

# CLOSURE, COMPLETION AND MEMORY IN *HARLAND'S HALF-ACRE: PHIL'S STORY*

CAROLYN MASEL  
Australian Catholic University

The rain kept falling loudly in the trees  
And on the ground. The hibernal dark that hung  
In primavera, the shadow of bare rock,

Becomes the rock of autumn, glittering,  
Ponderable source of each imponderable,  
The weight we lift with the finger of a dream,

The heaviness we lighten by light will,  
By the hand of desire, faint, sensitive, the soft  
Touch and trouble of the touch of the actual hand.

Wallace Stevens, 'An Ordinary Evening in New Haven', XV (406)

When we come upon these lines halfway through Stevens' longest poem, they are extraordinarily powerful, seeming almost to effect the actual transforming touch of the hand as it wakes us from sleep—or rather, from the dream that is reading. Their power is to make the most unlikely thing seem easy; it is, Stevens writes in another poem, 'As if the language suddenly, with ease, / Said things it had laboriously spoken' (Stevens, 'Notes' 335). The emotional effect is, of course, greater than an excerpted passage can show: a considerable volume of poetry before these lines is required to create the dream world, the trance, in which a repressive weight can be miraculously lifted.

I want to focus here on the creation a similar emotional effect in particular passages in Malouf's novels and present an extended discussion of it in relation to *Harland's Half Acre*, where it is crucial to the work as a whole. As in the example from Stevens, the emotional power generated by such passages stems as much from their context as it does from their particular virtuosity. Their effect is partly an intensification of meaning achieved by the repetition of particular images and symbols over a large body of writing. Malouf's use of images and symbols is fluid and subtle, so that they tend to resemble motifs in music. Through this motif-like imagery, he creates structures large and small, seeming to improvise freely in a musical way. Yet, at the same time, the achievement of such passages seems quintessentially novelistic; the insights at their core are arrived at by formulations of thought over a period of time: they do not convey a sense of being written towards, or plotted—rather, there is a sense, when one comes upon them, of their rightness. This accords with Malouf's claim, made on several occasions, that he writes first of all for himself (Tóibín 29), that the revelation that eventually appears on the page before him is a revelation of a writer to himself, of 'nothing less than his own consciousness, soaked through with the experience of a particular temperament in a particular place and time' (Malouf, Neustadt 701). Then again, the emotional and linguistic intensification of such passages links them directly with lyric poetry. And in fact, when Malouf is in the act of composing them and cannot think of a word he seeks, he will use scansion notation (long, short), so he can fit the right word in later

(Tóibín 31). It is clear that, as a practitioner across many forms, Malouf has a variety of techniques at his disposal.

Something he says in the course of an interview about his compositional method has a bearing on what I am trying to describe here: the musical quality of repeated motifs that together compose a memorable lyricism that is also a music of remembering, and the subtle tones and rhythms, the rise and fall of emotions, by which he conducts the reader through his narrative. Under discussion are the larger, shaping structures of the novel *The Conversations at Curlew Creek*, but what he says seems generally revealing:

I don't usually think of the forward drive of the book as having to do with plot, but with exploration of things which are announced first, sometimes almost like metaphors in a poem, say. You then explore both ends of the metaphor and let those spawn other oppositions, other comparisons, and then explore those. I think that's the way almost all my books work, and I think I learned really to shape a novel the way I'd learned to shape a poem. I sometimes referred in the past to the books therefore having a kind of poetical structure in that kind of way, or musical, if one wanted to say that. (Daniel)

Here, exploring both ends of a metaphor would seem to mean exploring a dialectical potential for divergence, so as to arrive at a range of fully articulated—as distinct from completely articulated—positions. Several critics have remarked on his love of contraries; Nicholas Jose, for example, comments on the way in which ‘the dichotomy between Europe and Australia is brought into complex correspondence with the other polarities of his private mythology: light and dark, nature and nurture, wildness and civilization, words and silence, consciousness and unconsciousness’ (326), to which Malouf himself adds ‘the interplay of . . . animal and human, body and soul; the moves by which we embrace accident and reread it as fate’ (Malouf, Neustadt 702). This particular explanation helps us to understand how, or why, ‘those pairings do not line up neatly’ (Jose 326), since the contrary positions are themselves subject to modification through being expanded. And it goes some way towards explaining how, in so many novels, the positions taken by various characters are ultimately precipitated out of ideas they have represented or entertained, so that they end up being foils for one another—for example, Ovid and the Child in *An Imaginary Life* (1978), Frank and Phil in *Harland's Half Acre* (1984), Digger and Vic in *The Great World* (1990); Lachlan and Gemmy in *Remembering Babylon* (1993).

