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Brigitte Ouvry-Vial. Stéphane Mallarmé self-appointed publisher of one's work: 1865-1898, the editorial epic of The Afternoon of a Faun. Quaerendo, 2014, 44 (Issue 1-2 (Oct 2014)), pp.1-36. 10.1163/15700690-12341286 . hal-02111688

HAL Id: hal-02111688
https://hal.science/hal-02111688v1

Submitted on 26 Apr 2019

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Stéphane Mallarmé self-appointed publisher of one's work: 1865-1898, the editorial epic of *The Afternoon of a Faun*

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Published in Quaerendo, Brill Vol. 44 (2014): Issue 1-2 (Oct 2014) pp. 1-36

Stéphane Mallarme's intense and thirty-six years long correspondence with his friends, fellow writers, successive publishers and printers depicts the editorial and publishing epic of his short but most cherished and acclaimed masterpiece, a poem in verse of 110 lines entitled *L'Aprés-midi d'un Faune (The Afternoon of a Faun).* A canonical figure in the legacy of modernism[1], Mallarmé (1842–98) was indeed a French Symbolist poet, theorist, and teacher whose ideas and legendary salons set the stage for twentieth-century experimentation in poetry, music, theater and art and a lifelong champion of the book as both a literary endeavor and a carefully crafted material object.

Scholars have pointed to the place occupied in his writing by "the ideal Book[2]", the total Book to which he aspired and the Album, a collection of disjointed pieces to which he had to resign himself, but always a constellation, a spiritual instrument[3], a vessel for a writing project, in other words having two dimensions or meanings, both material and poetic:

"The book, a total expansion of the letter, must draw a mobility directly from it and, spacious, in its correspondences, institute a game, unknown, which confirms the fiction. […] The making of the book, which will evolve into a whole, begins with a sentence. Since time immemorial, the poet has known the place of this line in the sonnet, which is recorded for the mind or on a pure space. For myself, I fail to understand the book, if I cannot, consciously, imagine such a motif in a special place and height on the page, according to the fall of light on it or on the work[4]."

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[1] http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/B/bo5886904.html

[2] MARCHAL, B., "Introduction", *Mallarmé, Œuvres complètes (Complete works)*, vol. I, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard, 1998, p. 11: "It is no longer necessary to have read Mallarmé for the inevitable clichés linked to his name to crop up: […] fear of the blank page and the ideal Book [...]"

[3] The expression « Instrument spirituel » entitles a chapter of Mallarmé's *Divagations,* Bibliothèque-Charpentier ; Eugène Fasquelle, éditeur, 1897 (pp. 273-280).

[4] MALLARME, S., *Quant au Livre (Regarding the Book)*, Preface by Lucette Finas, Farrago-Léo Scheer, Tours, 2003, p. 57.

Recent studies explore how this object was conceived and functioned for Mallarmé and his artistic circle[5]. Arnar[6] argues that it became a strategic site for encouraging a modern public to actively partake in the creative act and demonstrates that Mallarmé was invested in creating radically empowering reading experiences that anticipate interactive media prevalent in today's culture, a point broadly confirmed by previous works on Mallarmé.

Given that absolutist and innovative view of the book as a formal and substantive aesthetic unit, this article attempts at a reverse approach of the heightened sensitivity, the veiled impatience of the "heartbroken booklover" as Mallarmé presents himself while reacting to the proofs of *l'Après-midi d'un Faune* in a letter to the publisher Léon Vanier[7]. Given that for Mallarmé, "most of the time, the publisher is nothing but a brute[8]", the statement is partially related to the usual publication deadlines or long waits for money owed - common in the relationships of many authors with their booksellers, publishers and printers. The study indeed retraces and exhibits the unstable, often stormy relationships and lingering competition between renown authors and their publishers at a time –the end of the XIXth century- where the latter have not reached the autonomous or even domineering position of their XXth century's counterparts as co-author or influential master of authors' fate. Yet, the deception expressed in Mallarmé's self description reflects mainly the aesthetic concepts invested in the poet's work, leading to a formal specific layout of the book and a taste for lavish editions that not everyone was ready to understand or to comply with.

The article focuses on Mallarmé's *L'Après-midi d'un faune,* as it is the poem that demonstrated a definitive break from the Parnassian poetics, but also and mainly because it was a major preoccupation during much of Mallarmé's career. No other work of art has been published or attempted to in such a variety of formats, versions and editions, under the strict supervision of the author himself or after his initiative, nor has ever involved convincing and dealing with so many different intermediaries and high or low profile publishers, directors of Journals, art printers, trade booksellers, literary critics and the like. While the *Faun* and Mallarmé's poetics have been the subject of many studies, this article shifts the focus of

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[5] Among which ARNAR, A., *The Book as Instrument*, *Stéphane Mallarmé, the artist's book, and the transformation of print culture*, University of Chicago Press, 2010, 428 pages ; BOHAC, B., "Mallarmé et l'esthétique du livre", in *L'Esthétique du livre*, A. Milon and M. Perelman (ed.), Presses Universitaires de Paris-Ouest, 2010, pp. 149-164; WILSON-BAREAU, J. and BREON, M., "Tales of a Raven. The Origins and Fate of *Le Corbeau* by Mallarmé and Manet", Print Quaterly VI (1989), pp. 258-307.

[6] Arnar, A., *The Book as Instrument, op. cit.*

[7] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léon Vanier, 7 May 1886, *Correspondance (Letters),* vol. III, 1886-1889, collected, classified and annotated by Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin, Gallimard, 1969, p. 29-31.

[8] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Arthur O'Shaughnessy, 30 October 1875, *Correspondance* vol. II, 1871-1885, collected, classified and annotated by Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin, Gallimard, 1965, p. 77.

attention from textual alterations and stages of revision onto the author's both expert, maniac and metaphysical craft of book composition and publishing techniques, his considerations about the printing process and the material volume conceived as a spiritual extension of the writing process and a sacred casket to the poem.

It examines Mallarmé's self-assertion as the author of both the text and the book that mediates the power of its words. It also investigates the *Faun* from the perspective of publishing history and chooses to do so after Mallarmé's private and mundane correspondence. This huge and invaluable archive[9] has often been consulted to provide information and supplement textual interpretation with accurate data drawn from literary history. It has less often been considered as a corpus per se deserving to be treated as a primary document rather than simply a secondary source, let alone as the basic evidence for a critical case study. Resorting to Mallarmé's letters rather than on statements within his published poetic work, helps discard the set of appearances put up to sustain his intended public image of a modest and disinterested poet. Meanwhile the letters confirm through a case of "extra-textual – or extended – text- self-branding", Bakken's suggestion of a Rhetorical ethos at work in Mallarmé's work of prose, e.g. a commitment and auctorial presence in the text confirming the author's social engagement[10].

Relating the editorial epic of the *Faun* to Mallarmé's exclusive yet concrete concept of the Book will confirm why the poem "often served to illustrate a breakthrough in Mallarmé's style from the epigonic works of the 1860s to a recognizably mature symbolism"[11]. It will also showcase Mallarmé's specific contribution to the symbolist book particularly through the notion of synesthesia, lyrical and nostalgic, based on a mixture of the ancient and the modern[12], combining unfinished poems, unsophisticated, sometimes exquisite, with absolute and final pieces "like the charming habit some very rich and very refined people used to have of wearing around their arm, in a 19th century setting […] a wonderful array of antique

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[9] Several thousands of letters from 1862 to 1898, constituting more than XI volumes, without counting the annexes and supplements for letters discovered at a later date. This substantial work of collecting and editing, carried out by Henri Mondor, Jean-Pierre Richard then Lloyd James Austin, was followed in 1995 by a new volume, still at editions Gallimard, under the supervision of Bertrand Marchal, who included the complete correspondence of 1862-1871 and added a selection of letters about poetry from 1872 to 1898. Scholarly studies (e.g. Gordon Millan's *A Throw of the Dice: The life of Stéphane Mallarmé*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994, 389 pages) include unpublished letters from private collections that would be a valuable supplement for further developments on the poet's dealings with writers, publishers, editors.

[10] BAKKEN, Arild Michel. "Textual Self-Branding : The Rhetorical Ethos in Mallarmé's *Divagations*." *Authorship* 1.1 (Fall 2011). Web : <http://www.authorship.ugent.be>.

[11] CODE, D., J., "Hearing Debussy Reading Mallarmé : Music *après Wagner* in the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*", Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol.54, N°3 (Fall 2001), pp. 498.

