

pp. 32-35  
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Paul Celan.  
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Edited by Bernhardt Böschstein and Heino Schmuil.  
Translated by Pierre Joris.

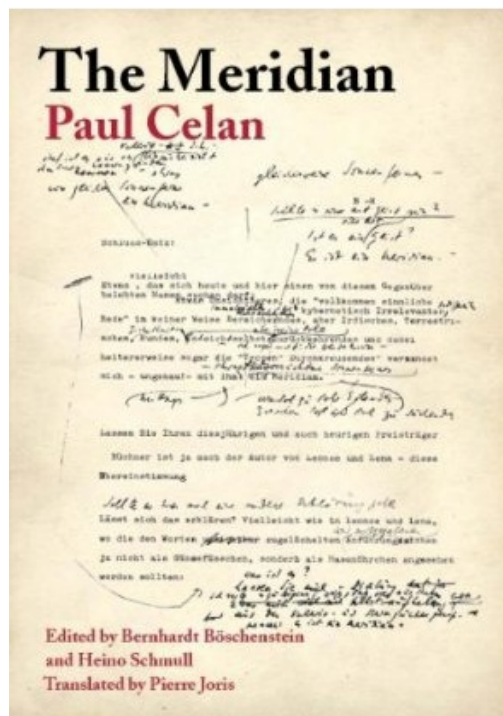
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Drafts (Nr. 17; 18)

<...> **30a** Again and again we write the 20 January, “our” 20 January.

**30b** Under such dates do we write, from such dates we write ourselves today—\* perhaps most clearly in the poem. Most clearly: that means with all the clarity we owe—or believe we owe—to what we have experienced both on the outside and the inside, and thus to what still needs to be reckoned with under this or that figure.

*from: Nr. 17 (C 36-39 [F4])*

**31a** I speak, as I am permitted to speak of poems, in matters concerning me. **b** Whereby I, and this seems to me to have always belonged to the hopes of the poem, speak perhaps also in matters of the strange—who knows, perhaps even in the strangest matter. **c** This “who knows” is the only thing I am able to add here, today to these hopes, as resembling hope. **d** Perhaps even an ~~concordance~~ [encounter] of this “strangest” with the just plain “strange” [and “other”] is thinkable—e the poem carries or rather tests the wind—a word to be related to the creaturely—through such thoughts. **f** Nobody can tell how long the ~~pause~~ breath pause—and with it the testing—will last; [the “swift,” which has always been outside, has gained speed;] the poem knows this; ~~with all its~~ it heads straight for a strange and a strangest, that it thinks as being [reachable,] vacant and [let’s say: like Lucile] turned toward it, the poem. <...>

*from: Nr. 17 (C 36-39 [F4])*

**32a** The poem shows, and this has, I believe, in no way to do with the—not to be underestimated—difficulties of word choice, the faster fall of syntax or the more lucid sense for ellipsis—, the poem shows, unmistakably, a strong tendency to fall silent.

Ts. “A”

**30a** Ladies and gentlemen, we write it again and again, the 20 January, this 20 January.

**30b** Under such dates do we write, from such dates we write ourselves,—who knows toward what dates we write ourselves.—\* Poetry, for me that does not mean only lyric poetry; the novel, the play, they all ~~arguably write, [are [can]~~ arguably, in their own manner,] like the poem, be written[.]under such dates[.]

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\* But what is <sup>new</sup> new in the poem—I do not mean the so-called “modern lyric poem,” what is new in the German poem—I am focusing before all on this—, what’s new in this poem is arguably (**30a**) that this is the clearest attempt to remain mindful of such dates. The clearest: that means with all the clarity we owe—or believe we owe—to what we have experienced both on the outside and the inside, and thus to what still needs to be reckoned with under this or that figure.

