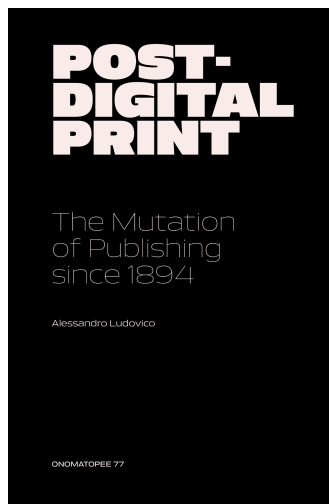**Post-Digital Print - The Mutation of Publishing since 1894**

This book helped clarify my questions on the meaning of print, why it has been such a politically sensitive medium throughout history and still is today, and furthered my understanding on its relationship to digital media.

The book traced print's history from its early use in revolution to its turn into an experimental artistic medium, and discussed the significance of printed matter in the digital age.

The discussion of print as a key medium for the circulation of ideas and political change was insightful. The censorship of prints has existed since the early days. Prints are fragile, but its reproducibility allows them to be dispersed in large amounts, making it harder to erase completely even in the most riot time. This makes me think of the opposite nature of digital content today. Under algorithmic governance and data-driven censorship, contents can disappear instantly without leaving any traces. Although print is also regulated, the fact that it exists in "another dimension" becomes a resilience to the new technology, it is therefore to some extent independent and protected from the centralized communication systems.

Besides, some of prints' qualities are irreplaceable. Printed matter carries a certain inherent authority—for example, we often assume the information on a printed newspaper to be credible without much hesitation. At the same time, print can be touched, passed on, and shared, functioning as a medium of physical connection among people which digital media cannot replace.

These qualities that print possesses make it a medium for resistance and building networks, suggesting that using this medium for expression and circulation remains important in the present day. This leads me to consider the potential in integrating the efficiency of digital media with the materiality of print to enable more powerful modes of expression.
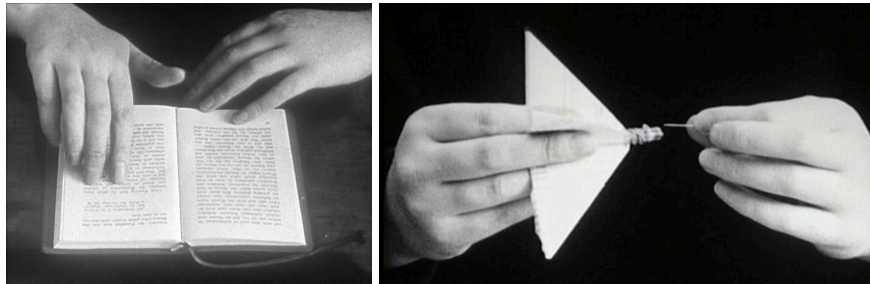
Books' physiognomic appeal and the overseas dissemination of Chinese dianji (classics): A focus on the Library of Chinese Classics

The discussion on the function of "paratext" greatly inspired me, allowing me to see more dimensions in a book: information beyond the book content, such as the crucial influence of the cover image on text interpretation. The cover significantly impacts a reader's understanding of a book's content; it can even be regarded as the most critical entry point into the content. According to the author, a "successful" cover should generally possess these functions: it should interpret the book's content, appropriately convey the book's information, and match the content's tone or atmosphere, thus helping readers clearly and accurately understand the content. Covers that fail to achieve these are considered "unsuccessful." Interestingly, in a survey the author did, most readers attribute "unsuccess" to the cover "choosing an inappropriate background image." In the context of responding to

book censorship, this seemingly "misleading" cover might actually be a disguise or strategic choice. I began to consider: Is it possible to convey information solely through paratext without directly relying on the book content? Can paratext itself be the content? How should elements such as images and text construct a narrative to convey complex meanings beneath a seemingly neutral surface?

