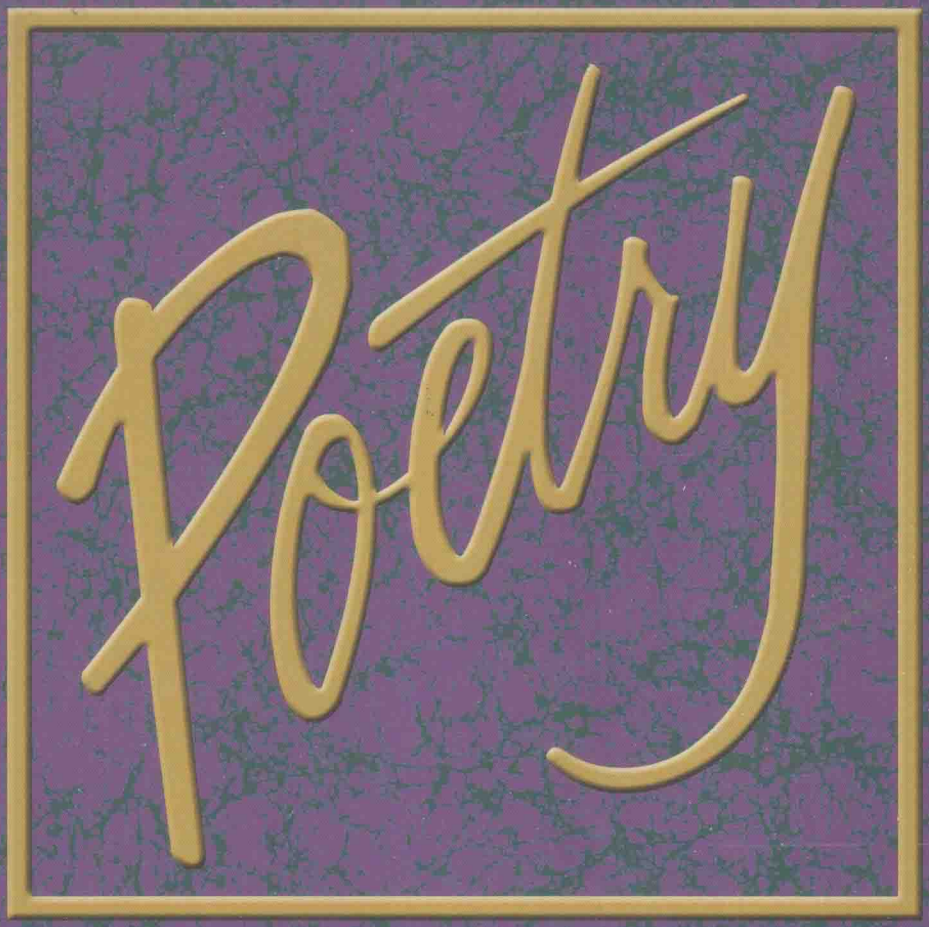

CRITICISM

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Poetry Criticism

Excerpts from Criticism of the Works of the Most Significant and Widely Studied Poets of World Literature

Volume 156

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Editor

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Poetry Criticism

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Preface

Poetry Criticism (*PC*) presents significant criticism of the world's greatest poets and provides supplementary biographical and bibliographical material to guide the interested reader to a greater understanding of the genre and its creators. This series was developed in response to suggestions from librarians serving high school, college, and public library patrons, who had noted a considerable number of requests for critical material on poems and poets. Although major poets and literary movements are covered in such Gale Literary Criticism series as *Contemporary Literary Criticism* (*CLC*), *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (*TCLC*), *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism* (*NCLC*), *Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800* (*LC*), and *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism* (*CMLC*), librarians perceived the need for a series devoted solely to poets and poetry.

Scope of the Series

PC is designed to serve as an introduction to major poets of all eras and nationalities. Since these authors have inspired a great deal of relevant critical material, *PC* is necessarily selective, and the editors have chosen the most important published criticism to aid readers and students in their research.

