

A Formally  
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otata's bookshelf

johnmartone@gmail.com

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*compiled by*  
otata



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*Write the story of a contemporary cured of his heartbreaks solely by long contemplation of a landscape.*

Camus, *Notebooks: 1942-1951*  
Justin O'Brien, Trans.

*The day the vote came in Jasna woke me, weeping. We both felt it like an amputation.*

—JP

*John Phillips*

Mountains & Rivers  
T'ao Ch'ien

his  
poems  
complain

the way  
not found

he walked

o

day light  
firefly

nothing  
much

◦

SHINE

sun  
black  
cormorant  
wings

◦

broken  
moon

light  
brimming

boat

◦

her  
comb  
come  
use  
less  
ly  
up  
on

o

moon  
on  
water

no  
closer

o

Old Ts'ang K'o  
invented  
writing for  
us to know



o

no point  
in asking  
the answer to be  
more than  
it is  
which we do

o

the original  
act  
was a word  
unspoken  
we each are  
to say.

o

inexplicable —  
what you must explain  
to see

you're  
the meaning of.

o

the invention of  
silence  
took place after we  
invented  
language.

o

walking backwards to  
what's still ahead  
to keep what  
you will have  
to lose.

o

all I think to say  
says what  
of all I think to  
mean

the saying for.

o

no meaning to loss  
beyond  
the meaning you have  
being here  
to lose.

o

language invented us  
to speak what it never  
knew  
we had to say.

o

we begin to sense  
the sense we make  
things we do  
have's  
never our own.

o

forgetting to say  
what must be said

is our way  
to keep on talking.

o

the world has its own  
living to do  
                                  that doesn't  
include  
                                  always  
                                  us.

o

perpetually  
postponed  
                                  the now  
  that language  
makes present  
                                  as past.

o

it takes a while to  
recognise  
                  how much is gone  
you still have  
                  to go.

o

the circumference  
to the circle  
we are

we never  
get to  
see.

o

eventually you  
will know  
                  what it was you did  
at least  
                  not come for.

o

to say the nothing  
there is  
to say

all these words  
are needed  
to fail.

o

life  
    can  
    easily  
do  
    without  
        us  
    how  
        ever  
much  
    we  
        pretend  
    not.

o

what we say      amounts to      a single syllable —

b r e a t h l e s s l y p r o n o u n c e d

o

whether meaning is  
or isn't  
what there is  
is what our meaning is.

o

no one watching knew  
the whole show  
was made up from  
those made  
to watch it.

o

to be truly  
blank  
a page  
must have  
— visible —  
words  
not  
written  
there.

o

to say enough to  
never have to say again  
never is  
what's said.

o

it takes a lifetime  
to find the one answer  
  
there is  
no question to.

## *David Miller*

from: EPILOGUE

.  
*Everyone became so wise that eventually they all turned to atheism, including the king. Every now and then, the king's conscience would trouble him because of the wrong turning he'd taken, but then he'd slip back into his lamentable ways again.* They leapt, they tried to fly, but their wings didn't serve their efforts; instead, they plunged into the water below. *And the grandchildren... to now through the gaps in the garden fence see them play, and to know during the night that they breathe in sleep so near.* A building, if a building could be nothing but water: outer and inner walls, all water, and a flooded floor. Children's shouts, cries, yelps, squeals.... – Because I possessed charity, I could pass through the ten walls of water, which were like waves standing upright, held up by the winds; and yet not drown. Because of charity, I was able to reach the Princess and remove the ten arrows from her body, and heal her with the melodies I played and sang. *Tears kill the heart, believe...* his voice at first surprisingly high, yet full and rich when required, as well as supple and superbly modulated. Grey lettering for the gravestone? Black. We arranged twigs over the flowers, broken eggshells at the base of the pots. Coming back from the cemetery, we drove by a field of sheep, and you stopped the car and called out 'Hello, sheep! It's Tuesday'; explaining that otherwise they wouldn't know which day it was. I responded that the tags on their ears looked oddly like hearing-aids. – Am I a body, no; do I have a body, no; do I have fingers and toes, a head and legs, yes, these are aspects of me; do these aspects constitute a body, no. A body is a dead thing; I'm not a dead thing. Though neglected by the music critics, he wrote: *I have had good luck. These 60 little pieces interest children taking piano lessons.* Reversed. What was here, is now there; black lace is white lace, and white lace black. – Rise up, rise up, the elder said. And the other children rose up and followed.