**31a** I speak, as I am permitted to speak of poems, I speak, I know, in matters concerning me:\* thus poems are indeed: mono-tone; “nobody becomes what he is not.” **b** But I do think—and this thought can hardly surprise you anymore at this point—, I think that it has always been—part of the poem’s hopes to speak exactly ~~in all~~ also in an alien, i.e. in an other’s] matter—who knows, perhaps in ~~strangest~~ the matter [of a totally other,] **c** This “who knows”—it is [arguably] related to what has preceded it ~~once~~ already—, this “who knows” is the only thing that I am able to add, here, today to [the old hopes] ~~as resembling hope~~ [hopeful,] **d** Perhaps even an encounter of this “strangest [totally other]”—I am using here a [familiar] auxiliary verb—with the not all too distant “other” is thinkable, **e**—the poem carries and tests the wind—a word to be related to the creaturely—through such thoughts. **f** Nobody can tell how long the breath pause—and with it the testing—will last[.]; [T]he “swift,” which has always been outside, has gained speed; the poem knows this; it heads straight for that other, that it thinks as reachable, [as to be set free,] vacant and—let’s say: like Lucile—turned toward it, the poem.

**32a** Certainly the poem—he poem today—shows, and this, I believe, has ~~in no way~~ to do [only indirectly] with the—not to be underestimated—difficulties of <sup>50</sup> word choice, the faster fall of syntax or the more lucid sense for ellipsis,—the poem shows, unmistakably, a strong tendency to fall silent.

## Ts. "L"

30a Perhaps one can say that each poem has its own [" 20th January "] inscribed in it? Perhaps what's new in the poem [s] [written] today is exactly this: theirs is the clearest attempt to remain mindful of such dates?

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b But don't we all write ourselves from such dates? And toward what dates do we write ourselves?

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31a But the poem does speak! It stays mindful of its dates, but—it speaks. For sure, it always only speaks on its own, ~~perhaps~~ its very own behalf. \* ~~It is monotone: "Nobody becomes what he is not": this line by Hofmannsthal~~

b But I do think—and this thought can hardly surprise you at this point—, I think that it has always been part of the poem's hopes to speak on behalf of exactly this "strange"—no, I cannot use this word this way—~~that in the matter~~ exactly on an other's behalf—who knows, perhaps on behalf ~~of the~~ of a totally other.

c This "who knows"—to [which] I see that I have now arrived at—, is all I can add, here, today to old hopes.

d Perhaps, I have to ~~think now~~ [tell myself now],—perhaps an encounter, ~~an agreement~~ of this "totally other" with a not all too distant, with a very close "other" is—I am using here a familiar auxiliary verb—, ~~is perhaps even~~ thinkable—thinkable again and again.

e The poem carries and tests the wind ~~—~~ a word related to the creaturely—through such thoughts.

f Nobody can tell how long the breath pause—the testing and the thought—will last. The "swift," which has always been [" ] outside [ ]", has gained speed; the poem knows this; but it heads straight, arguably, for that "other" [ ] that it considers reachable, able to be set free, perhaps vacant, and turned—let's say: like Lucile—toward it. [~~or only~~ ],

32a Certainly, the poem—the poem today—shows, and this, ~~most prob~~ I believe, has to do though only indirectly with the—not to be underestimated—difficulties of ~~syntax~~ word choice, the faster fall of syntax or the more lucid sense for ellipsis,—the poem shows, unmistakably, a strong tendency to fall silent.

## Further Variants

<sup>49</sup> <four spaces in Ts. "L"; three in Dsl. "I," here one is marked>

<sup>50</sup> <Ts. "A": unreadable hw. note in top margin>

Drafts (Nr. 18;17; 16; 82)

**b** It stands fast —via some experience and conceptions, whose subjective limitations I ask not to be overlooked—~~let me~~ [I now arrive] at this extreme formulation arrive at—, the poem stands fast at the edge of itself. In its self-sublation [it] sees its —perhaps only—chance; it calls and brings itself, in order to be able to exist, ceaselessly back from its already-no-longer into its always-still. \* In this in between, in the moment of its becoming free and having been set free, in this state of floating and drifting away ~~is seen~~ the ground of the poem—this, its own bottomlessness, the poem sets as its ground.

