

1

In my last letter, I mentioned “the change.” You ask for detail. Here goes. You read enough and no thinker seems so original anymore. You start to see personalities, inherently limited as such, engaging with inherited material. You start to see yourself working at the level of the issues themselves, finally above where everyone has to start, which is fanboyism or idolatry. With what “everyone knows,” the usual idiotic cartoonish reductions. The indeterminate childlike mind, which prevails throughout the adulthood of most, at least with respect to things they never seriously investigate. Who is Plato for those who have never read Plato ? A cartoon. And then Plato is just Plato. Words in books, helpless without flesh that cares.

2

You seem skeptical about Kleiss. Let me justify my respect for him. It's not about this or that claim, though I tend to endorse his claims. It's more about his total character, which is built around the **scarred** man of knowledge. Or I could say **soiled** man of knowledge. Kleiss is more serious than the academic type, not less. And yet, for just that reason, less serious. The futility of it all. The preacher in the Solomon mask, to make a point. That even Solomon is hot air.

Soiled and scarred, I say. You, me, Kleiss, and everyone we know. But not all of us know it, confess it, articulate it, draw conclusions from it. A game for honest fools or the foolishly honest. And the honest don't tell the truth. That's asking too much. They just tell it like they see it. They say what they believe, to those worthy of it. To those who will tolerate it. As if it matters. And, for a little while, it does. Or so one says. Or so one says one says.

3

Don't expect them to change on your watch, my young friend. If I may play the old man for a moment. Their vanity precludes the sudden transformation. Like bending cast iron, the souls of men. The souls of boys. I was no less stubborn myself. Time is the school in which a few of us almost learn.

These strangers on websites, no constraints on madness and vanity.

Cranks and fetuses. The fetuses have potential, right ? But they are buried in feeling that they mistake for thought, feeling for the promise of their father figure. Their Nietzsche perhaps. Or this or that face of the perennial philosophy. Or “Marxists” whose testes haven’t dropped. I begin to understand Hobbes and his contempt for the schoolmen. It’s not (of course) that big words are bad or that some things are hard to articulate. It’s a broader and blurrier phenomenon. The whole character is bent, dishonest, limp. As opposed to the upright and erect. The first maximizes obscurity. The second minimizes it. The first depends on a distance effect, on being lost in suggestive language. The second finds the matters themselves difficult and fascinating enough. Which is not to say that language is cleanly separable. I give you the poles of a continuum. The average member of the Talking Class is so useless and inscrutable to nonmembers that something like taste must decide. Raise a colorful flag. I take myself to have chosen a lonelier path, and yet also the more social in a genuine sense.

4

You ask me to expand on “theology is God.” I might also say that “ontology is (the developing spine of)being”. The point is that our sense-making is not outside of what we are making sense of but rather at its center. Theology begins in an alienated state, thinking of course that the God it articulates exists independently of the discourse that reveals that God. Theology discovers that God is its own product. That theology is creative, the creator of creators (like Blake’s “Poetic Genius”). An unconscious projection is grasped consciously as such. The scientific discourse that determines God/Nature turns out to be the most significant or crucial part of God/Nature. “God” is self-explicating, but initially this self-explication takes itself for the explication of something grand but distant and independent.

As Rorty saw, some of this same alienation seems to motivate that brand of representational scientific realism that I would call dualism. Which gives us the hard problem of consciousness, so called, while being blind to problem of the reality of the real, if the real is understood in terms of something “behind” representation. This generalized “matter” is something sufficiently transcendent to give a certain kind of a philosopher something truly superhuman. We may not know whether our beliefs

our true, but this basically mystical stuff ensures that (properly formed) propositions are either true or false in some absolute sense. Something is thickly there, radically apathetic. Is it a coincidence that this apathy mirrors the cold gaze of theory without mercy or bias? That's what I loved about Freud. Not this or that theory so much as the daring and the ice-cold diagnostic gaze, beyond what certain primates call good and evil, normal and perverse. Divine solidity. Numinous plenitude.

And let us celebrate the brilliance of Democritus and confess the charm of taking such an X-ray of the Lifeworld. It's all "really" little pieces of the same matter, but shaped in many curious ways, with hooks and loops, so what we see at the macro-level can be explained (in a vague way.) But then sweetness and color and the sensation of heat are, absurdly, made unreal. And the fragments give no explanation, but this dualism of Democritus is still with us. And its purveyors fancy themselves sophisticated. As if most philosophy types are unaware of the physiological complexity of perception. But these poor indirect realists seem blind to space of reasons, and they seem to think that some analogue of the pineal gland is the self that perceives. They just can't over their cleverness, which was already in Descartes. The nerves in the foot are like a little rope that you can use to ring a bell in the brain. Physiologically correct enough. But the kind of existence that the self has in the space of reasons is completely overlooked, taken for granted, transparent, even as this same self writes a philosophical treatise. Hilarious. But such is the seduction of Nature's mechanically cold causal nexus. Or corpuscles or atoms or waves. Anything simple. Like pieces on a Go board. Like bits in a matrix. The beautifully simple combinatorial form of the world. These fellows are poets, lost in the tittymilk of their muses. I work in such poetry myself, though typically with imaginary sculpture, math as art, animated and set to abstract "music." But I know my art is art. Not that I grudge Democritus. Good physics isn't, however, necessarily good ontology.