

Market Tender Family

Author(s): Kevin Magee

Source: *Conjunctions*, No. 22, THE NOVELLAS ISSUE (1994), pp. 294-310

Published by: Conjunctions

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24514323>

Accessed: 22-03-2024 03:09 +00:00

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

Conjunctions is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Conjunctions*

Market Tender Family

Kevin Magee

*To Weyhill and Winchester
I went to the fair, and when I meet there
that I most hate, I make debate
(for seldom does it come to pass
that one may rise above one's class)
The seam which ran its edge around
with lace to silk bodice was bound
No peasant wore such costly work
in all of Hohenstein or Haldenberk*

1.

Propulsion toward what capes, Duncan's H.D. (let Thetis threaten us) Stein Stevens' extremist in an enterprise, that moment in Modernism the discovery and excitement of writing in time — if there is an ocean it is here — to enter a new world, and have their freedom of movement, consciousness of immediate contact and contradictory demands of observation and interpretation. Zukofsky's fastidiousness when he hears (and fears) Hart Crane's hysteria, the negative imprint of domination that is *The Bridge*. Duncan's own distancing and distinction between his work ("disorders of reference brought about by figural excess") and L.Z.'s metal-tipped share of beech or oak a variety of wild sorrel called salt grass mixed with wheat and rye. Spicer's clear-sighted Protestant's eye, freed from the mist of superstition, where there is no lack of interest in the linguistic system and relation of language to social reality. Inhibited insistence on class. The 1980s' historic clash with terms. "Capital is a fever at play and in the world (silent I)." Michael I am happy to join you by the sea. "(This refers to capital with the capital L.)" Quotations from *Capital* in Canto 33: Chapter 10, "The Working Day," and Section IX of Chapter 15, "Machinery and Modern Industry." Dear Nathaniel, dear Kathleen. "The enormous

tragedy of the dream in the peasant's bent shoulders."

2.

There should be more, the book I am reading and the same page over and over, fingers following the words across each line and mouthing remedially what has been, what has to be done, glare cut away from compounding, gravitating toward the event, then, as referent, what figures show. Dispersed episodes. The entire time, in the form of rough notes interspersed with asides, the 'historian's truth' which first writes the lower orders and imagines them emerging as subjects, articulable if not themselves articulate, even as a potentially revolutionary class (*Bond Men Made Free*, 1973), and then begins to lose not its reason — historical materialism — but the capacity to narrate the mass of incrementations and additions patiently sifted from patent rolls, court and tax records, all partially relating even when obscuring the event that divides into the multiplicity inherent in its sources — that sudden, volatile uprising exceeding chronology which can no longer be conveniently reconstructed or contained by the "haphazard" collection of nineteen essays in *Class Conflict and the Crisis of Feudalism* (1990).

3.

The memory of an ancient injury persists — the change in the sense of page from disjunctive to integrative — and of that idea about the comparative unimportance of authorial identity, we do not know the author, we will never know that poet whose book, written across a life, opens out on one event, not that the event may only be read through the poem, but that the poem exists only in relation to the event, is subsumed by the event. Reading the poem is to read of an evolution from economy based on working the land to money, commodity and that newly emerging market-generated subjectivity called 'the individual.' *Ragmanroll*. A catalogue or roll of names and even a game by this name was played with verses describing social types or characters rolled up in a parchment roll attached by a string with the string hanging out for the player who pulled on the string and so learned by chance their identity and the penny was an important coin in the time of Edward III though a florin could sometimes be called a penny in which case a ha'penny

Kevin Magee

means a half-florin and a farthing the fourth part of a florin. See *rigamarole*.

4.

Dickinson [to Gould?]: *Magnum bonum,
harum scarum, zounds et zounds, et war
alarum, man reformum, life perfectum,
mundum changum, all things flarum?*

