

VOL. I, PLATE I, FIRST FOLD

PROSPECT OF THE SUBJECT TO BE TREATED OF

This thesis consists out of two parts. But if it could have been in a different form than linear text, it would have been circular, since both parts are continiously adding up to eachother in a chain of associations.

The first part is a view on constructions of the world or of knowledge. The scond part an intrinsic part of this world or of knowledge but calling up, referring and evan manipulating the first construction.

On both sides of the plane can be added and substracted, and from both sides the other never is already more than it appears to be.

2

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THE TRACE OF BODIES OF WHICH THIS TERRESTRIAL SYSTEM IS COMPOSED

4

The special collections reading-room has a great view over Edinburgh facing Arthur's seat. From the roof of the National Library of Scotland, on the 15th floor of the building, one mostly sees rooftops and chimneys, smoke and ravens. A real good panorama of the city can probably be reached from that mountain too. A mountain that gave new insights to one of the early modern geologists that lived in this city, whose book is now on a reading stand in front of me. Digital maps do not seem to get a grip on this city, since the layers it has cannot be depicted on the flat surface. My Google maps navigation seemed to get confused when it thought I jumped off George IV Bridge into Cowgate when I was navigating myself towards the building.

Around Calton Hill, from where the world's first panorama was painted, crossing North Bridge, to the right over the Royal Mile and than left to the library. 'H. G. Wells' had to stay in the locker downstairs before I entered the reading room, since I was just allowed to bring only the most necessary things.

When I look back at the book on the reading stand, concentrating to see the tiniest etching lines I've probably ever seen, the stone suddenly seemed much smaller than I imagined it to be.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GEOLOGY

Ask someone to draw a picture of the world. Rather than drawing the things he finds important in his life that we could call his world, he would draw his geological understanding of 'the world' or rather; he draws *the Earth*. But what is this geological world?

Geologists investigate the built-up of our Earth in the present and in the past and the process in which it changes. But as in many of the sciences the many fields inside the discourse are dendrite in a way that a branch on the one end of the doesn't understand the one on the other end anymore. Fields in geology



range from sedimentology, studying the behaviour of contemporary small loose parts (sand and mud), to

geochronology, which is the categorisation of all of the events on the Earth onto an abstract timeline. The topics they're dealing with are as disunited as the empirical methods they're using to get a picture of it. So even in a seemingly circumscribed field it is hard to say that there is one view on the world, in geology you would rather say that the sum of these discourses construct the Earth as a result of its historical forms.

The past survives in three ways; as objects, as physical landscape or site and in text, or narrative. And it is these aspects that, for geologists too, produce new knowledge to construct a bigger picture of *the Earth*. Landscape is of course one of the more obvious ways to gain or produce knowledge about the Earth, but objects (which off course include minerals and fossils) even form geological markers that prelude new eras or eons. In this way the trilobite fossil became the most well

6

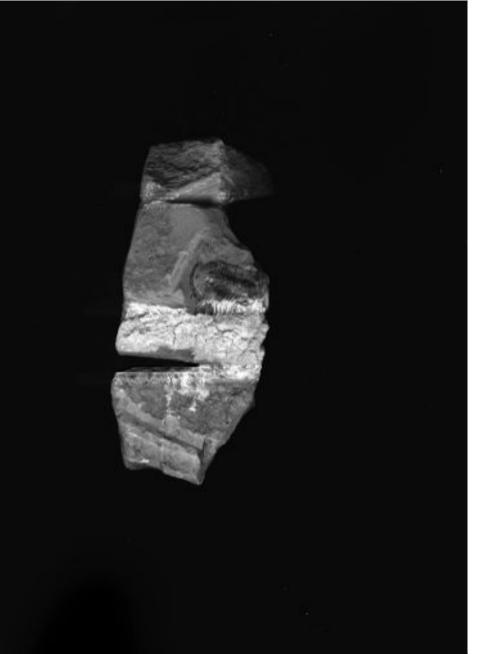
known fossil group as being the marker of the Atdabanian (or the upper Cambrian) [see Glossary: Cambrian system]. These marine anthropoids were essentially just an intrinsic part of this era but by their importance in systemising the history of the Earth they became a metonymy for the era they lived in. For the uninitiated geology enthusiast visiting the fossil-shop it has even started acting as a symbol for a much greater part of the Earth's history, the existence of pre-dinosaur or early marine life. It is the combination of the trilobite's intrinsic relationship with the Earth and the uninitiated eyes that allow it to become a symbol. Because, when speaking in semiotic terms, if the signified is more dynamic or abstractly defined by the viewer a sign is more easily found for it. It is simply easier to find a working metaphor for world, than a metaphor for shovel.

