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In the Way of Knowledge

Bryan Sentes

A Thesis
in
The Department
of
English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

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ABSTRACT

In the Way of Knowledge

Bryan Sentes

The motivating question of the present work is: How can philosophy and poetry be synthesized? Each piece or group of pieces embodies a particular way of answering the question. Approaches represented are both actual and fictional, traditional and experimental. Collectively, the pieces offer no single dogmatic answer to the question. Rather, they are pseudonymous and make up an anthology collected by an equally fictive editor in order to emphasize their exploratory and provisional nature.
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...it is ambition enough to be employed as an underlabourer in clearing ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge...

--John Locke, "Epistle to the Reader", An Essay Concerning Human Understanding
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

Were I to choose an auspicious image for the new millenium, I would choose...the sudden agile leap of the poet-philosopher...

—Italo Calvino, Six Memos for the Next Millenium

It is unknowable now how auspicious Calvino's image will be for the next millenium, but we do know that one of the most vigorous lines of intellectual and literary inquiry today is that investigating the fraternal strife between literature and philosophy. Admittedly, the quarrel was an ancient one even in Plato's day, but presently the struggle is at its most intense in decades, with literature threatening to absorb philosophy as just another style and philosophy doggedly defending itself as a bastion of knowledge distinct from the purely imaginary worlds, no matter how vital, illuminating, or "realistic", created by the literary artist. And within this foment and confusion are shadowy, nomadic figures, neither poets nor philosophers themselves (although often resembling one more than the other), surveying the no-man's-land between too-rigid conceptions of poetry and philosophy. The writers collected here are of this kind.

Each one brings into question the proximity and relation of poetry and philosophy and rather than composing
a dissertation or poem about the question, answers it by creating a new kind of writing. Some of these are obvious hybrids; others hide their parentage in curious ways; some intermingle only a trace of one with an overriding amount of the other in way of tentative experiment, but all bring literature and philosophy together, either to show the essential, if hidden, unity they share, or to propose a writing beyond both song and speculation.

I have opened the collection with three seminal figures: Thales of Miletus, Hypostases of Elea, and Anselm of Canterbury to provide a minimal historical context. Other authors have composed works equally fitting. However, the three works presented here have the value of being newly discovered and translated and might eventually serve to revise our understanding of the ancient quarrel now in its latest round. The remaining writing I have organized nearly arbitrarily in the hope of invoking a certain discontinuity that will serve to subvert any reader's will-to-absolute-unity. I have tried at all points to avoid convincing the reader of anything, since persuasion, in this context, whether it uses the tricks of rhetoric, the force of argument, or the charm of lyric, always betrays a will-to-power that attempts to bend the will of the reader and subvert his or her freedom.
Therefore, I invite the reader to a banquet instead of an academic symposium. Some of the views here will be familiar, some unexpected, some charming, some wearisome, some frustrating, some puzzling, but all present an opportunity for dialogue, even if this dialogue is finally only between the reader's own thoughts. But any opportunity to think is always more fruitful than being allowed to be just a receiver of some monologue, which, as Plato knew so well, more than anything else, stands in the way of knowledge.

Max Young
I

FATHER FIGURES
I came down from the high city to the sea.
The waves, red with dawn, failed and fell on the shore,
A low chorus in slow measure for my thoughts.

That black ship on the wine-stained ocean
Can know her distance from shore the way I learned
The height of Pharoe's tomb by its shadow's length.

The water wrestles here with the stubborn stone
The way it did when I turned a river's will
For the sake of the Lydians and their king.

My psyche has danced ahead of the spirits
Who possess the bodies of heaven and move
The moon before the sun, darkening the day
And even the long-burning hate of peoples.

And because I know all these things I am called
The wisest this side of Hesperus' Gates.

From somewhere beyond what I know, some daemon
Plays and flickers in the shadows at the edge
Of what light my understanding's lamp casts.
So I beg the gods to feed this flame, to blow
Upon it and brighten its glow, so that it
Bursts forth in a blinding radiance, burning
This teasing unnamed question like a moth.
But the waves still rise, and fall, and ebb away
In the sun's rising to noon, whetting the edge
Of the present, sharper and finer, nearer
And nearer nothing, all sound drowned in the waves'
Strain, all vision lost in the fragments of light
That swim together on the troughs and crests
Of the slowly shivering surface of the sea
And in the sparks that swarm from off every facet
Of every grain of sand.

A gust of wind off
The water cleared my sight and I saw a stick
Swirled in a tide-pool by the turning breeze,
Revolving and changing shape as if it were
A long thin drop of olive-oil pulsing
In the currents of a stirred pot. Then I saw

The sands run slowly
   in their own time, mirroring
the sea's swells and runs;

The clouds tossed and stirred
   like froth, carried on currents
of sea-blue aether;
The cliffs and mountains
    themselves heave heavier than
any sea-water;

And my thought became
    a light trickle suspended
in a fluid vision:

I saw birds pool
    in the blue, drop away, or
drift upward like steam;

Saw horse-herds charge
    with a river's low roar, or
stand stiller than dew;

Saw dancers step light
    as rain, caught in the course of
flowing harmonies;

Saw young men move with
    the ease of a stream, old men
bubble with laughter,
Saw their dark eyes glint
    like grove-shadowed pools
sacred to Diane;

I saw all cities,
    their people and laws, give way
in the flood of blood

That carries in time
    peoples to colonies far
past the present's gates,

Their revelations
    held and passed on by any
vessel that can bear them.

translated from the Greek by Felicitas Wordsworth
HYPOSTASES OF ELEA (c. 329 A.D.)

That moment always present and long
Foreseen as the absolute end
Of the poem encompassing history,
History's period, you might say, closes
Nearer the farther we extend
The line measured by the genius
Cf technique alone.

