*Photogravure: Native American (anonymous, 1925). There are two histories of photogravure. One from its invention in France in the later 19th century to the 1930s; then from the 1970s to our day. The rediscovery of the technique has followed from an archaeology of practice to the 1st period's books.*

The traces that we *leave* on the internet have attracted alot of attention, both with regard to our *rights* to these and *security*. What may have escaped our attention—in the mean time—are the traces, or *footprints*, left by digital *usership* in how we live, work and think. That is, the compound cybernetic *footprint* in what we learn through our senses (*aesthetics*), the paths we set and goals we seek in pursuit of a good life (*ethics*), and finally the *joinery* of the variety of causes (*meta-physics*) that allow us to screen, intercept and frame the workings of *cybernetic* hit-and-impacts.

Essentially, the *designs* we develop to monitor digital footprints in our life-form: the form of life we life then will determine how we absorb, transform and transpose the techno-cultural impetus in the *medial zone* (the zone *between* short-term concerns of narrow scope, *and* the long-term wide-scoped consideration). So, even though it can readily be *located*, the complex *agency* medial zone is far less obvious. Maybe because we more readily attend what goes into and comes out of the medial zone (input/output), than we attend what sinks *into* and comes *out from* our *life-form*.

In principle, one would think that *environmental humanities* would go straight to the matter. And perhaps this is happening—promises to happen—or, is anticipated and postponed. It provides us with the possibility of a new horizon. But a problem to be addressed, which is likely to be located at a different level, is the *requisite variety* of practices to meet the *complexity* at hand, and make it surface as a *material*. That is, the *archival accession* if you will: gathering, studying and working this material. That is, *no longer* as meta-data, but as our *primary* data. Turning the odds.

Evidently, there will be more than one basis to establish an experimental basis to work a materi-ality of this kind. In the domain of *markmaking*, however, what is known interchangeably as photo-gravure/heliogravure is an obvious candidate. Since *photogravure* is technique seen as a *repro-duction*-technique in printmaking. While *heliogravure* is the same technique pledged to the light-



Bing: the heir of ChatGPT 4 (MS Edge)

source (helios = sun). But while photogravure a technique seeking to obtain a superior quality of photography, heliogravure is pledged to an archaeological study of photography as an archival material/prompt.

Of course, this is *not* a resident property of a particular technique but linked the sense of *problem* tethered to the technique. For instance, the idea of looking at text-*scanning* to pdf, from a printed document, as a form of *encryption* of a digital file—since the text is now an image—follows logically from our using OCR to *decode* it. Similarly, digital technology has taught us to look at text as an *image*: for instance, when using the lasso-tool in OneNote to frame such images and have them Rocket-booked, or processed by other apps, through a QR code unto a Google document (etc.).

Here code is image: decoded and recoded in text as writing. Hence, the potential importance of the combined usage of image-text in coding in Luis Camnitzer's practice as an artist, architect, designer (or, simply educator). It comes with a provenance which is more extensive

than Elon Musk's PayPal when it was presented in Wire: the logic of compressing data from dual encryption Camnitzer started in the early 1960s (PayPal ca-me in 2000 and was sold to eBay in 2002). What it is about is essentially the jack-in-the-box trope invented at the level of data coding: *metalepsis*. Fictional content conjuring real-time action: *not* illusion containing its own reality.
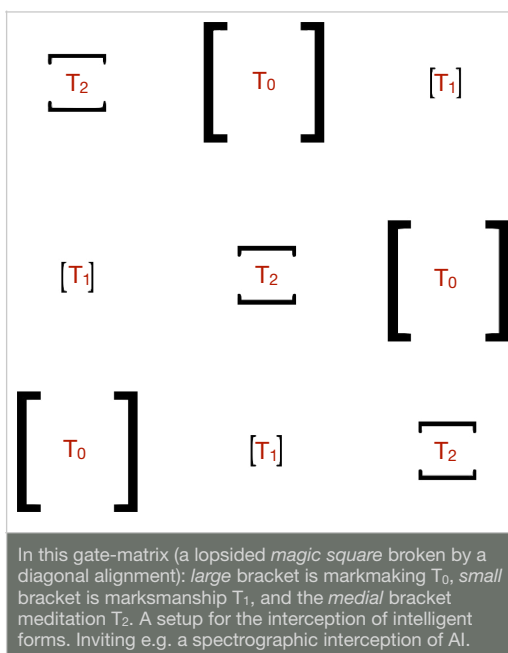
It is important to focus on this, if we want to know what AI was even before the existence of AI as we are presently defined by its usership. At this *close-to-cardboard model* level, AI is not beyond our reach. But it features and intelligence different from that we have been educated to: what remains of the ideals of the French enlightenment and the courtship with technology at that time (using AI to write essays and create visuals is arguably close to the mechanical automatons created in the 18th century, before the industrialisation of mechanics, in the following century).

So, if an important aspect of AI is covered by the above notion of *double-coding*, we can bring our focus to an important aspect of what it does: which is to work at the *transmission* between *language* and *action*, with the work of a technological interface. In this sense, the most important turn of AI—rather than producing essays, imagery and fake news—is to *topsy-turvy* the relation between data and metadata. If we want to be consistent with that, in defining our [usership](), then it extends from AI that we should take interest in metadata as primary data. Digitrails in usership.

With the heliogravure angle on photogravure, we have the occasion and privilege to study the performance, production and process of moving from image to text by small and laborious steps. This slow-motion is likely to teach us a lot double-encryption at the "cardboard" level. Moving from digital elements in the array of techniques used in heliogravure, joined in from the meandering path of a contemporary archaeological search (Jan Pettersson), to the detailed description in text of the technique, from about the time when photogravure was left in the 1930s France.

What can be learned by exploring this terrain in markmaking—moving from photogravure to heliogravure—is through the complex discernment of the difference between *accuracy* in each step, and the (desired) *precision* of the result. Clearly the technique works with a different *ratio* between accuracy and precision than the computer: here computation depends on accuracy, while we are led to expect that precision is delivered by the computer (as cybernetics). Which means that usership will be marked and turn out differently in heliogravure, than for instance with AI.

We want to become wise on this difference. We do *not* wish to obliterate it. What is valuable is the difference because it will allow the precisation on how metadata become data (with the action in both cases of double-encryption): a clarification on how the problem is set, in AI and heliogravure respectively. This will not only bring clarity to our notions of AI, but also on heliogravure as a form of intelligence (in its own right). In both cases, we are brought to think about intelligence and its relation to how information is compressed as data, and how data compute (a point underscored by [Sutskever]()).



In this gate-matrix (a lopsided *magic square* broken by a diagonal alignment): *large* bracket is markmaking $T_0$, *small* bracket is marksmanship $T_1$, and the *medial* bracket meditation $T_2$. A setup for the interception of intelligent forms. Inviting e.g. a spectrographic interception of AI.

Another area with a similar potential as markmaking—featuring heliogravure—is in the area of *marksmanship*. Here, the difference between accurate performance and achieved precision is the same. But at the difference from markmaking the cardboard target is *remote*, in the same way as the paper in photogravure is *intimate*. A third contrastive technique is *meditation*: here understood as the work of alignment of archival materials in study. It is neither intimate nor remote, but *medial*. The point being that we have a triangle which can help to intercept the form of digital intelligence, or the said digital footprint.

Any such adequate triangle can be determined as an [ecosophy T]() in Arne Næss' sense: personal philosophies brought together in a life-form that will be apt to intercept deeper ecological connections with other forms. The equivalent of AI in material practice, that can play a key-role in the "spectrography" of *intelligent forms*.