And lastly, the narrative. Narratives appear in written texts, but also in film, paintings and illustrations. The narrative is a tricky source when you talk about objective

— The trace of bodies of whic

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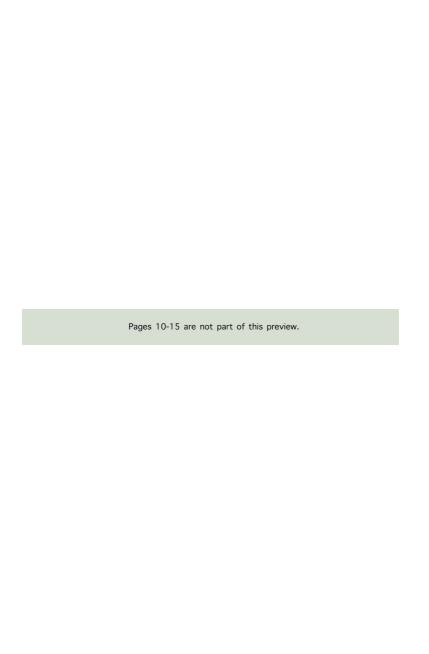
data, except maybe for photographs. But recordings of early events can be very useful in modern research. After all, every formulated truth can be called a narrative, and this includes both older references and more modern research that can be reinterpreted. Mainly by looking with new eyes to old data, old stories can be useful in new theories.

So how did we end up with the *picture of the Earth* representing *our world*, maybe even as a metaphor? Ironically enough, it came from outer space. The first actual picture of the Earth by NASA was made public in 1966, it did not show any countries borders, like maps and globes did, and was not pointed at anything in particular. The Whole Earth Catalog, whose founder ran a campaign to make the picture public, later sold this picture through their publications. The first edition in fall 1968 came with the slogan 'Access to tools'. The Catalog offered an overview of books on all kinds of topics, starting with the first chapter in the fist issue

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GOOGLE

There is a company that takes access to tools to a whole new level; "Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." it says on their 'about' page. In 2001 Google released the first version of their new service, Google Earth. Compared to the image released by NASA in 1966 it gave a whole new experience to look at our Earth, we where able to rotate the globe, turn it upside down and zoom in till our recognisable world on the surface of that globe.

9



"He (i.e. Wells) has come to believe that congruence with mind, which man has attributed to the secular (i.e. eternal) process, is not really there at al. The secular process as he now sees it, is entirely at one with such non-mental rhythms as the accumulation of crystalline matter in mineral vein or the flight of a shower of meteors. The two processes have run parallel for what we call eternity, and now abruptly they swing off at a tangent from one and other--just as a comment as his perihelion hangs portentous in the heavens for a season and than rushes away for ages or forever. Man's mind accepted the secular process as eternal and it could not do otherwise, because he was evolved as part and parcel of it." Wells writes.

And here he actually says two things, one is that since secularity is a concept created by a mind, it could only exist when a mind did, which is thus in the timespan that the mind exist. Secondly, he says that both natural and intellectual systems developed alongside each other and in both an evolutionary manner. So the mind

— THE TRACE OF BODIES OF WHIC

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SIDE TEXT HOW TO MAKE AN IMAGE OF A STONE

- III. Draw inner outline double
 - a. Draw outer outline

ETCH

- IV. Cover all up
 - a. Make raster inside inner outline
 - Paint back white figure including dark gaps with wax

ETCH

- V. Cover inside up
 - a. Rasterise in between inner and outer outline

ETCH

can see nature as logical because itself thinks it is, but at the same time when it sees the world as a random development then mind itself is random too.

"We shall thus also be led to acknowledge an order, not unworthy of Divine wisdom, in a subject which, in another view, has appeared as the work of chance, or as absolute disorder and confusion."

