

OMPHALOS

Konstantinos Lardas

The frantic Sibyl
Scraped the spewed marrow from her arms
Flung it to earth;
Raved at the greatest god.

Blood, feathers and the eagle's claws
Streamed from the skies,
Defiled the Delphic priestess.

Zeus, bloody-fingered,
Loosing the birds
To soar in his white heavens,
Tore out their piercing eyes.

Those blinded augurers,
Colliding in the universe,
Marked, with their fallen entrails,
The navel of the earth:

The firm-rimmed,
Love-defining Delphi.

Sputniks and Vanguard's,
Sleek, wingless birds,
Stream to the higher skies
Crashing beyond Olympus.

These blinded messengers of man
Soar past the eastern cupolas
Shoot past white shaft of stone
Guarding the great Potomac.

No single frantic Sibyl curses now.
Now all the world sings of the
Singeing craters.

Where shall we mark the center,
The firm, omphalic navel of the universe?
Once, it was Delphi and her treasures,
Now, it is man; his love.

EARTHLIGHT

Thomas Burnett Swann

And in that dark devoid of a wind,
The astronauts set hard, metallic shoes
Athwart the moon's black dust. With moonlight lost,
What Artemis remained for men to lose,
What Ishtar or Selene, turn to ash?
Below their ship—a soundless monolith
Star-pointed home—the spacemen bowed their heads,
Lamenting goddesses reduced to myth.
But while they bowed, a light came covertly
To quicken dust with apricot lagoons
Until, incomparable, the rising earth
Possessed the sky like four compounded moons
And, queen to exiles of the lunar night,
Divided to their need her warm earthlight.