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### Charles Olson, "Projective Verse," 1950

Four years after William Carlos Williams wrote his introduction to *The Wedge*, he spoke at the University of Washington. In a lecture entitled "The Poem as a Field of Action," Williams said, "I propose sweeping changes from top to bottom of the poetic structure."

Whereas Williams believed this new structure might evolve out of attention paid to speech rhythms, Charles Olson claimed it would come from "the act of the composition itself." In this extremely influential essay, published in *New York Poetry* in 1950, Olson proposes a new method for doing so, one based on the rhythms of breath and the projective nature of thought.

"Projective Verse" was written a year before Olson began his years as instructor and director of Black Mountain College, in North Carolina, which had on its faculty such experimental artists as the composer John Cage, choreographer Merce Cunningham, and painters Franz Kline and Robert Rauschenberg. During his tenure there, he met and published Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, and Denise Levertov (who became known as Black Mountain poets), as well as Louis Zukofsky, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac. Promoting a verse that, like Williams's, is active and alive, not reflective or representational, Olson believed that "art doesn't seek to describe but to enact."



Projective

Verse

(projectile

(percussive

(prospective

vs.

The NON-Projective

*(or what a French critic calls "closed" verse, that verse which print bred and which is pretty much what we have had, in English & American, and have still got, despite the work of Pound & Williams:*

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ter day, as what you might call t.*

Verse now, 1950, if it is to go ahead  
take it, catch up and put into its  
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(The revolution of the ear, 1910, the  
poets.)

I want to do two things: first, try to  
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drama, say, or of epic, perhaps, may

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First, some simplicities that a ma  
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stanza, over-all form, what is the "c

(1) the *kinetics* of the thing. A p  
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is the process by which a poet get  
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take away?

This is the problem which  
form is specially confronted by. A  
recognitions. From the moment he

*it led Keats, already a hundred years ago, to see it (Wordsworth's, Milton's) in the light of "the Egotistical Sublime"; and it persists, at this latter day, as what you might call the private-soul-at-any-public-wall)*

Verse now, 1950, if it is to go ahead, if it is to be of *essential* use, must, I take it, catch up and put into itself certain laws and possibilities of the breath, of the breathing of the man who writes as well as of his listenings. (The revolution of the ear, 1910, the trochee's heave, asks it of the younger poets.)



I want to do two things: first, try to show what projective or OPEN verse is, what it involves, in its act of composition, how, in distinction from the non-projective, it is accomplished; and II, suggest a few ideas about what stance toward reality brings such verse into being, what that stance does, both to the poet and to his reader. (The stance involves, for example, a change beyond, and larger than, the technical, and may, the way things look, lead to new poetics and to new concepts from which some sort of drama, say, or of epic, perhaps, may emerge.)

I

First, some simplicities that a man learns, if he works in OPEN, or what can also be called COMPOSITION BY FIELD, as opposed to inherited line, stanza, over-all form, what is the "old" base of the non-projective.

(I) the *kinetics* of the thing. A poem is energy transferred from where the poet got it (he will have some several causations), by way of the poem itself to, all the way over to, the reader. Okay. Then the poem itself must, at all points, be a high energy-construct and, at all points, an energy-discharge. So: how is the poet to accomplish same energy, how is he, what is the process by which a poet gets in, at all points energy at least the equivalent of the energy which propelled him in the first place, yet an energy which is peculiar to verse alone and which will be, obviously, also different from the energy which the reader, because he is a third term, will take away?

This is the problem which any poet who departs from closed form is specially confronted by. And it involves a whole series of new recognitions. From the moment he ventures into FIELD COMPOSITION

—put himself in the open—he can go by no track other than the one the poem under hand declares, for itself. Thus he has to behave, and be, instant by instant, aware of some several forces just now beginning to be examined. (It is much more, for example, this push, than simply such a one as Pound put, so wisely, to get us started: “the musical phrase,” go by it, boys, rather than by, the metronome.)