Harun Farocki - The words of the Chairman
https://www.harunfarocki.de/films/1960s/1967/the-words-of-the-chairman.html

With subtle humor, this film shows how ideologies, carried by books, function as a political weapon, literally staging a metaphor from the preface of *Quotations from Chairman Mao* that "Mao Zedong Thought is like a spiritual atom bomb." A page is torn from the book, folded into the shape of a dart, and thrown at figures wearing paper masks. Its deconstruction and reconstruction of the book as a sculptural form prompts me to reflect on how the form of the book can actively generate meaning.

Through the shaping of the dart, how books operate as ideological mediators are revealed. How it flies through the air mirrors how ideas are transmitted, and its aggression and violence are made visible through the plot of killing. Here, the book shifts from being a carrier of meaning to a functional object; the experience of "reading" also turns into an experience of handling and use.

Farocki uses the lightness and fragility of paper to illustrate the violence and aggression embedded in political language, employing this contrast as a method of irony: all these are like a game. To me, this method can also be taken as a strategy for resistance which might be powerful, as a quiet, restrained mode of protest that does not confront power head-on, but instead undermines it through subtlety and material presence.
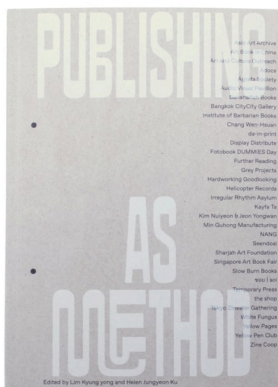
I read about feminist history and came across the large-scale "witch hunt" in history. From it, I realized that the stigmatization and conviction of females were not an isolated case in any single culture, but rather a recurring fate of women during the rise of capitalism. To me, "witch hunt" narratives possess an almost allegorical mysticism: barbaric, absurd, and full of superstition. Despite differences in era and culture, "trial," "conviction," and "burning at the stake" have not disappeared symbolically; they persist within the ongoing censorship systems, moral norms, and various control mechanisms of contemporary society.

In which hunt, this violent idea was systematized and legitimized through a crucial medium, prints. For example, *Malleus Maleficarum*, as a widely dissaminated text, provided an authoritative manual for identifying, judging, and punishing "witches"; illustrated portrayals of females as demonic figures were also widely circulated, popularizing and intensifying the persecution of females within society.

This reminds me to rethink the moral judgments in the context of my project from the angle of media history. How did media and their modes of circulation play a role in shaping how the public interprets images of females? Considering and exploring ways in intervening the aspects of media circulation—through what visual form, medium, material, scale, circumstances images were circulated—will be an important starting point for my experiment.

Publishing as a method — Ways of working together in Asia

This book examines contemporary art publishing through the lens of small-scale practices in Asia. A central idea of the book is "Asia as a method": it proposes to view Asia as a shared context, as a cultraul entity where all regions can learn from each other's experiences. This book made me more clearly aware of its significance for the future of China and Asia as a whole. It prompted me to reflect on my own stance—why I engage in publishing, under what conditions I work, and what kind of cultural and social relations I hope to participate in and shape through publishing.

The dialogues in the book reveal several common cultural challenges Asia is facing: such as the pervasive existence of censorship and the continued marginalization of Asia-centric discourse in a global context, for example, the long-term absence of Asian feminism in mainstream Western narratives. At the same time, the publishers also demonstrate various strategies for actively addressing these challenges: by creating alternative networks of circulation, knowledge production, and forming solidarity networks across regions.

To me, these practices can be understood as revolving around three pursuits: visibility, autonomy, and survival, where small-scale publishing acts as an agent for continuous negotiation for spaces and existence within regulations and limited resources. The presence of official cultural systems and other real-world constraints limits what small-scale publishing can express, as well as its ability to trigger more radical change. Navigating these existing structures thus becomes the most difficult part. How to maintain flexibility in expression while constantly negotiating and compromising with the officials? This might be a central question I need to keep exploring.