

“Word Drunk” (after Jim Harrison, et. al.) Like Birds. (or, noises as languaging as experiencing)...notes from a cabin

The idea here is that I will begin writing on a clean, empty, blank, page of a notebook (a gift from M) that makes claims on its cover to: “*Give best writing features,*” and that in writing – anything, everything – moving the pen in my hand, in this place, on this day, during these hours, temperatures, sounds and lights, experiences, etc... something might come (?), no, that’s not quite right, the “situation” might lead open into something desiring to be written (or not) – as if *by writing* I might find *some writing* that “wishes, needs, or wants” to be written... Perhaps.

Doesn’t need to...but can.

So I began.

Of course bringing M into it has already swerved the river in its course, and there’s the fair, sunny, breezy climate of Colorado in September with aspen trees beginning their blaze of glory towards undressing toward Winter, final grasshoppers clicking their calls, and a sky much bluer than the ink above. The size and texture and smooth submission of this thin, fine, notebook and favored ball-point in conjugation. And the fact I’m within a rare and unusual solitude, silence, stillness – a remote cabin in National Forest – thereby protected from habitual people, places and things, daily duties and disruptions. But these merely describe or report, as if remarking situation and experience... writing has yet to begin...

I may be a little bit hungry.

Reading as a form or activity of writing in/on the “self” or singular human.

In other words, concepts, ideas, feelings, and thoughts *also* breeze across and through me, as if I were the fir tree or acacia bushes receiving continuous wind. Or light. Each have the quality of passing-through and altering all aspects of the singular leaves, trunks, branches...constantly. Things are never still, however you define a “thing.”

Is everything writing (in its way) in/on me, continuously?

But I am assuredly not empty, clean, or blank. It’s rather like an unceasing scrambling, addition, revision, translation, erasure...

Rivers, streams, trees, soil are indeed nice analogies for writing – being. Skies too. Well, perhaps everything – as Heraclitus (and many other human participants of the unceasing have noted since we began this messy business of signification, naming, extracting and reducing and representing in our particular forms of species communiques (languaging): [it would seem to us] *the unchanging reality is change* (or somesuch).

Be that as it may, we move on...

Voicings

(pausing this activity for “contemplation”: a cigarette, small burrito, and a drink).

The time is: the first tree’s shadow reached the other side of the road.

I think I want a female to speak with, or attend to (really listen), and provide appropriate promptings to if necessary (to inquire of). Conversation or Dialogue (Inter-locution), like walking, or even better wandering or perambulating – eliciting mysterious differences (again, like drafts in flora) – cadences, tones, rhythms, full singularities [we’re always full – no? from infancy through death – seemingly ever-replete with experiencing our fill, and hardly blank pages] expressions, vocabularies, dialects, emotions, and on and on – come to play via interlocution.

Every conversation altering fullness, scrambling contents, changing experiencing.

And why should I prefer women (or the female sex) is mystery to me. As are women. Honestly, all singularities (instances) including myself, all other species, rocks, waters, birds, and so on... Perhaps it is a same-species (or so we’ve come to language our environment) but with clear biological differences (even if mostly the same – and this also goes for all humans of any sex or gender) – blah: what I can say is: in my experiencing, I tend to find greater novelty and difference “writing or editing me” in conversation with females than with males. Cultural differences, languaging differences, socio-educational differences, environmental and political differences – yes *all* of these heighten singularities of soundings in all interlocutions...but all things being similar or sharing commonalities among human groups, families, societies...even amongst these I find I experience noticeable difference interacting with a female conversant compared with a male. This may just be me, and that’s okay too – but throughout my life more letters have been exchanged with females, more surprises and intrigue have come about for me when engaging females of our species than males. (perhaps).

Even so, Voicings, Interlocutions, and Soundings carry a very special place in the writing, editing, scrambling, and wavering fullness that goes on with me.

Thus I read constantly and widely, deeply and broadly, across cultures and genres and epochs and styles – to keep myself perpetually written-into and muddled with being.

Difference. Otherness. Singularity. Distinction.

This also must relate to my longing or predisposition for travel – or visiting – and most often to relatively non-human environments – wilderness, federal lands, hinterlands, etc. I like to be written in by things maximally different from me – trees, mountains, rocks, streams, flora and fauna that one can spend enough time with to form something of an habituation... had I been raised away from people in a small remote community – perhaps social scenarios and cities would intrigue me in like manner – it seems to me we are written on/in most profoundly by difference – there is more to learn away from one’s “common.” (Even visiting mountainous areas I see that I spend more time looking and listening to my surrounds than those native, habituated, or familiar with it).

Difference, perhaps, increases our attention and perception, and helps (or can) to make us more of blank pages – to connive more room and freedom to that which we do not know (which is most everything - spaces for alarms and surprises, jarring differences or the uncanny).

Perhaps.

Think of art works, hearing foreign tongues, vastly variant cultural, religious, or ethical norms, etcetera – there you encounter most clearly your unwritten pages, no?

But this is to view yourself as a book.