I am taking the climax of *Harland's Half Acre* to be the passage where Phil Vernon recalls the details of his grandfather's death, which have been hidden from him until particular conditions are fulfilled. When this happens, he recalls that moment with a profound sense of contentment and completion that we seem to share as readers, for quite particular reasons that have to do with the construction of memory, as I shall explain. Andrew Taylor has noted that all of Malouf's novels since *Johnno* contain a similar kind of passage, where revelation is arrived at under similar circumstances and usually at a similar juncture, close to the end of the work (Taylor 715). In ‘The Bread of Time to Come,’ he examines these occasions of lyrical completion in all of Malouf's work up until 2000, linking them with his preoccupation with landscape. In a sophisticated and nuanced argument that I cannot do justice to here, he cites the example of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay of 1836, *Nature*, to argue that such moments of completion are dependent on the inclusion of the human in the landscape, either in the form of a human figure or else in an analogy with the natural world. Taylor was constrained by space to omit *Harland's Half Acre*, but the terms of his discussion could be extended to illuminate

the complexity of that novel, and I shall return briefly to the topic of the inclusion of the human in the landscape at the end of this piece.

Probably the best known climactic passage is the strange lyrical turn at very the end of *Remembering Babylon*, where the reader, swept up inclusively in the first person plural, seems to be invited to acknowledge a shared vision. It is cast as Janet's vision, but it references scenes that we have read, so that her remembering prompts recollections of our own. The children's first sight of Gemmy trying unsuccessfully to maintain his balance on the fence is represented in Janet's memory as an image of love, he having been drawn toward them 'by the power . . . of their gaze, their need to draw him into their lives' (Malouf, *Remembering* 199). This image of Gemmy falling into love, as it were, is transmuted into a drawing of the reader into the same power, by including us in the first person as we read of the sea at high tide rising toward us (Malouf, *Remembering* 200). The revelatory passage of *Harland's Half Acre* incorporates memory in a similar way to *Remembering Babylon*, but it is less self-consciously inclusive, and for that reason, it is possibly more successful. Where *Remembering Babylon* seeks to co-opt us, *Harland's Half Acre* only requires us to listen to an account, although what is recounted is quite extraordinary and demands our close attention.

*Remembering Babylon* shares with *Harland's Half Acre* some techniques of writing memory, but Malouf makes less use in the later novel of one technique that is particularly effective in *Harland's Half Acre*. Some of Janet's memories seem 'shared' with the reader; that is, some of the images are repeated from previous parts of the book—for example, the memory of 'her mother . . . the dark of her body solid through the flimsy stuff, the moonlight of her shift' (199) clearly echoes an earlier passage where her mother's nightgown, as she stands outside, is described as 'all agitated moonlight, but the body inside it was dark, bulky, deeply rooted out here' (124). A fresh image, 'the loose skin of her mother's hand like an old glove,' rests on a familiar one: 'the leathery back of his neck' (199), recalling 'the bared neck showing its wrinkles, coarse and pitiable' (80). Even if the reader does not recall the exact phrasing, the imagery is memorable enough for her to be able to recall that she has encountered it before.

The use of this technique in *Remembering Babylon* is all the more effective for being used sparingly; it occurs only at the climactic end of the novel. The achievement of *Harland's Half Acre* is quite different. I do not think it has been properly acknowledged that the inclusiveness of this novel is connected with its capacity, perhaps more than any other novel, to create and trigger memory—actual memory—in the reader. So that, in the course of reading the transformational scene of Phil's remembering the missing detail of his grandfather's death, the reader, herself recalling previous accounts of Phil's grandfather, seems to share the feeling of fulfilment expressed by Phil, because her own verbal memory is enlisted in the process of fitting the pieces of the narrative together.

