



org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.

**Your path through the collection lead along** Stopwatch, Investment, Cobalt, Une étoile est-elle un document?, Roofing (3) – Simon, tu me manques, The Imaginary Edge of the Roadway, Raisins, We Welcome Comments, A Bibliographic Reference, Inflation, It's Pouring, Cover, Crash (2), A Dead Insect on the Trunk of a Cedrus Atlantica Glauca, From Asturias, Into Cantabria, 12M m3 [7/8] A Fissure, Deneef 'for ever'

## What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, etc., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).

Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.

the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases ‘documentalist’ Suzanne Briet, stating that ‘an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance’. The gathered files are all documents – if they weren’t before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an ‘antelope’.

As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed. It documented your path through the website. As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.

This document was compiled by \_\_\_\_\_ on 30.05.2022 08:51, printed on \_\_\_\_\_ and contains 17 documents on 38 pages. (<https://the-documents.org/log/30-05-2022-4009/>)

the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.

the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.

#### Notes

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.  
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- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

#### Sources

- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents*. Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Accessed on 13.05.2021.



Flanders  
State of the Art





He's wearing a digital watch. It looks like a Casio. It's impossible to read the time, no matter whether you are studying the high-resolution scan of the negative or the negative itself, with the aid of a loupe and lightbox.

The device had a stopwatch function. When we were around eight and ten, we used to compete in trying to start and stop the stopwatch in the shortest possible interval. The smaller the gap, the closer to zero. Sometimes he would also have a try. We once managed to get it down to 00:00:00:03. Neither of us dared to press 'reset' and try again.

#### Notes





type  
photograph

date  
10.05.2022

filename  
032a-07s.psd

size  
802,34 MB

author  
De Cleene De Cleene

category  
archive, family, house, mirror, technology

**08:50:31**

The oldest coin in the collection has darkened over time, but upon inspection, the text 'AD USUM BELGII AUSTRI' (left) and the contours of a (female) head (right) can be discerned. A quick search learns it stems from the middle of the 18th century. The coin was made and used in the Austrian Netherlands, reigned by Maria Theresa, who is the one depicted. My mother recollects finding it in the backyard when she was a kid.

About 40 years later, the euro was introduced. The ringbinder with my mother's coin collection was taken from the shelf. A dilemma came to the fore: we wondered if we should keep one of each existing Belgian coin and banknote and put them in the binder, alongside Maria Theresa, or if we should exchange them for the new European currency. The decision to keep a coin of five Belgian francs was not difficult to make, but as the amount raised, the answer was increasingly hard to give. This was an assessment of the old currency's emotional and projected historical value, compared to its current financial worth. It was a decision based on investment principles.

To accentuate the value of the Maria Theresa kronenthaler of 1 liard, I put the coin on a pile of red post-it-notes when photographing it. Coins like these are sold on eBay for prices ranging from 0,70 euros to 16 euros.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	29.07.2021	_MG_6826.JPG; _MG_6825.JPG	6,7MB; 7,7MB	Arnout De Cleene
category	archaeology, economy, family, numismatics, collecting			

08:50:38





Cathedral glass, or Flemish glass, lets light through, but distorts visibility. It can show something or someone is present behind it, but not in detail. Often used in front doors, it marks the opaque edge between the private and the public sphere, laying bare their presence, without disclosing their contents.

A blue hand, or a spider (*Cyriopagopus lividus*), traces the cracks that testify to the fact that the jammed door had to be closed with force. The hinges need oiling. Cobalt blue tarantulas are said to be extremely defensive.





type  
photograph

date  
03.11.2021

filename  
\_44A6301.dng; \_44A6305.dng

size  
47,32MB;  
54,99MB

author  
Arnout De Cleene

category  
animal, house, impact, insurance, mistake, repair, trompe l'oeil

08:50:39







In the introduction to her book *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?*, French 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet asks what a document is. In a scrappy scan of her book I found online I am highlighting almost everything she writes. Is a star a document? Briet says it isn't. But the catalogues and photographs of stars are. When I quickly opened the file with Apple's 'Preview' application to check the above paraphrase, the highlighted sentences were illegible.

