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## Energumen 4

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Energumen 4, begun 2 January 2007

Maus. What bothers me is not the drawing, which is playful, skilful, memorable. And not the story per se, which is about the incommensurability of a father's memories with his son's sense of reality: it might from that point of view be like one of the father/son stories Kafka sketched out in his diaries and left there. No, what bothers me is the explicit, specific trope of Nazi as cat, Jew as mouse, with all the pictorial reinforcement, puns (Mauschwitz), etc. By mapping the Holocaust onto animals, Spiegelman has taken it out of history. And by denying (however unintentionally) the fact that it occurred in history and only in history, Spiegelman takes the story into a timeless never-never land of fairy-tales about talking animals. And worse than that: he makes the specific aggression of Nazis against Jews into a fact of nature, an eternal, unchangeable and (finally) amoral fact of the way things are. Nobody's fault. Cats eat mice, schluss. If that's the case, then the Jew (here essentialized as cunning but verminous) can never escape. He is essentialized as victim -- even if (like Jerry escaping Tom) he is cunning enough to escape sometimes. But the aggression will never end. This snatching of the Holocaust from history (and hence from accountability, human responsibility, moral choice) and dropping it into Natural History, the timeless misdeeds of animals against one another, strips the colossal event of its human meaning. And gives us no hope. We smile ruefully and shake our heads. Cats will be cats, etc.

\*

Full moon, the first full moon of the year. Green moonlight frosting the earth, I have never seen it so, ever. From the dark dining room I looked out and was convinced it had snowed a little, why not, cold January night, a slim coating of greenish pallor on every branch and roof, on bare earth and grass. But I went outside and everything was as it had been, snowless, and the deck light showed the conventional color of grass and wood and stone. But when the light went out, the moon made it phosphoresce in green again. (2/3 January 2007)

\*

The beauty of the Other lies precisely in its failed resemblance to the Same.

\*

How the colors of almost  
shimmer brighter than the color of yes.

\*

it is hard to write from one's childhood, I always think it shdnt be, yet it is, and even I (can you picture me a child? ) ((can I picture me anything else??)) cdnt do it. Writing must always be about taking leave -- among all the other things it always is.

\*

I remember myself from years ago as if the person I am remembering was another person, other people. I remember me as if I were a number of dead friends. Acquaintances, maybe. How well do I know that RK of 1959, and what was moving him to do and speak, desire and write? A stranger, or the RK of a decade later, I'm suspicious of him, his worked-up, worked-out appetites, his voluble lust. And a few years later, a dear friend now dead. Sometimes the Robert I remember is just a character in a book. I don't remember him well, I might remember better the delineation of the city he lived in, the friends he had. It's not that I reject them, all the Roberts I know or suppose myself to have been. Some of them I actually like a lot, and some of them I would even still be willing to know socially. And one or two of them I might even have to tea.

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What Americans want: safer dangers.

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If all lights could be blue!

Every line would rhyme whether or not it had a rhyme-sound, a sound-rhyme.

\*

A blue light. Not red for stop, not green for go, not yellow for be careful. Not white to illuminate something else. Just blue. A blue light lights itself.

\*

I want to find a piece of my childhood that I have not spoken before, given away before. Yet one image keeps coming back all day, even when I'm trying to fetch a different memory, even when I refuse this one. So I suppose I must finally say it, though it feels so ancient in me, as if perhaps I have said it a thousand times already. Yet it is so vivid, trivial, small.

We lived east of Nostrand Avenue, where all the streets had names: Brown, Batchelder, Haring, Gerritsen... But west of Nostrand, the streets had numbers only: East 37th Street, for instance. And through them both the East-West avenues ran, and they all had letters: Avenue S was ours, south of Avenue R, and a long block north of Avenue T.

Into those numbered streets I would be taken in a stroller, later for a walk, and later still would walk myself, though the small dark brick houses, the dark hedges, the low trees, but most of all the numbers themselves gave the neighborhood a feeling of the uncanny.

One of the houses had a small ornamental stone or cement lion on the balustrade. Whenever we passed this house, I would stop and insist on feeding the lion. I would bend down and pick from a stone windowbox some of the soft, succulent, broad leaved grass growing there, and feed a few leaves to the lion, that is, gently put the leaves into the lion's open mouth. This gave me great satisfaction, one I can still feel, as I can feel and smell the faintly crushed green succulent leaves, the rough stone of the lion's muzzle. It makes me happy still to think of this. The word 'lion' I mispronounced from the start as "iler," and went on referring to this particular lion as the Iler long after other lions in zoos or books got their right name.

Many years later, I was sent to a doctor whose name was Dr. Iler. But that is another story.

\*

Sometimes I am a terrible person. Sometimes I want to be the 'you' in poems that I read, want the animal of the poem to be coming towards me, curling on my lap or attacking me. Something I can understand. Sometimes I am very stupid, and want words to mean what they say, and say them to me. Sometimes I want all the words to be speaking to me. And when your poem speaks, sometimes I want it to be me you're talking to or about. This is terrible and stupid and natural, and very much how I am though I try to find a way to listen sideways to words so that they don't appear to be coming right at me. But I want them to come right at me. Sometimes if I seem not to like a poem, it's because I want it to have been coming to me so much, and I know it's not, but the effort of standing sideways and letting the words pass as aesthetic events not concerning you, not concerning me, is so great that it takes its toll, evidently, and I sound half-hearted. But I'm really

trying to be no-hearted, and just attend to the words as if I weren't there. That is a way I try to cope with being a terrible stupid person who wants all the words to come to him.

\*

Old neighborhoods. We never really move out of them. The thought of walking around my neighborhood in Brooklyn, museum and parkway and gardens, a cigarette, exhaling the whole sky, skyline, walking, the actual body movement. When I thought about it, the physical feeling was inside my chest: a small quiet band of children, some loose, some hand in hand, were walking down the inside wall of his chest, right side, and they had city a-plenty to look at all round them. That neighborhood was somehow the city hidden inside a city, everything complete but blending seamlessly into the great city around it. The children knew. They knew Grand Army Plaza best of all, the green of bronze and the roar of traffic doing the great wheel around the arch.

\*

Indeed I'm not very concerned with the boundary experience (what I think Silliman means by the contrast between writing poetry and writing poems) that make something into 'a poem.' I'm always tending to talk about the place or passage where I find the intensity of writing, poetry,

Where it isn't so much a question of like or dislike, but of the arrow that a poem is -- does it find me (reader), or does it pass me by (miss), or do I (reader) swerve to avoid its trajectory. Or do I unashamedly introject myself into it, as its 'subject' or 'target,' and thus deflect or even obliterate its own line of movement by my greedy insertion.

\*

Today I spoke to a man in Manila. After I got off the phone I remembered an event in my childhood. It shows how hard it was for me to become a poet, as I hope I have. Who knows. Who knows what poetry really is, until at the end (but there is no end) someone says: your poetry moved me. And then maybe we'd know. But the memory: I think it was the fourth grade. We were to do a pageant or presentation honoring the Allies -- the countries whose beautiful flags were displayed on the commemorative stamps issued that year. I was assigned the Philippines. I went and studied all about them, the conquistadors, the Spanish American War, the battles, the Tagalog language, the lepers, the coconuts, the fish. When the time came, we were given a script to follow. I was supposed to say "I am the Philippine Islands." But in rehearsal I insisted on saying "I represent the Philippines." No, the teachers said, no. You must say that you are the islands. But I am not the Philippine Islands, I said, I am me. I can only represent them. My memory draws a blank when I try to come up with the actual night of performance, whether I complied with the authorities and said "I am..." or whether, up there alone, I reverted to my own idea of what was accurate. See how hard it is to become a poet? Now I could say I am the Philippines, and say it with no anxiety. Now I am them.

\*

Sometimes I think I could tell everything. The foods I like best now are the ones I also like to cook: lamb bones with daikon, lamb bones with bitter melon, poached salmon, cod stew, stewed haddock, baked or fried haddock, lamb or beef vindaloo. But I cook a lot of things, for Charlotte especially, that I don't much eat: various rich pastas, fried flounder, roast chicken, fried chicken, lamb chops, braised endive, braised spinach.

\*

I was sent to Dr Iler because I was fat and growing fatter. Dr Iler was some sort of specialist. Dr Iler turned out to be immensely fat, the fattest person I had ever seen. He drove a little tiny Austin that somehow had been modified for him. He was said to eat a pint of ice cream at a sitting. He told my mother that I could be treated with "injections" -- a word that seemed to her equivalent to demons. No, no, there must be another way. So diets of various sorts were proposed. It seemed immediately to me that this doctor could not heal his own obesity, and was unlikely to cure mine. It took a while for my parents to see that. I think Russell Hills Iler was his name -- that rattles around in my head. He was quite young, actually, and I think his own father was also a physician.

\*

All food is psychedelic in one sense or another; if we could only learn listen to our skin and our juices and muscles and such, we would learn strange things about what we swallow and (literally) transform into us.

\*

Making songs I think that is what I always am wanting to be doing, think to do, but songs not from ideas but from the very fact of the body and its world. I want to hear the song the back sings, the groove of spine, the bulge of shoulder, the collarbone. I dont mean about them, but the actual smart even abstract intelligences that flood the music, or flood with music, that pours out of each part of us. And each thing in the world. Stone song and rain's reverie.

\*

"Help. I need currency. It would be a terrible thing if thinking about you turned into remembering you. When mindfulness dries into memory. Or would it be terrible. Maybe it's what you really want. Or what I really want. To sustain a filament of feeling. A shimmer of sense we sometimes make. Made."

\*

The brilliance of the bad obscures the good. Write a scholion on that: sorting the meanings like a supermarket clerk arranging a pile of avocados, over-ripe ones on top. The obvious is usually reliable but the subway gets you there faster.

\*

I always wanted to be Picasso, in the sense that I always wanted to be allowed to do everything, make everything. And I did! I hate rules, rules make for sloppiness. Only the inner animate energy knows how to create form.

\*

Writing with a sore thumb and the wind howling. "Everybody wants to get into the act!" cried Durante, and let them in, and took them along with him. Paradiso?

\*

You don't actually need to read a book. It's enough to hold it carefully, then casually, in hand, stroking it gently, like somebody's glove. Then you say its title aloud many times, alone and with others.

\*

Maybe the dream goes on all the time. Or dreams do. I don't mean reality-as-illusion; true or not, that's another issue. I'm asking this: if studying the dream rhythms, REMs, and so forth, periods of theta and all such measuring were continued through the waking life, would we find that we dream awake and asleep, and any moment can slip, unvigilant, into the other reality? Sometimes I'll come to myself when walking or sitting or reading and find that I have also been, or actually been, having a dream utterly unrelated to what I was doing or hearing or reading.

\*

For years I've had hints, and eventually spoken them to others as helping the hints along, that the vast body of my (or many poets'?) work might be best understood as an immense array of speeches for characters in a vaster Play, a play never sketched in outline (kein Umriß von dem heimlichen Dramaturg), never 'cast,' never synopsized.

Now it occurs to be that one could take my poems, or any one of them, and cast them, break them up, redistribute the parts into the mouths of the actors.

This would be the work of Will and Recognition. *Hai tes boules Anagnoriseis*. The recognition of the actor in the speech, the plot growing from all that all of them can be heard to be saying. What you can in effect make them say by willing recognition.

To sit with other person and compose a play from what has already been composed. To hear a music that has been, in this sense, notated but never performed. That can be performed (*meine Oper!*) only when the speeches find the mouths and bodies of the actors. To say them in place.

That is it: my poems want to be said in place.

\*

The picture. I can never tell you what a picture may be 'of' -- I'll only tell you what I see. "Of" is such a strange relation, we think naively: the picture is the child of some thing or some person out there in the non-picture. Leading to the bizarre and terrible conclusion: the world is what is outside the frame. Almost: the world is whatever is not here. The world is everything that is not in view.

Photo. Not what is in front of the camera at a certain moment (always past) in time, but what it makes happen before the eyes at another certain moment (always present). Deep in our relationship to the world is the central act of looking. We belong to our eyes. One of our defining moments: looking at each other.

Are blind men selfish? Or do they have no self, since they have no other?

That question is naively premised on the primacy of sight. But even hearing, hearing has no natural mirror. And when you touch your own skin, it feels most different from the skin of someone else. Though sometimes the skin too is drunk or swoons, and thinks the other is the same as self, or, waking, mistakes the bony wrist of its own sleeping other hand for an animal or book.

Is there any seeing, or seeing going on in all senses?

