



*Stage Fort Park*

“An Image of Man . . . ” Working Notes on  
Charles Olson’s Concept of Person · *Robert Creeley*

TALKING TO A GATHERING of student writers (S.U.N.Y. College at Cortland, N.Y., October 20, 1967) Olson again tried to make clear that he was not involved in some self-aggrandizement and that *The Maximus Poems* were not therefore a backdrop for himself as quondam hero. He then read “Maximus of Gloucester” (*The Maximus Poems*, Volume Three, p. 101)—the date for which he notes as “Friday November 5th/ 1965”:

Only my written word  
I’ve sacrificed every thing, including sex and woman  
—or lost them—to this attempt to acquire complete  
concentration . . .

•••

It is not I,  
even if the life appeared  
biographical. The only interesting thing  
is if one can be  
an image .  
of man, “The nobleness, and the arete.”  
(Later: myself (like my father, in the picture, a shadow)  
on the rock

One might expect to hear this plea from two other American poets, who are felt, I think reasonably, to be Olson’s predecessors, Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams. Paradoxically T. S. Eliot, whom Olson uses as a significant antagonist in “ABCs,” is not usually presumed to be *personally* present in his longer poems, although he said of “The Wasteland” that it was, after all, “the relief of a personal and wholly insignificant grouse against life. . . .” In contrast, Whitman’s “Song of Myself” is read as an intimate relation with the factual poet himself, although the reader discovers remarkably little about Whitman literally. What Whitman depends on is the authenticity of the personal, that the fact on an ‘I’ ‘feels’ this or that emotion confounds all ‘authority’ of an

otherwise abstract or general order. Both Pound and Williams make use of this fact. As Olson writes (*Mayan Letters*, Cape, London, 1968, pp. 26 ff.), “Ez’s epic solves problem by his ego: his single emotion breaks all down to his equals or inferiors . . .” and, of Williams, “Bill HAS an emotional system which is capable of extensions and comprehensions the ego-system (the Old Deal, Ez as Cento Man, here dates) is not. . . .”

It is ironic that what I call so loosely ‘the personal’ is both our *subject* (which only an ego can determine as existing) and our *object*, “having to do with a material object as distinguished from a mental concept, idea, or belief. . . .” It must be that Olson’s own physical size (he was six foot seven) made the latter situation of person most insistent. One of his last wry points in hospital was upon his own pleasure that ‘the fundament stayed as put as the firmament. . . .’ The body did not go away, in short, forever lost among the stars.

Returning to Eliot, Olson again qualifies him in the second part of “Projective Verse” (*Human Universe and Other Essays*, edited Donald Allen, Grove, 1967)—and it is the second part of this essay he felt especially valuable, as against the first part, which proved the most read:

—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.

What Olson means by the statement, “down through the workings of his own throat to that place where breath comes from . . .,” can be found most clearly in his brief but remarkably helpful text, “Proprioception,” for example, on the first page:

the data of depth sensibility/the ‘body’ of us as  
object which spontaneously or of its own order

produces experience of, 'depth' Viz  
SENSIBILITY WITHIN THE ORGANISM  
BY MOVEMENT OF ITS OWN TISSUES

It's to the point that Olson had wanted to compose a "Book of the Body," which would be an extensive study and report of the material, presumably, the "Proprioception" text so brilliantly graphs and/or outlines. This preoccupation is very frequently evident in his work, as in the short, initial statement, "The Resistance" ("It is his body that is his answer, his body intact and fought for, the absolute of his organism in its simplest terms, this structure evolved by nature, repeated in each act of birth, the animal man . . .," *HU*, p. 47) or, at more length, the proposal of human event found in "Human Universe" (*HU*, p. 10):

What happens at the skin is more like than different from what happens within. The process of image (to be more exact about transposition than the "soul" allows or than the analysts do with their tricky "symbol-maker") cannot be understood by separation from the stuff it works on. Here again, as throughout experience, the law remains, form is not isolated from content. The error of all other metaphysic is descriptive, is the profound error that Heisenberg had the intelligence to admit in his principle that a thing can be measured in its mass only by arbitrarily assuming a stopping of its motion, or in its motion only by neglecting, for the moment of its measuring, its mass. And either way you are failing to get what you are after—so far as a human being goes, his life. There is only one thing you can do about the kinetic, re-enact it. Which is why the man said, he who possesses rhythm possesses the universe. And why art is the only twin life has—its only valid metaphysic. Art does not seek to describe but to enact. And if man is once more to possess intent in his life, and to take up the responsibility implicit in his life, he has to comprehend his own process as intact, from outside, by way of his skin, in, and by his own powers of conversion, out again.

