:love, at interplanetary center, rhymes 'yellow' with 'pollen'

:thorn from greenstem equals what the mind climbed

:blue balances it in boundless pendulum of air

:inviolate Night its source, course.

"Now in the play that woman, led before the mystic crib, began to sing in her quavering voice, and then the voice changed, changed from the voice of a witch to that of an angel, and from an angel's voice to a child's, and then the answer came . . ."

"great planes that intermingle"

". . . the absolute *north*, the absolute *south* . . ."

(Van Gogh)
"I am going to put the *black* and the *white*
in a green park with

pink paths."

CRITICISM / CHARLES ALTIERI

The Poem as Act: A Way to Reconcile Presentational and Mimetic Theories

In pre-Romantic poetry the poet's or speaker's acts of mind serve to supplement the context or the argument; in poetry since Romanticism the act of mind tends to become the content of the poem. This oversimplified but useful generalization should help us understand why the theory of the poem as act of mind strikes us as an important subject and should make clear the stakes involved in our attempts to construct a theory that will at once suffice for poetry in the Romantic tradition and afford a new perspective on more traditional poetry.

We need terms for discussing the act of mind in poetry in large part because we have come to trust so litttle in older views which subordinate the qualities exhibited by the mind in action to the generalizations the mind achieves. Since Romanticism, however, our poets have come to share, even to precipitate, our culture's increasing scepticism with respect to abstract

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rational structures, moral universals, and symbolic and mythic systems for defining the value of particular actions. As Pound put it, we have become less interested in the universal truth of ideas than in the qualities of mind exhibited by a person as he entertains these ideas. We distrust generalizations about experience and judge actions primarily in terms of the qualities they present or the results they produce.

Romantic poetry dramatizes these general social tendencies by shifting its attention away from offering arguments interpreting experience in favor of presenting scenes which exhibit the mind in the process of seeking an adequate stance by which to foreground the very process of interpreting the particular experience the mind is engaged in. The aim then is not to offer conclusions about experience but to present as a performance the kinds of mental activity which might most fully disclose how the mind can register and respond to the complex dimensions of the scene confronting and engaging it. Poetic thinking becomes largely a matter of what Keats called "stationing," of demonstrating modes and movements of mental life which intensify our awareness of the mind's powers and of the quickened sense of life these powers can provide. Keats' direct heir is, of course, Wallace Stevens with his view of poetry as depicting the mind's strategies to find what will suffice and his sense that the measure of significant poetry is not its general truth but its flexibility in presenting the various facets and qualities of the life of imagination amidst natural flux. But Stevens only reflects on what other modern poets are reflections of: Yeats, Eliot, and Auden, for example, were concerned less with abstract truths than with exploring stances towards experience which might provide authority for their poetic meditations and give them access to the needs and powers of their imaginations.

The critical quest for a theory of poetry as action, then, can be seen primarily as another step in the endless process of critics' seeking a language that will suffice to describe the poetry that justifies their existence. But this quest also has important cultural values in itself—both for practical criticism and for the more general (and lamentable) post-Romantic critical task of justifying the humane value of poetry. Geoffrey Hartman nicely expresses the implications of this kind of theory for practical criticism. "If books are not prophetic, if they do not reveal the 'voice of the shuttle' as well as 'the figure in the carpet,' they are expendable."[1] Hartman suggests here two ways in which the theory of the poem as the activity of the voice in the shuttle enables us to transcend the limits of formalist and contextualist criticism. First of all, the voice is a mediator between the realm of *praxis* and that of "the figure in the carpet." By attending to it, the critic gains access to the social, psychological, and ontological needs and contradictions informing the text's rhetorical structure. And the form itself becomes less an

object than a process, like that Kenneth Burke defined as "symbolic action," for dealing with the larger concerns.

Second, attention to this voice allows the critic also to move more freely in the opposite direction, to treat the poem less as a formal statement than as an intense human experience. The critic can, with Thomas Whitaker, see the poem as a dramatized act of human speech in which "reality becomes actual" through the temporal movement of the speaking voice as it presents its direct emotional and intellectual engagement in a situation.[2] Moreover the theory of the poem as act can provide critical terms for judging the quality of this experience without referring to universal truths or symbolic levels of significance. We can evaluate the quality of the poem as act by examining how alive it is to the complexity of the situation it presents. And we can speak of its depth in less thematic and abstract terms: depth is created by awareness of complexity and by the poet's ability to involve us in characteristic human concerns and problems. Depth becomes a function of dramatic situations, not of explanations thematically proposed as interpretations of the "meaning" of those situations.

Finally this emphasis on depth as a dimension of situations and of the reader's response to the situation enables the theoretical critic to pursue a cultural role bequeathed by the New Criticism. Even though most of us reject the practical claims of the New Critics, we find ourselves unable to escape the need they felt to give a justification for poetry that might, by defining the qualities of literary experience, serve at least to mollify the increasing positivism of modern culture. Wallace Stevens claimed that the imagination resists "the pressure of reality," and he thus defined the central intellectual role in our culture for literary critics. They must make clear how certain forms of cognition disclose qualities which are not adequately explained by scientific models of human experience. The main threat to Stevens and the New Critics was behaviorism, and as the reception of Skinner's recent work indicates, the threat has not subsided. But contemporary criticism faces in structuralism a more powerful threat, because its linguistic scientific model claims to explain the very qualities of literary discourse on which the old arguments rest, in terms that deny human purposiveness and all dimensions of depth in experience.

Michel Foucault, for example, has claimed, with an all too human rhetorical flamboyance in his deconstructions, that our age is witnessing "the death of man" as a purposive, self-reflexive being. Human activities, he feels, can be subsumed into the operations of linguistic structures, and Roland Barthes has proposed a model of literary analysis he feels is capable of supporting such claims:

If up until now we have looked at the text as a species of fruit with a

kernel (an apricot, for example), the flesh being the form and the pit being the content, it would be better to see it as an onion, a construction of layers (or levels, or systems) whose body contains, finally, no heart, no kernel, no secret, no irreducible principle; nothing except the infinity of its own envelopes—which envelop nothing other than the unity of its own surfaces.[3]

Barthes, in effect, denies that literary texts represent any action at all except the play of language, and he rejects the basic Romantic claim that the act constituting a poetic text is a synthetic one, deepening our awareness of the quality of actions by creating complex interrelationships among their various aspects. Organic interrelationships show nothing except the capacity of language to operate in several interlocking codes. What Kant had proposed as a unique model of the human capacity to order and participate in complex experience, Barthes disposes. But the theory of the poem as act enables us to recover much of the force in Kantian aesthetics. In fact it is from Kant, and from less rationalistic constructions of his theory of action by thinkers in the Wittgenstein tradition,[4] that we can find the terms for restating the challenged assumptions about human values and can show how literary texts support those assumptions.