(2) is the *principle*, the law which presides conspicuously over such composition, and, when obeyed, is the reason why a projective poem can come into being. It is this: FORM IS NEVER MORE THAN AN EXTENSION OF CONTENT. (Or so it got phrased by one, R. Creeley, and it makes absolute sense to me, with this possible corollary, that right form, in any given poem, is the only and exclusively possible extension of content under hand.) There it is, brothers, sitting there, for USE.

Now (3) the *process* of the thing, how the principle can be made so to shape the energies that the form is accomplished. And I think it can be boiled down to one statement (first pounded into my head by Edward Dahlberg): ONE PERCEPTION MUST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY LEAD TO A FURTHER PERCEPTION. It means exactly what it says, is a matter of, at *all* points (even, I should say, of our management of daily reality as of the daily work) get on with it, keep moving, keep in, speed, the nerves, their speed, the perceptions, theirs, the acts, the split second acts, the whole business, keep it moving as fast as you can, citizen. And if you also set up as a poet, USE USE USE the process at all points, in any given poem always, always one perception must must must MOVE, INSTANTER, ON ANOTHER!

So there we are, fast, there's the dogma. And its excuse, its usability, in practice. Which gets us, it ought to get us, inside the machinery, now, 1950, of how projective verse is made.



If I hammer, if I recall in, and keep calling in, the breath, the breathing as distinguished from the hearing, it is for cause, it is to insist upon a part that breath plays in verse which has not (due, I think, to the smothering of the power of the line by too set a concept of foot) has not been sufficiently observed or practiced, but which has to be if verse is to advance to its proper force and place in the day, now, and ahead. I take it that PROJECTIVE VERSE teaches, is, this lesson, that that verse will only do in

which a poet manages to register pressures of his breath.

Let's start from the smallest part of versification, what rules a form, of a poem. I would suggest this secret from the late Elizabeth: ness of meter and rime, in a honey-guish the original success of blank

It is by their syllables that words sound as clearly as by the sense of given instance, because there is a c there, will be, spontaneously, the c fineness, and the practice, lie here,

O western wynd, when wilt th  
And the small rain down shal  
O Christ that my love were in  
And I in my bed again

It would do no harm, as an act now written, if both rime and m sense and sound, were less in the if the syllable, that fine creature, v on. With this warning, to those v place of the elements and minims it is least careless—and least logic: constant and so scrupulous, the ex surance of the ear is purchased at t from the root out, from all over t of, the dance.

“Is” comes from the Aryan roo equals the Sanscrit *na*, which r to perish. “Be” is from *bhu*, to ;

I say the syllable, king, and that ear which has collected, which ha the mind that it is the mind's, that it is close, another way: the m cause it is so close, is the drying fc

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which a poet manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear *and* the pressures of his breath.

Let's start from the smallest particle of all, the syllable. It is the king and pin of versification, what rules and holds together the lines, the larger forms, of a poem. I would suggest that verse here and in England dropped this secret from the late Elizabethans to Ezra Pound, lost it, in the sweetness of meter and rime, in a honey-head. (The syllable is one way to distinguish the original success of blank verse, and its falling off, with Milton.)

It is by their syllables that words juxtapose in beauty, by these particles of sound as clearly as by the sense of the words which they compose. In any given instance, because there is a choice of words, the choice, if a man is in there, will be, spontaneously, the obedience of his ear to the syllables. The fineness, and the practice, lie here, at the minimum and source of speech.

O western wynd, when wilt thou blow  
And the small rain down shall rain  
O Christ that my love were in my arms  
And I in my bed again

It would do no harm, as an act of correction to both prose and verse as now written, if both rime and meter, and, in the quantity words, both sense and sound, were less in the forefront of the mind than the syllable, if the syllable, that fine creature, were more allowed to lead the harmony on. With this warning, to those who would try: to step back here to this place of the elements and minims of language, is to engage speech where it is least careless—and least logical. Listening for the syllables must be so constant and so scrupulous, the exaction must be so complete, that the assurance of the ear is purchased at the highest—40 hours a day—price. For from the root out, from all over the place, the syllable comes, the figures of, the dance.