Approximately three to six authors, works, or topics are included in each volume. An author's first entry in the series generally presents a historical survey of the critical response to the author's work; subsequent entries will focus upon contemporary criticism about the author or criticism of an important poem, group of poems, or book. The length of an entry is intended to reflect the amount of critical attention the author has received from critics writing in English and from critics who do not write in English whose criticism has been translated. Every attempt has been made to identify and include the most significant essays on each author's work. In order to provide these important critical pieces, the editors sometimes reprint essays that have appeared elsewhere in Gale's Literary Criticism Series. Such duplication, however, never exceeds twenty percent of a *PC* volume.

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Each *PC* entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be listed in the author heading and the author's actual name given in parentheses on the first line of the biographical and critical introduction. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the author's name (if applicable).

- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author and the critical debates surrounding his or her work.

- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The first section comprises poetry collections and book-length poems. The second section gives information on other major works by the author. In the case of authors who do not write in English, an English translation of the title is provided as an aid to the reader; the translation is either a published translated title or a free translation provided by the compiler of the entry. In the case of such authors whose works have been translated into English, the **Principal English Translations** focuses primarily on twentieth-century translations, selecting those works most commonly considered the best by critics.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. All individual titles of poems and poetry collections by the author featured in the entry are

printed in boldface type. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included.

- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Citations conform to recommendations set forth in the Modern Language Association of America's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers,* 7th ed. (2009).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** describing each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Gale.

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A **Cumulative Author Index** lists all of the authors that appear in a wide variety of reference sources published by Gale, including *PC.* A complete list of these sources is found facing the first page of the Author Index. The index also includes birth and death dates and cross references between pseudonyms and actual names.

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In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale also produces an annual paperbound edition of the *PC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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When citing criticism reprinted in the Literary Criticism Series, students should provide complete bibliographic information so that the cited essay can be located in the original print or electronic source. Students who quote directly from reprinted criticism may use any accepted bibliographic format, such as Modern Language Association (MLA) style or University of Chicago Press style. Both the MLA and the University of Chicago formats are acceptable and recognized as being the current standards for citations. It is important, however, to choose one format for all citations; do not mix the two formats within a list of citations.

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Glen, Heather. "Blake's Criticism of Moral Thinking in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*." *Interpreting Blake.* Ed. Michael Phillips. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978. 32-69. Rpt. in *Poetry Criticism.* Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 63. Detroit: Gale, 2005. 34-51. Print.

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Linkin, Harriet Kramer. "The Language of Speakers in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*." *Romanticism Past and Present* 10, no. 2 (summer 1986): 5-24. Rpt. in *Poetry Criticism.* Edited by Michelle Lee. Vol. 63. Detroit: Gale, 2005. 79-88. Print.

Glen, Heather. "Blake's Criticism of Moral Thinking in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*." In *Interpreting Blake,* edited by Michael Phillips. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. 32-69. Rpt. in *Poetry Criticism.* Edited by Michelle Lee. Vol. 63. Detroit: Gale, 2005. 34-51. Print.

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Jean Arp
1887-1966

(Full name Hans Peter Wilhelm Arp; also known as Hans Arp) French-German poet, essayist, diarist, painter, and sculptor.

INTRODUCTION

Although he is best known as a painter and sculptor, Jean Arp regarded himself primarily as a poet. His poetry is little known among English-language readers, as its reliance on linguistic manipulation makes it difficult to translate. Critics have emphasized the tension between Arp's poetry and his visual or plastic art, his gravity and his playfulness, and his early participation in the avant-garde movements Dadaism and Surrealism and his late period of elegiac mysticism. Others have stressed the consistency of Arp's creative output, arguing that his works are united by a desire to create art in the same way that nature creates objects.