The deified
Deserted the house where language slipped
From song lost to sound and sense,
Where the hermetic seal on the word split
Into tesserae held by siblings,
And the burning pitch of constant wonder
Fell to the merest volume of memory
Or of musings murmured anywhere
Attention is broken by contrast
From ecstasy.

translated from Coptic by
John Maskull
At dawn, I came from the green hills
   Pale and moist with spring mist;
Left the yew in its morning stance,
   Let the rowan kneel still;
Left the stream's quiet chuckling
   To the minnows and toads;
Left the larks to twist their songs,
   Sparrows to their quick flight;
Passed the freshly furrowed fields,
   The ox's trudge and groan;
Passed through the village and its smells
   Of peasant life at dawn;
Mounted the slow rise surrounding
   The monastery's walls;
Traced their careful and smooth stonework,
   The curved arch of the door;
Turned and filled my sight with the sky,
   The far and massing clouds;
Stood and prayed in thanks for this day,
   Turned again and entered.
II

At ease in my high cell, I rest
   My legs from the climb's strain.
I consider the day's duties,
   And allow them to pass
Clear from my mind, for these define
   My life in earthly days.
I carefully list all duties
   Of one of my Order
That border my vocation,
   And, listed, let them pass
From my mind's attention also.
   Family I recall,
Ponder my own small place
   In the ranks of human
Souls that walk the face of the earth
   Under the loving face
Of God the Almighty Father;
   And on that focus
Body and all the faculties
   Of the created soul.
III

Once, I listened to two dispute
   The proposition that
All Creation is a codex
   Revealing the Design
Of God, the way that words reveal
   (By making visible)
The private thoughts of their author.
   If this is true, what of
All those who are illiterate?
   And what created man
Can claim he has interpreted,
   Not some treatise composed
By some mundane mind, but the thoughts
   Of God that sing like choirs
Of wise angels in harmonies
   And sublime chords no man
Can hope to transcribe in truth?
   The learned may dispute
And climb on Reason's wings alone,
   But not for all such flight.
IV

But if God is everywhere, why
    Cannot all men see Him?
Can it be true that one must learn
    To see His great Presence?
But if one were to stare into
    His Face, one would surely
Die. Therefore, it is human pride
    That dares to measure God
By the scales of the fleshly eye;
    A deadly sin again
Trips humble and sincere desire
    For Him into the Pit.
So, we must not seek to prove Him
    By our human senses.
And all the pagans and the heathen
    Had faith in gods of stone.
Some even worshipped trees, and wound
    Around their trunks for praise
The entrails of living men.
    Pure faith answers nothing.
V

No man is Reason and senses
And faith held together
In a wrap of clay. Man is one
Undivided being,
A unity broken only
In thought and abstraction.
And being made by a loving
Father, must have access
To that love so he may return
Love. In quiet, passive
Meditation, then, I ponder
What passes are open
Through this high range of questions.
And then I see my pride.
No one comes to the Father but
Through our loving Saviour,
And one need only approach His
Portal and knock humbly.
So now I call on memory
Of all the things He said.
"Unless a man be born again
Of water and spirit
He shall not enter the Kingdom
Of God. But what water?
What we sprinkle on infants' brows
Is purely symbolic.
Surely the water that God breathed
Over is meant: chaos
And darkness that threaten to drown
The helpless human soul.
"And what is spirit?" one asked.
"No man knows," He said,
"Here the wind comes from or where
It goes, but everyone
Hears the wind. We of the spirit
Are like that." Thus, I will
Rest like a leaf, blown and carried
By the wind where He wills.
Already my spirit lightens
And rises to God."
VII

Withered and frail through vice,
   Yet rising higher through
The blinding clouds of sin, I come
   To light at last before
What I conceive You, Lord, to be.
   I know You incarnate
In my idea of You, wrought
   Of dross metals, hardly
Gold, that constitute the substance
   Of even my finest
Thoughts. You still reside beyond
   The lofty heights you've brought
I've to; I know my conception
   Is true as it can be:
I do not seek to understand
   So that I may believe,
But I believe to understand.
VIII

Give my faith some understanding
That You exist as I
Believe You to exist. I know
There is no thing above
My thought of You; no greater thing
Can I conceive at all.
And can it be that such a thing
As I think you to be
Does not exist? Only the Fool
Says in his heart "There is
"No God." For it is more perfect
To exist than not to,
And what can I imagine
More perfect than You, Lord?
I understand that You must be,
For Your perfections pass
Far beyond what I can conceive.
Now, knowing, I believe
As one whole man: intellect,
Faith, passions, together,
A small created trinity.
IX

But now, the great grey seas of doubt
    Begin to boil and churn,
And though I had danced over them
    With the faith of a saint,
They trip, and toss, and buffet me
    Till I near drown in fear.
My heart thuds, thundering blood
    In my ears, and the storm
Passes away, leaving only
    A quiet stiller than
A hainous soul before the Seat
    Of Justice. And then, there
Rises a shadow, an island
    That navigates the seas
Anchorless, at random, a ship
    Of imagination
Alone. No more perfect island
Could be: rich forests,
Choirs of paradisal birds,
    A temperate halo.
That much I could see from this far
Off. I swam to its shores
And crawled onto its beach. The sands
Were white, and soft, and warm,
Lightly fragrant with salt and airs
Breathed gently on breezes
From the pale throats of flowers,
Still, on the fresh foliage.
Birds fashioned songs of audible
Quicksilver, suddenly
Gone, then sung again. And streams
Splashed from the forested
Cloak mantling the island's peak.
Around its slope. I saw
Animals, perfected by some
Husbandry of genius:
Golden flanked deer with opaline
Eyes; ghostly grey squirrels
Quicker than shadows; and angel
Feathered birds in vast flocks.
Sodden, trembling, and cold, I
Watched, muted, a woman
Approach with the ease of a Summer's
Dusk. Her eyes and hair were
Jet, her flesh a living ivory,
And her voice, music
As vibrant and soft as the blue
That gives way before night.
She was the angel the pagan
Parmenides mistook
For a goddess; the consoling
Woman Boethius
Loved as Sophia; the angel
Who called my mind from earth
To the contemplation of God,
Who showed me now in ways
My earthly soul could comprehend
Faint reflections of His
Infinite Perfections. I knelt
And sang a prayer of thanks.
XII

With dusk, the sun ignites the clouds
    And burns them red as blood;
My soul is calmer than the dawn
    Our Blessed Lord was raised.
My being sings the praise of God
    Who gives to all who search
Some understanding of His Love
    For every man with faith
Enough to rise on Reason's wings
    In rapture and in hope.

translated from the Latin by
Frank Lambdin
II

BILL DUNG
AFTER BOETHIUS

These walls are made of such rough-worked stones. Laid one up on the other—like sons of sons of sons of no doubt virile fathers—the same that hauled a statue of Venus to the sea and tossed it in with laughter. The same that took her virgins singly and wound their guts around a stake for sport. They worship instead a goddess with dugs as big as cows', and hips the width of three of these cells—if the figures I've found in caves tell true.