Goliardys is a glutton of words, singing and swigging and swinging a barrel of books as many as might be held by both arms, a scribe in a monastery who copies the Bible but liable to fable reproduces the book on the butcher's block that is history, according to Hegel. Marx: I laughed like hell, I laughed all over him, in the air loudly in lordly Latin *O rex si rex es rege te, vel eris sine re, rex, nomen habes sine re, nisi te recteque, regas, rex, ac veluti* as when *cum saepe sedito* after sedition *coorta est* has arisen *in magno populo* among a great multitude *que ignoble vulgus sae vit animus* and the ignorant vulgar masses rage *jam que faces et saxa volant* now firebrands and stones fly. To discourse a little less like Ummidius, Tyndarus, Adimantus took my hand. None of the Lydians that settled in E (see, for example, a book of banned poems by Guilielmus Hermannus called *City of Men*). One of you go and see, the other one stay and listen to me: *res inopum capita nisi gratis est quasi rapta*. "The wrong will not be remitted until that which was stolen is restored." I had my back to the lamp and my face turned toward. To Lacadaemon shall my lands extend. A secondary illustration on the first historiated letter of the only surviving folio. These are the rare companions with whom I Rome.

5.

I would be that reader come to rest on a crate or mound of stones and ring down the curtain of a morality play showing considerable familiarity with the language of lawyers and landlords despised by the rural poor, and rewrite them with no mitigation and the coarsest kind, wandering as a weathervane turns with each wind, accepting homicide and a receiver of thieves, downtrodden numbers unskilled and restless, bound not to the land and to no lord. They began to assemble in small groups at first in the regions of

Essex and Kent and by the middle of the next month were marching in a large mass on London. We begin with these features of the forces of production: the clock and the corn mill, the plow and the spinning wheel, the family, its reproduction and the production of clothing and food. Subsistence, then surplus. Consciousness that exists only in its collectivity and more than the sensation of being multiplied by the crowd, release from the singular, the individual, converged in the press and flow of wider time, gravity, the weight of our humanity. *Of such weight is my love, and by it I am carried wherever I am carried.*

6.

Only a non-dialectical shred of thought could argue this way. Reiterate without remorse or is this just a ruse to diminish the streets that are dangerous. Appealing (appalling) appearances. Actor and audience sharing the duplicity of their joint roles. How to get the figure performing manual labor back on the stage (so that the many who have the will but not the means can get a grasp?) — Bottom has in mind the joke of rushing up to keep Othello from doing what he does to Desdemona but B.B. would make the players more intelligible to themselves by acting to suspend mimetic expectations and foreground critical analysis. Double consciousness applied against identification and catharsis, allegory a counter-image that anticipates but cannot accomplish Redemption. The figure of the plowman as projected collectivity in the plowing itself, incarnation in the social body, is this how they first heard his “How may I save my soul?”

7.

Writing having to do with deciding there is no longer the luxury of waiting. The uselessness of the statement “all my life.” A state of extreme though extended — jotted — attention. No facility for that matter in the standard and the first proposition marks the voice. Shadow of the undeclared, the moment at which we must decide and engrave what we hear. *Kindle* one example of a word if it refers to burning wood for warmth or cooking unless the object be — by the sound — a stiff and stark congealment of wood or hay or stubble forced and frozen in the letter of human trust. Happen wanshape. On the verge of a ditch. Even a hard closing, or opening if closed.

Kevin Magee

Palm tilted upward tilling the whole field. Looking up. Add to an enormous capacity for work what must be learned about the language a book that was written from the worker's point of view. Debtors. Foreclosure. The economic fact. "The room soon filled with lamenting old women." It made the fields more real. This is not a book the product of leisure. Thanks to the peasant that went past.

8.

Gloss on 'anon.' This is the Palace of the fearful King (called Author). FIRST ACT. "What, John Rugby! What John, hey!" (Enter Rugby). "Here, Sir!" "Rugby, fetch me some paper." (Writes). "Rugby, come with me. Follow my heels, Rugby." SECOND ACT. "Respecting what a rancorous mind he bears can you not see, or have you not observed the strangeness of how insolent of late he is become, how proud, how preemptory? We know the time since he was mild and affable, and if we did but glance a far-off look immediately he was upon his knee." THIRD ACT. (Some carrying Horners body). Falstaff. "What, is the old king dead?" Pistol. "As nail in door." (The proverb alluded to is the door nail on which, in doors to mansions, the knocker strikes and which may accordingly be regarded as particularly dead owing to the number of blows which it receives). FOURTH ACT. "What are they, that do play it?" "Hard handed men, that work in Athens here, which never labored in their minds till now." LAST ACT. Hermione. "The keeper of the Prison, call to him. Let him have knowledge who I am."