.

from: Epilogue originally appeared in Stride and will be a broadside from slow tapes



## *Erica Van Horn*

### Moss

Paudie kept waking up to the sound of scratching. It was early in the morning. It was just Coming Light. The extremely manic sounds of the dawn chorus were loud. The scratching woke him up and as a result of being awake, he lay in his bed and enjoyed the birdsong. He had no doubt that the scratching sound was mice in the walls and the roof. He put out mouse traps and a little bit of poison. He knew it was just a matter of time before the mice were silenced. A week passed and the scratching continued. Maybe the scratching got worse. He was woken up every morning. Listening to the morning birdsong had been a pleasure but now it was annoying. He was feeling defeated by the mice.

Jimmie stopped by one day and they talked about things. The subject of the mice came up. Jimmie told Paudie that his problem was not mice but crows. The two men went outside and looked up at the steep pitch of the roof. Jimmie pointed to the bits of moss growing on the slates and in between the slates. He said the crows were eating bugs and things that live in the moss. The scratching he was hearing was their claws trying to gain purchase while slipping and sliding on the roof. Jimmie told him that unless he cleaned out the moss he wouldn't get rid of the crows. Jimmie reminded him that the same thing happened when they were children in their father's house.

Paudie told me all of this when we met on the road. I was on foot and he was speaking out his open car window. He was pleased to have a solution for the scratching sound, but irritated that it had to be his own brother who put him straight. Both brothers are well into their seventies but they maintain a competitive kind of relationship. Jimmie was older and he had always known better. He would always be older and he seemed always to be the one in the know. It was getting late for a change.



*Simon Cutts*

*Our Tracey*

on Margate Sands,  
I can connect

..... with  
..... ,

at The Turner  
Contemporary  
Art Gallery

the prodigal  
'conceptual'  
Bag Lady ?

## **An Irish Potato Patch**

**Irene          Flourball          Up to Date  
Home Guard    Vittelots          Lumper  
Land Leaguer    Dempsey's Darlings  
Redskin          Snowflake          Osprey**

**from the 2008 Potato Report Irish Seed Savers Scarrif County Clare**

three kingfishers on a pond in Purmerend Overwhere

for hans waanders

no ( w ) here

any ( w ) here

over ( w ) here



*Thomas A. Clark*

## four delays

a house set down in  
sweet cicely and skylarks  
beside hope's water  
under bleak law

some fragments of dark ware  
a flint knife or scraper  
the beads of a jet necklace  
a piece of burnt bone

the trachyte is a fine-grained rock  
of a deep blue-grey when fresh  
it breaks and rings like a phonolite  
and weathers to a light grey

sweeter than wine  
better than ale  
is clear spring water  
cupped in the palm of the hand

*Alec Finlay*

photography Hannah Devereux, 2015

---



A NATURAL CHROME : LICHEN

---

LEAVE SOME SMALL CHANGE : ASPEN

FROZEN LIGHT : QUARTZ

## SUGH FHIORAG : THE PURE-NECTAR WELL



some ways

**Am Bealach  
The Pass**

Whiteway  
Rathad Geal

Yellow-way Pass  
Am Bealach Buidhe

Redway Pass  
Am Bealach Dearg

Greyway Pass  
Bealachodhar

The Horsehill-way  
The Capel Pass

walking is an archaic pursuit (except for the clothes)

I walked until the hills were inside me



gathering: an eco-poetic guide to The Cairngorms

cruinneachadh: stiùireadh eag-bhàrdail mun mhonadh ruadh

with Hannah Devereux, Gill Russell, Jo Vergunst

Inspired by the place-name collections of Adam Watson

The White Mounth  
*The White Mount*

Place-names provide the methodology for this eco-poetic mapping of Am Monadh Ruadh, *the russet or red hills*, now commonly known as The Cairngorms, Upper Déside, and The White Mounth, *the white mounts*.