[12] MALLARMÉ, S., "Manet will be pleased that you appreciated his strange illustration so much : mixing both the Japanese and the ancient in a truly modern sense…", Letter to 0'Shaughnessy, 24 May 1876, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

medallions and cameos[13]". The printing process and means requested for precious illustrated editions of the *Faun* – some of it possibly not entirely genuine but inspired by the publisher Lemerre's edition of the poems of Chénier which Mallarmé reviewed, marveled at and tried to replicate in *La Dernière Mode* (1874)[14]-, reflect the symbolist values attached to the volume as an instrument of textual protection: the aim of the lavishness being, like the extensive corrections, like the ribbons to "dress" the copies, to "shield [the verses] from the hostile glare of daylight[15]", to clothe them, in the same way that for the bibliophile Octave Uzanne, the book was the clothing of thought, without which it would be "naked". Similarly, the *Faun's* princeps edition has a sensual fetishist value dear to symbolist artists, as exhibited in a famous scene by Huysmans in *A Rebours* which was directly inspired by the original edition of the *Faun*: "Des Esseintes also felt specious delight in touching this tiny booklet, whose Japan paper cover, as white as curd cheese, was fastened by two silk ribbons, one China-rose pink and the other black[16]."

Yet, the case study mainly aims at a more precise understanding of the mimetic value of the volume, a value highlighted by Mallarmé on his own as essential and intentional, "because, and this is the whole point of view (which I had to omit in a "periodical"), the rhythm of a phrase about an act or even an object only has meaning if it imitates them, and appears on the paper, taken up by the original printed letter, and can, nevertheless, convey something[17]". Such a mimetic value was perceived by Henri de Régnier who enjoyed re-reading the *Faun* "in its proud and indolent finery of the original edition, scattered sheets, comfortably gathered together […] completed by the innocent and unruly naiads which the painter Manet has drawn […] and the Faun […] sitting on the riverbank waiting with eager curiosity and sensual anxiety[18]". Exploring the evolution of this tangible formalism from the standpoint of the *Faun'* publishing history and through the letters, on the timescale of the day to day collaboration with the professionals, will lead to a fresh perspective about Mallarmé's philosophy of the book at large: one that sets him apart even from the symbolist movement he

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[13] *La Dernière Mode*, 6th issue, 15 November 1874, quoted by Henri Mondor, *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit*., p. 164.
[14] BOHAC, B., "Mallarmé et l'esthétique du livre", *art.cit*., pp. 152-153.
[15] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Cazalis, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit*., p. 123.
[16] HUYSMANS J.K., *A Rebours (Against nature)*, Ed. Babel-Labor, 1992, p. 281: "Concealed behind the cover, the black braid joined the pink braid, which added something libertine, like a touch of velveteen, to the ancient whiteness, to the naive nakedness of the book, and they intertwined, forming a loose bow, the dark color with the light color, suggesting a discrete warning of that regret, a vague threat of that sadness, which follows joy extinguished and intense excitement subdued. Des Esseintes placed *The Afternoon of a Faun* back on the table."
[17] MALLARMÉ S., *Ecrits sur le livre (Writings about the book)*, *op. cit*., p.119-120. My emphasis.
[18] RÉGNIER H. de, February 1887, quoted by J.K. Huysmans in *Écrits sur l'art (Writings about Art)(1867-1905)*, edited and prefaced by Patrice Locmant, Paris, Éditions Bartillat, 2006.

fathered, leaves him free to think ahead of the French print culture and creative life of his times and opens to further typographic and artistic developments[19] as well as alternate modern interpretations[20].

The editorial history of *The Afternoon of a Faun*

The editorial history of the short masterpiece which Mallarmé called, after its first publication, *the Faun*, *my Faun*, conveys most of the issues of the metaphysics of the book. These can be reconstructed to a certain extent from several documentary sources[21], particularly the letters, so rich in terms of their number, the diversity of the correspondents involved, and their subjects related to the career of the poet, the translator or, more simply, the teacher. The *Faun* reappears throughout thirty-six years of correspondence, a lingering issue continuously brooded over. Henri Mondor recounts, in 1948, the "tireless drafting" of this poem begun by Mallarmé at high school, around 1859-1860, which saw many preliminary versions, manuscript stages, literary, theatrical and editorial misfortunes, problems in publishing and printing, temporary or permanent, sidestepped and overcome or, in contrast, planned and agreed by the poet. Studying Debussy's response to Mallarmé's textual forms, as well as "The Formal Rhythms of Mallarmé's *Faun*[22]", David J. Code offers insights also about how "through the fine-tuning of symmetries, proportional patterns, and interrelated details of language, Mallarmé drew his text onto focus[23]" and how is "*travail* resulted not only in an attenuation of the poem's surface processes, but also in a tightening of its formal precision[24]" to make it more powerfully suggestive. Altogether the sources and documents currently available suggest the illustrative nature of the work, representative - no other having been the subject of so many versions and editions during the lifetime of the author, at his initiative or under his supervision - of a surprising editorial logic, which is above all a demanding, poetic and autobiographical logic, of the reception and reading of the work[25].

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[19] As sustained by Arnar, S., *The Book as Instrument*, *Stéphane Mallarmé, the artist's book, and the transformation of print culture*, *op. cit*, and Bohac, B., "Mallarmé et l'esthétique du livre", in *L'Esthétique du livre*, A. Milon and M. Perelman (ed.), Presses Universitaires de Paris-Ouest, 2010, pp. 149-164.

[20] Illouz, J.-N., "*L'Après-midi d'un faune* et l'interprétation des arts : Mallarmé, Manet, Debussy, Gauguin, Nijinski", *Littérature*, N° 168, 2012/4, pp. 3-20.

[21] Because many uncertainties still await the book or literary historian who claims to have finished with this work.

[22] CODE, D., J., "Hearing Debussy Reading Mallarmé : Music *après Wagner* in the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*", *art.cit*, pp. 493-554 ; "The Formal Rhythms of Mallarmé's Faun", *Representations*, Vol.86, N°1 (Spring 2004), pp.73-119.

[23] CODE, D., J. "Hearing Debussy Reading Mallarmé", *art.cit*, p. 499.

[24] *Id*.

[25] Bertrand Marchal, quoting the long letter of Mallarmé to Verlaine on 16 November 1885, emphasizes in the "Note" of *Poésies (Poetical Works), O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit.,* p. 1139-1140:"Mallarmé scarcely hurried to gather his

After a first draft manuscript, entitled *L'Intermède d'un Faune* (*The Interlude of a Faun*) or the *Faune, Intermède héroïque* (*Faun, a heroic interlude*) dating from 1865, the *Monologue d'un Faune (*the *Monologue of a Faun)*, a prose text, was composed at Tournon in 1865 for the *Théâtre français,* "on the model of Théodore de Banville's *Diane au Bois*, performed at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in 1863[26]". It was refused in September of the same year by Théodore de Banville and Coquelin who "liked the poetry of my *Faun* immensely [but who] didn't find the necessary story in it which the public demands, and assured me that it is only of interest to poets[27]". This theatrical version[28] remains unpublished although in 1891, the introduction to the volume of *Pages* by the Belgian publisher Edmond Deman announced: "*The Afternoon of a Faun*, a new definitive edition for reading and for the theatre, with notes and stage directions, [is] in press[29]".

Next came *L'Improvisation d'un Faune (The Improvisation of a Faun),* sent to the bookseller-publisher Alphonse Lemerre in July 1875 for publication in the third *Parnasse contemporain (Contemporary Parnassus)* and refused by the jury[30] comprised of Banville, François Coppée and Anatole France, literary advisers of the "Passage Choiseul" group, named after the address of the publisher. Henri Mondor would publish this form of the text posthumously in 1948, in *Histoire d'un Faune (Story of a Faun)*.

The following version, whose title became definitively *The Afternoon of a Faun*, was announced for months on the back of the *République des Lettres (Republic of Letters)* and finally appeared in April 1876, published by Alphonse Derenne, 52 Bd Saint-Michel, in Paris, in a deluxe first edition of only 195 copies, "a publication, offered to Booklovers, show[ing], with the rarest materials, all the savoir-faire which does credit to contemporary Typography and Publishing[31]". Printed on the presses of Motteroz, 31 rue du Dragon, 175 of the 195 copies

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published or unpublished poems into a collection […] [and] at 43-years-old […] he had no collection to his name. [Is this] disdain […] for poems which, in terms of the ideal book, would be "scraps", "rags" or simple "visiting cards" ? […] The fact is that this collection, whose neutral title refocuses on the key subject, which is the poetry, is deliberately organized as […] a poetic autobiography […] This venture then fits into the space of the book in two ways, between the blank page and the closed book, and may have another name: reading."

[26] CODE, D., J., "Hearing Debussy Reading Mallarmé", *art.cit*., p. 497-498.

[27] MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Théodore Aubanel, [27 September 1865], *Correspondance*, *Lettres sur la poésie (Letters about poetry)*, Preface by Yves Bonnefoy, edited by Bertrand Marchal, Folio, Gallimard, 1995, p. 253.

[28] Henri Mondor points out that this includes, according to the manuscripts and drafts discovered, dating from 1865 and 1873-1874, a dialogue between nymphs and a second monologue of the faun awakening "after some kind of death". *Histoire d'un Faune (Story of a Faun)*, *op. cit*., pp. 257-259.

