

SYMBOLIC HISTORY
Through Sight and Sound

38. NOW - ~~Alpha~~ Omega

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39. NOW — Omega

- 1) *Photomontage: Earth among stars, with Gilbert's C.G. Bell; + V detail*

By a leap of impossibility, the Now Alpha and Now Omega have to draw together. The task of the Alpha was to render what is mine to earth and cosmos; the Omega must treat earth and cosmos as my own. The mode of this convergence can only be the continual embrace and transcendence of antinomy. It is creative paradox which besouls the worlds.

- 2) *Three shots: Andres Aigla, at 11 months, learns to walk*

What is the paradox of walking? To fall and not to fall. To turn incipient falling to a directed, on-going progress. Here Andres Aigla, 11 months old, explores that simple skill, which the tottering earth has desperately to learn.

Va3) *View west from Sangre de Cristo (CGB, '78)*

3) *Photo-composite of Earth, Solar Corona, and Moon (or glazed V3)*

3a) *M. Tinklenberg photo, eclipse of sun in multiple exposure*

V3b) *Mandelbrot, Fractal: 'Planetrise,' etc.*

Music: Leonin, 1160-90, from Deum Timê (Yves Tinayre), Lumen 32017

We come to life adapted to wonders of earth and sky as beyond known chance or causal prediction as the myths of East or West (say Genesis) assume — all the inwrought balances Newton's science had to ascribe "to the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being." Above us circle two spheres, so disposed as to seem of equal (hence eclipsing) size — the coronal passion of the sun, lord of day; the sterile death of the moon, goddess of night — an archetypal antinomy.

And in music, the two-voiced stretch of Gothic Leonin (fade)

- 4) *Detail of 3: Corona of eclipsed sun beside full moon*
V4a) Raphael, 1517-19, Loggia, Isaac and Rebecca
 4b) *Peter Thys, c.1670, Allegory of Night, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien; with V details*

Music: Minischalchi, c.1630, lo tento in van (Max Meili) A.S. 79

swells to the recitative and ground bass of baroque Minischalchi. Though in the opposition of the sky, romance has leaned from the busy action of male day, to the moony Beulah of embracing shade: (Milton)

sweet the coming on
 Of grateful Evening milde, then silent Night
 With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,
 And these the Gemms of Heav'n her starrie train...
 (cut Minischalchi)

- Va5) Ship Rock, NM, far-off (CGB, Fall 1968)*
b5) Earth viewed from satellite, showing Europe and Africa
c5) Pliocene restoration, American West, Museum of Natural History, NYC (CGB '79)
5) Henri Rousseau, 1891, Surprised, National Gallery, London; + V details

Music: Mahler, 1909, Ninth Symphony, from 4th movement passage for violin and double bass (Horenstein) Vox Box 116

How often, in later music, from Bach to this Mahler, the tangled fabric cleaves to a dialogue of high and low. So on the round earth, tensile limits reappear: sea and land, mountains and plain, desert and fertile ground, farm and forest. From the dawn of life, entropic up-and-down reflects itself in leaf and flame, plant and animal, grazers and hunters — this panorama of the American Pliocene.

"Douanier" Rousseau, charmed by tropical shows in the Paris Exposition of 1889, caught nature's ambivalence in this painting called "Surprised": lightning from rain, wind-tossed trees, the tiger pushing through reeds. (fade Mahler)

- 6) *David Allan, 1781, The Halkett Family, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh; + V details*

Music: Gretry, 1782, Gavotte de Colinette a la Cour, Col. (78)x-126

No doubt the Enlightened taming of the British landscape and family scene (this David Allan of 1781) appeared to have put to rest the old Behemoth-Leviathan raging and uprooting through time and space — fate soothed, as it were, by Orphic airs and country dance (Gretry's pre-revolutionary fluff). Even Wordsworth would dream "that Nature never did betray/ The heart that loved her." (fade Gretry)

- a 7) *W. Blake, 1773, engraving, Joseph of Arimathea, British Museum; + V detail*
 7) *Blake, 1793-4, The Good and Evil Angels, Museum, Bedford; + V details*

Though the Bible and Shakespeare were still read, and Blake had already summoned this Michelangeloic Joseph of Arimathea to Albion's rocky coast. By 1793 (about when Beethoven went "to receive the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydn"),

Music: Beethoven, 1799, Quartet #4, 1st mvt, Coda, (Vegh) HSQ 44

Blake would be limning and voicing the radical ambivalence of these Angels contending for the human child — as in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the passive obedience called "Good," the shackled desire called "Evil" by the world, but by Blake, "Energy... the only life."

(end Beethoven)

- a 8) *Duke photographed by Young on Apollo-16 Moonwalk, 1972*
 8) *Night-earth with lights and fires, art-composite of satellite-views, Scientific American, Sept. 1989; + V details*

So, upon this threshing-floor, Odyssean earthlings push off from island domesticities into storm-ocean and star-void. Appropriately, with the globe already (as in this painted composite of satellite night-views) fired so wastefully: the spread of cities, slash-and-burn of tropic jungles, flaming grasslands of the sub-Sahara, burn-off of

natural gas around the Persian Gulf and in Siberia, flood-lighted squid-fishing off Japan.

9) *Hans Holbein the Younger, 1528, Wife and Children, Basel; with V details*

Music: Hieronymus Vinders, 0 Mors..., Archiv Stereo 2533 360

What can the Now be but the rooted outreaching of the whole tree of consciousness, as patiently enduring as Holbein's waiting family — earth's sentient ingathering, where the coded past (in each as in all) presses the probabilities of a present, to shape some future, hung between leaf and flame? (fade 0 Mors)

10) *Steffan Brenner, 1558, Table-clock with Astrolabe, Lübeck*

10a) *Array of clocks in Chet Johnson's repair shop, Santa Fe*

V10b) *Face of Chet's pendulum clock (CGB, '90)*

V10c) *Caribbean spiral shell, from a cruise advertisement*

That Now is a transformational one-many, far from the dimensionless instant ticked between lost past and unformed future, which the science of chronology seems to make of it. Examine a timepiece closely (this one, say, of 1558). What are its elements? First, some vibrating recurrence. Without flywheel, pendulum, pulsing crystal, no clock could keep time, any more than than earth, without rotation and revolution, could measure days and years. But that oscillation returns where it was, a dead beat, always the same. So every clock requires another element, a numbered advance, by which the future succeeds the past. Has the union of these two, wheel and arrow, compassed ' time?

11) *California sundial shell, Architectonica granulata (CGB '81) [video inserts photograph of snails mating, from Nature 106, and returns to 11]*

No. The spiral that knits these poles requires a body of perception. Like a recording clock, the mollusk of a Sundial shell graphs its growth in this demarcated coil. The shell alone is a spiral resolution of the arrow and the wheel; but it contained a Now, perceptive wholeness of a living process. Without that threshold of organic ac-

tion, this Architectonica could not have shared in time, creeping, feeding on his stomach-foot, a gastropod.

- 12) *Jost Burgi, 1594, Star-globe clock, Landesmuseum, Zurich*
- 12a) *Pine slopes E. of San Cristobal, Chiapas (CGB February 1975)*
- V12b) *Compound eyes in head of a horsefly*
- 12c) *R. Noonan, photo, midge coming from water-phase to air*

Are the heavens comprehended in Burgi's 1594 clock of planets and the starry sphere? What of the eternally rooted Now of inwardness, as cosmically free and bound as "I am that I am"? Had not Heraclitus, for all his burning antinomies ("We are and we are not"), made this clear: "Not on my authority, but on that of truth (λογος), accept the fact that all things are one." And Leibniz: "The machines of nature are still machines in their smallest parts ad infinitum." Here a midge struggles from larva and water to wings and air — Dante's sky-search that racks the globe: "Worms born to form the angelic butterfly."

- 13) *Shane-Wirtanen composite photo-map of 1,000,000 galaxies*
- 13a) *Spiral galaxy M 83, Centaurus, D.F. Malin, Scientific American, August '93*
- 13b) *Lava and Lightning on Sakura Jima, Japan's South Island*

The cosmos — like a protoplasmic bubble, this photocomposite of a million mapped galaxies (from an estimated one hundred billion, each averaging ten billion suns), evolving at all levels, energy, particles, atoms, chemicals, through dust-clouds, galaxies, suns forming and exploding, dark stars, planets, satellites — from the assumed bang to the earth-now of man — this cosmos has kept all processes going, in creative interplay, æons before we brought our observations to the scene.

- a14) *South Polar Star tracks, Sky & Telescope, February 1986*
- 14) *Ivan Albright, 1967, Self-Portrait, Youngstown, Ohio*

Surely, without cosmic consciousness — some print of mind on the radiant void — there could be no cosmos; the problem is to put ourselves in touch with it. For we are earthlings still, earth-ravish-

ers, and each pretends, like this Albright, to be himself alone — a slime-mould eddy on the chute of entropy —

a15) *Cascades at Agua Azul in Chiapas, Mexico (CGB 1978)*

15) *Northern waterfall with salmon leaping up*

that gravitational axiom (in a universe lively for fifteen billion years), that whatever happens is sure to have had a gradient for happening, where a gradient, by definition, goes downhill. But what of the salmon's gradient to leap up waterfalls? Does quantum uncertainty herald a nature where (as de Nerval wrote) "life breaks forth in everything"?

a16) *Rosette Nebula (NGC 2244), with stars formed and forming*

16) *Beta Equuleus Pictoris, 1984 — solar system forming?*

In any case, in cosmic extension, the axiom of closed-system decay rounds on itself, nature not admitting of one-way formulations. "Proliferate" has as strong an imperative as "subside to rest." Like the stars sowed by this Rosette Nebula — stars, any one of which might in its origin be wrapped in such a halo of dust and gas as this recently studied Beta Pictoris (first photographed evidence of a solar system apparently in process of formation) — like those stars,

a17) *Tropical growth, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico (S. Mason, 1955)*

17) *Photograph of a squash bed, Santa Fe, NM (CGB '90); + V detail*

every weed seeds itself as if to take over the earth. But as entropic down swerves to up, so proliferation can turn exuberance to a throttling: "Spirit, at war with itself."

I lay in the gourd-bed, flowered, fruitful,
Slipping curved fingers down the tendrils
To feel the clutch of subtle runners,
Twisting a noose for the throats of grasses.