“Is” comes from the Aryan root, *as*, to breathe. The English “not” equals the Sanscrit *na*, which may come from the root *na*, to be lost, to perish. “Be” is from *bhu*, to grow.

I say the syllable, king, and that it is spontaneous, this way: the ear, the ear which has collected, which has listened, the ear, which is so close to the mind that it is the mind's, that it has the mind's speed . . .

it is close, another way: the mind is brother to this sister and is, because it is so close, is the drying force, the incest, the sharpener . . .

it is from the union of the mind and the ear that the syllable is born.

But the syllable is only the first child of the incest of verse (always, that Egyptian thing, it produces twins!). The other child is the LINE. And together, these two, the syllable *and* the line, they make a poem, they make that thing, the—what shall we call it, the Boss of all, the “Single Intelligence.” And the line comes (I swear it) from the breath, from the breathing of the man who writes, at the moment that he writes, and thus is, it is here that, the daily work, the WORK, gets in, for only he, the man who writes, can declare, at every moment, the line its metric and its ending—where its breathing, shall come to, termination.

The trouble with most work, to my taking, since the breaking away from traditional lines and stanzas, and from such wholes as, say, Chaucer’s *Troilus* or S’s *Lear*, is: contemporary workers go lazy RIGHT HERE WHERE THE LINE IS BORN.

Let me put it baldly. The two halves are:

the HEAD, by way of the EAR, to the SYLLABLE  
the HEART, by way of the BREATH, to the LINE

And the joker? that it is in the 1st half of the proposition that, in composing, one lets-it-rip; and that it is in the 2nd half, surprise, it is the line that’s the baby that gets, as the poem is getting made, the attention, the control, that it is right here, in the line, that the shaping takes place, each moment of the going.

I am dogmatic, that the head shows in the syllable. The dance of the intellect is there, among them, prose or verse. Consider the best minds you know in this here business: where does the head show, is it not, precise, here, in the swift currents of the syllable? can’t you tell a brain when you see what it does, just there? It is true, what the master says he picked up from Confusion: all the thots men are capable of can be entered on the back of a postage stamp. So, is it not the PLAY of a mind we are after, is not that that shows whether a mind is there at all?

And the threshing floor for the dance? Is it anything but the LINE? And when the line has, is, a deadness, is it not a heart which has gone lazy, is it not, suddenly, slow things, similes, say, adjectives, or such, that we are bored by?

For there is a whole flock of rhetorical devices which have now to be brought under a new bead, now that we sight with the line. Simile is only

one bird who comes down, too easily have to be watched, every second, in iness, and thus their drain on the er lows into a poem. *Any* slackness tal from the job in hand, from the *pusl* ment, under the reader’s eye, in his r like argument in prose, properly pre allowed in, must be so juxtaposed, ap instant, sap the going energy of the c

It comes to this, this whole aspe: enter, actually, the large area of the like, where all the syllables and all th lations to each other.) It is a matter, what they are inside a poem, how ti they are to be used. This is somethin Part II, but, for the moment, let me an open poem (the syllable, the line, sense) must be taken up as participar solidly as we are accustomed to take and that these elements are to be see just as totally as do those other object

The objects which occur at every recognition, we can call it) are, can b occur therein and not by any ideas poem, must be handled as a series of series of tensions (which they also ar actly inside the content and the cont self, through the poet and them, into

Because breath allows *all* the spee is the “solid” of verse, is the secret c poem has, by speech, solidity, every solids, objects, things; and, though ir of the reality of verse from that other each of these elements of a poem can separate energies and can be allowed, keep, as those other objects do, their

Which brings us up, immediately, syntax, in fact against grammar gene

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iness, and thus their drain on the energy which composition by field al-  
lows into a poem. *Any* slackness takes off attention, that crucial thing,  
from the job in hand, from the *push* of the line under hand at the mo-  
ment, under the reader's eye, in his moment. Observation of any kind is,  
like argument in prose, properly previous to the act of the poem, and, if  
allowed in, must be so juxtaposed, apposed, set in, that it does not, for an  
instant, sap the going energy of the content toward its form.