16

Yes, Wells is perfectly right that the world is coming to an end. Since the book is written in the last months of his own life his prediction of the very understanding of the world will cease to exist is true. This is because his definition of this world will die with him. No person will ever have the same definition as he had again and the same counts for theirs. What Wells might actually be predicting is the end of the world as x knew it.

— The trace of bodies of whic

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VI. Cover all up

- a. Draw outside of stone to create three-dimensional effect
- b. Create lines following the outer contours of the stone.

ETCH

VII. Create shadows on contours: Etch from dark to light with use of intervals

VIII. Cover up

a. Create contours of gaps

ETCH

- IX. Create crystals in gaps using method of V.
- X. Cover all up
 - a. Make details in white figure.

ETCH

PRINT

"The result, therefore, of this physical inquiry is, that we find no vestige of a beginning,—no prospect of an end."

Wells has fallen in what we could call fatalistic synecdoche, which I can also believe can be partly ascribed to the time he was writing his book in. But the approach to a fatalistic event, such as ones own death, can cause people to conflate the whole (the world) with the part (themselves), to be followed by the belief that the whole world will cease to exist after their death. Talking about oneself in the third person and in a self-aggrandizing manner might be an argument for this.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO A STONE

I could not say that I'm well informed about the experiential world of a stone, there was also never an occasion I could ask one. However, literature gave me a way that I could imagine it to be.

<u>17</u>

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THE WORLD A

I could not say that experiential world of a occasion I could ask one way that I could imagin "IT FILLS ALL SPACE, AND WHAT IT FILLS, IT IS. WHAT IT THINKS, THAT IT UTTERS; AND WHAT IT UTTERS, THAT IT HEARS; AND IT ITSELF IS THINKER, UTTERER, HEARER, THOUGHT, WORD, AUDITION; IT IS THE ONE, AND YET THE ALL IN ALL. AH, THE HAPPINESS AH, THE HAPPINESS OF BEING!"

In Edwin Abbot's Flatland A. Square encounters another

entity next to Sphere, the three-dimensional truthbringer, he meets the king of Pointland. Pointland is a

land without dimensions which has only one inhabitant, the king. The king, just as a stone, has no senses, no eyes, no ears and thus no way to perceive anything else than himself. But how could it even? Since the edge of himself is the edge of his land. Anything pointed outward, such as vision or hearing would be pointed to the, for him, non-existing. The king of Pointland is himself his own world, his own universe even. When he 'explains' himself he talks in the third person. He has no concept of I, since he is unable to distinguish himself from the world, and is

When A. Square tries to confront the king by talking to him about its pointless existence the king mistakes the sound for its own thought and praises it for its ability to question its own existence. The world of a stone might too only exist in the space of thought, and that space is as

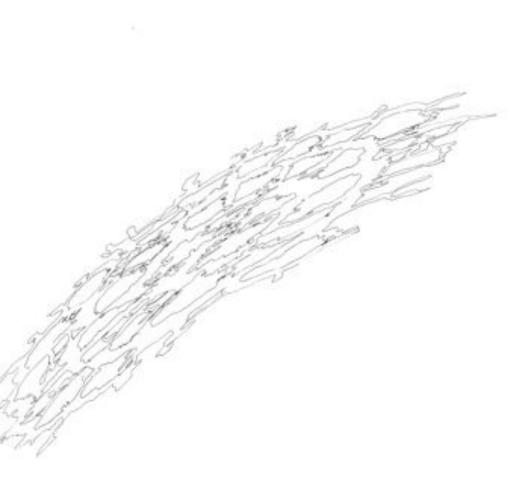
<u>18</u>

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— The trace of bodies of whic

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big as you imagine it to be. It could as well simply be the picture you draw with you hands if you talk to someone about the bigger picture. This might also be true for our conception of it, because how big is our world exactly? Can you describe how large a circumference of 40.075 km is, and if you can, can you imagine it? Large numbers seem to dazzle us pretty quickly.

Abbot's book could be read as a social critique on the Victorian time when it was written, but it never gained any success at that time. After Einstein published his general theory of relativity, which laid out a theory for the existence of a fourth dimension, an idea that was ridiculed in the book by Sphere but still put down by his own arguments, Flatland gained new popularity. The book could now be seen better as the ignorance of individuals concerning other worlds we can't see because our senses do not allow us to do so. We neither look further than what we understand, nor into each other.