While living in Zurich, Switzerland, during World War I (1914-18), Arp was one of the founders of Dadaism, an artistic movement characterized by its focus on the irrational and nonsensical. In the early 1920s, he was also influential in the development of Surrealism, a movement that grew out of Dadaism and promoted the use of fantastic and dreamlike elements in art and literature. For much of his career, the bilingual Arp referred to himself in German as Hans and in French as Jean, sometimes signing his work Hans Jean, or simply Arp. This playful approach to self-identification reflects Arp's intention to stretch the boundaries of medium and genre and to explore the creative process in a variety of forms.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Arp was born on 16 September 1887 in the city of Strasbourg, where his father owned a cigar factory. Located in the Alsace region, on the eastern border of present-day France, Strasbourg had been annexed by Germany in 1871 following the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) and was beset by cultural and political discord during Arp's youth. In addition to Alsatian, a German dialect, he grew up speaking German in school and French at home.

Arp showed an early interest in writing and painting, and by the time he was fifteen years old he had joined a circle of Alsatian poets and artists led by writer René Schickele. In 1903, some of Arp's writings appeared in publications assembled by the group, and in 1904, he visited Paris and Berlin for the first time. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Arp undertook a formal study of art in German and French schools, but he soon grew frustrated with his teachers' traditional approaches to painting. Between 1908 and 1910, he began to explore the potential of nonrepresentational art, experimenting with abstract landscapes and the visual depiction of his inner world. Although he destroyed all the works produced during this period, his efforts provided the foundation for a breakthrough that occurred in 1912, after his first meeting with the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky. Having abandoned a successful academic career at the age of thirty to begin painting, Kandinsky had also begun producing purely abstract art. Arp was especially inspired by Kandinsky's innovative approach to genre in his 1912 collection of prose poems and woodcuts titled *Sounds.*

In 1915, Arp presented his work at a gallery in Zurich. The exhibition was attended by Swiss dancer and textile artist Sophie Taeuber, with whom Arp soon began a professional and romantic relationship. In 1916, Arp joined a group of fellow artists—including Tristan Tzara, Max Ernst, and Hugo Ball—united by a common rejection of conventional boundaries and limitations. Taking the name Dada, the artists staged experimental performances that combined poetry, dance, and music with costumes, masks, and puppets. The creativity of the Zurich Dadaist movement was in part a result of the influx of artists who sought refuge in neutral Switzerland during World War I. When the war ended, many artists dispersed and formed new Dadaist groups; Arp left Switzerland to join Ernst in Germany. Although Taeuber remained in Zurich, the couple later reunited and were married in 1922. Arp and Taeuber moved to Paris, where they became associated with the Surrealist movement. Arp identified with the Surrealists' emphasis on unconscious processes and the conflation of dream and reality, which influenced the development of his ideas about "object-language," the intertwining of visual and verbal signs.

In 1929, Arp began to focus on natural cycles, incorporating motifs of creation and destruction in his art. These ideas were most notably expressed through his torn-paper collages, in which he arranged shapes according to an unconscious creative logic that he described as the "laws of chance." Arp's approach to poetry began to shift as well. In the mid-1930s, he started composing poetry in both French and German, often translating the works from one language into the other. During World War II (1939-45),

and especially after Taeuber's accidental death in 1943, Arp's poetry took on a darker tone. In the last decade of his life, by then a world-famous sculptor, Arp traveled extensively. In 1959, he married art collector Marguerite Hagenbach. After several years of fragile health, Arp died on 7 June 1966 in Locarno, Switzerland.