These, these slaves of Gaels till Caesar sent their masters west, revel in villas outside Rome, believing that taking our land conquers us. And we took Sparta thinking the same. And now the whims of Mercury displace the will of Zeus. Virgil aspires to gloss old Homer. These Ostrogoths will earn our pleasures and inherit our vices and their grandsons will read Latin and burn with the pride of Empedocles.
Still, in the rose of dawn,
the stupid guards asleep,
awake or not, deaf and blind
regardless, She comes.

Her mien is past
all time. Her eyes

seem mine, She knows
my mind so well.

She sings awhile
and speaks to me

of love of thought,
of script and song,

their clarity
the clarity
of water, stilled
in white sunlight.

How few bear this.
How few

are able to see.
Her truth, with dawn,

eases the stones,
in time, to dust.
I forged rivers and fens and rid
Myself of the plain to enter
The court of the learned at Pecs—
My end, to leave prairie and people

And plain ways to trail their herds,
While I would earn from the wise
Cloistered here a coin smoother
Than the gold that lights on a brook.

Here, they trained my tongue and hand
At Latin, and all their tomes opened,
And my eyes rode over Rome's
Gold leaves. Here, I read till words blurred,

Merged with page and pale dawn—I
Heard, heard the sea's red surge chant
The dirge of Troy, read Flemish oils
With ease, and saw the spark that burned
The words of Thomas like straw, struck
From the stone of Luria's long
Silence. My teachers' reason and
This school's walls became as glass.

Clearly I had learned all they taught,
For I argued them down in rhyme
And turned their livers to water
With wit. They and their walls became

The palest and feeblest ghosts.
I left to wander to and fro
All over the dark, dumb face
Of the earth. Yet, long later,

"Waking to Autumn's first frost,
I heard the far, low groaning
Of cattle. The black herd seemed fluid,
Pooled by racing dancing sharp dogs

And the mounted herders, weathered
And sparse as prairie trees. They
Homed and fed me, and wet my eyes
With their wine, wit, and all they played
On their resonant *lantae*. Some
Sang of the cry of rooks that crawls
Among the dead at battle's end,
And others of red turned leaves,

Layered into loam with Summer,
Like the leaves of a sealed book.
I learned every song I heard
And earned hard the *lanta's* strain,

For I saw the Natural Law
Here, writ in long lines on the arm
Of one who clubbed a wolf to death,
And I followed a *telos*

In the scars that are muscles
On the backs of all who till.
In time, bored of chasing pale harts
With two brothers, my friends, I left

And rode East, led by dusk and dawn.
I had no end: I rhymed at court
For what coin I wanted--took all
They gave--though loving more the song
Of the country's cherry trees,
Singing verses to the sun's light
Refrains, and searching the fine lines
Of every leaf grown gold and red.

Envoi

Now, I would each leaf a leaf.
I would this season slowed and
Stopped. Then, I'd see each red
And leave each leaf to fall and
End in loam, each heard, not lost
to all.
AFTER THE BLESSED ESPINOZA

The book is
Understood
By no one.

They call me
Atheist,
Heretic.

But its thoughts,
Every word,
Syllable,

Every holy character
Traces a world precise
As the thoughts of God.

How could it be other?
The hand that traced
The stroke and turn
Of every letter
Was God
Thinking.

The scar
Aches now
Only

When storms
Brew, or
I sense

The light
Falling
From High

Summer,
Each leaf
A shard

Of light
Redeemed
From night,
Deeper night,
Darkest night,
Then Solstice.

The Book of the World
Is thrown on the pyre
Of the seasons and

Catches flame and burns,
Burns the withering
Arms of the martyred

Rabbi that holds it,
Purges his vision
Beholding the words,

Letter by letter,
Lighting and flying
Back to their Author.

Tonight, beside
The book, I cut,
Grind another
Lens for another
Eye needing clean sight.
And this, grinds again

For me, my clear soul's
Substance, its blind dross
Worn off like fine dust,

Its perfected curve
And surface tracing
The optic of All.

I do the piece-work
Of God, my hand making
Glass, something real,

Transparent only ideally,
Swerve the world's light
For vision.
AFTER THE SEER OF HARTFORD

Tonight, the world is simple and plain.
The earth is round and the sky two domes
Enclosing us, excluding nothing.

The stars are all arranged in such a way
As to suggest an endless emptiness
Or heavens full of foreign deities.

And choosing to choose neither we lose
Ourselves, desiring only an end
To this plane enclosed around itself

That keeps us coming to ourselves again.
THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MORNING

In space pure of matter
    and ideal
the mind's merest act
    might posit a point.
Around it another
    might inscribe a line
nowhere straight
    and from nothing
create dimension.
Half a languid turn,
    as easy as twisting
a bean-flower's stem,
engenders the perfection of a sphere
half lit in the radiance
    cast by the eye of the mind.
One dimension further waits
    on only the whim
that sets the first event of Time
    in twilight
needing the light of presence
    to be.
The sphere may be set revolving
slowly

to reveal the *kinema* of history.

This a well-versed youth might think
straining to trace a line of understanding
composed of figures adhering by necessity
to the meaning of his master's aphorism
forbidding him to taste the fruit
of the bean's flower.

An initiate to mysteries that will confound
even the soul that will rise on its own wings
to an ecstasy transcending even the vision
that perceived Necessity to be a goddess—
even he is ignorant of his place on the sphere
of his time, having only a cupped palm
of worn and irregular *tesserae*
of stories or conjectures to piece together
again some mosaic depicting a drama
of Origin.
Even he is only a citizen by birth of history's perennially remotest colony: the present. The wilderness of the future waits on those given to explore and open its horizons, while the past lies in the dark always deepening farther and farther to the east.

Smugly, some will offer shards of stone transubstantiated from bone to evidence a literal Metamorphoses narrated by blind Life itself, making us a single line running on surely to an indifferent end.

Originally, Life itself was borne in a primal fire fallen into a space of its own making, wrapping it around itself as it flickered and dulled into only matter.

Here, the flame refined itself from nothing alive to something vital to light the dead dark around it with a halo of barest awareness.