Kant argued that no single explanatory scheme will suffice for dealing with human actions. It is crucial to distinguish between the discoveries possible from a scientific point of view and others provided from a more "intuitive" or phenomenological approach. Scientific explanations are limited to cause-effect relationships and assume that we must treat actions from a third-person perspective as merely events in the physical world. But areas of discourse like ethics are meaningless in these terms; only by approaching actions from the first-person perspective of the agent can we make sense of terms like intention, purpose, and responsibility. Science often makes the mistake of confusing the limits of its methodology with the limits of reality.

The theorist of the poem as act takes a similar perspective, even when he is not clear about his philosophical assumptions. Thus he can argue that it is certainly possible to deal with texts from a linguistic perspective and to see them as essentially abstract systems of linguistic codes. But structuralists are often guilty of introducing their analyses by claiming that their linguistic approach leaves no room for subjectivity and then concluding with ontological claims that there is no such thing as subjectivity. The theorist of the poem as act can counter, here, that it is also important to see the text in terms of first-person activity—both by attending to the activity of the reader and by empathizing with the point of view of the speakers and actors in the text. Two ways of recovering the text as something more than a play of surfaces then emerge, because we can view the text as a temporal structure as well as a spatial one. The reader does not merely observe for-

mal patterns; he gradually integrates them into synthetic wholes that are more than the sum of their parts. By attending to the way various strands of the text come together to give special weight to certain nodal movements, the reader constructs the work as an embodied act of mind. He recovers a process of gradually reflecting on earlier reflections and details and of gathering them into complex and highly charged images and symbols.[5] Second, the reader does not take the text as an end in itself, but as the means by which he is led to reconstruct the imaginary world of the actions represented. He is only a decoder in the sense that he transforms the textual signs by calling upon his full capacities for sympathizing with and understanding human actions. I will give an example of both these procedures in the final section of my paper. For now it should suffice to point out that, despite its excesses, the dream of the organically unified text serves important ontological and epistemological functions. The organic text does not transcend ordinary reality, but it does provide a way of engaging in human actions that transcends the conditions of scientific analysis.

II

Our very needs for a theory of poetry that corresponds to our cultural situation make it extremely important that we be careful in posing and scrutinizing formulations of the poem as act. The more we need abstract justifications for a procedure, the more we are apt to accept any theory that seems to get the job done. In literary matters, where theory is only justified by practice, we have perhaps only our self-respect to lose from inadequate theorizing. Nonetheless a coherent theory may serve to concentrate critics' attention on one set of questions rather than others, may allow us to continue to defend the humane implications of our discipline, and, at the very least, should make us sufficiently self-conscious to prevent our being naively conventional or naively *avant-garde*.

We must first of all recognize that there are several valid ways to speak about the poem as act. A poem requires various actions of its reader: speaking a poem involves his complex muscular activity; reading it demands his actively responding to sensuous qualities of sound and imagistic structure; and construing it involves his responding to the poet's human speech and sympathizing with the imaginary situation he creates. Moreover the poem may be considered the act of an author in several ways—as an act of speech and as a performance calling our attention to his verbal, structural, and rhythmic skills. Yet these aspects of poetry will not carry the burden of values theorists wish to assert in claiming that the poem is an act. For that we need to explain how the poem as act can be a unique kind of cognitive experience capable of deepening our sense of what is involved in human actions.

I would define poetic action on this cognitive level broadly as the presen-

tation of human processes which involve reflective consciousness and which suggest for a reader the possible values or implications in these processes. We need then to make two basic sets of distinctions if we are to avoid the theoretical tendency to limit the kinds of actions which a poem presents. We must first of all recognize that a poem can call attention to at least three different forms of conscious action, often in complex combinations: it can present forms of dramatic narrative where the audience is asked to sympathize with the character and to construct the moral and psychological implications of the total action; it can foreground the processes of reflection in a dramatized lyric persona expressing immediate feelings, trying out rhetorical roles, or meditating on a scene, event, or idea; and it can foreground the activity of an implicit author who shows signs of his artistic effort to give form to the flux of experience or tries by manipulating language and structure to incorporate the perspective of his dramatized speaker in a larger, more complex vision. The ballad, the poetry of Keats, and that of Yeats might be taken as exemplary of these three strategies.

The second set of distinctions is far more complex and more challenging to any single poetic theory. There are among theorists two basic approaches to the overall cognitive shape of a poetic action which must be reconciled. I refer to expressive or presentational theories of poetry and to the mimetic theories they sought to replace. I shall try to list briefly the basic claims of both theories and to suggest why neither is adequate in itself. In the process I shall treat these claims only as they affect the way practical critics treat the action of a poem and I shall ignore important differences between pure presentational theories, which tend to be objectivist like those of Williams and Olson, and pure expressionist theories, which tend to concentrate on the implicit activity of the author in the poem.

The central difference between presentational and mimetic theories is the way they consider the poem as action. Presentational theories see the poem as an immediate process or activity dramatizing the movement of a mind as it tries to establish a meditative equilibrium with an external scene. Expressionist versions of the theory treat that immediate process as the poet's attempt to express and order his feelings in poetic form. Mimetic theories, on the other hand, are concerned more with the poem as a completed action than as an activity: they treat the poem as product rather than process, and they stress the rhetorical structure as the primary context for interpreting the dramatic experience as a typical embodiment of characteristic or universal human problems.