9.

More savage than the death of kings. It cannot be a question of 'aptitude' or 'inclination,' i.e. that it just wasn't part of his sensibility. He has linked his fate with a force (capitalist economy) that cannot legitimate him. History of a disaster beyond speech, anticipation of the disaster, why the skepticism of etymology, the belief that the oldest is nearest the truth or 'recalls what has been lost' — this doesn't seem to be anything but an outpouring, rhythm as Ocean, the suspect (natural) histories of a word but what about history-as-word or time-in-language? Hilarity of its intention, the American Century. Impossibility of a discursive stance to presume to address that which is propelled by absent compelling

indicative inscribed the fiasco or fresco, Festooned. The unabiding as to withheld or reproach any appealing (appalling – the pall of a class of documents produced by a particular culture at a particular moment in history) the repressive economy of a given text what circumvents distorts deforms maims *The Bridge*. "The term 'proletarian' as applied to a poet must sound strange to Americans. Only Hart Crane with his roots in the depression and his love for metaphor, machines and manual workers suggests a recognizable case." Anton Nyerger, trans. *Poems of Attila Jozsef* (Hungarian Cultural Foundation, Buffalo, New York, 1973).

10.

The Village Idiot. Words don't hold horse piss. What about experience? How do you experience class? How are you positioned in relation to your class? "Flat on my back." Balzac's bric-a-brac, Bogdanov and Bazarov, Bayardo and Balthasar, the anarchist (Thoreau) and apologist (Adam Smith) together in one volume and I agree with Gorky, John Stuart Mill is a bore to read. One year the only book I read was *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. What's in the notes, what's on the blackboard, what's by heart. He said (what did he say?) – on the pastoral something about the incompatibility of communism and desire. Time passes, and the body drifts. The body goes through the motions of being alive by mid-morning, *high prime*, in the dragging of the sun across the sky's complicity with the reigning – (the verb *rowen* means to beam, literally to make or show rows or steaks, cf. day-rawe, day streak, daybreak, see also daye-rewe and rowes-rede in the passage from Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars*). "We have no fuel, our factories are idle, we have little paper and we cannot make books. All this is true, but it is also true that we cannot get at the books that are available." (Lenin, *Speech of Greeting at the First All-Russia Congress of Adult Education*, May 6, 1919). Iron plows with moldboards were long unknown in those regions of the East unaffected by German colonization, the simple *ard* or *soka*, a wooden scratch plow, was the typical tool of the Russian peasant down to the twentieth century.

11.

'*Boy Meets Tractor*' Literature. To go toward – by writing behind – the Renaissance. The breakdown of feudal relations, and rise of

nations. Class struggle moves time forward. The 1930s 'an excruciatingly difficult political period.' Arbitrary tallage, marks of servitude, and thinking no sharper than peasants or serfs born under the tenure of yet another inheriting lord. Milton: "That freedom of writing should be constrained by the Prelates and learnt by them from the Inquisition to shut us all up again." Blunt Brecht: "Every one of their criticisms contains a threat." Dear Sirs, it would be difficult to represent my purposes and goals other than by describing how my thinking has changed. I can hardly hold up the pen to write *father*, having only the impaired memory of the most impoverished, reduced, depleted, exhausted struggle to answer to a cultural imperative, its stringent method and model of a genealogical tree. She drew the fine for unchastity and was ordered off the estate for asking the youth to meet her at night in her father's barn. (Bastards by law were born to free status.) Can feminist rhyme with communist? The winter of 1938. A ghost, or globe. The train, the truck, the tractor. The ditch beside the road.

12.

The Plow in Flower. Plod along at the back of the book at the foot of the page. Before that — without that — forsaken look. Since Love has turned Pedlar. The world breeds in the eye a word or worm. Now even also every one bite me and gnaw me like a burning worm. Hands more like it, hard at it, sweat imbued and uncouth, as are the hands of those for whom it once had been intended. They chew up their charity, they eat what they could share then cry out for more. The Augustinian road to truth through introspection brings the Dreamer to the enigma of the tree. A graft or shoot or sapling, here used of a young tree growing in the heart of God — its fruit and the ladder against it, the rungs of which consist of crimes. Figures from history hang from the tree. A vision of Christ and the flowing wound of *caritas* in his breast. *The Man Who Died*: "I was wrong to try to interfere. The ploughshare of devastation will be set in the soil of Judea, and the life of this peasant will be turned like the sods of the field. It is tillage, not salvation." The field full of folk as both producers of the fruit of their labor and themselves the fruit of the tree that spans the ages. Each was to have their own charter of pardon. But the words of the pardon insist there is no pardon. Free will by which we must be held responsible. A translator of the *Rime*: "Who else could have written in concepts