MAJOR POETIC WORKS

Herbert Read (1968; see Further Reading) identified at least five distinct types of verse in Arp's canon: "nonsense" poems of the Dadaist period, "automatic" poems of the Surrealist period, "synthetic" poems, poetic "assemblages," and "lyrical and elegiac" poems. Despite considerable overlap, these categories reflect the chronological development of Arp's career. The Dadaist and Surrealist poems have been of particular interest because they were produced during Arp's most innovative and influential period. His Dadaist poetry comprises three early volumes: *Der Vogel selbdritt* (1920; may be translated as *One Bird in Three*), *Die Wolkenpumpe* (1920; may be translated as *The Cloud Pump*), and *Der Pyramidenrock* (1924; may be translated as *The Pyramid Skirt*). As Harriett Watts (1990; see Further Reading) suggested in her profile of Arp, these works are characterized by distinct styles. *One Bird in Three,* Watts wrote, is filled with "expressionist evocations of apocalypse, world upheaval, and ironic disjuncture," while *The Cloud Pump* contains highly associative, experimental texts. *The Pyramid Skirt,* meanwhile, offers "more rigorously structured, rhymed 'nonsense' verse." Most of the poems from these collections cannot be definitively dated, but many are thought to have been written between 1912 and 1920. Watts asserted that despite differences in style and thematic content, these works are connected by their "exuberant humor and playfulness."

Although critics have found difficulty in drawing a clear distinction between Arp's Dadaist and Surrealist poems, many have noted an important shift beginning in the 1920s. As Jane H. Hancock (1983) explained, a "special relationship between Arp's two areas of creativity" was established during this period. Hancock observed that Arp "began to take his own works of art as the inspiration for poetry," using language "to interpret and clarify a new type of imagery that was related to objects from the everyday world." In this process, Hancock continued, Arp "embraced the notion that meanings could grow and multiply beyond those initially intended when a work was executed." This approach is reflected in Arp's practice of publishing multiple versions of the same poem, often with the same title and occasionally in the same volume. In 1933, for example, he published the poem "L'air est une racine" (may be translated as "The Air Is a Root") in the periodical *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*; the poem was published again under the title "Les pierres domestiques" (may be translated as "Domestic Stones") in the 1946 collection *Le siège de l'air* (may be translated as *The Seat of Air*). The later version retains the four original textual components but doubles the length of the poem by repeating its elements in different configurations. He used the title "Configuration" for several different poems, each of which experiments with the rearrangement of a limited number of lexical elements. Eric Robertson (2000) maintained that such tendencies demonstrate Arp's fascination with "the materiality of language" and his use of words as "adaptable, interchangeable, structuring elements, rather than as transparent conveyers of rational meaning." These practices also reflect Arp's engagement with the laws of chance, which he believed freed artworks from the will of the author and allowed the unconscious to express itself in the impersonal processes of automatic arrangement and rearrangement.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Owing to Arp's linguistic experimentation and the technical and thematic differences between his French and German works, critical discussions of Arp's poetry have consistently focused on the question of language. Armine Kotin (1974; see Further Reading) explained some of these differences in a study of the linguistic techniques employed in Arp's French verse. Furthermore, regardless of the language in which they were composed, Arp's poems are difficult to translate. Many of them, especially the early works, feature such complex wordplay that they cannot be effectively rendered in another language. Read noted "the immense difficulty of translating those poems which depend for their effect on the manipulation and distortion of a particular language," suggesting that Arp's visual works are much better known because they can be more universally appreciated. Even Arp's own translations have proved largely unsuccessful, Kotin observed, since "his inventive use of the German language simply could not be rendered in French." A selection of Arp's work was translated into English and published as *On My Way* in 1948, while the 1952 volume *Dreams and Projects* combines twenty-eight of his woodcuts with examples of his prose and poems in French, German, and English translation. However, Arp's literary works are almost unknown to English-speaking audiences, and few book-length studies in any language focus on his poetry.

Shorter studies of Arp's poetry have focused on its place in the general context of literary history, often in relation to Dadaism. In his 1983 analysis of trickster, carnival, and magical figures in Dadaist poetry, Richard W. Sheppard discussed works by Arp, Tzara, and the German painter Kurt Schwitters. Surveying the avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, Mario Moroni (2000) explored the dynamics of subjectivity in Dadaist and Surrealist poetry, considering Arp's verse alongside works by three other poets. Arp's output during the 1920s has attracted particular attention, in part because of the level of continuity he

achieved between his visual art and his poetry during the period. In his 2011 essay, Robertson focused on Arp's preoccupation with "the problem of object-language" in the 1920s, as well as on the process through which his visual and verbal sign systems became more completely intertwined.