**Notes**

Briet is cited in Lisa Gitelman's *Paper Knowledge* (2014).

**Sources**

Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951. Online: <http://martinetl.free.fr/suzannebriet/questcequeladocumentation/briet.pdf>



A Julien CAIN

**D**E tout temps la latinité et son héritage ont donné au mot *document* le sens d'enseignement ou de preuve. Le dictionnaire de RICHELET, comme celui de LITTRÉ, en apportent deux témoignages français. Une bibliographie contemporaine soucieuse de clarté a lancé cette brève définition :

Si l'on se réfère aux définitions « officielles » de l'Union Française des Organismes de Documentation, on constate que le document est présenté ainsi : «

Cette définition a été parfois mise en échec par des linguistes ou par des philosophes, épris comme il se doit de minutie et de logique. Grâce à leur analyse du contenu de la notion, on a pu proposer ici une définition, la plus approchée qui soit à l'heure actuelle, mais aussi la plus abstraite, et partant la moins accessible :

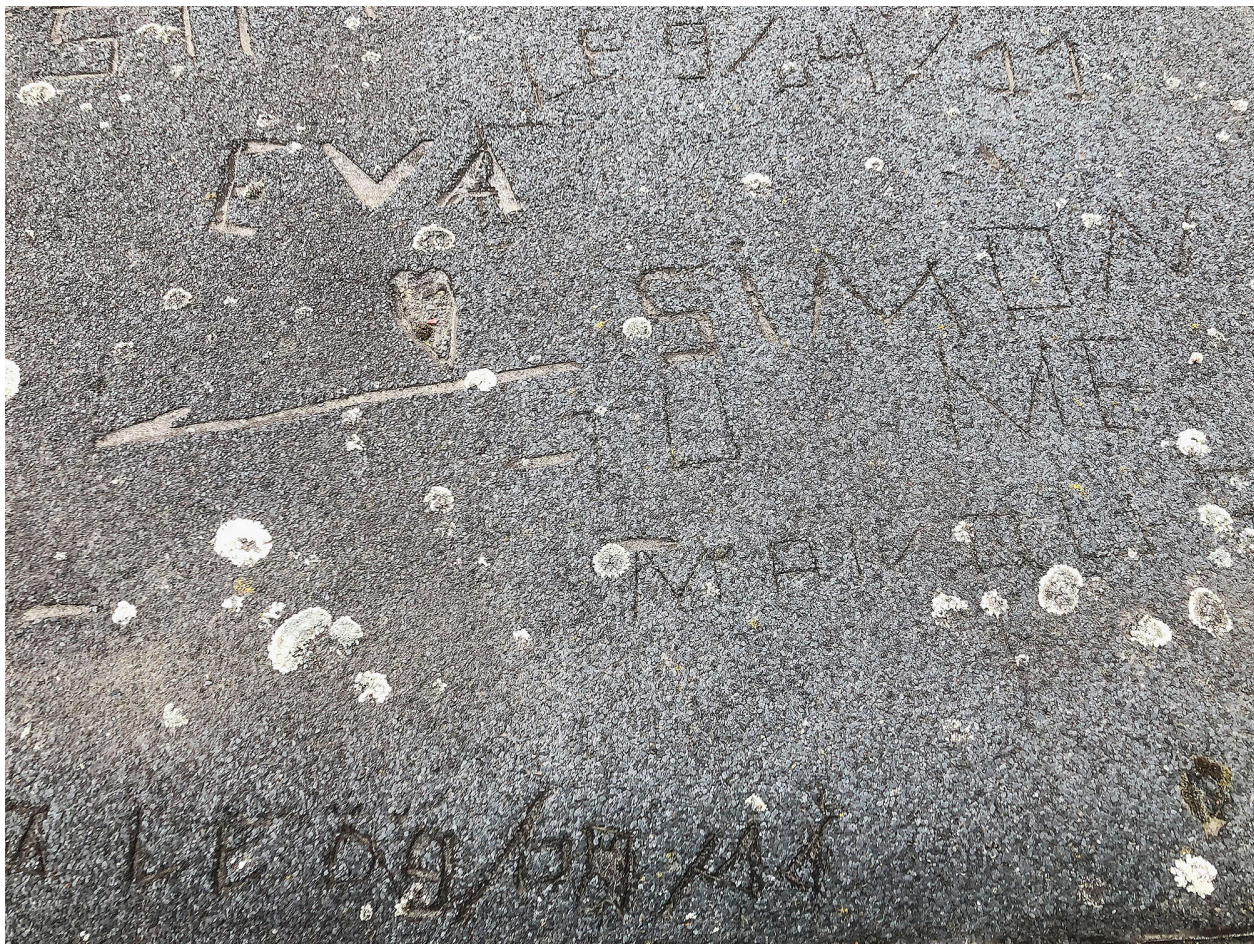
A notre époque de transmissions multipliées et accélérées, le moindre évènement, ou scientifique ou politique, lorsqu'il a été porté à la connaissance du public, s'alourdit aussitôt d'une « vêtture de documents » (Raymond BAYER). Admirons la fertilité documentaire d'un simple fait de départ : par exemple,

