their homes, and while seeming to be very innocent and naive, were actually a new source of danger. They hinted that they were really out to seduce the men they worked with and to whom they sold goods. The humorous erotic illusion Picasso has created in his collage can

be seen as suggesting the uncertain morality of the salesgirl.

Another possible interpretation of this collage, suggested again by Christine Poggi, is that the collage was actually a private joke between Picasso and Apollinaire, who was a friend of Picasso's and who is very likely the person who introduced Braque to Picasso. Picasso's pun may have been a private joke, referring to Apollinaire's first pornographic novel Mirely Au Le Petit Trou Pas Cher, which he wrote in 1901.

Looking at the actual collage again, one can see that all the newspaper clippings are placed on a wall-like background. This use of wallpaper makes the whole collage look very like a wall with advertisements glued on. One wonders what sort of wall Picasso wanted us to see. Could it be that the woman and the lingerie advertisement make the wall into one in a lady's bedroom? Yet the drawing that suggests a wine glass to the right of the collage and what could very well be a bottle of wine to the left, hint at the old familiar scene of the café used in so many of Picasso's other collages. However, in my opinion the overall appearance of the collage reminds one simply of an urban wall covered in posters.

Many art historians, for example Rodari (Florian)

and John Golding, when writing about this collage may simply look at the physical position of the different scraps of paper, possibly discussing the subtle overlappings, the differences of colour and textures that make each fragment stand out from its neighbour as well as from the surface onto which it is glued. They may look at the interaction of the collaged elements and pencil lines. All of these are important points to look at but they overlook the typographic meaning of the collage, which in my opinion is what this particular collage is about. What Christine Poggi and Robert Rosenblum have to say about this is extremely interesting and helpful in understanding the use of typography in this collage. The themes that can be found lingering in different places throughout the collage, whether they come across in a very strong way or are simply hinted at, are what makes this collage work.

The Cubist artists were endlessly curious about typographical variety, Picasso in particular. Robert Rosenblum writes about how Picasso's eye was constantly alert to the lesser variations of typeface invented in modern advertising. Picasso, Braque and Gris's use of typography in their collages and the use of different typefaces must have been influenced by the innovations of commercial art. Already in the late nineteenth century they had seen the work of Toulouse Lautrec,

Bernard and Denis, all painters who had been involved in poster design and had become increasingly aware of the role of words and lettering in their art. The Cubist generation was very much an heir to this tradition. Like Gris, who made book illustrations and newspaper drawings both as a youth and in his pre-cubist years in Paris, Picasso was often obliged to leave his main studio work for the practical realities of commercial illustration and design. In fact, throughout his life Picasso remained one of the masters of poster design.

The intricate juggling of words and images is very much a part of Cubist collage. These still life collages explore the ordinary printed, handwritten, stencilled, pasted typography commonly experienced by any twentieth-century urban man. Not only does the typography in Cubist collage enrich intellectually the formal language of Cubism with ambiguous verbal double entendres but it also establishes, clearly, cubism's connection with the new imagery of the modern world.

Chapter 3

GOHRSMÜHLE

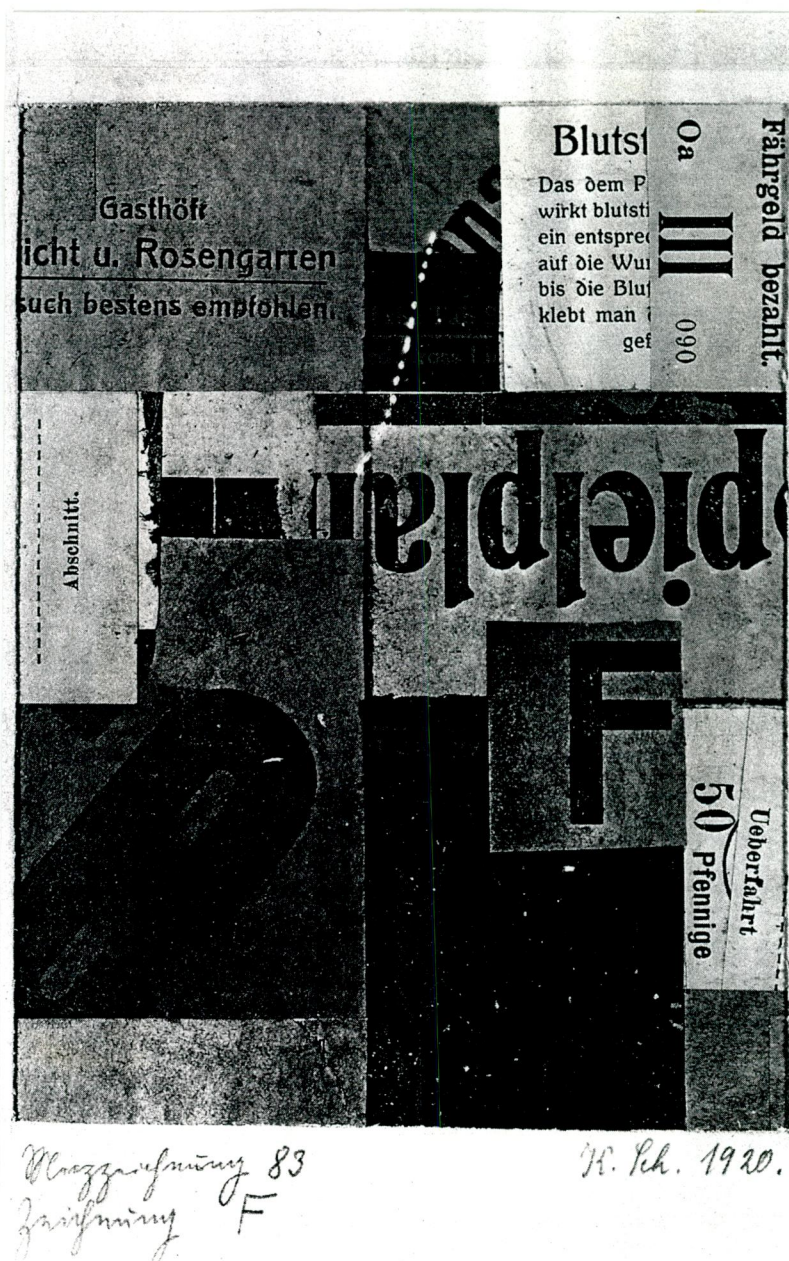
This chapter will move on to look at the Dada artists use of typography in collage. It will consider whether Dada collage is a continuation of Cubist collage, examining how the Dada artists responded to Cubist collage and art in general. It will discuss some of the ideas expressed by Arthur Cohen in his article The Typographic Revolution and by Annegreth Nill in her article Rethinking, Kurt Schwitters. This chapter will contain a discussion of the use of chance in Dada collage and in particular the collages of Kurt Schwitters. It will also be discussing in detail Schwitters' collage Grünfleck, comparing certain aspects of this collage to Picasso's Still Life: Au Bon Marché in relation to their use of typography.