Typical presentational and expressionist theories make five basic claims.[6] (1) The poem does not imitate or copy an event outside the poem to which it must be faithful. As Joyce and Williams put it, literature imitates nature only in the sense that, like nature, it is the presentation of continuous crea-

tive activity. (2) Instead of imitating experiences, the poem brings experience into being by naming or articulating what had been merely vague or diffuse impressions. Thus the poem presents what is in effect a new way of experiencing the world. (3) Because the poem is a new experience, the presentational theorist stresses its immediacy. The poem literally places the reader in direct contact with an act of mind by virtue of his sharing the poet's speech, by his recreating the embodied author's struggles to give form to feelings, or by his imaginative involvement in the poet's attempt to achieve a stance in which his mind can compose a scene and recognize the values and numinous forces latent in it. (4) The stress on immediate experience leads the critic to reject spatial and formal models of literary meaning and to insist on one's treating the poem as a temporal construct whose meaning unfolds and deepens as he follows the movements of mind. (5) Given the emphases on immediacy and temporality, the meaning of the poem is not considered to reside in any conceptual interpretation of the poem but rather to be inherent in the disposition or act of mind the reader experiences in reading the poem. Meaning resides in the quality of the experience and cannot be reduced to discursive statements: in Fenollosa's terms, what a poem means is what it does.

Mimetic theory is more difficult to summarize because it has many shades and variations. The basic elements, nonetheless, can be recognized if we distinguish three basic projects in Aristotle's original formulation of the theory. The concept of mimesis is necessary first of all not simply to assert that literary works are copies of real experience, but to define just what kind of copies they are. Only in this way could Aristotle respond to Plato's attack on literature as merely the copy of a copy. Thus Aristotle insists that to clarify how literature imitates experience we must grasp the purpose (or in Kant's more sophisticated system "purposiveness") of representation. Far from merely copying facts, the literary work seeks to create a formal image of a course of action which can provide a reflective model of the ways men act and can illustrate the meaning and implications of the different ways men order the world of facts. In Aristotle's response to Plato, then, there are two basic and important critical claims: (1) that the literary text is neither merely a copy nor a direct experience of reality, but the product of a purposive structuring of experience intended to make us sympathize with a dramatic situation while also controlling the way we reflect upon it; and (2) that literature is a mediated form of expression which can only be related properly to experience when we attend to the formal means the writer has at his disposal to structure the reader's processes of reflection. These two principles allow Aristotle to claim both that literature does refer to real experiences and that it arranges experience in such a way that it serves cognitive purposes. He gets into trouble, however, when he goes on to explain what those cognitive purposes are. For then he turns away from de-

scription to his own general philosophical definition of meaning as *theoria*, as the way one comprehends the relationship of particulars to universal principles.[7] He therefore defines the purpose of literary imitation as the production of *catharsis:* literature imitates actions in order to purify our understanding of their nature and probable consequences by leading us to see a single process of action as a coherent structure of causes and probable effects.

Aristotle is no simplistic realist invoking canons of verisimilitude; literature must be true to the logic and psychology of actions and consequences, not to the surface phenomena of experience. Nonetheless his epistemological interpretation of the purpose of imitation is terribly limited and has rightly been rejected by Romantic theorists. Aristotle's insistence on plot as the shaping of a single narrative action and his concern for meaning in terms of universals will not suffice for a good deal of literature. Many lyric poems, for example, simply present processes of expression or meditation which aim to intensify our awareness of qualities in particular acts of mind and to give us access to particular moods or modes of feeling. Some degree of universality, or at least of relevance to other lives, is necessary, but that need not depend on plot or concepts or universal principles. The critic need simply describe the resonance created by the process of thinking and feeling in order to show its qualities of depth and comprehensiveness. Moreover Aristotelian theory tends, like New Criticism, to overstress criteria of unity and thus to mistreat certain kinds of literary texts whose power depends on articulating incompatible movements of mind or even on radical contradictions between the theme the author tries to assert and the thrust of the imaginary world he creates (*Paradise Lost,* for example).

Aristotle's concepts of purpose, mediation, and reflective reference, however, must remain basic to any adequate literary theory. They make clear that, while we need expressionist and presentational concepts to deal with the poetry engendered by the Romantic rejection of mimetic theory, we must recognize the limits of these concepts as explanations of literary experience. The primary failing in these Romantic theories is an insistence on immediacy that distorts our ordinary sense of aesthetic experience. One crucial aspect of aesthetic experience is our emotional participation in the literary work as a continuing dramatic event, but the event of reading also requires a certain amount of distance. In reading we reflect on experiences as well as participate in them. We become involved in a poem by first recognizing that a poem suggests a particular purposive act by an author and carries out its purposes by employing the formal devices poetry provides for eliciting and controlling a reflective meditation on the act presented. The reader seeks not only to share a poet's experience but to understand it, and that understanding depends on his being aware of the system of relationships created within the dramatic event by the poet's rhythmic,

stylistic, and structural devices. Thus while a Gary Snyder lyric might seem to render a direct experience of nature, claims for its directness must ignore the medium and, more important, ignore the way in which the medium guides the peculiar reflective way we participate in the experience. We do not simply see a mind in nature; we consider the poem's syntax as a sign of the way the mind composes itself in order to have access to what is valuable in the scene, and we reflect upon the poem's specific development of the action as a way of dramatizing how human desires and natural scenes reinforce one another's value.[8]

III

The difficult burden of trying to integrate these theories has been somewhat lightened in the past few years by the work of Richard Ohmann. Ohmann is in the process of developing a theory of mimesis that avoids the limitations of Aristotle's position. He wants to show how the formal elements of a text serve to control the reader's reflective participation in the action imitated and, more important, he wants to redefine the way a literary text refers to ordinary experience so that we can speak of the text's meaning without assumptions about conceptual universality or unity of action. His theory is based on the idea that a literary text is an illocutionary act without illocutionary consequences.

The concept of the illocutionary act derives from J. L. Austin's distinctions between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary forces in an utterance; the locutionary force of an utterance establishes its sense and possible reference, the illocutionary force stems from the kind of speech act a person performs, and the perlocutionary force is determined by the effect of an utterance on its audience. Illocutionary force registers the difference in utterances which have the same reference but signify different acts by a speaker (e.g., "Alas, Mary's divorced" and "Good, Mary's divorced"), and it also explains certain acts we perform in language which are measured in terms of felicity rather than of truth and falsity. Thus "I take you for my wife" is neither true nor false; instead, saying the words accomplishes a task and incurs rights and obligations if the proper conditions of felicity are met. In the marriage example the criteria for felicity are whether the man can legally marry and whether the prescribed social conditions are satisfied (e.g., the minister must have the proper legal authority, etc.).