18) *Attic Cup, c. 500 B.C., Aphrodisiac orgy, Louvre G 13*

V18a) *More startling groups from the same cup*

Music: Bessie Smith: "I'm wild about that thing," Col.GP33, side 3

Once the thrust of human sexuality mounted the oldest fertility urge, what was to limit orgiastic celebration? The Greeks could practice our "illegal obscenities" in sacred precincts with temple courtesans consecrated to Aphrodite and Dionysus, as in Pindar's skolon.

- a19) *Hindu, 1000 A.D. Ritual orgies, Lakshmana Temple, Khajuraho*
- V619) *Indian Miniature, c. 1750, The Nayika mounted by all creatures, detail, with horse and ape-man, Kotah State, Rajasthan*
- c19) *Same, detail, with bear and elephant*
- 19) *Same, whole; + three V details*

In India, such rituals appear in stone on the heaven-bands of Hindu temples, here at Khajuraho, 1000 AD — while the West cowered under the penitential climax of the Dark Ages. Small wonder the procreative drive, here symbolized in an Indian miniature of the 18th century, where the Nayika is the coupling mate of all creatures — those beasts, who in the upper section, work God's command: Be fruitful and multiply — no wonder that rapture is so hard to damp today, even where it over-populates the earth. (fade Bessie Smith)

- 20) *Hindu, 10th cent, Dakini with demons, drinking blood, Khandarva Mahadava Temple, Khajurho, India*
- 20a) *Hindu, 9th cent., Shiva, doing penance, Bhuvanesvara; + V detail*

In truth that older world had harsh ways of stemming the overflow. Those very temples of erotic abandon equally enshrine the skeletal attendants of Kali, drinking blood on the battlefield.

The same Shiva who wreathes in bliss with Sakti and Parvati withers to the death-lord of Yoga, doing penance. How soon is the world to become as ruthless in paradox as the old sacrificial gods? Must we steel our hard-won humanity against ideal and sentimental pretences?

- 21) *Famine in besieged Biafra, Life, August 23, 1968 (video: details only)*
- 21a) *Ethiopia, 1985: woman of 28 being prepared for burial*

V21a) *Ethiopian group with starving old man*

21b) *Children from the Sudan, living on the streets of Khartoum, Life, June '88*

A simple fact: there was never a more ideal or sentimental folly than that by which modern hygiene and medicine were spread abroad, without any thought or concern, much less program, how one planet might house and feed the resulting population. Though war and politics have used famine in Biafra and Ethiopia, drought and crop-failure played a typically Third-World role.

So also with the 10,000 Sudanese children, refugees from civil strife and want, who in 1988 slept and begged on the streets of the capital city, Khartoum.

22) *Frogs: female, with two fertilizing males; first, video detail*

Music: Bessie Smith: Close of "I'm wild about that thing"

Yet still, like these mating frogs — female clutched by two males to fertilize the extruded eggs — black tribesmen and white Christians join in protesting birth control. (fade Bessie Smith)

a23) *Giotto, 1306, detail of Injustice, Arena Chapel, Padua; first, V detail*

V623) *Tony Price, Atomic Lab Junk Crucifix, detail (CGB '90); first, V closer detail*

c23) *Photo of a Swiss Nuclear Reactor (Scientific American, September 1990)*

23) *Russian tanks move into Prague, Life 1968 (V23: wider).*

The indulgence of freedom builds a counter-tension to the common good — radically in Giotto's detail of Injustice. By the compromise of law, each must forgo his savage claim to kill, rape, and rob. Such the minimal contract Hobbes and Locke would think adequate. But can we stop there?

Even Adam Smith gives society "the duty of protecting... every member... from the injustice or oppression of every other". What then of economic oppression? What if industry work injury? What if our Keynesian boom produced opulent dysecology? Must not

Smith's "natural liberty" explore some maximal contract for the life-good of the whole?

Despite which, the First World War, the Nazi war, and even the half century of Cold War — here Russian tanks on the streets of Prague — have been lived and presented as the struggle of freedom against tyranny.

A24) *Persian, c. 500 B.C.(?), Archers of Darius I, Louvre, Paris*

B24) *Greek, c. 443 B.C., Hydria-bearers from N, Frieze of the Parthenon, Acropolis Museum, Athens*

24) *Double: [A] Persian Archers, and [B] Parthenon frieze*

Our model for that was Greek: in Herodotus' History, how the invading Persian hordes, lashed to the pass of Thermopylae by captains of squadrons, rued the courage of Leonidas and his Spartans — those men of whom Demaratus had warned Xerxes: "They are free, yet not wholly free; for law is their master. What their law bids them, that they do." A strength subtly expressed in Simonides' inscription: "Stranger, tell the Spartans we lie here, obedient to their bidding," where "obedient" is the middle-passive participle of "persuade," implying: "We lie here, to their bidding self-persuaded." (For an art-contrast, the 500-B.C. Archers of Darius I confront the 443-B.C. freedom of the Parthenon freize.)

a25) *Greek, c. 460 B.C., Ruins of the Zeus Temple, Olympia*

25) *Same, another view (both CGB '77)*

Yet the Greeks, in their very prime of civic life and art, saw such exercise of human daring as a field of mythic overweening and tragic fall, to which their land attests — Hölderlein:

But where are the thrones and temples, where the
vessels,
Brimmed once with nectar, delight of the gods, with
song? (CGB)

Music: Greek, 2nd cent. B.C., First Delphic Hymn, sung by J.E. Butt

— The great Zeus temple of Olympia, reduced by earthquake to these shattered ruins.

- a26) *Greek, c. 460, Metope from the Zeus Temple, Hercules shows Athena the Stymphalian Birds; Museum, Olympia; first, Va26, detail*
 26) *Same, West Pediment, Centaur biting a Lapith, Olympia*
 26a) *Same, East Pediment, the old diviner, Museum, Olympia; + V detail*

Of which the remnant carvings — most dramatic sequence of Greek art — exhibit (though from different myths) the phases of Aeschylean tragedy. In this Metope from the labors of Hercules, the hero brings the man-eating Stymphalian birds to his barefoot patroness Athena. It is god-given power in superhuman act.

In the West Pediment, the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs becomes such a net of death as is spread in the Agamemnon and Choephore: "Who shall tear the curse from their blood? ...The end shall be destiny."

For the third phase we draw from the East Pediment the mystery of the rapt diviner, seeing as through loss and turmoil some healing transcendence.

Let that cathartic triad of power, overreach, and prophecy resonate as the noose tightens on the world.

- a27) *Riace Bronzes, both warriors, Reggio-Calabria Museum; + Va27, detail*
 27) *Same, Younger warrior, from waist up (CGB '84); video, detail only*

Surely it resonated for Græco-Rome. The first chorus of the Antigone is a praise of man: "Many a wonder..." But the Greek word for wonder is *deina*, as in dinosaur — a greatness also to be feared. So in the Riace Warriors, Greek energy risks the hybris of the Peloponnesian War. It is Plato's "fair and spangled state... ready to burst with liberty."

In our pursuit of happiness, we forget how far the revolt of agriculture seemed a profane plowing up and seeding of our mother, Goddess Earth.

(end Delphic Hymn)

28) *Roman Bust, c. 66-68, Nero, Museo Capitolino, Rome; + V detail*

28a) *Roman, 66-67 A.D., coin with Nero, American Numismatic Society*

By Nero's Rome the outrage is too blatant, too devastating. The preface of Livy's History (c. 10 A.D.?) foreshadows not only the crisis then festering at the heart of empire, but every such degradation (to quote Thucydides) "as long as the nature of man remains the same." This Livy translation is from a Phi Beta Kappa address by Gordon Craig:

...Poverty with us went hand in hand with contentment. Of late years, wealth has made us greedy, and self-indulgence has brought us — through every form of sensual excess — to be, if I may so put it, in love with death, both individual and collective...

a29) *Roman Christian, early 3rd cent., The Good Shepherd, crypt of Lucina, Cemetery of Calixtus, Rome*

29) *Roman Christian, c. 470, mosaic, St. Ambrose and St. Maternus, San Ambrosio, Milan; first, video detail*

Already the followers of Christus were being burnt for nocturnal lights (so Tacitus) in Nero's gardens. Strange, the claimants of an embodied Saviour should have withdrawn to catacomb entombments of flesh and outwardness.

Music: Pre-Gregorian Sanctus, Mass for the Dead, (Solesmes) DP7532

But it was flesh God had taken, and, as we have centrally pursued, that Judgment ultimatum to declining Rome would incarnate in the West a body of assertive temporality, reaching from the humbled earth-denial of this 5th-century mosaic of St. Ambrose and St. Maternus in Milan.

(close Sanctus)

Va30) *Bernini, Angel, 1673-4, Sacrament Altar, St. Peter's, Rome*

- V630) Bernini, *Angel*, 1668-70, with scroll and thorns, *S. Andrea d. Valle*
 30) Bernini, 1670-71, *Angel*, with scroll, *Ponte Sant' Angelo, Rome*
 30a) *Detail of same*

Music: J.-B. Lully, c. 1670(?), *Amen* from the *Dies Irae*, ARC 3097

through a Christian antithesis of Baroque exuberance, assertive, whether for joy or grief — here, about 1670, with Bernini and Lully —
 (close *Dies Irae*)

- 31) *Double: Bernini [A] 1654-70, Constantine, Scala Regia, Vatican, and [B] 1665-7, drawing, Equestrian Louis XIV, Museo Civico, Bassano (video shows first A and B separately; see video file)*

Music: Lully, c. 1670, *Te Deum*, close of "Et in saeculum saeculi", London DTL 93043, side 2

an assurance always primed for the heroic miscarriages of church and state (Bernini's *Constantine* and his *Louis XIV*). Through that
 (fade *Te Deum*)

- 32) *F. Rude, 1833-6, La Marseillaise, Arc de Triomphe, Paris; with V details*

Music: Berlioz, 1830, *Symphonie Fantastique*, close, London CM 9227

to the secular explosion of the French Revolution, this 1792 rallying of volunteers, carved forty years later, when surely it smacked of some Faustian compact — even in Rude's *Arc de Triomphe* commemoration, where the face of War (above) follows Michelangelo's sketch of a Fury: So why not pair it with the close of Berlioz' *Fantastique* March and double fugue?
 (end Berlioz)

- 33) *Triple: [A] Ambrose mosaic (detail of 29); [B] Bernini Angel (30); and [C] Rude, La Marseillaise, plaster model, Musée Rude, Dijon (variant of 32)*

Taking this sequence as a springboard — from the disclaimer of earth, with hope in God; through a godhead seated in the physical, its space, time, and cause; shrunk then to a Deist ground of mere nature, for the hue and cry of Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood — hurled, as

we are, on that springboard toward an alarming future, we know that the tragic vaunt of freedom is not Greek or past, but with us, an archetypal antinomy in the Now.

a34 & 34) *Goya, 1810-20, Disasters of the War, 11 and 33*

Since between the "Call to Arms" and Rude's reenactment, had come the Rhine invasion upon which we have quoted elsewhere from Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea:

May I never again in such contemptuous madness
Look upon man! Better the beast in his rage!
Never let him speak of freedom, as if he could
Rule his own passions! — (CGB)

and after twenty years of outrage, the Peninsular Campaign, with the long agony of guerrilla warfare, to be recorded by Goya in searing prints and canvases.