Recognize, then, that surely *one* insistent human dilemma is lodged in the abstraction which consciousness permits, *if* that marvellous function

be employed only to gain an “objective correlative” to that very existence any one of us is fact of. Olson’s respect for the mushroom, specifically for the experiments which Timothy Leary was conducting in the early 60s, has obvious bearing. Talking to an informal group at William Gratwick’s home in Pavilion, N.Y., November 16, 1963, he emphasized the apparent fact that hallucinogenic agents, LSD in particular, “. . . puts you on your own autonomic nervous system—as against the motor.”

And certainly the human race has been so bereft of its autonomic system for so long that you can practically talk that we’re green. In fact I would think almost that you have to talk about the species today as *green*, individually and socially. Not all—how you say it—the way we tend to talk from our progressive or evolutionary or developmental past as though we’ve now got to take this step. It’s not some step that you take easily, or that even to take the step, if you stop to think about it. You’re just who you are; what you do, if it’s any good, is true; and you are capable of being alive because of love. I mean it’s about as simple—it’s like those simplicities operate. And that’s it. Well, it’s not so easy to come to believe as absolutes, imperatives and universals. In fact, on the contrary, we’ve been encouraged to think there is some universal, absolute or imperative we seem to be missing out on. But the autonomic thing is very crucial.

(*Olson*, #3, pp. 19-20)

In the same discussion he speaks of the triad of politics, theology, and epistemology, the three intensive-extensive patterings of human ‘content,’ and of how crucial it is that they be examined in present situation. Because once there is the human belief, “the idea that there is such a thing as knowledge . . . (“invented by a man named Plato. *Episteme* is his invention and it’s one of the most dangerous inventions in the world . . .”)” (*O*, #3, p. 13), the dislocation of mind and body is immediate. George Butterick’s “notes from class, 15 September 1964” make a further clarification of Olson’s emphasis:

Olson began his Modern Poetry course at Buffalo the following fall with the same triad, which he identified as “August-

tinian,” saying that it was “dogmatically true.” He related the term politics, or the Greek *physics* ‘nature,’ to “necessity”; epistemology, or *nous* ‘mind’, to “possibility”; and religion, or *theos* ‘God’, to the “imaginable.”

(O, p. 54, footnote 14)

“Soul” also can be an obvious distraction, but only if you let it get away from you so to speak. I find, somewhat sadly, that the *OED*’s first listing of this word’s definition, “The principle of life in man or animals; animate existence,” is noted as obsolete, while the second definition not only survives but defines our problem entirely: “The principle of thought and action in man, commonly regarded as an entity distinct from the body . . . ” (*OED*, p. 2927). One can make a simple measure of the dangers inherent in abstraction by recognizing how removed the valued factor in existence, the soul, has become from that which it inhabits, the body—and, equally the life, the process, of which it is literal instance. Nonetheless the dilemma is clear, apart from this particular resolution: how is that which we are, as “thought,” “action,” “soul,” what we also are as in Olson’s phrase, “what gets ‘buried,’ like, the flesh . . . bones, muscles, ligaments, etc., what one uses, literally, to get about etc. . . .” But, he says, “the soul is proprioceptive . . . the ‘body’ itself as, by movement of its own tissues, giving the data of, depth . . . that one’s life is informed from and by one’s own literal body. . . . that this mid-thing between . . . that this is ‘central,’ what is—in this 1/2 of the picture—what they call the SOUL, the intermediary, the intervening thing, the interruptor, the resistor. The self.”)

The gain: to have a third term, so that *movement* or *action* is ‘home,’ Neither the Unconscious nor Projection . . . have a home unless the DEPTH implicit in physical being—built-in space-time specifies, and moving (by movement of ‘its own’)—is asserted, or found out as such . . .