It comes to this, this whole aspect of the newer problems. (We now  
enter, actually, the large area of the whole poem, into the FIELD, if you  
like, where all the syllables and all the lines must be managed in their re-  
lations to each other.) It is a matter, finally, of OBJECTS, what they are,  
what they are inside a poem, how they got there, and, once there, how  
they are to be used. This is something I want to get to in another way in  
Part II, but, for the moment, let me indicate this, that every element in  
an open poem (the syllable, the line, as well as the image, the sound, the  
sense) must be taken up as participants in the kinetic of the poem just as  
solidly as we are accustomed to take what we call the objects of reality;  
and that these elements are to be seen as creating the tensions of a poem  
just as totally as do those other objects create what we know as the world.

The objects which occur at every given moment of composition (of  
recognition, we can call it) are, can be, must be treated exactly as they do  
occur therein and not by any ideas or preconceptions from outside the  
poem, must be handled as a series of objects in a field in such a way that a  
series of tensions (which they also are) are made to *hold*, and to hold ex-  
actly inside the content and the context of the poem which has forced it-  
self, through the poet and them, into being.

Because breath allows *all* the speech-force of language back in (speech  
is the "solid" of verse, is the secret of a poem's energy), because, now, a  
poem has, by speech, solidity, everything in it can now be treated as  
solids, objects, things; and, though insisting upon the absolute difference  
of the reality of verse from that other dispersed and distributed thing, yet  
each of these elements of a poem can be allowed to have the play of their  
separate energies and can be allowed, once the poem is well-composed, to  
keep, as those other objects do, their proper confusions.

Which brings us up, immediately, bang, against tenses, in fact against  
syntax, in fact against grammar generally, that is, as we have inherited it.

Do not tenses, must they not also be kicked around anew, in order that time, that other governing absolute, may be kept, as must the space-tensions of a poem, immediate, contemporary to the acting-on-you of the poem? I would argue that here, too, the LAW OF THE LINE, which projective verse creates, must be hewn to, obeyed, and that the conventions which logic has forced on syntax must be broken open as quietly as must the too set feet of the old line. But an analysis of how far a new poet can stretch the very conventions on which communication by language rests, is too big for these notes, which are meant, I hope it is obvious, merely to get things started.

Let me just throw in this. It is my impression that *all* parts of speech suddenly, in composition by field, are fresh for both sound and percussive use, spring up like unknown, unnamed vegetables in the patch, when you work it, come spring. Now take Hart Crane. What strikes me in him is the singleness of the push to the nominative, his push along that one arc of freshness, the attempt to get back to word as handle. (If logos is word as thought, what is word as noun, as, pass me that, as Newman Shea used to ask, at the galley table, put a jib on the blood, will ya.) But there is a loss in Crane of what Fenollosa is so right about, in syntax, the sentence as first act of nature, as lightning, as passage of force from subject to object, quick, in this case, from Hart to me, in every case, from me to you, the VERB, between two nouns. Does not Hart miss the advantages, by such an isolated push, miss the point of the whole front of syllable, line, field, and what happened to all language, and to the poem, as a result?

I return you now to London, to beginnings, to the syllable, for the pleasures of it, to intermit:

If music be the food of love, play on,  
 give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,  
 the appetite may sicken, and so die.  
 That strain again. It had a dying fall,  
 O, it came over my ear like the sweet sound  
 that breathes upon a bank of violets,  
 stealing and giving odour.

What we have suffered from, is manuscript, press, the removal of verse from its producer and its reproducer, the voice, a removal by one, by two removes from its place of origin *and* its destination. For the breath has a double meaning which latin had not yet lost.

The irony is, from the machine he observed or used, but which leads and its consequences. It is the advanced rigidity and its space precisions, its breath, the pauses, the suspensions even of parts of phrases, which he in the stave and the bar a musician has out the convention of rime and metre his own speech and by that one act reader, silently or otherwise, to voice

It is time we picked the fruits of the Williams, each of whom has, after his scoring to his composing, as a script to enter of the recognition of the conventional bring into being an open verse as form advantages.