l'information de presse fait connaître l'évènement par des communiqués de journaux, de radio, par les actualités cinématographiques. La découverte fait l'objet d'une communication à l'Académie des Sciences. Un professeur du Muséum en fait état dans son enseignement. L'animal vivant est mis en cage et catalogué (jardin zoologique). Une fois mort, il sera empaillé et conservé (au Muséum). Il est prêté à une Exposition. Il passe en sonorisé au cinéma. Son cri est enregistré sur disque. La première monographie sert à établir partie d'un traité avec planches, puis une encyclopédie spéciale (zoologique), puis une encyclopédie générale. Les ouvrages sont catalogués dans une bibliothèque, après

In what order and by whom the various texts and drawings were carved into the soft roofing is unclear. To the right of 'EVA', a heart symbol and an arrow (pointing to the left), the roofing reads 'SIMON TU ME MANQUES'.

The short sentence usually – yet hastily – translates to 'Simon, I miss you'. However, in French the 'you' (*tu*) is the subject and has an active role, whereas the 'I' (*me*) is the direct object. In short: by his not being there, Simon actively effectuates hurt to the one who carved this text.





type  
photograph

date  
14.04.2021

filename  
IMG\_6512.jpeg

size  
4,50MB

author  
Michiel De Cleene

category  
automobile, decoration, fissure, parking, roofing, sign

**08:50:44**

Article 75 of the Royal Decree containing general regulations for road traffic and the use of public roads, published in *Het Belgisch Staatsblad* on 9 December 1975, lists the rules for longitudinal markings indicating the edge of the roadway.