The place-names are from Adam Watson's collections: *The Place Names of Upper Deeside* (1984) compiled with Elizabeth Allan; the follow-up, *Place-names in Much of North-east Scotland* (2013); and a recent collaboration with Ian Murray, *Place Name Discoveries on Upper Deeside and the far Highlands* (2015). That we have so many names available to us for this fascinating region, where Gaelic, Scots, Pictish and English inter-mingle, is largely down to the diligence of Adam, his collaborators, and informants.

Adam's name collections make a significant contribution to Scottish folk-culture. They total over 7,000 place-names covering almost every field, ruined croft, shieling, hill, corrie, burn, and wood, gathered from 260 local people. The names are commonsense and, occasionally, mytho-poetic; they convey ways of seeing and preferred formulations. In adding a sub-stratum to the Ordnance Survey they offer a radical class based 'eco-poetic' alternative to *Landranger* and *Explorer* maps. This perspective on the landscape has a contribution to make in terms of current land use debates – the movement initiated by Frank Fraser Darling, maintained by Adam Watson and Dick

Balharry, and re-ignited by Andy Whightman – they have always combined a social and ecological perspective. They also offer a new path for eco-poetics, and add to what I like to call the htopian movement, and place-aware walking – a term I coined for this project. In other words, they belong within that renewal of interest in the wild, innovative mapping, foraging, marginal gardening, and the blending of commons and crafting. The blogs will touch on these, along with more traditional practices, like stalking, hiking and climbing – always by way of names.

Compare the level of coverage these place-names provide with the paucity of today's automobile-centric maps, and Google-Earth, which impoverish place-names and represents the non-urban landscape as a beige desert or wood of a green no leaf has borne.



A name is a place and its absence. How rare it is to be present at the moment a name is coined? There are place-names that record a fleeting moment – the presence of a bull in a field, a landslide, or the death of someone out on the hill – and there are names that seem to refer to an ever-present – the mountain upon which a snow wreath rests deep into summer.

If we choose to see the world through names and their meanings then a vast field of reference awaits us – a world characterized by flux. Words change when they become names; names change when speech is written down; speech changes with the incursion of new language communities and flattening effects of popular culture.



The old Gaelic names of Deeside were liable to be Frenchified, Scottified, and Latinised, long before they were Anglified and mapped by the Ordnance Survey. We have to listen in to the hidden sounds that reverberate within them if we wish to understand, or guess at, their meaning. Today's English-speaking hikers like to salt their speech with corries, bens and bealachs. John Murray, author of the touchstone *Reading the Gaelic Landscape*, lists some of the Gaelic toponyms absorbed into English and Scots: brae (bràigh), cairn (càrn), craig (creag), glen (glean) and knock (cnoc).

Not everyone will recognise other borrowings: gob, trousers, smidgen, bother, teaming, smashing, and slogan. The study of names is a matter of linguistic archaeology, but we should never forget that naming is a creative and, sometimes, unconscious act. It is less interesting to reduce names to the words they once were, than to attempt to follow the passage through which they have been altered and, sometimes, transformed. Names are about our belongingness: how we belong changes. Names are a guide to human time, human space, stewardship, and loss.



When I was invited to work with Hauser & Wirth – the generous collaborative teams they assemble ensures it is with, not for – I decided that place-names would be my guide to the region. In particular, I wanted to work with the remarkable catalogues of names collected by Dr. Adam Watson.

It was in one of Adam's books that I first read the name of a burn, Allt Phoupla, named for a ruined sheiling – a summer pasture – in the upper Gairn. Adam's translation is 'the burn of the booth' – like the *búðir* the Icelanders used for their temporary huts of stone and skin coverings that were set up around the *Alþing* every summer, at Þingvellir. I have given this translation:

Allt Phoupla  
*Shelter Burn*

I was lucky enough to be guided out to the ruins by local guide Ian Murray, who has written three books on the region, drawing on the folk memory of some of the same informants as Adam – folk such as Rob Bain of Ardoch. What Ian and I made of the name Allt Phoupla, and its meaning, will be the subject of a future post. One of the name labels that I used in my initial field research is included above.