\*

Whenever we try to fixate a sensation on or with another person ('your hands are wet,' 'I heard you grinding your teeth when you were asleep') we have an immense opportunity that is usually wasted. It could

be a moment where we stand at the mouth of a great dark cave that runs deep into the earth of each person's feelings, and more than that, each person's sense of incarnation in this place: body, speech, mind, aligned with the material, the substance of this earthlife. Instead, we usually waste the opportunity, or at least use only a little of it, by turning our perception of the other's sensation into an analysis of our reciprocal emotions, relationship, etc. Every sensation is a cavemouth, a mine.

\*

If I had to guess, I'd guess I don't like Haydn because he tells me what's wrong with me: too long, too learned, too quick, too prolific, slow, boring, thorough, habitual. Willing to wade through long dull stretches (of my own composition) to reach some O altitudo! When I listen to dull composers (Haydn, Spohr come to mind), I keep asking myself why, why do they write the dull stuff, the unrelenting passagework of obvious skilful fiddling, when they could cut all that and go right to the essence. What is the essence? Maybe (for them, for all?) the essence is the plodding onward, the soldiering through. Why can't I learn to leave out the dull stuff? Why drag people up the tedious crest when once I've gotten there? Let the brief explosion be enough. Just be suddenly there. on the top.

\*

Important to study the things and artists I don't like -- they reflect my bad qualities. Haydn, Debussy, Renoir -  
- bland, bland almost all the time -- but then those moments!

\*

The body. So much it is the body that means. The body means.

Its meaning is momentary, like a word, spoken always in context, taking its meaning from the when and where it's spoken into.

The body is a word, just like that. It means what it means only right now, only the now it inhabits and controls.

Its meaning is fugitive.

It says:

Embrace me  
in all your ways.  
I am the word  
my soul says  
only to you and only now,  
this year, this skin  
before time happens  
to us both.

The holiness of the pretty body now, in all its freshness, the thing it speaks.

It is what the body is that gives.

That speaks.

If you don't hear the word it says at any given age, any given moment, appearance, state, then you'll never hear it.

It is not a permanency, it is now. That is its gift. It gives the moment. and gives it meaning.

It's not about what the owner of the body thinks or wants to tell, but the body itself.

You see, the point here is that the body is wiser than the mind, but it is also truer and deeper than the personality. The body of a young person is utter truth. It takes a person years and years to grow towards that wisdom his 'own' body is. And all too often he grows to get past it, to deny the wisdom, refute the word of his own body. It is that process we dignify by the word maturation. In fact it is not so much a loss of vitality but a loss of meaning.

The body a young man or woman gives, gives perhaps by just being there, is what the mind or spirit has to work so many honest years to give some permanency to, the shape of art or commitment or social form.

\*

when the Gates shift (chemical/alchemical valence/polarity) in Jerusalem, arent the contradictions sublated (or sumfin) into not so much a synthesis (implying opposed or at least opposite forces brought to alignment or repose) as a mandala? such as the yantras we see/read in Dharma, the images of the shel-yay-kang (I'm being phonetic) heaven house or 'celestial palaces' where all the energies of a given principle/function ("deity") are set in place and in motion at once -- such a palace is for us to enter, to inhabit, to function from. As I read this then, the dualistic has fallen away (certainly in dharma, where dualisms are not meant to be reconciled so much as un-seen, un-known, gnosed into void) and what flourishes is a plenum. And it is precisely that I think Blake aims at in the myth/fable of Jerusalem, and evident (as you gloriously argue) in the plates though not in the enunciative. It is this word from that tells all the difference between Blake and most of the English visionaries before and after, his sense of working from the revelation into the world of men, not backwards to Eden (Har and Heva, George and Marion Kirby as they might be) or out in some timeless Yummyland, but the here and now where samsara is nirvana, and both have to be transcended by wisdom and compassion. [note to Michael Ives, resp. to his of 6 March 07]

\*

It is not the past that repeats itself but the present.

There is no future except what this day construes. Constructs. As there is no past. Nothing but what we imagine we remember.

We flee from guilt as we flee from history, using neo-weasel phrases like "the construction of history," as if all we have to do is rearrange the wooden blocks and lo! there never was an Auschwitz.

Of course history is a construct, an imagined sequence whose exit-point is always me now. But the essential questions are why this construction, why this one.

Memory is the dream of those who are awake.

Memory is Tagesreste too, just like Freud's dream, and the question always to be asked is why now, why should these remnants of the day be imagined, or imagined as recurring?

\*

How it feels in your body as you read a book -- this vital part of our awareness is missing, it seems to me, from all criticism. Serious critics seldom use words like nauseating -- yet perhaps they should. They should read with their bellies and their groins, their chests and their thighs. Then they can talk from experience about this reading business. The body as vulnerable to rhetoric, narrative, fable, style.



\*

Never re-read. Re-reading makes false memory real. Or distorts it. Reality continually distorts history, memory. Whose fault is that?

Aren't our memories of the book a part of the book? And each reader has a better Hamlet than any book.

\*

A broken dish still full of frozen peas. Like a mastodon remembered, new risen from frozen tundra. Or a caveman in a cartoon.

I am everything that I recall. But am I only that? Am I anything other than the sum of what I remember? And if so, who's asking?

That's the one I want to meet: the one who's asking the question about who's asking the question.

But everybody knows him, he was around here just yesterday, he has a pretty wife and a little dog.

No, no dog.

\*

["Might I be correct in tracing "yogurt" or "yoghurt" from the Turkish for "to knead" back to I.E. *ieug, ius*, whence, Gr. *zugon, zyroma, zeuxis, zygote, yoga, Yuga* ... joining together, uniting, DENSIFYING? The latter is of greatest interest at the moment - densification of experience, flow thereof, for instance, by bacterium ... " wrote Michael Ives on 19 March 2007, and I answered:]

heartland, densification, *dichten* = *condensare* all over again. I don't know about the Turkish -- since the one thing yogurt can't be is kneaded (i.e., must be left rigorously swaddled and motionless while the lactobacilli do their miraculous work --without which the undersigned wd be a less healthy man -- unless it's a *lucus a non lucendo* number, calling the 7 ft guy Shorty, etc., but that seems unlikely, given the sacred importance of the Curd (which itself seems with curdle, crud ((as in lemon crud, now bottled as lemon curd for obvious reasons)), cruddle, etc. to point towards thickening.) *Yoga/zygon* -- doesn't that range always imply a harnessing of duality? Yoking beast with frame, beast with beast, mind with body. (Recall the pervasive image of the rider/mind, body/horse, and make them non-hierarchical, yes, Dr Deleuze, and we get the image of mind and body yoked together, yoga. Which as everybody but a philosopher will know is what Parmenides has in mind (ha!) with his two mares who carry 'him' to the trackless real.

\*

Simone dos Anjos sends me a citation from the introduction to Adorno's *The Culture Industry* by J.M. Bernstein:

"Fragmentary writing is premised upon the refusal of the operations that establish "rational" connections between statements in theoretical discourse (inference, entailment, deduction) and their linguistic representatives ('therefore', 'because', etc.). For Adorno, these operations are the markers for domination in the conceptual realm. Equally fragmentary writing does not pretend to empirical accuracy (truth as correspondence). Fragmentary writing is modernist, its logical and syntactical dislocations the cognitive equivalent of dissonance in music. Fragmentary writing functions through the multiplication of logically

distinct perspectives, each one of which is something of a theoretical caricature. Through the multiplication of diverse perspectives a complex portrait of the phenomenon in question is produced."

\*

Lifelong unhappiness is the price a person often pays for happiness.

Some artists are so haunted by the necessity to be recognized, acknowledged, rewarded that no actual reward or achievement ever really pleases them; they always want more. They haunt the offices of arts administrators, grant officers, patrons, always clamoring for more. They are unhappy, driven to drink and thoughts of suicide, every other artist's good fortune tortures them, or Schadenfreude is their only comfort. These wretched, self-tormenting beings, who never feel content no matter how well rewarded they are, are in fact achieving their happiness by the very stratagems and enterprises their need for acknowledgement propels them towards. They wear out grantors and get grants, they get what they ask for. Without the rodent unhappiness they would not ask, without asking they would not get, without getting they would not be happy even for a minute. Strange consolations of the artist! How different from the consolations of art itself, for those who have the great good fortune of only consuming it.

\*

(Dreamed into this waking thought, ides of March 07:)

Karma rides DNA. Every action can alter -- and the most microscopic change can be immense in its consequences -- the sequence of letters, the Code. And lead to strange births.

This would explain as well the incremental power of karma, how it always increases, like an exponential horn, ever bigger for good or ill.

(But fully awake I wonder how does Karmic purification work? How can it work? Or does (e.g.) Vajrasattva practice, chanting certain mantras, etc. just as subtly and microscopically realign the code that non-virtuous action deranged? In a quantum world such things are possible. Even likely. In fact, how could any action, gesture, chant, practice, word not have an effect?)

\*

My turn to die. The madness of being alive inside a side that is not ever allowed to show itself, the madness of being sane inside, warm and wanting and feeding and enough. Sane inside and sane outside but in between these two orders of sanity (social calm, true human feeling) lies a zone of savage madness. Hurts. Can't I tell you, means can't I seduce you, can't I lure you to live inside me like a word in the mouth, wet, wet, I want to speak and when I speak it is the sudden truth. The cheesy absolutes by which I live. Walking through the street like a high priest of some fallen faith, alone, alone-o. If I ask you I give you the power to hurt me. Wound means also what winds around. Wound, wound, no matter how you pronounce it is a trap, the columns crush against me, I push them over, th temple falls. The price of freedom is always death. This kind. I feel you pull away from the thought of me. Whether you do or not you feel it and I feel you feeling it, and that feeling is enough to send me to the swampland, les paludes, from which myth is born and where mere mortals die. To become what. What comes out of the marshland. You are not good for me. You have made me want too much and say too little. You know, and have the power to silence my desires before they speak. How can this be?

\*

How wonderful childhood reading was, when I could read a book and not need to write it, not even want to write it, just sail on over the wide sea of reading it. When an author was a distant kindly and most generous endower of mind, and not a competitor. To read with awe and delight or interest, and never envy or emulation : how to discover that again.

\*

On 23 March 2007 I decide I should listen to Bach's St Mark Passion, as reconstructed by various scholars. I begin to listen, then read something about it, find that the original (now lost) form was performed on Good Friday, which fell that year (1731, was it?) on March 23rd.

\*

Meaning is the Santa Claus of poetry. It brings you all the gifts you don't believe.

\*

Soulmaking Keats called it, this gorgeous flurry of what we do and suffer and enjoy, always coming to expression, not self-expression but the im/pression spoken out of what is (t)here,

and that Crichton's text ("A Poem") talks about in her Easter card, giving more of the detail of how it is done, the love and saying love, the love and hearing love, the way that saying is never enough but always enough.

\*

Peaceful and Wrathful Deities. They exist, appear, not just at or in death. They are always, always here. Here, in fact, means exactly where they are. Permanent identities beyond identity. Or so it seems to me this cold April Monday in Charlton, Massachusetts. Which is currently here.

\*

[from a letter to Jennifer Moxley] . . . of course we felt en famille (Circe helped, and I hope her shark fin showed in the video) with you and Steve, but I carry away, to chew on, your sense of our affinity on the issue of family. Your words made me think it further along, and I've gotten as far as realizing that the real pressure for me was to escape from the horizontal family (brothers, cousins, nephews), not the vertical (parents, uncles, aunts). ((I sense the uncle as a slanted vertical, while the nephew is a slanted horizontal...)) The horizontal focuses the power, the horizontal disperses it. Etc. Does that have any resonance for you?

Being childless = the buck stops here. The focus of energy, genetic and karmic energy, is now redirected, not to the vertical (the child) but to the world beyond the circle of family, the true horizontal gesture, in other words. Yvan Goll: o pour briser un seul cercle! To break any circle is to break all of them. Out the door is Mongolia and Ponape.

\*

Timor Domini initium sapientiae. But there is a subjective genitive as well as an objective one. Is it our fear of the Lord that makes us wise? Or was the Lord afraid, and from His fear fair Wisdom came?

Is the whole world spoken out of God's nightmare, roused by wordless fear to speak focused, limited, limitable, words, words that are us?

\*

This is diary stuff, dark before dawn, graveyard palaver. Word soothes it. Sleep may heal. But who finds sleep? Who is it that goes to sleep?

\*

Ego parts. Yolk of the ego. Yoke of the egg. To bind a thing to itself.

Made pregnant by yoga, a woman is plump with promises.

Cold spring. Abject biologies, subject to mere whim. Unions. Cassiopeia's throne.