And we are asked to imagine this world emptied of the imagined, a silent place endlessly opening to a race needing only everything be made in that pitch that alone can bear itself a semblance of permanence.
Our origin's story can neither exclude our finest faculty nor fail to account for the question questing after Why? and Whither?

But all this is best left in a florid prose leisurely composed by a naturalist, as observant as idle, on holiday somewhere in the New World's tropics.

Imagine
Then, a Maker and
Let Him make us
Two, a solution
for any loneliness.
Let us know our bodies
In the quick of our wills.
Give us good food and shelter
In warm mothering weather.
Give us leisure to compose
The grand poem that encloses
The whole Cosmos, Created
And Uncreated, carolled
With easy joy in rhyming
Couplets. And when the world
Is real and full of harmonies
That note only the most heavenly
Chords, let us play
With the world's potential
And gleefully weave legends
Of infinite worlds to discover
And explore and command
And fly from to the next and
The next on the most untiring
Of angelic wings.
And when we weary
Drunk and giddy
On the fragrance
Of this heavenly
Flower we've made,
Let it bear the promise
Of its fruit, and let us feed
On the knowledge we have made
This place from our need
To make, borne of endless
Incompleteness.

Now, perceive
The Maker in naked despair,
His creations poetic and lovely
As desire requires, every
Imperfection a venomous hornet
Whining and stinging, one
With the howling swarm inflicting
Boils that burn like fresh cinders.
Another is conceived in desperation
To aid in driving the hellish cloud
Away. And these conceive still
Others to labour and bear Utopias
To other worlds others have made.
The whole explodes and falls
In cacaphony and din, every one
Driven and desperate as the first.

What seemed
An unbreachable plenum cracks and bursts
Upon like a new flower in Spring
That fills the emptiness around it
With colour and fragrance and promise
Of pollen and bees, fruit and seeds,
An empire of fields, and seasons.

Tonight,
Stars are slowly exploding,
Constellating possible gods
Only for us to see. Trees
Wave a million leaves
A piece and shower the flowers
Beneath them with seeds.
This wilderness, we have made,
In time, our home.
III

JULIA PETITRUE
Language disguises the thought; so that from the external form of the clothes one cannot infer the form of the thought they clothe, because the external form of the clothes is constructed with quite another object than to let the form of the body be recognized.


that from the thought; so Language disguises not infer the he clothes one can external form of t ause the external t they clothe, becform of the though ith quite another s is constructed wfrom of the clothe ody be recognized. the form of the bbject than to let

the thought; so Language disguises that from the he clothes one can external form of tnot infer the t they clothe, becform of the though the external s is constructed wform of the clotheith quite another the form of the bbject than to letody be recognized.

the thought; so that from the Language disguises he clothes one cannot infer the external form of t t they clothe, because the external form of the though s is constructed with quite another form of the clothe the form of the body be recognized. object than to let
Language disguises that from the thought; so external form of the clothes one can not infer the clothes one can form of the thought. The external form of the thought is quite another one is constructed with object than to let the body be recognized. The form of the body that from the thought; so external form of the clothes one can not infer the clothes one can cause the external form of the thought. They clothe, because quite another form of the clothes is constructed with body be recognized. Object than to let the form of the body
try to explain what knowledge is. Never say it is beyond your power: it will not be so, if heaven wills it and you take courage.

We have for that purpose not to reflect about it and ponder what it might be in truth, but to deal with it merely as sense-certainty contains it.

Sense-certainty itself has thus to be asked: What is the This? If we take it in the two-fold form of its existence, as the Now and as the Here, the dialectic it has in it will take a form as intelligible as the This itself.

*
something absolutely uniform; and, without the things placed in it, one point of space does not absolutely differ in any respect whatsoever from another point of space. Now from hence it follows, (supposing space to be something in itself, besides the order of bodies among themselves) that 'tis impossible there should be a reason, why God, preserving the same situations of bodies among themselves, should have placed them in space after one certain particular manner, and not otherwise; why everything was not placed the quite contrary way, for instance, by changing East into West. But if space is nothing else, but the possibility of placing them; then those two states, the one such as it is now, the other supposed to be quite the contrary way, would not at all differ from one another.
and Now

Which is never more than this instant, than you, figuring it out, and acting, so. If there is any absolute, it is never more than this one, you, this instant, in action.

What is the Now? we reply, for example, the Now is night-time. To test the truth of this certainty of sense, a simple experiment is all we need: write the truth down. A truth cannot lose anything by being written down, and just as little by our preserving and keeping it. If we look again at the truth we have written down, look at it now, at this noon-time, we shall have to say it has turned stale and become out of date.
IV

J.A. KIENER
AN ACCIDENTAL APOLOGY

A flat in Cambridge, 1938. The walls are bare and the floor scrupulously clean. In the living room two canvas chairs and a plain wooden one. An iron heating stove in the middle of the room. In the bedroom a cot and card table with papers and pen.

A man sits at the card table. His face is lean and browned. He wears light grey flannel trousers and a flannel shirt open at the throat. His shoes are extremely clean and polished.

His look is concentrated and severe. He makes striking gestures with his hands as if arguing with someone. He stops, sits still.

He remembers swimming— a small boy— the ease of floating, the sun and water in his eyes, closing them tight. He remembers how hard it was forcing himself down, down deep to the mud at the bottom, the water always pushing him back to the surface, his needing air pushing him back to the surface.

He has written a treatise on logic. He knows those who do not know him think him an old man, irritable and obscure.

He remembers writing his thoughts for the book in
little notebooks he carried around after leaving Cambridge for the first time. He remembers writing "If the proposition 'the watch is shiny' has sense..."

He remembers the flash of sun on the watch-face that gave him that example. At dusk it had rained and the sun was only now cutting through red clouds. The field's mud is soupy and slick. He crouches down in the water of the trench, almost having to stand up to avoid slipping over in the muck. He hears the sharp and tiny ticking at his wrist. He dates the entry 16.6.15.
NOTES IN EVIDENCE AGAINST A TAUTOLOGY

Death is not an event of life. Death is not lived through.
If by eternity is understood not endless temporal duration but timelessness, then he lives eternally who lives in the present.
Our lives are endless in the way that our visual field is without limit.

--Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, 6.4311

It is vision in the clear sky's depthless blue drowning.

It is the million odd leaves of every tree passed.

It is every morning's belated rising to the comforts of night.

It is this present drawing memory.

It is the membranous pulse of the body.

It is the pairing of limbs and some organs.