Now Ohmann's crucial insight is that a theory of illocutions allows one to capture the expressive quality so basic to literary utterances while finessing the problems of reference created if we take a text as a locution, or of psychological reductionism if we take it simply as a perlocution. And he further recognizes that because the felicity of illocutionary utterances depends on social conventions, a view of literary texts as imitated illocutions immediately places or situates the text in a social context. Imitation then

serves two functions. It suspends the ordinary force of the illocution so that we can reflect on the act's meaning in its context. And it makes the reader create an imaginary world in which he can understand the reasons for the statement, judge its felicity, and relate his sense of the texts' action to his sense of society—either to judge the kind of society in which the character can perform successful actions or to reflect on the social implications in dramatized failures of illocutionary acts. Thus in reading Beckett's *Watt,* we first must recreate the world of the novel to understand its disjointed discourse, and then we recognize that Beckett's continually thwarting the possibility of felicitous illocutions calls into question a complete system of social arrangements.[9]

We cannot, however, simply adapt Ohmann's work for the theory of the poem as act. There are several problems needing to be ironed out which stem from Ohmann's ardor for linking literary analysis with potential social criticism. I shall briefly develop two of the problems which bear on my project. While Ohmann's definition of illocutionary acts is too broad in some respects,[10] it is too narrow in others to carry the theoretical weight he wants it to. Poems, at least, often do not imitate any kind of illocutionary act and do not call attention to social structures invoked by the forms of expression. Many poems are monologues in which a speaker tries to understand his emotions or to focus his meditations on a situation so that he can recognize the value and significance latent in it. And other poems, like Ohmann's example of Wordsworth's Immortality Ode (SAS, 249), which gain some of their emotional power from conventional contexts elicited by what may loosely be called illocutionary acts, nonetheless depend primarily on the specific qualities the poet calls up by the activity of mind he dramatizes. Our primary questions about the poem are less concerned with the felicity of these illocutionary acts than with the specific relationships they establish between the mind and nature. The poem does not simply imitate illocutions, it makes the illocutions part of larger processes of mind whose particular richness and intensity require phenomenological reflection. Ohmann's mimetic theory threatens to save the poem from immediacy only to lose it in easy generalizations about verisimilitude or in debate about the nature of the poem's dependency on social structures.

My second objection concerns Ohmann's curious insistence that the poem imitates illocutionary acts but is not itself an illocutionary act. We have seen that many poems do not contain illocutionary acts, but every poem *qua* poem is a distinctive form of speech act which invokes specific conventions if it is to be properly understood. Austin does not include speaking poetically among his categories, but poetry clearly meets his criteria.[11] Indeed only a concept like felicity can explain why other criteria than those of propositional truth and falsity are important in judging and responding

to poetry. Moreover while a poetic monologue is not an illocutionary act, we take it as mimetic rather than direct speech because it exists within a set of illocutionary conventions. We interpret the conditions implied by the act and reflect on its qualities; we do not respond to it as direct discourse. Thus literary works are not imitations of illocutions, but imitations because they are illocutions.[12]

Once we qualify Ohmann's claims and take the poem itself as an illocutionary act, we can go a long way towards reconciling expressionist and mimetic theories. For on the level of dramatic action, poems present a variety of direct expressions and illocutions, but these are enclosed within a larger set of conventions that lead the reader to approach the dramatic action with the curious blend of sympathy and reflective distance characteristic of our aesthetic attitudes. Thus we can accept Ohmann's valuable description of how the process of imitation leads the reader to reconstruct contexts situating or placing the activity imitated as possible real human experience in some setting. But because the poem itself and not specific acts within it evokes that procedure, we provide those contexts for all the actions in the poem, not just for its illocutions. And because there is such a variety of contexts needed, we need not limit ourselves to describing social ones; literary acts also call up ontological and psychological situations.

Finally Ohmann's work provides a crucial distinction which allows us to finesse the basic source of conflict between expressionist and mimetic theory. Most of these conflicts develop because the act of creating poems takes such different forms. Realists insist that poems copy experience, moralists that they interpret it, and Romantics that they utter the immediate processes of mind or (for Wordsworth) of a memory directly rendering its reactions to and involvement in a situation. But Ohmann shifts the emphasis from production to consumption. No matter how the poem is created, our response to it takes the form of reflecting upon its dramatized action and upon the relationships which formal properties create among the elements in the action. Mimesis then can, and perhaps must, be taken primarily as a term describing the way in which we relate poetic experiences to existential ones. Thus the poem by Wallace Stevens which I shall explicate in my last section can be recognized as a pure example of expressionist poetics. It presents a poet offering a direct temporal meditation on experience with the purpose of articulating or naming a set of feelings, and even a unique state of mind. We cannot say that it copies an experience we can recognize independently of the experience of the poem. Yet when we read the poem, we do not merely plunge ourselves into it or recreate the expressive act of the poet. We try to understand its temporal movement by attending to the way the formal elements create internal relationships, and we reflect on the poem by trying to comprehend it imaginatively as a possible act in the

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realm of experience. We ask ourselves what it would be like to approach experience in the terms Stevens provides, and then we bring that question back to supplement our direct experience of the poem.

I suspect that Ohmann might object to the casual way I adapt a theory based on the specific conditions of understanding speech acts to the more general consideration of other actions imitated by literary texts. But this adaptation is possible because the concept of illocutionary acts can be subsumed as a subcategory of the larger framework for describing human actions presented by Erving Goffman as the process of "keying."[13] Keying, Goffman explains, is a recurrent phenomenon on all levels of animal life. Keying is a procedure by which a being takes a new perspective and performs a different set of actions with respect to what might be called his primary frames for organizing experience. When animals bite one another, the primary frame would call for a violent response. But signs can be given which key the biting as play, and these signs produce another conventional form of proceeding. In a similar way, stage setting signifies that the audience is to respond to violent actions with different conventional procedures than those they would adopt if only their primary frameworks were invoked.

