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**Indwelling and Breaking Out:
Literature as Discovery**

**I. To "dwell in possibility":
the poem as language event—
a post-critical perspective**

In this essay I propose to show how literary texts engage the reader in language events that initiate him in what Michael Polanyi calls "the tacit dimension" of knowing, a crucial stage in the process of discovery.¹ Works of literature, it will be argued, esp. acknowledged masterworks, or works representing "the literature of power,"² partake of what has been called *the event-character* of language. A text like *Paradise Lost*, poems by Emily Dickinson or Wallace Stevens or the stories by Leo Tolstoy, Stephen Crane, or James Baldwin treated below, do not present themselves simply as artifacts in a material culture, to be dissected by the analytical eye of the reader, but instead come to us as symbolic disclosures of complex situations that the reader is invited to enter, not as an analyst or observer, but as a participant.³

Such works, by relying on the tacit dimension of language in their composition, create virtual

¹ Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (New York: Penguin, 2009; orig. publ. 1966), cited as *TD*. See also, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1962), cited as *PK*.

² See Thomas De Quincey, "The Literature of Knowledge and the Literature of Power" first published in the *North British Review*, Aug. 1848, as part of a critical essay on Alexander Pope. <https://supervert.com/library/thomas-de-quincey/the-literature-> . . . , accessed May 5, 2018. See also, David Bromwich, "The Language of Knowledge and the Language of Power" *Literary Matters* (The Association of Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers, <http://www.literarymatters.org/1-3-the-language-of-knowledge-and-the-language-of-power/>, June 14, 2017), accessed February 10, 2018. Without an explicit definition of the discovery process like that offered by Polanyi, Bromwich emphasizes with several examples from nineteenth-century British poetry how the language of power leads both writer and reader to existential "discovery."

³ On the notion of language as event, see Robert W. Funk, "Language as Event: Bultmann and Heidegger" in *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God: The Problem of Language in the New Testament and Contemporary Theology* (New York: Harper, 1966), pp. 20-46.

contexts of experience that we undergo by reading discerningly, letting the experience unfold by directives embedded in the language of the text. By suspending disbelief, and skirting the imperatives of a hermeneutics of suspicion, the reader crosses the logical gap that separates critical attitudes from a post-critical standpoint. From this standpoint the text becomes the basis of a language event that we attend by contemplative reading—whereby we understand by approaching the language of the text as a form of dwelling. While critical attitudes typically hold the text at a distance for purposes of explication or analysis, by adopting a post-critical perspective we see the text as having the characteristics of an event which we may enter, and by "dwelling" in its ambience for a while, receive instruction in tacit knowing.

This paper presents an approach to works of poetry and fiction from a post-critical standpoint. It attempts to show that the study of literature instills habits of thought that make post-critical thinking effectual in achieving its aim of existential discovery. These habits comprise stages in the process of discovery. They include *indwelling* the language and other materials of inquiry, and *breaking out* of "accepted frameworks of thought, guided by the intimations of discoveries still beyond our horizon" (*PK*, 199). The key to finding genuinely new meaning from a literary text is to allow its energies and the unique forms of its language to reform our framework of pre-understanding. By re-forming our basic assumptions about the text and the world to which it points, we come to see its meaning from a perspective that comports with the semantic structure of its composition, and avoid imposing cultural or intellectual assumptions on the text that are not relevant to its internal structure.

Interpreting texts in a post-critical vein begins by recognizing that the radical separation of the knower from the known, stemming from Descartes, is not an ontological reality, but a construction based on the demands of the critical method he invented.⁴ From a post-critical perspective, when we see the literary text as having the structure of an event, and its language not as an object but as a place of mental dwelling, in the act of interpretation we begin deconstructing the conceptual framework of dualism. That framework, starting from the radical separation of subject from object, claims as one of its underlying assumptions, that all beings, including human beings, are nothing but objects. This view, which he called objectivism, Polanyi held responsible for the moral inversion that had led to the holocaust and the cataclysmic wars in Europe in his time.

In "The Music of Poetry" (1942) T.S. Eliot speaks of the poet's craft in a way that explains how poetic language may enable a reader to switch interpretative frameworks, in a way that makes poetry more

⁴ See René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (1637) and other writings. See also Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Taylor, *Retrieving Realism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2015), chaps. 1 and 2, "A Picture Held Us Captive" and "Escaping the Picture," 1-54. Hereafter cited as DT.

intelligible. In Eliot's view, "the poet is occupied with frontiers of consciousness, beyond which words fail, though meanings still exist."⁵ Eliot's figure of a *frontier* is a image of the tacit dimension of consciousness. The writer's *occupying* it is another figure describing his access to the "tacit coefficients," semantic background, of words and meanings. Here, to "occupy" implies dwelling in this diffuse mental space where the boundaries of consciousness are indeterminate, yet sensing (through what Polanyi calls the "power of anticipation," or "premonition," *PK* 103) that something new is waiting in the wings to be said and known.

For the writer this new "saying" entails rejecting hackneyed or conventional language that holds one to an outworn framework of ideas, or a belief in one of the many "myths of the given,"⁶ and striking out for the territory—an unknown intellectual or spiritual topography. By moving into this diffuse region of awareness, the "literal" (explicit) meanings of words may "fail," words may become disconnected from their referents or otherwise "signify nothing." Reflecting the sense of existential dislocation prevalent in Eliot's time, a character in *The Waste Land* (1922) is heard to say "I can connect/ Nothing with nothing" (ll. 300-301). But despite the inability to "connect" words to experience or meaning, by exploring what lies at the "frontiers of consciousness," the writer's tacit premonitions yet guide him, and his readers, toward a new terrain of understanding, where "meanings still exist."⁷

In the language event occasioned by reading a great work of literature both writer and reader become engaged by attending to their sense of anticipation or premonition, with the ulterior sense that discovery may lie ahead. The reader willing to follow the text into this territory may find not direct answers, but *means* of answering fundamental questions such as what is real? what is of value? and how do we know? In a parallel sense, the scientist "has hunches, and elated by these anticipations, pursues the quest that should fulfill these anticipations. This quest is guided throughout by feelings of a deepening coherence and these feelings have a fair chance of proving right. We may recognize here the powers of a dynamic intuition."⁸ The reader of a classic like *Paradise Lost* or *Moby Dick* will likely find himself guided by similar "feelings of a deepening coherence" as he follows the strands of meaning in the text towards discovery of

⁵ Eliot, "The Music of Poetry," *On Poetry and Poets* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux/Noonday, 1973), 22-23.