We are no longer summer-walkers, but our minds remain tailored to identify marks in the landscape. Standing stones and significant skylines are evidence of a belief system – what Hanna Tuulikki calls '*memnonic topography*' – that adapts the landscape into a seasonal clock, essential for managing the agricultural calendar and making the best of what's available.

Carn nam Blàithean  
Wee-blossom Hill

Torr nam Fiann  
*Crowberry Knowe*

Adam's survey of local names defines a poetics – or *eco-poetics* – of the bioregion of the Dee, tracing flora, fauna, lost forests, and deer-tracks, making common cause with Walter Benjamin's thought:

*'Isn't every region governed by a unique confluence of plants and animals, and isn't every local name a cipher behind which flora and fauna meet for the first and last time.'*

A shift of the gaze can change what we perceive and, in a similar way, knowing the meaning of a name can bring a shock of recognition. Names travel us through time, unraveling their meanings, revealing the ciphers: this was once the lair of the wolf, here is where the stags gather:

The All-mhad Barn  
*Wolf Rock*

Lag an Daimh  
*Stag Nook*



These blog posts bring together two projects. The eco-poetic mapping will become artworks for the Fife Arms, Braemar, along with a publication that including maps, photography, poems, and prose, some of which you can read here. As ever, I am working with a team of people – some local, others from farther afield – identifying place-aware walks and other ways to appreciate the complexity of the landscape of Upper Deeside.

Collaborators include Hannah Devereux, the primary photographer on the project, who worked on the Taigh memorial at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, and Gill Russell, who worked with me on the colour walks in *Some Colour Trends*, and is creating watershed maps and working with me on conspectus. Place-names guide our attempt to represent the ways that locals and visitors

experience the Monadh Ruadh – stalking, climbing, walking, ecology, history, deer, and pine-woods, each perspective is a different vision and our interest lies in allowing these to speak to one another, sometimes agreeing, sometimes arguing.

The field research is extended by a parallel artist residency at the Department of Anthropology, University of Aberdeen, where I will share ideas with Jo Vergunst, Tim Ingold, Alan Macpherson, and others; as well as working with the poet David Wheatley, who teaches creative writing in the School of Language and Literature. Having got to know these peers outside of their offices through shared conversations at Deveron Arts I will do my best to erase departmental markers.

Jo and I share an interest in new walking practices, such as my own place-aware walks, viewing, and conspectus, which are partly inspired, or necessitated, by the limits illness imposes on my walking. And we will also explore Caledonian pinewood regeneration, looking at sites on Invercauld and Mar Lodge Estates.



Some of these ideas, in particular those connected with walking and viewing, are also being explored in a new journey project with Ken Cockburn, The Perthshire Tour: follies, views & wild gardens. Other previous journey and mapping projects are listed in the blog roll.

In the posts and publication the English translations of the names are my own, based on Adam Watson's, and with reference to other sources and contemporary experts – referenced in the bibliographies that feature at the end of the posts. Adam's translations are available as a definitive record and, of course, the interpretations I have given will never supplant his greater scholarship and working knowledge of local Gaelic. My English versions of the names are 'poems'; for example, conventional English translations from Gaelic would give 'burn of the X' or 'hill of Y' and, although these are accurate, I chose to work as a *translator* of poetry would, bringing the expression over into English, giving a sense of the broader meanings, using words appropriate to a local toponymic feature, especially where I was able to view the site.



*bibliography*

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Peter Drummond: email to Alec Finlay, 2015

Adam Watson: *The Place Names of Upper Deeside*

Adam Watson: *Place-names in much of North-east Scotland*

photography

The White Mounth from The Strone: Hannah Devereux, 2015

Glen an t-Slugain: Hannah Devereux, 2015

Tullochcoy sign: Hannah Devereux, 2016

Allt Phouple: AF, 2015

The All-mhad Barn, Creag Nordie: Hannah Devereux, 2015

Pine, Invercauld: Hannah Devereux, 2016

Bog-cotton: Hannah Devereux, 2015

*gathering: an eco-poetic guide to The Cairngorms* appeared originally (and can still be read) as a blog at [www.gathering-alecfinlay.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.gathering-alecfinlay.blogspot.co.uk)

Pages 29-33 co-designed by Alec Finlay and Studio LR.



