

ration can hope to make such methods work. Today, when the latest self-proclaimed "assassin" finds himself quickly

embraced by the art world, Kramer laments, Miró's method has fallen into lesser hands and become a "shallow orthodoxy."

The Digitized Word

"The Electronic Word: Literary Study and the Digital Revolution" by Richard A. Lanham, in *New Literary History* (Winter 1989), Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 701 W. 40th St., Ste. 275, Baltimore, Md. 21211.

Despite the onslaught of television the printed word is still alive, if not well. But will it survive the arrival of the computer?

So far, the personal computer has been used chiefly as a writing aid, notes Lanham, a professor of English at UCLA. But in the future, when Chaucer and Shakespeare, as well as contemporary pot-boilers and romances (and music and pictures) are put on interactive compact disks and viewed on computer screens, people are likely to read in different ways.

"Digitized films can now be released with alternative outtakes, or alternative endings, from which each viewer will assemble a private ideal version at home," notes Lanham. "Interactive literary texts will share this fundamental irresolution."

Some day, it may even be possible to push a button and have a computer read a book aloud, or help set the text to music and create illustrations. Ultimately, the reader may exercise as much control over the "book" as the author. Indeed, the barriers between the arts and letters may come tumbling down, as the computer allows more and more "authors" to orchestrate them all in one work.

Is this a prospect to be feared? Not according to Lanham. He sees the promise of a great "democratization" of culture, as "invidious distinctions between high and low culture, commercial and pure usage, talented or chance creation, visual or auditory stimulus, iconic or alphabetic information" all vanish.

OTHER NATIONS

Futility in South Africa

"Prospects for Revolution in South Africa" by Jeffrey Herbst, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter 1988-89), 2852 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-7885.

Five years have passed since the latest mass protests against white minority rule erupted in South Africa's black townships. Growing in fury and intensity with every passing month, the rebellion that broke out in June 1984 seemed sure to sweep away white rule, just as mass movements deposed the Shah of Iran and Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines.

That, says Herbst, a Princeton political scientist, is one of the false analogies used to describe the South African uprising.

The Shah and Marcos were corrupt leaders who maintained their regimes only through personal authority. Not so in South Africa, where the government relies

on "an institutionalized system of repression" to ensure the rule of an entire racial group. The Shah's repressive measures were mild compared to what white South Africa brings to bear. The Shah refused to permit an attempt on the Ayatollah Khomeini's life or destruction of his "mosque network"; South Africa's security forces operate under no such constraints. In 1985, Trevor Manuel, a leader of South Africa's 2.5 million member United Democratic Front, assessed the impact: "Two thirds of our national and regional executive members are out of action through death, detention, or trial."

South African police have confined most