\*

I have never had enough -- felt I had enough-- work space. I am a big man and I wanted a room for me. A room forty by sixty, with big windows, and nothing in it but a desk, or better still just a writing table and upright chair, and in a far corner an easy chair. C'est tout. I'm not Mussolini, not especially grandiose, but I've always wanted to spread my arms, walk back and forth in a room, feel the space around me. The table could be clear or cluttered, that doesn't matter, but the room should be empty. That's what it is, mostly, an empty space in which I cd shape the air around me as I moved, in which the words I say would have space to float out and resonate and fall, or reverberate, or come back to me as if another had spoken them. I want the big echoing space of a reverberant room. A room, we say, not just room in general (where German has Raum to mean all space, we have closed space down, four walls and a door. And please God some windows. A lot of window. The room is for me to move in, not to shelter in. So long I've wanted this simple, impossible thing. Maybe some day I'll buy a garage and put it on the roof, and walk back and forth and hear the floorboards answer my feet.

\*

I love these eleven-line poems (of mine -- like Juarez of 17.iv.07) -- they're like one-night stands.

\*

Taste leads to ignorance.

\*

[to an Oxford Theory man:] Why does it matter who wrote them? Or better: don't we know that poems write themselves through us, fighting our natural propensities, starting with silence (the most natural of all), our terrible willingness to say nothing. When everything is happening.

Even I have had poems written through me. And if I have had, why couldn't Shakespeare have had? He had, in a noisier time, a hungrier mind than even mine.

\*

Morningdark: the dawn of not knowing. I dreamt this, as a title to use, answering Nietzsche's Morgenroete.

\*

Sometimes we are kept apart by those who brought us together.

\*

Speculative fiction: I now have the insight, and hasten to write it down before it becomes a belief, that every writer owes it to the world to utter or contrive a piece of speculative fiction. Sci-fi, horror, ghost, mytho-sorcery, Grail romance, thriller, mystery.

And then I wonder: if fiction is not speculative, then what purpose does it serve except journalism, propaganda, sociology, sugar-coated history?

I bless those writers -- James, Dostoevsky, Forster come to mind -- into whose works the shadow of another order of being sometimes is allowed to fall.

\*

The face in the moon: an opera.

The man beneath the wheel: another.

Spirit is Matter: a comedy, like Gianni Schicchi, the alive pretending to be dead.

\*

Every art consents to space and time only long enough to wield them for its own purposes.

Think what an artist --or an assassin-- can do with two minutes, and you begin to understand the energy and materiality of time itself.

\*

Every forest is the same forest.

{This is an observation I gave to Carey Harrison, and that he kindly returned when I needed it most}

\*

Nomenclature is sometimes more important than mathematics. If indeed they aren't two names for the same thing. Or same non-thing.

\*

Note that the Tarot is a Syro-European form. Its persons or animals should be those among us, of the West. Dog or wolf, not tiger. Ox, not elephant. Pontiff or high priest, not swami. Lions once lived in Graecia, so we might let lions in.

\*

SHeM. The name of God. What one needs, everything one needs: the overflow of animal. The animal overflows in a cry. The cry cries out to someone, something: the cried-out-to one, the \*Gaudh-

The god. In some sky sensed as Diwos/Deva. But right here is where the cry comes, right here is the cry and the cryer and the hearer of the cry. The true name of God is: Right Here.

\*

[from my letter to Barbara Roether:]

"your North African story... About which I felt strongly this, and we can talk about it: we have entered a public time when the only thing that people (that is, the people-who-read-books but are not people-who-really-read-books-all-the-time) want to read is MEMOIR. It's overwhelming the shelves, and it's not bad, not at all. I don't write it myself, this memoirisme, but I understand it as a powerful social tool for poor lost lambs finding plausible identities they can slip on for a day or a lifetime. Anyhow, even the great masters (Sebald, Bernhard) prefigure the memoir craze. What I'm getting at is this: there is something in your story that is old-fashioned. Namely the very thing workshops (and people like our poor lost Richard) used to try to trick people into doing: disguise themselves as some other. When all the while the disguise is in tatters, and the deception shows through. And is annoying. So I'm telling you that the story in question is (= seems to this reader certainly) a story about you, or a character so like you as makes no difference. The whole artifice of pretending she's somebody else (with alias, etc.) is useless -- in a jiffy you can and should, please, rewrite the story in first person barbara --- and it will not only be a better story, easier for you to work her/your feelings in (without the eternal clumsinesses of she felt, she thought, she noticed...) lucidly and tellingly, but also will be a more publishable one. Even I don't want to hear about a character wandering around among the Arabs, I want a person, I want you. And that is the big shift in fiction/prose literature in my lifetime. Memoir rules, so get with it. Forget all the old character stuff -- unless you really want to focus on a character that isn't remotely you or your own husband or your own child. In other words, unless you become Henry James or Herman Melville, and have interesting insights into the Whale."

\*

\*Parlando\*:

Take Parlando as organizing trope for a book.

Certainly I suspect that I tend to arrange my readings as classic operas, where arias and big numbers are interspersed with, led up to by, recitatives. Poems in that recitative --mostly discursive, essayistic, or narrative [like "Disclosures of Don Juan" in *\_Conjunctions\_*] -- style I will call \*Parlando\*.

But I've just today noticed this Mozart-Rossini habit of mine today -- more Gioacchino than Wolfgang, I guess.

\*

From my recent books try to construct an hermetic *\_doctrina et demonstratio\_*. Stone as a flowering substance -- and any stone, not just gemstone (Edelstein).

\*

The interesting thing about smoking, the wonderful thing about it, maybe, is how it connects with pagan experience. That vast sense of interpenetration of energies, the rich, sensuous, keen intelligence of place is what we mean by paganism, the sense of being part of air and earth and tree -- and smoking comes from, speaks into, that world. As the earth breathes out at evening, the mist that brushes gently along every contour of ground, drifts through trees, so we breathe out. And smoke is our visible offering of that breath, a gentle disappearance of what is you into what is everything else. Smoking connects with these holy processes and holy places -- but how coarsely most people smoke, how they violate the very "participation mystique" which is the one good thing about it. Now I have come to understand that I can achieve the same participation, offer

the same pagan worship, by breath alone, by the focused inhalation, retention, exhalation cycle that we love in smoking. Minus the smoke -- but not minus the breath, the air, the sending the joining.

I recall that 'Hopi Messenger' I met in the 70s in LA, a decent quiet man who explained what Indians know, that if smoking is always done reverently, and the smoke offered to the Four Directions, the tobacco will not harm the smoker.

\*

[from my letter to Robert Pullman about Martin Kearns, responding to RP's memory from 1971 of how MK was towards me in 1951:] 'avuncular' -- yes, your word is apt, and the kindly interest it implies was certainly there. What he reported of my embarrassed and dismayed quest for girls is more likely his (accurate!) intuition than any actual avowal I'd given him. My embarrassment was profound, and talking about girls was no easier than talking to them. Because embarrassment is general, and stifles everything. Hence the poem, the golden key to all our silences.

\*

Why are windows so sad?

Why do they move me so? Christ never said "I am the Window." Yet through him we are to see light. In lumine tuo videbimus lumen.

What is it about windows? The landscape they 'command' might or might not move me when beheld all by itself out there. But framed by window, intersected it may be by the cross of the windowframe, or the horizontal, or the twelve panes, so framed, presented, it suddenly becomes an exquisite artifact, the most amazing thing: a thing different from itself.

Why did I sit in the dentist's chair on Bergen Street looking out with terror at the richly grey sky of one Good Friday fifty years ago and know that the end of the world was right there?

The end of the world is always waiting in the sky, but only certain windows show it.

\*

Anagogic. Anagogy is how we must proceed in these days, in writing, reading, listening.

For all we yearn to learn is how we are supposed to be, what we are supposed to do, how we are supposed to do it.

Now every book must be a guide to salvation. Every reader is desperate for the way.

When all the ways have been explored --all the books sold from Barnes and Noble-- people will say Here I am all along!

Finally everything must become a poem.

Or the poem.

The poem. Which can only be read as you are. To re-read a poem you must become another person. A better one perhaps. Further along some way.

All poems lead into the dark. But what a dark!

\*

I like it that our word-from-Greek \_ceno-\_ can mean empty or mean common to all. Greek kenos (as in the kenosis) empty; Greek koinos (as in Koine) common. They fall together for us. Vowels! Our sole song!

\*

26 May 2007: a cock crows from Montgomery Place. After so long. He's back! Christus resurrexit.

\*

When the Christians call Mary by that wonderful name, what would it mean if the words really meant exactly what they say: Mater Dei, Mother of God? No equivocation about hum, hum, mother just of the human aspect of God, hum hum -- but just the actual, inconceivable, absolute, mother of God. As we call Prajnaparamita or Wisdom the mother of all Buddhas.

\*

How certain images of my mother stand before me, no different in their look from icons, from divinities. My father too, though fewer, perhaps.

Each has created a small iconography in my head, and I revisit them -- or they revisit me -- in a kind of chapel-time. Around each image is utter quiet. Both silent of sound but also silent of narrative associations. Nothing precedes or follows these images. That makes them icons, not 'stills' from some remembered story or event. The images recur randomly, if that adverb has any meaning when applied to what happens in the head.

Here i was thinking of my mother in a rowboat on Lake Huntington, reading the local newspaper, looking up at me with a smile, I stood on the little wooden jetty in shade.

\*

American are always trying to find something to do. They seek to achieve even spiritual goals by doing something. I'm trying to find the Doing Less (the \_wu wei\_) that I think hides in the woods -- but even my trying is a species of doing.

\*

Ascension. Christ's ascension. One of its infinite meanings, a little one, but relevant to this little world around me, is this: every teacher ascends -- every teacher at some point ascends from his bewildered students into the heaven of his subject, his scholarship, his creative actions; the students, disciples, seem abandoned: but they are abandoned into the same world of making and learning they have been brought to, made citizens of, by the teacher.

So in this reading, each one of us is Christ, since each one of us teaches, ascends, and abandons. Each one of us (if we're lucky) is or has been a student, a disciple, abandoned into one's proper work. My business is not of this world, says the teacher: but your business is; you must stay in the work where you find it, you who are ten or twenty or fifty years younger than I.



I think of all the students I have abandoned into their work. I think of all my teachers who have abandoned me, abandoned me into my work. This too is the Mystical Body. This too is Jesus's Round Dance, where from a certain vantage in space-time, we are all dancing together, teaching, learning, forgetting, remembering, holding hands and letting go. And finding soon enough the outstretched hands again.

\*

Demarcated space. [Hu]man and Space.

What a window told me: how thin the wall around I am. All a house is is space marked off (as an hour is time corraled). A boundary -- and the line is more of a protection than the wall itself. We build walls now of tyvek and flakeboard and plywood, and the Japanese built them of paper. It's not their structural strength but their visual impact. I stood at the upstairs window and felt only inches from the street, was only inches from -- and yet that tiny distance keeps me safe from all except determined criminals of man or nature.

\*

I'm trying to distinguish what I'd call Analytic Religion from Syncretic religion. For example, analytic religion would realize that Jesus was a Bodhisattva and taught shamata and vipassana meditation, and revealed himself to his disciples in his Sambhogakaya form in the event called The Transfiguration. The function and effect, in other words, would be stressed as insight. In syncretic practice, on the other hand, there would be a materialistic reification of process into assertion, so a Buddhist might try to worship with a Jesus sadhana, or a Christian propose a Mass of the Buddha.

All religions are not one, not at all. But all of them that I've encountered have something to say, some insight to offer, into the practices of one another.

Analysis = a solving upward, a loosening of things from their apparencies upward into their true identities, ipseities, functions.

Merkavah: the work of the Chariot is analysis: the descent upward.

I think analysis is a profound tool for the soul in its work.

All religions are not one, God forbid! -- For then all men would be the same man.

But from time to time we hear voices from the church next door that help us in our own practice. Not because religions are the same, but because we all breathe the same air into our different organisms.

For most people, the phrase "analytic religion" would have a chilling sound, since analysis suggests geeky and ill-smelling procedures in chem labs, or bored teachers gutting live poems on the blackboard, or at best a testy Viennese explaining how your fascinating love life merely plays out some old Greek sitcom.

But these are the failures of analysis, rather, when the keen, endless processing that is analysis dies, or dries, into the syncretic trait.

Syncretism is the corpse of analysis, as 'a thought' is the corpse of thinking.

\*

Suggestions for conference topics.

When I was asked at The Abode of the Message for a suggestion, I mentioned: The Nature of the Sacred Text. It would be an attempt to investigate the powerful, but elusive, suchness of the sacred in texts. What

makes a text sacred? Is it something that comes from within the text, that is, is there something in the words themselves that signals the sacred to a reader, and thus summons the reader to special and reverent attention? Or is the sacred something that comes from outside, tradition or society; that is, does the reader approach a text already labeled sacred by its inclusion in a canon, continuity of commentary and (above all) use in worship? We could look at all manner of 'religious' texts, familiar and less so, as well as visionary writings from secular sources.

