COLT1430Y Spring14 S01

Forms of Life

You could not calculate with paper and ink if they were subject to certain queer changes.  The fact that they changed could in turn only be got from memory and comparison with other means of calculation. And how are these tested in their turn? What has to be accepted, the given, is, so one could say, forms of life.

Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, P. 226)

How do poetic forms and forms of life bear a family resemblance? How do Ovid, Rilke, and Vicky Hearn form the animal and the human? How is love formed in Petrarch, Shakespeare, and Berryman? What is city life in Catullus, Baudelaire,or John Ashberry? What is nature for Vergil, Wordsworth, Robert Frost or Mary Oliver? What makes poems formal objects? Are they also forms of nature, thought, being?

Form, poetry, life, everyday, experience, forms of life, poetic forms, the life of poetry, everyday experience, experiences of poetry, poetry everyday... These givens organize this course on the assumption that forms of poetry are experiences where world and knowledge are recognized and that different forms of experience test one another.

 On a day to day basis, forms of poetry and poetry of everyday experience by Baudelaire, Catullus, Horace, Petrarch, Rilke, Wordsworth, and a changing array of modern and contemporary poets largely from online sources will provide the variables for weekly critiques, paraphrases, interpretations, imitations of 500 to 750 words shared in an ongoing class journal.  The growing list of readings will be shaped in process by student explorations of poetry and criticism. A final interpretive exercise of 5000 words will complete student work for the course.

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