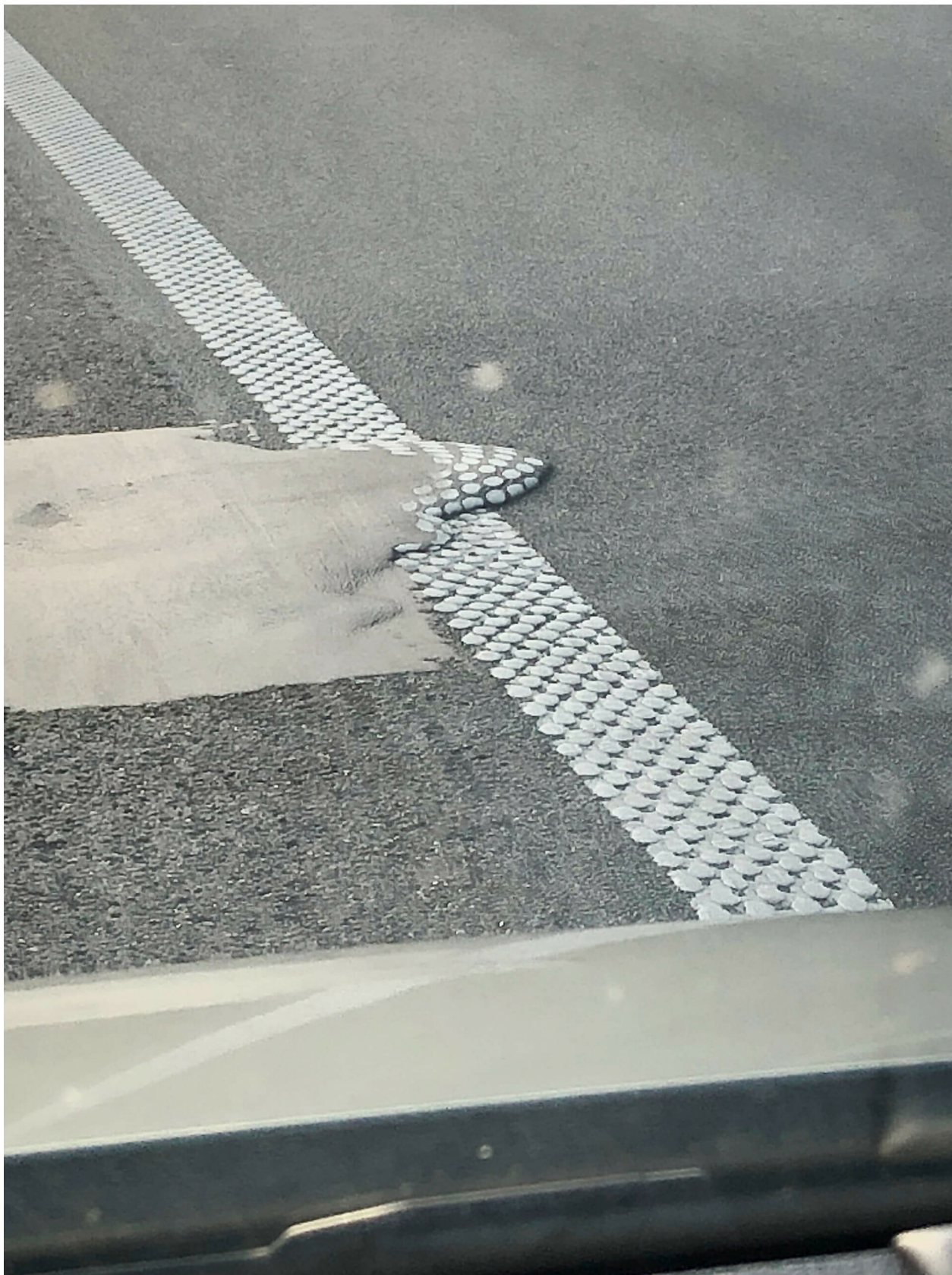
According to 75.1, there are two types of markings that indicate the actual edge of the roadway: a white, continuous stripe and a yellow interrupted line. The former is mainly used to make the edge of the roadway more visible; the latter indicates that parking along it is prohibited.

In 75.2, the decree focuses on markings that indicate the imaginary edge of the roadway. Only a broad, white, continuous stripe is permitted for this purpose. The part of the public road on the other side of this line is reserved for standing still and parking, except on motorways and expressways.

#### Sources

<https://wegcode.be/wetteksten/secties/kb/wegcode/262-art75>





type  
photograph

date  
08.08.2021

filename  
IMG\_7943.HEIC

size  
659 KB

author  
Michiel De Cleene

category  
automobile, government, parking, repair, sign

08:50:46



When I grew up, my parents told me that the number of raisins in the local baker's raisin bread attested to the result of the most recent soccer match of KAA Gent. A victory was celebrated by throwing more raisins into the dough than usual, a loaf following a painful loss was hardly a raisin bread at all.