19



AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 'NATURAL **OPERATIONS'** EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE

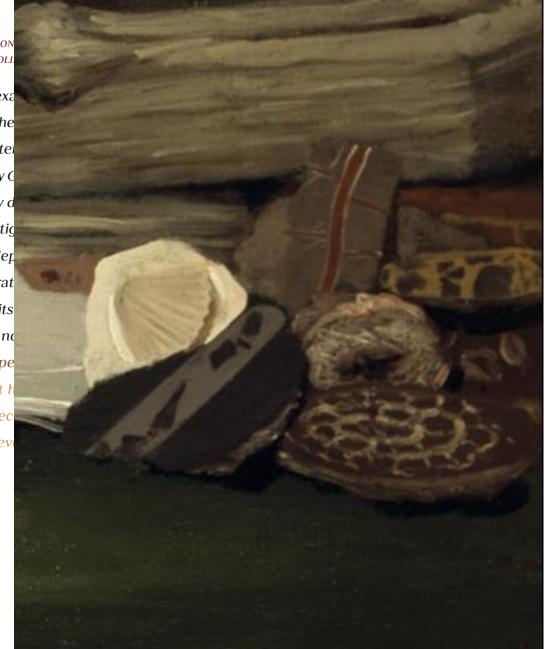
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The image under examination in this writing derives from 'The Theory of the Earth' by James Hutton written in 1795, which was later scanned by Google. Before the book became a scan by Google the image was deployed to consolidate the theory described in the book concerning one of the early investigations of the mechanism that is the earth. The stone depicted was prescribed a purpose, the purpose to illustrate, to hold information readable for the one knowing its language. However, the eroded image available to us now is one that confronts us with its 'thingness'; it stopped working for us in its intended purpose. The accident happening in the image might be what has the most effect on us; a broken thing confuses or can in some cases even attacks us.

<u>21</u>

— An Investigation EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

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— AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 'NATURAL OPERATIONS' EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

The displacement of mass free to move is a common phenomenon in natural terrestrial operations. Masses that are characterised by their sharp outlines we usually call things. Imagine for instance a stony dessert, what is lying around our feet, mostly stones, maybe some pebbles, we can call things. But the soil that supports them, however made of the same material, we can hardly call a thing, because we can not distinguish its outlines. Ironically enough, when we break of a piece, we have a thing again. It is the interesting edge, where the word rock shifts from one of its definitions to the other. [see Glossary: Rock] We could say that this bigger mass, consists out of fused things, or that every thing once derived from a bigger mass.

But what if we threw the stone, we just picked up to examine its thingness, back on the ground. The moment it stops moving, it is amongst other heterogeneous things again. When it falls out of focus and stops moving, it gains some invisibility. (Wait, was it this stone or that

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

The displacement of phenomenon in natura that are characterised b call things. Imagine for is lying around our fee pebbles, we can call th them, however made hardly call a thing, bec outlines. Ironically enowe have a thing again. the word rock shifts fro other. [see Glossary: Rock] $W\epsilon$ consists out of fused th derived from a bigger m

But what if we threw examine its thingness, b it stops moving, it is things again. When it fal it gains some invisibility Chinese craftsman use a technique to create an image, mostly calligraphy, from a stone that exists out of two methodologies. One wet, one dry. The dry method uses thick plant-fiber paper soaked in a water and algae-gelatine mixture to make it completely flexible. It is folded around the stone and into the cracks. The flexible paper easily imitates all the small contours of the stone and is carefully beaten inside the marks, cracks and writing. Then, ink is dabbed on the paper; any deeper laying parts of the stone are left blank in this process.

Because the stones themselves usually are of dark colour the print might not actually appear as a negative. The strict contrast created in this process only makes the stone easier the read. For us the difference between black and white is easier to distinguish than the difference in depth on a black stone. However, it also clarifies the 'stony' qualities of the stone tablets. Every crack spot and rough edge is more clearly distinguished as well.

- An Investigation of the 'Natural Operations' FMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

one I just had in my hands?) It is for that reason that we associate with things only intermittedly. But what if matter can in some way stay in a kind of motion?