Many Dada innovations and developments had actually been initiated before 1916 and the birth of the Dada movement. For example, the abandoning of three dimensional perspective and the acceptance of everyday objects and materials into the work of art, are both developments found in Dada art but they began in Cubism. The Cubists pronounced all objects as valid raw materials for the artist. They further developed the techniques of collage which was one of the immediate things the Dada artists inherited from the Cubists. The Cubists were the first to introduce

words into painting initially by using stencilled typography and then by using newspaper clippings. This led the Dada artists to use letters, numbers and words as objects in collage. An example is a collage by Kurt Schwitters, which will be discussed later (Illus. 24). Although Cubism was developing in a much more structured way in contrast to Dada's unstructured approach with the use of chance and chaos, the Cubists' break with Renaissance tradition in painting was essential to the Dada artists. The freedom the Dadaists had with their art was made easier by the Cubists move away from traditional painting.

THE USE OF CHANCE IN DADA COLLAGE

One of the most important differences between Cubist and Dada collage must again be mentioned. The Dada artists brought the use of chance into their art and this was their unique contribution to the modernist movement. Hans Arp is generally accepted to have discovered the idea of involving the act of chance when creating a work of art. In 1916, after struggling for some time with one of his drawings, he tore it up and let it fall to the ground because it had not turned out the way he wanted. Then he discovered to his delight, that what had happened by accident with the torn up pieces of his drawing on the floor, resulted in the exact formal arrangement that he had been endeavouring



(Illus. 24) Merz 83 Drawing F, by Kurt Schwitters.