[29] *Id.*, p. 257.

[30] Banville recommended accepting the poem "despite a lack of clarity, due to its rare harmonic and musical qualities", but let the other two have their way, particularly Anatole France, "We would be laughed at". MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Catulle Mendès, 28 July 1875, note 2, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit*., p. 65.

[31] Derenne edition, colophon.

were on light Japan and Holland paper (with or without ties) and 20 on large Japan, numbered separately, including "Frontispiece and Ex-libris except Fleurons and Vignettes in the text, in two pages, illustrations by Manet, on 16 pages of octavo Japan paper, gilt-titled, and fastened with China-rose silk ribbons[32]".

In 1885, the edition of *The Afternoon of a Faun* by Léo d'Orfer, to whom Mallarmé had entrusted the text in 1884 for publication in the *Permesse (Permessus)*[33], was refused by the author: the proofs had been corrected[34] but d'Orfer had transferred the rights to a series of bawdy works to appear, according to the magazine *Taches (Inkblots),* in the *Librairie Européenne (European Bookshop)* in which *Les Fêtes galantes (Romantic festivities)* by Paul Verlaine and *The Afternoon of a Faun* by Stéphane Mallarmé would have been next to *Les Horizontales (The Courtesans)* by H. Beauclair and *Les Papillotes (Candies)* by Léo d'Orfer. D'Orfer defended his plan to publish the *Faun* by promising "a little jewel", in another collection but he would only publish later in *La Vogue (The Fashion)*, the definition of Poetry requested from Mallarmé for the planned edition[35].

In 1886, for a few hundred francs, Mallarmé made over to Léon Vanier, with whom he had already signed a contract in 1885 for the *Poèmes d'Edgar Poe (Poems of Edgar Poe)*, the right to publish a thousand copies of the *Faun* in a modest form. The contract anticipated a new cover with black ribbons for copies of the Derenne edition. However, for the *Poèmes d'Edgar Poe*, like for the *Faun*, the disputes with Vanier increased. He did not re-cover the copies of the large *Faun*, he wanted to reduce the edition of the small *Faun* to 500, and he postponed indefinitely the publication of the *Poèmes d'Edgar Poe*: Mallarmé prosecuted him in September 1887[36].

By March 1887, he had "taken the initiative[37]" and *La Revue indépendante (The Independent Review)*, managed by Edouard Dujardin, printed a new edition of *The Afternoon of a Faun,* with a brick-red cover and said to be "definitive", on the presses of Louis Boyer

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[32] *Ibid.*

[33] MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Léo d'Orfer, 20 June 1884, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

[34] MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Léo d'Orfer, 14 August 1884, and note 3 indicating that d'Orfer had suggested an offprint on luxury paper to Mallarmé, *Ibid.,* p. 267.

[35] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léo d'Orfer, 27 June 1884, *O.C.*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 782 and note 1, p. 1433: "My dear Monsieur d'Orfer, Your sudden order was a blow which blinded me for an instant! - "Define poetry." I stammer, wounded: "Poetry is the expression, restored by human language to its essential rhythm, of the mysterious meaning of aspects of our existence: it thus endows our time on earth with authenticity and constitutes the only spiritual task." The definition appeared in the third issue of *La Vogue*, in 1886, pages 70-72, in the *Curiosities* section, with the replies of other poets. Cf. *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, note 1, p. 266.

[36] The prosecution did not break the contract or halt the sale of the books but it allowed the author to distinguish between the editions he publicized and those he denounced. Cf. Letter to Verhaeren, 20 January 1888, *Correspondance*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 165-166.

[37] MALLARME, S., Letter to Verhaeren, *Correspondance*, *Lettres sur la poésie, op. cit.*, p. 599.

and Co. at Asnières. It was an edition in nine photo-offset quires[38] of the manuscripts of *Poésies (Poetical Works)*[39]; the *Faun,* in which the woodcut of Manet did not appear, was the sixth, printed in 47 copies[40], with a frontispiece by Félicien Rops.

In 1888, Vanier, without telling the author, published the *Faun* in an octavo booklet, 15.5 x 23 cm, with an imitation parchment cover; presented as a "new edition" this is the "cheap hybrid forgery" of the Derenne edition criticized by Mallarmé[41].

In 1893, the poem was picked up again, in the collection of selected pieces entitled *Vers et Proses (Poems and Prose)* published by the *Librairie Académique Perrin*.

In 1899, it reappeared, posthumously, published by Edmond Deman in the volume *Poésies*, a collection of all the poems that Mallarmé, who had carefully prepared the edition, had definitively chosen to represent his life's poetic work.

Finally, Henry Charpentier published an earlier draft thought to be of the Faun, entitled *Réveil du Faune* (Awakening of a Faun), in 1949. Three drafts appeared in the *Pléiade (Pleiades)* of 1965 of Henri Mondor and all the versions and variants of the poem identified and documented since then contributed to the *Dossier du Faune (The Faun Dossier)* in the 1998 edition of the *Pléiade* put together by Bertrand Marchal.

Simultaneous and rival editions of the same work

Actual and planned editions both proliferated and coincided with each other: the attempt to publish the *Faun* in the *Parnasse contemporain*[42] was contemporary with that of *Le Corbeau (The Raven)* with the same publisher[43]; this did not prevent, at the same time, the rival project of a "monumental edition" of 200 copies of the same text by Richard Lesclide in May 1875.

In February 1887, while Vanier was producing the *Faun*, he also published the issue of *Hommes d'aujourd'hui* (*Men of Today*) about Mallarmé without the permission of the author and without letting him correct the proofs. Mallarmé therefore entrusted the definitive limited

[38] Published in October of the same year.
[39] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.,* p. 254.
[40] *Correspondance*, *Lettres sur la poésie, op. cit.*, p. 600.
[41] 7 May 1886, Letter to Léon Vanier, MALLARMÉ S., *Correspondance*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.
[42] It seems that Lemerre hesitated between a Parnassus, a compilation of long and short prose and poetry pieces, and, in the absence of enough responses, a simple volume of six or eight long poems Cf. Letter to Catulle Mendès, July 1875, note 4, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
[43] Mallarmé had perhaps hoped for the Elzevirian series for *Le Corbeau* but then had to fall back on a small school edition. This earned him the negative opinion of the teachers consulted, reported by the publisher in his letter of 11 March 1875. Cf. Letter to Léon Cladel, note 6, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

edition of the *Faun* to Dujardin for *La Revue indépendante* but, despite this, the Vanier edition was not suspended.

In July 1887, four months after the publication of the *Revue indépendante* editions, Mallarmé, claiming that the private edition of Dujardin would go unnoticed and, in some ways, did not count, asked Dujardin for permission to include the *Faun* in *l'Anthologie contemporain (The Contemporary Anthology)*. Dujardin refused, depriving Mallarmé of the free use of his work, the only writing or publishing contract that he considered worthwhile.

In 1888, both Léon Vanier and Edmond Deman were undertaking the publication of the Poèmes d'Edgar Poe. Mallarmé allowed the proofs of Vanier to drag on[44], who himself had postponed the printing for two years, so that the Deman edition could gather speed and make the Vanier edition obsolete. In October 1888, he wrote to Deman that Vanier "had given up any idea of prosecution and even of publishing, [and] is worn down by our magnificent volume[45]" but in 1889, the *Poèmes d'Edgar Poe*, like the *Faun* in 1888, was well and truly with Vanier who wanted to publish Mallarmé while needing competition[46] and perhaps to rid himself of the author's supervision in order to achieve this. Anyway, although they had been rather cool with each other since 1888, Vanier continued to sell Mallarmé's books and, in 1891, the author broke the silence and wrote to Vanier[47] to discuss a possible reissue of *Vathek*, which was finally published by Perrin in 1893.

Mallarmé set up a similar pattern of pitting editions and publishers against each other for the same text in 1898 in his dealings with Ambroise Vollard, to whom Mallarmé gives, with justifications and pretended innocence, all the rights to *Hérodiade (Herodias)* despite the claims of Deman to the same title[48]. However, in a letter of July 1896 about the proofs of *Vers*, in which the *Faun* was to be republished, Mallarmé had in fact suggested that Deman publish *Herodias*, after the previous publication of two extracts in *La Revue Blanche (The White Review)* even if, as the poem was not yet finished, this would postpone the publication of the

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[44] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Deman, 29 June 1888, *Correspondance,* vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 217: "Vanier has sent me the proofs of his edition of Poe: given his poor practices and the fact that I consider only your publication to be my own, and that I want it to be the only one to include the dedication and the sonnet (in short, that which is personal), I will let the proofs drag on, especially with the holidays coming."

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 266 and note 5.

[46] Vanier had been alerted by the announcement of the Deman edition in the *Revue indépendante* of May 1888.