The baker retired long ago. Today my two-year-old son picked out all the raisins from his slice of bread. KAA Gent's last game was a tie against Union.



type  
photograph

date  
30.12.2021

filename  
IMG\_9810.HEIC

size  
1,2 MB

author  
Michiel De Cleene

category  
family, food

08:50:47

Robert Nemiroff and Jerry Bonnell's lesser known project (R.N. and J.B. being the creators of Astronomy Picture of The Day), was making websites containing over a million of digits of square roots of irrational numbers, e.g. seven. 'They were computed during spare time on a VAX alpha class machine over the course of a weekend. [...] We believe these are the most digits ever computed for the square root of seven on or before 1 April 1994.' Elsewhere, R.N. states: 'They are not copyrighted and we do not think it is legally justifiable to copyright such a basic thing as the digits of a commonly used irrational number.' If one wanted to get a copy of the 10 million digits of the square root of the number  $e$  R.N. and J.B. computed in their spare time, one can send an email to R.N. at [nemiroff@gssc.gsfc.nasa.gov](mailto:nemiroff@gssc.gsfc.nasa.gov).

**Sources**

- <https://apod.nasa.gov/htmltest/gifcity/sqrt7.1mil>
- [https://apod.nasa.gov/htmltest/rjn\\_dig.html](https://apod.nasa.gov/htmltest/rjn_dig.html)
- <https://apod.nasa.gov/htmltest/rjn.html>

What follows are the first 1 million digits of the square root of 7. Actually, slightly more than 1 million digits are given here. These digits were computed by Robert Nemiroff (George Mason University and NASA Goddard Space Flight Center) and checked by Jerry Bonnell (University Space Research Association and NASA Goddard Space Flight Center). They were computed during spare time on a VAX alpha class machine over the course of a weekend. We do NOT guarantee the accuracy of these digits. Although these digits have been checked once we encourage others to check them as well. We believe these are the most digits ever computed for the square root of seven on or before 1 April 1994. If anyone is aware of more digits we ask them to please alert us of their existence. We have computed at least 10 million digits of the square root of two as well as several digits of the number e and the square roots of other numbers. These are available on this mosaic server (URL: <http://antwpr.gsfc.nasa.gov/htmltest/rjn.html>). We welcome comments.