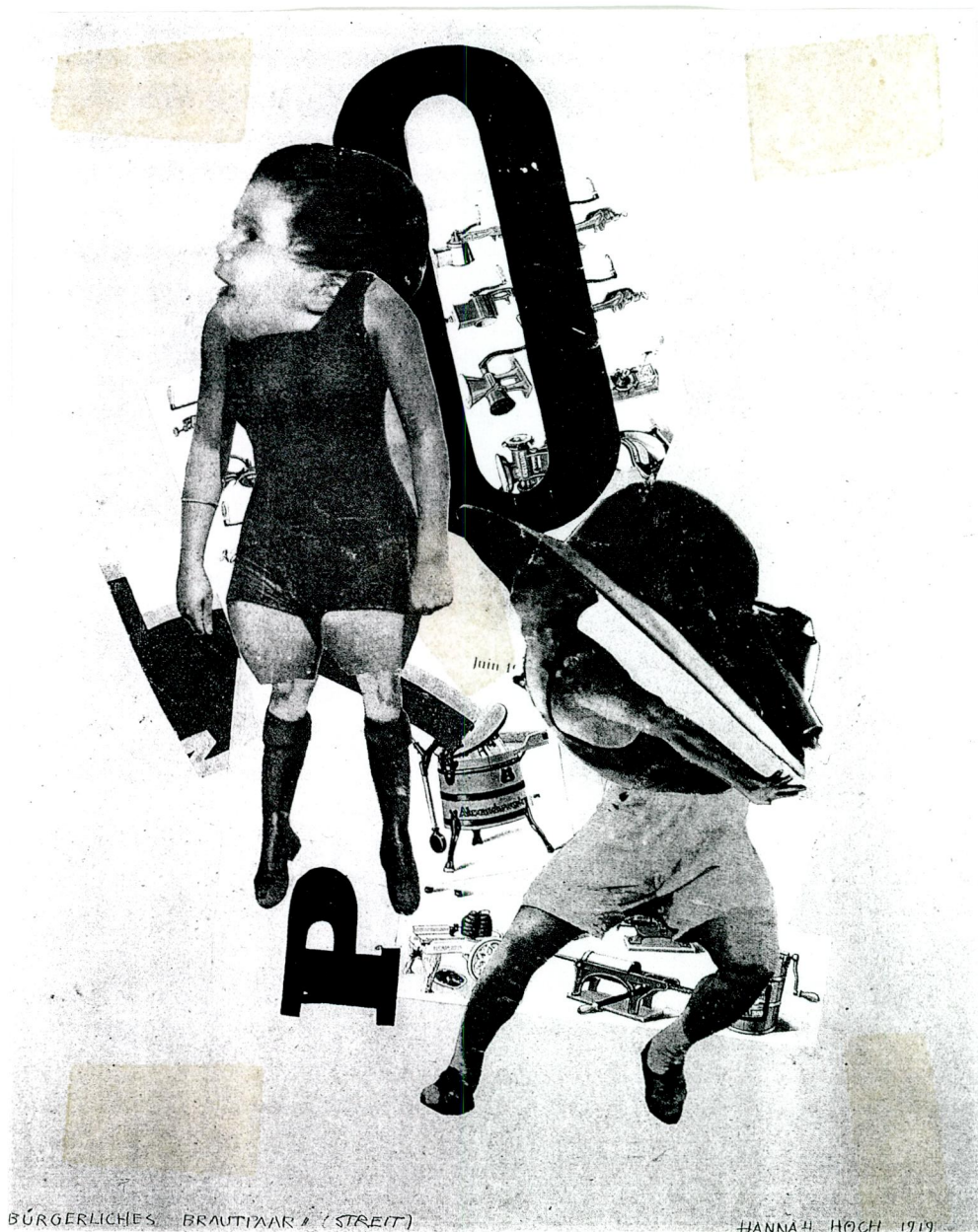


to achieve. He began to use this procedure with other drawings and collages of the Dada period. This was the start of the involvement of chance in the process of creating a work of art. Arp, like the Cubists, accepted newspaper and advertisements for use in his collage work and he uses these in his chance collages (Illus. 3).

Very closely related to Arp's methods of creating collages through chance are the other Zurich Dadaists' audacious experiments with words and language. Tristian Tzara set down these directions for making a Dadaist poem:

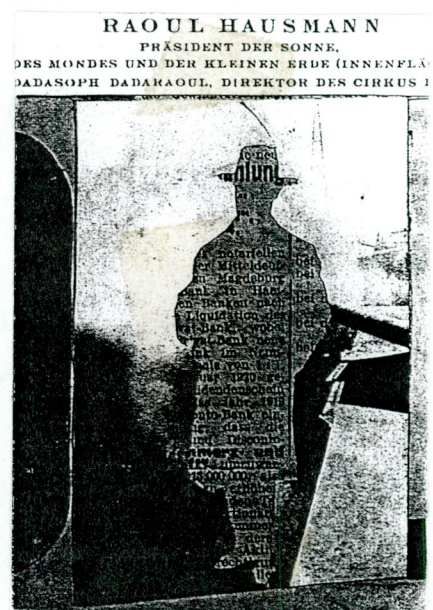
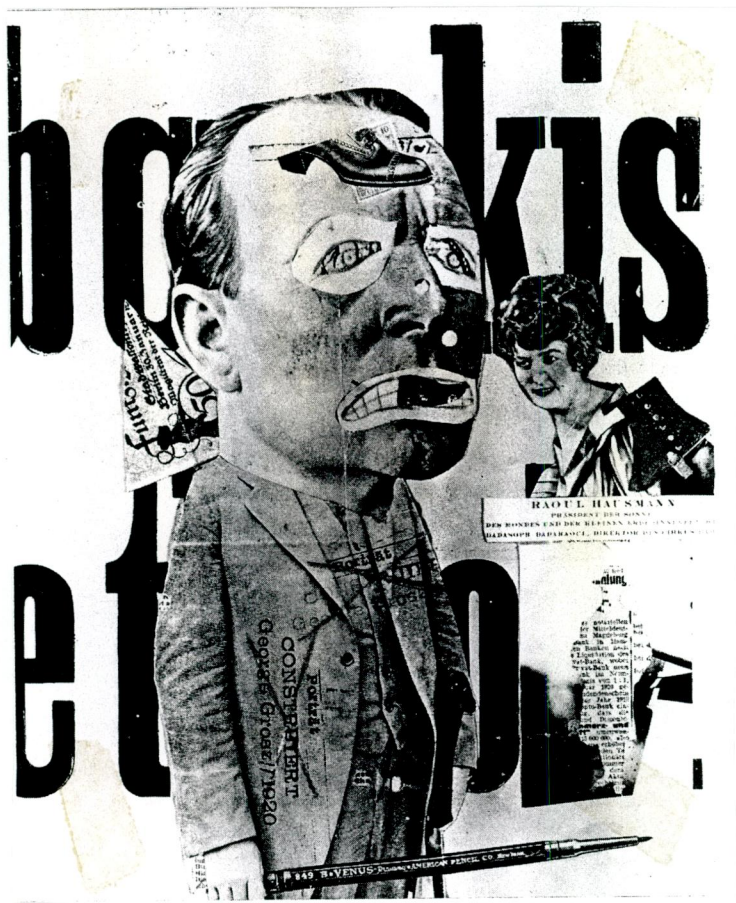
Take a newspaper, take a pair of scissors. From the newspaper choose an article of the same length as you would like your poem to have. Cut out the article, then carefully cut out every word of that article and put the words into a paper bag. Shake them up gently. Take out the slips of paper one by one and lay them out in sequence. Copy them just as they are. The poem will resemble you and you will stand as a writer of unsurpassable originality and fascinating sensibility, though not understood by the general public. (14, P.92)

On many of their collages the Dadaists used Tzara's technique when applying typography. Examples of this can be seen in the work of Hannah Höch and Raoul Hausmann (Illus.25 and Illus.26). In some of his 1915 collages Arp even went so far as using a trimmer, in order to eliminate any trace of his own



(Illus. 25) Bourgeois Newlyweds (Quarrel), by Hannah Höch.