[47] MALLARME, S., Letter to Léon Vanier, 6 June 1891, *Correspondance,* vol. IV, 1890-1891, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

[48] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Ambroise Vollard, 16 May 1898, *O.C.*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 820: "Deman has no rights, none; nor has he had any discussions with me about this, prior to the agreement between you and me […] Deman, who has the right to an edition of my poems, has concluded from *information given by me at the beginning of various books* that this reprint of *Herodias* belongs to him, I know nothing of this, and I would find it unreasonable if he made any announcements about it. Urge him, this concerns you, on the basis of your rights and my support, to stop, so that you do not have to refute it in public; he will not hesitate, he is still a very good man… All the same, I do not understand anything about this fantasy […]"

collection[49]. In November 1896, he explained to Deman that the poem was not ready but that he intended "to publish it separately, straight away or as soon as it has appeared in *La Revue Blanche* and [that] one must clearly wait a little while before republishing it in the *Poetical Works*[50], for which it will be, when finished, the Finale[51]." Finally, in a note in his will written on the eve of his death he stipulated: "My poems are for Fasquelle, here, and Deman, if he will limit himself to Belgium: *Poetical Works* and *Vers de circonstances (Occasional Verses)* with *The Afternoon of a Faun* and *The Wedding of Herodias*. Mystery[52]." Bertrand Marchal notes that "Mallarmé had signed a contract with Deman for his *Poésies*, which was certainly not limited to Belgium. After the death of the poet, Deman asserted his rights and won his case: he was the one to publish *Poetical Works* in 1899[53]".

Mallarmé rapidly published editions and reissues one after another: "This little pastoral poem is yours - he wrote to d'Orfer in 1884, before retracting - if you believe you should publish it in your *first* issue[54]." He gave a number of reasons: "I would add, illogically, that one could even point to the extreme rarity of the deluxe copy of the *Faun* today, to motivate its reproduction in the *Permesse*."

In 1887, the colophon of the *Faun* in the *Revue indépendante* declared: "the wish to make a correction to a line of the noble original edition of *The Afternoon of a Faun*, at the same time as disapproving of all imitations of identical format or choice of characters which might appear against the author's wishes, this is why I have decided to entrust the care of a standard definitive reprint to the *Revue indépendante*; one would not dare say popular, despite the favor which seems to be attached to this short poem[55]."

In reality, although Mallarmé claimed to grant a favor to successive publishers of the *Faun* by giving them the right to reproduce a work fixed by "the fine subscribed publication then blown away by so many auctions[56]" and to respond to the favor that would be granted to him, he knew perfectly well, because he kept a very accurate account of the copies sold or in stock, that none of the prior editions of the *Faun*[57] - which appeared without any fuss and never had many buyers - had run out and that ten years after the publication of the book (by Derenne),

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[49] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Edmond Deman, 21 July 1896, *O.C.,* vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 813-814.
[50] In preparation at Deman, who published the collection in 1899.
[51] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Edmond Deman, 20 November 1896, *O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit.*, p. 814-815.
[52] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Marie and Geneviève Mallarmé, 8 September 1898: "Recommendations about my papers. (For when my dear ones read them)", *O.C.,* vol. 1*, op. cit.*, p. 821.
[53] MARCHAL B., *O.C.,* vol. 1*, op. cit.*, note 3, p. 1445.
[54] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léo d'Orfer, June 1884, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 265.
[55] Colophon, Derenne edition.
[56] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit.*, p. 261 Preparatory notes and forewords for the 1899 edition of *Poetical Works*.
[57] It would be the same for the *Le Corbeau*, and *Poetical Works* in the lithographic edition.

"although bound in Japan paper and with gilt lettering", one could still easily acquire a copy as less than 160 people bought the original edition of *The Afternoon of a Faun*[58]"!

Multiplicity of people involved and paradoxical relationships between the author and his printer-publishers

This overlapping of planned and actual editions involved a multiplicity of publishers, printers, booksellers, editors, managers of magazines, and of intermediate, private, bibliophile and populist publications, concerned in one way or another in the history, or even the *editorial writing* of the *Faun,* endlessly announced, reported, postponed, and resumed[59].

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[58] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit*., p. 249.

[59] Eugène Lefébure, "In my Faun, for such is my hero, I indulge in summery expansions that I know nothing of, while hollowing out the poem a great deal, which is very difficult because of the action", MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Eugène Lefébure, [30 June 1865], *Correspondance*, *Lettres sur la poésie*, Preface by Yves Bonnefoy, Bertrand Marchal Edition, Folio, Gallimard, 1995, p. 244. Henri Cazalis, MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Cazalis, 28 April 1866, *Ibid*., p. 298. Théodore de Banville and Coquelin, to whom he sent it for the *Théâtre Français*; Théodore Aubanel whom he informed of their reply; Victor Pavie, a printer in Angers, publisher of *Gaspard de la nuit (Keeper of the night)* by Luis Bertrand which Mallarmé admired; Pincebourde, "a bookseller for writers and collectors, a lover of rare or lost romantic works" *Ibid*., p.284; Joseph Roumanille, a bookseller and poet of Provence; Catulle Mendès, publisher of *Parnasse contemporain* then of the *République des Lettres*, one of the three dedicatees, along with Léon Cladel and Léon Dierx, of the first edition; Louis Xavier de Ricard, co-director with Mendès of *Parnasse contemporain* before the creation of the *République des Lettres;* Léo D'Orfer, supposed publisher of the *Faun*, director of short-lived magazines such as *Scapin* or *La Décadence (Decadence)* in which Mallarmé did not want to publish unless the magazine title was changed; Anatole France, who refused the *Faun* for the *Parnasse contemporain* because "We would be laughed at"; Alphonse Lemerre, to whom Mallarmé sent the *Faun* in June 1875 for the third *Parnasse contemporain* and who first published the *Toast funèbre (Funeral toast)* by Mallarmé in 1873 in *Le Tombeau de Théophile Gauthier (The Tomb of Théophile Gauthier).* Mallarmé had come into contact with him in 1868, through Cazalis and Lefébure, when a collection of sonnets illustrated by etchings was being put together and for which he had sent a sonnet. Neither Mallarmé's nor Lefébure's sonnet would appear in this collection. Cf. Letter to Cazalis, *Ibid.*, note 2, p. 393. Richard Lesclide, Victor Hugo's secretary and publisher of *Le Corbeau,* "a man conducting bad business whom I see very little", MALLARMÉ, S., *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit*., pp. 136-137. John Payne, poet and English translator, who sang the praises of the *Faun* in the English literary magazine *The Athenaeum;* the publisher Charpentier, who Mallarmé thought of for a while to set up another literary group after the break-up with Lemerre and who published the *Faun* in the volume of *Divagations*; Alphonse Derenne, "a new man, a printer who wants to become a publisher, […] a man of goodwill", *Ibid.,* pp. 86-87, described by Roujon as a "bookseller with a nostalgic temperament, who publishes obstetric theses and prefers to go to the café", *Ibid.,* note 1, p. 87. Charles Swinburne, great English poet, leader and founder of literary magazines, to whom Mallarmé sent *Vathek* and the *Faun*, "rather insignificant offerings", in December 1875, MALLARMÉ, S., *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit*., p. 545; p. 548; *Correspondance,* vol. II, *op. cit.,* p. 28; p. 91, in manuscript form, then announced, in January 1876, the publication of the preface to *Vathek* and of a "very short little poem, published with too much luxury by a printer as a *specimen* of his work, very insignificant publications of his winter", *Ibid.,* p. 99. Arthur O' Shaughnessy, English poet and critic, friend of Mallarmé, disciple of Swinburne, who directed the magazine *The Athenaeum*, to whom he mentioned on the 7th November 1875, then on the 21st, without naming it, "a little poem, nothing much, a hundred lines, a pretext for the deluxe edition which will be ready, I hope, in the first two weeks of December, as it is a book for New Year's Day", *Ibid.,* p. 80; p. 85. Paul Verlaine, whose sonnet *Beauté des Femmes (Beauty of Women)*, like the *Faun*, was excluded from the third *Parnasse contemporain* by Anatole France; Edouard Dujardin, founder of the *Revue*

The repeated refusals, the conflicts and the most violent clashes did not prevent Mallarmé from continuing, for a time at least, to do business with his publishers but one notices in his remarks a paradoxical difference between the respect reserved for true bookseller-publishers - who, like Lemerre or Vanier, impressed Mallarmé by their literary leanings and their stable of serious authors - and the treatment of less established printer-publishers, intermediaries in the publication of private deluxe editions, like Lesclide, Derenne, Dujardin, and Labitte, publisher of *Vathek*. Concerning the latter group, Mallarmé's criticisms were both unrelenting and excusable - the apathy of the publisher, the slowness of the proofs, of the advances promised, of the printing, and of the binding, which threatened his *Faun* with "an eternal darkness" and his *Vathek* with being more forgotten "than the ritual of a mummy[60]" - and his recognition was moderate, despite their intellectual and financial generosity: no true consideration, either for d'Orfer, the poet-publisher who claimed to let "the artist" in him speak to convince Mallarmé to allow him to republish the *Faun,* or especially for Dujardin, one of the main leaders of symbolism[61] who professed (concerning Wagner) a very Mallarméan theory of the Book. Rather unfriendly letters were exchanged with Lesclide whom Mallarmé addressed as "you wicked and forgetful fellow[62]", about the many unsold copies of *Corbeau*, but Mallarmé ended up taking back some of the deluxe copies and, like Manet, did not claim his due. In the Perrin edition of *Vers et Proses*, the list of the only authorized editions of the *Faun* does not mention the Vanier edition, which is understandable, nor the Dujardin edition in the *Revue indépendante*, whereas, on Mallarmé's own admission, this had "ended the deadlock[63]".

