

Philosophy that is Mindful

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I write this as the train pulls out of Staisium Eamoninn Ceannt in Galway. For many people in our manipulated world pulling out of a station is just pulling out of a station. For me, pulling out of Staisium Eamoninn Ceannt was like pulling out from a tooth. And I see the sea, the west sea, with the cold hot sun coming up over it. And I wonder do philosophers ever think of such things, and of the resonances of locale... of the frosted ponds yielding up their white misty fumes.

Sometimes philosophy is so mindless as to have no mind, no roots. It talks – and it is the right word, for somehow this type of philosophy is only on the fringe of a man, in his it-ness – it talks of man as if he might be produced in never-ending uniformity, to keep the buttons pressed and the globe a going nerve-torn concern. Yet man, you and I, is no ways like that. Man is moulded by the corners of the house of his conception, and the flexings of his phonemic mouth grow from the first days of his memetic wail.

The great ball of Earth rolls on under the wheels of Cú na Mara as I think of mindlessness and the sadness of man's contemporary neglect of man, of himself. I write not of abstract spectral man, measured out in philosophic monotony; I write of cold-curved women skirting their way to winter work and of this morning's men tailored to the economy. We have come a long way from the warmth of the primeval tree, and not all of the coming has been an ascent. What is amazing about man in his modern maze is that he, she --- dare

I say it --- has so little serious attentive interest in being happy. Again I write here existentially. I spoke last night in Galway of the rich relationship of phonemic regionalization to refinements of human hilarity. But somehow the phonemic contact of contemporary life does not easily bear, or bare, meaning or mystery. We have got used to thin print, or phonemes tellyphoned. That the words be thick, years-thick, with meaning, is inconceivable. I feel that I carry away in Cú na mara my meaning.

But no. There was shared meaning, if only with a few. It was a meaning that resonated in bone-marrow attuned to mystery before the dawn of time-studied man and his time magazine. And there was after the meeting: when into the night a half dozen Jesuits walked, psyches merged in melodies that drew on the twisted tonalities of a thousand years. And we lifted into a living that was too deep for laughter too near to tears. And I carry away that meaning in Cú na Mara, yet leaving it eternally resonating in the fibre of my friends.

But why all this under the title of Philosophy that is Mindful? Should I not propound some theses, instead of Carrigfergus-like reminiscences of friends and phonemes, “of happy hours I spent long ago”? Indeed, I could propound many a printed thesis in a thousand words. But what would it all mean? The reader would bring away little more than he or she brought. Meaning doesn't come in print or in plastic bags. It comes only under the pressure of gentle mindfulness, cultivated and cultured over years. And that cultivated cultured reflectiveness is a context for an exuberance and happiness beyond the ken of consumer man.

White fields twist past Cú na Mara now as if they were in a hurry to go west. Agus is é mo thuairim go bhfuil an ceart acu. Tá rud éigin thall ansin ar fiú é – rud fóineimeach, rud a fhéadfadh a bheith fuinneamhach freisin.

But is the west asleep?

In the last analysis it is only individuals who sleep.