(Illus. 26) The Art Critic, by Raoul Hausmann, and detail.



touch in an attempt to 'approach the pure effulgence of reality'. This willingness to collaborate with chance has the effect of blurring the distinction between artistic production and the direct experience of life. The early Cubist collages of Picasso, Braque and Gris, in which a piece of reality intrudes into the artistic frame, challenge these two areas on an abstract level.

Using chance as an active factor in the creative act and in the works themselves was a new vantage point for imagination. The Dada artists loved taking the risks involved with chance. They relied very much on luck. The Cubists would make decisions and think about what typography they would use in their collage and about the placement of it, whereas the Dada artists, as previously mentioned, would often simply cut up a paragraph and then randomly re-arrange the text. In Illus.25 one can see that the letters used in this collage may simply have been dropped onto the work and pasted down where they fell. The use of accident became an actual compositional rule for the Dada artists.

The Dadaists' interpretation of Cubism has often been ignored, yet here is Richard Huelsenbeck, one of the founders of the Berlin Dada Club in 1920, sounding very like a supporter of the movement. He is talking specifically about Picasso's Cubism:

Picasso restricted his painting to the foreground, he abandoned depth, freed himself from the morality of a plastic philosophy, recognized the conditionality of optical laws, which governed his eye in a particular country at a particular time..... He wanted to paint no more men, women, donkeys and high-school students, since they partook of the whole system of deception..... At the same time he felt that painting with oil was a very definite symbol of a very definite culture and morality. He invented the new medium. He began to stick sand, hair, post-office forms and pieces of newspaper onto his pictures, to give them the value of direct reality, removed from everything traditional. (14)

A Dada artist who, in my opinion, took the above quote of Richard Huelsenbeck's very much into account when he was creating collages is Kurt Schwitters. His work will be discussed next in the chapter. Anarchist Dadaists also developed Picasso and Gris's use of newspaper clippings to reinforce political content in collage. They especially admired Picasso's collage and they decorated the walls of their meeting places with reproductions of his work.

THE USE OF TYPE IN DADA COLLAGE

The young Dada artists, poets and writers were determined not to have anything to do with the madness of war taking over Europe in 1916. They were appalled like many Cubists, Picasso in particular, at what was happening. The medium of collage with its use of scissors and paste ideally suited the Dada artists in

their protest campaign. Like the Cubists, the Dadaists had rejected the traditional subjects used in painting. Arp and Schwitters were two of the many who came to accept newspapers, advertisements, etc. as a new source of subject matter for their work. The Dada artists felt that the ephemeral nature of the newspaper clippings and other typographic materials was ideal for use in their collage work. They also felt that these materials provided an ideal source of language from which they could obtain elements at random with eyes closed.

The Dada artists enjoyed using typography and violated all the conventions of good taste in typography and layout. The use of pieces of typography at random in collage is an example. This can be seen in a collage by Arp (Illus. 3). The small typographic piece within the rectangular shape appears to have been simply dropped into the composition of the collage. Another example of the new Dada typographic methods used in collage can be found in one of Schwitters' collages (Illus. 24). In this collage the type really comes alive, as Cohen writes:

'Like living things squirming on the page'

(1, P.89)

The typography in the Dada collages almost becomes a living voice; messages are shouted out to us.

The Dadaists used all materials without distinction and assembled them in what amounted to spontaneous ephemeral shouts in the form of collages, leaflets, posters, book wrappers. Every viewer of the Dada movement is struck by the use of visual language and how the eye is made to see words differently, to absorb new rhythms of type rather than the familiar forms of traditional typography. Slogans would be printed upside down (Illus.24) or obliquely or in circles so that language was biting its tail. Much of their collage work expressed the confusion of a society unable to cope with its troubles except by using violence. The Dadaists would select images from printed typographical sources; they would use illustrations from newspapers and magazines (Illus.25). The Dadaists developed the collage the Cubists had started into a language that was both savage and readily available to the public, and that revealed the true face of bourgeois selfishness and its lust for power and dishonesty. Dada art made use of typography, accepting it as an uncontaminated medium. They used it in the most eccentric way, producing a kind of childish anarchy.