⁶ On "the myth of the given" see Wilfrid Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997).

⁷ For further discussion, see my *Frontiers of Consciousness: Interdisciplinary Studies in American Philosophy and Poetry* (New York: Fordham UP, 1991, 1994).

⁸ Polanyi, "The Creative Imagination" in *The Concept of Creativity in Science and Art*, ed. Denis Dutton and Michael Krausz (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981, orig. publ. 1966), 98. Cited in text as CI.

hidden order, both in the text and in the world outside the text. The reader, like the writer, and like the scientist, may recognize in these feelings the operation of the powers of a dynamic intuition.

What is discovered in the experience of literature is of course not objective scientific fact. Discovery in a literary context is the disclosure of coherences in experience heretofore unknown. It occurs by our striving to understand the language of a literary work. The act of striving to understand starts us on the path of apprenticeship, and can, I argue, enable us to fuse the horizon of our own consciousness with that of the master.⁹ As writing begins by occupying (dwelling in) the frontier zone or indeterminate regions of awareness, where new possibilities come to light, engaged reading begins by dwelling in the metaphors of the text, each pointing to a tenor of indeterminate meaning, in expectation that meanings will disclose themselves through our own exercise of intuition and imagination, not only within the text but in newly emerging forms of experience emerging from the event-structure of the work.

In a section of *Personal Knowledge* titled "Dwelling in and Breaking Out," Polanyi argues that "art, like mysticism, breaks through the screen of objectivity and draws on our pre-conceptual capacities of contemplative vision" (*PK*, 199). In its extreme forms such as radical behaviorism and logical positivism, the objectivist framework sees objects in material contexts as the only realities worth talking about and scorns human subjectivity and ethics as immature mythical notions. Post-critical philosophy is an attempt to articulate how the "screen" inhibits creative thought, and weakens ethical insight. It proposes to displace the screen of objectivity—the implicit social consensus called *objectivism*—with a new framework of understanding and interpretation.

To reinforce his point, Polanyi also cites a powerful line from Percy Bysshe Shelley's "A Defence of Poetry" (1821): writes Shelley, "poetry purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being"; it breaks into "a world to which the familiar world is chaos" (*PK*, 199). Claiming here, and offering demonstration in his work as a poet, that poetic vision breaks out of the "chaos" of the objectivist world-picture, Shelley sees into a new "world" possessing higher levels of order than could

⁹ See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Continuum, 1997) 302. Gadamer's definition of an horizon: "Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of 'situation' by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence an essential part of the concept of situation is the concept of 'horizon.' The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. . . . A person who has no horizon is a man who does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. On the other hand, 'to have an horizon' means not being limited to what is nearby, but to being able to see beyond it. . . . [W]orking out of the hermeneutical situation means the achievement of the right horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition." See also DT, chap. 6 "Fusing Horizons," 102-130.

be imagined within the older framework. In poetic vision the poet discovers unseen coherences in the fabric of existence. Poetry then leaves traces of these discoveries for others to follow. In a post-critical perspective, discoveries, in science or elsewhere, are understood to be germinative. They are seeds or germs of new discovery. An authentic discovery is proven at least relatively true by making an inexhaustible range of further discoveries possible. This, I argue, is what happens to engaged readers of great literature. By our dwelling in the word it is the nature of literary discourse to move us into more open frames of mind where intimations of new existential possibilities, beyond our present horizons, take precedence over the critical attitude, and new discoveries happen.

By engaging in reading as an event occasioned by the text, the reader may learn in practice the fundamentals of the art of tacit knowing. These involve a progression of intellectual acts, from (1) *indwelling* the materials of inquiry, to (2) *breaking out* of an established framework of understanding (esp. one that constrains thought and language within arbitrary boundaries), to (3) *discovery* of previously unseen coherences in the human reality. All of these are stages on the path of a potentially more fundamental discovery—the emergence of a new framework of understanding that opens rather than closes further avenues of inquiry.

In one of her many small masterpieces, Emily Dickinson writes,

I dwell in Possibility—
A fairer House than Prose—
More numerous of Windows—
Superior—for Doors—

Of Chambers as the Cedars—
Impregnable of Eye—
And for an Everlasting Roof
The Gambrels of the Sky—

Of Visitors—the fairest—
For Occupation— This—
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise—

The verb phrase "I dwell" appears, at first, simply a description of the author's experience. But as metaphor the literal meaning of living in a physical place is transformed into a wider meaning. The phrase as *vehicle* stretches the mind in a "from-to" semantic motion, from the literal to a range of metaphysical and spiritual implications in the *tenor*. *Dwelling* in this sense then makes reference to a spiritual condition open to the large field of *Possibility*. The tenor of the word "dwell" also includes an invitation to the reader—to live with the poet in the language of poetry, as an apprentice with his master, starting with this moment of reading, and by doing so enter the open frame or mind called "Possibility," where intimations of new coherences emerge in the consciousness.

The language of the poem is more a "showing" than a "telling." Here we are made to see the abstract "Possibility" as a concrete "House" that is "fairer" (both more beautiful and more trustworthy) than "Prose." If this House is "more numerous of Windows" this "more" that is offered to us by indwelling the text is more than "Prose"—De Quincey's literature of knowledge, the language that delivers only information. The structure of metaphor reveals *more* than its literal meaning. The tenor of "dwell" (a verb form) and that of its relative, the noun "House," both start a semantic movement toward an indeterminate range of new existential meanings and potential discovery.