If a contemporary poet leaves a space means that space to be held, by the time suspends a word or syllable at the end (in addition) he means that time to pass time suspended—to pick up the next hardly separates the words, yet does not interruption of the meaning rather than him when he uses a symbol the type

“What does not change / is the w

Observe him, when he takes advantage, to juxtapose:

“Sd he:

to dream takes no  
 to think is easy  
 to act is mo

but for a man to act after he has  
 is the most difficult thing of all”

Each of these lines is a progressing one going forward, and then a backing up, movement outside the unit of time lo

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The irony is, from the machine has come one gain not yet sufficiently observed or used, but which leads directly on toward projective verse and its consequences. It is the advantage of the typewriter that, due to its rigidity and its space precisions, it can, for a poet, indicate exactly the breath, the pauses, the suspensions even of syllables, the juxtapositions even of parts of phrases, which he intends. For the first time the poet has the stave and the bar a musician has had. For the first time he can, without the convention of rime and meter, record the listening he has done to his own speech and by that one act indicate how he would want any reader, silently or otherwise, to voice his work.

It is time we picked the fruits of the experiments of Cummings, Pound, Williams, each of whom has, after his way, already used the machine as a scoring to his composing, as a script to its vocalization. It is now only a matter of the recognition of the conventions of composition by field for us to bring into being an open verse as formal as the closed, with all its traditional advantages.

If a contemporary poet leaves a space as long as the phrase before it, he means that space to be held, by the breath, an equal length of time. If he suspends a word or syllable at the end of a line (this was most Cummings' addition) he means that time to pass that it takes the eye—that hair of time suspended—to pick up the next line. If he wishes a pause so light it hardly separates the words, yet does not want a comma—which is an interruption of the meaning rather than the sounding of the line—follow him when he uses a symbol the typewriter has ready to hand:

“What does not change / is the will to change”

Observe him, when he takes advantage of the machine's multiple margins, to juxtapose:

“Sd he:

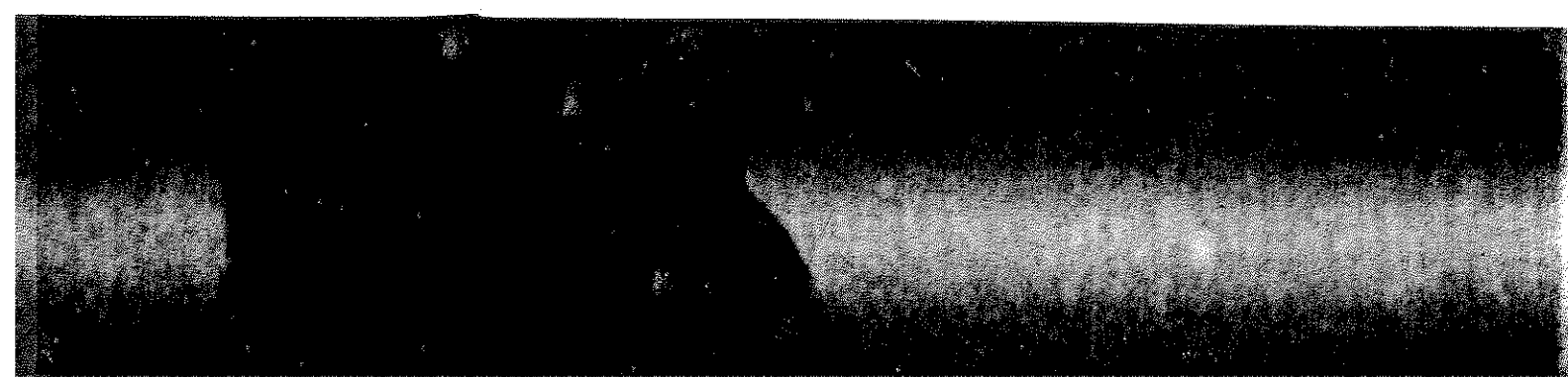
to dream takes no effort  
to think is easy  
to act is more difficult

but for a man to act after he has taken thought, this!  
is the most difficult thing of all”

Each of these lines is a progressing of both the meaning and the breathing forward, and then a backing up, without a progress or any kind of movement outside the unit of time local to the idea.

sound

script, press, the removal of verse  
: voice, a removal by one, by two  
destination. For the breath has a  
lost.