35) *Blake, 1795, Good and Evil Angels, color print, Tate Gallery, London; + V detail (note Va35: possible double of slide 7, above, and of this 35)*

So what was Blake's prophecy, when in 1795, a year after the watercolor we saw earlier, he magnified (and reversed) its scene of Good and Evil Angels struggling for a child — to produce this mono-print, where the energy figure has hardened (as from Lucifer to Satan) — the French Revolution meanwhile exhibiting at home and abroad the fierce scaling-over of what Blake would call the "Orc Cycle", where:

Rebellion struck the tyrant dead,
Became a tyrant in his stead...

a36) *American, 1826, Vernon Church, Vernon, Mass. (CGB '46); + V detail*

b36) *Neighboring barn-building, 1888, Museum, Massillon, OH; + V detail*

Vc36) *Side view of 36, Monticello (CGB '62)*

36) *Jefferson, 1769-1809, Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia*

America seemed to avoid such a reversal. Our revolution hardly stirred the social fabric. It was the educated men of property and substance who took over here; and what they made constitutional was the liberal heritage of British law and institutions, local government, schools and churches. The have-nots could pioneer; the haves reasonably accepted that the "unalienable rights" of the Declaration would in time be spread around — as a century later, in the prosperous Midwest, at this neighborly construction of a barn.

Though Paine, our only radical, was exhorting, "We must think as if we were the first men that thought," while the unflawed spirit of Jefferson seemed to share that boldness (at Monticello, three practical stories contrived and disguised under the mask of one); yet in architecture, as in politics, the genius of the new republic was the caution of its originality, its power of invention within the traditions of the past, here of Palladio.

- 37) *Schinkel, 1826-7, Charlottenhof, Sans Souci, Potsdam*
- 37a) *W. Peiner, German, c. 1939, War, from Apocalypse tapestry design*
- 37b) *Schinkel, 1838, Schloss Orlanda, Crimea, Hall and Garden*
- 37c) *Same, Sketch for the Classical Gallery*
- 37d) *William R. Hurst, etc., 20th cent., Columned pool, San Simeon, CA*

Compare the house Schinkel built in Sans Souci park about 1826 for the Prussian Princess Charlotte, by marriage Queen of Russia. Its academic neo-Greek wants the freshness of Monticello; but the clean modesty might almost have raised Jeffersonian hopes for Hegel's Germany. Though in fact, the whole country would veer in a century to the frenzied excesses of a madman's tyranny. Another Schinkel design may give a clue to the fatal entanglement of that Europe. Here, a fairy-tale vision he would sketch for the same Charlotte (and her husband Nicholas I, that "Iron Tsar") — a monstrous, somehow Græco-Moorish palace, never built, by the Black Sea on the Crimea. It is the sort of exhibition Hearst would first spring on America — at some cost to Jeffersonian democracy.

- a38) *R.C. Woodville, 1851, Waiting for the Stage, Corcoran Gallery, Wash., D.C.*

- 638) *Brueghel, 1568, Parable of the Blind, Capodimonti, Naples; + V detail*
- c38) *Banquet of New York plutocrats, photograph, c. 1900(?); first, video detail*
- 38) *New York Modern, World Trade Center, Manhattan*
- 38a) *Burning tropical vegetation, photograph, 1989*
- 38b) *Reininger AIDS photo of Kaposi's sarcoma (Ken Meeks)*

Would R.C. Woodville's 1851 irony of the man shrouded behind dark glasses searching the news in The Spy, while he waits with others for a stagecoach, have let it out, that the Fathers' trust in a free press to bring truth to a free people, might (as the blind lead the blind in Brueghel) end in the ditch of slogan-sale and media debauchery — as when the children turn on the telly, and soul cries out: "Who let the enemy in the house?"

Surely a prophet could have seen, that when neglect of Rousseau's dictum — "because the force of circumstance tends always to destroy equality, the force of legislation must tend to maintain it" — had installed plutocracy, even our balanced freedoms would join the death-dance of the planet, that great Kermess of arrogance, strung from the May pole of the twin towers of World Trade, out through all competing nations and bank-colonies, to the last burning of jungles for the brief agricultural failure the tropics allow. As Prometheus says in Aeschylus, "Besides this I gave them fire." So freedom chases the old beast around the tree until the pursuer becomes the pursued — hounded to death in the hunt for happiness. Thus our lot too may harden to a planned order of the whole: our freedom death, our life-road regimen.

- a39) *David, 1797-8, Unfinished Napoleon, Louvre, Paris; + Va39, detail*
- 639) *Canova, 1803-22, Bust of Napoleon, detail, Pitti, Florence*
- 39) *Double: [A] David, Napoleon, as in a39, and [B] Gothic, c. 1245, Head of a Woman, from N. Portal, Notre Dame, Paris; found buried in 1977 (from Metropolitan Museum Show); video uses glazed double, V39*
- 39a) *Canova, 1787-93, Eros and the reclining Psyche, Louvre*

Around the 1800 switch from loose-rein to curb-rein, when a liberation still functional in America veered in Revolutionary France

toward the control of Europe — in that explosion of hope, how deeply David's unfinished 1797 Napoleon is cloven. So in Rousseau's Social Contract: does the General Will ask Jefferson's state of minimal interference, or the maximal state Marx would infer from the same text? Rousseau:

...the general will is always right and tends to the public advantage; but it does not follow that the deliberations of the people have always the same rectitude... Some must have their wills made conformable to their reason, and others must be taught what it is they will... From thence is born the necessity of a legislator...

In that lawgiver proclaiming like a shaman the General Will, Sovereign over all, lurked the Revolutionary Republic of Virtue, 1793: when the Council of the Commune would require the destruction of all relics "of superstition and feudalism" — here, from Notre Dame, a face of Gothic humanity, buried almost two hundred years.

Under Hebert, Notre Dame became "The Temple of Reason," where the nude dancer Maillart impersonated Truth, until the scandal of her rites gave Deist Robespierre cause for guillotining the radical faction: extremists *in extremis*.

A40) Friedrich, c. 1810, pen-drawing of Self, National Gallery, Berlin; + V detail
40) Double: [A] A40, Friedrich, Self; and [B] 40B, Gericault, Nude (see V40)
40B) Gericault, 1804-12, Male Nude, Beaux-Arts, Rouen (video: half-length only)

Music: Schubert, 1827, Die Winterreise, from "Frühlingstraum," Fischer-Dieskau, Angel 3640 B

Two phrases from Schubert's Winterreise occasion two images. From "A Dream of Spring" (Frühlingstraum), where the frost on the window suggests leaves and flowers, the incalculable yearning of the tearful major has summoned Caspar David Friedrich's pen-magic of the searching Transcendental self. (fade Frühlingstraum) Against which, Schubert's "Mut" breaks into proud defiance: "If there are no gods on earth/ We will be gods ourselves."

Music: Also Winterreise, close of "Mut". Angel 3640 B

The urge to that was already in Friedrich's longing, as it had been in Goethe; but Gericault's nude gives it the desperate muscle of Napoleonic France.

Prophetic rumblings from the tragic Continent.

- a41) *Bingham, 1847, Raftsmen Playing Cards, Museum, St. Louis*
- 641) *Chicago, 1831 (S.M. Peto, 1866, Resources and Prospects)*
- 41) *Currier & Ives, 1871, The Great Chicago Fire*
- 41a) *Currier & Ives, 1892, Chicago from Lake Michigan; + V detail*

While here the confrontation was delayed — not yet the Promethean vaunt, or fatal rupture.

Yet the very energy and expansive success of America — Chicago from the fort and trading post of 1831, through the spur and stimulus of the Great Fire of 1871, to the 1892 spread of shipping and trade, industry and housing — that surge of powers would launch us on some such tragic risk as Promethean Greece had signaled.

- a42) *Paulus van Vianen, c. 1603, Landscape with river and raftsmen, pen and wash, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest; + V detail*
- 42) *E.D. Lukas, 1872, Susquehanna at Conowaga Bridge, D.M. Bell; + V detail*
- 42a) *Mississippi River, 1988 low water, barges stranded*
- V42b) *Trashed Hawaiian beach, 1988, plastic, etc*
- 42c) *Deforestation, 1989, Cascades, State of Washington*

Since our freedom of quest, Adam Smith's quick and happy way to clear a land and build a booming nation, rested on what had long sustained the prosperity of Europe — that taming of nature which ties this van Vianen 1600 log-rafting down some German river, to Lukas' Susquehanna of 1872 — America still counting on what Smith and Marx both assume (their common and fatal error), that nature is inexhaustible and works gratuitously.

But we know too well what price Nature exacts — we who face the extremes of a changing climate, Gaia's great storms and droughts (summer, 1988, these barges stranded on the old Father of Waters, near my home-town of Greenville, Mississippi); we who feel the more actinic rays of the sun, who experience polluted streams, trashed beaches, garbage-fills, the old timber clear-cut from the ranges; and we shall know and feel more, as the world-pinch for food and water, raw materials and energy advances.

a43) *Dinosaur skeletons, Natural History Museum, NYC (CGB'79)*

43) *Double: [A] Fish in the ocean, and [B] Eocene mammals and birds*

43a) *Double: Upper Cretaceous, reptiles of land, sea, air*

43b) *Iraqi tank, 1990, Persian Gulf crisis, Newsweek*

Consider the rise and fall of dinosaurs; such adaptive radiation and earth-seizure must throw life-balances, genetic or social, out of whack. Organic causality is a complex interplay. The fall of comets or of asteroids could only have posed a general challenge, which, in fact, fishes in the sea (even sharks), first birds in the air, reptile sprawlers (lizards, snakes and crocodiles), besides early mammals, managed to live through; where all ruling reptiles ("dinosaurs"), large or small, of diverse orders, in ocean, air and all continents, became extinct. External impingement hardly accounts for so selective a catastrophe — from which man should learn, if learning is possible.