Dickinson's language moves one by the power of metaphor to dwell in the "House" of Possibility. Its "Doors" suggest there are portals opening out from this poetic dwelling place, into that which is "Impregnable of Eye"—in the frontiers of consciousness, beyond what Polanyi calls "the screen of objectivity." The figures of both "numerous . . . Windows" and "superior . . . Doors" imply the possibility of emerging from the closed logical system symbolized by Polanyi's word *objectivism*, and finding a new dwelling (framework), with openings into larger dimensions of reality than what is seen with the "Eye." For some readers Dickinson's "House" may recall Heidegger's provocative line, itself a metaphor, "language is the house of being."¹⁰ To

¹⁰ In a famous line, from "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger says, "Language is the house of being." The word "house," as the *vehicle* of a metaphor, declines to "tell" us anything about the subject, language, but points us instead to its tacit coefficient, *tenor* of the metaphor—having a more abstract, difficult-to-understand, but larger implication: that language, including its diction, syntax, tone of voice, etc., is not simply a system of codes representing objects in the external world. It also is a mode of dwelling, like a house, a place where we enter, rest, and think. Above all it is where we live. Heidegger goes on, "In its home human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of being insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying." (Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings* [New York: Harper, 1977]), pp. 193-242. From a post-critical standpoint, a poetic text is a form of language that we come to understand not by analyzing it, but by dwelling in it. In "The Nature of Language," Heidegger presents another way of thinking that supports the characterization of language as an event. He speaks of "the possibility of undergoing an experience with language. To undergo an experience with something [he says]—be it a thing, a person or a god—means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us. When we talk of 'undergoing' an experience, we mean specifically that the experience is not of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. It is this something itself that comes about, comes to pass, happens." As descriptions of language, the two metaphors, house of Being, and something that "strikes us," that "happens"—in other words, an *event* that befalls us and transforms us—both offer ways of experiencing

others the poem has another intertextual resonance, with William Blake's line, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite."¹¹ Though aware of the screen of objectivity making it "impregnable of Eye," the poet discovers in vision a world with a higher order of coherence than is offered by familiar views of the world: "an Everlasting Roof/The Gambrels of the Sky."

By exposing us to the tensive language of metaphor Dickinson shows us what it looks like to be on the path of discovery by means of tacit knowing. As guide she brings us through the stages of indwelling the House of tacit knowing (Possibility), through its Doors and Windows, beyond the limits of an established but spiritually inhibited framework of understanding, to a new realization:

For Occupation—This—

The spreading wide my narrow Hands

To gather Paradise—

The "spreading wide" her "narrow Hands"—the poet's "Occupation" in the land of Possibility—is an intimation of spiritual discovery, a "gathering" of the "Paradise" she has glimpsed. After the film of familiarity has been purged from her view of natural phenomena, the cedars and sky appear as portals to transcendent experience.

II. Literary study as apprenticeship

The tacit dimension of mind is not a static logical space, but is a phase of consciousness where new forms of logic and their underlying conceptual frameworks come to light. It is an energy source, more like an electromagnetic field than a definable place within a human subject. It is tacit precisely because it is a dimension of experience that is undefinable in denotative language, but post-critical philosophy, like literary art, embarks again and again on the journey of discovering linguistic means to make the tacit dimension tangible and comprehensible. To say that language, especially the unique language of literary discourse, consists of effusions or discharges from the tacit dimension of mind, and so possess this kind of energy, is to say little more than many poets and writers, including Shelley, have suggested about their art.

In his influential essay on projective (or open) verse (1950), poet Charles Olson tells us "a poem is energy transferred from where the poet got it (he will have some several causations), by way of the poem

language that make it possible first to "dwell in" its deep semantic structures, and from that encounter to "break out" of the "mind-forg'd manacles" of the objectivist framework.

¹¹ William Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," in *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman, commentary by Harold Bloom (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 39, see: 33-44.

itself to, all the way over to, the reader."¹² And novelist Joseph Conrad explains his artistic intent this way, "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see. That—and no more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there [that is, discover by entering the event structure or energy field of the text] according to your deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm—all you demand; and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask."¹³ It is not simply by analyzing the formal properties or cognitive contents of the poem, but by receiving the energy conveyed by the power of the written word, that a reader will get (or participate in making) intrinsic or existential meaning in encountering the text. He will experience what British essayist Thomas De Quincey called "the literature of power." Reflecting on the gap between writing designed primarily to give information ("the literature of knowledge"), and literature that dares to discover and convey truths about the reality of experience, De Quincey argues that "there is a rarer thing than truth, namely, power, or deep sympathy with truth" that is found in "the higher literature."

This paper holds that literature—by the power of the written word—engenders sympathy with truth, a disposition in the tacit dimension of consciousness that puts one on the apprentice's path to truth, without making unwarranted claims to knowledge. It is for the "literature of knowledge," e.g. discursive logic in scientific or journalistic reporting, to articulate matters of settled knowledge. The objectivist framework of understanding makes the assumption that by relying entirely on critical method, truth is objectively knowable. Its counterpart, the post-critical framework, works from the assumption that truth is provisionally discoverable by relying, not primarily on critical method, but on the powers of *creative imagination* and *dynamic intuition*, the inherent powers of tacit knowing (see Polanyi, CI). These steer the mind to think outside to box, that is, outside the objectivist framework of established assumptions which in the realm of the humanities often obstructs inquiry. Says Polanyi,

The conceptual framework by which we observe and manipulate things [i.e. objectivism] being present as *a screen between ourselves and these things*, their sights and sounds, and the smell and touch of them transpire but tenuously through this screen, which keeps us aloof from them (*PK*, 197).

In Conrad's and Shelley's descriptions of the effects of the "word" on readers, literature has power to break out of the screen of objectivist assumptions, purge the film of familiarity from our "inward sight" and make us hear, smell, touch, and see things more clearly as they are. By its peculiar language forms, poetry

¹² Charles Olson, "Projective Verse" (1950), www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/charles-olson accessed May 1, 2018.

¹³ Joseph Conrad, Preface to "Narcissus" (1897) <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/46669-my-task-which-i-am-trying-to-achieve-is-by>, accessed, May 10, 2018.

trains the mind in the activity of indwelling the word. A practice that in religious communities has been used for centuries in reading the Psalms and other poetic elements of scripture is known as *contemplative reading*. This is slow silent or oral reading to achieve focus on the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of language, to bring the mind to single-pointed attention. Though there are many types of indwelling, recognizing the language of the text not as an object but as an event, by contemplative reading we engage in a specific form of indwelling. Though the objectivist framework may block our direct experience of things, the method of contemplative reading breaks us out of its screen of objectivity. As Polanyi explains, "*contemplation dissolves the screen*, stops our movement through experience and pours us straight into experience; we cease to handle things and become immersed in them" (*PK*, 197).