It is the mind-absent agility of our gait and standing.
It is the silence timing our breathing's monotony.

It is the weight that moves each day.

It is the early autumn highway, shadowed by apple orchards, still.

It is the halo of loss that beatifies the focussed.

It is the massive white reading lamp.

It is a knot in the flex of necessity.

It is that any admission admits an entire world.

It is the perpetual motion of argument.

It is the grace of every breath.
THE SPIRIT OF Lw—A DRAFT

This book will perhaps only be understood by those who have themselves already thought the thoughts which are expressed in it—or similar thoughts.


We know no sensations
give these propositions sense. Questions
that exact innocence free of naivete
demand a rigorous ignorance of the evident
apparent given as the one condition
for their initial
stuttered utterance.
The long tautology that bends,
say, the blade of a jet engine
to just the angle of most force
turns on this
when the need for further thrust
draws inertia from the potential
for doubt, unbinding concepts and arguments
and baffling mathematicians
just this side of mathematics.
We need our end to be
the final determination
of the rule that keeps stasis
appearing repeatedly, that blesses with some semblance
of regularity frequently enough
to let us see this
and hear that
completely unsurprised. These things we know
are hardly thought, for the common
is the category entered most
easily. We can count, yet,
to ask what numbers are
reveals the path that eases
the passage everywhere but where
the answer you expect to desire lies
and leads you to question
again the writings of those who forced you
to conclude the first proposition
that defined one doubtfully. For them
it is mere dissection; for you
something more that flails you
to what is truly necessary. The clear thought
expressed as clearly as the fabric of language
will strain it
fascinates you with its immaculate muteness
that finally becomes a song so mythic
you are bound from it,
fast, and your hearing is filled
with what is spoken
in innocence, naively.
V

GEORGE GOODMAN
TWO APOLOGIES

1. Three dicta

Tomorrow's forecast is for no weather.

* 

No philosophical text is Real.

* 

I don't experience what I think.
2. A leap of faith

a) Metaphor relates disjunct entities.

b) Words refer to an extra-linguistic reality.

c) All language is metaphorical.
THE ALIEN GOD

We have long been charmed by bird-song, although most today believe it merely spontaneous, or of only the barest biological utility. It is an old doctrine that visible Creation reveals the Design of its Creator, the way the words of a book manifest the less perceptible thoughts of their author. Hearing a bird sing you hear a string of syllables composing but a fragment of a speaking to humans in a language only as tortuously sophisticated as its meaning. To hear a single word, you must first hear an owl sigh to sleep at dawn, then a sca-parrot purr on a Blasket Island cliff, and finally a meadowlark carol on the Great Plains. Not only must each be heard, but each must be heard in sequence, regardless of their spatial displacement. Our response to this attempted greeting is limited only by the number, deployment, and synchronization of our recording instruments; and the will and imagination of those who need to listen.
The bright balloon was too big for the infant to hold. On the fingertips of one stretched-out hand she would balance it; the moment she grasped, the balloon squeezed free and away.

Knowledge can only paradoxically render its object transparently clear, since the literal fulfillment of this guiding metaphor would remove the known to an absolute, an invisible, clarity.
THE OWL OF MINERVA

Ideas and concepts are as vivid and sensuous as the slow greening of trees in early spring, or the charged blue of the sky after dusk before the full dark of night.

The most intense sensations, perceptions and visions ignite and burn only within that space emptied of disorder that the concepts of 'figure' and 'ground', 'green', 'vital', and 'holy' maintain as tacitly as the glass of a light-bulb holds the argon that allows its illumination.
A VALID WAY OUT OF A FLY-BOTTLE

The sign, in general, is nothing other than the union of signifier and signified. There are three species of signs: the index, whose signifier is causally related to the signified; the icon, that signifies by resembling the signified; and the symbol, whose signifier and signified are arbitrarily connected by convention.

Sensations are indices of the objects that cause them. Since they must in some way resemble their causes, sensations are also icons of objects. However, this iconographic relation can be affirmed only arbitrarily, since we know nothing of objects apart from our sensations of them.

The perceptual world is a language in the most emphatic sense, one whose speech is sublime and transcends us at every turn: colours mutter at the edges of our vision; our fingertips discourse with the finest textures.
SENSE-DATA

Sensation is an unending and unbroken testimony to the radical intelligibility of the world; one that is only rarely heard, since there is neither court nor question, in any conventional sense, to elicit our expectation of a voice and its answer.

Sensation's voice is a synaesthetic white noise; one inaudible on principle; one of its tones, silence.
Imagine a people vocationally disloyal to every profession, school, church, nation and race. Their only common incident is the need to speak of something with which language has not yet come to terms. They howl, chant, sing, stutter and murmur. Often they lift words freely from any discourse and turn them to a new sense. Some have learned to study their predecessors' solutions and work from them with an always increasing sophistication sometimes decadent. Although their end seems insoluble, their answers to this mute yet relentless question approach the purest, most ecstatic music, every attempt drawing nearer the sheer plenitude that tantalizes and tortures them in its absence.
THE RULE OF METAPHOR

Metaphor is the essential form of poetic utterance, wherein one thing is made something else: a dreary scholar is a dried fig; a lover is a rose; a stupid and brutal dogma, a devil. Once the metaphor is discovered, one can as easily speak of a massive sphere of burning gases as of a numberless angelic host, the terms interchangeable as they are identical.

Imagine a sequence of metaphors, each successive one troping on the one before, relentlessly. If metaphor discloses the essential identity of its terms, then the final metaphor of the series bares the unity of the poet and the One.

Poetry is a most rigorous mysticism; its rule, metaphor, the revelation of universal identity.
IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

The metropolis is unexceptional except for its foundations sunk profoundly deep into the bedrock of the Pacific Ocean's floor. A hemisphere of breathable air is maintained by a permeable membrane admitting necessary gases and freeing the excess of others into the surrounding sea-water. Lights, that on the surface are overpassing aircraft, here trace the course of super-tankers. A traffic of smaller boats swirls into constellations nightly. The ocean exerts a pressure on the outer surface of the membrane infinitesimally greater than the pressure exerted on the inner surface by the atmosphere within. This potentially catastrophic difference is corrected by three beams of light whose common source is three spotlights turning on the roof of the city's highest edifice, identical to those atop Place Ville Marie in Montreal.
HERMENEUTIC GRAMMAR

Many theoreticians today conceive language as a pane of glass between reader and world. Imagine the relation between reader and world as a stroke of light: the angle of refraction through the pane represents the mediation of the reader's perceptions by language.