"(...) matter itself must be in motion, and the scenes of life a continued or repeated series of agitations and events."

Stones that move more regular are usually the 23 smaller ones. Their movement through landscapes is even perpetual. Easily transported by wind or water the weightless grains can take on long and distant journeys, away from the rock they derived from, mixing with other specimens.

Here I come to the thing I want to talk about, the clastic body [see Glossary: Clastic body]. A clastic body is a mass that through time and multiple events grew into a solid body, a new thing. Made out of different kinds of clasts, these are parts of pre-existing masses that disintegrated

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLL

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— AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 'NATURAL OPERATIONS' EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

earlier. Clastic bodies are gatherings that include some pre-brought associations as for instance to the landscapes the individual parts derived from. Although the movement of the clasts was an event that took place in the past, it is still visible in the present thing. Most of the information can be found in the composition and association of the parts. The clastic body has gathered pre-existing particles that do not just weld together different landscapes as elements of the same kind; they straddle boundaries between kinds.

A body existing of different elements does not have the same sharp and rigid outlines that are generally brought in connection with things. Not in their material way but in the way they are called upon. If we see the scan as such a clastic body we could name its parts, search for the cement that melds it together. The fusions result in considerable blurring of outlines of things. The contrast of their clastic composition and their unified gestalt is one element that distinguishes an associative thing from a prosaic sort.

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

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A body existing of di the same sharp and ri brought in connection v way but in the way the scan as such a clastic search for the cement the result in considerable be contrast of their clastic gestalt is one element the thing from a prosaic soi

The dry method is used for exactly these stones that are more complex due to their 'stony qualities'. It can even be stones that have been exposed to the outside conditions for ages that are handled with this method. But naturally, this involves even more care. The paper used for the dry method is extremely thin (known as cicada wing paper). After the stone is cleaned the paper is pasted on the stone. Because the paper almost appears transparent it is first sprinkled with nacre dust. The paper is then shaped into the cracks by hand, the warmth of a hand already transforms the paper. Again thicker ink is dabbed on top.

The paper imitates the shape of the stone becoming the image of the stone; this is later only captured by adding the ink on top. Like photography the rubbing is a snapshot of an object, only in this case not captured by light, but by depth. However, when the ink has dried, the craftsman use a shell to again flatten out the paper so it becomes suitable to store.

— An Investigation of the 'Natural Operations' EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

"When this is properly suggested in the appearances of things; and, though we may not understand all the modifications, or the whole capacity and regulation of this power in bodies, we are not to neglect the appropriating to it, as a cause, those effects which are natural to it, and which, so far as we know, cannot belong to any other."

I would now like to take you through the clasts in this Google scan. The different kinds of clasts make up the totality of the image.

Firstly we have the solid clasts of pre-brought associations. These are the part of the scanned image you could not see it without and without you could not see it, they support and accompany the image, sometimes also called the medium. In this case we have the service of a huge Internet based multinational corporation, Google books. This service, claiming to

— AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 'NATURAL OPERATIONS' EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

have the ideology to make knowledge accessible for everyone connected to the Internet, was key to have access to the image at all. Since the second carrier, another association is an 18th century geological book, with the most nearby copy (only two of its four volumes) lying in the collection building at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh.

While these two carriers seem as distant as they could possibly be; a digital and a paper carrier, one produced by digital reproduction and the other by classical book print craftsmanship, they might even have some things in common. Both carriers preach their ideology about knowledge; Google preaches knowledge accessible for everyone. 'Theory of the Earth', being written at the beginning of the enlightenment, including a detailed proof against the existence of the universal flood, preached a knowledge generated by empirical research. 'The theory of the Earth' (already the title gives it away) was written to provide the reader with an image of the

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI.

have the ideology to reveryone connected to access to the image are another association is a with the most nearby colying in the collection by Scotland in Edinburgh.

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But what should a stone look if it was not voluminous? Stones are namely exactly that; by definition not two-dimensional. However, a good carrier ready to accommodate to the three dimensional character of the stone, such as the paper in this printing method, is still being righteous to this character. The paper, the carrier of this ancient printing method, starts taking an important leading position. But involuminous volume, volume that can be archived, is only achieved in one way.