As readers, we find the principles of tacit knowing rendered—however indirectly—comprehensible in the literary text. Approaching literary study from a post-critical perspective, we touch the inner meaning of the text—qualities in the language that engender sympathy with truth. The feelings of deepening coherence that confirm our sympathies with truth come to us not by observation or analysis, but by engaging with poetic language as a mode of dwelling.¹⁴ Writes Polanyi: "The things which we can tell, [including, we might say, the aspects of literature we can explain in clear discursive language] we know by observing them; those that we cannot tell, we know by dwelling in them. All understanding is based on our dwelling in the particulars of that which we comprehend. Such indwelling is a participation of ours in the existence of that which we comprehend" (*PK*, Preface to 1964 ed.). There are many "external" facts about a literary work, including the long history of the technology of writing, that can be told explicitly. That which we cannot tell explicitly is the tacit dimension of its language forms, the deep semantic structure in metaphors and other elements of literature, which can be known, but only by dwelling in them.

At a certain point in reading we encounter more than the artist's mastery of the craft of writing. By reading contemplatively we become participants in the *creative imagination* and *dynamic intuition* that produced the text in the first place. These, as defined by Polanyi (CI), are primal energies, infused by the writer into the language of the text. In Polanyi's words, "In order to share [the master's] indwelling the pupil must presume that a teaching which appears meaningless to start with has in fact a meaning which can be discovered by hitting on the same kind of indwelling as the teacher [e.g. the author of the text] is practicing" (*TD*, 61). By leaving traces of his practice in the text, the author transmits these primal energies through the power of the written word to the reader who stops learning *about* the text and starts learning *from* it. To interpret literary texts skillfully, to become an apt pupil with the text as mentor, it's essential to read by

14 See Lawrence J. Hatab, *Proto-Phenomenology & the Nature of Language: Dwelling in Speech* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017).

tapping into our inherent knowledge of the tacit dimension of language as it resonates with the tacit dimension in the language of the text. By dwelling in the language—e.g. practicing contemplative reading—the latent powers of imagination and intuition are called into action in the reader, legislating, as it were, as we feel their impulses toward deepening coherences of meaning, new rules of logic from outside the objectivist framework. These powers issue their calls to action in the reader through the dynamic elements of literary discourse: specifically, metaphor, narrative point of view, and climactic moments known as epiphanies.

III. "A voice from outside logical space":

literary metaphor

Richard Rorty claims that metaphor is one of three primary ways of "reweaving the fabric of our beliefs," the other two being, in his view, perception and inference. If reweaving the fabric of our beliefs happens by breaking out of an older framework of understanding and adopting a new framework, literary metaphor may be an especially powerful tool. "A metaphor [according to Rorty] is a voice from outside logical space, rather than an empirical filling-up of a portion of that space, or a logical-philosophical clarification of the structure of that space. It is a call to change one's language and one's life, rather than a proposal about how to systematize them."¹⁵ Being outside logical space, literary metaphor makes little appeal to reason as commonly conceived. Every form of logic derives its rules from the conceptual and interpretative framework within which it operates. If we live and form logical sequences within the framework of objectivism, as defined by Polanyi, logic will likely be expressed in atomistic and mechanistic terms that strictly preserve the dichotomy of subject and object. But if for example we follow the semantic motion of Dickinson's metaphor of "Doors" from the word as concrete vehicle to the indeterminate implications of its tenor, we in effect step into the framework of an alternative worldview or framework. Here the tacit dimension, in the form of "Possibility," is opened to us, the film of familiarity is purged from our inward sight, and we begin to see more of what is "impregnable of eye"—a new "logic" that is outside the normative logical spaces of modern philosophy and culture. Similarly, if we take Blake's metaphor of cleansing "the doors of perception" we peer, as it were, outside the closed world of mechanistic logic into a new way of seeing "every thing as it is." These are ways literary metaphor discloses existential meanings, outside known logical spaces, but within reach of the imagination and intuition of the reader.

The two elements of metaphor—*vehicle* and *tenor*¹⁶—correspond to the two aspects of knowing in

¹⁵ Rorty, "Philosophy as Science, as Metaphor, and as Politics" (1989), in *The Rorty Reader*, ed. Christopher J. Voparil and Richard J. Bernstein (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 214.

¹⁶ See I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936, 1964), chap. 5, "Metaphor," 89ff., and chap 6. "The Command of Metaphor," 115ff.

post-critical theory: the *explicit* point of focal attention, and the *tacit* (subsidiary) awareness that lies in its background. The *vehicle* is a word that brings focal attention to a comprehensible thing—e.g. a "chamber" or "roof" or "door" in Dickinson's poem. As simple representation, the word connects the reader to an otherwise knowable thing. But as metaphor its potential meaning is more expansive, hinting at something else, some other dimension of reality, more complex or difficult to comprehend. The "something else" to which it points is the tacit "drift" of meaning, the *tenor* of the metaphor. This, we say, is what the metaphor *means*. But in literary expression, the meaning (referent) of the tenor is multivalent, and can lead a searching reader to many possible interpretations or discoveries.

In "steno language," according to Philip Wheelwright, there is an exact, one-to-one relation between two terms, the word as sign and its referent or meaning (as with the mathematical symbol *pi*, which never varies in meaning). In "tensive language," on the other hand, there is a "semantic motion," a "double imaginative act of outreaching and combining [that] marks the metaphoric process."¹⁷ Tensive language, as found in literary metaphor, has multiple valences, expansive rather than restrictive in connotation, or tacit implications. While objectivist logic operates within a closed system of assumptions about what can or cannot be said, metaphor works by the tensive principles that Polanyi calls intuition and imagination, moving the reader from a concrete first term, a vehicle, to a second term, the tenor, that is typically indeterminate in meaning.

The dynamics of metaphor involves the reader in what Polanyi and Prosch call acts of "integration." The principle of integration has a specific relevance to literary metaphor, as distinct from didactic metaphor and figurative language used for instrumental purposes. The elements of metaphor (concrete word-image and indeterminate referent, vehicle and tenor) are integrated by the powers of imagination and intuition in the reader's mind in the act of tacit knowing. Encountering the concrete word-image, the imagination goes in search of valid meaning among the possible referents to which the image points. Then dynamic intuition steps in to make a pre-logical connection between the concrete reference (vehicle) and a more complex referent (tenor). In literary study, validity in a metaphorical expression resides in a three-way connection between the imagination and intuition of the reader, the literal meaning of the vehicle, and a newly discovered meaning in the tenor. That connection "works" in the life and mind of the reader if it moves thought forward, holding open the gates to new potential discoveries. Such discoveries cannot typically be verified by the accretion of scientific evidence, but may be judged valid if the conclusions of the reader-as-interpreter make sense within a community of competent interpreters.