Indeed, at various points of the novel, the carefully directed reader makes a connection *before* the narrator does so, reinforcing a sense of active involvement that is closely analogous to having shared an insight with the author. To give but one example, Phil, at one point, records one of Gerald's rambling stories and then proceeds to give quite a lengthy account himself of why he finds them 'embarrassing':

It was difficult to tell in what spirit they were offered or how you were to take them. They seemed like signs of a particular intimacy or trust, then you discovered that other people had already heard them: he told them to anyone who would listen. And they went too far. Beginning as self-conscious attempts

to make himself interesting, they ended as dream-monologues that left the narrator isolated, withdrawn, in a silence it was not easy to break, unless he himself broke it with a kind of giggle. He would blush then and gulp his beer, looking at you sideways out of his bright round eyes. Then five minutes later would be at it all over again. (Malouf, *Harland* 163)

Since we have Gerald's story, it is an easy matter for us to match it with Phil's description, which seems accurate enough. But we are not being asked to validate Phil's powers of judgment: the sheer amount of space given to this assessment alerts us to the fact that something else is going on here. It would be very difficult for a reader to miss the similarity of Gerald's stories with those of his grandfather, that great self-serving survivor, Clem Harland. It is a connection that Phil is not himself in a position to make, since he has not yet met Clem, but Malouf wants us to see it, and we do. Our memory as readers is actively engaged in the process of interpretation; we take Phil's words as evidence of something that he himself cannot yet see. About twenty pages later we are vindicated when Frank tells Phil, "The boy's a fascinator, . . . he can't help it. It's a power or a weakness he's inherited" (186). And only a few pages after that, Phil encounters Clem, 'magnificent' at seventy, for the first time (191).

In order to understand what happens to Phil when he remembers a crucial detail of his grandfather's death, one needs to be able to recall a description of a generalised memory of the routine around his grandfather during the last summer of his life. This is not a description of crisis, but the opposite, rescued initially from possible tedium by its sheer lyricism, which makes it memorable, and by the representation of the gentle contemplative consciousness of the boy. At first, the passage seems preoccupied with things—perhaps overly concerned with the minutiae of a period piece—and then one begins to notice how layered the description is and that the most significant things, which are actually not things at all, but smells—camphor, the spirit lamp, disinfectant, the spicy smell of the crumbling fabric of the building—these smells are all partly, and therefore unsuccessfully, masked:

. . . they were happy hours, those times in Grandpa's room. The mahogany wardrobe and dressing table with their wing-shaped projections and cornices and bevelled glass stood solid against the drifting of the curtains. From the trays of the wardrobe, where Grandpa's shirts were stacked, came a whiff of camphor or mothballs that added itself to the smell of the spirit lamp beside his bed, the disinfectant from the bedpan that was kept out of sight behind a screen, and a peculiar smell, as of sweet-spice or nutmeg, that belonged to the timbers of the house itself, especially where the boards had gone soft under the paintwork so that you could press with your thumb, feel the layer of enamel crack and produce a fine reddish dust. And beyond all this, as the long curtains stirred and lifted with the springing up at last of the sea breeze, the salty, ever-present, clean but sourish smell of the Broadwater. (81)

The fine reddish dust links the crumbling house and the old man: they share a doom. The proximity of that reddish dust, too, to the 'salty . . . clean but sourish smell of the Broadwater' combines with it as a sign of life. Those long curtains, we realise, were not curtains at all, or not only curtains, the 'wing-shaped projections' take on another dimension; we remain, with the boy, close to the dividing veil but unperturbed by that nearness.

Almost incidentally, as if closing a set piece and effecting a transition to the next part of the narrative, Phil mentions his final task of pulling up the spread around his grandfather once he woke up:

When I pulled up the spread, fussing a little in imitation of my mother, he would set his hand on the crown of my head, so light and dry that you barely felt it, and say, 'Thank you, boy,' a kind of blessing, and I would lean forward and kiss him on the forehead. The skin was paper-thin. You were aware of bone. But there was nothing frightening in it, and I wasn't in any way disgusted by the odour of decay. (81)

This habitual mutual blessing is only a little more personal than the description, just a few pages earlier, of Grandpa's beginning a reminiscence, anxious to be reassured of a listening presence, while Phil is unsure whether it was his presence that was meant, or whether the account was intended for a past companion of Grandpa's childhood. In any case, when Grandpa 'whispered "You still there, boy?" and reached out his hand to be touched. I replied anyway, for myself or for the others, and he seemed content' (76-77). When Malouf comes to represent the occasion of Grandpa's death, it is the state of the bedclothes he focuses on to create the sense of disorder that Phil experiences. Physically present, and lost in a book only for a few minutes, the boy misses the moment,

because when I glanced up, as I did every few minutes or so 'to see what Grandpa was doing', he had slipped sideways in the bed, at the edge of his great bulwark of pillows, and had what I knew immediately, though I had no experience of it, was a look beyond sleep.