Since the human assault on the globe, through mechanized war and peace — capitalist, communist, third world — exhibits some such unorganized chain-reaction as must have marked the evolutionary crisis of the higher reptiles — some irreversibility of cultural, as of genetic process.

a44) *Coal-burning plant, 1989, San Juan, New Mexico*

Vb44) *Savonics Solar Generator, 1990, Hawaii*

c44) *Conifers dead from acid rain, Scientific American, 1991*

d44) *India, Ganges River, pollution and coal-burning plant*

44) *Romanian polluted town of Copsa Mica, 1990; first, V detail*

44a) *Pollution from a New Jersey oil refinery*

V44b) *Mexico City slums, junk-heap millions, Scientific American, 1989*

Take the burning of coal for an always unchecked upward spiral of population and energy-demand — here the Four Corners plant, San Juan, New Mexico, belching dioxides of carbon and sulfur. "The feedbacks are enormously complex," say company scientists, meaning: "We can't act because we can't be sure." While the production of solar panels is neglected or suppressed: "Hardly cost-effective" — deceiving and deceived, by an economics of the fragmented particular, which obscures the cost of greenhouse gases and acid rain.

Fourier at the beginning and Arrhenius at the end of the last century had linked carbon-dioxide to climate (I heard of it in 1934 from Barr at Virginia); meanwhile, industry has plunged dead ahead. No doubt one reads now of "sustainable development," and that such polluting power plants as this on the Ganges fail to comply; but how is book-knowledge to change the politics of need and greed?

Worst of all when the so-called "planned societies," who took up the banner of world-hope, plan nothing but police enforcement of their own dogmatic rule, blind to the tensile tie of means and ends — materialist hicks who, as Simone Weil said, have fallen to the top in the gravity of power — this Romanian town of Copsa Mica, become under suppression of comment, "the most polluted place on earth".

And those other hicks on the Western side, who called themselves political scientists and economists, and who take pride in having persuaded America that "plan" is a dirty word — all incapable of polyvalent thinking — as if an essential ingredient (Adam Smith's free enterprise or Marx's labor) were the entire recipe and cause of prosperity, or of value.

- a45) *Human body, Capillary circulation, blood to tissue*
- 45) *Macrophage, white blood cell, hunting *Escherichia Coli**
- 45a) *White blood cell drawing in bacteria by pseudopods*
- V45b) *1851, Clipper Ship, 'The Flying Cloud'*
- 45c) *Cut-out montage, earth against Milky Way*

They deplore organic analogies. But the goal-directed symbiosis of the body is not totalitarian. Evolution has endowed its cells with genes of common loyalty and service. For each to pursue its own gain, as our politicians, bankers, and realtors do, would be cancerous. That is where the media have let democracy down. They should have built a gene-pool conscience of the race. Observe this microphage white blood cell pouring itself out after bacteria: that is the immune response. You see no policeman but the cell itself, no central authority. Nor with this hoplite, wrapping invaders in arrowed pseudopods. He is on his own. But the whole action is moral and for the whole. It is only by plan that we can salvage the earth. But not a plan of the dumb and tyrannical. We have to constitute a feedback community of observing and governing intelligence — some many-minded Odyssean navigator.

This program smacks of a new religion, a love and worship of the mothering earth, floating at ease in the cosmos. But we cannot simply trust to Tellus Gaia. If that orb is alive, it is vulnerable, like every living being, to sickness and death — our death. We must intensify science to keep it green, but a new science of the mysterious whole, redeemed from short-sighted bondage to logic, profit and war.

- a46) *Delacroix, 1830, Liberty Leading... Louvre (CGB '80)*
- b46) *Daumier, 1854, On the Barricades, National Gallery, Prague*
- 46) *Houdon, c. 1778, Terra Cotta bust of J.J. Rousseau, Orleans*
- 46a) *Highgate Cemetery, London, Giant memorial head of Marx*
- 46b) *Triple: Photos: [A] Mussolini, [B] Wilson, and [C] Lenin, c.1920*

So we scheme; while revolutions of two centuries have heightened at once intemperate hope and violence. After the French Reign of Terror and Napoleon, came the inconsequential Paris uprising of 1830 (which would only change one Bourbon for another); yet to what crux of reckless zeal Delacroix has lashed it, in his "Liberty Leading the People". Next the workers' insurrection and brief commune of 1848 (just when Marx and Engels had released their Manifesto), would prompt Daumier's partisan response, as in this Les Miserables group "On the Barricades".

In a calmer century Rousseau had doubted the emergence of good laws from civil strife and hatred —

Many governments have been established in war, famine or sedition; but they are the very governments that destroy the state... The choice of the time for instituting any law is one of the surest criteria whether it be the work of a legislator or tyrant.

— prophetic condemnation of militant prophets, whether of left, right, or middle. So the Manifesto —

The Communists' ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution.

— of which it could be asked: "What's all that hate doing in there?" Though the curse of hate would fall on all parties, the child father to the man: this between-wars trio of Mussolini, Wilson, Lenin — all fatefully snared.

The tide has swept us forward. However —

- a47) *Russian poster of 1905, Chains Broken (Russia in Revolution); + V detail*
- 47) *Custodiev, 1905, Revolution striding the streets (same volume)*
- 47a) *Caricature of 47: Revolution as striding skeleton (same volume)*
- 47b) *Cartoon, c. 1917, Gold-greedy Capitalist Hog (same volume)*

Music: Scriabin, 1907, from Poem of Ecstasy, London OES 6915

1905-6 is the date of the first Russian Revolution — such a frenzy of defiant hope, joined with Nietzschean scorn ("We have to be destroyers!") as, in this poster ("Chains Broken"), heightens the petition and massacre of the same year; while in music Scriabin's 1907 "Poem of Ecstasy" cradles its Orphic Egg of explosive yearnings — a complicity of yea-shouts and poignant cries.

So Custodiev's absolute peasant-worker giant, trampling and shattering the established city, stirs the privileged to alarm and hate

— a wizard of terror that blasts the great rebel to a skeleton trailing blood and fire — as it counter-blasts those of station to the beast and enemy — this gold-greedy hog of Capital. (fade Scriabin)

48) *S. Eisenstein, Ten Days that Shook the World, Nikandrov, as Lenin, speaks at the Finland Station*

What can it mean that Shostakovich in the climactic forte of his withdrawn 4th Symphony (two-and-a-half minutes of inwrought, percussive dissonance) cleaves the stark violence of two Great Wars and of Revolution from its former ecstasy, crusting the volcanic brew of Eisenstein's Ten Days that Shook the World?

a49) *First World War: long-distance artillery firing*

b49 *Same, about 1917, battle in the trenches*

49) *Russian Poster, c.1917-18, '5 1/2% War Bonds'*

Music: Shostakovich, 1935-6, Symphony No.4, final brass chorale, MHS 824958Z

Drums. Cannon (Krupp and Allied) shell both fronts. West and East, the carnage of trench warfare. Spent Russia still lashed to the field — this poster for five-and-a-half percent war bonds.

50) *Russia in Revolution, c. 1920(?), Lenin harangues the people*

50a) *Same, 1917, Litovsky Prison burning, Petrograd*

From April 1917 on, Lenin was there, (with Trotsky below: "The end justifies all means". Trotsky, to workers on strike and petitioning revolutionary sailors: "I'll shoot you like pheasants!" In that kindled pyre of burning, looting, purging, starving, the population of Petrograd fell from two-and-a-half million to five-hundred-thousand.

51) *Same, c. 1920(?), White execution of Bolsheviks*

51a) *Same, 1921, Corpse-butcher peasants with cannibal meat*

51b) *Same, Poster, 1922, Caricature of the League of Nations*

All parties, White, Red, Socialist, espoused terrorism. Production failed; money more or less disappeared. By 1921, when Trotsky had broken the Civil War, famine and disease were rife; even cannibalism surfaced — these butchers of the human dead. Lenin: "We are beggars, hungry, ruined beggars." Yet hate laid the blame (why not?) on the swollen capitalist powers: France, the U.S.A., England.

52) *Russia in Revolution, 1929, Stalin, with Party Delegates*

What ecstasy could remain, once the plotting exterminator of the old Soviet vanguard — Stalin — had tightened his rule?

53) *Spanish Civil War, 1936-9, Refugees at the French Border*

Meanwhile, the war of Left and Right spread over the world — Spain: refugees by a gutted farm turn to France.

54) *Sino-Japanese War, 1937, troops on the Great Wall*

54a) *Same: May 3, 1939, Bombing of Chungking, Life*

54b) *Same, Bodies of women and children after an air-raid*

Ironic chance, that the only appearance in these shows of the Great Chinese Wall, is for the 1937 movement of troops in the Sino-Japanese War — from which the most appalling pictures show the bombing of Chungking —with the air-raid slaughter of women and children.

55) *Nazi Reserves, 1939, addressed by Hitler at a Rally*

56) *St Paul's, London, the night of December 29, 1940*

56a) *Moscow bombed, Kremlin, night of July 23, 1941*

Then it was the Nazi build-up... for the assault on Europe: London... Moscow...

57) *World War II, Ruins of Wesel, Churchill (Life)*

58) *Atomic Bomb, August 9, 1945, over Nagasaki, Japan*

"I will repay," saith the Lord — Wesel, on the Rhine, north of the Ruhr. Could the climax be other than the atomic cloud, of which Oppenheimer averred: "I am Shiva, destroyer of worlds"?

(from brass forte to dark brooding)

- 59) *Margaret Bourke-White, 1945, Buchenwald, liberated Jews*
- 60) *Korea, 1950, Marines retreat over their own dead*
- 61) *Vietnam, June 1966, Phosphorous bomb on a jungle village*
- 62) *Rumania, 1989, Fired Palace of Communist boss, Ceaucescu*

Here, Shostakovich's clang of ordnance gives way to a muffled span of brooding, dark as the trial of the Jews, or Russia's Gulag Archipelago... Or the no-win aftermaths of cold war: Korea, 1950... Vietnam, 1966 (phosphorous bombs on a jungle village)... These brasses smoldering, like Soviet misrule in East Europe, down to the fired palace of Romanian Ceaucescu. What is the prophecy?

(cut dark brooding section)

- Va63 *Cathedral of the Annunciation, 1484-9, Kremlin, Moscow*
- 63) *Zagorsk Belfry, 1741-69, near Moscow, Russia*
- 64) *Russia, c. 1917, May Day, Communist Poster Greeting*
- 64a) *Kandinsky, 1926, Several Circles, Guggenheim Museum, NYC*

Music: To the celeste passage closing the Shostakovich Fourth

What, most of all, when Shostokovich, after such intensities of attack and repression, distills for the symphony's close a space of mysterious intimation, sprinkled with rising arpeggios of the heavenly celeste?. Who can hear it as the pealing bells of an Orthodox past? Or attach it to the frail posters of Soviet hope — the exploded delight of this 1917 May Day? Exiled Kandinsky's spiritual abstractions (this 1926 rapture of "Several Circles") seem nearer. If such was the art-affinity, no wonder Shostokovich withdrew the Fourth.