Another issue that might make a good conference is: Spirit and Soul: their relationship. The controversial German thinker Ludwig Klages called his masterwork *The Spirit as the Enemy of the Soul*, and while hostility is not what we usually expect between those two terms (if indeed we understand them as separate!), it is striking how important the distinction can become in the actual religious life of people. There are paths of spirit, paths of soul, and paths that seek to use both. I suggest this as a novel way of looking at contemporary spiritual life (as it is called), which we might finally discover to be something more like the life of the soul.

\*

Death is our mother.

Death is our tender mother.

\*

Now I've written my way through an attack of the Bard power mower, who rides around proudly loud and slow in his canopied chariot, wearing earphones to protect himself from what he injures us with. He rides like the figure in the Tarot card of the Chariot -- and no less ambiguous.

\*

Have you ever tried to disambiguate a bird cry? Rilke did, and won years of sullen grace, Adriatic fog kept the seaside roses fresh, tunes that had not been heard in two thousand years. All it takes is listening. And loving most of the things you chance to hear.

\*

Inky fingers give the best caress.

\*

What do I know of all my work that came before? Should I archivize myself, and become a scholar of 'my' productions? If I truly believe the work is *\_heard\_* or 'given', no reason for me not to study it, like anybody else -- since with respect to the work, once written, I am anybody else. Right now I'm an indolent schoolboy faking some knowledge of 'my' Iliad.

Or, this might be truer, I understand my work well-enough, I just don't remember. Never did, and why start now?

\*

It takes a precious stone a long time to show you all its colors. Night light and candle light and strong sea sun, winter and autumn and spring green all round -- every moment's different, and all the differences are the property of the stone. Each unrecoverable gleam: a precious stone is memory. This

sapphire on my hand, yellow, lustrous, waiting for me to read in sunlight some text it wrote in the dark below the earth, it never stops speaking.

\*

Learning once that the Nestorian scribes carried pen and ink pouches with them, and used blue and black ink -- each to its own indictment prone -- used systematically the way we use black and red thrilled me. I have known this fact for thirty years at least -- and every now and then the thrill renews itself. Men carrying blue ink and black ink in little pots with them, fifteen hundred years ago, professionals, men, men.

\*

Looking is friction -- we rub by looking. Seeing is frictionless. Explain this for the rest of my life.

\*

WOHL  
dem den der  
Herr in  
seiner Arbet  
segnet

says a calligraphic page in Johannes Klinger's *Vorschrift* (model writing book), 28 November 1812, intended "for those who like reading and writing," Exeter, Pennsylvania. (The spelling is not yet standard modern.)

I notice this: as a literal string of words, it clearly says: It is well for the one whom the Lord in his work blesses. Lucky the one God blesses in his work.

The perverse periodism of German intends it to specify...whom the Lord blesses in his work.

Even there, though, whose work it is that's being blessed remains interestingly unclear. This per-ambiguation of the blessing is powerful. The Lord's work is to bless the work of the one being blessed. The two works are complementary, necessitate each other. I like it that the cut of the lines insists on that.

And more: that third line! three different forms of the same word! the definite article in the dative, the accusative, the nominative.

And more: on one line we read: Herr in. The in is written so close in the calligraphy that we read at first: Herrin: the Lady, the Potnia Kosmou.

\*

Those Pennsylvania mystics found such beauty and enlightenment in the calligraphic act itself, the *Fraktur* or fracture of the self, fracture of the predictable 'look' of the word so the real word could manifest through the beautiful rubble of its letters.

\*

Coming in from a sabbatical where I finished a novel (*The Book from the Sky*) and two long poems (*Fire Exit* and *Listening Through*) . My most recent books are *May Day* and *Sainte-Terre* this year, *Threads* last year. Right now surprising myself by working on a play, about which I know nothing. Talk to me about *Antigone*, tarot cards, Moravians, lost things, Russian spirituality, Roberto Bolano, Iris Murdoch, Richard Strauss. And read the most important local news: the *Annandale Dream Gazette*.

\*

Russian blondes. Intensely spiritual and utterly amoral. The most dangerous combination.

\*

Once I asked a class of young poets to write a text describing their ideal reader. One quiet student --Laura Dorsey-- wrote that hers would be a young waitress in a snug grey skirt, crouched down in the store room of the diner, stealing a few minutes reading in a book of poems.

I thought: this is the ideal reader indeed, the crouch of her body, that tension when the body folds in upon itself to read its own response to its own physical predicament, as if she is reading with her thighs, her feet compressed against the floor, her ass compressed on the packing crate, her elbows compressed on her thighs, her back bent over the book. A poem is \_compression.\_

And it is labor. In labor. The poem, unlike prose, \_wants to be read through the body\_. That is the difference. She is almost in fetal position: \_the poem wants us to be born from it\_, she is newborn from everything she reads.

Hence the immense responsibility of each poem, that it be mother man and mother hawk and mother tiger, that we can be reborn through reading.

And her location is transgression, she's stealing some of The Man's time, she's made it her own, for the moment, free, and we live only in the moment. It teaches us that \_a poem is a transgression\_. Not just the great naughty or outright criminal poets (Rimbaud, Villon, Genet), but the poet by nature stands outside the ordinary discourse (call it prose, a simple if not really accurate word for it), the poet stands outside and mocks it, pilfers from it -- \_de vulgari eloquentia\_ -- violates it at will, to make that creative spasmodic wrench of time, when the reader is alone with the poem and something happens, and happens fast.

\*

the cry in the woods, the word of the words, words rising again, the skin speaking its immense malady of touch, the death of a decent man, languages of strange mountain clefts, and the little delve on the upper lip, the philtrum, the very core of a face's beauty,

the philtrum in folklore, the fingertip of the angel on the lips of the about to be born, sealing the lips softly, to unsay all knowledge of the newborn's previous life, and in Les Bienveillants the old Jew --but is he really Jewish?-- on his way to his chosen grave, how we march to our destinies but so few know it,

the softness of the upper lip, the philtrum, children suffering from fetal alcohol syndrome are born without the philtrum, fact, the drunkenness of the mother baffles the angel, the poor newborn knows it has just lived a life and lost it, and carries the loss into the new life, so many places on the body where angels touch us, nape of neck, base of spine, the finger of the angel pointing out the resting place of the Grail.

\*

The long golden afternoon of atheism, when we played on the lawn and thought we were alone, with nothing worse to affright us than the odd microbe, lingering rattlesnake, or misfiring neuron that turned some blameless youth into a psychopath. I feel nostalgic for atheism, now that most of us, and soon all of us, come to learn that we are not alone. And that the aliens we're always fussing about have no need of spacecraft. They are here, and have been here all along.

There are tribes without notable architecture, without literature. But there has never been a group on the earth without a fully articulated demonology. All these people, all these ever and ever ancestors, were not just fools. They knew something, and we are coming to remember it too.

We don't even need to study Hitler and Stalin and Mao and Pol Pot, monsters great and small. We just need to study little things, like road rage when it strikes even us. We are not all monsters, but some part of us seems swung into the rage for violence -- but it is not a part of us: it is a gap or hollow or access in us that demonic forces enter. The highway demon has been with us as long as there have been caravans. All the Harry Potter and Philip Pullman and Susannah Clarke and Bartimaeus are symptomatic of our growing awareness that magic exists, and is a technology, and is meant for, intended for, created for, dealing with the Other Beings who people 'our' world.

Interesting to chart the innocent awareness growing, Andrew Lang and George MacDonald, the lovely and dubious faerie of Dunsany and Machen, up through the growing sense of our own vulnerability to demonic attack that culminates in Lovecraft, the last atheist, asprawl before entities that have (like Cthulhu) always been here. Rowling, Pullman, Clarke, Stroud and so on give us a breezy, stiff-upper-lip --muscular Magianity?-- attitude: magic can be learned. Demons can be dealt with. Negotiated with.

They live here too. It is with us as with all the generations past, apart from that century or so of sweet atheism. We have to get used to it. Soon we will have --if the Pentagon does not already have-- a Ministry of Magic.

\*

How strange one is. There are Shakespeare plays one knows almost by heart, and Shakespeare plays one has never read -- and one rests comfortably in that savage contradiction.

\*

FRAKTUR. I need to know about this sense of Fraktur the Blake book talks about (and Stroudt on Pennsylvania German art) -- a sense that fraktur is fracture: breaking the letters and that it is a cabbalistic exercise,

break the letter open  
see what's inside,  
let the inside out

the bent stance of a man  
a man bent over the writing desk  
like a broken man

humbled before the word  
humbled by what he is writing  
humbled by the very act of writing it

he breaks the word as he is broken by it:

Writing is always a spiritual exercise, but the intrigue of this literal striving, the letter itself, to kneel at the foot of the letter like Saint John at the foot of the Cross, waiting dry-eyed, all tears long shed and gone, waiting to take down the broken man, Man, whose twisted Body you are still trying to read, as Gruenewald painted Him too, a twisted green letter, tzaddi maybe, nailed to the sky.

Am I making this up, or is this in fact historically, intentionally, present in the metaphysical, baroque, roots of Fraktur script? I want to know what they did in Altona, and at Herrenhut, and among the American Moravians, Mennonites ... Pennsylvania! It was there all along!

\*

You can't see darkness with your eyes closed.

You have to open your eyes to see the dark.

\*

An image is the knife-tip left in the wound.

\*

Catullus and Dante had their hendecasyllabics. I have my hendecastichs -- the eleven-line poem that seems my natural outburst.

\*

Dreamt (10 VII 07): [Naturally] [he had] a complex theory to safeguard [his] silence.

Dreamt in two stages: first "a complex theory to safeguard silence," then, almost immediately, the bracketed amplification to make a sentence.

\*

Dream of a chubby barber sitting on a chair outside his barbershop waiting for a customer -- a common sight in my childhood. But this barber also was, or could turn into, a thick snake looped on a boulder.

\*

The imaginal body. This is the body your lover feels, sees, knows in mind --though mind is something that pervades the chest, the thighs, the loins, the sides, the throat -- before he has actually touched or known or made love with your 'actual' body--- that is, the one that the dressmaker fits garments to or the rain falls on.

This imaginal body is very real to the lover; he (we'll call the lover he, for simplicity) feels it already, knows the taste of your skin, the smell of your body, knows the humid folds and the dry scalp-- it is distinct, particular, utterly different from any body he has ever touched or made love with or even thought about.

This imaginal body is a strong part of what he means when he says 'you.'

Though he knows it so well, he yearns to put that knowledge into practice on your current skin, the actual weight and mass of your physical presence. He wants to sample your eagerness and reluctance, wants to feel that skin he loves so well press forward to meet him, or shrink away shyly; he wants those lips he has studied so intently to part just a little and let his tongue slip in. The thought makes him swoon a little. He hardly dares to imagine the actual kiss, though his mind's hands are long practiced already in running along your hips, pressing you to him.

He wonders if his eyes will notice any difference between what he sees then, when he actually kisses you, and what he sees now, the fine bone structure of your face, the lucent intelligence of your eyes.

\*

The two bodies of the beloved: that should be the title of everything.

\*

And sometimes the lover realizes: my body, the body I bring her to, is also imaginal -- I only feel that I'm feeling.

\*

"Gott ist ein unbegreifliches Nichts, und ich bin ein unbegreifliches Ichts. Wir [haben] zu leiden . . . [bis] alles Seyn in das Nichtseyn and alles Etwas in das Nichts aufgeloeset ist."  
Conrad Beissel, cited in Jeff Bach, 220.

\*

A feel left in the air  
by the red woman

\*

When I'm sick I sleep.

Sleep heals.  
It feels like going back to my original planet

deep sleep or shallow

"often I am permitted to return" to my own country

The rule seems to be I can't remember that place consciously, because to be conscious of it in this life would contaminate my mindstream by letting this life shape that, and thus risk spoiling the \_experiential purity\_ of that place -- which is always ready for me in all its clarity when I return.

(As I was writing this, on the deck, it suddenly began to rain, without any prelude of dimming or wind, just water sudden from the sky -- warning me to be careful in what I was inscribing here -- this is holy ground. I closed my book and wrote no more.)

\*

So many things I don't know about you, you don't know about me. This ignorance is the ground of intimacy, and makes a friendship into a never-ending education.

\*

Imagine a special separate alphabet for each person you ever knew.

Even choosing a distinctive typeface for each would be interesting -- but a secret alphabet peculiar to each one! And in it you could write at length the actual nature you detect in her, and its actual consequences in you.

An alphabet at last in which you could, almost perforce, tell the truth.

\*

Voila mon histoire:

Had too much everything  
and still want more.

\*

Good last words:

-- Yes, Mother.

Or:

You're asking a lot.