*Lila Matsumoto*

she points out the features

she points out features  
of the landscape

(the men write their poems)

she worries  
about the welfare  
of the horse

she looks for cottages  
where they might take refreshment  
and pass the night

(the men wrote their poems)

omitting no incident

she describes the  
country minutely

so you should feel as if you had been with her

# my Highland guide

my Highland guide

acquainted with the country

knew the name of every hill

and every rock

I took no notes

and now I am little better

for what he told me

rocks and hills

would have filled a scrap of paper

I would have walked two miles willingly

to have had the pleasure of seeing them so happy



## *Malcolm Ritchie*

having realised  
the fundamental illusion of self  
an eminent *Zen* master  
on his deathbed was asked  
if he had anything final to say  
he unhesitatingly replied:  
i don't want to die

o

only mosses and lichens can live  
on the names of the dead

o

in the road a solitary shoe  
like bereavement

o

when you were here  
where were you  
now that you've gone  
where are you

o

mourning the living is often worse than  
mourning the dead  
but do the dead mourn the living

o

in the compositional water of my body  
is the body of water that will drown me

o

in the doorway silence cries -  
the corpse of a cricket

o

stains bequeathed by an unattended corpse  
- true maps of the afterworld

o

where the old stag had lain  
dead last winter  
wild irises have bloomed

o

at birth  
we're given a rattle  
at death  
we give it a shake

o

*on my mother-in-law's hundredth birthday*

how do one hundred years  
sleep  
in such a small bed

o

solitary blackbird singing  
one cloud

o

in a plastic bowl  
two hands  
each bathing the other

o

two hands embrace  
in front of three buttons

o

lips of fish  
silently mouthing  
something existential

o

rain has come  
like an unexpected lover

o

above Goat Fell a dark cloud brews  
mountain tea

o

without intention or contract  
a scarecrow  
protects the seed

o

wearing my father-in-law's  
old grey woollen kimono  
i feel i'm beginning  
to piss like him

o

because of recent tinnitus  
i can no longer listen  
to silence

o

each time  
someone enters the path  
it changes  
no matter how many enter the path  
it remains the same

o

when i was a child and as wild as a flower  
i got trampled  
and the petals kept falling  
for years and years  
and years

o

the fly the fly  
with a rainbow on its back  
it eats shit

o

the Garden of Eden  
and Golgotha  
are the same place  
only in different dreams

*Julie Johnstone*

slow

down

long

enough

to

read

these

words

pausing here to read this

reading this to pause here

this

is

to

remind

you

of

that

thing

you

will

forget

looking at some words

thinking about some words

Two pauses

en

em



*Gerry Loose*

*being time*

the sense of the water of the oak  
sense of the air in wood  
knowledge of the oak in air  
knowledge of oak in the wood  
sense of knowledge in sense  
the crow in the oak

o

song of the thrush  
sense of sound on air  
knowledge of tree space in thrush-song  
thrush weight on the branch  
thrush weight on air sense  
song weight on air space

o

hearing slow rain in air  
sound of air rained on  
knowledge of hearing air  
edging sense  
movement hiss  
smack of rain on leaves

◦

hinds on the path  
/ no hinds on the path  
sense of presence  
sense of absence  
knowledge of hind space  
bracken moving

◦

bedrock bulk hill of Dumgoyne  
sense of no sky  
sky colour in loch water  
sense of no colour  
water meets air air meets sky  
mute swan

◦

digging wet earth under moss  
wind moving bracken  
no sound of wind  
sense of wind  
knowledge of hearing  
knowledge of no-sound in muscle

## night exposures

walking on  
dry gravel  
bed running  
between trees

◦

she drowns in the canal  
beside a towpath  
at a lock

behind on the towpath  
2 women  
discuss a court  
appearance

◦

the journey  
the fleeting moment

while she sleeps  
someone falls in the water

while he sleeps  
little girl falls in the water

the same time

◦

given up everything  
penniless

they all strangers

geologists  
earthmoving  
machines at workings

listen to the explanation  
of sandstorms  
horizons obscured

lean back  
eyes shut  
wire fence

tell of  
a soldier  
stroking his beard  
but also of  
his shaking hands

◦

loss

◦

Pabum. No.  
pabulum

◦

public political speech  
men in shades  
among crowd giving  
random beatings

leaders talking  
thanking each other

fathers at war  
mothers giving birth

◦

constraints

sexual nature

someone is there

who is wandering

around there?