His mouth was open. One hand hung over the side of the mattress, the other lay open on the sheet. But the sheet there was rucked and creased, as if in the moment before the fingers relaxed he had been grasping at it in an attempt, against terrible odds, to climb back or hang on. Whatever struggle he had been engaged in I had missed. It had taken place while I was far off in another country. (114)

The horror of this description lies in its restraint. It is the horror of an intimate, irreversible knowledge of what the body's position means and a consciousness of failure to be present. The crucial lapse of attention causes the boy much distress, but sitting on a chair in his grandfather's room while his mother lays out the body, he composes himself, recognising the end of the man's life means the end of his part in the loving routine that surrounded him. It is a highly orderly account, which characterises Phil both as a boy and as a man; extreme emotions frighten and distress him, from the time when, as a boy, he witnesses them break through the fabric of genteel decorum that regulates his grandparents' household. Sitting and thinking, fitting events together and working out his place in the scheme of things, becomes a characteristic activity—as when, for example, he sits with Frank Harland after Gerald's suicide, in a passage like a hideous parody of his attendance at the deathbed of his grandfather:

It was like watching over a cadaver. The flesh had fallen away, leaving the sharply exposed cheekbones and jaw of a man of eighty. Veins were visible under the mottled skin, the eyes were icy. Smashed jars, sodden newspapers and sheets of cardboard were on the floor among runnels of red and blue

watercolour, brushes, rags, warped books. Disorder was natural to any place where Frank was working but this was wreckage. (211)

This is an occasion of anagnorisis, recalling Dorothea Brooke's or Isabel Archer's recognition of the kind of marriage each has made:

I sat for half an hour, and felt when I got up that years had passed. It was only partly the man's skull-like mask and the immediate ruins made by the storm. It was something in myself as well, the beginnings of a process in which, my youth already gone, I put on the heaviness of decades. I had sat down in my twenties, and . . . it was as a man of forty that I saw Tam Harland standing, grey and flabby, at the head of the stairs. (211-12)

Later still, after Frank's death, Phil will sit with Frank's young friend, Jeff, and recall this very moment, just as the reader does, directed by Malouf's careful control of the pace at which the narrative unfolds:

We sat one on each side of him, as I had sat with him the night Gerald died, and when I got up had felt, as my body moved on ahead, that twenty years had passed.

And now they really had passed, and I was just where I thought I'd be. (260)

All of the scenes I have outlined are caught up in the depiction of Frank Harland's death, which is, at least equally significantly, also the occasion of the completion of the death of Phil's grandfather. The climax of the novel involves a double narrative loop, an intersection of two circles, which are at once complete and incomplete. This is one of those extraordinary lyrical descriptions that depict a moment of closure and completion in a person's life—in this case, two people's lives—when, without fuss of any kind, the piece of the puzzle arrives that turns out to reveal the pattern that was there all along. The elusive memory of that moment of death thirty years ago, for which Phil was present but which he cannot recall and believes he missed, arrives, like grace, precisely at the moment of Frank Harland's death. Absent-minded again at just that point, Phil nevertheless achieves 'a deep contentment . . . as of being and belonging just where I am. It is final. It is also a beginning . . .' (259). In the midst of his vision, Phil tells us that he hears his grandfather call his name, and a moment later he is summoned back to the present, and the recognition of Frank's passing away, through hearing his own name called—which we hear too, and note, as if for the first time, that it is one of the names of love. The effect of the double narrative loop, with its claim, made as a sort of linguistic fact, that one cannot exist in the past and the present simultaneously, is profoundly moving in the way that certain kinds of human experience are moving. It has something of the yearning for the impossible revelation of a mystery that we experience when confronting the great arcs of life's inevitabilities, the heartache we experience when we read tragic narratives or listen to certain kinds of music, or engage with the kind of poetry Wallace Stevens sometimes wrote out of his great yearning.