Or:

Is it real gold or only plated?

Or:

As you were saying...

Or:

I never thought i had one of my own.

\*

[some notes from a month ago, Cuttyhunk and after:]

Osprey whistle over the roofbeam. Sufi weather: blue blue sky, sleep under wool, fall in love, get drunk on actuality alone.

\*

When we came, the flowery catkins of the chokecherry were everywhere, and the great half-mile plantations of wild *Rosa rugosa* by the sea, scarlet, pink, white, were just coming in. Now they have peaked, the catkins faded, gone, while the honeysuckle now is everywhere, and the *Rosa multiflora* --white, with many small florets-- are exultant. And the hydrangea even --that Betty planted by the rock, for me, she said, knowing my love of them-- is blue now, sky-flowers profuse but still small. But why does it make it seem --or make me seem-- more authentic to mention the names of flowers. As if I too were finally of this earth.

\*

When you read philosophy, it stays in your heart.  
The rigor of thinking makes you feel.

This heart-thing, where the blood is logical and the breath full of love, this is the midpoint, the ruby jewel Klages needed, between Spirit and Soul.

\*

As if anything depended on what I think!



\*

My first opera will be: "Herodotus in Egypt."

\*

There is a refining also to be done on every element.  
To discover the water of water. The air  
embedded in the air.  
What we call wind is the struggle of air to escape from air,  
to set its essence free.

We never see pure earth--  
what we see is earth subdued by or in conflict with air or water--  
rock or sand, marl, mud.

Refine earth to get earth.

But what of fire?

\*

Me is purely relative.

\*

The last day. The last day remains. It is like salt way back in the cupboard. You know it's there but never reach for it.

\*

Go ahead, be mechanical. A lot this destined otherwise.

You can unsay the said, the fatum, fate.

Maybe what one always means is that which undoes.

[end of older notes]

\*

There is a curiously Moloch-like quality about the university. It devours the cultural productions of recent times and its own conjuncture, then sells samples of it back, repackaged, to the very people who produce culture in the first place.

The commoditization of learning, strange. Selling the experience of reading a book is more sophisticated merchandising than selling the book. And the certificate at the end of four years attests: four years have passed, during which the graduate has successfully confined his or her attention to the notional gridwork proposed.

\*

A fool's paradise  
is perhaps  
the only paradise there is.

\*

What color am I now?

Dry water.

\*

Nine-tenths of a ruby's power is its color alone. But we need the other tenth to do the stone's work in the world. Glass beads help a lot, no doubt about that, but they don't go all the way. They do remind us. They are present, cheer us up, point us towards the missing tenth. But above all, they keep color itself before us: concentrated, alive.

\*

So the incipient magician (isn't that a polite epithet?) unless he is wealthy will need to find a cheaper, effective surrogate for the missing tenth of the genuine jewel. The finding of this succedaneum is an important sign of the magician's progress in the art.

Four big red glass beads at the corner of a pewter trivet, in sunlight on the kitchen table in a motel in Glimmerglass. Four red reminders.

\*

"...when an orator delivers a truly inspired discourse, nodded heads during the speech show he is deeply touching his [Indian] audience, but the greatest tribute that can be paid him is an absolute aftermath of silence, as, in their hearts, the listeners continue to follow him devotedly on the pathway he has led them."

...

"...when a member of the immediate family, a beloved friend, or two young lovers return home after a long separation, and finally coming before each other, [they] are transfixed in a sweet silence ... they let their spirits dance to the rhythm of their thoughts for a long while before the silence is broken..."

(David Villasenor, *Tapestries in Sand*. Healdsburg CA, 1966. page 65)

\*

"Manche quälen sich schwerfällig ab, sich aus dem Sande ans Licht emporzuarbeiten--wie große schieferfarbene Taschenkrebse, wenn die Flut zurückkommt,--und als wollten sie alles daransetzen, meine Blicke auf sich zu lenken, um mir Dinge von unendlicher Wichtigkeit zu sagen. Andere--erschöpft--fallen kraftlos zurück in ihre Löcher und geben es auf, je zu Worte zu kommen."

(Meyrink, *Golem*)

\*

Thinking about secular -- remaking the secular into the secular is to make it magical -- as if the link between a place/event back then and that place/event now actually creates a perpendicular to historical time, an

expedition to Magic Land, that is, the land where \_every gesture means\_, and every visible detail is significant.

Between the two images a powerful and mysterious Third arises, a kind of invisible instructor bringing us to the heart of our own engagement with the visible.

Secular means: of an age, of this age (as in English commonly) hence mundane -- our dismissive word for what is only real, and all around us. But secular is saeculum too, of the ages, kalpas, ins ecula secolorum Amen.

\*

The sexiest part of someone is the ipseity. That's what men and women go to bed with time after time.

\*

A fetishist displaces part of his own ipseity onto or into the fetishized aspect of the other. No wonder he'll never be sated! Through this displacement, the hunger itself enters into the fetish -- the unquenchable skin!

\*

Tong-len. The heart of the other is God's heart.

\*

When you're in another land, another language, it's the time to face what your body on earth and your mind in speech and your heart in shadow really are asking. Now might be the time to ask: what your soul wants.

Ludwig Klages, strangest of the German philosophers, an Aryan anti-Nazi, saw the great tragic history of Western culture as the battle (all too successful) of Geist gegen Seele. The suppression of soul for the sake of the exaltation of not just rationalism and other 19th century horrors, but for the sake of that dialectic deconstruction of experience into categories that makes up philosophy as we understand it -- anti-experiential, anti-'soul.' And the so-called spirit (the other reading of Geist) was perhaps an even more sinister contradiction. In the name of the spirit, religion triumphed (always authoritarian, organized, cultic, processional, social) -- leaving the soul (always personal, experiential, immediate) to howl in the dark. I think Freud, for all his rational and pseudo-rational explanations, was the first to try to hear the soul's clamor in the welter of will and representation that makes up our lives.

We are caught in that place. That's why the 'other country' is so helpful -- you may understand the people and speak to them, but your heart is running on a different language, and in that gap, the soul shines through. What you want. Because the soul is made up of closenesses and desires and affiliations, recognizes its kindred and flees from inappropriate connections.

\*

====

What feeds the soul  
is desire.  
Not doing what it desires,  
that isn't important,  
isn't worth making people unhappy.

What the soul needs  
is to know what it desires,  
and to let the constellation of that desire  
shape the way the soul sees,  
speaks, responds.

It's not about sublimation or repression.  
The alert soul represses nothing-  
it is its clear knowledge of its own desire  
that allows the soul to motivate the art and beauty,  
the dance of its person.

Only the unacknowledged desire is dangerous.  
Imagine in great detail what you desire,  
imagine the fulfillment of that desire in every particular.  
Then the soul is strong,  
and you, the person, can do as you want.

In other words, what hurts the soul is not not-getting-what-it-desires  
but not knowing what it desires.  
That is the danger, the smoldering fuse.

So if you meet someone you desire, be aware of it.  
Dwell in the desire for a time, then see who you are.  
Don't worry about trying to fulfill the desire-  
the soul's perfect knowledge of its own requirements  
will bring everything to pass.

That is the soul's word. Whence poetry.

\*

If we can't endure the hatred of our friends, how will we cope with the indifference of our enemies? These are  
the artist's notable obstacles.

\*

Language is the voice of the friend.

It has been talking to us since the beginning. Or more likely, when it began talking to us, the beginning  
began.

The voice heard over Eden was a voice.

Speaking.

It begins with hearing someone else's cry.

It begins with hearing someone.

It begins with hearing.

\*

The singular beauty of just being alive, christ, it's like a peach in August.

\*

Change by being.

\*

In claustal gloom what we demand: novation of our contract with the earth.

\*

Egypt: the more we know, the less we know.

\*

The Committee for the Abolition of the Week {CAW} seeks to abolish the chronological infrastructure of ordinary life. Of our subjection to a system. Ours is a practical agenda, and like most such does lack aesthetic appeal. We love the beauty of the Moon in Monday, and Venus on her special evening, and Mars's morning - - but for those pretty pictures we pay too dearly. They are posters that Moloch sets up to cheer slaves on our way to work.

\*

If time could only be allowed to flow free, the way experience does. The way a current flows along your electric lines -- but nothing moves, nothing changes place, no substance moves. It is pure flow. So let time itself run our machinery! Unfettered time, not boxed in days and weeks, let it surge onward and run our refrigerators and our radios -- if it doesn't, or can't, or won't, we'll find another force behind it:

the time behind time,

the Blue Lord that even death fears, all human time just a pretty little coral snake around his wrist.

\*

And when we free time from the week, we will at the same time free the gods from time, and set Venus free of Friday, and let Mercury slip bright and lissome out of all our Wednesdays. Break the week loose and we and the gods both go free.

\*

What color is an animal either?

\*

The way the soul is chained to certain images. My mother's garden, its lost roses so crimson on the left, not one missing after sixty years, the big hydrangea in the middle, blue flowers soaked all day with morning dew.

\*

To take reckoning of just those images -- of which each one's soul has dozens, scores, or more -- is worthy work for any poet.

To leave at the end of one's career a chanted tabulation that shows: these were this one soul's hallows, and these were the charges that drove it through the world. Look on them and know a single human as well as you ever can.

\*

The stronger a will, the easier it is to bend to other people's needs. Only someone with a very weak will has to insist on getting his own way. Someone with a strong will easily goes along with what the other wants or needs -- it doesn't matter, because will is sturdy, and will is always working out its own designs in the world. Because will is the public name of Being itself -- and one is as strong as one \_is.\_

\*

Temple mysticism? As if there were any other temple but the heart!

Yet 'freemasonry' shows how to build the heart.

\*

Poiesis = eureka. The only point in writing is to discover.

\*

To know of the something self another body floating through your personal air.

\*

My life is woven of obligations. And even the free time I owe to me -- to my sense of what I should be, should be doing, should have done.

Nothing is ever enough for 'me.' So I travel morning after morning to that country where anything is enough. And even that journey is an obligation.

\*

Who knows what poetry is?

Poetry is precisely what you didn't know.

\*

Thesis: That the Angel with the Flaming Sword set outside the gates of Eden was in fact standing there to burn through the thorny autonomic hedges and let us in again. That He is in fact the Gardener, the same one that Mary Magdalene would see in the garden outside Jerusalem thousands of years later, just before she recognized Him for who He actually is. He was waiting there all along for us.

\*

Trust the image. The image always tells the truth.

Sometimes it takes time -- you have to live with the image, with a wise companion, and bring it with you through all your affairs. Attend to it in different contexts, different adversities. Study slowly. It speaks.

\*

We disguise ourselves as one another all too successfully.

\*

A difficult thing about growing older: the discord between two impulses. The first, which has been developing consciously and unconsciously over many years, is towards a softening of one's edges, a releasement into natural feeling and perception, an erosion of boundaries, an openness of mind and social presence to the kindness of the world, simply, an alert and undemanding awareness of the world, a spaciousness of mind. The second impulse, one which much more recently appears, is almost directly opposite, and moves towards toughening the hide, bracing oneself against the losses which mount up in one's experiences, losses of friends and relations, influence, vitality, charismas of various kinds, and looking away, looking firmly away -- averté oculos, custodé oculorum -- from evidences of weakness, unattractiveness, senescence, futility, habits, while at the same time trying to do something practical and spiritual about all such minute catastrophes. What hard work it is to grow old!

\*

When you give a gift, never wonder what the given-to does with it.

\*

One by one a world gets made -- your world, made one by one person at a time. Made by that one, or by meeting that one.

That's what meeting means. Our world is made by the ones we meet.

\*

A car door slamming. Are they coming or going? Or just checking their tires, taking a breath of air? You can never tell by the sound itself. A perfectly ambiguous sign.

\*

\_OLD MAN

You are blind, blind  
and walk in the dark,  
you, it is you who cannot see

while I look all around and see,  
and see no masters anywhere,  
just us, all of us  
we're all the same now, slaves of the light,

common slaves

of the light or slaves of the common light,

you hurry onward through time and age  
but I have none of that,  
I come back towards you now. . .  
(he pauses)  
... maybe it's my turn to guide you.\_

He blinded himself at the end of King Oedipus. Now, in that weird grove at Colonus (which I keep seeing as the strange clustered now shabbily overgrown pine grove on the headland at Clermont) something has happened to him. He is 'gone.' But someone is left, an Old Man, and that someone sees again. And sees that we are blinded by the sensory world around us, all the things we see tear us from, distract us from, what we really see, what the eyes of the soul are really fixed on. Is that what it means? The 'Old Man' Saint Paul talks about, the old Adam, unregenerate, full of lusts and worse: full of habits?