of divine law, the unwritten law of humanity (*ius gentium*) and human transgressions against justice in the form of a conversation between Love and three outcast, wandering women? Perhaps Langland, but he lacked the discipline of Dante's art."

13.

"*Not half hungry*. To play off workers' dialects against the written language is reactionary. Leisure, even pride and arrogance, have given the language of the upper classes a certain independence and self-discipline. It is thus brought into opposition to its own social sphere. It turns against the masters, who misuse it to command, by seeking to command them, and refuses to serve their interests. The language of the subjected, on the other hand, domination alone has stamped, so robbing them further of the justice promised by the unmutated, autonomous word to all those free enough to pronounce it without rancor. Proletarian language is dictated by hunger. The poor chew words to fill their bellies. From the objective spirit of language they expect the sustenance refused them by society; those whose mouths are full of words have nothing else between their teeth. So they take revenge on language. Being forbidden to love it, they maim the body of the language, and so repeat in impotent strength the disfigurement inflicted on them. Even the best qualities of the North Berlin or Cockney dialects, the ready repartee and the mother wit, are marred by the need, in order to endure desperate situations without despair, to mock themselves along with the enemy, and so to acknowledge the way of the world. If the written language codifies the estrangement of classes, redress cannot lie in regression to the spoken, but only in the consistent exercise of strictest linguistic objectivity. Only a speaking that transcends writing by absorbing it, can deliver human speech from the lie that it is already human." Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, section 65.

14.

A Crow for Norma Cole. In Gower's *Cronica Tripartita* the mob which mutates variously into wolves, sheep, peacocks, jackasses, oxen, cats and dogs shouts out a song from the streets below:

Kevin Magee

*The Swan cannot keep his wings forever
Nor the Horse his hide
Now the Swan is without wings
The Horse is flayed
And the Bear in biting chains is rising*

(My translation). The word *laborers* in the Statutes of Edward III appears comprehensive, including tailors, bricklayers, tilers, carpenters, ditchers and diggers, bakers and butchers, weavers of wool, weavers of linen, masons and miners and many others. The code varies: 'tailors and tanners, tillers of earth' or (and I will exist in this omission) 'tailors and tinkers and toll-takers in markets, tanners and tuckers also.' A tucker is the same as a fuller of cloth, and a tucking-mill means a fulling mill for the felting of cloth. Apart from these there was a class of plowmen inferior to the rest, though in the poem *Piers Plowman* the plowman speaks like a scholar – and here the epithet does not necessarily imply contempt, but indicates a thing like a person or implement that can be put to immediate and adequate use, such as a rag to clean out an oven or swipe the floor. The plowman likens the Crow to those of a low station in this life, and shows how unlike it is the Swan, whose feathers are eyed and coveted much as the rich are when they venture down the road adorned in diamonds hidden under robes of camlet and velvet furred with grise. The Crow though by far the most cursed of birds is far swifter in flight and has a much hungrier cry.

15.

Election Day. Makeshift, the mystery, soar without regard for and stand tantamount to that sweating, historical figure, written across this half light, one more link one block one cement block in each hand, a malleable alphabet whose letters swerve vanishing found apace binding mime. Roar worth every book you cannot afford, arthritic enjoined amiss trowel no less than kept out, stopped, run up against a child's babble responsible for the last – lost – minute (missedit) then rend the map to it, reading the price on a book. A road the child made in the sand captioned with a stick do not step on do not obliterate reels asphirated phial can't read my own handwriting anymore this past year's scraps of cheerfulness portioned out, rash rhetoric excerpted piecemeal from the last