◦

little low hills  
given over to wheat

◦

( )

◦

the sky  
knows

speedwell  
forget-me-not

◦

she becomes aroused  
the house is full

◦

his calves  
seen through  
(a tear)  
curtaining  
waves

leaves' pattern

◦

old houses bulging at the back

touch across the little alley

a new wrought railing

angry about children

squinting in the sun

domestic matters

◦

caravan deep into wilderness  
is mother is father

watch orchestrated ball games  
in an orchard there

the crabs have withered apples  
prepare for winter

◦

tending two fires  
in cottage

to keep folk warm  
the battered ash

◦

's a being (of that world)  
large substantial  
human woman

with other humans women  
waiting for their interpreter  
dressed (as they're naked)

face each other  
in a small circle  
silent waiting

◦

use creosote

two old friends  
just met

pinholes in the pages  
show a constellation

of light

◦

*stag stab*

there are three  
one with stag horns

along a deep lane  
to a dead end  
he is transfixed  
with sharp antlers  
an axe thumps  
into his throat  
scramble the bank  
escape  
here now

°

( )

°

all's well

a nonsense

°

a son's with

o

unpaved road  
along cliff edge

across dry sandy  
arroyos where  
rivers once fell  
cliff edge  
waterfalls

o

playing small  
stringed instrument

o

giant wild puck

goat horns  
larger than ever seen

grab horns under  
oxter drag

home  
horns

come off

◦

searching for Pretty Boy  
who's not found

but the stillness after

& shock of finding

of which  
no knowledge

recognise people  
other than

◦

part of resistance  
to occupying army

disguise theft  
of their cement

render it smooth  
to delay them

sharpen knives

◦

something menacing  
rising

&  
above a wall

a wall

◦

on juggernauts  
(child refugees  
running in front/alongside

along canals  
under rains

water swilling  
around seats)  
a political meeting

tending  
demonstrating  
winter tree pruning

a suspended  
pollarded living tree  
no roots

°

another wall

another rising

again

went to grandma's

up a ramshackle

ladder

°

small things  
domestic things

asking for groceries  
on credit

◦

memory  
hides

is broken  
with steel

deceiving  
edges

◦

taking  
pills  
made  
of  
iron

◦

deep in  
trees trunks

stems boles  
nothing else

◦

cooking on a  
black iron stove

under a tree  
no fuel

estranged daughter  
begins to talk

◦

are pointed

diving  
deep

nothing  
there

◦

instead of tongue as  
tongue leaf

o

the little bird sings  
the little dog laughs  
the last bird  
the last dog  
the last laugh  
they were lonely  
the third bell  
the seventh bell  
the ninth bell  
the last planet