Oedipus has outlived his habits. He who married his mother is now younger than his daughters, he is in a sense newborn -- not born again, but maybe born for the first time out of the weird dream his life was made up on: the prophecy, fate, the thing that has been spoken. You can be born out of your fate. You can be born out of your life.

Oedipus looks around and sees no masters -- no king (he has killed the king, has been the king, has died as a king and died as a beggar, and is somehow born as neither, he is born as an old man, or as no man), no god. Theseus can't bear to watch -- the triumphant vanishing of a man into himself, that is scary to see, earthshaking. It is also the death of kingship and government.

"Living, I want to depart to where I am!" cries D.H. Lawrence, and Oedipus has done just that, become an old man, an old man who sees and wants and goes his way. We are slaves of what we see with ordinary sight, slaves of the images -- not just media manipulations, but the whole 'education' that teaches us to value and possess things and obsess about them. He has none of that, so he can guide his girls, can guide us.

He is not a slave of the light, and not a master. A man can guide or be guided or can sit still. Which does each one choose?

\*

Perfect balance of a horse asleep standing up. Asleep in its feet. House. A house should be like that.

\*

Dream [6 IX 07]. Walking through Los Angeles, a dingy suburb more like Brooklyn or Chicago, but vacant lots stretching out, rare buildings. One of them in a building all by itself, like the last house left standing from a row of attached houses, is an old bookstore: in the window are ranged impressive sets of leather-bound volumes: one multi-volume set "The Flora of New Guinea." I call out to Ted Enslin who is walking with us, and prompt him to look in the window. We are astonished at the set -- of course the store is closed.

\*

A radical change in humankind happened with the movies, during my own childhood, the era of continuous showings. A subtle change, but consider: A child would sit there gripped and cathected with the story, shaped towards an ending, ending. And then things would happen: news, cartoons, trailers, the second feature: and then the film would start again. Eternal beginning. The vivid presence of the cyclic, the absence of finality:



how much we were taught by those interminable double feature afternoons that segued into night. Dark when we came out, clutching our new beginnings. Nothing ever ends. Subtly we were already being primed for the virtual. Everything was exactly as it seemed--and then it wasn't. We could always recur to the beginning. So now the eternal return was no longer the property of the mystic or philosopher, it belonged to all of us. All. It had become a basic trope for all civilized humanity. Stay in your seats and it will all begin again. With a book you had consciously to decide to 're-read' or 'start from the beginning.' But in the Gem or Embassy or Loew's Kameo you just sat there and it all renewed itself. Apocatastasis every afternoon.

\*

Skill grows out of motivation.

Teach poetry by making them poets, then the poetry will take care of itself.

Anybody can learn to write a poem; only poets can write poetry.

First be a poet.

\*

When the ancients called Homer blind, they must have meant a certain indifference they felt in his work to the sheer sensory, the glance of things, in favor of a structured, moral understanding of person against person.

Surely that is why strict Lutheran Germany valued Homer so highly, while lax latitudinarian England relished the sensuous delights of Virgil more. Whatever they said, it was Virgil they quoted.

For the blind man, everyone's an enemy.

\*

Everything is far away.

Everything falls.

\*

You walk the way you will. If you want to see what kind of will a person is driven by, watch the gait.

Walking is pure will --motion with a goal or for its own sake-- the whole body set in motion.

Running is something else. It's contextual --escape or competition or exercise-- and the context shapes, distorts, the driving will even while it manifests the will's intention towards or from.

\*

Some day we'll find the opposites of the elements. The pure withdrawal and abstention that is the opposite of water, the dark containment that is the opposite of fire. A black hole? It annihilates as surely as fire does, whatever touches it. but does not send smoke and flame and glare and soot and cinders and heat back into the air of the world -- it keeps it all \_inside.\_

Maybe it's in every \_inside\_ that we have that we should look for the elements' opposites.

\*

Alchemists leave no traces. The ones we know of were the outriders, ambassadors, quartermasters, correspondents for the nameless bright ones who turned themselves into themselves (Au = gold) and stayed apart. Abscondite masters. They, like the lammed-vavniks in Jewish tradition, pass through our occasional midst, town or mountain. Sometimes we meet their splendid Talleyrands, like an Eugenius or a Paracelsus, but never themselves. Except we do, over and over, but never know.

\*

I suppose that is my central song: what we meet and never know it, the love affairs through which we pass unknown and unknowing, the doors we open and look vaguely through, stand there gormless then wander away.

The song that's all around us all the time, drowned out by music.

\*

I can't be smart every morning.  
I need your sassy questions  
to rehearse me. Tibi cano.

\*

Some people about control, about giving power to the other person. I think if you stay in yourself, sure in what you want (above all what you want) and know, nobody has control over you. It's when one drifts into what the other wants that one loses control of the situation. Be you and be in power: the will to power is the will to be. Being itself is control.

\*

Mist on the pond early. The fewest loosestrife I remember. Stream very low, trees still green. I walk around as if I have come back from somewhere not the earth.

\*

Such sleep these days, brief and terrible.

Dream by its very nature is alien abduction.

\*

\_Onus humanum\_: to know so little. Or: to know so much and be able to do so little.

\*

Thomas Bernhard's work and voice I love so well. But now I find his book \_The Voice Imitator\_ and it shows instead his limitations. Tries by turn to be Hebel or Kafka or Adorno, fails. The little fables are far too clever, too rational. The curse of the theater haunts them: the playwright's deft, all too easy, sense of epiphany of the banal. Fénelon's \_nouvelles\_ in three lines (thanks, Luc!) do it better, firmer, fiercer.

And in the little stories, it's the standing back from the characters and their deeds or dreads, that makes him feel more like Canetti, that heartless cleverness, that almost smug arrogant apartness of his stance.

More to think on this. I want to be wrong.

\*

Fénéon. Getting the world into its news, getting the news into three lines. Making up the news to fit the world.

Not just getting the historia (ficta aut vera) into three lines of type for the newspaper column, but getting it into one sentence (like Slonimsky in his version of Baker's dictionary). History as sentences. History as a sentence.

\*

Every car that passes by roars a denunciation of our system. Drivers turn up the volume on their audio to drown out the noise of their own animal.

\*

Diseases of music: Listening. Caring. Responding. Remembering.

\*

An ending is always a mistake.

\*

Little by little have I denied myself to those who care for me? With the thought that when no one does and no one's left, then I can go? But there is always someone I do not remember or cannot imagine, and for that person I should stay. And if that person turns out to be me, then one at least person I shall not have refused. But let it be the other. The other is my mother. Better let it be you.

\*

Restless. But the lack is not 'rest' but 'deed.' I feel deedless. A weightlifter with a pile of feathers.

\*

Recent books: May Day (poems, Parsifal Press); Sainte Terre (Shivastan); Threads (a cycle of poems, First Intensity Press); Lapis (Godine/Black Sparrow). Forthcoming: The Book from the Sky (novel); The Language of Eden (a poem investigating psychoanalytic discourse); Opening the Seals (a long poem essaying to reflect and refract proto-linguistics matters: sounds and roots). The newly finished long poem Fire Exit, biggest project of recent years, is now getting ready for publication. RK is one of the directors of the Writing Program at Bard College. For twenty-five years he has studied the philosophy and systematic practices of Vajrayana Buddhism under the guidance of Kalu Rinpoche and Norlha Rinpoche -- the teaching of those most generous masters has enriched and clarified his life-long devotion to the Western wisdom traditions.

\*

Travels into the body, I bet that's what we'll all write, since we're still on pilgrimage to that most elusive of all shrines. Our own body, I mean, let alone the distant galaxies of other people's. [note to Elizabeth Robinson, on her Out of the Body Book project.]

\*

Real power is not something one has, it is something one is. If you have power, you can always lose it. If you are power, it can never be lost. It continues to draw your life, the quality of your life attracts people and situations to you.

\*

Power is not getting what you want, it is wanting what you get.

\*

The problem is seldom finding the key. The real problem is finding the door.

\*

Balance. Tibetan letter {na} (nasal, tonguetip between teeth) -- means 'sick.' Sickness. what can it be but imbalance -- of body, mind, soul -- of chemical, emotional, sensory inputs. The Medicine Buddha's lapis light heals lust's infections too, and anger's inflammations. Our usual mistake: to think physical illness different from emotional disturbance -- we are one physis. Balance. The letter {na}, how easy for it to topple over. As it is written, it looks like a broad-headed long nail standing on its point. O keep balance! Keep thinking to keep balance.

\*

There are poems that can only exist as dialogues from broken plays, 'dumbshows' in words, word mimes. They arise like waves, and fall back, and the ocean is not changed. Such discourses are the opposites of drama, which (I think) always has words entrain action, action entrain resolution.

\*

I'm just trying to give you all I can, that's all. No power, no control scene. Just my ability to give, and all of that I give to you, unarmed, having no hope of ever satisfying either of us, but giving what I can. Most of our future is in the past -- but the past is pasture too, where even we can roam around and hunker down and hide a while and be us, be us a lot, not enough. Not everything, but not nothing either.

\*

In hope of achieving balance, I wear the color of the day.

\*

These days I want to feed on sleep. I am hungry for sleep.

\*

In a mess hall on the moon, I am teaching someone to eat, to prepare, kidneys.

There are cars parked outside. A vista, with cars in it, dwindling into grey distance.

In a packed assembly hall I take my seat. My name is called, I raise my hand, am told that the Dean wants to see me. "I've been bad already," I say, rising. Laughter. It's clear that I am a high-ranking something or other, so my remark amuses. Breaks the ice in this formal gathering. I wonder: is that my role, to break the ice? To wake up \_a different mood\_ in whatever is the case? [Dream, 28.X.07]

\*

The poor mistake rhythm for melody. They settle for a drumbeat, when they could be saved by a tune.

\*

Humans, we, us -- we control the moon. If there were no humans, the moon would be different. If there were no sentient beings on earth, there would be no moon at all. The moon is pure response. That is why the ancients called it the Chalice of Semen.

\*

Following a tune --une petite phrase-- is like almost recognizing a face in the street, and following the person shyly, but steadily, to see if it is finally the face of someone you know, someone you love. (listening to the Bridge string quartet No.1, 2nd mvt, adagio molto)

\*

The secret nature of reality is a woman's face.

\*

All the people born into the world at the same time are part of the same person.

But what is the 'same' time?

\*

We need a graph that means [?!], question and exclamation at once.

As if a cry is the truest answer.

\*

Why does remember?

\*

There is a dream state that can happen while I'm awake -- sometimes listening to music, as today to a Schubert quintet. Not asleep, but while hearing the music clearly I am in a different place. My eyes are open inward as well as outward. What is this state? I call it a pale dream, or the White Dream.

\*

How strange to look up from the communion chalice being offered to me at the funeral mass and see the deacon is someone I have for such a long time wanted to be in bed with, and see those lips I want everted for my kisses now speaking, in priestly undertone, about the blood of Christ. Truly how strange it is that we are

people, always people, never get away from it, never reach the paradisaal point where the entity vanishes into essence, and the being exists only in its function.

=====

finding this note I wrote just after Dick Higgins's funeral. The distance from the New York scene in 1959, Yoko Ono's loft, the angry mimeographs and joyous combinations of those days, the arrogance of the vanguard we were ... to this country church to which Dick, a churchman, had come with regularity in recent years so that the celebrant could speak of Dick's relationship with the church and with his God.

\*

Always I provide people with Waffen gegen mich, I am generous with the weapons any hand can turn against me, that is my business, isn't it, I really am an ancient Roman after all, römische katholische Kirche, build an empire so that every wandering Volk can strike against me, tear down the walls I build: so that you can come to my heart, so that you can pour into the streets of my city. That is why I build everything I build, so that you, someone like you, can overwhelm the limes, die Grenzen, and come in. You capture my city. Waffen und Wagen, and as if that weren't dangerous enough, bildhauerische präzise Lippen just a little turned out, a little parted for a fated kiss. And this city of mine, in here, in with me, is decadent and perverse and corrupt, just like old Rome, wives and slaves and concubines, temples to strange gods, passionate sexual worship of dark namenlose Streben, worship of no sky god but the clouds, the clouds themselves. Once I called myself der Wolkenhirt, that was in England years ago, when I inherited my body for the first time, early 1980s, suddenly I was no Ungeheuer, was normaler Mann, walked around, walked around, Norfolk marshes, cliffs, moors of Yorkshire, green green lowlands of Somerset where my great-grandfather came from, I was a Wolkenhirt at last, walked around, guckte in die Luft, sah die Wolken, and suddenly I knew I needed nothing else. But I need everything. You said it right: I want everything new, and I don't want to give up what I have. When I was in school I read a lot of Kierkegaard - his Either/Or [Entweder/Oder] was the crux for me, and I constantly fought against it, and made my own slogan Both/And. And so it's been all my life. Gierig? Neugierig? Or just naturally wanting - like someone composing a mosaic - to put it all together.