Instrumental metaphors, called "indications" by Polanyi and Prosch (e.g. "a weak link," "arm of the

¹⁷ Philip Wheelwright, *Metaphor and Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1962), 73.

law"), operate within boundaries of steno-language, in which the reader performs "self-centered integrations" (*M*, 75). These are typically forms of representational language, in which the primary effect of words is to represent something already known or knowable by other means such as observation or logical inference. But literary metaphors, designed to expand vision by enabling the reader to participate in the process of meaning-making, are examples in Polanyian terms of "self-giving integrations."

Interpreting poetic language as representational involves self-centered integrations, retaining one's center of gravity in a Cartesian self, so the activity of knowing remains at a distance from its object. In this "I-It" relation to the text, the self stays in its ego-centric shell, and interpretation tends to be literal, thus confounding the intent of many poetic texts. But when approaching the text from the standpoint of tacit knowing our interaction with it becomes a holistic occasion of experience, forming an "I-Thou" relation to words and meanings. The metaphors and other semantic elements of the text converge to make an occasion for self-giving integration (*M* 74-75), a fusion of the horizon of the text with the horizon of the reader's experience. Learning how to distinguish denotative language from poetic discourse in the experience of reading trains the mind to leap the logical gap between self-centered and self-giving integrations. But in a larger context it is training in how to step out of one framework of understanding, e.g. objectivism, and move potentially into another, e.g. post-critical thinking, where the principles of tacit knowing come naturally into play.

The conception of language as an event, while not denying the power of words and syntax to represent things and situations external to themselves, yet begins to open up the closed categories of inner versus outer, or subject versus object, upon which the critical tradition since Descartes had been built. This view of language is part of the emerging post-critical framework of understanding articulated by Polanyi. If language is essentially an event rather than a tool or object of analysis, by our attunement to the tacit dimension of language, rather than holding the world at a distance for analysis, words have power to bring the mind into more intimate I-Thou relation to the things they name.¹⁸

IV. Making "a dwelling in the evening air":

Wallace Stevens' "miraculous influence"

In Stevens' "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour" we find another literary rendering of the pattern of tacit knowing.

Light the first light of evening, as in a room
In which we rest and, for small reason, think
The world imagined is the ultimate good.

¹⁸ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, tr. Ronald Gregor Smith, 2nd ed. (New York: Scribner's, 1958), 3.

This is, therefore, the intensest rendezvous.
It is in that thought that we collect ourselves,
Out of all the indifferences, into one thing:

Within a single thing, a single shawl
Wrapped tightly round us, since we are poor, a warmth,
A light, a power, the miraculous influence.

Here, now, we forget each other and ourselves.
We feel the obscurity of an order, a whole,
A knowledge, that which arranged the rendezvous,

Within its vital boundary, in the mind.
We say God and the imagination are one . . .
How high that highest candle lights the dark.

Out of this same light, out of the central mind,
We make a dwelling in the evening air,
In which being there together is enough.¹⁹

The poem guides us as readers powerfully but obliquely through the stages of indwelling and breaking out, to discovery of a "comprehensive entity" (*TD* 34) Stevens calls "the ultimate good." We get the intimation of discovery in the poem's testament to a feeling, which we're invited to share with the speaker, of "an order, a whole, /A knowledge," growing out of his experience." The language by which we understand a comprehensive entity makes "an *ontological* reference to it" writes Polanyi (*TD* 32). In its metaphors and in its reference to the ultimate, the poem touches the "ontological aspect of tacit knowing," making us sense viscerally what it feels like to experience the act of imagination in knowing. The discovery we make in such ontological references is described by Stevens in another poem as "the outlines of being and its expressings, the syllables of its law."²⁰

The language of the text implicitly invites the reader to engage with "the two terms of tacit knowing" which will be "seen as two levels of reality"—"the proximal" (particulars in the form of concrete words, many of them the *vehicles* in metaphors) and "the distal," which is their "comprehensive meaning" (*TD* 34). The form of tacit knowing required to pose the problem of the ultimate good involves a "correspondence between the structure of comprehension and the structure of the comprehensive entity which is its object" (*TD* 33-34). By *performing* the work, whether in consciousness or in oral delivery, the reader in effect creates just such a correspondence. That comprehensive entity is the language event of the poem, including the indeterminate referents of its metaphors, and our self-giving struggle to integrate them in a meaningful whole, all part of our apprenticeship to the text as mentor. The comprehensive entity expressed here as "the world imagined"

¹⁹ Stevens, "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour" in *The Palm at the End of the Mind* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 367-368.

²⁰ Stevens, "Large Red Man Reading" in *The Palm at the End of the Mind*, 320.

raises for the reader the question of how to activate the quality and reach of imagination to encounter its "ultimate good." The answer we give to that question is central to the meaning of the comprehensive entity of the poem.

The way to discovery is to "light first light of evening" which the metaphors do in our minds, drawing us into the semantic space in which words describe a situation ("in a room"), where we "rest" and "think." By entering with the speaker into this room and dwelling there a while, in the role of apprenticeship we follow the lead of the text to discover a higher (more highly organized) level of reality, the distal comprehensive meaning of the poem. The "light" (as both noun and verb) carries us to something like the inner sensation of Stevens' "world imagined." To move its reader in this direction the poem offers a set of indirect instructions in contemplation or meditative thinking, showing us how to leap the logical gap from our ordinary selfhood, capable only of self-centered integrations, to a new framework, from which we intuitively practice self-giving integrations, able for once to read the signs in experience of the ultimate good.

The language of the poem makes us sense the speaker's meditative state through concrete images like "light of evening," and "a single shawl/ Wrapped tightly round us." By dwelling in these and other particulars "we collect ourselves, /Out of all the indifferences, into one thing" one single point of attention. The speaker and his interior lover experience "a warmth, /A light, a power, the miraculous influence." As the shawl is wrapped tightly to bring them warmth, the reader too is drawn into this warmth and its influence, by the power of poetic discourse. This discourse isn't merely self-referential; it also initiates the reader in a qualitative (tacit) dimension of thinking, and assists him or her to break through the screen of a pre-established framework that inhibits perception of things as they are.

The poem offers directives in how to move beyond the operative systems of the objectivist framework which sustain only the logic of representational meanings (*PK* 195-202). Discovery is not just a matter of finding new information, but involves leaping across the logical gap that separates one framework of understanding from a newly emerging framework. Poetry like that of Stevens or Dickinson is a highly crafted discipline designed to disclose existential meanings, but also to offer clues to a new framework—a new "world imagined." Here Stevens proclaims his most astounding discovery: "We say God and the imagination are one." This, like other discoveries in the poem, is presented to readers as an opportunity, like that offered by master to apprentice, to "get the feel of the master's skill" and insight (*TD* 30).