Wagnérienne (Wagnerian Review) then of the *Revue indépendante*, second publisher of the *Faun*; Léon Vanier, publisher of Verlaine, first introduced as a "gracious publisher", then as guilty of "all sorts of swindles", MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Verhaeren, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit*., p. 599. Edmond Deman, "a charming, refined man", "a very good fellow", who contacted Mallarmé via Verhaeren in 1888 to suggest a deluxe edition of *Poetical Works,* MALLARMÉ, S., *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit*., p. 126-127. The Strand bookshop which kept safe a fragile copy intended for O'Shaughnessy; Edmond Valade who published an account full of praise; and many others who have no doubt escaped this inventory.

[60] *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit*., p. 210.
[61] MALLARME S., Letter to Dujardin, note 1, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit*., p. 578.
[62] MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Lesclide, Friday 3 November 1876, *Correspondance,* vol. II, 1871-1885, op. cit., p. 132.
[63] MALLARME S., Letter to Verhaeren, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit*., p. 600.

The case of the bookseller-publisher Lemerre

Mallarmé's attitude toward the bookseller-printers was quite different and "the Lemerre affair" is typical: learning in June 1875 that Lemerre was planning a new *Parnasse*, Mallarmé sent him his *Faun* and, at the beginning of July, confidently and rather curtly asked for the proofs[64]. At the end of July, he interceded with Lemerre to settle a dispute concerning Leconte de Lisle and congratulated himself on it in a letter to Catulle Mendès, which suggests the ambiguity of his relationship with the publisher:

"The volubility of this good man kept me for four hours in passage Choiseul; he honorably and even amicably ended the matter […] It was me who suffered Lemerre's first fit of anger, violent and simply terrible; and I was really armed with absent revolvers in my coat pockets. Appeasement and reconciliation, for a few years I think […] At the heart of the misunderstanding were five or six years of daily quarrels and the subtle tactlessness of France, to put it mildly[65]."

The situation of Leconte de Lisle, without Mallarmé seeming to be aware of it, was similar in all respects to his own. In effect, the letter continues in these terms:

"Something else, my verses have been refused by the committee of *Parnasse*; but only mention it with a smile and as a ridiculous probability to Lemerre, because that is how I received the verdict myself. If I'd taken it another way and if it was proved true, I would have felt obliged to go and slap the three judges, whoever they are; and to give them a kick somewhere: and I am very tired, oh! Too weary, to start the slightest thing.[66]"

And yet, a few months earlier, in March 1875, Lemerre had sent horrible letters about *Le Corbeau* of Edgar Poe, translated by Mallarmé and illustrated by Manet, which, in the rudest terms, he had refused to publish because teachers had judged it detrimental to the small collection by which he intended to support his publishing house. In his letters, Lemerre added "your translation, which I have not read, is completely obscure and cannot be published by your servant[67]", then "the poem is full of such nonsense that it is impossible for a serious firm

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[64] MALLARMÉ S., Letter to Lemerre, 3 July 1875, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 62: "My dear Lemerre, here are the verses for *Parnasse*: I would like you to send me the proofs, because I have only had time to copy out this piece without making some of the corrections needed. Best regards, Stéphane Mallarmé."

[65] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Catulle Mendès, 28 July 1875, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 64-65.

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léon Cladel, note 6, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

to publish it[68]" and he referred Manet to Mallarmé: "Please take it up with your colleague if your pictures follow the same fate as the main work to which they are attached[69]".

Despite this, Mallarmé claimed not to believe the refusal, accusing the judges, A. France and F. Coppée, rather than the publisher and yet continuing to write them courteous, even admiring, letters. In September he inquired: "Who is Lemerre angry with at the moment; and what is happening with the *Parnasse*[70]?" Only on October 12th, after the vain intervention of Mendès, Cladel and Dierx on his behalf, did he no longer write to "my dear Lemerre" but to "Monsieur Lemerre, Editor, Paris" that he had not "grasped the value" of the approach made by his friends, that "the incident" and "the insensitive and ridiculous rejection" with which he confronted them prolonged "the villainy received by you from two or three of your employees", and concluded: "Enough of all this: please return my manuscript by messenger; without a word, because it is pointless to repeat, concerning these few verses, the pretexts found for the *Corbeau*. My regrets that my relationship with you, which I have tried at times to make good, ends this way[71]."

Lemerre then offered to publish the *Faun* with a note explaining that the text refused by the committee had been reinstated at the request of the poet's friends and that the publisher would let the public be the judge: a new letter of 22nd October emphasized the deplorable effect of a note not mentioning the names of the committee members or the poet's friends and declined this rather ungracious proposition[72]. After this, in the correspondence, Lemerre "[is], alas! Only a joker[73]" "a man of quite dishonest practices with whom I have broken off relations a second time and for a long time[74]".

Nevertheless, Mallarmé's insistence on offering him his writings, despite the humiliations both already endured and foreseeable, indicates a fascination for the editions of the bookseller-printer and the collection in Elzevirian format in which he had reprinted the work of Chénier in 1874; also a deference toward the literary "circle" of Lemerre in which Victor Hugo was very influential. Demanding the presence of Leconte de Lisle in the *Parnasse contemporain*, Mallarmé advised caution: "only make an approach to Alphonse Lemerre with a significant number of serious protesters so that we are still partly right, though the presence

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[68] *Ibid.*
[69] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit.*, p. 169.
[70] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Adolphe Racot, 12 September1875, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
[71] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Alphonse Lemerre, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p.76.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[74] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

of Victor Hugo would prove us wrong[75]", "Let us deprive Lemerre of us, not get rid of him[76]." The excommunications of Lemerre disturbed him and drove him to break away from the *Parnasse* "a rather rusty sign[77]", foreshadowing, by a "fatal movement[78]", the advent of Symbolism.

Mallarmé the self-publisher or the art of keeping the publisher in his right place

For Mallarmé, the good publisher, in an era that witnessed the emergence of the figure, the "consecration" of the modern publisher[79], was someone, like Perrin or Deman, who granted complete freedom to the author, remained discreet, promised him everything he asked for[80], would be told how to do his job[81] in an authoritarian, even curt, manner in which the "we" that represented a collaborative idea of publishing, was sometimes the royal "we": "Had *we* said enough about all the colors[82]"! The many letters to Deman, a bibliophilic bookseller turned publisher of high standards, bibliophilic editions and prestigious writers[83], demonstrate the rapid transition from the attitude of an involved author to that of a difficult associate:

"From now on, we will put the 'By the same author' on the back of a blank page where the reader can put his name, in short the ex-libris will occupy the front of the page, and we will place this page first so as not to separate the half-title from the title, which is irregular[84]".

"We shall share our thoughts for a few days, shan't we? Since we need to establish this edition of *Vers*, […] Do you see it like that? […] It is how the operation seems to me so far: but what is your exact opinion?[85]"

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[75] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] MALLARMÉ, S., "The old *Parnasse*… », *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 87.
[79] DURAND P., GLINOER A., *Naissance de l'éditeur (Birth of the publisher),* Preface by Hubert Nyssen**,** Essai Collection "Réflexions faites", Les Impressions Nouvelles, Brussels, 2005.
[80] MALLARMÉ S., Letters to Deman, 7 April 1891, *O.C.*, *op. cit.*, p. 804: "Find one of those beautiful Roman types and engrave it […] Yes, the frontispiece by Rops if it can be reproduced in its original appearance […] How many copies? Perhaps a hundred […] If you are hesitating about the engraving, it would be printed with flair and on paper specially watermarked for the edition. My title so far […] with a great deal of white, between the three lines."; 20 November 1896, *O.C.*, *op. cit.*, p. 814: "No! we are definitely not there, I'm sorry. Neither the format nor the character is pleasing …".
[81] Many letters of 1888 are lists of instructions for the composition, the spacing etc.
[82] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léon Vanier, 7 May 1886, *Correspondance,* vol. III, 1886-1889, *op. cit.*, p. 29-31.
[83] FONTAINAS, A. and L., *Edmond Deman éditeur (1857-1918). Art et Édition au tournant du siècle.* Bruxelles, Labor, coll. Archives du futur, 1997, 356 p.
[84] MALLARME, S., Letter to Deman, 7 August 1888, *Ibid.*, p. 236.
[85] MALLARME, S., Letter to Deman, April 1891, *Correspondance choisie (Selected letters)*, *O.C., op. cit.*, p. 804-805.

