

*Kim*: Must it ring so true / So we must sing it // To span even yawning distance / And would we be near then.

*Oppen*: If having come so far we shall have / Song // Let it be small enough.—There are things / We live among ‘and to see them / Is to know ourselves.’

*Glissant*: The poet’s desire now is not to abstract himself from his being, to entrust his song to strange forces that would soon engulf him, nor, by some opposite push, to withdraw into his own weightiness to rage lyrically in the depth of his desolation.

*Kim*: The lyric undertakes the task of deciphering and embodying a ‘particularizable’ prosody of one’s living.—The duration of the now, the now occurring, that manifests a time before—sayings . . . disturbances / A nation to be humanized / Visited by a humble pounding / The meaning of becoming related.

*Glissant*: There is this movement through which the spectacle of the surround illumines (disorders), while the imposition of each word tends to order in the world. On this double necessity, which has been the secret seed of poetry, the present articulates itself like a solemn, ineluctable law. The poet does not stop obeying this

commandment, twice negated, twice consented to. He leaves the lightning, the 'revealed,' this punctuation of nothings, this lure of illuminations which disappears into the passing actuality of the image, to give itself to a duration where rhythm multiplies.

*Kim:* Propose: constant translation. Propose: the / application of the compass to navigation. Propose: from / a settlement, a capital grows. Propose: foray, expansion. / Propose: as relates to an America. Propose: as relates / to immigrant. Propose: knowledge becomes the parlance / of the state. Propose: sound combinations. Propose: / nameless days.

*Glissant:* The poet chooses, elects in the world mass what he needs to preserve, what his song accords with. And the rhythm is ritual force, lever of consciousness. It leads to these powers: prosodic richness (rigor), guarantor of choice, guardian of conquests; the knowledge of the world in its thickness and its spread, the enlightening obverse of History.

*Oppen:* I might at the top of my ability stand at a window / and say, look out; out there is the world.

*Glissant:* That is to say poetry rebegins in the domains of the epic. In our anarchic universe, such a manner of poetry ceases to be accidental, imposes itself as the imperious Harvest. It names the Drama that is ours: fire of the Diverse, struggle of the Disparate, desire for

the Other. It perpetuates in chaos this labor, which is uniquely poetry's: to tear down the walls, the barks; to unify without denaturing, to order without taxidermizing, to unveil without destroying; to finally know each thing, and that space from one thing to the other, these saps, these countries—in the mind's sharpness and the heart's all-generosity.

*Kim:* For me, where I can say politicize, I have to say that word generosity.—How many multiple locations can we make that support our creativity and hunger for meaning?—How can we keep making wider the terms by which we politicize or radicalize? I think generosity is a possible mode by which we can tend to the business of listening and, ultimately, of change.

*Oppen:* There is a force of clarity, it is / Of what is not autonomous in us.

*Glissant:* And yet the inextricable grabs us, in that the Old World's shadow has fallen over us. Our certainties, reflecting this huge score, get upset. Our clarities become clouded. Our knowledges, just then so easy, fructify into the complex, the difficult.

*Kim:* Contemplate the generative power of the designation 'illegible' coming to speech—Allowing for the floating materiality of matter that 'does not fit' or 'is not part of a metrical pattern' asks urgent questions about the terms under which ideas of the metrical pattern (that is,

ideas of authority and maintenance of the superstructures that support these mechanisms) emerge and are validated. What is under consideration: the poem as investigation, the poem as action—the poem embodying points along a fragmentary axis that factor in, layer in, and cross fields of meaning, elaborating and multiplying the means of sense making. To encounter and to problematize the political and economical terms that function to determine and codify legibility.

*Glissant*: It seems that what gives strength to the desire for poetry is that its simplicity will have to be *conquered* at the level of the dedoubled injunction to which knowledge has led man: to be conscience and negated science of conscience, speech and language contesting speech, signifier and sign devolving from the signified.

*Oppen*: Possible / To use / Words provided one treat them / As enemies. / Not enemies—Ghosts / Which have run mad / In the subways / And of course the institutions / And the banks. If one captures them / One by one proceeding // Carefully they will restore / I hope to meaning / And to sense.

*Kim*: In a concrete way, partly what we're talking about is a historical rupture.

*Glissant*: But we, dragged through this history (I see the trace left by our feet), do we inherit that injunction? Can we profit from it, without our assuming its weight?

*Kim:* But there's this possibility for modulation and conversation around what oppositional looks like anyway. Because for me, I need to deliberate about how I am oppositional so that it doesn't re-enact and replicate those very things that we are saying we want to 'oppose' or shed light on.

The poem may be said to reside in disrupted, dilated, circulatory spaces, and it is the means by which one notates this provisional location that evokes and demonstrates agency—the ear by which the prosody by which to calibrate the liberative potential of writing, storehouse of the human—To mobilize the notion of our responsibility to one another in social space—Speaking and placing the speaking. To speak from the place of the word is to speak forth.