The underlying continuity of Arp's artistic output has attracted significant interest among scholars. Robertson (1996) argued that Arp's bilingualism and use of various media "not only coexist, but actually complement one another." In his 1997 essay, Robertson considered the continuity of Arp's poetry and the differences between his early and late works. Watts (1986; see Further Reading) considered later developments in Arp's poetry, examining the influence of Jakob Böhme, a German mystic whose ideas "laid the foundation for Romantic aesthetics and metaphysics." Watts also discussed the relationship between Arp and Kandinsky, tracing the influences of their respective shifts from abstract art to "concrete" art. This topic was also explored by Hubert van den Berg (1997), who analyzed the relationship between nature and Arp's conceptualizations of concrete art and the laws of chance.

Cynthia Giles

PRINCIPAL WORKS

Poetry

Der Vogel selbdritt [may be translated as *One Bird in Three*]. Berlin: n.p., 1920.

Die Wolkenpumpe [may be translated as *The Cloud Pump*]. Hanover: Steegemann, 1920.

Der Pyramidenrock [may be translated as *The Pyramid Skirt*]. Zurich: Rentsch, 1924.

Konfiguration [may be translated as *Configuration*]. Paris: Poesie, 1930.

Weisst du schwarzt du: Gedichte [may be translated as *If You White, You Black: Poems*]. Illus. Max Ernst. Zurich: Pra, 1930.

Des taches dans le vide [may be translated as *Splotches in Space*]. Paris: Lib. Tschann, 1937.

Sciure de gamme [may be translated as *Gamut Sawdust*]. Paris: Parisot, 1938.

Muscheln und Schirme [may be translated as *Shells and Umbrellas*]. Illus. Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Paris: n.p., 1939.

Poèmes sans prénoms [may be translated as *Poems with No First Names*]. Cannes: Moderne, 1941.

Rire de coquille [may be translated as *The Shell's Laughter*]. Illus. Taeuber-Arp. Amsterdam: Vordemberge-Gildewart, 1944.

Le blanc aux pieds de nègre [may be translated as *The White Man with Negro Feet*]. Paris: Fontaine, 1945.

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*Includes the poem "Les pierres domestiques" [may be translated as "Domestic Stones"], which was originally published in the periodical *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* in 1933 under the title "L'air est une racine" [may be translated as "The Air Is a Root"].

CRITICISM

Jane H. Hancock (essay date 1983)

SOURCE: Hancock, Jane H. "Jean Arp's *The Eggboard* Interpreted: The Artist as a Poet in the 1920's." *Art Bulletin* 65.1 (1983): 122-37. Print.

[*In the following essay, Hancock traces Arp's idea of the "Eggboard," a fictitious Dadaist game to which Arp later gave visual and literary form as a wood relief and poem. Hancock presents the Eggboard's evolution "from a simple joke into an extended statement of social criticism" and uses it as an example of the "continuity between visual art and poetry" that Arp achieved in the 1920s.*]

The intimate relationship between the poetry and art of Jean Arp was part of a widespread trend in the first half of the twentieth century toward strong bonds between the arts. Close connections between visual art and literature arose as a result of friendships and collaborations between artists and writers in almost all the important modernist movements and out of the literary activities of many artists themselves, including Kandinsky, Van Doesburg, Schwitters, de Chirico, Klee, and Arp. Unfortunately, these connections have been little explored in a thorough manner. Among the artists who wrote, Arp distinguished himself by sustaining a life-long literary career alongside his art, and by winning recognition from literary critics and scholars.[1] Because both his art and poetry are of high quality, and because he was associated with the crucial modern movements of Dada and Surrealism, Arp's work provides a worthy focus for a study of links between the two realms of creativity.