Which is notable, for I was enculturated largely through books – my reference points in orientation to being: seed catalogs, a Religion of the Book, scholastic education most of my life – textbooks, texts, language, music, and so on...almost all referenced (if not determined) by books, by language.

It's my cultural analogue. With a mom as a nurse – often even the body was read as a book. My father a land appraiser – the landscape surveyed like a text, or at least “by the books” into more books and reports and documents and ledgers. I learned Bach and Beethoven, Mozart and Glazunov, the Old and New Testaments, doctrines, beliefs, science, philosophy, and mathematics, histories, English, cultures, sports...*by the books*.

In more words, even when I began exploring with all of my senses – feet, hands, voices, nose, ears, eyes, and so on – I was repletely written into and onto... my comparative reference-points for encountering surprises and differences – were books.

By the way, I am a librarian by profession (i.e. “keeper of the books”)

And gather and keep them I do! Before this employ I was a “bookseller,” “book clerk,” even “book-hand,” and newspaper and mail deliverer. They've never been far from me. As a farmer I “read” the lines of the sowing and reaping, fencerows and landscape. In fact an alias I used when I first began to write somewhat publicly was “Adam de Livre” – “person of the book,” or “manoftheword.”

Language, it seems.

Does experiencing come to be felt as experienced primarily or only – when it is languaged or expressed?

Yesterday I read:

“it seems the experience of speaking is the experience of not being dead...take away what can be spoken and what will be left for us?”

(Reiner Schurmann, *Broken Hegemonies*)

If I cannot translate it into communicability (reciprocation? Registering? Responding?) via gestures or markings, singings or sayings...am I yet fully humanly participant? Alive? Aware that I am experiencing?

Yet I've devoted the recent decades of my life to the unsayable – am I trying to find evidence that there are experiencings that cannot be referenced, signaled, reflected, represented, or signed? “*Nothing*”, for example – and still we've made a referent for an impossible sign.

Schurmann also writes:

“There is, in any case, no ordinary statement that does not do violence to ‘there, that mountain.’” (Schurmann, *Broken Hegemonies*)

I’ve certainly no qualms with that! I’ve long felt words were just gestures toward fields that incalculably exceeded their terms: “grass,” for instance, or “bird.” “Love,” or “death.” “Woman,” “animal,” “quark,” “paper,” “filet mignon” NEVER accord with “this” or “that” one.

Here we do have some words: “You,” “I,” “he,” “we,” “here,” “there,” “this,” “that.” These each mean only in relation to particularity and singularity and context. But how much can they accomplish on an accurate page or message?

Does our languaging, do our words, our expressions, mean anything outside of a maximization of reductive violence to each “there is”?!

Languaging as Experiencing

For myself I try to side-step this problem by considering languaging itself as experiencing. No matter what we are talking “about,” we know it’s not THERE – even fully verbal constructions like “human,” or “philosophy,” “politics,” or “presidents,” “money,” or “grief,” or “mom.” For you to experience my “mom” or “this mountain” you would have to encounter it – and your encounter with it, either my “mom,” or “this mountain” would singularly differ from mine...each and every time. This goes just as well for “Paris” or “Susan,” “idea,” or “mouse,” a novel, algebra, medieval, “you.” Experienceable each and all, only in-with themselves and experiencing participants.

Yet we CAN experience the languaging AS experiencing. When you tell me what happened last night, what “To Kill a Mockingbird” is *about*, how you are feeling, describe to me a sibling, etc... I KNOW the words don’t capture the things, places, emotions, or entities (singularities) – but your languaging – your words and how you sound them, choose them, construct them, entone them, arrange them, rhythms and pauses, etc – are the experienceable happenings. What they may be intended to refer to they unsay, that’s okay, they offer experiencing themselves, like each tree, each face, each breeze, each time.

I hesitate to think of any of these words (including “cow,” “mountain,” “mom,” “politics,” “Janet,” “race,” “color,” “number,” and so on) as “things” because they are unstable and unidentifiable *as such* outside of instances of experiencing. (Singularities).

Poetry and singing are a kind of languaging that exposes this, or draws attention to itself AS experiencing that seems the case to me of most languaging in any form. Languaging is singular experiencing.

Whether a math textbook, musical notation, laws of thermodynamics, “stop” signs, price tags, recipes, censuses... these are instances of languaging that do not refer to reality-at-large, or ‘in truth,’ or comprehensively, but can be experienced and related to as we choose or see fit.

Many languagings are so acted-on or held in shared beliefs or conventions or cultures that ignoring them or interpreting them singularly may result in all manner of other sorts of experiencing, but IN THEMSELVES they are experiences of languaging.

[Were there no ways to determine who passed first through crossroads before “stop” signs or “color” signs? No way to negotiate value before standardized acceptance or obedience to monetary signage-systems? No way to relate to the complexity of environments and change before “physical theories”?]]

Singing.

