

The Earth is the Lord's

Here . . . is the intersection of the sun-clock with land.
Today . . . I am the one chosen, given this spot on which to stand.
There . . . are other intersections, plane with plane, vales and peaks.
My life a line traced graphically,

meandering over the land-plane,
passing time-planes tick by tock.

My memory loses me in its maze, fusing reality with the unreal;
February 22nds are George Washington days,
though we have decreed him born on Mondays.
Old Christmas mixes with the new,
Confused, confused by a few decrees of history.

I stand alone . . . on this spot . . . at this time . . . but
surrounded by other planes meeting their own Washingtons and Christendoms.

In folly, I claim this land as my own—sometimes by might; better by insight—
it is a gift, **not** mine, the claim is unjust except as a gift divine.

Others have lived here!
This has been their home!
A gift to them! **“Hear me!”** I shout.

This land plane leads me to them and them to me.
We have shared this land,
my spot with theirs marking out the whole vale with its sun-paced story.

How can I claim this land when others have stood here?
Or how can I claim other land while I stand here?
We answer lawfully . . . and awfully. Better by insight.
The land embraces all, it yields its fruit when we care for it.
As we nurture it, it nurtures us.

When we forget that this is a gift for today, it can roar with rage, heave, paw and spew,
burn with hot rage or cry with uncontrollable floods,
and then give itself again to those who understand that
A gift is gift only when it can be taken away.

Time-planes are a gift with the dynamite of the dynamic, prone to unexpected eruptions.

Whose land is this? Better not to beg the question. Certainly do not argue about it.
Use the gift well.
Its story becomes the property of those who accept the gift and kneel in thanksgiving.
Use it to the glory of the Giver who gave the land and life to all the creatures who inhabit its plane.

by John Martin Ramsay after a year in Denmark, 1981-1982.