Detailed comparative studies of Arp's art and poetry have been rare, and in general art historians have been less active in this area than scholars of French and German literature.[2] A few art historians who knew Arp personally, Carola Giedion-Welcker, Marcel Jean, and Herbert Read, have written introductory monographs and essays that include perceptive although mostly general comments on the similarities between Arp's art and poetry.[3] These writers and others after them identified some broad characteristics unifying his works: the refusal to represent known reality, the destruction of hierarchies, the reduction of verbal and visual languages to elementary units, the use of intuition and chance, and the concept of nature as a model for creativity. These were fundamental characteristics of both Arp's art and his poetry at various times during his life. To go beyond the observation of these generalities, however, and to assess the role of poetry in the development of his art, specific related works should be carefully analyzed within the context of his career. I have approached this problem through a study of two selected works and the processes involved in creating them.

The two works in question were based on Arp's idea of the "Eggboard" (*das Eierbrett*), which he developed in several stages in the 1920's. He first invented the Eggboard as an imaginary Dada game, then gave it visual form as a wood relief in 1922. He referred to it again in a lithograph published the following year. Five years after the relief, Arp's poem **"The Eggboard"** was published in the magazine *De Stijl.* The relief and the poem were characteristic of Arp's works during that decade. Their special importance lies in their unusually clear relationship to each other, a relationship confirmed by Arp who cited them as together representing the period when his art and poetry were similar.[4] I will show that the essential meaning of the Eggboard theme remained unchanged while it gained richness and complexity as Arp developed it. As he transposed it from verbal, to visual, and back to verbal form, it grew from a simple joke into an extended statement of social criticism. In this growth is an example of the interdependence and continuity between visual art and poetry that Arp achieved in this period.

The special relationship between Arp's two areas of creativity arose in the 1920's when he began to take his own works of art as the inspiration for poetry. Whereas earlier he had produced abstract art without addressing its content verbally, now he began to use language to interpret and clarify a new type of imagery that was related to objects from the everyday world. The key concept that art could and should be accessible through words led Arp to broaden his conception of the way art may express content. He became more accepting of allusions to the visible world; and he embraced the notion that meanings could grow and multiply beyond those initially intended when a work was executed.

The Origin of the Eggboard Theme

Although it may be impossible to find the exact date and circumstances for Arp's invention of the Eggboard game, evidence suggests it emerged from discussions with his Dada friends between 1919 and 1922, the date of the relief *The Eggboard.* In those post-War years Arp traveled widely from Zurich, taking part in Dada activities in Germany, France, Switzerland, and Austria. In addition to Sophie Taeuber, whom he married in 1922, his Dada associates

included Serner, Janco, Tzara, Ernst, and Schwitters. Arp described the fictitious Dada games he thought up with them in his 1948 essay "The Navel Bottle":

> The middle classes regarded the dadaist as a scapegrace with no morals, a revolutionary villain, an uncultured barbarian, harboring evil designs on the church bells and safes of the bourgeoisie and all its brilliant roster of honors. The dadaist would think up all sorts of practical jokes to prevent the bourgeoisie from sleeping in peace. He would send false reports to newspapers about hair-raising dada duels in which his favorite writer, the "King of Bernina," was involved. The dadaist made the bourgeoisie feel chaos and remote but powerful rumblings so that their bells began to buzz, their safes wrinkled their brows, and their honor was covered with stains.
>
> The "egg-plank," an outdoor and parlor game for the upper crust, in which the players are smeared with egg yolk from head to foot by the time they leave the arena; the "navel bottle," a monstrous household implement in which a bicycle, a sea-serpent, a brassière, and a Pernod spoon copulated; the "glove" that can be worn instead of the old-fashioned head—all were meant to show the bourgeoisie the unreality of their world, the futility of their efforts, and even the inanity of their profiteering flag-waving. Our aim was naturally naïve since the bourgeoisie has less imagination than a worm, and a larger-than-life corn in place of a heart, the corn twitching only when the barometer, i.e., the market, drops.[5]