- Robert Nemiroff and Jerry Bonnell

The square root of seven =

2.6457513110645905905016157536392604257102591830824501803683344592010688232302  
83627760392886474543610615064578338497463095743529888627214784427390555880107722  
71715072972832389229968959486508726070097805420372382802371594110034193911600157  
85255963059457410351523968027164073737990740415815199044034743194536713997305970  
05051399692237545616097119027378154991633288287704000657570674651963497752083793  
81811461309087647378659562433057994798128163230705483650107715617946361191553454  
53647749482059309049484983403398900210478616673327950369392462257170537164925787  
54832290732492671346980298949908037748251109227895568897919808814834090831685251  
33535829539172211770714414974576907081989444441458972284741400303502353203719487  
07382629318519364090832280596462783761021959794197089096354695861341181793067816  
21360849101677835321255633463490021898146042255929503669562418692737327715022087  
52309966469813203212818945478568020950635962446628550076190504139350447437123488  
52233277362510045059621080672334698120004300514490251206257311759115423194459672  
60497833404344683725636178255048160879406205511486397833055016369470076387773745  
19511658095220474202064982102444056001996590904100285534069110102261166807200774  
83070332613842826296809502470794656496344336830519708820348050486447262317930876  
95722489377521119788376007845603903658809421599292501057753682356001720074065236  
92473209967419778002535708540617794442886681589731184938101638162073015642647016  
29841099690071341323798188477647769954391111945967670336972452475367740100245826  
51593077528163005479339717508017899520565284447796194304512502890432970610508746  
04492966897542257133380633247034508888234275409806214511439553803393190705392738  
14520604335238180389333294731479058055670704161068722878104529957696633035133295  
04704245502510500789645502552271857923370921821991843932537781386785650143790894  
13002099040860186605228131329821735251716419633617853080179022873400337109527257  
36428650922035916343820273976336550966714177816292894279884853951076819102168116  
99677176780863793410667897509217050421558644370687652934899322442240273649792906  
66842070305782257110537944215790013280304078494579431518120466309284152592404683  
65282802722458530778415894238973955590959563491357495109757674781975590533726939  
36521431268222909570986506137179452721677198255442288046052307455488310813325041  
49932783468182066583447383366862454456169497251774270254688591746231942309355060  
38899235355634465872922507362228284298215287903623847595555861643755472027361518  
00826144981691174794610631845652307625691344410868551999982851633960745717970829  
72776495645142655658205126240305961633868338746134237463526431296594527010213721  
72174899143552932049575097114259427207988929665230498875939525378121455723193310  
30690840194942118708515205734116214105775416917245804962369512932926647583857193  
34312550616097509003957512063487575979549295499224726634074018815634940531052960  
44658755646209433389479417623956283563497138016947322200667916212934359736711005  
87608647371575881684122969500862937088695418127695765706218647593705890746227177  
67431598986793495542319038774222444613699306088875639565284339127439923238796883  
29062070715981239181401975323766238742188337107032853227711421862644792384439312  
30317870021802156263998733847453103345993606899837633245900690816758898827355721  
30478851132714468724152035311133859228865134587481955304126432221367858385542359

type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	01.05.2021	Schermafbeelding 2021-05-01 om 16.44.39.png	340KB	Arnout De Cleene

category  
astronomy, archive, data storage, irrational numbers, mathematics

08:50:48

‘ORIGINAL. Rire de tout ce qui est original, le  
haïr, le bafouer, et l’exterminer si l’on peut.’  
[‘ORIGINAL. Laugh with everything that’s  
original, hate it, scold it, exterminate it if you can.’]

#### Sources

Flaubert. *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (présenté par Raymond Queneau). Paris:  
Livre de poche, 1959 (with p. 232-233: dried leaf of a ginkgo tree, and p.  
324-325: dried leaf of a birch tree), p. 429 [2,00 EUR, Librairie Vic-sur-  
Cère, August 2021].



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	14.09.2021	_MG_7413.JPG	5,2MB	Arnout De Cleene
category	book, botany, tree, encyclopaedia, replica/copy, literature, collecting			

08:50:49

A 250 meter walk away from the seaside. A sign states in Dutch and French:

‘!!! NO PARKING !!!

Wrongly parked cars will be chained and only released upon payment of a € 40 parking fee’

The 40 EUR parking fee the sign threatens to charge is communicated by a relatively new sticker stuck on an older sign. Underneath the three black characters (€, 4 and 0) on a white background, there’s a relief: 7 characters declaring a parking fee of 1500 BEF.

1500 BEF equals 37,18 EUR<sup>1</sup>. In changing currency, the fee increased by 7,58%.

#### Notes

1. The Belgian franc was the currency of the Kingdom of Belgium from 1832 until 2002 when the Euro was introduced. 1 EUR is worth 40,3399 BEF.