The ‘soul’ then is equally ‘physical.’ Is the self.\*  
its own is such, ‘corpus.’ Or—to levy the gain psychology

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\*See “The Soul is a body as long as God’s” —*Olson*, #4, p. 7.

perception from 1900, or 1885, did supply until it didn't  
(date? 1948?)—the three terms wld be:

surface (senses) projection  
cavity (organs—here read 'archetypes')  
unconscious the body itself—consciousness:  
implicit accuracy, from its own energy as a state  
of implicit motion.

Identity, therefore (the universe is one) is supplied; and the  
abstract-primitive character of the real (asserted)  
is 'placed' projection is discrimination (of the  
object from the subject) and the unconscious is  
the universe flowing-in, inside.

(*AP*, pp. 18-19)

Again and again one finds in Olson's thinking an insistence upon the  
*authority* of one's own life as initial. Whether it be "that all start up/to  
the eye and soul/as though it had never/happened before" or "That a  
man's life/(his, anyway) is what there is/that tradition is//at least is  
where I find it,/how I got to/what I say," (Letter 11, p. 48) there is no  
otherwise, or where.

It would be of point, clearly, to consider the way in which "history"  
is present in *The Maximus Poems*, and to say again, as he did constantly,  
that Olson

... would be an historian as Herodotus was, looking  
for oneself for the evidence of  
what is said: Altham says  
Winslow  
was at Cape Ann in April,  
1624

(*TMP*, p. 101)

Characteristically, one is tempted to type, in the third line, "was" for  
"is," and "said" for "says"—but it is as much to the point that the  
present is "historical," as that there is, therefore, an "historical present."  
Or as answer to the question I had then asked, literally, "what is  
"history"?" Olson's answer, the poem "Place; & Names":

a place as term in the order of creation  
& thus useful as a function of that equation  
example, that the “Place Where the Horse-Sacrificers Go”  
of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is worth more than  
a metropolis—or, for that matter, any moral  
concept, even a metaphysical one

and that this is so

for physical & experimental reasons of  
the *philosophia perennis*, or Isness  
of cosmos beyond those philosophies  
or religious or moral systems of  
rule, thus giving factors of naming  
—nominative power—& landschaft  
experience (geography) which stay truer  
to space-time than personalities  
or biographies of such terms as specific  
cities or persons, as well as the inadequacy  
to the order of creation of anything except  
names—including possibly mathematics (?)

the crucialness being that these places or names  
be as parts of the body, common, & capable  
therefore of having cells which can decant  
total experience—no selection  
other than one which is capable  
of this commonness (permanently  
duplicating) will work

“Story” in other words as if not superior  
at least equal to ultimate mathematical  
language—perhaps superior because of  
cell-ness (?) In any case history  
(as to be understood by Duncan’s Law  
to mean a) histology & b) story)  
applies here, in this equational way  
& severely at the complementarity of  
cosmos (complementary to individual  
or private) and not to cities or  
events in the way it has, in



a mistaken secondary way, been  
understood

Duncan had written him (18 Dec. 61): “But “history”?—couldn’t we throw that word out and establish histology: the tissue and structure, weaving, of what [it] is we know.

story: what we know from the questions we asked. This thing is made-up, or an answer—but is, also, the only thing we knew to answer :oracle or sphinx-demand

That: we *do* hold by histology and story having to do with one *gnosis*. And the art, the story, seeks out histology or lapses into the cult-sure . . . ” (O, 4, p. 45, n.2)

It’s also to the point to remember, that Olson’s favorite definition of the word “history” was, finally, John Smith’s (despite, as he remarked, its curious faintness): “History is the memory of time . . . ” In an autobiographical note (“The Present Is Prologue”), published 1955, he writes:

There are only two live pasts—your own (and that hugely included your parents), and the one other we don’t yet have the vocabulary for, because the West has stayed so ignorant, and the East has lived off the old fat too long. I can invoke it by saying, the mythological, but it’s too soft. What I mean is that foundling which lies as surely in the phenomenological ‘raging apart’ as these queer parents rage in us.

I have spent most of my life seeking out and putting down the ‘Laws’ of these two pasts, to the degree I am permitted to see them (instead of the boring historical and evolutionary one which the West has been so busy about since Thucydides) simply because I have found them in the present, my own and yours, and believe that they are the sign of a delightful new civilization of man ahead.