o

the list of  
things  
re/member

o

they are executing him  
automatic weapons

others dance  
in a circle slowly

◦

old woman's  
released from

darkness  
fed

◦

new moon  
vixen calling

calling

◦

( ) religious ceremony  
( ) transmission

all are naked

after  
fruit & blossoms're lying

on grass beside  
the path

◦

journeying  
along a canal for

ceremonial purpose  
handfuls

objects mirrors handles  
empty cloth bags

journeying  
along single track

roads escaping  
oil changing

bleeding aircraft  
brakes leaking

at stand  
still

◦

the architect drives  
( ) to his room

the baby is dropped  
knows only kindness

◦

swarming  
Milky Way

dog fox  
barking

◦

inventing  
numerical table

mirror image  
pair of triangles

adjoined at base  
with perfectly

reflecting  
different numbers

up & down  
the scale

◦

butcher in apron  
wind running

someone  
stolen

heavy eyelids fluttering  
opening

◦

visiting a gangster  
songs are good

emergency exit

◦

in greaseproof  
blisterpacked

tablets    smoke  
inhaled from

inches away no need  
to suck the end

◦

can't find the  
two smallest children

◦

planting  
restricted

cuneate  
unrevealed

◦

canal of mud  
flowing along the street

little is lost  
at the edge

◦

smiling mouth

stabs an eye

◦

mother's

alive

baby

's getting

fat

◦

walking in  
back alleys

city's  
night

rooftop aviaries  
women

singing

◦

waiting for a bus  
all that's owned

waiting for the verdict  
court of religion

never make it  
it's not there

heron's gone  
river in flood

◦

's swelling  
telling

a story

◦

triangular space  
high wooden

walls  
secrets

◦

parrot is  
singing with a

human voice  
after all

◦

we are being  
someone else

◦

for part of the route  
there's only photographs

◦

moths devouring  
each other

Snake  
Monkey sit in

glowing coals  
She appears

things go awry  
Chorus

◦

the aqueduct-bridge  
closed to humans

's to be painted  
sky blue with water

fade  
against sky

◦

she brought a  
green pumpkin

◦

plottings. plans.  
assassination.

◦

in cottage  
short sweet lyrics

century third  
open window bird

song

realise not enough  
time

is called

◦

hold the new  
born baby

for the first  
time

◦

pissing a  
long time  
a hole in  
chemical crust  
ground dirty  
polluted

the dog is lost  
that spoke

're in the mountains  
on steep  
boulder strewn trails  
between villages  
pack animals  
black  
bony

°

on the way back  
the public vehicle stops  
small coastal village  
river meets sea  
fish market  
front for the guns

bid a man good morning  
in the afternoon

°

defend  
death

paint a picture in  
quick brushstrokes

a mushroom cloud  
souvenir

◦

go absent walking more  
than once  
watching life

◦

hiding in caves  
at the end of the  
island  
invaders  
murderer-raiders  
come

◦

cops  
make us sign  
to park

◦

mockfucking  
in the house  
she says  
we have the sunlight

◦

he wants to kill  
run  
along canal banks  
through shopping malls  
climb walls

(the rich live here  
now)

◦

nimbus of flying insects

small boy talking

Dalai Lama visits

◦

climbing wild  
mountain  
's green red scree  
lone trees bare  
two men in the  
cave on small motor  
bikes not /asking  
for bribes  
trying to hide the old rifle  
no trigger

shanties where we  
will wait for  
bandit-inspectors

◦

shelter in  
tiny pavilion  
pull it  
back  
like a kite

◦

arrested by  
unshaven sheriff

hands cuffed  
behind back

driven off

no papers  
( )

other cop  
casually beating

not  
being silent

◦

taken hostage

◦

where houses  
stop  
cliff's edge  
a small bridge  
to an island

◦

leaving.

disagreements

with a sister

◦

no  
sleekness  
of before

◦

blessing  
from

who instructs  
on procedure



*JL Williams*

## The Temples and The Three Cities

*with thanks to John Neville Ebejer*

execution is  
the implementation of  
the construction plan

skeletal remains  
become limestone through pressure  
exerted by sea

serpentine valleys  
grotto at the valley mouth  
uninhabited

lizards determine  
the building site to visit  
proof of pre-planning

small stones pressed in to  
the still-wet terracotta  
before the statue

epitome of  
fertility the temples  
aligned with Venus

inheriting the  
interpretation birth of  
Venus in the sea

carved and angled niche  
through which the first rays of sun  
light the oracle

someone crying out  
in winter an oracle  
speaks through the window

these sites denuded  
a perfectly cut stone used  
then for something else

serpentine narrow  
cultural dominating  
influence baroque

fortifications  
withstood the attack the gate  
encircles cities

houses demolished  
convents like barracks virtues  
fireworks French horns



*Ian Storr*

Bouldered forest  
telling the tale  
of Gawain

Lifting an edge  
of every lily pad  
the summer breeze

Whither Zambia . . .  
the young ringed plover  
left on a Greenland shore

That dream again  
of having murdered someone  
so long ago  
I had forgotten it  
until the detective called

Otata will come again  
one day  
late fall in the mountains

— Santoka as translated by Burton Watson

*Otata mo aru hi wa kite kureru yama no aki fukaku*

As Watson notes, “Otata was a woman who went around selling fish in the area of Santoka’s cottage in Matsuyama.”