- 65) *December 1989, Protest at the Berlin Wall; + video variant, V65a*
- 66) *November 1989, Havel's victory sign to the people of Prague*
- 67) *1965, Black protest and arson in Watts, Los Angeles*
- 68) *1989, Overflowing landfill of consumer wastes, N.J.*

But if prophecy, why not of the coming wave of liberation — this joyful breaching of the Berlin Wall, Christmas, 1989? Or is that promise as vain as the other claims?

(close Shostokovich, 4th — celeste passage)

Some open-throttle drive to supermarket expansion: consumer goods and energy? Could even Havel's victory-sign, made over the streets of Prague, erase the unsolved troubles of the West, which had brought in rigors of Right and Left? Or can today's spendthrift opulence obscure our own crisis of inequality and foreclosure, racial slums, violence, the speculative wars Marx deceived himself to avoid?... But our fate is intensified by what Marx was blind to — everywhere the power of an earth-rape, defiant of plan, whelming nature in wastes of productivity and poisons of science.

69) *Eye of white-sided dolphin through nylon of a drift-net*

Music: Ockeghem; from *Intemerata Dei mater* (Munrow) Seraphim 6104

Through such buildup in the mechanized ravage of war, the ecological havoc of peace, the globe with all its creatures, chiefly man, is snared, like this dolphin, whose dying eye looks through nylon strands of a thirty-five-mile, ocean-exhausting drift-net.

70) *Chartres Cathedral, 16th cent., Angel over the Choir Gable*

70a) *Iraqi War, 1991, Kuwaiti Oil Terminal Burning*

So a centennial question mounts like an ancient prayer: whether the reconstructive earth (here suggested, as through past wars, by the guardian angel over Chartres) can so far assert itself, as to avoid impending catastrophe. That question is being tested, moment by moment; it has even, of late, almost been answered in the negative.

(close Ockeghem)

71) *Double: [A] Egypt, Dynasty III, c. 2660, King Zoser, detail, Museum, Cairo, and [B] Sumerian, c. 2700 B.C., Head of orant from Eshnunna, Bagdad*

71A) *Head of King Zoser (from 71)*

71B) *Head of orant (from 71)*

71c) *Ayatollah Khomeini, c. 1978, Muslim leader of Iran*

Appalling, the intensity of faith and will it took to produce civilization, to rear Egypt and Mesopotamia from the bogs of pre-agricultural man — both peoples Semitic, of kindred, yet warring tribes: here from Egypt, Saqqara, Third Dynasty, of the Step Pyramid, about 2660 B.C., King Zoser's mutilated statue, its jewel eyes gouged out by later vandals; and from 2700 B.C. Sumeria, a gypsum orant now in the Baghdad Museum, menaced, perhaps, by bombs.

As if the dæmonic force it took to found higher culture must become, in the reactive chemistry of place and race, the bane of its continuance.

a72) *Assyrian, 883-59 B.C., Lion hunt relief, Throne room, Palace of Assurnasirpal II, British Museum, London*

72) *Site of Jewish defiance of Rome, A.D. 70, Rock of Masada*

Let two relics bridge the millennia since those origins: 9th century BC and after, reliefs of hunting and war, to be transported wholesale from palace ruins of Assyrian conquerors to the British Museum; and, shrine of the conquered, this Rock of Masada, where the Jews, most God-inspired, maligned and persecuted of those people, chose in 70 A.D. mass-suicide, men, women and children, rather than submit to Rome. A two-edged precedent.

a73) *Iraqi tanks enter Kuwait, August 2, 1990*

b73) *Double: [A] Hussein and [B] Bush*

73) *Gulf War, 1991: U.S. missile and bombing attack*

73a) *Oil spill in the Persian Gulf*

73b) *Hans von Briesen holding scales to the sky (CGB,'91); + V detail*

73c) *Eta Carina nebula and 1843 nova (Scientific American, April.1973)*

It is in these faith-cradles of civilization that the question of its future looms. Now, when the will and drive of the whole United Nations, free enterprise, communist, third world, should be creatively focused on a rethinking and reordering of everything — population, diversity, production, distribution, resources, energy — where every

leader needs to plan and implement vision, this imbroglio of desert and Crescent shows leadership impotent but for bungling to the chaos of war: to have fostered and armed a gambler like Saddam Hussein, as reckless as unprincipled, for manifest aggression until, tempted by our own devil, we espouse the mischief — down to our saturation plane-and-missile bombing, his oil-sabotage of the Persian Gulf.

In a world so dangerously poised, so bereft of formative control, so driven to catabolic stampede, the balance Zeus and Jove hung in the sky must read: global catastrophe — advancing at its own chain-reactive rate. That fact seems less in question than whether the calamity will be total or corrective. Here the Janus counsel of wisdom should be: to work for corrective containment, although aware that the cosmos we praise, may — among countless worlds — already have seeded (by our connivance) the miscarriage of earth.

Va74) Another of von Briesen holding the scales

b74) Memling, 1466-75, from Judgment, weighing souls, Danzig; + V detail

c74) Roger van der Weyden, 1443-6, Judgment, same, Beaune; first, V detail

74) Gislebertus, 1130-40, Tympanum Judgment, same detail, Autun

And yet those heavenly scales span a contradiction. Do they herald a fate, or (from the name, Libra) a libration? In Daniel V: 27, God, under that image, warns Belshazzar: "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting." Milton follows in Paradise Lost: "The Fiend lookt up and knew/ His mounted scale aloft." So in this Memling Judgment, the good soul, to the angel's right; settles, like gold; the sinner rises, like dross.

Contrast the Iliad: "The Father balanced his golden scales... The Achaians' death-day was heaviest." Here down is bad, as with van der Weyden's sinking sinner on the angel's left. But the paradox is not the ambiguity of up and down; it is of gravity and spirit — that the weighing of souls (swayed, in this Autun carving, by angel and devil) must share, with life, some more than quantum uncertainty.

- Va75) *Bulgarians demand reform, December 1989, after forty years*
 b75) *Mahatma Gandhi, c. 1940, seated in lotus posture, writing*
 Vc75) *Cactus flower, Chiapas, Mexico (CGB 1978)*
 75) *Flower photographs: video (V75) Lady's slipper, photograph (CGB 60); slide show (75) Hibiscus, photograph (CGB '91)*
 75a) *Halloween pumpkin, carved and photographed by C.G. Bell, 1985*

So too with the fate of the world; it is not determined but probable. Man's conscious feedbacks may cross the threshold of surprise, almost of miracle.

We have again to assess the odds, more searchingly, beginning with the wheel-and-arrow projections of history; while the organizing power and fate of all our shows draws to this here and NOW, as in the plants of Goethe's Metamorphosis:

When the plant vegetates, flowers, fructifies, it is still the same organs which under protean shape, expand as leaves, contract to the calyx, expand again in a petalled crown, contract to the organs of reproduction, then expand, for the last time, as fruit.

- a76) *Double: [A] Athens, c. 540 B.C., Peplos Korê, head, Acropolis; and [B] Head of Antonia Minor, Ara Pacis, 13-9 B.C., Rome; first, V: A and B*
 b76) *Triple: Egypt: [A] Old Kingdom, Khafre; [B] Middle, Sphinx of Amenemhet III; [C] New, Limestone Ikhnaton; all details, Cairo*
 76) *Triple: [A] Chartres, c. 1210, Melchisidek, detail; [B] Bernini, c. 1615, Msgr. Santoni, S. Prasede, Rome; and [C] Picasso, 1907, Self, Prague*

What is New in Vico's Science of cycles, of 1725 and '44? That his "nations" are less political states than cultures; that their causality shifts from what is outward (as war) to what is inward (as religion and poetry), anticipating our great pulses of consciousness, or soul — such a mutation as from this Archaic Greek Peplos Korê, 6th century B.C.; to a face from the Ara Pacis, under the doubts of Augustan Rome.

Yet Vico's pattern for this is a wheel of recurrent Ages: of Gods, of Heroes, of Men (in Egypt: from the pyramid-building Old

Kingdom, through a Middle Kingdom of weighty control, to the human quest and yearning of the New). Or we might extend Vico to our own time, charting the Christian West, from the God-force of Chartres (1210), through Bernini's embattled Monsignor Santoni (1615), to a Picasso Self (of 1907), between the human and a Kafka mask.

- a77) *Double: Theran, c. 1500 B.C., fresco of a lady; and [B] Greek, c. 700 B.C., warrior; both, National Museum, Athens.*
 77) *Double: Roman, c. 400 A.D., Priestess at an Altar, Diptych of the Nicomachi and Symmachi, Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and [B] Gallic, c. 400 A.D., Man in a tunic, gold; Dumbarton Oaks*
 77A) *The priestess, from 77, above (video, detail only)*

In the Cycles show, the Greek show, and even in the personal review of NOW-Alpha, we have dramatized the confrontation at each turning of this wheel, where late-cycle luxury is ravished by barbarian renewal — this Theran lady about 1500 B.C., with an Iron Age warrior of the sequent Time of Troubles.

Yet there is something rather static about the imaged repetitions; thus (after two millennia, say 400 A.D., in the twilight of pagan Rome) this (ivory) high-born priestess at the altar of Jove, confronts a gold statuette of some tunicate chieftain of Gaul.

Too static, when moderns make Vico predictive, as Spengler, Toynbee, on the slopes of Western decadence, conjure force from nostalgias. What hierophant, in the circle of Yeats, Pound, H.D., will this priestess evoke? Or where, in her ambiance, will Nietzsche's "barbarians of the 20th century" appear?