(AP, pp. 39-40)

There is a sweetness, in that last phrase, and a ‘progressivism’—a sense that one is going to get somewhere ‘ahead’—one does not find usually in Olson. But again, it’s of use to recognize that the ‘history’ of *The Maximus Poems* is initial tracking (“mapping,” as he would call it) and is as much the form of the *agent* (the person acquiring the ‘history,’ in

this case Olson) as it is the events and/or persons so examined. Lest one presume that is an extraordinary distortion of 'the facts,' that is, some body of information that might be 'objectively' the case, remember that any response to and/or statement of such data will presume a context and a meaning. It is the false face of the 'objective' or the 'general' or the 'abstract' that Olson finds contemptible, as in "Letter for Melville"—"written to be read AWAY FROM the Melville Society's "One Hundredth Birthday Party" for MOBY DICK at Williams College, Labor Day Weekend, Sept. 2—4, 1951":

Timed in such a way to avoid him, to see  
he gets a lot of lip (who hung in a huge jaw)  
and no service at all (none of this chicken, he  
who is beyond that sort of recall, beyond  
any modern highway (which would have saved him  
from sciatica? well, that  
we cannot do for him but we can  
we now know so much, we can make clear  
how he erred, how, in other ways  
—we have made such studies and  
we permit ourselves to think—they  
allow us to tell each other how wise  
he was

(AM, np)

As though one could tidy up the *real*, or find another place for it, or understand it apart from its enactment. . . .

Possibly the most active rehearsal of Olson's "methodology" is "A Bibliography on America for Ed Dorn" (AP, pp. 3-14), which George Butterick has called "a fusion of Whitehead's notion of *process* with an *Herodotean* sense of history. . . ." It was written in January 1955 as a letter—actually two letters—to the poet Edward Dorn, then a student at Black Mountain College. . . ." (AP, p. 31, n.) The qualification there of *person* is very useful. In fact, the "Working premises" given at the outset should make much clear:

I That *millennia*:

&

II *person*

are not the same as either  
time as history or as the  
individual as single

(*AP*, p. 3)

And a little later, same page:

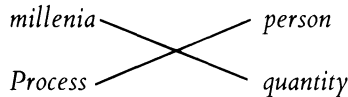
*Results*, as of historical study:

(a) it is not how much one knows but in what field of  
context it is retained, and used (*millennia*, & *quantity*)

(b) how, as yourself as individual, you are acquiring &  
using same in acts of form—what use you are making of acquired  
information (*person*, & *process*)

It's Olson's intent in these letters to define both the *nature* of that  
attention he values, and the *method* which most proves its use. Because  
he feels it absolutely required that one move beyond any humanistic  
evaluation of data "BECAUSE THE LOCAL AND THE SENTIMENTAL IS HOW  
HUMANISM COMES HOME TO ROOST IN AMERICA (*AP*, p. 5)"—as instance,  
"*sociology*, without exception, is a lot of shit—produced by people who  
are the most dead of all, history as politics or economics each being at  
least events and laws, not this dreadful beast, some average and statistic . . ."  
(*AP*, p. 3)

In contrast, his proposal is as follows:



Continuing:

Applying all four of these at once (which is what I mean by  
*attention*), the local loses quaintness by the test of person  
(how good is it for you as you have to be a work of your  
lifetime?); itself as crutch of ambience, by test of ambience  
[to which one might add as plaintive parallel, "how long, oh  
Lord, how long. . ."] its only interest is as process (say barbed  
wire, as attack on Plains husbandry) or as it may be a sig-  
nificant locus of quantity (in America how, say, prairie vil-  
lage called Chicago is still, despite itself, a prairie village. . . .

(*AP*, p. 4)

If, in fact, by *person* one means “what, in fact, the critter, homo sap, is, as we take it, now . . . (AP, p. 6),” then, as Olson says, “our own “life” is too serious a concern for us to be parlayed forward by literary antecedence. In other words, “culture,” no matter how great . . . ” “So far as “scholarship” might, it will disclose the intimate connection between person-as-continuation-of-millenia-by-acts-of-imagination-as-arising-directly-from-fierce-penetration-of-all-past-persons, places, things and actions-as-data (objects)—not by fiction to fiction—” (AP, p. 7). There follows, at this point, a lovely homage to Alfred North Whitehead, who is then used to define the principle at work here—“we should start from the notion of actuality as in its essence a process” (Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* p. 355) . . . (AP, p. 8).