\*

This harb is the first word of Genesis - bereshith - spelled backwards and supplied with a helping vowel. It is like the ta'wil spoken of in all those interviews with me, a kind of leading backwards from the evident or the local to the primal, Imaginal, world from which the present comes: exactly as some mental/emotional/intellectual event or 'passion' will be the Imaginal World from which the present 'mood' arises. Arriving, always arriving: that is your keyword, your Grail word- to observe the arriving.

\*

Great dome of the Ukrainian Cathedral, stand inside under the dome, knowing what is to be known. What can only be known by standing inside.

Something that stands for heaven. When the Russians and Ukrainians build their churches, they intend them to make the worshippers feel that for an hour or three they have been in heaven.

\*

I have a natural delight in secrecy.

From the time I was perhaps eight years old, my favorite Christmas present was always a chemistry set, and from the time I was ten I had one set up in the little cellar room that was mine, and where I spent all my time,

reading, thinking, daydreaming. Even at that time, I realized that I was less interested in the actual bench work of chemistry than I was in contemplating the universe of materials in transformation. I had never really heard of alchemy, but already the alchemical disposition had formed in me: to involve mind and its imaginal, seminal, powers in the work of transforming a material world.

I loved the flasks and test tubes and little flames, the tiny jars nested so neatly by a wise company that knew just which chemicals a child should have. A wise Company that gave me what I needed. O the oral thrill of receiving the word.

My natural delight in secrecy extends of course to everything that has to do with process, be it the process of art making or the process of the heart.

So for me it is a gentle pleasure to talk with people about their affairs and keep silent about my own - I don't mean I elicit their confidences, far from it, but I endure them, taking interest, trying to be wise. But I take a real delight in keeping my own to my own.

Because in alchemy the very secrecy is not just a part of the process. It is an actual tool. Silence is the great Reverberating Oven, which increases the heat of the process, and brings it to the critical temperature at which the transformation starts.

Idea turns into image, image into text or film or art or gold. Just as a novelist or film maker prefers to say nothing of the work she's actually doing, so the alchemist stands silent in the doorway of his house, looking out onto the busy street, smiling, having a sweet word with the neighbors and the passers by, but saying nothing of what is going forward in the shadowy house behind him.

So yogins say nothing of their experiences in meditation, poets nothing of the poem in hand, lovers nothing of the one they love or why they love them.

This holy silence! To speak of these things is not so much to profane them as to spill them out unfinished and unready. To speak about the affairs of the heart, the affairs of art, is to pry up the seed to see if it has sprouted, or pluck up the sapling to see if it has roots.

Interesting that this reflection began with the simple remembrance of the big Ukrainian cathedral, I can't even recall what street it's on. And that failure is part of it too. In some Eastern Christian rituals, there used to be a moment called the Great Silence, when the doors of the temple are opened, and we look in. And something wordlessly comes out and touches us.

\*

From my earliest glimpses of the world, by word and image, guess and dream and story half overheard, it seemed to me that the greatest of all things was to tell of the interpenetration of the ordinary by the extraordinary: matter by spirit, history by godhead's incarnation, the political by the magical, the congressmen by angels.

I had not much love for fantasy per se, for remote kingdom's a galaxy away, where things were such and so and never come home, or come home only with a wistful look in the eye, and all lost.

What I wanted was the crisp daytime pierced with the brighter, fiercer gesture of the angel.

An angel is all about entering. An angel never abides, and never leaves. An angel is all entering:

in school children begin their definitions "...is when" - and that is strictly right for angels. An angel is when something ripples into the system from outside, an angel is when a new thing happens, an angel is when it comes in.

\*

### The Other Side of the Mirror

I have been thinking about this anger that so many women have articulated about the Male Gaze. Warped and full of malaise as our gender relations are, I wonder if there isn't something else at work here as well. Maybe the anger is really a disguised form of a deeper and more ancient outrage. The 'feminist' rage, quarrelsome though it may be, is more socially acceptable than the outrage it masks. I think the real anger is directed at the victimization of the Mother, enthralled by her infant's Gaze. Anything that reminds a woman of that unpersoning, demanding, obsessive yet fickle gaze will horrify her. Of course men inherit the gaze from infancy. Of course they turn towards women some version of that impersonal yearning with which the child dominates its world.

Lacan's 'mirror phase' positions the child in front of the mirror ? but behind the child is the adoring mother who beholds the act of recognition ? and the child beholds that while it moves, and knows itself in moving, behind it there stands one who does not move. A fixed unperson, a mere part of its world.

Women who rage against the male gaze are perhaps unwilling to recognize that a woman's truest enemy is her child, the very enemy she is least able to resist. No wonder she's angry. The gaze humiliates her: the one person in the world she loves most, with all her heart and biology, is precisely the one for whom she is not a person at all, merely a necessity, an object, a food.

\*

An image fades into an image. Into another image. An image fades.

\*

The hardest things to give up are the ones you don't have.

\*

What if the dead carry their old diseases with them? Sickly ghosts stumbling through time in search of cure.

\*

Old diseases need old medicines. Love still needs one another.

\*

All night I drank the cup you gave me. And woke to ask you. Not so much what was in it, because my throat knows that and doesn't need a word. But ask you, because I want to ask you, because asking is a part of what anybody is we might try to be. That is lame, like an old moon, gone tonight or tomorrow night from the sky. Even the shyest witches are sly, and know more than others. They know words in old languages, and some word or two in every language. But they don't just know words or with words. They know with their fingers,



their knees, their lyrical soft elbows, their eyelashes. This is a witch, a body of knowing by night. All night they worked in stone, worked the stone so that when light comes back up the world will stand more or less firm around us. They do it for us. Everybody does it for us. So in the stone room under the house (this was the dream you had for me, thank you) the witches were performing the ritual called Knowing Things by Way of the Chalice. But what was in the chalice, that's what I need to ask you. You know because you were there and I only saw. Seeing is so feeble, compared to being somewhere with the silver in your hands and the gold on your fingers and the last light of the dying moon pretty, no fancier word, pretty on the slim new snow. Or maybe the chalice was empty, they have so many rituals, this may have been the Mystery of the Vacant Chariot, whose sacramental sign is an empty cup. When do we drink it together and find out?

\*

\_My God, what a world! You can prove nothing.\_  
-Walter De La Mare, "Out of the Deep," 1923.

\*

In Kabbalah our only hope.

Nec spe nec metu -- and hope is also what we can learn to live without. Callahan's indians: "We're the No-Hopis..."

To live without.

And the sacred alphabet teaches that too.

To be a fish aswim in the IM [yam].

\*

The imagination is an orchestra. The conductor is dead on the podium but the music never stops.

\*

I have never believed in the ordinary, but I have always loved it. [one more epitaph for me]

\*

Knowing is violation.

\*

Do you think people will ever tell each other the truth? The truth means: to say accurately what images of the other arise in the mind of the self. Not to share, or not just to share, the emotional summary one makes of another person, but to declare like a shipment's manifest --or a manifesto-- exactly the images, thoughts, visions of the other that come to the self's mind. Tell the texture or glisten or smell that those images have or yield. That would be the tryth -- the truth that only you in all this world know, can ever know unless you tell. That is why each of us is or can be a Truthteller, a soothsayer, a knower of the world. You are the only one who can declare that portion of the truth that arises in your mind, and only there.

We owe our images to the world.

And will you dare to return to each person the images of them that their actuality, their essence, their energy, made arise in your mind? How will they ever know themselves unless you do?

If you could tell me, I could know me.

Everyone must one day be a poet, must tell the truth or try to tell it.

"You" is a collection of still and moving images, senses, icons adrift in the dark of my mind. "Telling" is the only way to keep from unconsciously projecting those images back onto you, and feeling baffled or frantic when they don't match "your" sense of yourself. Or don't work.

How to tell. Art of Poetry. Art of not telling lies.

And the biggest lie we tell is not telling.

\*

Bad art can only be art at all by reminding us of good art. Good art is the product of telepathic powers in the artist -- I begin to learn that today.

Telepathic powers [un]consciously projected into the art work, from which it's retrieved by the sensorium of the beholder.

This means of action (or "mode of action" as the druggists would say) of art has never been mentioned, let alone discussed.

Action at a distance.

Why a Pieter Saenredam church interior is utterly different from his contemporaries' equivalent paintings, which 'look just like it.' What intensity of frightened Catholic sexual longing ill-silenced by the vast light-infested spaces makes these Protestant inscapes so overwhelming? Isn't it the mind of the artist projected?

Or how (more to our time, our sense of relevance) a Rothko panel gets us (literally) between the eyes, while his strategy or habits can be imitated with no effect whatsoever.

How offended art criticism would be to learn that there is something going on that is not susceptible to formal or quantitative analysis, something that can only be felt. And those feelings are what they talk about, honest critics, no matter how strictly they try to talk about the mark on the canvas, the structure.

It is when they deal with the whole 'body of work' of an artist that they allow themselves to talk broadly of meanings -- meanings which are actually profoundly and specifically encoded in any single painting, that can be decoded only by the heartfelt mind of the viewer.

These questions rise when one asks of (say) an abstract painting, why this mark, why this gesture? Why does this painting work, and another image --so very like it-- does not?

The work of art is a mind-lock perception sets free. To pour thinking into something seen -- that is art.

An object or image charged with telepathy.

\*

Writing books I wouldn't dare to read.

\*

The dance of ordinary light that a film can make extraordinary, god-like or even godly. Syberberg's H-----.

\*

So deep in the night, though the clock doesn't know it -- I walked a lot today, in morning through luminous mist like some Goethean fantasy about the birth of color, then in the afternoon we walked in sunlight veering to cold, by the river.

\*

Nature tells me when to turn on the light, lower my eyelids, take a walk in her generous trees, But what do I tell her? There must be reciprocation in any love. Could my attention possibly give her something, add a minim of devotion to the riches of the natural order?

\*

But matter enjoys its destinations. Matter loves what we do with it. There is nothing more quietly beautiful in the world than the deeply spiritual, giving, generous, self-abandoning and at the same time self-fulfilling way in which matter gives itself into our hands. For us to use. Matter wants to be used.

\*

It doesn't matter. I have written so many things into the world that the world (or mind or who) wrote into me. A little man sitting in the desert humming, his music also enters, inscribes itself into the world. All alone or all about, the word spoken writes itself into the great text. The world is so huge. But the world is also a tiny place, where the least breath dislodges meaning from a sound.

I woke up thinking that. "It doesn't matter" had the feeling of Allein, was tut's, was tut's!" Salome crying out, what does it matter if the main thing has been done. I have kissed your lips, she cries out, accepting the guilt and triumph of her sin, which also was a dance. And then the soldiers crush her. But it was worth it.

I woke up thinking like that, everything is worth itself. It doesn't matter so much what effect my work or any work seems to have -- the effect of art is deeper, deeper in people, deeper in time, deeper in the substance of the world itself, that joyous willingness we call Matter.

Matter that is, our language tells us, also our Mother.

\*

I have been thinking a lot about matter these days, the sweetness and kindness of things.

\*

Surrealism, from its outset and before, Lautreamont to Gracq, depends upon the first person singular. Every book is an I-book for surrealism. No other subject, no other pronoun, wields and is wielded by such dreams.

\*

Waking early on 12 Jan 2008, a German sentence spoke me awake:

Ich will nicht so tief im Koerper leben --  
[I dont want to live so deep in the body]

that's why no swimming, no sauna, how I want not to be in body,

that's why sex is so vital, because \_sex lives in the body of the other\_ --

sex is will, and lives no deeper in the body than the skin,

(it is skin that takes the skin of the other in,  
only skin)

Will toward the "figure of [the] Outward"  
the one standing there,  
over there.

Ich will nicht so tief im Koerper wohnen  
[I don't want to dwell so deep in the body] ==  
hence the Dharma, ths spring past death,  
the always departing, the actual  
embrace of the other \_as\_ the self and conversely,

in this life (by sending & taking -- \_tong-len\_)  
and the next

where one's actual beloved is  
one's next embodiment.

(This part seems less clear as I write it down, poured out of waking.)

(The German phrases are mine -- how we sometimes talk to ourselves about the deepest things only in a foreign language, as if half-hoping not to understand -- and the first one woke me and wouldnt let go cycling and commenting on itself till I got up and wrote it down.)