302

book bought constriction braced bargain salad bestow pound and pound on the page without looking back at the horse led around with a rope in its infected mouth. Eucalyptus stench when the car door opened and then a violin broke in with the last dime's spoken then broken down in exhilaration of number and identity surge shoulder to shoulder with nameless suffice no single and separate *feudal* Whitman's term for pre-America. Hart Crane came from Akron's arcane span widen iron vested business interests vision and a lot of hard work, his fight for a finer passage, newspaper pulp the page rubs off on whose hand did this myth volume porous ream coloration west of rock one and rock two spills out by the window sill oak lapel dowry don't forget your guitar, the child sits on the dictionary eating a feast of sound holiday arrears caper dial ribbon shingle style playing cave became catapult then snowstorm on the sofa. I have one hour where is the barber who will my barber be now, wary and the word warehouse for the fourteenth time Trotsky's *Balkan Wars* one more book that I couldn't buy subsequent to that incisive query without a guard for travelers crouched in a coach rocking along in the quick of night toward some distant inn, tavern, wayside or light, the need to write bitten off out of hand garner standpoint, base otherwise rust, dust, missing is a song you might recognize with a radically reduced lexicon seconding ebullient declivity opulent dents in the edicts bulb angular and Thibadeau, Anselm, Ambrose, the Church fathers carve for dinner and ate fish for Friday, a hallowed meal. Premonition of massive social upheaval filed away under ominous, omnibus, *omni* an important Latin root, my scholarship serrated thimble hymn brigadier cob nickel straighten phosphorescent eastern astern. Set forth under adverse, beside oneself with pent up pious tempestuous bridled apex haste gaping sway, mint handle batten battered few made it through, shortcomings and summonings recited, epoxy, estuary, incandescence, the rain rots the hay. Stonemason came, wall rose, damp plaster capacity to be diminished, strapped inconspicuous and powder in the air—sieve of liver, kidney, lungs. It rained. Walking briskly in the rain to buy a book any book below three dollars charged one sixty five including taxes rhymes with Texas this tendered theme of you, she was asking for you, showered in the light of her alacrity elided tilt brine token inflamed or inflammatory London, a lion in the mind, huddled over the desk with quill and inkwell the faster fingers notations *nota* over and over *nota* in the far column reading left to right across passages

Kevin Magee

the players keep coming back to then take off on a tangent more illegible than before. Arrived yoked brocade tenor whey cursory funnel, hours that for lack of free time are called a day dissemble – it cannot be watched – page, data, the percentage of the population that succumbed to disease, the Stroud valley north of the Scarp in the hundred of Bisley, records rise on the screen rhymes with scream enter *screams*.

16.

But that most neden aren oure neyhebores. She had nothing, when they put what they put in that box they put in her car. They put the box in her car. She took the food home. She took the food out of the box, and now must make the meal. Powdered milk (no formula), flour, cornmeal, dried potatoes, macaroni, canned corn and cans of peaches and pears, jello, pudding, toothpaste and dish soap. She needed this food she had to beg to come by and now, not even now, especially not now, when she arrives home and starts cooking does she know where the next meal will come from when the bags and the cans in the box are gone, as he is gone. The reasons he gave were vague. I remember the reflex in the face, a broken face, breaking into a smile. He had an application in at Farmstead and IBP in Columbus Junction, and didn't care that the one was union and the other was not. Not that it matters, but he had not finished high school. He asked for more money, and they let him go. From time to time I would hear that somebody saw him on a construction crew or in a grocery store, another time on a farm. He had said he could not go back there. For a short while he had a job on the docks. I looked for him and I could not find him.

17.

Paystub Household. Born beneath the ruthless rustic wheel, Zink compiled a chronicle of the city of Augsburg and left a terse account of the circumstances in which he made a book. His wife, the daughter of a widow who could offer as dowry only some saucepans and a child's rickety bed frame, promised him to spin four pounds of wool each week, and thus earn 32 pence. Zink promised her in turn to find a priest to give him a book to make. The priest paid 4 gross a sextern (also 32 pence) and gave him one gulden cash to buy paper, with the advice to write fast. He copied his book

304

from a shadowy and obscure exemplar, and though the dream of attending the University of Vienna had long been abandoned, he still retained enough learning to compose a reasonably grammatical Latin sentence — a small miracle in manuscripts outside Italy.

18.