All the individual measuring points of a 3D scanner appear like a sheet wrapping around a stone object. But the image of it, a collection of measuring points taking a position in a three dimensional space, does not actually have a volume, because points do not. And if accurate, they are only there if seen from one side.

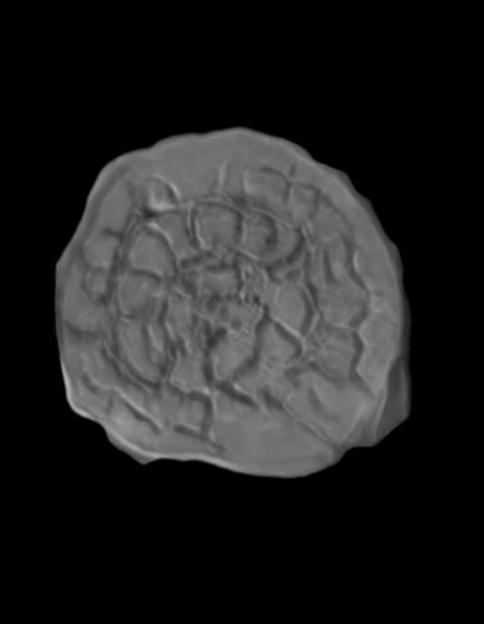
whole globe, Google brings this to a whole new level with another of its services, Google street view. But also in Google books itself, the attempt to cover 'the whole' or 'all', be it the people to have access or the books scanned, is not to be denied. And ironically both are in a way censored. Google self-censored most of the scans due to reproduction rights held by the library and 'Theory of the Earth' is basically self-censured by its own rare and scattered existence, the plates as used in the scan are not the same on any of the publications of the book. It might appear that these associations now do not only support the scan, being the reason the scan exists at all, but might also be called on by the scan.

Secondly the fluid body of what was the intended subject appears, the rock formation underneath the fold. Fluid, because they appear differently in other occasions. The stones appear to have the characteristic form of septaria. Septaria are siliceous nodules or concretions [see Glossary: Concretions, Septaria], mostly ironstone,

— An Investigation EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

whole globe, Google bi with another of its ser also in Google books it whole' or 'all', be it the books scanned, is not to are in a way censored the scans due to reprod and 'Theory of the Earth own rare and scattered the scan are not the sar the book. It might appe do not only support the exists at all, but might a

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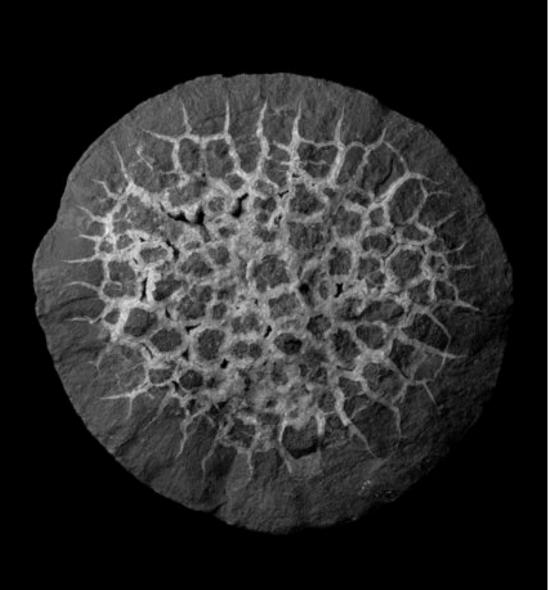


crisscrossed with cracks filled with calcite or other minerals. They are stones that potentially hold many depictions of themselves, from perfectly round and symmetrical to multiple irregular cracks. Depending on where and how the stone is divided one nodule of septaria alone contains countless various motifs. The choice where to make the cross section of the nodule, that may be made lengthwise, crosswise, diagonally or equatorially determines the shape of the pattern. Even when cut on the same axis the patterns already change rapidly when the cuts are set only a few millimetres apart. Even while two cuts of the same nodule might look completely different, the human eye might still be able to imagine a transition between the two. The two stones depicted on the page might thus even be two states of the same stone.