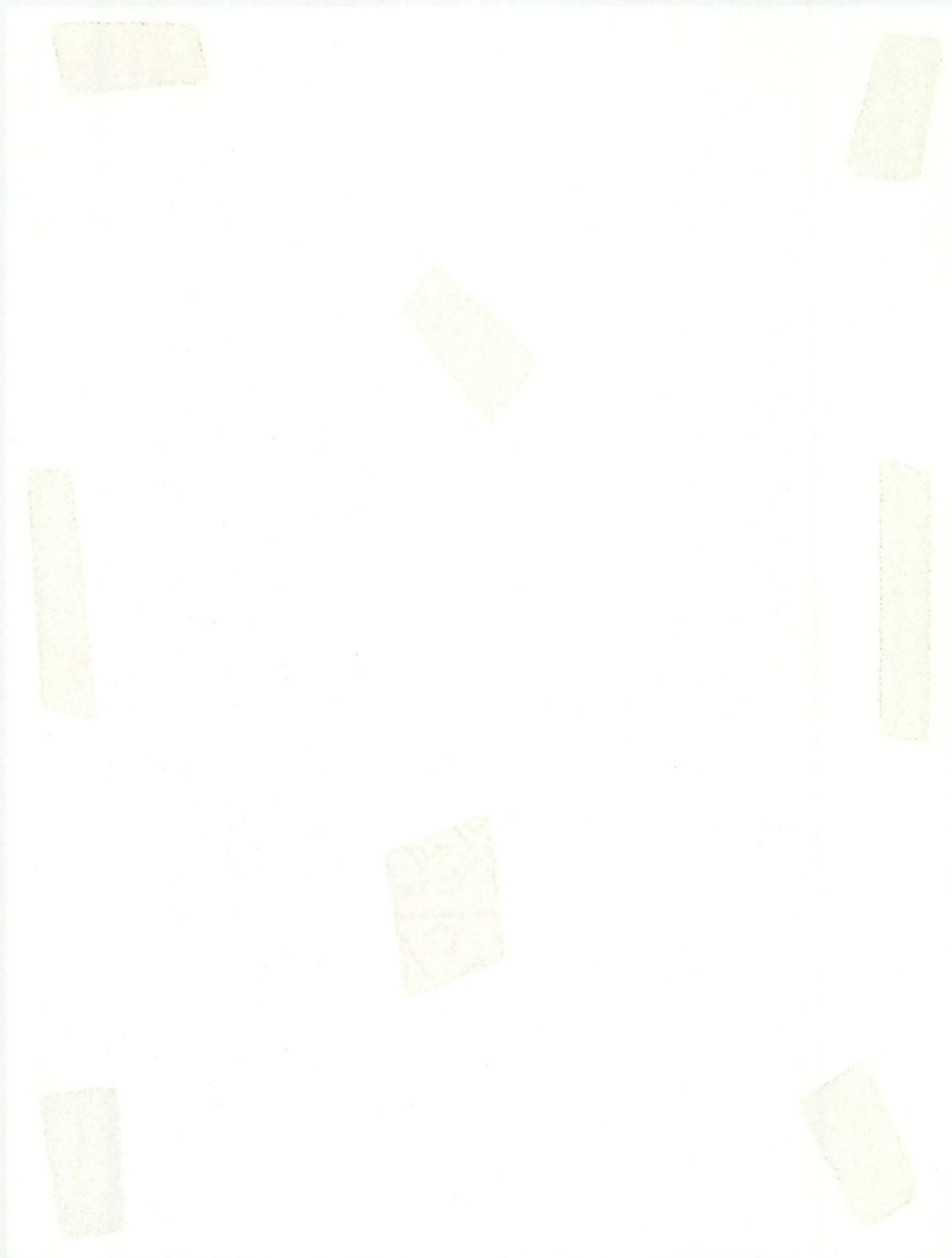
Kurt Schwitters, whose work had much in common with Dada, will now be discussed, particularly his use of typography in his Dada collages.

THE TYPOGRAPHY IN THE COLLAGES OF KURT SCHWITTERS

Although in 1917, when Kurt Schwitters went to join the Dada club, he was rejected, Schwitters was a true Dadaist. For him the real Dada was a movement of abstraction. Schwitters was an eccentric, sincere, humorous man who gathered like the cubists and other Dada artists, materials for his collages from the everyday objects around him both at home and in the streets. Influenced by Cubism and Futurism, his Dada collages developed into a way of transforming the anarchy of disordered collages and typography into something positive. His typographical arrangements in his collage work were much more than statements of anarchy. They were real works of art. In 1919 he began to compose pictures of gathered scraps. To describe these collages he used the term MERZ, from a pasted bit of newspaper in one of his collages with the advertisement for the Kommerziel Private Bank on it. In 1919 he also began working with other Dada artists, including Arp.

In his collages Schwitters used materials that came from his immediate surroundings in Germany, Norway and England. These included his records, letters, stamps and newspaper clippings of personal value. He experimented with typographic abstractions (re-arranging letters, etc.) and compositional arrangement. This can

be seen in his collage Merz 83 Drawing F (Illus. 24) created in 1920. In this collage he uses fragments from newspapers, in a dynamic way. The typography becomes a surface through which patterns of geometric shapes further abstract the letter forms. In his collage Picture with Light Centre (Illus. 27) created in 1919, a rough sense of structure gradually emerges at the centre of what seems to be a very disordered surface. This collage is made up of abstract forms and texture. The materials he uses include newspaper scraps with numbers, letters and words on them. Schwitters also uses stamps. Each of these fragments in the collage defines a direction, whether they suggest an anecdote, or refer to a price, place or date. One gets the feeling of randomness from this collage; obviously the act of 'chance' was a part of creating this collage. Continuing new techniques and traditional procedures, this collage attempts to achieve a fusion of opposites. The tension produced by the contrasting textures and thicknesses, contradictory lines, intersecting planes and most importantly the collision of extremely varied typographic images and bits of information, form an abstract landscape possessing a great inner radiance. Perhaps the Berlin Dada artists denied Schwitters admittance to their group because they had no understanding for the spirit of discipline and the longing for harmony, which very much guided Schwitters.