Though the substance of this model is correct, its triadic scheme may be better re-presented by an unbounded sphere of crystal wherein every being is possessed of a different density through which the light of consciousness is thrown. As the transparent atmosphere is coloured some visible tone by sunlight, Being (refracted by every being) illumines subject, object, and the medium of their encounter.
OBSERVATION I

It has recently been determined that it was simply not possible for the moon to have been formed by a piece of the earth breaking free from the then-infant planet, the forces necessary for the fission being sufficient to propel the moon free of the earth's gravitational field. Further, the moon would have had to have been travelling at an impossibly slow velocity for the earth to somehow have snagged it from space as it drifted past. We must conclude, therefore, that the moon is a product of artifice.

One might question how common sense could have missed this satellite with a massive smile carved on its face.
Observation II

It is commonly understood that the hue of the sky is caused by the refraction of the sun's light through the earth's atmosphere. Yet the most innocent know the air is transparent and colours, whether high pale blue, deep navy, or even pink, are all opaque.

The myth of refraction is clearly a ruse devised to bind human speculation and aspiration.

Happily, a limit is visible only once transgressed.
(UNTITLED)

The longest-lived organism is undoubtedly the tree, some possessing an historical breadth of literally centuries.

In the westernmost reaches of Alaska, a single plant has been discovered whose longevity has transcended the presence of human beings in the Americas by an indeterminable span. Records, from echoes of the earliest oral narratives to those of present-day on-site botanists, reveal the plant has undergone at least twenty-six metamorphoses so startling that it is undecidable whether the plant is lichen, fungus, moss or fern, deciduous or coniferous, having been all of these, bizarre ingenious combinations, and unseen varieties that can only be imagined. One can only speculate whether the plant is living in that stage preceding death or changing in a way that hints at the threshold of its infancy.
LOGICAL SPACE

Logical space is the absolute event horizon of every noetic act; a horizon defined by neither sunlight nor night.

Sensuous helicopters sound heaven to their own choppy applause.
LOGICAL ATOMISM

Conceive a particle so simple, it just evades imagination; its transparency so pure, it is invisible; the perfection of its geometry transcending even the most capable and refined conception.

This particle is the true atom of reality, the Idea of which the objects discovered and described by physicists are only material shadows.
KNOWLEDGE BY DESCRIPTION

In recent decades, a radical group of experimental sculptors and conceptual artists have infiltrated the scientific research community. Imitating atomic physicists and engineers, they have managed to convince governments internationally to fund the construction of massive installations. These sculptures are dumbfounding in the rigor of their design and explicit intricacy. Synthesizing the worlds of art and science, they generate experimental data in a manner consistent with the most demanding mathematical and scientific methods. These "particle accelerators" constitute a communal artistic and engineering accomplishment unprecedented since the construction of Stonehenge, the Pyramids, or the Coliseum.
PHILOSOPHY AS VELOCITY

That the universe is boundless but finite means that the greater your velocity the faster you return to your point of origin.

*

Imagine this circuit many times in rapid succession.

*

When Goethe met Hegel he didn't know whether he'd met a madman or a genius. He described him as "dizzying."
("WHAT-IS IS...")

What-is is endlessly disclosed. The end of revelation is the most brilliant and final moment of human knowing.

*

The growing mass of knowledge increases proportionately in gravity, accelerating Apocalypse.

*

Metaphysics is the most demanding and dangerous confessional poetry.
The being of the world appears as something constant, hence mundane.

Why from instant to instant it should be at all, is both the most necessary yet unasked question; the answer lost to our knowing yet always already granted us as the sole condition for our wondering and asking.

The moment Being is questioned, you hold your own. The sky shows itself ancient and empty of history. You are thrown into the world, into a free fall of possibility: every perception is equally mystical and infernally profane; the world, as charged and plastic as your imagination; living, buoyant as your choice.

You need only improvise with the sincerity of the purest possible will.
Even such names as "logic", "ethics", and "physics" begin to flourish only when original thinking comes to an end. During the time of their greatness the Greeks thought without such headings. They did not even call thinking "philosophy".

—Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism"

Parmenides of Elea preceded even the very conception of philosophy. Plato acknowledged his pre-eminence in the dialogue he named after him; the only dialogue that undoes Socrates and his so-called Platonism. Professors of philosophy agree, nearly unanimously, that the essence of philosophical method is logical argument, the invention of Parmenides. His epic poem is understood to be apophantical; that is, composed exclusively of propositions and deductions. John Burnet writes that "the great novelty in the poem of Parmenides is the method of argument" (Burnet 205). W. K. C. Guthrie asserts that "the first part of the poem deduces the nature of reality from premisses asserted to be wholly true" (Guthrie 4). Kirk and Raven concur that the poem "presents an unprecedented exercise in logical deduction" (Kirk and Raven 266). Even the most recent translation of Parmenides into English is prefaced by the remark that "Parmenides is the earliest ancestor whose work contains explicit and
self-conscious argumentation" (Gallop 3). I intend to show that to read Parmenides' writing as apophantical prohibits any of the deductions it is supposed to perform; therefore the reading must be mistaken.

Obviously it is necessary to survey the arguments traditionally found in Parmenides. One will see that these deductions rest upon the disjunction of two terms: "what is" and "what is not". For my thesis to possess any veracity it is necessary that all of Parmenides' so-called deductions proceed from the above disjunction. I turn to the primary source to demonstrate the truth of my assertion.

In rehearsing the first Parmenidean argument, I present the fragment from which it is derived:

A single story of a route still
Is left: that (it) is; on this (route) there are signs
Very numerous: that what-is is ungenerated and imperishable;
Whole, single-limbed, steadfast, and complete;
Nor was (it) once, nor will (it) be, since (it) is, now, all together,
One, continuous; for what coming-to-be of it will thou seek?
In what way, whence, did (it) grow? Neither from what-is-not shall I allow
You to say or think; for it is not to be said or thought
That (it) is not. And what need could have impelled
(it) to grow
Later or sooner, if it began from nothing?
Thus it must either be completely or not at all.
Nor will the strength of trust ever allow anything to come-to-be from what-is. Besides it; therefore neither (its) coming-to-be nor (its) perishing has Justice allowed, relaxing her shackles, but she holds (it) fast; the decision about these matters depends on this: Is (it) or is (it) not? but it has been decided, as it necessary, to let go the one as unthinkable, unnameable (for it is no true Route), but to allow the other, so that it is, and is true.