(The imaginary games the "Navel Bottle" and the "Glove," as well as the "Eggboard," became visual subjects for Arp in the 1920's.)[6] Arp's essay helps establish the approximate date as well as an emotional context for the Eggboard game. The false news reports composed by Arp, Serner, and Tzara about a duel between Arp and Tzara actually appeared in Swiss newspapers in July, 1919, suggesting a similar date for the other pranks cited here.[7] Furthermore, this essay makes it very clear that Arp associated the Eggboard game with a mocking, antagonistic attitude toward the bourgeoisie. Such a stance was characteristic of Arp in the late Dada period, from about 1919 to 1925, rather than the early Dada years of 1916 to 1918. Surviving examples of his prose writing from before 1919 show no special attention to class conflict, nor any marked antagonism toward the conservative forces of society. Rather, they reveal that he was pursuing abstract art in the gentle hope that visually "pure" art could set a moral example for human behavior.[8] Soon after, however, Arp shared the feelings of disillusionment and social polarization that affected so many artists and intellectuals when the conclusion of the World War and the revolution in Germany failed to bring about sweeping reforms. This mood is evident in the tone of his post-War statements, which shifted to bitter mockery of the arrogant and complacent middle class. For example, in 1921 he published a satirical account of the origin of the word "Dada," concluding with the following belligerent and scatological remarks:

> I am convinced that this word [Dada] is of no importance, and that no one but imbeciles and Spanish professors can be interested in dates. That which interests us is the dada spirit and we were all dada before dada existed. The first Holy Virgins that I painted date from 1886 when I was a few months old and amused myself by pissing graphic impressions. The morality of idiots and their belief in geniuses make me shit.[9]

The satirical Eggboard game must have been born of Arp's feeling of disgust and rebelliousness after the War, to ridicule the middle class and its outworn values.

The Eggboard game was to be played with some sort of bat or racket vaguely identified by the German term *das Brett,* a board or plank, and with raw eggs in place of balls. The game was perhaps a parody of tennis, cricket, or polo. Arp left the game's nature vague, citing it as either a parlor game or an outdoor sport. To judge by the account in "The Navel Bottle," it was the messy outcome that mattered: smeared with egg yolk, the bourgeois players would be humiliated and shocked into recognition of their foolishness. Their mistake was their supposed willingness to play the Eggboard game in the first place—a parody of middle-class compliance with certain social imperatives which alarmed and angered Arp. He identified some of these in "The Navel Bottle": the church bells, safes, and roster of honors stood for religiosity (or, perhaps, false piousness), profiteering, and the preservation of social hierarchies. The phrase "profiteering flag-waving" accused the period's greed cloaked in nationalism. Arp's continued use of the Eggboard as a subject in the 1920's indicates the importance he attached to exposing what he considered to be grave social ills.

It is curious to note that this complicated theme probably originated as a simple pun. This is suggested by the title of Arp's 1923 lithograph *The Egg-Beater* (*Der Eier-Schläger*).[10] The print presents a black silhouette resembling a kitchen cutting-board or a ping-pong paddle, and identical to the boards in the relief *The Eggboard* (*Das Eierbrett*). "*Eier-Schläger*" was Arp's neologism based on *der Eierschläger,* the ordinary kitchen tool, the eggbeater. In a typically Arpian maneuver, he divided the word into its components with a hyphen. *Der Schläger* alone means tennis racket, baseball or cricket bat, or ping-pong paddle; one who hits, such as a batter; or a hooligan or rowdy. The *Eier-Schläger* was literally an Egg-Beater, signifying either the game player who hits eggs, or a new game implement for striking them. The idea of a racket-like implement led to the image of the "beater" seen in the lithograph, and to the identical *Brett* or board found in the relief. Thus from a linguistic play about "beating eggs" Arp invented a game in which eggs were smashed about a field, and from this he derived the visual iconography of eggs and boards.

"The Eggboard" Relief

Whereas the lithograph *The Egg-Beater* shows a single board in isolation, the wood relief *The Eggboard* presents