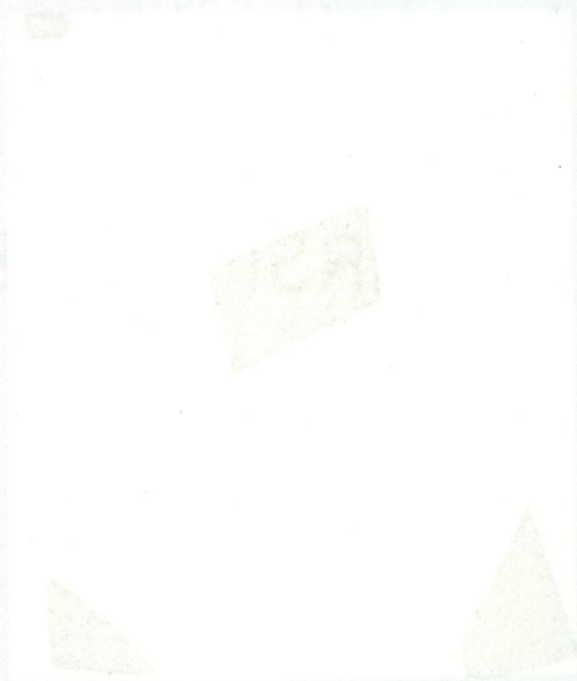
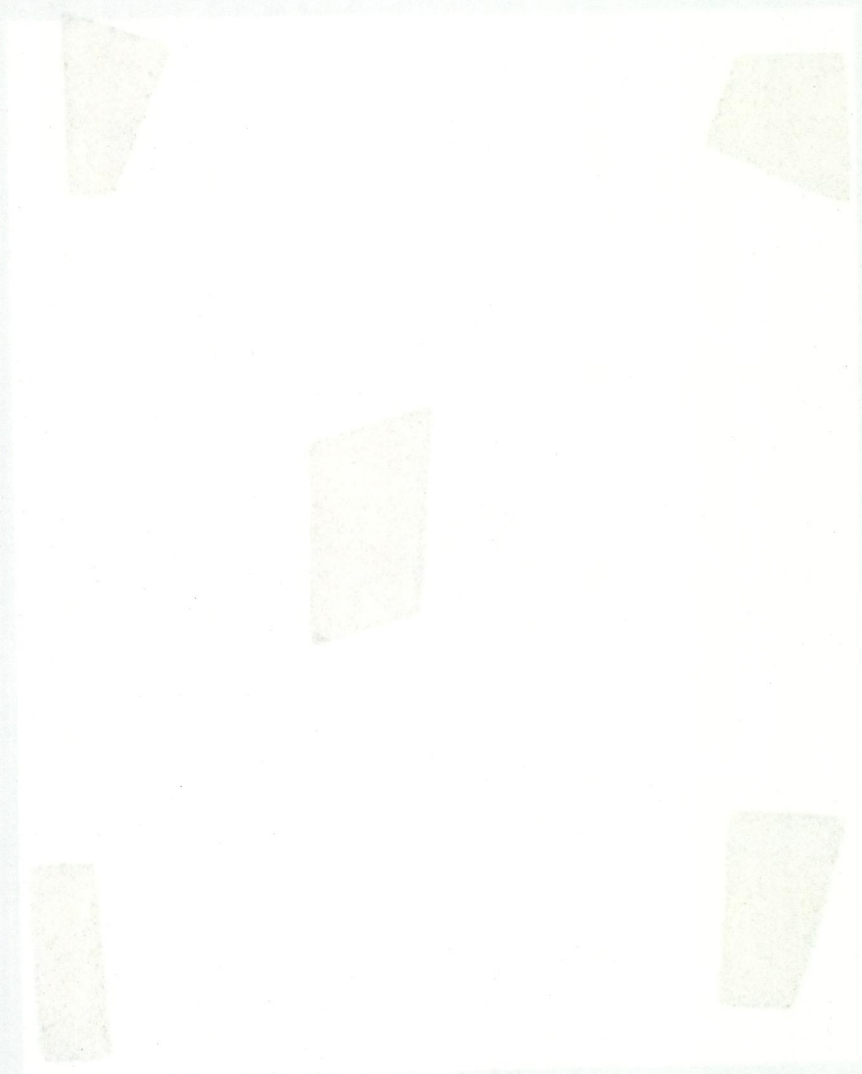
GRÜNFLECK (Illus. 28)

A Dada collage which has a particularly interesting use of typography will now be discussed. The collage is Grünfleck by Kurt Schwitters, created in 1920. Certain elements of this collage will be compared with Picasso's collage of 1913, Still Life: Au Bon Marché (which was discussed earlier). Annegreth Nill in her article, makes some interesting points and includes relevant discussions on Schwitters use of typography in this Dada collage. Some of these points and discussions will be examined throughout this section. Grünfleck, like many of Schwitters' other collages, was created with materials from his own personal collection of ephemera including letters, tickets and newspaper clippings. As Picasso had done, Schwitters' choice and use of these typographic materials conveys to the viewer the exact message he wanted. Also like Picasso's collage there is more than one possible meaning to Grünfleck.