Childbed Taint. With what sense does the parson claim the labor of the farmer? What are his nets & gins & traps & how does he surround him with floods of abstraction & forests of solitude to build him high spires & castles where priests & kings may dwell? Till she who delights in no fixed lot is bound in spells of law & must she drag the chain of life & wake her womb & bear the harsh scourge of the heaven of her eternal spring? Water & sleep & cave & air to turn the wheel e're ope the eyelids of the babe & they behold the arrows of the sun & sea & storm. The human form is orb & meteor & murderous.

19.

*How camest thou by thy burden?
By reading this book in my hand.
Hast thou a wife and children?
I am as if I had none.*

Kinderhyme.
Six flat
little black
fish float
thru the air.
One round
brown bear
wears a woolly
sweater.
Red & yellow
rings & spheres,
alphabet blocks
& a bluebird
clock
which
goes

Kevin Magee

tick, tock. What is deep? What requires a leap. Where the sheep. Fall off the cliff. Time for bed. A fish in the spiderweb. *Diapsychidon* (sugar stick) cathect. Beset. I will read to you. I will bring you barley malt and gall. This is all we will ever have in the midst of which among I mean among. The rich. The name of the train. Buried deep. Sever is never the same as maim. Go to sleep. The Milky Way in Spain is called the road to Santiago. I will read you one more page. Mob fly across stage. Troops pursue. They load and stab and starve and shoot the Jews. Askance. A chance (simply, to exist). Impecunious. A scrap of golden, embolden. One gold, bold lion. Bright chains insignia. Insomnia. My own land about the tilling of which, telling time, and make a long cart of Liar, the town crier. What you need to believe is true and the words you use. God is a dog. Dead as a doornail. John of Gaunt is the cat. The mice will fail. Goodnight, innocence. Intransigence! What is the cost. Am sure that my copy of *Little Fur Child* is lost.

20.

Mother Courage. Helmet, basket, kettle. A wagon without wheels. Body movements, a kind of dance. Vex membrane, ligament, tissue, tendon. Pipe: to put there what is not there. Dip, pivot. Hands in pockets extricate pittance. A popular song. Vocal blocks endowed expiratory stream spring free round variability undulating long vowels volatile coloration. Discontinuous rhythmic segments, phonetic consequence of liberation from a unilateral bond. Midnight till 3 or 4 (sometimes dawn) am drawn. Laborious ascent from "doctrines so long accepted" to "significance at last apprehended." Kattrin strikes drum. Apt kin cast salinity, solidity, solidarity's barred circumspect staged, bolstered by this boundless imperious pure liturgy, Brecht's orthodoxy.

21.

An die Nachgeborenen.

Read
at this point
together
our negation

306

falsify
the signature
surely,
facsimiles

shall my Liege
measures
brawler
his houses

unsullied
such variants may
. . . the Earle
of Essex and,

as Aurelian said,
“contemporary
readers were
darkly to point at

word,
exempl’d
interpretationem
[errors of the printing house]

later to such as
seem unavoidable
these, as much as
Observations

Poetical
to the periphery
are
Nativity Ode

finger
cast
it has
(Works, 1st ed. 885)

also Helen
undated
uncollected
unrevised

22.

Dieu vous save dame Emme. The category of family economy. The family, not factory, as primary economic unit of production. The family as work unit maintained by necessity inherent in the mode of production to which it was bound. Remorseless conversion of the mother into inert means of reproduction deprived of every right by her legal assimilation to a theoretical category or descriptive term. Dilate: (Latin: *dilatare*) to enlarge, spread out, wide – latitude – 1. (archaic): to describe or set forth lengthily and in detail, comment at length upon; 2. (obscure): to extend or diffuse through a wide space; 3. (modern): to enlarge or expand in bulk or content – as matter is dilated by heat – dilute, delay, dilatory, dial, dialogue, dais, day, dilation of the pupil, or cervix. Freud to H.D.: “But I don’t want to play the mother.” In Chaucer’s Prologue, the word *gurles* means youth and no further indication is provided for their gender. In the Coventry Mysteries, one of the Roman knights carrying out the Slaughter of the Innocents cries: ‘Here knave gerlys I xal steke’ and, then, again, ‘Upon my spere A gerle I bere.’ In *Piers Plowman*, ‘wolwebsteres’ are female weavers of woollen, though the distinction between ‘webbe,’ a male weaver, and ‘webstere,’ a female weaver, is not always made. Malkyn a common name diminutive of Matilda or Mary for a woman of her uncommon station, who stood the most to lose, a trembling coursing through to each of her own sex whose hands she touched in perfect proportion and a separate gift. (This text is not from the Bible, but from the apocryphal gospel of the Nativity of Mary to be found in the *Aurea Legenda*).