**7b** the poem [—born in distress —] ~~thinks~~ [understands] itself as an act of freedom. <new attempt> ~~The medium, in~~ It is a step. The medium in which this step ~~is so happens~~ occurs, is language

*from: Nr. 18 (C 33)*

<...> **33a-c** ~~But~~ [Rather] in the poem as the poem of the one who knows that he speaks under the angle of inclination of his Being, that the language of his poem is neither “analogy” nor just language as such, but language actualized, simultaneously voiced and voiceless, set free in the sign of a radical individuation that at the same time, however, remains mindful of the borders language draws and of the possibilities language opens up for it. **d** The poem is one person’s language-become-shape, it has objectivity, presentness, presence; it stands into time. <...>

*from: Nr. 17 (C 36-39 [F4])*

<...>\* Poems ~~want to~~ [exclude] everything they are not by themselves,—the one who has written them they include ~~and keep captive for a long time;~~ [(34a)—he is added to it;] <...>

*from: Nr. 16 (F 2/3 [C 1])*

\* The poem gives itself into the hand of the one, you, who stand ~~in~~ therewith in (34b) the mystery of the encounter—into what hand does it give itself! It gives itself into your hand? by the most strange illuminated] as if it were its own!

*from: Nr. 82 (C 12)*

Ts. “A”

**b** It stands fast—after so many extreme formulations,] permit me this ~~extreme formulation~~—, the poem stands fast at the edge of itself; it calls and brings itself, in order to be able to exist, ceaselessly back from its already-no-longer to its always-still{,} \* ~~in the moment of its becoming free and having been set free, in statu nascendi and in statu moriendi at the same time, it sees its chance{;}. Such movements, I believe, are most deeply inscribed in the poem, they are acts of freedom, but they too can only be documented in the medium of language~~

**33a** This always-still is a speaking. It is not just language as such, nor should it be “analogy.” **b** It is actualized language, ~~simultaneously voiced and unvoiced~~, set free in the sign of a radical individuation that at the same time, however, remains mindful of the borders language draws and of the possibilities language opens up for it. **c** It is the poem of the one who does not forget that he speaks under the angle of inclination of his Being, the angle of inclination of his mortality; **d** it is one person’s language-become-shape, it has ~~objectivity~~, presentness, presence. <new attempt> **34a** ~~¶~~ [The poem] is lonely and en route. **b** [but stands [is], here already, in the encounter—in the mystery of the encounter.—] <...>

## Ts. "L"

**b** ~~Permit me~~. It stands fast—after so many extreme formulations, permit me this one too—, the poem stands fast at the edge of itself; it calls and brings itself, in order to be able to exist, ceaselessly back from its already-no-longer into its always-still.

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**33a** This always-still can only be a speaking. But not just language <sup>51</sup>as such and presumably nor indeed no word-based "analogy" <sup>52</sup>either.

<sup>53</sup>**b** But language actualized, set free under the sign of a <sup>54</sup>necessary individuation that at the same time, however, remains mindful of the borders language <sup>55</sup>sets and of the possibilities language opens up for it.

**c** This always-still of the poem can indeed only be ~~the~~ found in the work of the poet who does not forget that he speaks under the angle of inclination of his Being, the angle of inclination of his ~~mortality~~ creatureliness.

**d** Then the poem is—even more clearly than previously— one person's language-become-shape,—and, according to its essence, presentness and presence.

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**34a** The poem is lonely. It is {L}lonely and en route. Its author remains added to it.

**b** But doesn't the poem therefore already at its inception stand in the encounter,—in the mystery of the encounter?

<sup>56</sup>==

## Further Variants

<sup>51</sup> as such, <yearbook>

<sup>52</sup> <Ts. "L": Fair copy of corrected sentence in top margin>

<sup>53</sup> <Dsl. "l": paragraph 33b marked in margin with serpentine lines.>

<sup>54</sup> ~~necessary~~ radical, <corrected in proofs>

<sup>55</sup> borders language sets <Ts. "D"; marked in left margin: "?">

~~sets~~ draws <corrected in proofs>

<sup>56</sup> <double space in Dsl. "l" and first edition, in yearbook, single space>