"The format is very good; but (perhaps this will annoy you) the characters seem lacking in charm - not lively, for the italics. Moreover, we agreed, or I asked you, not to use italics […] I will make some corrections, but as you say, no alterations. Do not start anything without me, and tell me everything, not little by little. I do not want to allow anything, the layout, blank pages, etc., that does not completely please me. […] There, I think that's all, my dear friend; but, above all, do nothing without me, who remains, here, your colleague[86]."

"No! We are definitely not there, I'm sorry. Neither the format nor the character is pleasing - not at all worthy of your art or suited to our undertaking. I was afraid of my own taste, of suffering from an isolated impression, but there is only one opinion, people have come to see me, everyone pulls the same face in front of these attempts[87]."

He behaved like an experienced author-publisher[88]. He corrected everything in the smallest detail, the point of the characters, the paratexts, mentions, and short lines, defined the size of the editions on Japan and Holland paper, ordered cardboard covers instead of light ones, commissioned illustrations from well-known artists regardless of the conditions, treated the publisher in turn like a printer with no editorial ability - "for your part, you can take care of the papermaking, twenty-four pages, that is six sheets of the agreed format[89]"; like an assistant - "I will tell you when it is time to write to Lemercier and Delattre for the color and the black and white editions (you will write to them in order to be in agreement with them)[90]"; like a secretary - "My article will not be ready until tomorrow evening, have it collected at about seven o'clock […] I ask for no less than the proofs[91]", "and, appealing to your usual friendly support, here is a little telegram that should be put in the box tomorrow Wednesday between one and two o'clock[92]"; an incompetent clerk , - "and the papers, the papers, are they ordered,

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[86] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Deman, 21 July 1896, *Ibid.*, pp. 813-814.
[87] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Deman, 20 November 1896, *Ibid.*, p. 814.
[88] Experience moreover confirmed, if need be, by the relationship of Mallarmé with Octave Uzanne, a publisher of bibliophilia, and with the Comte de Clapiers, founder of *Bibliophiles contemporains (Contemporary bibliophiles)*, by his activity as a translator and publisher of literature as witnessed by, apart from his own works, the energy invested in the translation and printing of *Le Corbeau* in 1875, then the *Poèmes d'Edgar Poe* in a first edition, with the illustrations of Manet in the reissue with an important preface, of *Vathek* by Beckford in 1876, or else in the publication, for which he alone carried out all the editorial tasks, under around ten pseudonyms, mostly feminine, eight issues of *La Dernière Mode (The Latest Fashion)* from September to December 1874, which left him, according to his customary expression, "dazed and exhausted", MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Lemerre, 6 August 1874, *Correspondance*, vol. II, 1871-1885, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
[89] MALLARME, S., Letter to Ambroise Vollard, 15 September 1897, *Correspondance choisie, O.C.,* vol. I*; op. cit.*, p. 817.
[90] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Deman, 8 October 1888, *Correspondance*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 265.
[91] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Dujardin, 23 July 1885, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
[92] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Dujardin, 29 October 1889, *Correspondance*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

Vollard?[93]"; an unrepentant bad payer, - "You should know that I made some commitments after you gave me your word about the 10, and which I had no reason to doubt, so you can send me on receipt of this telegram half of the agreed sum[94]", "I am expecting your clerk […] to bring me the remainder of the small sum agreed for last month[95]". He was the owner of the original editions, which he would recover from one person to sell or give to another, checking the reputation of publishers in order to pursue better on their successive presses, like an itinerant blacksmith with his very personal alchemy recipes, his dream of the architectural Book.

Layers of editions or the architectural Book

Each edition supplied a new stone to the building and saw a gradual construction of the *Book* (in both the material and intellectual sense), inseparable from the planned concept of its writing and its reading. Mallarmé increasingly mentioned the ownership of the rare editions that he recognized as his[96] and presented himself as "a solitary worker preparing a personal work of art, whose first publicity [will be made] by means which are equally individual[97]". The enigmatic *Notes en vue du "Livre" (Notes for "The Book")*[98] which "try to equate its shape, its size, its edition, its price and, above all, the half-theatrical half-liturgical scenography of that which Mallarmé called the Readings[99]" establish an "identity of the place and of the sheet/ of the session and of the volume/ of the Reading and of the edition[100]". Each volume or edition of a poem or of a group of poems is both a temporal "session"[101] and a ritual and communicational space, defined by its format, its edition and its price and which underpinned Mallarmé's reasoning with regard to various editorial propositions:

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[93] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Ambroise Vollard, 12 May 1898, *Correspondance choisie*, *O.C.*, *op. cit.*, p. 819.
[94] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Vanier, 18 June 1886, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
[95] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Vanier, 12 July 1886, *Ibid.*, p. 45.
[96] MALLARMÉ, S.: "Apart from the translation of Poe's *Le Corbeau* and the poem of *The Afternoon of a Faun* […] (1874 and 1876); a photo-engraved volume of the manuscript of his *Poetical Works* (1887); finally, *le Tiroir de laque (The Lacquer drawer)*, a collection of prose poems and the complete translation of *Poèmes de Poe* (in press, 1888), M. Stéphane Mallarmé […] has published nothing with a publishing house." Notice, 25 June 1888, *Correspondance*, vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
[97] *Ibid.*
[98] Repeated in *O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit.*, pp. 945-1060.
[99] MARCHAL, B., "*Notes en vue du "Livre*", Notice", *O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit.*, p. 1379.
[100] F° 174, p. 594 and quoted p. 1379, *Ibid.*
[101] MARCHAL, B., "*Notes en vue du "Livre"*, Notice", *O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit.*, p. 1379. "A real liturgical period over a 5-year cycle ("*Le lustre*"*("The Chandelier"))* required for the complete execution of the "Book", at the rate of 4 to 20 sessions annually (each session consisting of 2 different readings)."

"Besides, everyone is anticipating the format of *Pages* […] you argue that your preparations, frontispiece and ornamentation, do not concern the format in question, that of *Pages* and of *Poe*; I am sorry […] better still to adapt the ornamentation to a different format, than to continue with the current concept […] I might add that those people who pay more than three francs fifty will go up to the price of *Pages* and even a little more; and that those who would not pay the price of *Pages*, on the other hand, will not break their habit which is fixed on those three francs fifty[102]."

The multiplication of projects thus contributed to this unique and absolute Book which Mallarmé dreamed of "with the patience of an alchemist, ready to sacrifice every vanity and every satisfaction, like in days gone by people used to burn their furniture and their roof beams to fuel the furnace of the Great Work[103]", and the succession of editions of the *Faun* over time - including the manuscript versions, because Mallarmé copied and recopied his poems a great deal, in his best hand-writing - constitutes a well-ordered discourse of the work whose writing is prolonged by the printing process:

"All things considered, I think there is no need to start publication of the manuscript again, which happened once as an exception, but the poem lost by it. […] Find one of those beautiful Roman types and engrave it (I say Roman as the poem seems more definitive than in italic, which is closer to handwriting). It will be the edition par excellence; for which this manuscript will have been the draft or the copy, and afterwards only the small standard edition will be accepted[104]."

Mallarmé did not establish a hierarchy between the deluxe, standard, definitive, new or so-called popular edition, reissue and reprint of the same text. He assessed the specificity of each one in terms of the reading and the public targeted, in terms of the "nobility", and the "stability" of the whole - "I even think that, among booklovers, many, who already have the manuscript, will take this stable and completed version[105]" -, -"Thus, at some time, after a reasonable period devoted to a fine current edition of my verses, there will be some ordinary publication, at an indeterminate price; although the stable, high and noble publication should

[102] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Edmond Deman, 20 November 1896, *Correspondance choisie, O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit*., p. 815.
[103] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Verlaine, 16 November 1885, *Correspondance choisie*, *O.C.,* vol. I*, op. cit*., p. 788.
[104] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Deman, 7 April 1891, *Ibid.*, p. 804-805.
[105] *Ibid.*

remain the one we are attempting at present[106]"; finally, in terms of conformity to the supposed concepts of the book and of reading of the period. Taking into account the "randomness, full of folds and breaks, with which today's narrator must flesh out his idea[107]", he stated that a "Book whose special aesthetic quality is in total agreement with the way in which its readers may use it, is a masterpiece[108]". Thus, the editions on ordinary paper are suitable for "people in whose hands I cannot imagine the Collection[109]"; the bibliophile editions are aimed at "that rare readership of connoisseurs[110]"; the standard editions like that of 1893 published by Perrin meet his wish "to avoid financial problems and to be in easy contact with the reader of current publications [and] may be enough for the public, while encouraging their curiosity about complete deluxe books[111]".

