

*Timor mortis me perturbat* reminding  
a tradition that has in its meditation on death

longed so long for immortality it is almost  
unable to think in terms of human existence,

human being, freedom such as it is, giving Psyche  
*a missionary view of herself as self-understanding*

seeking Love through an Augustinian  
novitiate ordeal brought nearly to her knees

to take the priestly vows but taking a veil instead  
reacting against the dictatorship of public opinion

an existential loneliness the pathos of historic  
nihilism contempt for everything social

deliberate alienation a methodical  
solipsism evolved from vulgar egotism

into esoteric phenomenology  
a thinking more primordial and so more authentic

than the vapid universalism of enlightenment  
that ends in positivistic science and technology

bureaucratized industrialized wage-labor  
mechanized warfare urbanized

mass culture — western history a decline  
*from* the Platonic conviction that the point of inquiry

is apprehension of principles, that knowledge is contact  
with an underlying nonhuman order of things

greater and more powerful than human existence  
yet available through techniques of knowing thyself

*to* the American conviction that the point is  
to get things under control by technological means —

his anti-Semitism the usual culturalistic  
sort squeezed between bolshevist and americanist

collectivisms his great fear fragmentation  
disintegration dissolution his anarchic

democratic exterior metallicized  
against the interior feminine, his blind faith

that poetic modes of disclosure can liberate us  
from the technonihilism of modernity, mistaking

*poesis* for *praxis*, ends for means, and thus willing  
while bracketing his own personal alienation

that the state become a wrought-iron urn  
holding the ashes of pluralism and diversity

a hygienic machine that while cutting away  
inferior human material (classes races

degenerate individuals) might well restore  
the body politic to its primordial

identity as the ancient Greeks once did  
by *techne* — *bring forth the true from the beautiful*

*Point* • That only death can bring man to realize  
his very being *I am not, therefore I think*

*Point* • That but little comes to be known, what is  
known remains inexact, what mastered insecure

*Point* • That the business of philosophy  
is to recapture the force of the most elemental words

by ceasing to think of them as natural, to allow  
them to in fact turn back into poetry

*Point* • That there is just us in the grip of the words  
we speak, the metaphors we've internalized

*Point* • That one is what one does the practices  
one is engaged in the language in which one is spoken

*Point* • That we are nothing save the words we use  
our being is what our vocabularies are about

or more precisely what our final vocabulary  
the one we can't help using is about

*Point • That to understand what language has to say  
we must enter the vortex of the dialogue we are.*

*Point • That language is the templum death is the shrine of nothing  
The point is to read thw word death without negation.*