We fully understand a phenomenon only "by dwelling in it," writes Polanyi,

and this indwelling can be consciously experienced. Astronomic observations are made by dwelling in astronomic theory, and it is this internal enjoyment of astronomy which makes the astronomer interested in the stars. This is how scientific value is *contemplated from within*. But *awareness of this joy* is dimmed when the formulae of astronomy are used in a routine

manner. (*PK* 195, my italics)

Similarly, the joy of contemplating the language of poetry, like Stevens' "highest candle [that] lights the dark" may be dimmed by retreating to an abstract distance from it—objectifying it, so to speak, in over-wrought analysis. The scientist moves toward discovery by "contemplative experience" or "indwelling"—experiencing the facts "from within" the things themselves—not from a distance, as required by objectivist standards. Similarly, the epistemology of tacit knowing shows us how to "interiorize" (*TD* 30) our subject-matter, in this case the language of poetry, to detect the tacit dimension in metaphor and other elements of literature, and so begin the process of existential discovery.

V. Fiction and the quest for discovery:

Tolstoy, Crane, Baldwin

The three stories addressed below, from different languages, time periods, and cultures, written in the mode of literary realism,²¹ all display patterns of thought similar to those seen in the poetry of Dickinson and Stevens, from indwelling, to breaking out of habits based on an outworn framework, to discovery of existential meaning. Each of the stories portrays a main character involved in an intense experience that brings him into a contemplative state resembling the phenomenon Polanyi calls *indwelling*. Each story shows its main character *breaking out* of mental inhibition or a framework of conventional attitudes. And all show their main characters making a discovery involving new understanding of an ethical, artistic, or spiritual truth that has a profound effect on their own and others' lives. In all three literary renderings of the experience of discovery, the author's artistic use of narrative point of view enables us as readers to identify intersubjectively with that of the main character, and so potentially become the subject of our own discoveries.

A. Listening to "the voice of the soul":

Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*

The main character in Leo Tolstoy's novella, a middle-aged lawyer and judge in nineteenth-century Russia, is portrayed as gradually sinking into catastrophic illness, suffering, and death. By the artistic handling of narrative point of view, the reader is guided through a process of identification, to fuse the horizon of his consciousness with that of the central character, Ivan. Confronted involuntarily by the thought

²¹ Crane writes in a specific form of realism known as literary naturalism that relies on a Darwinian vision, picturing man against man, or man against nature in a struggle for survival.

of death, Ivan's mind is brought to laser focus in a way that he has never before experienced. He discovers the contemplative state.

In a single moment, in the midst of intense struggle with pain, regret about the conduct of his life, and the fear of death, we're told, Ivan "caught sight of the light, and it was revealed to him that though his life had not been what it should have been, this could still be rectified. He asked himself, 'what is the right thing?' and grew still, listening." In this state of spontaneous contemplation, inner stillness and listening,

He sought his former accustomed fear of death and did not find it. "Where is it? What death?" There was no fear because there was no death. In place of death there was light. "So that's what it is!" he suddenly exclaimed aloud. "What joy!" To him all this happened in a single instant, and *the meaning of that instant did not change* . . . "Death is finished," he said to himself. "It is no more!" He drew in a breath, stopped in the midst of a sigh, stretched out, and died. (155-56, my italics)

As we move with him into and through his stages of spiritual development, the text exercises a kind of magnetism through the artistic handling of point of view, that holds our attention, making us "see" and engaging our sensibility in the *happening* of the events of the story. At the same time the text gives instruction about entering the indeterminacy of the tacit dimension (Ivan's radical doubt and unclarity about the course of his life). Ultimately the screen of artificial objectivity, the film of familiarity, that had dominated his life prior to this moment of epiphany, dissolves before Ivan's new inner sight. For us readers, to follow Ivan Ilych through the doors of perception requires us to dwell in the language of the text, and so live with him in his increasingly interior world, exposing ourselves to its implications for our own experience.

At a certain point we're told, "Then he grew quiet, and not only ceased weeping but even held his breath and became all attention. It was as though he were listening not to an audible voice but to the voice of his soul, to the current of thoughts arising within him" (147). The inner experience conveyed to the reader bears a resemblance to the quiet epiphany in Eliot's evocation of "the still point," in *Four Quartets*,

After the kingfisher's wing
Has answered light to light, and is silent, the light is still
At the still point of the of the turning world.²²

Something factual is discovered in such contemplative stillness which may be found and validated again and again by different writers or readers. This *factual something* was called "spiritual fact" by Ralph Waldo

²² Eliot, from "Burnt Norton" part IV, in *Four Quartets*, in *The Complete Poems and Plays 1909-1950*, (New York: Harcourt, 1962), 121.

Emerson in his 1836 treatise, *Nature*.²³ The language of each of the texts, by Tolstoy and Eliot, is a set of clues that invite us to discover a truth about the experience of contemplation, in the tacit dimension of mind, in the tenor of the word "light" and elsewhere behind the words.

As apprentice readers, by observing "the current of thoughts" arising within ourselves, we go with Ivan through his various phases of pain and emerging self-awareness, culminating in a remarkable sense of stillness. And at a certain point we're invited by the text to experience a parallel discovery of "light." Without propositional argument, the text leads us to one "actualization" after another, and as Wolfgang Iser argues "the aesthetic effect [of the literary work] results in a restructuring of experience."²⁴ By moving us into and through the stages of Ivan's developing insight, the story doesn't *tell*, but *leads us* to sense a process of deepening coherence in experience, and *to discover* a fact in the tacit dimension of existence—that the soul (including the soul of the reader), by "listening" to its own voice, can transcend despair.

Ivan's release from fear is a personal liberation involving a reconstruction of experience. We understand the meaning of this portrayal of spiritual release by engaging with it as "a happening" in which "the experience of the reader [is] activated by this happening" (Iser 22). As a participant the reader goes through Ivan's developmental stages, which correspond to Polanyi's stages in the discovery process, including his state of indwelling or *contemplation*, and a final state of illumination bringing the discovery that "in place of death there was light" (156). In Ivan's final state, in place of the dark logic of the objectivist framework, he finds himself in a new framework of understanding, which we are invited by the text to share. We come to understand the tenor (the tacit dimension) of the metaphor *light* by dwelling in its implications both for Ivan and in our own lives, including the most enigmatic sentences: "There was no fear because there was no death. In place of death there was light."