The collage itself has an interesting composition. It is fanlike, centred around a circular core slightly to the right of the centre. Diagonal lines of red, blue and beige textiles move towards the centre from the right edge, drawing attention to the typographic elements around the central core of the collage. The typography is presented within rectangular shapes



(Illus. 28) Grünfleck, by Kurt Schwitters, and detail.



including tickets and newspaper clippings. The arrangement of them is very similar to a hand of playing cards. In the collage Au Bon Marché, Picasso uses separate printed materials which he makes work together to present the theme of his collage. Schwitters also does this in Grünfleck. Whereas Picasso presents us with an image of a middle class woman, Schwitters pieces together words on bits of clippings and tickets to present his own personal ideas on the actual medium of 'collage' (this being one of the themes of the collage).

Annegreth Nill points out that compared with his collages of 1919 and 1920 (Illus. 27) this collage appears much less randomly composed. Similar to Picasso's collage, the formal arrangement of Grünfleck shows an orderly creative process clearly concerned with the presentation of content. Schwitters is known to be a person who loved creating new words rich in meaning. This is true for the collage Grünfleck. To begin with, he put together the word Grünfleck. Annegreth Nill explains that this title word is written on the left below the collage in Schwitters' own handwriting. This word was probably made up by Schwitters to describe his collage. The noun Grün, according to a German-English dictionary of 1909 means - the colour green, spades in a suit of playing cards. As an

adjective it means - fresh or new. The noun fleck can mean - blot, blur, blemish, spot, stain, taint, patch, piece, or botch. As the colour green is not used in this collage at all, the other meaning of the noun Grün will be examined. As mentioned previously, the compositional arrangement is like a hand of playing cards, so Schwitters has obviously taken Grün to mean suit of playing cards. The outer fragments have been stained or smudged, another word relating to Grünfleck. Grün is also the traditional colour of spades in German cards (originating from a spade like leaf pattern which decorated these cards).

Anlage, the next word for discussion, is an important word in this collage. It is printed in white letters on a black background and is placed on the narrow rectangular piece above the circular centre of the collage. Anlage is also a word rich in meaning. As a noun it means - foundation, beginning, plan, construction, design, outline, plot, laying out, establishment, plantation, investments, invested capital, stock, talent, annexed paper, enclosure, tax, duty, pleasure grounds and public parks. Many of these meanings for anlage relate to Schwitters' collage, for example, beginning (the beginning of collage for Schwitters), design, laying out, talent. There are others which will be discussed later. Grünfleck is very much about the making and viewing of

collage and other works of art. It also speaks about the economic situation of the inflationary period after World War I. Annegreth Nill points out that the collage Grünfleck reflects Schwitters' dual concern for art and commerce.

The words Grünfleck and anlage relate more to the first meaning mentioned above, the issue of collage as an artistic medium. Anlage relates to Grünfleck in the following ways: the process by which one lays one's cards out on a table in a game of solitaire, for example, is called anlegen in German. Annegreth Nill explains another interesting connection between these two words. Anlage and its meaning of 'pleasure grounds and public parks' relates to Grünfleck in the sense of 'ein fleck grün' or a 'green spot'. It is interesting to note that Schwitters grew up and enjoyed living during most of his career in a place that was filled with beautiful public parks or anlagen. Below the word anlage is another carefully cropped piece of type. The letters 'nsicht' above a domed architectural structure. In 1920 everyone would have easily recognized this building as one of the earliest cigarette factories built in Dresden. Schwitters has used the word 'nsicht' so that it has more than one meaning. He wanted the viewer to either add the 'a' to complete the word 'ansicht' or 'view', or to remove the 'n' so that

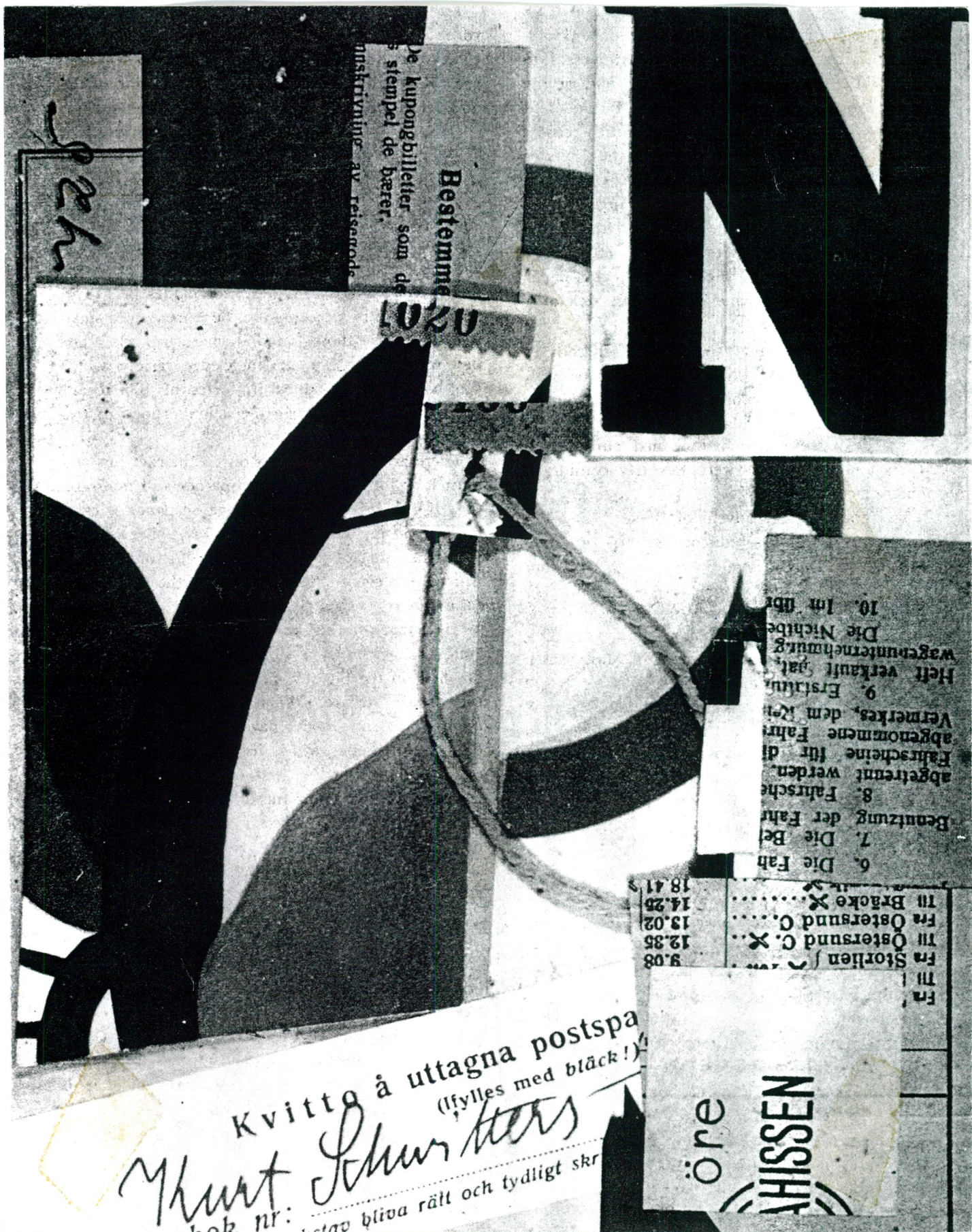
it reads as the word 'sicht' or 'sight' (this relates to anlage's meaning of 'public parks').