Mallarmé operates similar distinctions for his *Vathek* as shown by Gordon Millan who follows in details his negotiations with the publisher Aldolphe Labitte and his plans for producing a "popular" edition[112]; yet the *Faun* remains the only title published in the whole range and diversity of available editions.

He would not compromise his own standards and requirements: his passion for accuracy - "terrible sensitivity[113]" which made him correct, without being asked, the texts of his fellow writers, the proofs of Swinburne's poem, the published version of *L'Assommoir* that Zola sent him and in which "between simple misprints, [he] noted a slip of the eye or of the pen which would amuse you[114]", and made him apply to the publication of his own works the same "absurd patience to do almost everything myself[115]", the same obsessive attention, "really nitpicking meticulousness[116]" he said, regarding the author's alterations, misprints, or details of typography and illustration. There are countless letters "clamoring[117]" for proofs, "supreme mercy, requested on bended knee[118]", which he read in no time, given the brevity of the work and the limited or lack of author's corrections. In the intermediate versions of the *Faun*, he purified the text of mundane phrases, "some padding, one or two pomposities[119]", and the

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[106] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Edmond Deman, 20 November 1896, *Ibid.*, p. 815.
[107] MALLARME, S., Letter to Zola, 18 March 1876, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit.*, p. 247.
[108] *Ibid.*
[109] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to the publisher of *Parnasse contemporain*, 6 August 1866, *Ibid.,* p. 317.
[110] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.*, p. 219.
[111] *Ibid.*, p. 260.
[112] Gordon, M., ed. *Documents Stéphane Mallarmé*, Nouvelle Série m. Saint-Genouph : Nizet, 2003, Pp. 214.
[113] MALLARME, S., Letter to Cazalis, 18 July 1868, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit.*, p. 393.
[114] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Emile Zola, 3 February 1877, *Ibid.*, p. 557-558.
[115] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to A. O'Shaughnessy, 24 May 1876, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.,* p. 119.
[116] MALLARME, S., Letter to Mendès, 24 April 1866, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit.*, p. 295.
[117] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Cazalis, 18 July 1868, *Ibid.*, p. 393.
[118] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Mendès, 24 April 1866, *Ibid.*, p. 294.
[119] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.*, p. 223.

rhythm so as to "only deliver works which can give me a reputation for perfection[120]". In the Perrin edition of 1893, he agreed to correct the spelling of the adjective "*alourdi* (made heavy)", written until then with two "ls". Beyond this, in the successive editions, which he changed endlessly, "the effect of the whole[121]", "the air between the lines[122]", the composition[123], the distribution of the blanks, which introduce "rests[124]", prefigure the Mallarméan revolution later revealed by *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira the hasard (A throw of the dice will never abolish chance)*.

It is important to stress how unique the *Faun's* publishing history is in this respect. Conversely, Juliet Wilson-Bareau and Breon Mitchell[125] show that in the case of the publication of Manet an Mallarmé's edition of Edgar Poe's *The Raven*, by the publisher Richard Lesclide (1875), Mallarmé "reputation for perfection" was at stake: Typographical mistakes, inadvertent errors (omission of four commas), variant readings on the translation were left unnoticed and uncorrected although two different printings were produced. By the time the mistakes were discovered the trial run of 150 copies type had already been distributed and it would have been necessary to re-set the entire text and the entire book. Mallarmé decided not to change his own translation and it was reprinted unmodified as late as 1888. Despite numerous attempts by Lesclide, neither Manet nor Mallarmé could be persuaded to buy back copies of their own book, even in a subsequently corrected edition, thus bearing to send out uncorrected copies to their correspondents[126].

The book of the booklover as a symbolic space

The editions on cartridge paper and with artists' illustrations contributed to this absolutist concept of the Book: the Derenne edition "a real masterpiece of typography […] was printed by hand, in specially-cast Elzevirian type, on handmade paper sorted by sheet […]; the illustrations, […] in small quarto, a drawing outside the text, a fleuron and a vignette in the text [are] by Edouard Manet […] All these woodcuts in two colors, pink and black: an imitation of Japanese processes attempted for the first time in Europe" were hand-colored by

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[120] MALLARME, S., Letter to Cazalis, 21 May 1866, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie, op. cit*., p. 304-305.
[121] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Mendès, 24 April 1866, *Ibid.,* p. 294.
[122] MALLARMÉ, S., "[…] air between the lines, space, so that they can be separated from each other, which is necessary even with their condensation", *Ibid.*
[123] MALLARMÉ, S., "All the substitutions have their goal, generally related to the composition, and I have not hesitated in sacrificing lines which seemed like a pretty painting", *Ibid.*
[124] *Ibid.*
[125] WILSON-BAREAU, J. and BREON, M., "Tales of a Raven. The Origins and Fate of *Le Corbeau* by Mallarmé and Manet", Print Quaterly VI (1989), pp. 258-307.
[126] *Id*., p. 270 ; 272 ; 274.

Manet, to avoid the cost of coloring[127]. Nevertheless, these editions illustrate less the search for luxury itself[128] than for a symbolic reception space - Swinburne spoke of "a marvelous little jewel of poetry set so fittingly and so delicately like a diamond in a casket of pearls[129]". Although he decorated the copies with calligrams and dedications in red or black ink, Mallarmé conceded the relative frivolity of these "first expensive candy-bag booklets, but wonderful and rather oriental, with their Japan paper, gilt-titled, and tied with China-rose and black ribbons[130]." On the other hand, the fragility of the book, which he repeats several times cannot be entrusted to the mail (due to these precious materials[131]), is an indication of the reception of the poem itself: this "particularly Parisian luxury" contributed to "infuriating the French press[132]"; "something so beautiful in every way, wrote Swinburne, must surely make the fools cry out[133]"; "Above all I was delighted, wrote John Payne, by the pure and precious turn of your phrases: all in all it is an exquisitely crafted jewel […] It contains Pentelic verses, translucent and gilded by an ancient sun[134]".

The graphic art is an integral element of this process through the enhancing presence of the grand masters: not so much Félicien Rops, who provided the frontispiece of the 1887 edition, as Edouard Manet for the first edition, and James McNeill Whistler for the etching of the last, famous partners in the work[135]. The 1887 edition of the *Faun*, in which the woodcuts by Manet no longer appear, carries their mark by "the previous permission to print - that of the Derenne edition of 1876 - which pays tribute to them, and by an additional mention: "If it is not appropriate to place this Homage, which speaks of the illustrator, before the text that remains alone, I do not want it to be absent from any future reissue: as he defended my work, he shall emblazon it forever[136]." Illustrations do not decorate the poem with peculiarly ornate and metaphorical graphic language although the *Faun* illustrated editions are early versions of outstanding artistry anticipating future Artists' books. The purpose is essentially to experiment with an innovative conception of the page as a syncretic space open to different

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[127] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.*, p. 210

[128] Even if Mallarmé needed "a bookseller who can make my Poe in the deluxe conditions that I want […]", Letter to O'Shaughnessy, 27 November 1875, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[129] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter from Swinburne (LAS, vol. III, p. 193), quoted in the Letter to Swinburne, 7 June 1876, note 2, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 121-122.

[130] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.*, p. 261, preparatory notes for the 1899 edition of *Poésies*.

[131] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune, op. cit.*, p. 215.

[132] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Swinburne, 10 May 1876, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

[133] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter from Swinburne (LAS, vol. III, p. 193), quoted in the Letter to Swinburne, 7 June 1876, note 2, *Correspondance*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 121-122.

[134] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to John Payne, 12 June 1876, quoted by H. Mondor, *Histoire d'un Faune*.

[135] Manet was also a partner in misfortune, poorly understood by the critics of his time; his works, on exhibition in his studio in 1876 when the *Faun* was published, were refused by the judges of the Salon.

[136] MALLARMÉ, S., *The Afternoon of a Faun*, editions of the *Revue Indépendante*, 1887, colophon.

art forms, and of the page setting as an aesthetic and spiritual aspiration to the Synthesis envisioned since 1867[137].

The Total Book or Theatre

The Mallarméan cult of the Book thus combines the way of producing the book with its aesthetics and involves an operation that is virtually a translation of the text into the typographic and material language of the book[138] which, as a total work of the mind, materiality included, is the continuity of the writing, putting it on show. Instrumental, it is the orchestra that performs the work and ensures its fulfillment, "a solitary silent concert [which] is given, through reading, to the mind which recaptures, with a lesser sonority, the meaning[139]". Hence the importance of its composition and of its rhythm, which is marked by, amongst other things, the characters and the spaces: - "I would like, said Mallarmé, quite a tight typeface, suitable for the condensation of the poem, but with air between the lines, space, so that they can be separated from each other, which is necessary even with their condensation[140]." "The poem is only beautiful in impersonal characters, in other words typographic: except of course when it is engraved if one wishes to give the edition something immutable and monumental[141]."