As the dramatic metaphors so basic to discussing keying might indicate, the concept is a crucial one for discussing literary actions. The idea of keying requires two elements—a concrete and specific sensual experience taking place, and a definite, often conventional, procedure determining how we respond to that experience in ways different from what our behavior would be if the signs or keys were not recognized. Thus a philosophical interpretation of an event, unlike a dramatic representation of it, would not be an instance of keying because the system of philosophical explanation displaces the original concrete content and does not merely change our way of relating to it. Literature differs from philosophy precisely in its efforts to make us reflect on the significance of concrete experience without displacing that concreteness to the status of mere example. The illocutionary act of offering an experience as a literary text, then, provides a means of keying an experience so that it at once retains its immediacy and is regarded with reflective distance. The poem both expresses an experience and, for the audience, imitates it. The clearest instances of literary experience as at once direct and keyed are those that best fit Ohmann's theory of imitated illocutions—lyrics and narratives which foreground the expressive activity of a dramatic authorial voice. Other modes, like meditation, objective novels, or dramas, are more difficult to fit because what is literally presented are descriptions of actions or scripts, not actions themselves. But in so much as language can be seen as directly leading us to imagine situations—that is, as a clear rather than an opaque, self-referential medium—the same conditions hold.

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Goffman's model, then, allows me to summarize briefly the values in conceiving the poem as act along the lines I have suggested. We have already seen that by reconciling expressionist and mimetic theories it accounts to some extent for the curious blend of sympathy and reflective distance that constitutes our aesthetic response to literature. On the simplest level it shows how literary experiences maintain the texture of real events while calling for different kinds of response than those employed when there are no keys to alter the primary framework of procedures and expectations. On a more complex level, the keying model illustrates why literature so easily becomes self-referential—for both author and reader. There are already two levels of experience operating, and it becomes very easy to shift keys, to move from presenting experience in a particular key to reflecting on the procedures involved in the very act of keying. Thus a text can key its own keying, but it usually does so on a level where the audience is asked to see that second keying as also the expression of a way of acting and assuming stances toward experience.

This flexibility among levels of keying also provides some theoretical foundation for a procedure becoming more popular in recent criticism, a procedure for conceiving texts dialectically as the articulation of tensions between the complex events depicted and the formal structure which seeks to interpret the events. As Ohmann has suggested, the primary existential level of a text is constituted by fully creating imaginative contexts for the actions presented. Now the keying model allows us to grant the full complexity of the event and to see at times that the formal interpretive structure is not adequate to it. The more fully the event itself is recreated, the more clearly we can judge both the adequacy of the interpretation suggested and the possible sources of the inadequacy. *Paradise Lost,* for example, creates a world of which we can say that the more fully we imagine it, the more limited it renders the interpretative keys Milton tries to impose upon it. The rhetoric may, as C. S. Lewis shows, claim an increasing loss of dignity for Satan, but the figure Milton calls us to imagine simply acts in ways not reducible to that structure. Indeed, if we key on the keying, Milton's authorial voice has as much in common with Satan as it does with the Christian humanist judging Satan. These tensions, let me add, can be seen as objectively within the text and not mere ideological interpretations, if we have an adequate model for the way poems present human actions.

Finally the model of keying allows us to explain how the formal elements of a text operate. First it suggests that rhythm, structure, and patterns of diction, image, and symbol serve to key the work as a literary text, and in so doing they call attention to themselves as the very means which control the reflective procedures they initiate. Second the keying model allows us to admit that while the literary object is a formal and mediated mode of expression, the presence of form does not deny its powers to sig-

nify or refer to real experience. And it denies claims that formally composed literary objects are thereby transformed into another ontological realm, be it the transcendental one claimed by symbolist aesthetics or the more demonic imaginary realm proposed in various ways by psychoanalysts, Sartrean phenomenologists, and structuralists. Form does not change the primary materials but provides a focus for reflecting on them. Form is not primarily spatial patterning which creates self-referential objects somehow divorced from ordinary experience. Formal patterns serve instead to compose and intensify the reader's temporal involvement in the experience by gradually deepening his awareness of how the various elements in the experience are related to one another. Form is a means for viewing actions, not for transforming them.[14] Thus instead of radically divorcing literature from life, the keying model makes it continuous with any other mode of reflecting upon experience. The poem is simply a form developed by society to deepen our awareness of what we can be aware of when we act. We can be made aware of how consciousness operates in a wide variety of contexts, and beyond that, we can recognize that our way of becoming involved in the action serves to satisfy the cultural needs I discussed earlier. Poetry itself will not save us, but it may help call attention to dimensions of experience which will make us feel we are still worth saving.

IV

Poetry will not save us, and theory will not save poetry. Indeed we must suspect any theory which claims to present radically new ways of dealing with materials that in large part depend on conventional, if not explicit, contracts between author and audience. All the theorist can do is make explicit that contract, suggest its epistemological and behavioral foundation, correct limited views of the full experience a poem provides, and offer guidelines by which readers can attend to the ways those experiences unfold. I would like, then, to demonstrate how my theory helps recover the full dimension of a late lyric by Wallace Stevens, a poem which is the fruit of a lifetime's meditation on poems as acts of mind. I have chosen "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour" because it is clearly an expressionist poem requiring our attention to the temporal movement of a mind at once presenting a new experience and reflecting on the experience as it is articulated. Yet despite the overt expressionist mode, Ohmann's strategies for situating the poem in a mimetic context, albeit a more ontological Heideggerean one than he would grant as relevant, are necessary if we are to disclose the poem's full depth. Finally I have chosen the poem because Merle Brown, normally a sensitive practical critic, fails in discussing it for reasons that stem directly from his inadequate expressionist theory. The more I can demonstrate how awareness of formal controls and mimetic contexts deep-

ens our experience of the poem, the more I can justify my claims that expressionist and mimetic theories must be reconciled.

I will first quote the poem and then Brown's basic comment on it:

> Light the first light of evening, as in a room
> In which we rest and, for small reason, think
> The world imagined is the ultimate good.
>
> This is, therefore, the intensest rendezvous.
> It is in that thought that we collect ourselves,
> Out of all the indifferences, into one thing:
>
> Within a single thing, a single shawl
> Wrapped tightly round us, since we are poor, a warmth,
> A light, a power, the miraculous influence.
>
> Here, now, we forget each other and ourselves.
> We feel the obscurity of an order, a whole,
> A knowledge, that which arranged the rendezvous.
>
> Within its vital boundary, in the mind.
> We say God and the imagination are one . . .
> How high that highest candle lights the dark.
>
> Out of this same light, out of the central mind,
> We make a dwelling in the evening air,
> In which being there together is enough.