I think I might, more responsibly, now enter this discussion as a person, literally—and not as a commentator, editor, scholar, or however one may care to qualify what has been said thus far. Just as Olson had said to Ed Dorn, “Best thing to do *is to dig one thing or place or man* until you yourself know more about that than is possible to any other man . . . ,” for me the crux was to be “the NARRATOR IN, the total IN to the above total OUT [“what I call DOCUMENT simply to emphasize that the events alone do the work”], total speculation as against the half management, half interpretation, the narrator taking on himself the job of making clear by way of his own person that life *is* preoccupation with itself, taking up the push of his own single intelligence to make it, to be—by his conjectures—so powerful inside the story that he makes the story swing on him, his eye the eye of nature INSIDE (as is the same eye, outside) a light-maker (HU, p. 127).” Always in my own situation, there was tacit fear some essential information was lacking, that one was dumb, in some crucial sense, left out of the ‘larger picture.’ So that this possibility, as a *method*, was extraordinarily moving to me insofar as it exchanged a concept of social limit (again ‘culture,’ in its most pernicious sense) for the active potential and authority of a human life, *lives*, literally being lived. I had known, certainly, what Olson elsewhere proposes as “There are no hierarchies, no infinite, no such many as mass, there are only/eyes in all heads,/to be looked out of (MP, p. 29)” So too, in somewhat parallel sense, Pound’s insistence: “What thou lov’st well shall not be reft from thee/What thou lov’st well is thy true heritage . . .” (*Pisan Cantos*, p. 99). But the condition, the law, so to speak, of this situation I took time to trust.

Why? That question seems to me intimately involved with all the familiar senses of enclosure and self-limit, what Louis Zukofsky wryly put as “born very young into a world already very old. . . .” It is hard to change the system, like they say—the more so, paradoxically, when it is, by virtue of consciousness, so very simple to. Think of what’s become of the various significant patterns of “history” even in our own lifetime. But my point is really that significant aspects of Charles Olson’s thought and work have been confusing to its critics insofar as the *model* of ‘world’ in mind, in each case, was very different, if not altogether antithetical. In short, there is often a disposition to read *The Maximus Poems* as if they were a symbolic representation of the forces of history, in the abstract, and that the unremitting emphasis upon “the facts,” as he would say, whether of dreams or Gloucester records or his own daily existence, are somehow there to ‘describe’ or otherwise ‘stand for’ a ‘reality’ of general kind. They are not. Let me, in fact, make an absolute emphasis: *they are not*.

No, the “cause” is otherwise, “It is the cause the cause, still, it is (and she, still/even though the method be/new, be/the rods and cones of a pigeon’s or, a rabbit’s/eye, or be/who, man, is that woman you now dream of, who/woman, is that man. . . .” (“by 3/6/51” *AOM*, np.) In his lecture at the Berkeley Poetry Conference (July 20, 1965), Olson makes the point very flatly, “You’re simply stuck with the original visionary experience of having been *you*, which is a hell of a thing. [Laughter] And, in fact, I assume that the epigraph that I’ve offered today is my only way of supporting that, which is [he writes on the board]: *that which exists through itself is what is called meaning. . . .*” (*CM*, p. 11)

I believe there’s simply ourselves, and where we are has a particularity which we’d better use because that’s about all we got. Otherwise we’re running around looking for somebody else’s stuff. But that particularity is as great as numbers are in arithmetic. The literal is the same as the numeral to me. I mean the literal is an invention of language and power the same as numbers. And so there is no other culture. There is simply the literal essence and exactitude of your own . . . Truth lies solely in what you do with it. And that means *you*. I don’t think there’s any such thing as a creature of culture . . . The radical of action lies in finding out how organized

things are genuine, are initial, to come back to that statement I hope I succeeded in making about the *imago mundi*. That *that's* initial in any of us. We have our picture of the world and *that's* the creation.

(*CM*, p. 36)

There is, finally, a late text (“Gloucester, 28 Fort Square Feb. 15th (LXIX)” *AP*, p. 76) which makes an intensive compact of a great range of Olson’s thinking, and since one cannot, responsibly, undertake all the materials and situations of his work in such “working notes” as these, let it serve as center for our own ending here. (Regretfully, in some respects, since much dear to my own heart, “Apollonius of Tyana,” for example, or the specific relations with Jung, Corbin, and that primary man, Alfred North Whitehead, have barely been touched upon, if at all. But one takes heart in Whitehead’s insistence, dear indeed to Olson: “There is nothing in the real world which is merely an inert fact. Every reality is there for feeling: it promotes feeling; and it is felt.” (Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 439) So we won’t miss ‘it’ insofar as it is ‘here.’)