The climactic passage is signalled by the switch into the present tense:

Now the surf-side swings into view: the long beach on the tilt, then whitecaps, then endless blue. Southward the Bay and its islands, stretching sixty miles to where the long sandy arm of South Stradbroke touches—or almost touches—the

northward-pointing spit of the Broadwater, the air so clear I can see all the way to Southport, twenty-five years back—no, more.

*This high free feeling is what it is like to float in time*, I tell myself; *beyond the limits, beyond flesh*. I reach out and my fingers find a papery dryness. It has the texture of bark and my fingertips see through it into the earth; so that when, quite casually, my grandfather lays his hand on my arm and says, ‘Thank you boy,’ I feel the occasion open to include vast stretches of time, the future as well as the past, in which we in our generations are very small, though not unimportant, and a deep contentment comes over me, as of being and belonging just where I am. It is final. It is also a beginning. I am seated once again at the end of Grandpa’s bed, curled up hard against the rails. I do not look up from my book, but his breath fills the spaces of it, and I hear him, very softly, call my name; hear it quite distinctly in his still-familiar voice—the moment is open again. It is as if it has taken all this time—thirty years—for the sound to travel the length of the bed and reach me; as you hear a word spoken sometimes and fail to catch its sense, and then later, thirty years later, you hear it clearer and do. I looked up. There were tears on my cheeks.

‘Phil. Phil!’

It was Jeff.

It had happened while I was looking away, back, or ahead—anyway, out across the Bay from a great height. (259)

The bark-like papery dryness that Phil reaches for here is surely Frank’s hand as much as it is his grandfather’s—bark and paperiness have been motifs repeatedly used of Harland during his final stint on the island—although this final blessed contact is never quite explicit. It does not need to be. Further, as the reader recalls, when Grandpa’s hand reached out for contact, Phil responded on behalf of all the boys of Grandpa’s childhood, as well as for himself. Perhaps, unconsciously, he extends this same grace to Frank; certainly the open moment can encompass this kind of emotional transfer.

In one interview, Malouf speaks of becoming conscious of ‘the number of times [he] really want[s] to use the novel to stop time, to slow things up,’ to the point where ‘a second is something that can be explored maybe over pages’ (Daniel). In another interview, he associates this slowing up of time with death (Levasseur 170). Here, where Phil receives the final blessing of his grandfather at the very moment of Frank’s death, love—the knowledge that he has loved and been loved—is the legacy to which he awakens with tears on his cheeks as, in an extraordinary telescoping of past, present and future, his consciousness shifts out of one time into another. We are not yet quite in the realm of the eternal present—that is something Malouf will entertain through his gently ironic portrayals of Clem and Connie at the very end of the novel. Clem, weeping at the sight of himself weeping on the television, will become a figure of predictable recurrence, a tawdry solipsist moved only by the drama of himself; and Connie’s repetitions, caused by dementia, will transform her into a figure of eternal recurrence of the same. Still, it is intriguing to think about the spatial treatment of time in this climactic passage, which, indeed, one is encouraged to do by the vantage accorded by the helicopter that first provides Phil with the perspective on his own past. The effect of melding the imagery of space and time, of being able to see ‘all the way to Southport, twenty-

five years back—no, more’ is quite vertiginous; it is similar, perhaps, to the effect created at the end of ‘The Snows of Kilimanjaro,’ when the physics of the rescue flight turns into the metaphysics of Harry’s final flight, as Hemingway plays his carefully designed unrepeatable trick on the reader, in a passage whose effect is comparable to the kind of writing I have been discussing here:

Then they began to climb and they were going to the East it seemed, and then it darkened and they were in a storm, the rain so thick it seemed like flying through a waterfall, and then they were out and Compie turned his head and grinned and pointed and there, ahead, all he could see, as wide as all the world, great, high, and unbelievably white in the sun, was the square top of Kilimanjaro. And then he knew that there was where he was going.  
(Hemingway)

Hemingway creates a feeling of presentness through the use of *style indirect libre*—a kind of past tense typically used in popular fiction to narrate the present-tense consciousness of a protagonist. His presentness here presses toward the future. Malouf, by contrast, switches from the past into the present tense and maintains it right up until Phil re-enters the present, at which point the narrative reverts to the past tense.