<u>28</u>

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

crisscrossed with crac minerals. They are stor depictions of themselv symmetrical to multiple on where and how the septaria alone contains choice where to make that may be made length equatorially determines when cut on the same a rapidly when the cuts apart. Even while two look completely differen able to imagine a trans stones depicted on the states of the same stone



"I have one specimen, in which the primary crystals are siliceous, the secondary thin foliaceous crystals of deep red but transparent iron-ore, forming elegant figures, that have the form of roses."

Hutton describes many variations in the septaria of the ironstone. But the one depicted is probably one filled with calcite, which gives it a nice black and white contrast. The stones have a typical round and sometimes somewhat flattened spherical form. The septa in the stone ideally follow the circular shape of the stone giving the stone an idyllic shape that could almost function as a model or a tiny world in itself. However, we should not forget that we are just looking at the result of ink filled in grooves in an iron plate following the contours of the grooves in the stone. It is not even said the maker of the drawings did not make them slightly prettier than they actually where. It is known of John Clerk of Eldin, who made a lot of the drawings for theory of the Earth,

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI.

"I have one specin crystals are siliceo foliaceous crystals iron-ore, forming of form of roses."

Hutton describes m of the ironstone. But th filled with calcite, whicl contrast. The stones hav somewhat flattened sp stone ideally follow the c the stone an idyllic shar a model or a tiny worl not forget that we are filled in grooves in an ir of the grooves in the stc of the drawings did not they actually where. It who made a lot of the d

This is because of what the measuring points actually are; the end of a distance between the scanned object and the spectator. This distance does not exist when the spectator looks from the 'inside' of the object. Which again means that this image isn't even hollow, just flat. Yes, the observer can 'move around' a digital object but the moment he sees one side, the other side simply does not exist because the distance between the object and the observer ends earlier, on the visible side, still making it a flat image. What makes the image look like a three-dimensional object is the fact that there are multiple measuring points taken through time saved in one place. It is the advance of this image that it is described in a plurality of images.

though it is unknown who made the drawing of the stone, that he was not always objectively correct in his drawings. In line with the fashion of his time he drew humans quite a lot smaller relative to the landscape.

is Thirdly, there the fold or the fault. [see Glossary: Fold]. From this irregular body we can only guess the nature of the human or machine interference. when it covers up the etched set of stones. The fold manifests itself by our curiosity about the image that lies underneath and on the other side of this paper that is properly covering its own image. The materiality of the paper is enhanced by the two little corners of the paper, which are folded back, facing front again. But this material lost part of its property by being digitalised, we are not able to lift the paper and see what lies behind. This situation became eternalized as the new image.

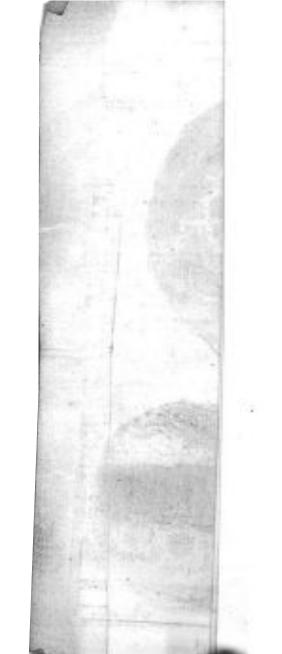
Than, there is the fault [see Glossary: Fault], the mistake, the physical defect, the irregularity. The sudden accident in the scan flip-flops the identity of the scan from something that was mediating through illustration to something that became a metaphorical mediator. Instead of being told what we are supposed to see there is now gaps to fill in with information and to connect with its other links. Like looking back at what the fault means in the world of geology. On Siccar Point, Schotland, Hutton discovered vertically folded layers of rock underneath horizontal positioned layers of rock. Huttons unconformity as it was called was the first indication that continents where actually in drift.

Lastly, there is an even more unpredictable body that surrounds the whole image. Looking at the difference in the scan as it appeared on the 22nd of March 2014 in comparison as it appeared on the 3rd of September 2014 we are able to distinguish a slight difference in contrast, which enables us distinguish something of

— AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLL

Than, there is the faul physical defect, the irrethe scan flip-flops the ide that was mediating thr that became a metapho told what we are suppos in with information and Like looking back at wha geology. On Siccar Poin vertically folded layers positioned layers of ro was called was the first i actually in drift.