There is more to be said in order that this convention be recognized, especially in order that the revolution out of which it came may be so forwarded that work will get published to offset the reaction now afoot to return verse to inherited forms of cadence and rime. But what I want to emphasize here, by this emphasis on the typewriter as the personal and instantaneous recorder of the poet's work, is the already projective nature of verse as the sons of Pound and Williams are practicing it. Already they are composing as though verse was to have the reading its writing involved, as though not the eye but the ear was to be its measurer, as though the intervals of its composition could be so carefully put down as to be precisely the intervals of its registration. For the ear, which once had the burden of memory to quicken it (rime & regular cadence were its aids and have merely lived on in print after the oral necessities were ended) can now again, that the poet has his means, be the threshold of projective verse.

## II

Which gets us to what I promised, the degree to which the projective involves a stance toward reality outside a poem as well as a new stance towards the reality of a poem itself. It is a matter of content, the content of Homer or of Euripides or of Seami as distinct from that which I might call the more "literary" masters. From the moment the projective purpose of the act of verse is recognized, the content does—it will—change. If the beginning and the end is breath, voice in its largest sense, then the material of verse shifts. It has to. It starts with the composer. The dimension of his line itself changes, not to speak of the change in his conceiving, of the matter he will turn to, of the scale in which he imagines that matter's use. I myself would pose the difference by a physical image. It is no accident that Pound and Williams both were involved variously in a movement which got called "objectivism." But that word was then used in some sort of a necessary quarrel, I take it, with "subjectivism." It is now too late to be bothered with the latter. It has excellently done itself to death, even though we are all caught in its dying. What seems to me a more valid formulation for present use is "objectism," a word to be taken to stand for the kind of relation of man to experience which a poet might state as the necessity of a line or a work to be as wood is, to be as clean as wood is as it issues from the hand of nature, to be shaped as wood can be

when a man has had his hand to it (lyrical interference of the individual that peculiar presumption by which self between what he is as a creature to carry out) and those other creature derogation, call objects. For a man is take to be his advantages, the more I greater his advantages, particularly humilitas sufficient to make him of u

It comes to this: the use of a man, how he conceives his relation to nature somewhat small existence. If he speaks himself, and shall sing, nature has sufficient forms outside himself. But if retained within this nature as he is parallel to listen, and his hearing through objects share. And by an inverse law he is in this sense that the projective act field of objects, leads to dimension problem, the moment he takes speech work his seriousness, a seriousness to try to take its place alongside the nature works from reverence, even in his a crash). But breath is man's special dimension he has extended. Language when a poet rests in these as they are like, but the life in him, for all that) these roots, works in that area where size.

It is projective size that the play, able to stand, is it not, as its people Andromache or the sea suffer diminished "natural" dimension Seami causes to clear in *Hagoromo*. And Homer, who do not think I need to press home their clothes.

Such works, I should argue—as equivalents are yet to be done—could

at this convention be recognized, it of which it came may be so for- offset the reaction now afoot to ence and rime. But what I want the typewriter as the personal and k, is the already projective nature ms are practicing it. Already they have the reading its writing in- was to be its measurer, as though e so carefully put down as to be For the ear, which once had the & regular cadence were its aids the oral necessities were ended) ns, be the threshold of projective

ne degree to which the projective poem as well as a new stance to- matter of content, the content of distinct from that which I might e moment the projective purpose ent does—it will—change. If the n its largest sense, then the mate- th the composer. The dimension F the change in his conceiving, of a which he imagines that matter's by a physical image. It is no acci- re involved variously in a move- but that word was then used in it, with "subjectivism." It is now It has excellently done itself to its dying. What seems to me a s "objectism," a word to be taken to experience which a poet might to be as wood is, to be as clean as ure, to be shaped as wood can be