23.

La poire du caillouel. Then there is the standard interpretation provided by the passage in *Ephesians*. The allegory of the naked tree, ‘pur tre’ being rendered by translators as the ‘tree itself.’ The one called a privilege, the other his right. Both were wrong. *Wife* is a name derived from the ancient custom of washing the feet of

the poor to this day. She shook the tree where Widowhood grew, and wept. Maternity also made a fearful cry. The poet uses *mase* to mean confusion, and the entire sentence, though elliptical and incomplete, suggestive of exhaustion caused by the absence of the verb, as the verb *palle* is very rare, and can only be found in *Joseph of Arimethea*. (Note the volatility of the word *tene* as it shifts among scenes). When Seth reached Eden. The child in the tree. A mum is anything approaching a word, for the flesh is a fierce wind, and will often carry the fruit away before our aching, opening mouths. It is not clear if a pear is what is meant, sweet and good to eat and soft and not that stony as to be unfit for anything unless hidden in a pie (pie-heel, the crust, the part that no one wants). The most esteemed pear in the fourteenth century was *hastiveau*, otherwise known as *la poire du caillouel*, a hard pear, that came from Cailloux in Burgundy, yet even here the epithet 'hard' lingers until we learn that the hardness derives not from the pear but from the rugged, shallow soil of Cailloux (c.f. Fr. *caillou*, flint). Its fruit not small nor with one sweetness sweet. Ripen: remarkable for the retention of the final *n*.

24.

The Writing Lesson of 1381. "The topos of woman's incoherence" or "Woman as Riot." As if the Wife of Bath could vitiate the discourse within which she is powerless and illegitimate. Vitate: to violate the chastity, contaminate, pollute, to make air impure, to render ineffective to destroy the force. But *break* might also be used in the sense of to vent, as in breaking one's mind – literally, an utterer of strife or debate (even without giving it any thought). Francoise: "A Baron? What Baron! Where's the Baron?!" The Baron: "It is far more difficult to disfigure a great work of art than it is to make one." Transpose lls. 23–46 from "East Coker," Zukofsky's notation in "A"-23, Pound (*The Spirit of Romance* – Langland left off of Pound's list), William Morris (*A Dream of John Ball*), Robert Southey's *Wat Tyler* and Byron's excoriation of the author's political reversal re the same, John Clare's *The Parish* – a decayed allegory – the Cade scene in Shakespeare, Florimel's unannounced arrival at the hut and the impossibility for the Peasant to pronounce his love (Book III, *Faerie Queene*), "Wynner and Wastour," "Perce the Plowman's Crede," "The Plowman's Tale" appended to the *Canterbury Tales*, Usk's *Testament of Love*, Chaucer, Gower,

Lydgate, et al. Walsingham: "It was especially dangerous if an ink-pot were to be found at one's elbow." Lord Berners' translation of Froissart (the first volume having the chapters on the Peasants' Revolt) appeared "at the high commandment of his most redoubted sovereign Lord King Henry the VIII, King of England and France, and high defender of the Christian faith, etc." The translation is contemporary with the rebellion in Germany Engels will write about in 1850. The editor of the Froissart notes that Lord Berners' book was second only in popularity to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. (The full text of Engels' *Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith* became known only in 1968 when it was found by a Swiss scholar in the archives of Joachim Martens together with the draft rules and circular for the First Congress.) It was a question of chronology, now that I saw it only from aside, and seeing no other possible obstacle than the basic fact that I had a body, hands which were not my own immense and belligerent forms. Tonight a romp, rolling from side to side at the end of an item in the print-haze. Pages that possess the immediacy that might be expected of reports written a few days or even hours after the events they describe. Writing that has thoroughly materialized and socialized the field of the Imagination's activity. An allegory charged with a multitude of overlapping schemes, concentric circles of reference, instinctive contraventions. Austere profanations and as material designated and adapted enduring theft, wrenched linkages, inconstant token — and make of them messengers. The conditions that gave rise to the life we led are gone.