> The sense of the fancifulness, of the unreality, of the oneness of the experience keeps the poem from being fanciful and unreal. Even so, the excluded things are not felt as an ominous threat; the poem is dominated by the dreamy pleasure of neglecting the othernesses of the world and of one's body. The poem must seem silly unless it is taken as a delicate articulation of the comfort experienced by an old man whose imagination has escaped from the tentacles of his body and flowed into a oneness with what he feels to be the governing force of his world.[15]

The irony here is that Brown's concern for the author's expressive act and his desire to locate the original savage feeling being given form lead him to a bad version of imitation theory. For the critical question his analysis raises is the problem of determining from the poem what existential context

best gives significance to the mental processes enacted. Brown is correct to see that the dominant affective quality of the poem is "an ease of mind." However because his theory does not grant the formal qualities of the poem enough power to control our reflections, he immediately posits a rather silly existential model for the feeling. The import of the poem resides instead in the process of thinking it dramatizes and in the imaginative act it requires of the reader if he is to interpret the relationship the mind has here to its own reflections. The crucial question here is not who is the speaker but where is he, what space of the mind is he inhabiting.

The opening line signifies that we are not dealing with a simple dramatic situation, but rather with an act of reflection that presents a unique kind of mental existence. "Light the first light of evening" seems to have a clear illocutionary force which places the speaker in a typical domestic setting. But the following simile "as in a room . . ." demands a radical change in focus. The initial domestic setting is now as metaphoric as it is real, and when the poem goes on to treat the room in both physical terms ("rest") and terms defining the light and the room as possible mental entities, the reader must search for a way to situate the illocution. The two abstract structural patterns of the poem are our major clue to determining the imaginary site and to defining the interior paramour: one pattern gradually spiritualizes the possible meanings and analogues of the initial "light the first light," while the second pulls against that symbolic thrust with continual reminders of man's poverty, like "for small reason," which insist that whatever values the imagination discovers must reside in something like a domestic situation. (Even Wordsworth's conjugal pair, the mind and nature, must eventually take up a dwelling in the narrow confines of a civilized order.) This spatial pattern, however, is not the meaning of the poem but the structure of the terms it seeks to resolve in a temporal process that unfolds through a variety of mental acts.

The first stanza develops the vacillating mental process by breaking the opening statement into two major verbs in the relative clause, "rest" and "think." The first verb picks up the domestic context of the illocution and the room metaphor, and it is echoed in the wry "for small reason," while the second verb picks up the fact of the opening metaphoric transformation and begins to relate "lighting" to a realm of abstract imaginative activity and a vocabulary of ultimate value terms. The second stanza then reenacts a process of thinking set in motion by the initial abstractions. "Therefore" indicates that the mind is already trying to reflect upon its own reflections, but the process is a difficult one. The first act in the stanza returns to the local setting, the "this," only in abstract terms. And we are then immediately moved back into the mind's motions as it tries to give resonance to its own summary metaphor of the rendezvous. The mind seeks to collect itself, but the vagueness of "one thing" and the ambiguity of "that thought," which

can refer either to the first stanza or the opening of the second, indicate the danger in this self-reflection.

The third stanza changes the direction of thought to concrete metaphorical expressions of affective feeling and concludes the first half of the poem with a synthesis of the two realms. Thought in the second stanza had produced an abstract and unspecified idea of unity; now the space opened by that thought (as the repetition suggests) allows metaphoric thinking and breeds a series of appositions which, by their lack of causal or hierarchial connectives, produce a rich sense of the coexistence of concrete and abstract elements. The mind is enclosed in a physical space and bodily affections, yet the physical space seems to become at the same time enclosed in an act of mind. The central function of the series of appositions is to regather the physical qualities of light while extending the idea of lighting a light into a realm of metaphor where it will ultimately by paralleled to God's creative "Fiat lux." The appositions progress from "warmth," a physical quality of light which nonetheless only comes to consciousness through the "shawl" metaphor, to "power," a term with both physical and spiritual qualities, to the spiritual realm where one acclaims "a miraculous influence." (Notice also that the series moves from bare nouns to one modified by an adjective as the spiritual expansion involves the emotions, and that indefinite articles give way to a definite one, suggesting how on the level of imagination various specifics share the determining influence.)

The fourth stanza introduces the second half of the poem by placing the miraculous influence back into the immediate scene. "Here, now" echoes Eliot's phrase for the sexual incarnational presence of the word. Indeed this full acceptance and celebration of the immediate present is probably the single most important triumphant theme in modern poetry. And Stevens follows the exclamation with an explicit reference to feeling in order to express the effect of the abstractions on the speaker's concrete self. But the celebration also moves in another direction. As Hegel tells us, the expressions "here" and "now," so dear to empirical philosophy, are really quite abstract terms; they simply express a mental state unless defined by physical coordinates. And this is precisely Stevens' point: "here, now" refers to a sense of presence, but one which is located at once in a possible concrete room and in the act of forgetting empirical realities as one is carried into an awareness that a transcendent order is also present. Stevens is playing here with the metaphor of incarnation—an initial sense of sexual presence becomes also a secular awareness that a transcendent order enters the flesh and transforms it.

The fifth stanza makes explicit the synthesis which the poem has been preparing and, through the ellipses, dramatizes the changes in mental activity as the mind comes to recognize where it stands. The first two lines present the mind returning in a casual way to the limits of abstraction ("we

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say") in order to define what has happened. "We say God and the imagination are one" because the speaker (drawn into an identity with his paramour) realizes that the simple human creative act of lighting the light and the effects of that act on his imaginative sense of his condition parallel God's creation of a world so that he can look back, say it is good, and rest.[16] The ellipses then suggest that the mind has reached the limits of abstraction, but these limits are not felt as a negation. Instead they produce a transformation as thought gives way to exclamation. The exclamation is a simple illocution, but it is only by reflecting on what justifies this illocution that we come to recognize how appropriate the candle metaphor is here. The candle metaphor synthesizes the original lighting, God's "Fiat lux," and the subsequent imaginative awareness of what the metaphoric parallel means for man's limited condition. It is precisely the presence of darkness, both literally and figuratively, which demands creation of the light. The implication here is that precisely because of man's perennial poverty he can continually appropriate for himself powers that God only used once. Moreover it is the exclamation itself which dramatizes what it means to recognize the parallel between man and God. The exclamation registers the sense of wonder that derives from man's meditating on his own powers even when confined to the narrow room of his poverty. And it is only within the exclamation, within the speaker's emotional response to his own creativity, that abstraction and concreteness are thoroughly unified through the synthesis of the candle metaphor. That metaphor is obviously important semantically, but its full meaning emerges only when we ask what is involved in the act of the speaker who utters it at this particular point in the poem's temporal unfolding.