when a man has had his hand to it. Objectism is the getting rid of the lyrical interference of the individual as ego, of the "subject" and his soul, that peculiar presumption by which western man has interposed himself between what he is as a creature of nature (with certain instructions to carry out) and those other creatures of nature which we may, with no derogation, call objects. For a man is himself an object, whatever he may take to be his advantages, the more likely to recognize himself as such the greater his advantages, particularly at that moment that he achieves an humilitas sufficient to make him of use.

It comes to this: the use of a man, by himself and thus by others, lies in how he conceives his relation to nature, that force to which he owes his somewhat small existence. If he sprawl, he shall find little to sing but himself, and shall sing, nature has such paradoxical ways, by way of artificial forms outside himself. But if he stays inside himself, if he is contained within this nature as he is participant in the larger force, he will be able to listen, and his hearing through himself will give him secrets objects share. And by an inverse law his shapes will make their own way. It is in this sense that the projective act, which is the artist's act in the larger field of objects, leads to dimensions larger than the man. For a man's problem, the moment he takes speech up in all its fullness, is to give his work his seriousness, a seriousness sufficient to cause the thing he makes to try to take its place alongside the things of nature. This is not easy. Nature works from reverence, even in her destructions (species go down with a crash). But breath is man's special qualification as animal. Sound is a dimension he has extended. Language is one of his proudest acts. And when a poet rests in these as they are in himself (in his physiology, if you like, but the life in him, for all that) then he, if he chooses to speak from these roots, works in that area where nature has given him size, projective size.

It is projective size that the play, *The Trojan Women*, possesses, for it is able to stand, is it not, as its people do, beside the Aegean—and neither Andromache or the sea suffer diminution. In a less "heroic" but equally "natural" dimension Seami causes the Fisherman and the Angel to stand clear in *Hagoromo*. And Homer, who is such an unexamined cliché that I do not think I need to press home in what scale Nausicaa's girls wash their clothes.

Such works, I should argue—and I use them simply because their equivalents are yet to be done—could not issue from men who conceived

verse without the full relevance of human voice, without reference to where lines come from, in the individual who writes. Nor do I think it accident that, at this end point of the argument, I should use, for example, two dramatists and an epic poet. For I would hazard the guess that, if projective verse is practiced long enough, is driven ahead hard enough along the course I think it dictates, verse again can carry much larger material than it has carried in our language since the Elizabethans. But it can't be jumped. We are only at its beginnings, and if I think that the *Cantos* make more "dramatic" sense than do the plays of Mr. Eliot, it is not because I think they have solved the problem but because the methodology of the verse in them points a way by which, one day, the problem of larger content and of larger forms may be solved. Eliot is, in fact, a proof of a present danger, of "too easy" a going on the practice of verse as it has been, rather than as it must be, practiced. There is no question, for example, that Eliot's line, from "Prufrock" on down, has speech-force, is "dramatic," is, in fact, one of the most notable lines since Dryden. I suppose it stemmed immediately to him from Browning, as did so many of Pound's early things. In any case Eliot's line has obvious relations backward to the Elizabethans, especially to the soliloquy. Yet O.M. Eliot is *not* projective. It could even be argued (and I say this carefully, as I have said all things about the non-projective, having considered how each of us must save himself after his own fashion and how much, for that matter, each of us owes to the non-projective, and will continue to owe, as both go alongside each other) but it could be argued that it is because Eliot has stayed inside the non-projective that he fails as a dramatist—that his root is the mind alone, and a scholastic mind at that (no high *intelletto* despite his apparent clarities)—and that, in his listenings he has stayed there where the ear and the mind are, has only gone from his fine ear outward rather than, as I say a projective poet will, down through the workings of his own throat to that place where breath comes from, where breath has its beginnings, where drama has to come from, where, the coincidence is, all act springs.

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