- a78) *Boecklin, 1880, Isle of the Dead, Kunstmuseum, Basel*
 78) *Dali, 1935, Palladio's Corridor of Dramatic Surprise, Museum of Modern Art, NYC*

Ominous, when the post-romantic brooding and pseudomysticism of Boecklin's (powerfully painted) Isle of the Dead — the sheeted soul rowed to the hollow of grave and birth, between rock flanks, under shade of cypress — when that yearning spawns the hysteria of

Dali's 1935 Palladio's Corridor of Dramatic Surprise — Palladio, Renaissance founder of our trusted Jeffersonian orders — his barrel vault collapsing, among surreal vulgarities. Surely a static determinism of history.

a79) *Khirbet Qumran, before 68 A.D., part of the Isaiah scroll*

79) *S. Pudenza Mosaic, c. 410, Christ enthroned with Apostles*

Against that classical wheel of time, the Hebrew arrow had been launched (as from Isaiah, this Dead Sea Scroll): "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son... Emmanuel... The Prince of Peace"; through John the Baptist: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"; to John the Divine: "Christ hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." But that City of God was more within than without, of eternity more than of time. Church and state had not withered away.

a80) *Nicholas of Verdun, 1181, enamels: from the triple rows (right side), four columns of three, (video: of these scenes, the four lower right, with a detail of one, V680, the Harrowing of Hell), Altar, Klosterneuburg*

80) *Same, two each from lower and middle rows, especially [below] Moses Receives the Law and [above] Descent of the Holy Spirit (video shows the lower two first, V80a, then the middle two, V80b)*

By the 12th century, Joachim de Floris, extending Biblical history to present and future, foresaw an actual Coming, in time, of the Holy Ghost — such freedom as Virgil assures Dante at the top of Purgatory: "I crown and mitre you over yourself." If Nicholas of Verdun's Correspondences, as (left) from Moses' receiving God's Law, to the Disciples' receiving his Spirit, were pushed to a mystic now, what would it be but Joachim's Third Kingdom of Grace abounding?

a81) *Rheims, West Windows, 1254-90 ff., from the Nave (CGB, '59)*

81) *Paris, Notre Dame, c. 1270, North Transept Rose, center-spread*

81a) *Same, South Transept Rose, center spread; + V details of both*

Joachim: "The first age (of the Old Testament) should be assigned to the Father, the second (of the New) to the Son, and the third to the Holy Spirit... when that promise begun in a few will be

consummated in many... Joel: 'I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters will prophecy.'" Similarly in the "New Light" of Gothic, rose windows spread radiance from God the Father, or from the Mother and Child, out through patriarchs and saints, to the life and occupations of the world. (So Rheims and Paris;

- a82) *York Minster, c. 1338, Heart detail from West Window; + V closer detail*
 b82) *Sainte Chapelle, 15th cent., Rose Window, Paris (CGB, '59)*
 82) *Giotto, 1304-6, Nativity, detail, Arena Chapel, Padua; first V closer detail*

then the flower-wreathed heart of York.)

In the sun-sphere of Dante's Paradise, it is Franciscan Bonaventura, opponent (with Dominican St Thomas) of Joachim's promise, who is made to introduce and praise him. Here Dante, uplifted by the paired circling dance of such ordained lights of Intellect and Love, is suddenly dazzled by a far brighter horizon of soul-sparks: "new spirits making a ring beyond the other circles" (so these music-making elders of the Sainte Chapelle) — "*Oh vero sfavillar del Santo Spiro*" — "Oh very sparkling of the Holy Ghost" — at which Beatrice smiles! So Dante hails the spiritual seeding of earth. Had not the windows of three centuries told as much; or in painting, Giotto's radiant humanizing of the birth of God?

a83, Vb83, c83, Vc83, Vd83, 83, V83a & 83a)

Grünwald, 1512-16, central spread of Isenheim Altar, with details, especially the spill of Heavenly Glory over the mountain world, Mother and Child.

Music: Josquin des Pres, 1515-20(?), 3rd Agnus, Missa Pange Lingua, The Tallis Scholars, Gimell 1585T-09

How successive waves of Reformation take up the Earthly Kingdom of Joachim's Franciscan followers: Luther — before the violence his preaching loosed threw him into fear and trembling — writing in confident joy of "the inestimable power and liberty of Christians"; Josquin's climactic masses, the Pange Lingua Agnus; and (Incarnation summit in all art) Grünwald's spill of light and angels

from the Father in glory into a mountain landscape, where the Child is dandled by Mary, beside a rose without thorns. (fade Josquin)

- a84) *Rembrandt, c. 1669, Simeon with the Child, Nat. Mus., Stockholm; + V detail*
 84) *Rembrandt, 1641, Landscape with a Coach, Wallace, London*
 84a) *S. Cooper, c. 1655(?), Oliver Cromwell, National Portrait Gallery, London; + V detail*

Music: Schütz, 1629, Sackbut overture, Fili mi Absalon, MHS 4504

By the time of Milton, Rembrandt, and Schütz, the same God-trust rests always more on the weight and solemnity of the human drama. In the radiant landscape it is the sun, down clouds, which sanctifies the spatial recess. In Cromwell's England the Fifth Monarchy Men expect the coming and present kingship of Christ. (fade Schütz) The stakes are always higher, the faith-wars more charged with material detonation.

- 85) *Jacques-Louis David, 1793, Marat dead, detail, Beaux Arts, Brussels; + V closer detail*

The next revolutionary move brings us back to France, 1793, Marat's assassination, under the cleaving shears of fact and dream. For Condorcet's History the blade of hope (non-Christian) was for a Tenth-EPOCH perfection and fulfillment of man; the blade of fact was the mounting Reign of Terror, which pursued him to a prison death.

- a86) *Triple: Portraits, 1792-1820(?), [A] Hegel, [B] Hölderlin, and [C] Schelling (here video adds Vb86, Runge, detail, then C of a86, Schelling alone)*
 86, 86a) *Runge, Morning, Small and Large, Kunsthalle, Hamburg; + V details*

In thought, it was Germany which brought to fruition, in three astonishing schoolmates, Hegel, Hölderlin, and Schelling, radical transformations of Joachim's temporal Coming (blended sometimes with Vico's cycles).

Music: Beethoven, 1799-1800, First Symphony, opening, Toscanini

— All (at that turn to the 1800s) as if launched on Beethoven's early symphonies, toward Promethean daring.

Schelling, youngest of the three, by 1809 had completed Of Human Freedom, tracing, from the primal dark ground of nature, and self-willed battle of history, God's physical emergence as light, His moral emergence as Spirit.

At the same time Runge was composing versions, small and large, of his transcendental Morning to image the life-forces of earth, as in Böhme's Sacred Element, (fade First)

a87) John Martin, 1852, *The Great Day of His Wrath*; first, video details

87) Same, *The Plains of Heaven*, both Tate Gallery, London; + V detail

Music: Beethoven, 1800-5, Fifth Symphony, from Trio, Toscanini

No one has formulated the death-drive of history more powerfully than Hegel, where a God at war with himself is only to be actualized through successive alienations; so the fruit that every culture ripens and hungers for, becomes a poison draught to it, and yet at the same time the rise of a higher principle. By this cunning of reason, every decay and fall from China to the West, advances the self-realization of spirit, (as with Schelling) actually and concretely, in the World.

In such a theodicy, John Martin, Victorian fantast, leads from his "Great Day of God's Wrath" to these earthly "Plains of Heaven," white with souls. (fade Fifth)

a88) *Pastel of Hölderlin*, 1792, Schiller Museum, Marbach; first, video detail

b88) *Michelangelo*, 1532-3, *Resurrection drawing*, British Museum

88) *Athens*, c. 600 B.C., *Kouros*, Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.C (CGB '79)

V88a) *Athena Gigantomachia*, c. 525 B.C., *Acropolis Museum*, Athens (CGB '77)

V88b) *Apollo temple of Corinth*, 6th cent. B.C. (CGB '77)

88c) *Landscape*, north of Lago di Garda (CGB '59)

V88d) *Landscape*, northern Bavaria (CGB '59)

Music: Beethoven, 1804, Third Symphony, 1st movement, Toscanini

The third schoolmate and transformer of history was Hölderlin, most enrapt elegiac poet of the West, undervalued through life and mad for almost forty years, for whom (as Nietzsche would elaborate) the expected German Coming would not be Christian, but Greek. After the long night of Olympian withdrawal (for which Christ, second Dionysus, gave ritual comforts), Hölderlin foreknows the dawn-ecstasy and mythic-return of the keen deities of earth and sky. (The translations that follow are by C.G. Bell.)

So the gods of heaven come in, with such deep trembling,
Down through the shadows their day-spring breaks
among men.

(Beethoven's Third, evincing most, how "the Zeus-eagle, from Indus and Parnassus and the votive hills of Italy,"

Exultant, over the Alps, wings on at last,
And sees, wide spread, the many-patterned lands.

To wake that Germany, Hölderlin, in "Bread and Wine," his greatest poem, invokes the Hellas he would never see:

- a89) *Greece, Rocky coast of Paros, photograph (Roy Moore); or Va89*
- b89) *Delphi, Temple of Apollo and Mt. Parnassus, photograph (CGB '77)*
- 89) *Delphi, Theatre and Temple from above (CGB '77)*
- 89a) *Greece, Attica, Bay at Sounion, photograph (Roy Moore)*

By day and by night, godlike fire drives us on...
Wherefore,
To the Isthmus come, there, where the open sea roars
under
Parnassus, and snow gleams on the rock cliffs above
Delphi;
There to Olympian lands and Bacchic heights of
Cithaeron;
Among pines and firs, over slopes mantled with
grapes,

Where Thebe below and Ismenos sound in the land of
Cadmus;
Thence comes, and points us thither, the past and
coming God.

Yet every invocation of that lost and expected glory:

Greece, feast-hall floored with ocean, tables mountain
Peaks, lifted time out of mind for a destinate coming —

- a90) *Friedrich, c. 1830, Temple of Juno at Agrigento, Dortmund*
- b90) *Delphi, Temple of Apollo ruins, darker photograph (CGB '77)*
- 90) *Runge, 1799, Crayon Self, detail, Kunsthalle, Hamburg*
- 90a) *Friedrich, c. 1818, Climber over Mists, Kunsthalle, Hamburg*

Music: Beethoven, Third Symphony, 2nd movement, Toscanini

recalls the desolation: Where are the groves and temples?

Delphi slumbers, and where now does the great fate
sound?

— No more in Greece; nor yet in Germany. "We come too late" —
or too soon. So the will to anticipate that Coming:

Look, we are it, ourselves, we, fruit of Hesperia —

darkens the lonely task of unshared prophecy: "And wherefore poets
in a time of dearth? — *"und wozu Dichter in dürftiger Zeit?"* Until, in
"The Blind Singer," stretched to madness, he prays release:

Take from my heart, that I may bear it,
Life, the god-like, take from me.