B. Discovering a "subtle brotherhood": Crane, "The Open Boat"

In Stephen Crane's masterpiece, "The Open Boat," four men are joined by circumstances in a battle for survival in a small dingey after the wreck of their steamship at sea, an event that Crane himself experienced on the open seas of the Caribbean, while on assignment as a newspaper correspondent

²³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, in *Selected Essays* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1982), 35-82, Part IV "Language," 48-55.

²⁴ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 24.

covering the Cuban insurrection from Spain in 1896. The fact that the story has a specific event in Crane's life as a source contributes to the event-character of its language.

The story is told from the point of view of the correspondent, and as readers we are led to participate in his sensibility in facing the threat of imminent death at sea, indwelling the immediacy of the circumstances of the struggle for survival, as well as the discovery of an unexpected sense of brotherhood among the men, arising from the narrator's dwelling in the conditions of fear and struggle on the open sea. He shares this discovery with us in the details of his sudden realization or epiphany, in following paragraph:

It would be difficult to describe the subtle brotherhood of men that was here established on the seas. No one said that it was so. No one mentioned it. But it dwelt in the boat, and each man felt it warm him. They were a captain, an oiler, a cook and a correspondent, and they were friends, friends in a more curiously iron-bound degree than may be common. The hurt captain, lying against the water-jar in the bow, spoke always in a low voice and calmly, but he could never command a more ready and swiftly obedient crew than the motley three of the dingey. It was more than a mere recognition of what was best for the common safety. There was surely in it a quality that was personal and heartfelt. And after this devotion to the commander of the boat there was this comradeship that the correspondent, for instance, who had been taught to be cynical of men, knew even at the time was the best experience of his life. But no one said that it was so. No one mentioned it.

Crane's words make us feel, along with the men in the boat, the "warmth" that springs up spontaneously between them, in the intense coldness of a night on the open sea. Through the power of the written word, in the skillful handling of narrative point of view, we come to see and feel through the eyes, and ears, and sensations of the correspondent more than the film of familiarity in ordinary life permits. In the end the correspondent makes a significant discovery of a quality of life he had not known before: that of a "subtle brotherhood of men." By the intensity of his indwelling the circumstances of danger, the correspondent senses that this "personal and heartfelt" qualitative fact of brotherhood "dwelt in the boat" with them, and was "the best experience of his life."

C. "Freedom lurked around us":

Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"

In "Sonny's Blues" (1957), Baldwin gives us an extraordinary poetic account of the creative process among jazz musicians, including discovery of the liberatory power of music for the listener. The story is about a kid growing up in 1940s Harlem, struggling with drugs and the violence of the culture, going off to the army, all the while playing piano, and becoming a great jazz artist. At its climax, Sonny's brother, the narrator of the story who is a more stable person, a high school math teacher, and not a musician, comes to a club at

Sonny's invitation, to hear him play. At the end of the story this is part of what the brother tells us about the happenings at the club:

All I know about music is that not many people ever really hear it. And even then, on the rare occasions when something opens within, and the music enters, what we mainly hear, or hear corroborated, are personal, private, vanishing evocations. But the man who creates the music is hearing something else, is dealing with the roar rising from the void and imposing order on it as it hits the air. . . . Creole began to tell us what the blues were all about. They were not about anything very new. He and his boys up there were keeping it new, at the risk of ruin, destruction, madness, and death, in order to find new ways to make us listen. For, while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There isn't any other tale to tell, and it's the only light we've got in all this darkness Then they all gathered around Sonny and Sonny played. Every now and again one of them seemed to say, amen. Sonny's fingers filled the air with life, his life. But that life contained so many others. . . . It was very beautiful because it wasn't hurried and it was no longer a lament. I seemed to hear with what burning he had made it his, with what burning we had yet to make it ours, how we could cease lamenting. Freedom lurked around us and I understood, at last, that he could help us to be free if we would listen, that he would never be free until we did.

As a writer, and a music fan, Baldwin implies a parallel between the spontaneous creativity of the jazz musician and literary art. Sonny makes the music "his" by a "burning" intensity in improvisation, and we in his audience must go through similar burning intensity of listening to make it "ours." The writer goes through analogous intensity of burning, Baldwin implies, in order to produce his work. And in order to get its message, the reader must expose himself to a parallel burning intensity. In the performance, we're told, "freedom lurked around us." In jazz, the performer, through improvisation, is also a composer, inventing new forms on the spot in playing his instrument. Jazz consists of notes and rhythms, but behind the notes and rhythms lurks potential discovery, just as in literature the reader, like the writer before him, needs to go (in the words of Wallace Stevens) "behind the symbols" of the text, into the tacit dimension of language, to get the teaching of the master.²⁵ In Tolstoy's and Crane's stories, similarly, the main characters experience an intense fear of death. In an oddly similar way, we're told the players on the bandstand in Baldwin's story go through a struggle for authenticity in the creative process, "at the risk of ruin, destruction, madness, and death." It's just this extremity of risk that brings the discovery of freedom from fear in all three stories, and the movement of soul in which their characters "could cease lamenting."

²⁵ Stevens, "The Sail of Ulysses" *The Palm at the End of the Mind*, 388-393. See my "Poetry and the Art of Meditation: Going behind the Symbols," *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*, Vol. 11, Winter 2005–2006, <http://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1130&context=jaep>

VI. "Something different and deeper than a theory":

Language as captivity and as liberation

"A picture held us captive" wrote Ludwig Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). "And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably."²⁶ The phenomenon of a "not fully explicit picture" in the deep semantic structure of language, approximates what Polanyi means by the term "framework." As explained by Dreyfus and Taylor, Wittgenstein's "picture" conveys the sense of something "different and deeper than a theory. It is a largely unreflected-upon background understanding" that "provides the context and thus influences all our theorizing." But the conceptual framework of objectivism as defined by Polanyi is not a neutral factor in our culture. It operates as a force, releasing the limits on language, perception, and logic in the "objective" realm, but putting severe constraints on what can be said or perceived in the non-objective or tacit dimensions of experience.