Singing is a nice addition because it points to the ephemerality (singular instancing) languaging is. Perhaps it is closer to conversation and interlocution, or silent contemplation or “thinking to oneself” than printed texts. This activity of languaging or sounding, in actuality we often don’t even care what the words are! Songs in unknown languages, screamed unintelligibly, nonsense lyrics, etc... and even when we do care about the words – the passing of song (even recorded) is never the “same” experience as it is each repeated experience. Languaging just is like this. Ask a scientist or mathematician how many types of referents the mark “1” or “x” might refer to (nearly infinite).

Read and listen in languaging experience as you do to singing or musical notations performed.

Poetry (or “Literature”) - Language aware or concerned with itself as experiencing (the silent singing of written languaging)

Poets and novelists may have singular experiences that they wish to language, but are aware that any reader’s (including their own) experiencing is inherent to and depends on the languaging itself. So even if a writer’s attempts in languaging into a stable medium of a written form is to process, share, preserve, or invent their own experiencings, they are purposefully creating experiencings of language itself. Words as the medium of experiencing (like breeze, or light, touch, sight, etc...).

This is why I can say that “poetry and/or literature” (experiences of language AS language) can be found in any form genre or style of writing. MOST writers know as they begin to write that this languaging artifact will be any readers experiencing of whatever they are writing. So whether researched history, scientific textbooks or handbooks, ledgers or codes or records, writing is in some sense dependent on the ability to experience the languaging or notation or signing AS itself. It can be remarkable experiencing anywhere!

However, for those who take up writing as making languaging experiences (particularly creative writers, fiction and poetry, drama and composers) the usage of languaging is to foment experiencings (see why all forms of writing arguably belong?). It’s more the intention for you to have experiences with the languaging rather than to hope to cause experiences of what the languaging “communicates,” “refers to,” “represents,” (or is *about*) that highlights the opportunity for understanding languaging-as-experiencing in ways that many forms of writing do not attend to and rather hope for some universal or reduced and generalized shared conceptual or belief-meaning.

Related to singing, or musical notation

In composing music (outside of commercial, propaganda, sound-tracing roles) a musician arranges notation in such a way as the notation performed (read, played, sung) IS music. The notation IS its own meaning. Poetry and literary writings are like this – primarily about the reading and playing of the words themselves composed in a similar way – the “aboutness” or experiencing or meaning coming about in the languaging itself and its singular activations – not in something beyond or “behind” or that the words refer to. This is languaging-as-experiencing at our best so far, and once you get the hang of it – (experiencing languaging as experiencing languaging or soundings itself) – you can read, converse, study, communicate, and so on with much more benevolent and critical, difference-actualizing resonance and novelty and surprise than if you read the world as if expression or languaging were one piece of reality referenced only to your own replete pages of experiencing.

Like Birds

Another way to think into languaging sensibly (i.e. that it’s not a truth-declaring, world-determining or –conceiving entity, in other words to move away from its invented logic and reference, toward itself as the experiencing) is to consider humans along with human-experienced environments. We hear distinctness and difference in the noises of bird species and kinds, wolves, bees, cicadas, crickets and grasses, porpoises and whales, trees and bushes, turtles, mosquitos and flies (and on and on...)

Doesn’t it make most sense that the noises we share amongst our species are similar in kind? Methods for signaling, alerting, identifying, coordinating, communicating, soothing, playing? Human soundings are not likely about “THE WORLD” – “reality,” or all the others we share environments with or experience in various ways, but OUR world and experiencing it together.

Perhaps crickets, birds, whales, and snakes all have complexly developed theories and hypotheses regarding one another and the entirety of their experienceable surround, perhaps migration patterns are political, and den-building some form of sociology and religion they’re constantly testing out and revising (whatever “time” might be for each of them) – OUR observation, perception and curiosity, explorations and habits don’t indicate anything about *their* experiences, only OUR experiencing of them. Why would languaging be any different, or our ways of coordination and signaling, sounding and reporting – why would our behaviors vary from what everything else is doing with our shared contexts in their unique ways?

Human languaging, it would seem, regardless of how we give and receive or consider it amongst ourselves – is another example of species noise-making, sounding, signaling, perhaps singing and expression – securely holding usefulness for human experiencing – all the thoughts and fancies, dreams and novels, philosophies and sciences and religions and instructions and codes and commands and woos and whispers and shouts and laughs indicate something between our species and environments themselves – their reach outside of humanity would seem like the bear’s roar or squirrel chitter, raven’s caw or whalesong... something other beings may notice and respond to with their own interpretations and responses as parts of their environmental surround – but human sounding is extremely unlikely to be a language that “speaks for” anything but our own experiencing and ways we go about it.

I think this is useful as well when we language and co-language as a species: there is not a reference to it outside of human experiencing, no truth or falsity to it (except insofar as we act and evaluate our own theories together FOR US)...it is not about the world outside us – but a noise in our experiencing of one another and the surround that supports and enables us as a species.

Spiderwebs

so...fiction it is,

an (mis-) understanding of light and air...

[there is an utter astonishment, amazement, to the stun of encountering living things, “systems,” occurrences...from air to squirrel, human bodies to light, math to adjectives, motion to temperature to verbs. Perception. Attention.]