- a91) *Friedrich, 1809-10, Monk by the Sea, Charlottenburg, Berlin*
- Vb91 *Same, 1817, Memorial Landscape, Charlottenburg, Berlin*
- 91) *Carus, c. 1825, Wanderer at the City Gate, detail of 91b, below (video takes
a detail from this, and a wider detail from the whole)*
- 91a) *Relief of Susette Gontard, Hölderlin's Diotima*
- 91b) *Carus, c. 1825, whole of 91 (Kunst, 1932); first, video detail of the sky*

Yet in what dusk-love paeon he hymns that Night itself, of which he would foresee the dawn. The opening of "Bread and Wine" brims the conscious space of the distych with the soul-inebriated gloaming of that solitude — a mood-suffusion not even Beethoven's Funeral March approximates (*fade Beethoven*); only Schubert's grave-ward yearning in *The Winter-Journey*, with the soul-search of Friedrich and Carus.

Music: Schubert, 1827, *Die Winterreise: Der Wegweiser*, Angel S3640B

Ringsum ruhet die Stadt; still wird die erleuchtete
Gasse,
Und, mit Fackeln geschmückt, rauschen die Wagen hin-
weg.

Quiet spreads over the town, hushed now are the
glimmering byways,
And, with torches agleam, rustling the wagons depart...
Ah, but the sweep of strings sounds far from gardens...
fountains
Ever-bubbling and fresh whisper on vaporous beds.
Still in dusk-laden air, roll the echoing bells of
evening...

(*fade Der Wegweiser*)

— Fruitless, to transcribe mere objects, which that German floats in a liquid of mood-sounds: "Still in dämmriger Luft ertönen geläutete Glocken"; only music pours back those volatile pools, or art, in its way: Carus' *Wanderer at the City Gate*, with the love-death pilgrim of Schubert's *Winterreise*:

- a92) Friedrich, 1825, *Evening, House by a Pine Grove, Köln*
- 92) Friedrich, 1830-35, *Easter: Road to the Cemetery; Private, London*
- V92a Friedrich, 1824, *Willows and Moon, Wallraf-Richartz, Köln*
- 92b) Athens, *Parthenon from Philopappou Hill, photograph (Roy Moore)*

Music: Again Schubert's *Wegweiser*, final repeat of last stanza

Momently wakens a wind and stirs in the peaks of the
 forest;
 See, and the shadow-image of earth, the moon, se-
 cretly
 Comes also, and Night, swirled in stars, and little con-
 cerned
 With us, spectrally hovering there, a stranger to what
 is mortal,
 Far over rock-heights hung, glances, supernal and sad.

Glänzt die Erstaunende dort, die Fremdlingin unter den
 Menschen,
 Über Gebirgshöhen traurig und prächtig herauf.

(end Wegwelsner)

In that prophetic Night, in the death-joy of the god's betrayal,
 today's tragic earth-triumph finds its utterance.

a93) Double: [A] Pompeii, 1st cent. A.D., Portrait of a Girl, National Museum,
 Naples; and [B] Munch, 1895, Self-Portrait, National Gallery, Oslo;
 + V single of B

93) Double: [A] Christian, c. 300, Orant, Catacomb of S. Callisto; and
 [B] Henry Lamb, 1914, Lytton Strachey, detail, Southampton Gallery;
 + V detail of B

Music: Dvorak, 1893, New World Symphony, from 2nd Movement,
 Angel S35615

Whereas any Vico-to-Toynbee Cycle would have led the ripe
 nostalgias of Rome or the West (Arnold's "strange disease of modern
 life" and "take me, cowled forms") as Eliot would lead his Lost
 Generations of Prufrock, Gerontion, Hollow Men, "beyond the orbit of
 the shuddering Bear" —

(fade Dvorak)

Music: Gregorian Mass for the Dead, Introit, Requiem, MHS 915

and with the luck of the poor in spirit — through alienation and sceptic
 denial, to await in the desert the Plainsong descent of an "Ash
 Wednesday" priest (surely not Christ); while Eliot's "(Bless me father)
 though I do not wish to wish these things," would lure his convert

Quartets, into a rose-garden moment of late-cycle nostalgia: "human kind/ Cannot bear very much reality." (fade Gregorian)

94) *Triple: Epstein, [A] 1921, Senegalese Woman, bronze; [B] 1919, Day, stone; and [C] 1939, Adam, alabaster, from right*

When I began this study during the Nazi overthrow of Eliot's Between Wars, it seemed the sculptor Epstein, from the romantic realism of his portraits, through the hardening abstraction of Cubism, to the world plight of his 1939 Adam, had pursued some such cyclical course as Eliot's, though with more fierceness and humanity. Nor could I avoid comparison with Stravinsky's 1930 Symphony of Psalms.

95-99) *Epstein: 1919, Day; 1929, Night; 1931, Primeval God; 1939, Adam, from front-left; and same, profile detail above*

Music: Stravinsky, 1930, Symphony of Psalms, I, opening and close, Philips A01193L, with the five slides (holding 99 over)

Yet as I review the sequence now, fifty years afterwards, Epstein's Adam puts the Aquarian question: was this the stylized objectification of man's post-romantic agony, or did it purpose, as Symbolic History must, to rear a tragic containment for the crisis of earth itself?

a100) *Augustus John, 1907, W.B. Yeats, Tate Gallery, London*
 b100) *1918, Trench warfare in the Meuse-Argonne*
 100) *Mosaic of Chrysostom, 10th cent., St. Sophia, Constantinople*
 v100a) *Same, 12th cent., St. John, detail from the Deesis Panel*
 100b) *Also St. Sophia, Mosaic, 12th cent(?), Christ, S. Gallery*

Music: From "Baroque Harp," (Elena Polenska) 2nd Irish Air; TV4069

Meanwhile, our greatest poet, Yeats, in his early dreams of an Irish "Golden Dawn," had hailed Joachim's "Holy Spirit" as a "multitudinous influx," to bring back Celtic myth and the gods of Eri. (fade Irish Air) That wind of change was tied (as Nietzsche's had been) to the spiritual winnowing of "an impending European war". But after

twenty years and the actuality of World War I ("We... are but weasels fighting in a hole"), even Yeats toyed with the cycle of Christ's return, as Eliot was doing. Thus the imagined Sailing from sensuous Ireland, "To the holy city of Byzantium": "Consume my heart away; sick with desire/ And... gather me/ Into the artifice of eternity." So in "Demon and Beast," we hear: "O what a sweetness strayed/ Through barren Thebaid," when Saint Anthony and his monks "Starved upon the shore/ And withered to a bag of bones".

101) *Constance Gore-Booth, photograph, c. 1885(?), Sligo (CGB '80); first, video details*

101a) *Rembrandt, 1631, Philosopher under a winding stair, Louvre; + V detail*

Music: 2nd Irish Air (as above): pick up 2nd phrase

But Yeats perceived that the Christ program would take him through Plato and Plotinus to the deserts of theology; while in fact he was an Irish poet, and "what theme had Homer but original sin?" (~~fade~~ Irish Air) (Here, from their County Sligo youth, Constance Gore-Booth, "The beauty of her country-side" — later, "A Political Prisoner.")

So between Yeats' own search and his wife's spiritual dictations (he brooding, like Rembrandt's "Philosopher under a Spiral Stair"), they hit on a two-lobed cycle of intersecting cones, alternating in time, somehow combining Vico with Hölderlin (whom Yeats could hardly have read, though he had browsed upon Nietzsche).

a102) *Yeats' Thoor Ballylee, Gort, County Galway (CGB, '80)*

b102) *Upper left section of 102: Attic Krater, beside cone-spirals detail*

Vc102) *Detail of b102, Attic krater (CGB '77)*

102) *Superimposed cone-spirals, Lunar and Solar; at the corners: A) Attic, 8th cent., Funerary Krater; B) Herculaneum, 1st cent. A.D., Drunk Hercules, House of the Stags; C) 9th cent, Gerokreuz, Dom, Köln; D) Penelope Jencks, 1980, Valerie (with video-spiral and picture details, as V102B-C, double of B & C — closing on V102D: Valerie)*

102e) *Double: Eros Kalos, c. 500 B.C., [A] Louvre vase, Satyr-nymph dance; and [B] Berlin, Coupling Satyrs and Nymphs*

The stair was in his restored Medieval tower near Gort. The tower — most relevant to the early violent phase of Western culture, or to the renewed violence of that time of civil war — could also contain the great gyres of history.

Briefly, from a vertex above (that Zeus-kindling of Homeric Greece, here sampled in a funerary urn — Yeats: "I imagined the annunciation that founded Greece as made to Leda... and that from one of her eggs came Love and from the other War"), a twelve-phased lunar gyre of myth and sensuous gods descends, widening toward its late-classical variety, instanced by a drunk Hercules. Yeats: "In pity for man's darkening thought/ He walked that room, and issued thence/ In Galilean turbulence..."

Here the absolute incursion of Christ born and crucified summons (below) to the vertex of a solar cone, a culture of one God, theology, rational science. So that spiral mounts to our age of "Turning and turning in the widening gyre," where (to a Penelope Jenks' terracotta called Valerie) the "beast... to be born" should recur in Dionysiac rape. Thus in Yeats' "News for the Delphic Oracle": "Nymphs and satyrs/ Copulate in the foam" — a "changing of the tinctures" for which the poet, at 68, would undergo Steinach rejuvenation, to become the incarnate voice of that passion. As an intimate has told of his last euphoria: "He spoke of nothing but sex, mysticism, and history — all one in his mind."

103) Samuel Palmer, 1879, *The Lonely Tower*, etching, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

103a) Rembrandt, 1647, *Night Rest on the Flight*, Dublin Gallery

The central room of the tower was Yeats' place of night study — as he enacted "Il Penseroso's Platonist" (with Palmer's engraving):

Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely Tower...

So Milton; and Yeats — with Rembrandt's Rest on the Flight, in the Dublin National Gallery:

Benighted travellers
From markets and from fairs
Have seen his midnight candle glimmering.

104) *Double: [A] Print of a Samurai, and [B] from Friedrich: a new moon;
+ video details, first of B, then of A*

On the study table lay Sato's sword, curved and stainless as a new moon, gift of a Japanese admirer, sign of the rending and creating absolute at the vertex of every historical cone — that past and coming violence Yeats had to fear and affirm:

All changed, changed utterly;
A terrible beauty is born.