type  
photograph

date  
02.01.2022

filename  
\_44A4714.dng

size  
63,15 MB

author  
Michiel De Cleene

category  
automobile, brick, economy, parking, sea, sign, sticker

08:50:50



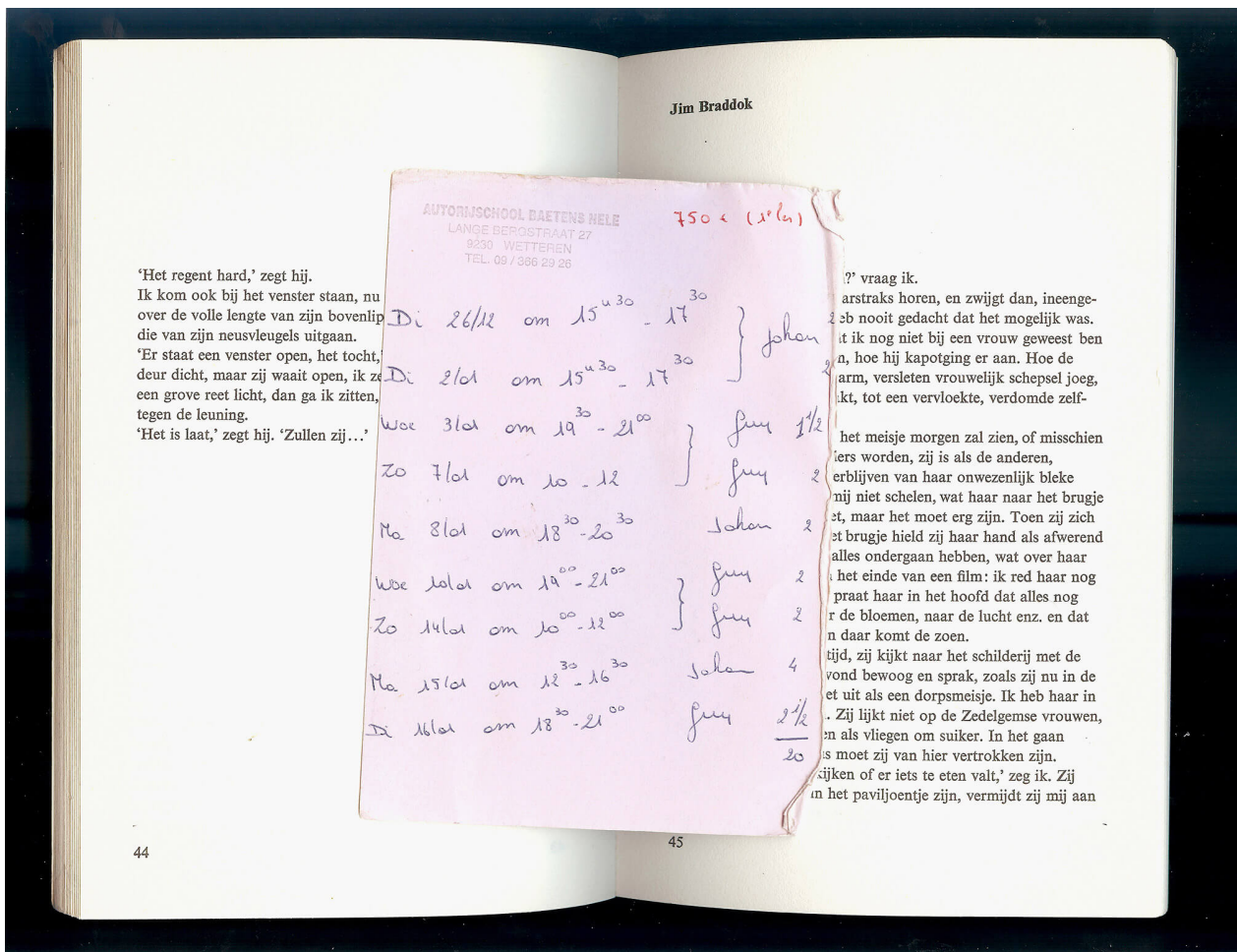
In his debut novel 'De Metsiers' Hugo Claus employs a multiple narrative perspective. In the copy I picked up in a thrift store, there's a bookmark between pages 44 and 45 where the perspective shifts from Ana to Jim Braddok. It's pouring. The pink piece of paper lists 9 sessions at a driving school. There's a total of 20 hours, taught alternately by Johan and Guy.