For Dreyfus and Taylor, this problematic "picture" refers to the categorical split between the subject and object of knowing in modern philosophy. In their view the picture of dualism "has been a kind of captivity, because it has prevented us from seeing what is wrong with this whole line of thought." Typically, no one is able to think "outside the box," because "the picture seems so obvious, so commonsensical, so unchallengeable" (DT 2). It (the picture) "lay in our language" in the sense that in Western languages meaning is thought to be detachable from linguistic signs and symbols. All language is implicitly believed to be representational or mediational. The semantic situation includes things in the world and their representations in the form of words or ideas in the mind. By re-presenting things, mediating as it were between the objective world and the mind, language is believed to make atomistic "copies" in the mind of real things (the objects and contexts of perception or reflection), leaving us stuck, as Kant and the classical empiricists had argued, in a situation where the only things we can "know" are simple ideas that come to us as atomistic sensations, but never the "things in themselves." Language primarily works by making other copies of the sensory atoms, but never contacts the things themselves.

In its extreme forms the objectivist framework maintains the fiction that every thing is simply *an object*, with no ancillary features expressed by terms like mind, consciousness, sympathy, or the tacit dimension. But the picture and our captivity to its systems of logic have consequences more severe than the intellectual impasse described by Dreyfus and Taylor. This underlying belief, which would have scandalized our forebears in earlier centuries, has in Polanyi's view exercised "a destructive influence" (*PK*, vii) in the world, partly by diverting scientists from their most vital resource, the tacit dimension of knowing. But by

²⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1965; orig. publ. 1953), 48, para. 115.

reducing the human reality—including body, mind, other human beings, and environment—to objecthood, it has also "falsified our whole outlook far beyond the domain of science" (*PK*, vii). And Polanyi believed it responsible for the dehumanization and murder of millions in Europe, the Soviet sphere, and China in mid-twentieth century.

"To identify the picture would be to grasp a big mistake, something like a framework mistake, which distorts our understanding, and at the same time prevents us from seeing this distortion for what it is" (DT 2). If it is true that the false picture of our ontological status is embedded in our language, it may be possible, despite Wittgenstein's apparent pessimism, to get "outside" the picture. One way is by learning to "dwell" more in the alternate forms of language found in poetry and other literary arts, and so switching our passionate allegiance from the mechanistic framework of objectivism to a new framework based on the principles of post-critical philosophy. With considerable variations, these principles are found in the writings of Polanyi, as well as Heidegger, Bultmann, William James, John Dewey, Merleau-Ponty, and others. Post-critical philosophy helps us interpret poetic metaphor so we see how it opens Dickinson's "Doors" of thought to reveal what is "impregnable of Eye"—the tacit dimension of experience. Poetry promises the resources to cleanse the doors of perception, and purge from our inward sight the film of familiarity that obscures from us the reality of our being. If we read literary texts by absorbing from them the sympathy for truth (an awareness of the tacit dimension) that distinguishes the literature of power from other forms of writing, we acquire the power to follow poets and writers into the frontier zone where it is possible to make this switch of allegiances from one framework to another.

When intentionally indwelt, literature gives us clues to a new kind of inquiry, oriented like that of the poet not to formulaic rules, but to the art of tacit knowing. As the poet uses words not primarily to re-present reality but more as clues to "look at the unknown," the philosopher is invited by the rhetorical features of poetry to develop a new kind of discipline, as many outside the mainstream have done, capable of thinking outside the box. In doing so he or she may become a heuristic thinker capable not only of gaining new understanding of facts, but participating in the envisioning and design of an emerging framework of understanding. Polanyi's thought unveils the rudiments of such a newly emerging framework. And while the objectivist framework tends to take its own assumptions for granted as true, the post-critical framework bases itself on the principles of tacit knowing, in which real thinking is the movement of consciousness toward discovery. As such it is distinguished by being a framework-aware framework, capable of evaluating its own assumptions in relation to those of competing frameworks.

Continuing to build on the rudiments laid down by Polanyi involves recognizing the capacity of language to touch the tacit dimension of existence. This creative capacity of language is abundantly evident in poetic discourse. But it is also operative in the work of philosophers, including Polanyi and many others.

When thinking goes into its own depth and becomes contemplative thinking—as modeled in literature by Tolstoy's suffering anti-hero, Stevens' interior paramour, the poet who dwells in Possibility, and the correspondent in Crane's "Open Boat"—we learn to dissolve the screens that block our self-knowledge of the tacit dimension of consciousness. Unbeknownst to many, the screens of objectivity divorce us involuntarily from perception of *what is*. The screens dissolve in the light of contemplation—indwelling the actual phenomena of experience, and treating the particulars of language as clues to more simple yet more advanced understanding of what's happening. It is the act of indwelling that enables one to get the news from poetry and literary texts concerning the ontological aspect of tacit knowing. The poet who looks beyond the known into the nature of being as such, uses words not as direct representations of objective facts, but as clues to discovery of greater coherence in the human reality than previously known.

Escape from our captivity to the picture of objectivism is found, not by rooting around in language games acceptable within the framework of objectivism. Understanding literary discourse as a means of breaking out of the objectivist framework is a leading edge in the discovery process. The escape to some unknown frontier of freedom demands switching frameworks. If literary metaphor springs from the “ontological aspect of tacit knowing,” it points a way “outside” the “picture” of objectivism. Within the critical tradition, reality consists of untouchable things in themselves, presumed to exist outside of language and perception. To remedy this impasse, the power of the word in poetry requires indwelling to be understood, and so puts us more fully in touch with the realities of experience named by the words.

By engaging thought to move from a concrete image (vehicle) to a less tangible but more significant tenor, the dynamics of metaphor enact the process of tacit knowing, moving us from an object of focal attention, to a realization waiting to be uncovered from behind denotative meanings of words, by an equally dynamic intuition and imagination on the part of the reader. As the vehicle in metaphor makes a connection to an indeterminate *something* in the tenor, the thought of the reader connects to a reality beyond his ken that he or she may comprehend only by dwelling in it. In this way language enables us to break out of a mistaken picture of reality, and to see more of what is real. Metaphor, as Rorty says, is "a call to change one's language and one's life" (see p. 8, above). Post-critical philosophy, like literary metaphor, may have the effect of undoing the assumptions of objectivism embedded in modern language and thought, making changes to our language and our life that enable us to experience this more. It is this pre-logical connecting power of metaphor that shows promise of getting outside the picture of an objective mechanistic universe, and is an essential building block in the emerging post-critical framework of understanding envisioned by Michael Polanyi.