105) *Coole Park Garden, Gort, Bust of Maecenas (CGB 1980)*
V105a *Picasso, 1901, Absinthe Drinker, Gershwin Collection, N.Y.*
105b) *Coole Park, stone bench under ancient yew (CGB '80)*

Music: 2nd Irish Air (as above): pick up 3rd phrase

A few miles west, Lady Gregory's house, and especially her garden with its bust of Virgil's patron Maecenas, upheld the Western plateau of aristocratic life and art. So in Yeats' "A Prayer for my Daughter," he, hierophant of "The Second Coming": "The ceremony of innocence is drowned" — soon to turn his pen to Crazy Jane — prays that his daughter may come into a house of custom and ceremony, innocence and beauty;
(end Irish Air for harp)

106) *Battlements of Yeats' Tower (CGB '80)*
106a) *Ruin near Yeats' tower (CGB, '80)*

Music: Bartok, 1928, Fourth Quartet, Last Movement, (Fine Arts), CS501

though he has been on the wind-lashed battlements of the tower:
"Imagining in excited reverie/ That the future years had come,/ Dancing to a frenzied drum,/ Out of the murderous innocence of the

sea." (For Lady Gregory's innocence of custom, this Gita innocence of Sato's sword.) (fade Bartok)

107) *Photograph of Yeats, 1937-38, broadcasting in a BBC studio*

107a) *Photograph (full-face) of Maud Gonne, 1897*

No doubt, when Vico's millwheel of return, Joachim's fire-arrow and assault of spirit, had become for Yeats a paradox road of poetry — to affirm both — that oscillating whorl between "dire antinomies" required some resolving timeless embrace. In Yeats' early worship of Maud Gonne, such need had found a Platonic voice: "Lives on this lonely face," and "Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?"

a108) *Another photograph (profile) of Maud Gonne in her youth*

108) *Donatello, c. 1455, Mary Magdalen, profile of face (first, video adds Vb108, same, from the waist up) Duomo Museum, Florence*

In the 1928 volume named The Tower, beside poems of polarity, gyres and cycles, one of the greatest, "Among Schoolchildren," sets a memory of Maud's youth against her present state. (Surely the reference is to Donatello's penitent old Magdalen of the 1400s, then in the Florentine Baptistery):

Did Quattrocento fingers fashion it
Hollow of cheek as if it drank the wind
And took a mess of shadows for its meat?

a109) *Double exposure: Jo and John Malins over Heligenbluth, with Giovanni Bellini, Madonna and sleeping child (CGB, '59); + V detail*

109) *Horse chestnut, photograph (CGB); video uses V109*

109a) *Double: photographs (CGB) [A] Leaf-bloom of horse chestnut, and [B] its bole*

109b) *Martha Graham, c. 1938, 'Harlequinade' (Barbara Morgan)*

How startlingly the heart-break of our condition, stretched between flesh and eternal Presences (those "self-born mockers of man's enterprise"), is consumed in a vitally altered Platonism, where the imaged wholeness of a chestnut tree fuses into love, music, and dance, the old antinomies of beauty and wisdom, body and soul:

O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
 Are you the leaf, the blossom, or the bole?
 O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
 How can we know the dancer from the dance?

- 110) *South China, Sung, c. 1200, Ma Yuan, semi-round of ink and color on silk; Bare Willows and Mountains; Fine Arts, Boston*

Think now, in the ad-libbed visuals of this homing sequence, as in all symbolized philosophy, — we must mind at once arrow and wheel, the flowing stream, and its expansion or convergence into round. For which I interpolate a poetic discourse from my Five Chambered Heart: "Pool of Tao":

- a111) *Durer, 1495-9, Pond in the Woods, watercolor, British Museum*
 Vb111) *Ko Son, c. 1850(?), On the Wing, Bibl. Nat., Paris*
 111) *Rubens, c. 1630(?) Forest at Evening, Collection August Neuerburg*
 111a) *Bill Whalen, c. 1980, Reflecting Tarn, watercolor; C.G. & D.M. Bell*

I waited the fulness of time.
 As sunset deepened
 The wind died.
 In the hush the pool
 Was an iris of trees
 Fringing a sky —

Motionless, until
 A flight of geese passed over;
 Then I heard the sound
 Of water, a stream
 That falls to the pool,
 Lingers, and falls away.

When the geese were gone
 The sky gave over
 The motion received;
 But mine was full,
 Holding flight and water,
The arrow and the wheel.

- a112) *Blake, 1800-03, Jacob's Ladder, British Museum, London; first, video detail*

112) *Venice, 13th cent., Mosaic of Creation, Atrium of San Marco*

112a) *Chuang Tsu, Japanese Screen 19th cent., Chinese Immortals (video shows details only, above and below, and adds a central detail of 112)*

So in the final form of A Vision, Yeats conceives a 13th cycle, cone, or sphere (like Blake's convergent point of Jacob's Stair), mysteriously surrounding the historical pulses, altering their determinism and bringing Will, human and divine, into the temporal and material. (Did not Epicurus make his atoms swerve to spring the determinism of Democritus, as quantum uncertainty has opened up our physics?). Yeats:

"The Thirteenth Cycle... or Cone... may deliver us from the twelve cycles of time and space... it is the phaseless sphere... within which live all souls that have been set free, and every Daimon and Ghostly Self."

(These Chinese Immortals in a Japanese screen.) What that sphere intends we cannot precisely say, for there the unique intervenes, both in us and beyond. "The particulars are the work of the thirteenth... cycle, which is in every man and called by every man his freedom."

a113) *Conrad v. Soest, 1403-4, Nativity detail, Bad Wildungen Altar*

V6113) *Vermeer, c. 1665, Girl with veil, Wrightsman, Palm Beach*

113) *Munch, 1893, Death and the Maiden, Munch Museum, Oslo; video, central detail only; see V113*

It is "the uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor." Crazy Jane's dark Christian word: "For nothing can be sole or whole/ That has not been rent," climaxes in "The Circus Animals Desertion" (Last Poems). Yeats knows, that when his high visions have failed:

I must lie down where all the ladders start,
In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.

114) *Michelangelo, 1508-12, Sistine vault, Lunettes, Ancestors of Christ, Old Spinner, Vatican*

114a) *Burne-Jones, 1881-98, Arthur in Avalon, Museo, Ponce, Puerto Rico*

Yet the poet who accepts that resides in the Oneness of the Thirteenth Sphere — simultaneous repository of all that has been or is to be. "Cast a cold eye/ On life, on death./ Horseman, pass by!" His is the other knowledge of "The Curse of Cromwell":

That the swordsmen and the ladies can still keep company ...

That I am still their servant though all are underground.

a115) *Chinese, Yen Hui, 13th cent., T'ieh Kuai, Taoist Immortal, color on silk, detail, Chiou-ji Temple, Kyoto*

115) *Same, whole; + other video details*

Music: Japanese Bamboo flute, Yamaguchi, Koku-Reibo, close, H72025

The problem goes to the very core of thought, the complementarity of knowledge. Neither mind nor soul can embrace a fabric which does not unite the trial and search of becoming with the source of all Greek wonder, Being. Here, to the Zen flute, a supreme picture by Chinese Yen Hui, late 13th century, this silk painting of a Taoist Immortal, who in his crippled beggar's body, sees himself, on a cloud-track above, taking the sky-road.

116) *Double: Rembrandt [A] c. 1660(?), Pallas Athena, Gulbenkian; and [B] 1665-9, Lady with a Pink, Metropolitan, NYC (each also appears singly, A before the double, B after)*

Music: Purcell, 1680, Fantasy (In Nomine) for seven viols, ARC 3007

Even in the proud embodiments of the West, all souls of depth so thread the one-and-many, weaving the actual and visionary to a robe as seamless as the polyphony of Purcell's *In Nomine* for seven viols. So, from Rembrandt's last decade, we draw a complementary pair, immortal, and mortal: the triumphant Pallas Athena; the whimsical sad Lady with a Pink, musing on our happiness, "that passeth soone as floures faire."

a117) *Botticelli, c. 1493-7, Dante Drawing, Paradise XXX*

- 6117) *Doré, 1857-68, Dante Illustrations: Paradise XXXI*
 117) *Stars over Arizona rock and tree;*
 V117a *Dumbbell Nebula*
 117b) *Ravenna mosaic, 6th cent., Stars and Cross, S. Apollinare in Classe*
 117c) *Spiral Galaxy NGC 2997, Cambridge Atlas of Astronomy*

In Dante's Empyrean, God's Spirit first appears flowing out through time and space — as in Botticelli's drawing, a stream of sparks between flowered shores; but when the poet has dipped his eyes, those "shadowy presages" gather to the eternal round of the rose of Paradise (here by Doré). While the Inferno, Purgatory, Paradise, all end with the word *stelle*, stars: "E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle." — And we came thence to see again the stars. — "*Puro e disposto a salire a le stelle*" Pure and disposed to ascend to the stars... "*L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.*" — The love that moves the sun and other stars.

Surely, it is in this cosmos that the Omega earth began, has evolved, and ultimately will end. (fade Purcell)

- 118) *African weaver ants holding territories in the trees*
 118a) *China, July 1989, Tanks in Tien an Men Square, Beijing*

While Marx, despising mystics and romantics, trusted a partisan upheaval to institute a classless brotherhood, where, as the Joachites had phrased it, church and state would wither away.

How much glory and agony these never-withering states have extracted from that promise. Which brings us back to where Shostakovich left us, at the end of a century of global wars and revolutions.

- a119) *Christo, 1968, 5,000 cubic meter package, erect, Cassel*
 119) *Same, Cranes lifting the 'package', Cassel, West Germany*
 119a) *May 6, 1937, Zeppelin von Hindenburg burning, New Jersey*

History, seen as from the outside, is a configuration in time and space — like Christo's great sausage blown up over the park and city

of Cassel. But from within and in its own right (as we who inhabit its curvatures experience it) world history is the shape of space-time itself.

No doubt Christo's phallus is a comic array; whereas that history (everywhere webbed with waves and fields of electromagnetic messengers, relativistically eternal; since at the speed of light time ceases, and all causalities act in mythic simultaneity) rather suggests the 1937 flame-cascade of the Zeppelin von Hindenburg —

a120) *Limbourg Brothers, 1413-16, Fall of the Rebel Angels, Tres Riches Heures, f.64 v. Musée Condé, Chantilly; + V details*

120) *Burning Kuwait oil wells, fired by Saddam Hussein, 1991*

such a chain-reactive Now as we must steel ourselves to convey, whether of achievement or catastrophe.

Music: Purcell, 1680, In Nomine for seven viols, close, ARC 3007

There is no division between that Now and what has been ripening since the fall of Lucifer — this earth-harvest, of which we have to inquire: what appears on the plus side, what hopes of a life-road? But here those "instructors" Yeats claimed in A Vision, tell me to break off; since that must be the closing thrust of the triune NOW — Symbolic History's last and fortieth show — entitled "The Rooted Future".
(end of Purcell, In Nomine)