**Notes**

In 2000, 2006 and 2017 the twenty-sixth of December was a Tuesday.  
(Earlier years are improbable, since the Euro was not introduced yet.)

**Sources**

Claus, H. *De Metsiers*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij De Bezige Bij, 1978.



A year before the crash, Swiss artist Charlotte Stuby designed a tailor-made cover for the car. The dents caused by the unfortunate hailstorm weren't visible. The work, called *Gone Fishing*, was on view during an open air exhibition on the theme of the parking lot. Heavy wind had caused the temporary traffic signs on the parking lot, left there by the city services, to tip over. One hit a car and caused a scratch. It was unclear if this would be something the insurance company would accept. We attached Stuby's cover a second time. Parking fines flew irregularly across the lot.



type  
photograph

date  
08.02.2021

filename  
P\_016-1024x834.jpg

size  
377KB

author  
De Cleene De Cleene

category  
automobile, crash, cloth, parking, precipitation, wind, sign, insurance

08:50:52

Near Avenue 61 on an artificial island close to Seef, a truck is being towed after the driver lost control over the vehicle and flipped it onto its side. A warm wind blows in from the Persian Gulf.

A police officer signals us to come closer. 'Why are you taking pictures?' he asks. 'This is just an accident. You have to delete the pictures from your phone. Now.' After checking the pictures-folder on our phones, he gets in his car, drives a few metres, stops the car and rolls down his window. 'And don't do it again!' he yells. Then he drives off, raising a cloud of sand in his wake.

#### Notes

Photograph taken and recovered from my trash bin on 18.12.2020.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	08.05.2021	IMG_5071.jpeg	2,71MB	Michiel De Cleene

**category**

Bahrain, crash, data storage, drought, government, interference, mistake, parking, sand, technology

**08:50:54**



It's early spring. The pool is covered with a sheet of plastic. The deciduous trees are just leafing out. A tree stump serves as a placeholder for the diving board's foot – it was customary to take it indoors for winter – and keeps people from kicking its threaded rods sticking up from the silex tiles that line the pool.

The upper right corner of the plastic frame is missing. It's probably where the insect – now dead, dry and yellowish – got in. The frame was left behind in the laundry room overlooking the garden, the pool and the pool house. At the time it hadn't been used for quite a while. Half empty, the water green.

In summer, when the wind dropped, horse-flies came. You could shake them off temporarily by swimming a few meters underwater.



type  
scan

date  
22.07.2021

filename  
pool.jpg

size  
38,87 MB

author  
Michiel De Cleene

category  
animal, botany, cloth, decoration, family, tree

08:50:55



A half a day's walk from the Fuente Dé *teleférico*,  
there are less and less traces of passers-by. The path  
to Sotres suddenly runs through a lush green.  
The fence between two pastures keeps the sheep  
from crossing and coincides with the border  
between two regions. A hole in the fence would  
change the landscape's hue.



type  
photograph

date  
15.05.2021

filename  
\_MG\_9795.jpg

size  
4,6MB

author  
Arnout De Cleene

category  
animal, landscape, government

08:50:56

What they took for ice that slid down the dam's slope, appears to be the reason for draining the reservoir: a fissure in the watertight layer. The dam became unreliable.





type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	06.12.2021	IMG_0515b	5,42 MB	Michiel De Cleene
category				
fissure, landscape, mistake, repair				

08:50:57



The previous owners of the house we moved into, left us a piece of a newspaper that was used to clad the wall at the time the building was built, and which they found when they renovated the house. The sport-section of the socialist newspaper *Vooruit* is dated 18 November 1931. It features articles on cycling and soccer. Recently, we noticed the plaster is coming off the wall in one corner of the living room. With sufficient rain, it might reveal other events that happened on that 1931 November Wednesday.



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	20.02.2021	Document_2021-02-20_133700.jpg	1,7MB	Arnout De Cleene

category  
archaeology, architecture, fissure, decoration, house, precipitation

08:50:58