These metaphysical issues confirm Mallarmé's place in the poetry of his time, an innovative shocking place in the eyes of his established peers who, as they had done before for his master Baudelaire, denounced Mallarmé for a long time for his wild expressions, describing him as "mad", unnecessarily incomprehensible, "seemingly afraid of the natural" and more or less good for the asylum[142]. After 1885, however, Mallarmé had achieved a certain

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[137] MALLARMÉ, S.: "Thus, at the hour of the Synthesis, I have just defined the work which will be the image of this development. Three poems in verse…", Letter to Cazalis, 14 May 1867, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la poésie, op. cit*., p. 343.

[138] For Mallarmé, the work of printing led to an "art print", a term which reflects the ideographic dimension of the reproduced work; this is how "literature *proves* itself", as he wrote in a letter to Camille Mauclair, concerning *Coup de dés (A Throw of the Dice), Stéphane Mallarmé Correspondance choisie, O.C.*, vol. I*, op. cit*., p. 818 and note 2, p. 1444. Ample evidence of this can be found in *Notes en vue du "Livre",* about which Bertrand Marchal notes "the question of the contents of a book cannot be dissociated from that of its structure: because the book form is the most powerful development of the poetic law par excellence of the rhyme, there is homology between all the levels of this development, from the "Book" to the syllable." Notice, *Œuvres inachevées (Unfinished works), Notes en vue du "Livre", Stéphane Mallarmé, O.C.*, vol. I*, op. cit*., pp. 1379-1380.

[139] *Ibid*., p. 58.

[140] MALLARME, S., Letter to Catulle Mendès, 24 April 1866, S. Mallarmé, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie*, *op. cit*., p. 294.

[141] MALLARME, S., Letter to Edmond Deman, 7 April 1891, *Correspondance choisie*, *OC, op. cit*., p. 804.

[142] MARCHAL, B., *Stéphane Mallarmé*, Collection Mémoire de la critique, Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 1998.

reputation, people flocked to his Tuesday evenings and A. France gave a kinder assessment of his "obscurity" based on a linguistic and semantic dualism, perhaps finding its resolution in a third sense "infinitely subtle and yet voluptuous, […] a reward for the enlightened who can read between the lines in a knowledgeable and secret way[143]".

Taking France at his word and assuming that the three-dimensional nature of the book transports this third sense, then the material discourse of the book, skillfully arranged by Mallarmé but long denigrated, *objectivizes* the writing and gives it an essential additional depth. For Mallarmé, "Poetry is the expression, restored by human language to its essential rhythm, of the mysterious meaning of aspects of our existence: it thus endows our time on earth with authenticity and constitutes the only spiritual task[144]". The publication of works and the making of books are part of this task; originating from this same poetic art, they participate in the same exploration of the boundaries of the mind and of matter.

The Book has a philosophical value of Synthesis[145]: it is the mirror that reflects the Human Being, a place of reconstitution but also "a tiny tomb of the soul", of imprisonment. Tormented by the Absolute, long haunted by "the terrible vision of a pure Work[146]", which had made him "almost [lose] my mind and the meaning of the most familiar words[147]", Mallarmé persevered in expressing it and revealing its truth, the truth of its effect, of its feeling; hence the invention, highlighted by Bertrand Marchal[148], of a "new Poetics" which consists of "painting not the object, but the effect that it produces": the Mallarméan book is one of the means by which this poetic theory is expressed, it is the reflection of this painted object and aims to reproduce its effect; it is "the authentic time on earth" of "Man", with which the latter "exchanges a reciprocity of proofs[149]".

The Book above all, has a poetic value, because it was by relentlessly hollowing out the poem that Mallarmé discovered Nothingness[150]. And he distinguished the pieces of prose and verse published almost everywhere each time a magazine appeared from something else which he had always attempted and was what? He said "It is difficult to say: a book, quite simply, in many volumes, a book which is an architectural and planned book and not a

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[143] *Ibid.*, Preface, p. 14.
[144] MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Léo d'Orfer, 27 June 1884, *O.C.*, vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 782. Published in *La Vogue*, n°3, 1886.
[145] See above note 137.
[146] MALLARME, S., Letter to François Coppée, 20 April 1868, *Ibid.*, p. 380.
[147] *Ibid.*
[148] MARCHAL B., *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie*, Preface, *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[149] Definition of Poetry sent to Léo d'Orfer, reproduced by Richard Wagner, *Rêverie d'un poète français (Dream of a French poet)*, Letter to Léo d'Orfer, 27 June 1884, *Ibid.*, p. 572.
[150] *Ibid.*, p. 297-298; p. 342.

collection of random inspirations, however wonderful[151]". His work, he said, was so "well-prepared and structured, representing as best it can the Universe, that I would not know what to remove without damaging some of my layers of impressions.[152]" The poem is thus "one of the splendid twisted Solomonic columns of this Temple[153]" which he planned. "I will succeed perhaps, wrote Mallarmé, not in creating the whole of this work (I do not know who one would have to be to do that!) But in showing a finished fragment, in making its glorious authenticity sparkle in one place, and in indicating the remainder which would require more than a lifetime. To prove by the portions completed that this book exists and that I knew what I could never accomplish[154]."

The *Faun* could be this fragment of "an Orphic explanation of the Earth", this portion whose construction - continually brooded over, with layers of impressions from one edition to another, added to by the adaptation of Paul Fort[155] at the Théâtre d'Art, and by the *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun)* by Debussy - proves the existence of the Great Work, as all the books contain the fusion of those repetitions which were taken into account.

It thus acquires the value of this Theatre provided by Literature and embedded in the typographical presentation of the 1876 version that David J. Code sees as "an acknowledgment of the illusory promise of vocal presence in written words[156]." Foreseen in the *Faun*'s body and in the double aesthetic of the initial 1865 project of a verse drama, the multiple editions of the poem exhibit the theatrical scenography and the potential stage setting process – "not *possible for the theatre*, but *demanding the theater*[157]" - which Mallarmé attempts to introduce or reconvene in the book, as he writes to the Italian critic Vittorio Pica: "Performances, will be the true modern cult: a Book, an explanation of Man, enough to satisfy our wildest dreams[158]". Unlike Coppée's book, which Mallarmé judged "so well-behaved in its limited setting[159]", the *Faun*, in its many volumes and performances, from the decoration and

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151 MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Verlaine, *Ibid.*, p. 585.
152 MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Cazalis, 18 July 1868, *Ibid.,* p. 393.
153 He detached fragments for his friends, Letter to Verlaine, 16 November 1885, *Ibid.,* p. 586. "Each fragment, built in layers, like a column of the Temple, represents as best it can, a small replica of the Universe and this architectural and planned Book which it cannot attain". *Ibid.,* p. 335; 393.
154 MALLARMÉ, S., Letter to Verlaine, 16 November 1885, *Ibid.,* p. 586.
155 Mallarmé criticized the staging of *Le Corbeau*, by Paul Fort, at the Théâtre d'Art: "You were given a masterpiece (this is not the translator speaking, believe me); you turned it into rubbish." Letter to Paul Fort, *Correspondance*, Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin, vol. IV, 1890-1891, Gallimard, 1973, p. 246.
156 CODE, D.,J., *art.cit*, p. 500.
157 « Non *possible au theâtre*, mais *exigeant le théâtre* », Letter to Henri Cazalis, 1865, (*OC*, 1559).
158 MALLARME, S., Letter to Vittorio Pica, 27 November 1886, *Correspondance, Lettres sur la Poésie*, *op. cit.*, p. 593.
159 MALLARME, S., Letter to François Coppée, 20 April 1871, *Ibid*, p. 380.

costumes, braids, silk ribbons, and colored print of the extravagant first edition on Japan paper, to the etching, the "exquisite frosted cover", the beautiful and traditional restraint of the last Deman edition on "rough and primitive Holland paper", highlights this potential of the book which Mallarmé aspired to as he declares in *Cérémonials (Ceremonies)*:

"A book, in our hand, if it sets out some noble idea, compensates for all the theatres, not by causing them to be forgotten but, on the contrary, masterfully *recalling* them[160]."

Retracing the editorial and publishing history of the *Faun* thus demonstrates the status of this poem as Mallarmé's *urtext*, providing a unique occasion to experiment with the translation process of moving from the metaphysics to the physics of the book, and eventually exhibiting the very value of the Mallarméan Book as a "Forme fantasmée[161]", a fantasied form if not preceding content at least setting it in motion.

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[160] MONDOR H., *Histoire d'un Faune*, *op. cit.*, p. 259.
[161] Barthes, R., *La Préparation du roman I et II*, Cours et séminaire au Collège de France (1978-1979 et 1979-1980), Texte établi, annoté et présenté par Nathalie Léger, Seuil Imec, 2003, pp. 240-242.