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32

— AN INVESTIGATION OF THE 'NATURAL OPERATIONS' EMPLOYED IN CONSOLIDATING THE STRATA OF THE IMAGE —

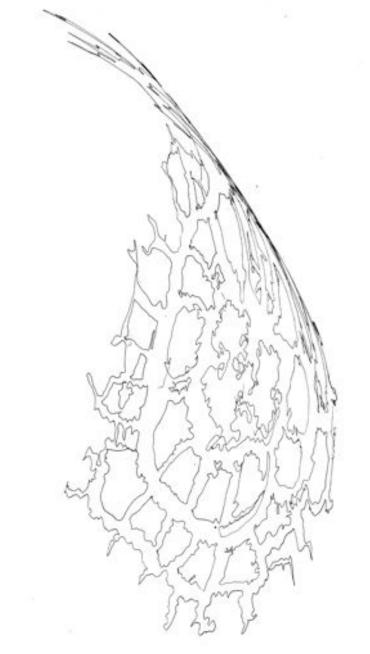
the underlying layer. The scan changes when it moves through time or rather, every appearance of the image differs it from its earlier ones, even more so with a digital image like this one. The first state of the image, the one in the book, has took on its travels in circulating from one medium to another, one moment it are interchangeable pixels floating on the internet the other time it is the cover of a book, closed up in a context. And the fold might only be one of the faulty reproductions of the image. Alteration or erosion is a secular process but in the noösphere things tend to become more instead of less in this process, opposed to the natural world.

"These are, the form of the whole, the materials of which it is composed, and the several powers which concur, counteract, or balance one another, in procuring the general result."

- AN INVESTIGATION EMPLOYED IN CONSOLI

the underlying layer. The through time or rather, differs it from its earli digital image like this of the one in the book, has from one medium to interchangeable pixels for time it is the cover of a lather than the fold might only be of the image. Alteration or in the noösphere things less in this process, opp

"These are, the for of which it is comp which concur, cou in procuring the g



In concluding all this, it is hard to name one particular part or a method by what things become associative. It is rather the combination and the association between the parts. Things that travel in parts or shreds, like digital images are more likely to get involved with many contexts, because of their adaptive format. A change in the image while it travels can make it accessible and it can gain new associations.

But still such a body has to be seen as a whole thing every time it appears. It is not so that a clastic body is merely the sum of its parts; it is also the whole thing and the relation between the two. That is when larger pictures can be able to be called on by a smaller image. In case of the scan I think we can agree on Google Books > Theory of the Earth > the scan > the stone/the fold. Still the fold can call up the association with the self censorship of Google Books, or with a tectonically displacement, covering up an earlier layer of rocks. In this case I could actually add the earth itself in front

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Something like a stone is not easily represented in a way that is both easier to archive and more robust than the stone itself. However paper once won over stone to depict and store things that we think important, the storing of stones themselves still takes a lot of space and in some cases even risk. But when thinking of distribution, explanation and accessibility, finding another medium to mediate the stone might become useful. Creating multiple images from the same thing will eventually show the plurality of the thing depicted. Stones are ordinary things at first sight, but when you actually look at them, and looking at things using a pencil might be the most detailed way of looking, the thing that you first simply called 'stone' gets a more detailed observation. Getting further in representation by re-inscription takes you further away from these generalisations, because it brings you closer to the plural identity of a thing.

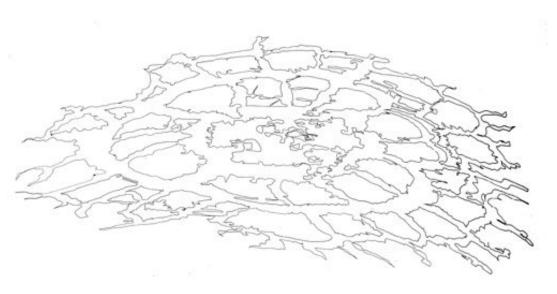
of Google books. Even looking through the layers, like in geology, you are actually looking back in time, to an earlier version of both information spreading and knowledge.

"In taking this view of things, where ends and means are made the object of attention, we may hope to find a principle upon which the comparative importance of parts in the system of nature may be estimated, and also a rule for selecting the object of our inquiries."

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SYSTEM OF DECAY AND RENOVATION

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