And how could what-is be in the future; and how could (it) come-to-be? For if (it) came-to-be, (it) is not, nor (is it) if at some time (it) is going to be. Thus, coming-to-be is extinguished and perishing not to be heard of. (Callop 65)

There are two arguments in the above passage. The first that "what is" has always been; the second that "what is" always will be. In conjunction these two arguments demonstrate the eternality of "what is". The deductions may be stated succinctly. "What is" must have always been, for there is only "what is" and "what is not", i.e. nothing. In order for "what is" to come into being, it must have (by the disjunction above) proceeded from "what is not", but from nothing nothing comes. Likewise, for "what is" to "perish", it must become "what is not", and this is absurd.

It is obvious that the veracity of the arguments above hinges upon the meaning of the terms "what is" and "what is
not". Parmenides' poem uses arguments of the above form, i.e. proceeding from the disjunction "either it is or it is not", to demonstrate that "what is" is not only eternal, but also continuous, indivisible, and motionless. The truth of these deductions rests upon the properties of "what is not", namely, no properties at all.

I intend now to turn to one of the terms of the crucial disjunction from which Parmenidean cosmology is supposedly inferred. There exists a fragment which asserts the relation between thought, language, and "what is". Fragment six reads: "It must be that what is there for speaking and thinking of is" (Gallop 61). It requires only a simple inference to obtain "'what is not' can neither be spoken nor thought of." And if "what is not" can neither be spoken nor thought of, the Parmenidean arguments cannot proceed since one of the disjuncts of the disjunction pivotal to their proceeding is illegitimate.

I wish to make it very clear that the term "what is not" can have no apophantical significance and so cannot be legitimately used in any deduction. The fragment above entails that one cannot speak of "what is not", and if one cannot speak of "what is not", then one cannot use the notion in one's deductions.

The case can be made stronger yet. Cuthrie writes that
the verb translated "think of" (noein) could not, in and before his (Parmenides) time, convey the notion of imagining something non-existent, for it connoted primarily an act of immediate recognition. (Guthrie 18)

Philology shows why one cannot think of "what is not".

One cannot speak of "what is not" because

"to say nothing" in Greek does not mean to be silent: it is the regular expression for talking nonsense, uttering what does not correspond to reality. (Guthrie 20)

Even if Parmenides intended to write apophantically about "what is" and "what is not", his language would have denied him the categories of thought necessary for his project.

If one approaches Parmenides' poem as being apophantical, then there can be no deductions within his writings, since the poem declares explicitly that "what is not" is utterly unintelligible. Either one approaches Parmenides' poem as being apophantical or not. To approach his writings as being apophantical renders them non-deductive. And to approach the poem as being not apophantical disallows its being deductive also. Further, the very possibility of deductiveness is denied Parmenides by his very language. Therefore, on logical and factual, i.e. philological, grounds, one must conclude that Parmenides' writing must
be read not as contemporary argumentative philosophy, but rather as what it is: poetry.
WORKS CITED


VII

CLAUDE HOCQUARD

DENISE ROYET-JOURNARD
CORRESPONDENCE

13.11.88

Dear A-------,

Here's the letter you're expecting.

I've been thinking again about the dilemma that faces L.A. SWAG writing: e.g., Steve McCaffrey (LANGUAGE poet of the "orth. (strong and free?)") writes in his book of essays ORAL OF INTENTION re some review of Downdey's first book:

...Cairncross's response to the book is not in every sense erroneous, it is on the fundamental level of Downdey's work entirely irrelevant, assuming as it does a theory of language that is patently not one shared with the poet...

I think we'd both agree that what's entirely irrelevant is any writer's theory of language--if we're writing in a language that language does what it does quite independently of what we think it does or how it works. And so the dilemma: If your theory of language is descriptively true, then anything you write will be consistent with your theory; if your theory is not descriptively true, then it's just a
bad theory.

"What do you think? As Gadamer wrote: "...both the poetical and philosophical types of speech share a common feature: they cannot be 'false'."

Seems to me that what's important in language writing is the same thing that was important about the Abstract Expressionists: the very medium of their work has become an object (or, better, a field) for investigation: the very medium of the art has become at least important if not problematic. And in this, language writing is at least consistent with the concerns in philosophy this century: language. A lot of people, Gadamer, Peirce, Affrey, etc. see this problematic as the field (of moment) where poetry and philosophy come together (as if Plato or Heraclitus didn't know this.)

Anyway, that's why I've adopted the tactic I have for the "Wittgenstein poems, and that's why I'm always so irritated when people criticize it for being (in its language) too 'abstract' or 'general' or 'conceptual' instead of phanopoeic (i.e. "casting an image on the imaginative eye of the reader")—"why should I have to "cast an image on the
imaginative eye" when I'm already casting an image on the striate cortex? Just a case of not being able to see the trees for the forest I guess. More likely it's an unfamiliarity with a concern for language. But how can this be? Stevens wrote that the best poetry will be rhetorical criticism. And you can't criticize rhetoric until you can see it!

And that's exactly what the "Wittgenstein poems are all about: the way that philosophy has been incarnate in language, from aphorisms and epic verse to dialogues and bootleg lecture notes to notebooks and collages (or mosaics) of remarks to mixtures of verse and prose to even the rather bland academic essay we're trapped with today. And of course the reverse is true, poetry has come to philosophy, has been "philosophical" almost all along: I've shown you enough Shelley and Wordsworth and Whitman and Smart and Stevens and Pound and Ammons and Levertov that I know it's hardly an issue between us anymore.

But finally I think what's even more important is the remark by Gadamer I quoted earlier: the value of poetry and philosophy is the world they give us, if indeed the world is always already mediated, and if we have any control over that
mediation, and I think we do (just reflect on the way that I can use the religious lingo of Judeo-Christianity and not for a moment affirm the existence of some guy in the sky with a beard), then poetry and philosophy are "fictitious" in Stevens' terms: it doesn't matter that there really are no atoms or electrons etc., as long as the mythology works--
And this is why arguing over it and trying to determine a priori whether the Wittgenstein poems work or not is the wrong way to go at it: "It is like looking into the cabin of a locomotive. We see handles all looking more or less alike. Naturally, since they are all supposed to be handled."