The last stanza returns us to quiet reflection, to the "sad, waste time stretching before and after," but in Stevens' world the decomposition of vision produces acceptance not despair. One reason for the acceptance is that even in quiet reflection the imagination and the scene remain integrated and the plain speech of poverty remains charged with resonance. The poem's final apposition presents a lovely balance of physical and mental realities. The light reminds us of the mind's power to enter experience, while the parallel reference to the central mind suggests that the mind is as concrete as the light. The speaker has learned to inhabit a mental space at once absolutely concrete and absolutely reflective, just as Santayana in another poem learns to dwell in the two homes, the centers of empire and of the religious imagination. And again the major verbs are crucial. Throughout the poem Stevens employs a strategy, picked up by Robert Creeley, of using elemental words like "here, now" to carry philosophical weight and to embody the theme that our actual candle blazes with artifice. In the final stanza the key terms are "make" and "being there." These terms express the full range of the poem's desire to integrate imaginative activity with man's

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primary need to dwell fully in the confines of his domestic situation. What these terms rend asunder, "together" integrates in a last triumphant expression, the more triumphant because the term is so casual. Yet on the syntactic and phonological levels of the poem's activity the term is not casual at all. "Together" breaks the flow of the last line, but only to reinforce what it means actively to be there and to express a quiet awareness of the many syntheses the poem has achieved. Moreover as "together" calls attention to itself by breaking the syntax, it also calls attention to the fact that even phonologically this word gathers most of the dominant sounds in the line into a linguistic, non-symbolic togetherness.

To appreciate fully the poem's last word, "enough," we must generalize about the kind of meditative space Stevens has created. The word brings the pattern of poverty terms to a climax and expresses the central idea of heroism in Stevens' work. For Stevens the central heroic act is the achievement of sufficiency, of a state of awareness which recognizes the power of imagination to act in the world without allowing imagination to transform the world and to provide only the consolations of mythology. The aim is to concentrate on the acts of imagination without pursuing the inherent contents of the imagination (as Blake does), which resist the pressures of reality only by leading the mind to live in unrealities soon to mock men with their insubstantiality. Thus in "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour," the metaphorical analogies of the light eventually negate any transcendent source of creation, and, like the light itself, remain only as properties illuminating man's physical world and metaphysical poverty.

If we are to remain in the concrete world and still participate fully in the creative life of the imagination, a poetry imitating moments of numinous perception like those so common in imagism and in contemporary poetry will not suffice. It ignores the mind's capacity to recapture its powers to create myths in an empirical framework. Stevens' task is to make us learn to inhabit a kind of reflective space which blurs the boundaries between container and contained and presents mind and world as literally one. It is just the act of a mind in this reflective space which Stevens imitates in the poem we have been considering, and the formal structure of his imitation leads the reader to recreate this space in his own reflective activity. The poem asks us to participate in it by reconstituting the unique mode of being in which its illocutions, appositions, and metaphoric transfers seem really possible. The reader is asked to create a "dwelling" which carves out a unique space for the mind to occupy. The blueprint for that dwelling is the poem, especially its last apposition where the physical light, its metaphorical analogues, and the central mind evoked by those analogues, all exist on a single plane of being. In his earlier poetry Stevens had vacillated between a faith in the vitality of a concrete scene energized by imagination and a sense that what would suffice would only emerge if the mind learned

to abstract itself from the scene and reflect on the source of imaginative activity in the figure of Major Man. In "Final Soliloquy," as in so many of his last poems, the act of the poem creates a space in which both forces come together and require one another without tension.[17] The world exists neither for meditation nor in meditation but *as* meditation—and Stevens has taught us to recognize the full temporal and hypothetical dimensions of that lovely connective which perhaps defines the ontological status of all poetry.

NOTES

[1] *Beyond Formalism: Literary Essays 1958-1970* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970), p. XIII. I consider Hartman's work on Wordsworth's poems an excellent example of phenomenological treatments of the poem as a dramatized act of mind and of the role of formal elements in focusing the quality and implications of that act.

[2] Thomas Whitaker, "On Speaking Humanly," in Robert Scholes, ed., *The Philosopher-Critic* (Tulsa: Univ. of Tulsa Press, 1970), p. 72.

[3] "Style and Its Image," in Seymour Chatman, ed. *Literary Style: A Symposium* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 10.

[4] For summaries of recent arguments see John Cook, "Human Beings," in Peter Winch, ed., *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein* (New York: Humanities Press, 1969) pp. 110-151, and Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Antecedents of Action," in Bernard Williams and Allen Montifiore, eds., *British Analytical Philosophy* (New York: Humanities Press, 1966), pp. 205-225. The most suggestive modern use of Kant on action is P. F. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment," reprinted in Strawson, ed. *Studies in the Philosophy of Thought and Action* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968). I try to interpret the metaphysical implications of Wittgenstein's grounding his theory of meaning in action, and offer that interpretation as a critique of structuralist semantics in "Consciousness and Action: The Use of Wittgenstein's Later Ontology as a Foundation for Literary Criticism." I think the essay is forthcoming in *Modern Language Notes*.

[5] The limits of spatially oriented formalist analyses are nowhere so evident as in Roman Jacobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss' classic essay, "Charles Baudelaire's 'Les Chats,'" reprinted in Michael Lane, ed., *Introduction to Structuralism* (New York: Basic Books 1970), pp. 202-221. The essay ignores the way Baudelaire's initial image of the cats gains in imaginative power as the poem develops its spiritual and physical implications. Most of the patterns the authors discuss exist in the poem, but they unfold temporally and in so doing intensify the dominating figure of the cat.