The text, then, is “The Animate Versus the Mechanical, And Thought” (*AP*, p. 74 ff.) He begins, “Gravity, in fact, but pre- or post-mechanics. That is, not effect (Newtonian) nor proof (Recent) but experiential: phenomenological, perceptual, actionable” (*AP*, p. 74). In short, that this fact of being, in any given instance, not be taken *outside*, so to speak, but be recognized as the “Dogmatic Nature of Experience” (cf. *P&T*, p. 44), which it is. He notes the situation of a plant, which “has at the tips of its leaves and the ends of its roots “standing-growing-responding” actions . . . and has, if and as ‘weight,’ gravitational ‘history.’”

In fact ‘history,’ as, in that sense, difference from “astronomy” [which relies, perforce, on ‘mechanical’ measure]: that event (in Merleau-Ponty’s sense [cf. *O*, p. 3, pp. 44-50]—narrative) is a perceptual—that wld be *primordial*—element of experience so much so that it ‘carries’ through-out the system—the system being ‘Creation’—as ‘element’ (or ‘weight’) as profound as any mechanically measurable or demonstrable ‘truth’; that even in short—or here decisively ‘history’—as *must* [as necessity, as what has to happen]—is a condition of

organism. (Above 'Animate.')

... now I am proposing an even more fundamental 'tropism' ["Tropism, I think, is actually the riddler of the lot. Or it's the management, or it's the manueverer, or it's then ... it's ourselves." *P&T*, p. 43]; that one cannot 'think' even—because one cannot 'act' even—without such limits as the 'lines' of being, both in the plant and the animal 'meaning,' 'animate' ... So I am back to animate, plant-or-animal—'perception' sense—of the freshness in time of the narrative or history as a tone or mode and so activeness of, for a human being, 'Creation': that there is no 'knowledge' of the crucial (axial-tropistic) sense of *anything*, including the "Universe" or the "Self," except by this 'Time' phenomenon of freshness which Animateness, *in and by itself*, as initial of experience.

(*AP*, p. 74)

You will recall the frequency with which Olson quoted Heraclitus, 'Man stands estranged from that with which he is most familiar'—literally, that fact, that living organism, of him/herself, and the crisis, persistently, in the situation is that all else is affected by such a powerful 'unit of meaning' so intensively awry. It is as if we have entered the 'inside' of this animate 'content' with the same terms of measure and their related agency, the mechanical, with which we had presumed our mastery over the 'outside,' that "geography" also so insisently present and which "forever ... leans in/on me ... ." (*MP*, IV, V, VI, np). In contradiction, Olson proposes:

The animate—plant or animal—is the aboriginal instance of our occurence and is therefore the aboriginal condition which qualifies—defines both in fact and act, including the form-making usefulness of—our action.

...

The import of this can be quickly stated: man as Love (plant, heliogeotropic) grows up and down, man as separateness (animal) disposes of himself by *sitio*—chooses his place but which even though it gives him freedom disposes him likewise by gravity (statolith)—starch, turgor—'weight'-of-mass)—equal tropistically. Heaven and Earth.

(*AP*, pp. 75-76)\*

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\**Turgor*: "The normal fullness or tension produced by the fluid content of blood vessels, capillaries, and plant or animal cells." *Statolith*: "A small, moveable concretion of calcium carbonate, found in statocysts." *Statocyst*: "A small organ of balance in many invertebrates, consisting of a fluid-filled sac containing statoliths that help indicate position when the animal moves." (*American Heritage Dictionary*)

What's to be made of that, with that, is all that any human life or the acts that make it life can constitute:

an actual earth of value to  
construct one, from rhythm to  
image, and image is knowing, and  
knowing, Confucius says, brings one  
to the goal: nothing is possible without  
doing it. It is where the test lies, *malgre*  
all the thought and all the pell-mell of  
proposing it. Or thinking it out or living it  
ahead of time.

(*MP*, Vol. Three, p. 190)