Anyway, you've heard me rave about all this before many times. But I'd like you to take a ride in the locomotive I've sent you here and tell me how it runs. I know it's pretty crudely steam-powered and all and there's a lot of smoke and steam and noise and it loses velocity when it goes up hills and probably even scares away a lot of wildlife (don't try the whistle). But the landscape is nice, and I think the little town somewhere near the ferry to the Western Lands is pretty and a good place to stay for a while--it's dangerous and unusual and somehow the streets keep changing around every now and then, but, honestly, would you want to live anywhere more static?
Write soon. Good luck with Michel and Roland (watch out for laundry trucks!), and, above all: "WORK HARDER!!!

Yours,
B----

*

'01.89

Dear B----,

My apologies for the tardy reply.

Yes, I agree entirely with what you've said about the writers and theories of language. But it is important to keep in mind that the truly inescapable dilemma you have noted is only recognizable to those who are genuinely familiar with the concerns of contemporary philosophers of language—probably those who have benefited from instruction in philosophy. Then Steve 'McCaffrey, for example, refers to the different theories of language held by Davidson and Gairdner, I suspect that he's not thinking of the domain surveyed by Vepke, Putnam, Quine, Davidson, and followers.
It seems, rather, that "theory of language" stands in for some much more amorphous notion about how meaningful constructions are created and how, in turn, such ideas can be used to create a certain kind of poetic presentation. "Theoretically", this is harmless, though sloppy. It is, no doubt, a more unsettling (political) matter when such things begin to infect the critical reception of someone's work. So one must insist on clarity and demand, as everyone's favourite Harvard philosopher demands (Paul Ziff): "You rottta at least learn how to keep the slop in the pail!"

I smiled when I read what you wrote about the Abstract Expressionists because, ironically, that was an interpretation of their work which was foisted on them. It began with Clement Greenberg's nationalistic fretting about the dominance of French painting and, through an almost unbelievable confluence of social and political circumstances, ended with CIA backed European tours of the "New American Painting", designed to win the support of war-weary Europeans ("Have you seen the art coming out of the Soviet Union?") Really, it's true! It's as well documented as any such phenomenon could be (check out the work of Serge Guibault, Griselda Pollock, and Peter Fuller). The amazing thing is that all the major "Abstract Expressionists" vehemently
and insistently denied this interpretation of their work, and the artworld systematically ignored them. The pen might be mightier than the sword but the paint brush is a part of the means of production. Here lies the key to understanding why art since the fifties has taken on such a radically different appearance. But, I guess, you don't need the CIA for a conspiracy, at least I don't think that the CIA is issuing directives to critics insisting that they claim that poetry "must cast an image on one's imaginative eye." There can be garden variety plots, nourished by inertia.

As for this business about poetry being poetry and philosophy being philosophy, I'm afraid I don't understand it. So, okay, we all have our fears. My dad has recently developed this fear of ice patches, but I guess that's understandable, as you know, he has walked with crutches most of his life.

Yours as always,

A-------
VIII

JOHN YOUNG

AII
HOMO OMNIBUS
(for one voice)

On that bus
there
is a man

in a big
black
baggy
suit.

And that man
on that bus
is lusting--
lusting after a dusky girl
with dark eyes.

And that man
on that bus
evades those eyes
when they look near him
or at him, or
to him.

And that man
on that bus
is thankful his suit
is baggy

when those eyes look near him
at him
or maybe
to him.

And that man
on that bus
on that street in this city
is thinking--

he is--
he's thinking--
and he's thinking
no one can pin me down on this bus— he's thinking—
you could drive a big pin of light through this bus
through the point on the great curve where it is
and you would always
miss.

Thinking of curves
and the looking-around
dusky
dark-eyed girl

he's thrilled
and breathes
and he knows he is

and is thankful
his suit is baggy
and loose
and cool

that man
on that bus
on that
always changing street--
cars passing
passing plants
and dogs
and plants beside dogs
and people
and people beside plants
and plants beside dogs beside people
and plants beside dogs beside people beside buildings
and air
beside
everything else.

And that man
on that bus

is glad he's not
beside

the dusky girl
with dark eyes

who looks at him
sometimes
then he's glad
his suit is baggy
and loose
and black
so that
not even shadows
or shadows of folds
reveal the curve
or a shadow
of a curve.

And that man
on that bus is glad--
glad as he steps from the bus at his stop
a few feet ahead of the dark-eyed girl
and glad as the bus passes
rippling leaves, rippling leaves
and his baggy suit,
his rippling

baggy suit,
always changing its shape

in accord with what's outside,
its place

with what's
inside.
I shed scales and
blood the slow water
at the river's edge, the fish
gutted on a warming rock.
A wondering after
origins and wellsprings
rises with my standing
and squinting into the glare
of light broken upstream
at my vision's limit.
What one source spills
up this river?—
Numberless puddles brimming
over as rain falls
to fill them, clear
water writhing
over slick, dark rock
too hard to trace
a lasting path in,
waves of rainwater
draining in rippling sheets
off flat rock walling
a gleaming highway,
or running in rivulets
charging a careening stream
from a sudden height
in an opening spray of sparks
that scatter against one
mountain's steep
lower rises. Upward,
glaciers moan and turn
themselves to fluid under
their own weight
for the sake of motion.
Lighter ice and snow
drop, over-heavy
overhang, giving
the glitter of crystals
to the lift of wind
and the long swerve of descent
to dew on darting spear grass
leaves or on the grains
of the smallest ant mounds
mining the glint
of sand mixed in the topmost soil
of swelling foothills.
Clouds shadown the climb
of rock, condensing
and losing themselves
in the strain
to come to nothing
but clearest light.
Everywhere countless sources urge
one flow that fills
perfectly any particular
rap in every round
in its scrambling run
to that ease of gravity proper
to the sea. This river
one route before me
and beyond me on
either side, never ebbing,
only changing course
to another. I follow
some black bark carried free
on flashing rises of the current,
sometimes edging a shore, sometimes stilled
in the turning of
a darker random
swirl, but always
spiralling out again,
to give with the slow measure
of the ocean's deepest founding swells,
or float on the light
lift of waves
and the chance of the wind
into some child's quick
excitement in the sea-drift.