

Michael Gendreau: biographical sketch of *vitoj*

Lately I find myself in various rather extreme emotional states. This, coupled with a particular state of perception sometimes present when ascending from a state of sleep is the theme of this CD, if there must be one. It is distinct from the particular technical means used to make it, as has always been the case with me, though I tend to use things that will allow the jagged edges of the psychological states I mention and thereby, with accelerometers, shakers, and motors large and small—detritus from my work in acoustics so that I do not have to carry two sets of instruments or record two types of vibration or noise—, try to avoid the headache and distraction of cultural referents. But then there is writing...

*Limiting myself to thoughts written down the last 38 days:*¹

“...measurement as one of our most paralyzing skills.” W. Spies

Of course there is periodicity in nature, but I wonder about the artificiality (humanity) of this construct: nature provides cycles, but humans define endpoints, where they have synthetically tacked together their accounting of the cycle. “...(cf. the two clock hands becoming one at midnight, the paradoxical zero point of the end of the cycle).” (R. G. Cohn) Nature does have natural extrema, but does not celebrate them as humans do. (Nature takes a far more conservative view, e.g., the long-term effects of “summer” with little concern for the moment of “solstice.” There is no *moment* with the impossibility of precise definition of boundaries, or in vanishingly small bands of time.)

Nature is much more probabilistic, mankind in pretension of precision.

This sense of precision is useful in a relative sense (with defined margin of error), as in registering some time between the start of an event and some expected effect (jettison the booster rockets), but is not relevant in an absolute sense.

Sometimes I have moments of great clarity in a state of half-sleep—I understand some thing or some situation very clearly—in these states I make explanations to other persons that are perfect or nearly so—or at least unusually insightful in an apparently objective sense.

An unconscious desire that reflects itself in dreams. “Do not worry about your trace. You are the only one who cannot erase it.” E. Jabès

On return to normal daily consciousness I recall the form of these states, and perhaps the filmy surface content of them—but it is difficult to bring back all of the details or even a small part of the essential kernel of the realizations made (“Words are easily distracted. They often leave us halfway down the road.” E. Jabès). But is this possible? Perhaps, with practice.

¹ This is not, of course, when the CD was written. Perhaps the thoughts and references of that time would have been different, but there is temporal persistence in the attitudes spoken of, and in the particular mode of construction.

“...clay calling to clay like mating birds, concept responding to concept the way passionate flesh congests...” W. H. Gass

This might imply a sort of *natural construction*, a conservation of energy (like the cross-disciplinary use of instruments and sources), a minimization of surface area and tension (cf. C. V. Boys, et al.), that promotes construction, paratactic² or otherwise, but in any case would be less necessary for logical construction since, in that case, logic is the basis of construction.

Either one of the clauses can be subordinate, or a subordinating conjunction can be used (A. Rynell). The implication here, and in a following discussion about *omission*, is that faults are assumed in the old texts because they do not fit the rules of modern syntax. The original texts, and the eras in which they were written (the communication modes acceptable to the society of readers “in the streets”) were more supportive of non-hierarchical language construction.

That our society prefers a more Cartesian reality, and forcibly overlays this on the translation of paratactic texts or music, should not be surprising. However, one wonders if contemporary reality will be more admitting of text (or music) of a more open-ended or probabilistic nature. (I do not refer to “chance” or randomness of course. The emptiness of such “operations” was shown long ago.) “What may appear to be fragmentary in most of Mallarmé’s production is really the effect of refinement and aeration...the links of ordinary reality in everyday existence and usual syntactic language are suppressed in favor of the aesthetic of suggestion...” (R. G. Cohn)

What we do to avoid thinking about or concentrating on the absurd construction of reality we dwell in. I am here just so this will be written.

“...revolt against explainability.” W. Spies

Just the idea “...break a rock open to see what’s inside of it...” (G. Lakoff and M. Johnson—but not exactly what they are intending to communicate) is disorienting, implying that the surface of the rock defines a container (when in fact it is highly probable that it was broken from a larger rock), and that the surface material is somehow distinct from the rest of the rock, which is, again, probably relatively monolithic. (But, yes, some formerly not visible vein might be found.)

...impossible to convey the details, let alone the feelings....I never seem to sleep well; further evidence of culpability in all of my endeavors and, indeed, all of the perceptible events surrounding my life. I try to take solace by claiming responsibility, perhaps to my greater ruin. “It is not the pen crosses out a word but the eye reading.” E. Jabès

Considering H.-J. Frey (and sub-nanometer physics in general), the impossibility of beginning and ending (no *surfaces*)... [later: consideration of the existence of a point in

² See <http://www.zeromoon.com/mg/> and point at *Quotations Illuminating Paratactic Thought and Work Practices*.

time when the masking tone overtakes the possibility of inattentive communication in the bar.]

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