One cannot help noting in passing the paradoxical way tenses are made to perform in the hands of masters. But what is especially interesting about the treatment of spatialised time in Malouf’s novel is the way that it plays with two models of time, which are themselves the subject of current (and sometimes heated) debate (Gelonesi). The miracle through which Phil can recapture the memory of his grandfather’s voice, which he did not hear at the time, is represented as an ‘open’ moment; the model of time it elicits is one where the past is usually closed and only the present is open. It corresponds with the Heraclitan view that you cannot step in the same river twice, itself an already-spatialised model of time. That is, you cannot step in the same river twice, unless, by some grace, you experience a redemptive moment like Phil’s. However, Malouf’s ‘open’ moment also plays into the post-Einsteinian view of space-time (Minkowski space-time), which typically represents time as a fourth dimension; for our purposes, what is interesting about this view of space-time as a block or manifold is that its proponents argue that there is properly no present moment, no here-and-now—for that would be to privilege one moment over an infinity of others. In this sense, it resembles Parmenides’ view of time in which everything already exists; it is just our limited perception that leads us to posit the existence of a past, present and a future. If we were in a position to know this empirically rather than entertain it metaphysically, its quality of eternal presentness (*i.e.* its timeless quality) might be manifest (Gelonesi). This model of thinking supports a conception of nothing ever being irrevocably lost; everything is recoverable if only one knows where to look. The possibilities for redemption that this model suggests make it an attractively optimistic concept. In the end, however, Malouf opts for the temporal over the eternal and, indeed, privileges the notion of the present moment. Phil’s consciousness cannot encompass being in two places at once; he moves between past and present, but he does not occupy them simultaneously. The recovery of his grandfather’s final words means that he is absent-minded at the moment of Frank’s death.

Malouf seems wary of totalising models; for a writer, working in a temporal medium, the stopping of time means death, silence, the ineluctable summit-white page. He prefers to stop close to this, ‘at a point where time is suspended and the book can go on in the reader’s head’ (Levasseur 170). The saving grace of the posthumous Harland retrospective is that many of

the canvases are missing; it is not—and there is unlikely to be—a complete representation of his work. And even faced with the great plenitude of work that is Harland's legacy to the world, Phil comes upon a mystery at the heart of it. Just as the model of a block of time does not imply a deterministic or fatalistic view, since the view of a cross-section at one point does not determine the view at any other slice of the block, so Phil recognises that the way the paintings are arranged is not the way they have to be arranged and that a chronological arrangement does not explain any origin, either in terms of a person or a place. The exhibition, like the paintings themselves, is only, in the end, one more version of things:

I had sat in the same light with him in which some of these works came into being and had watched the action of his hand. But all that did was increase the mystery. *I was there. It was not like this. Now it is.* (262)

The retrospective of Harland's paintings returns us, by way of conclusion, to Andrew Taylor's salient remarks about the inclusion of the human in the landscape. To begin with, some of human figures in Frank's paintings are described in detail, and, as in the case of Gerald's rambling stories about himself, it is suggested that the reader sometimes knows more about their origin than does Phil, narrating. For example, the 'spare, priest-like figure, in what looked like a Ned Kelly helmet made of gauze' (262) seems likely to have originated in old Mr Koenig, the bee-keeper (15), although the description of what are presumably bees as 'clouds . . . made up of a million tiny molecules, a syllabary of living breath' (261-62) means that he also encompasses Clem Harland, whose 'endless flow of words on that caressing breath . . . must itself, Frank decided, be the creative medium' (12). The combination of an old king (whom Frank will never see again and draws from memory) and the life-giving father who 'breathed [his son] forth in a great bubble or spat [him] bodily from his . . . mouth' (12) seems the most plausible of conjunctions: mythic, resonant, and going some way toward explaining, or attesting to, the stature of Frank's work.

Figures are in Frank's drawings and paintings from the very beginning, as they are in the rock art Clem and Frank encounter (25-26). It could be argued that Phil's reaching down into the earth to find the missing memory supplies a human element to an otherwise coldly perspectival view of the coastline—although one would want to describe his experience of the bark-like texture of the hand and the memory it prompts as chthonic or elemental, rather than figural. When, in a turning-point in Frank's development as an artist, his painting of Killarney is splattered with the life-blood of his friend Knapp, the lesson he derives is not about the inclusion of the human in the landscape, for that has been there from the beginning. Rather, it is the transformation of what was an ideal landscape into a place coloured by human suffering; it is the end of heaven and the beginning of an understanding of the possibilities for grandeur in the human world.

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