\*

Finally today I take in hand the small squat edition of the late Julien Gracq's The Castle of Argol that New Directions published when I was very young -- and that I used to see in the 8th St. Bookshop for years. Never touched till today. Facing the title page a list of some of their Modernist classics in that format back then: Pound's ABC of Reading, The Flea of Sodom, which were my own classics. But it all seems a hundred years ago -- yet as I look at the book itself, shape, format, its kindred catalogued on the frontispiece, I feel again the excitement of my own first years, my own first taste of the avant-garde. Dahlberg, Kierkegaard, Rexroth, Queneau, Conrad, Hawkes, Sartre, W.C.Williams, Pasternak --- all jumbled together, all new, all somehow eternally Now. What a strange garden, their names all together. Some of them still seem chancy, fresh, dangerous: Hawkes, Queneau.

There seems then to be a vital classical avant-garde canon to set beside (or set fire to) the sluggishly evolving canon of official literature. Work that is \_inherently, perennially vanguard\_ -- Joyce, Stein, Apollinaire, Pound, Zukofsky, Khlebnikov, Jandl, Char?

\*

Nature is a superstition.

\*

The veil of Isis is the human mind.

\*

Identity is the first mistake.

\*

Who am I? is the only question in the world guaranteed to produce only wrong answers.

\*

by R.S. Thomas:

#### Death Of A Poet

Laid now on his smooth bed  
For the last time, watching dully  
Through heavy eyelids the day's colour  
Widow the sky, what can he say  
Worthy of record, the books all open,  
Pens ready, the faces, sad,  
Waiting gravely for the tired lips  
To move once -- what can he say?

His tongue wrestles to force one word  
Past the thick phlegm; no speech, no phrases  
For the day's news, just the one word 'sorry';  
Sorry for the lies, for the long failure  
In the poet's war; that he preferred  
The easier rhythms of the heart  
To the mind's scansion; that now he dies  
Intestate, having nothing to leave  
But a few songs, cold as stones  
In the thin hands that asked for bread.

\*

In my dream, the violinist Julia Fischer paused before the cadenza and explained to the audience how the new cadenza she was about to have the honor of playing had been composed by young Mr Paul [ ], present in the audience, who had in fact written it not for her, Julia, but for [ ], the distinguished concertmaster of this orchestra -- who also seemed to be present. The explanation went on and on; at first I too was present as she explained, then absent, reading the transcript of her remarks (but the concert hall sounds and feelings were still all around me), which at first were in German (we are after all in Kiel, in the Kieler Schloss), then in English. At first it seems that the concertmaster -- a tall, unappealing woman in her fifties, I'd say -- was alive and well, and had graciously yielded to the the young Julia the right of first performance. But then it

seemed she actually as dead, and Julia was about to play this new cadenza in her memory. The dream ended before the cadenza began.

Is it to be said, or thought, that to yield the moment to another  
is the same as death?

Or is that all that death is,  
yielding the score or instrument to somebody younger  
to carry it forward

to the happy and attentive audience?  
And for whom did I write my cadenza?

\*

\_in quo salietur?\_

\*

Kant is the domovoi of European culture; its house is his house, the bleak Scot with his copious German settled on the Slavic coast. He doesn't want Europeans to think outside his solemn and on the whole comfortable thinking-salon. He douses occult fires whenever he can, and sneers from his chimneycorner at ghost-seers and New Age illuminates.

By and large we comply with him, his sense of what is important to think about, and how to do that thinking aright. Even though our forefathers escaped to the New World precisely (if unconsciously) to flee his categories, they quickly built them up again all round, as the old Iceland settlers brought ridge-poles from their former continental homes. All our floorboards and shingles are steeped in his thought.

What would it be like to think something new?

That kind of house would such thinking built?

But always what seems at first to be new turns out to be only one more image -- one more metaphor. "Only another orphan," as our most magisterially Kantian novel concludes.

\*

A man with no sense of humor can't be serious.

\*

NARRATION:

There are two forms--

- a) when all is known and 'merely' has to be told
- b) when nothing is really known, and everything is beginning.

(A) is the order of history, essentially anecdote, report.

(B) is the order of invention:

- i. working from a character or persons
- 11. working from lyric observation or detail

Lawrence's "Snake" is an instance of (a) as the ground of (b) -- something indeed happened, but then the telling is not what happened, but working out the meaning of what happened.

\*

What love teaches us is that there is no neutral space. Everything means. Every single thing means. Every fucking thing means. Whatever rhetorical level you reach, or reach for, the fundamental postulate is that: everything counts. Those teachings that show this best (Buddhism, Steiner's Goethean wisdom, Renaissance painting) are our guides. The gleam on the doorknob is painted with as much care and devotion as the gleam on the angel's halo, or the tender flush on the Virgin's cheek. Everything matters. As long as art commits to that (and the modern grace of artifact, soupcan, felt and fur and copper, is profoundly so committed), art can help us. Comfort and help.

\*

\_Augenblick\_ means a moment, the twinkling of an eye. Our form would be 'eyeblick.' But \_blick\_ means a glimpse, a sight, something seen. And blink means to close the eyes, if only to open them again. We blink against the light.

How did blick (= see) become blink (=not see)?

Do we English-speakers see better with our eyes closed?

\*

Language a forest. Language is a forest. The words are trees. But in them and between them and beneath them there is a rich complex life to which the traveler has to pay the most precise and reverent attention.

\*

Liberate the aces, name of the game.

\*

When one has lived a certain time, it's hard to meet a woman you haven't met before.

\*

"From: orville crane <manbythewater@hotmail.com>  
Subject: LL-L "Etymology" 2008.03.15 (04) [E]

Lowlander Ron,

\* The Faroese have the 'hulda', (imaginary) being which is believed to hide things which are right in front of one's eyes. These beings are believed by some to be the unwashed children of Eve. There is a whole group of words for this hidden group of beings and their everyday life;

1. huldubatur-boat manned by huldur(plural)
2. huldudrongur-fairy boy
3. huldafolk-hulda people
4. huldugenta- girl hulda

5. huldukona- hulda wife
6. huldukugv- cow belonging to huldufolk
7. huldumadur- male hulda
8. hulduneyt- cattle belonging to huldufolk
9. hulduseyður- sheep belonging to huldufolk.

The Far. verb, 'hylja' means to cover, hide, conceal.

A nighttime walk in the Faroese outfield might show the hiker this hidden world."

\*

Religion is a disease that happens to ethics.

As an example: the Biblical injunction, so transparently intended to promote a kind of universal sympathy and compassion, against seething a kid in the milk of its mother, is dried out into a religious legalism about all milk and all meat. The rule is kept, the compassion forgotten. Or, from the Christian side, for centuries one did not eat meat on Friday, in mournful remembrance of the death of the Lord's body on the cross -- so one ate instead the dead bodies of fish or (in some dispensations) birds.

\*

I think of how Creeley's "my love" (tender, ironic, sincere, offhand, wounded as it sounds breathed in Bob's own reading) turned in Jean Daive's translation to "mon amour," naturally enough, but how vastly, vilely, different -- it came across spoken with a dreadful hypersensitivity, the kind that makes us hate poetry. But what could Daive have done? Creeley had created a \_space\_ in which 'my love' could speak with a controlled, controlling resonance. Daive had not, as a translator, created such a space in French. And this is one instance where the literal translation can be the most treasonous. (Remembering our reading at the Pompidou a decade ago.)

\*

How to create a space in which the word sounds right and resounds correctly.

Translation is no different from composition. How could it be?

It is just an altar dedicated to a different \_santo\_ from the one who usually talks in your head.

Translation is the same as writing, except the translator endures a benign and necessary (literal) schizophrenia.

The mouth with two minds.

\*

As we hurtle towards death, things get clearer and clearer. Dozens, scores of things, doubts, issues, histories quickly gel into sense. Suddenly, like a chest easing, breathing easy, suddenly the knowing comes. Oh that's why....[whatever it is] ! may well be the last cry.

\*

Entitlement. A strong sense of entitlement is a kind of prison. A person early taught entitlement can't escape from her own desires and the necessity of fulfilling them. One \_has to\_ get the thing one wants. One is not free to decide not to want, not to have to get, not to get.



\*

Her body movements --carefully imitating the Speech Eurythmy she'd seen at Camphill Village -- were a description of the movements she had seen and at the same time a critique of them. Her body was telling what her mind and sensibility had thought about what she had seen.

Body as critic.

Body as describer.

Leading to: body as speaker.

Let the body learn to / enact / perform / = inform space with / the sounds of language. The actual sounds in the actual language (English is not German) speaking, but speaking through movements of the body as a whole, not just the 'organs of articulation.'

Or better still: the body as organ of articulation.

For each of the 13 or 14 vowels a movement, for each of the thirty or so consonants, a pose (for stops) or gesture (for fricatives and continuants).

Can we learn how to speak?

Not sign language but space language.

\*

Next book: Intermediate Thinglish. Thinglish Without Tears. Elementary Thinglish.

\*

The reader is himself a footnote in the text being read.

But the asterisk that reminds him of his condition has somehow strangely dropped out of the text, leaving the reader to find the phrase or section or judgment in the text that is for him. Or is him, himself, forever after.

\*

Who said: painting the dictionary red?

\*

In this sickness, when I'm thinking, I'm at some distance from the thinking, I see the words of my thinking roll onto the paper or come onto the screen but I am not exactly writing or typing them; something is happening, and I seem to be able to follow the argument my words are constructing, As yesterday on the phone I cd have a rational discussion of departmental business without confusion, watching myself participate. No, that's too strong a sense of apartness. Some distance, only a little distance away from the one who is speaking.

\*

Having an active social life shortens it.

\*

Everyone is looking out  
of his own eyes too

\*

## POETRY

Poetry is the weaving of silence into speech.

Every age has its own ideas of what poetry is about or what poetry does. But I'm speaking of what poetry is. What it always is, the weaving of silence into language,

weaving by ear or metric or good idea  
moments of silence into speech,

line ends, caesuras, great pauses, poetry.

The weaving uses silence to shape sound into meaning or music.

And music is (as ever) meaning enough.

\*

## RUNNICLE.

A runnicle is an image left over from dream left in the mind at waking, an image or fact with no narrative content or context. This information is itself a runnicle, and I wake, hurry to write it down and share this runnicle with the dream community. 23 May 2008.

\*

Poor young people who don't even have any perversions of their own yet.

\*

Dream [21 VI 08]:

A curiously level, plausible, quiet dream, nothing the least bit dream-like about it. Four of us in one small room. The one who had brought me (perhaps PLW) and introduced me to the people in it was sitting at my left, and played no further part, apart from my looking towards him from time to time as one does, sometimes worried how he might be taking what I was saying. Because it was mostly me talking.

In front of me, crosslegged casual on the bed, a man, middle-aged, Levantine, possibly Jewish. He wore a long pale caftan, and seemed to be the guru of the woman sitting at my right side: late forties, slim, long black greying hair tied back loosely, certainly Jewish, American. The nature of their spiritual connection seemed though to be Muslim -- Sufi, but certainly Western Sufi. There seemed no hint of Qur'an, no iconography of any kind -- just a sense of (what I think of as) narrative sufism, à la Idries Shah, wise about being wise, many parables and not much theology.

I did all the talking. I was urgently supportive of the woman's relationship with her teacher; at one point I rose and gestured towards him and said to her, while pointing to him: "there is no relationship in the world more sacred, more important, than that of pir and murshid." I imagined those words meant guru and disciple, but wasn't sure, and a few minutes later repeated the proposition using guru and disciple.

She and I were sitting at either end of a couch. I kept my distance, and made it a point to avoid any physical contact with her, even the slightest -- that seemed important. In fact, it showed my feelings accurately, because I had some fear that this woman might be at risk of wanting to transfer her discipleship from him to me -- something I was very conscious of not wanting. At one point I said: "Trust the Guru you have found; your whole life's karma has brought you to him and him to you. Trust that connection." She had that wavering intensity of loyalty one often sees in people who have gone through spiritual hippiedom -- yes, at one point in the dream I acknowledged that all of us in the room had at one time or another been in Dharamsala -- if not always for the same questing reasons.

Later, she and I were walking in a hallway outside the room, and she was explaining to me that despite all my enthusiasm for her relationship with her teacher, the guru was jealous of me though he had said nothing at all the whole time I was talking, but always seemed attentive and friendly. I discounted the jealousy -- the guru has a right to his own emotions, I explained, and feeling a natural human jealousy (presumably at or of my volubility?) gave him material to work with spiritually. And jealousy, even if it does nothing else, shows us what we in fact value, more than we usually notice until it is threatened with being taken away. In any case, all through the dream I was conscious of my determination not to let the woman get interested in me. But why had I bothered even talking? Carried away by afflatus, I seemed to be in danger of encouraging the very thing I was trying to avoid.

Best memory: at one point she had turned to me and started to say "You have a wonderful..." (presumably about to say voice or vocabulary or blarney) and I cut her off and said "I have a wonderful teacher." And told her about Rinpoche.

\*