To the right of 'nsicht' and under anlage, also in white letters on black background, is the phrase 'a rhein'. Schwitters has cut off the 'anlage' and 'a rhein' piece of newspaper just below the word 'genuss'. This word is an important connection to the word Rhine, 'genuss' means enjoyment, pleasure or delight. Schwitters' message here is about the pleasure and enjoyment people experience or he has experienced looking at the beautiful scenery of the Rhine River (one of the most scenic areas in Germany). Schwitters' meaning here in relation to collage is that this pleasure and enjoyment is also experienced when one looks at the collage.

The use of streetcar tickets and entrance tickets is very obvious in this collage. Schwitters has used their flat, rectangular shapes to fit into the rectangular structure of the collage. The numbers, names, and lines printed on them add to the texture and colour of the collage without overloading it with content. Schwitters' reason for using streetcar tickets was probably because of their importance at that time in Germany. It was the most common form of transport in post war years. This use of tickets in the collage is part of the commercial meaning of Grünfleck. Another point in relation to the collage's commercial aspect

is that people had to pay to see this collage Grünfleck; people had to buy tickets to see it. The collage therefore entered the commercial arena. It became one more commodity to be bought, but at the same time it became another kind of 'anlage', it becomes an 'investment'. Annegreth Nill writes about Schwitters' feelings on art in commercial terms, as he was fascinated by business.

Schwitters' statement of 1920 is, in my opinion, very relevant for this collage: ' I pasted up pictures and drawings so that sentences should be read in them'. This could also be said for Picasso's collage Still Life: Au Bon Marché because we see in both of these collages different fragments of type and illustration all placed in the collages to work together in order to convey specific messages/meanings. Grünfleck, like Au Bon Marché, with its themes found lingering throughout the collage whether they come across very strongly or are simply hinted at, through the typography, are what makes the collage work.



(Illus. 29) Untitled Collage, by Kurt Schwitters.



CONCLUSION

The Cubists firmly established that the twentieth century painter had other interests besides providing a visual likeness of objects, scenes and people. They gave up painting these portraits and landscapes to concentrate instead on rendering newspapers, glasses, etc., by introducing typography into their work. They came to realize the visual impact of the printed word, initially through stencilled typography and afterwards through the use of type on printed materials. This thesis has examined the Cubists' use of typography in collage and the manner in which they succeeded in communicating their thoughts and ideas on current issues and events in the world. The typography was not used purely as an element of colour and texture, but frequently was used to communicate the main themes of these collages. A close look at many of the newspaper clippings used shows them in fact, not to be randomly selected pieces of printed material, but reports and accounts meticulously cut and carefully pasted to preserve legibility.

Both the Cubist and Dada artists through their use of typography in collage were able to make their own social statements.

The use of typography in collage by the Dada artists has been examined and also the manner in which

they were influenced by Cubist collage. They developed the Cubists' introduction of typography into collage by the introduction of 'chance' in the creating of a collage, this factor being one of the important differences between Cubist and Dada collage. The Dada artists through their use of typography in collage smashed the conventions of typographic communication and gave it a new freedom.

The Cubist and Dada artists' collage work through its composition and use of typography reveals a symbolic and expressive quality beyond the communication content of a verbal message. This thesis has shown that through the use of typography, whether a newspaper clipping, magazine advertisement, calling card or bus ticket, very often these typographic materials are what make the collages work, and in fact, communicate their themes to us. Through these collages the impulsiveness of the designer's hand, the contrast of the different elements chosen and the many layers of information and meaning, are combined together to create a work of art.

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