[6] I take as pure examples of presentational poetics the theories of writers like Charles Olson, Robert Bly, and, in fiction, Ron Sukenick, and as examples of critical practice the work of phenomenological critics like Heidegger, Poulet, and Jean-Pierre Richard. For pure expressionist theory see both Kenneth Burke's work on symbolic form and the idealist aesthetics of Croce and Gentile. For a recent example, which also typifies the expressionist polemic against a simplified or straw-man New Critical formalism, see Merle Brown, *Wallace Stevens: The Poem as Act* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1970). For two good statements blending expressionist and presentational poetics see John Vernon, "Poetry and the Body," *American Review*, No. 16 (Feb., 1973), 145-172, and the essay by Whitaker cited above. We should also note that Barthes' own theory of literature as signification is a kind of linguistic expressionism in which language expresses its own possibilities. See his *Critical Essays*, trans. Richard Howard (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1972), p. 218.

7 See Francis Fergusson, "Introduction," to *Aristotle's Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961). My brief and loose treatment of Aristotle is also indebted to Leon Golden and O. B. Hardison, *Aristotle's Poetics: A Translation and a Commentary for Students of Literature* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968). For a good modern, non-Aristotelian discussion of imitation, see Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Poetry as Fiction," *New Literary History* 2(1971), 259-82.

8 I have substantiated the claims made here in "Gary Snyder's Lyric Poetry: Dialectic as Ecology," *The Far Point*, No. 4 (Spring/Summer, 1970). Like Moliere's character, and like many critics, I find I have always been speaking about the poem as act without knowing it.

9 The best single statement of Ohmann's recent position is "Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4(1971), 1-19. For other statements more directly tying illocutions to social structures, see "Speech, Action, and Style," in Seymour Chatman, ed., *Literary Style: A Symposium* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 241-259; "Literature as Act," in Chatman, ed., *Approaches to Poetics* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 81-107; and "Speech, Literature, and the Space Between," *New Literary History* 4(1972), 47-65. I shall use abbreviations taken from the title of the appropriate essay in citing Ohmann's work.

10 His concept of illocutionary act is too broad because, like Austin, he fails to distinguish between acts which perform a task by invoking conventions (e.g., saying I take you for my wife) and acts whose performative qualities simply indicate the force of the utterance (as in my example of responses to Mary's divorce). The concept of felicity holds for the first category, but for the second it merely substitutes for psychological terms like sincerity. Notice that if you say the words of a marriage ceremony insincerely, you are still bound to the marriage, but no similar obligations occur if you pretend to be sad at Mary's divorce. Most literary illocutions are of the second type, where ties to social conventions are not so strict. For further discussion of problems with the concept of illocution see the essays by P. F. Strawson, J. O. Urmson and John Searle in Isaiah Berlin, ed., *Essays on J. L. Austin* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973).

11 John Searle, apparently without being aware of Ohmann's work, has recently argued a similar position which denies my claim that speaking the poem can itself be taken as an illocutionary act. He claims that in general the illocutionary act performed is a function of the meaning of the sentence (e.g., "I marry you"), but utterances in poems do not claim they are poems. However as he goes on to present his own theory of literary illocutions as "pretended assertions," he seems to ignore the fact that there is no explicit reference in the assertion of the illocutionary status of it as pretense. He also cites for his case the example of games like charades, which surely alter illocutionary status without literally referring to the altered status. Finally he claims that what defines literature is the attitude we take towards the utterances, but won't grant that it is the signs of literariness in a text (which in a poem are so pronounced as to approach a literal statement of illocutionary status) which call up that attitude by invoking illocutionary conventions. See Searle, "The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse," *New Literary History* 6(1975), 319-332.

12 Ohmann cannot grant that the poem is itself an illocutionary act because it would prevent him from claiming that literature directly invokes social contexts. If the whole poem is an illocution, the only social conventions directly evoked are those establishing aesthetic attitudes. The only society within the text is an image created by the author. Ohmann is often aware of this (SLSB, 54ff), but he resists contextualism when he thinks he can demonstrate how literary texts directly invoke social judgments. Thus he defends claims by his women students that they could not mimetically recreate Lady Chatterley "without self-betrayals" (LA, 106). The more traditional and correct view would

criticize this direct judgment of Lady Chatterley in terms of one's own self-image as a serious limitation of the power of literature to develop by its presentation of imaginative contexts a sense of sympathy with lives we may not desire to pursue and may not morally condone. We must distinguish between the possibility of understanding a situation imaginatively, which literature provides, and the process of moral judgment which requires other disciplines as supplementary and secondary to literary understanding.

13 Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1974). See especially his third chapter, which is then developed throughout the book, with many complications I avoid, although they are relevant to the topics. For changes in levels of keying, which I discuss below, see p. 543. And for keying as a process of controlling response to a performance, see pp. 345 and 540-546.

14 It is largely disputes over the question of the nature of form which lead presentational and expressionist theorists to indulge in polemics against the New Criticism. On one level these polemics are ironic and short-sighted, since it was New Critics like Brooks and Blackmur, with the concepts of dramatic attitude and gesture, who popularized the concept of the poem as act. Yet on another level they are somewhat justified, for the New Critics did tend to give the poem as formal organic object a special status. The poem becomes less a way of viewing experience than a unique object somehow either free of the contradictions of ordinary experience or more complex and unified than any ordinary experience. The question, I suppose, is whether the qualities of action which a poem makes us aware of are latent in experience or only available within the complex structures of literary discourse.

15 *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1964), p. 524, and Brown, pp. 180-81. In all fairness I should point out that Brown does not pretend to offer a full analysis of the poem.

16 Brown, pp. 179-80, claims that this stanza is not earned: it comes too easily unless we imagine an old man's state of mind. We see here quite clearly how his need for original feelings to be transformed, feelings he can only find with difficulty in order to justify this line, leads him to a problematic model of verisimilitude, and more important it denies the contextual power of the poem to define the role of such lines as elements in a process of developing mental activity. The stanza is less a claim about reality than a prospect on reality, justified by a particular train of thought in a particular imaginative site or situation. The status of the speaker is not foregrounded in this poem, so it is not his qualities but the qualities of reflection which justify an utterance. In a poem like "Prufrock" the situation is quite different: there the site of the poem is within the head of a particular character, and we must project the psychological conditions informing his speech acts in order to appreciate the poem.

17 The best critical locus for explaining this space of mind is Northrop Frye's discussion of anagogy in *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 115-130. Stevens, however, gives anagogy a secular twist: as nature becomes contained in mind, the mind takes on a kind of physical existence.