

Discovery his blatant division from nature for

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



Discovery is inherently a challenging and transformative process that predicates personalised enrichment, broadening one's perception of self and the world governing them. This is evident in Robert Gray's poetic anthology *Coast Road: Selected Poems* (2014), as "The Meatworks" (1982) and "North Coast Town" (1985) congruently explore the transience of nature in commercialised societies, and expose the abhorrent reality of industrialisation.

Similarly, Ursula Le Guin's short story *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* (1973) captures the culmination of humanity's immorality in the provocative discovery of human sacrifice, presenting substantial psychological and ethical dilemmas. Therefore, both texts reveal the didactic nature of discovery, whereby adversity ultimately expedites our understanding of the human condition. 112 The transformative capacity of discovery testifies to the indispensability of capitalizing on seemingly detrimental confrontations to refine discernment on social practices. The hellish setting of the "Meatworks" is vicariously exemplified in the synaesthesia of "the hot, fertilizer-thick, sticky stench of blood," denouncing the industrial indifference to scruple shown in the degenerated standards, facilitating the confronting discovery of humanity's culpability.

Gray criticizes the consumerism of the late 20th century as he delineates the extent of Australia's flourishing consumerism and avarice, where "working with meat was like burning-off the live bush for this frail green money." Here, the simile captures the epiphany when the persona registers his blatant division from nature for materialistic bounties, altogether sacrificing his morality. Consequently, the realignment of the persona's

values is engendered, prompting his efforts to relinquish his misdeeds as he “scoops up the shell grit and scrubs his hands,” the intertextually semiotic of Lady Macbeth’s endeavours to detach from guilt and find solace in introspection. Affirming this, Gray characterises the persona around his Buddhist sentiments and commends that he “usually didn’t take the meat,” the conspicuous juxtaposition with the Meatworks expounding the persona’s justifications for his wrongdoings and reconciliation with the natural environment. Hence, the persona’s discovery of truth fosters a heightened understanding of society’s duplicity, rousing scrutiny and an aversion to consumerism. 217 The value in rediscovering childhood to quantify development is accentuated in Gray’s stableaux poem “North Coast Town”, whereby the disjunction between culture and landscape is disdained.

The persona’s idyllic preconceptions of “North Coast Towns” are immediately subverted by the tactile imagery “stepping about on mud... flushing in the urinal,” where the initial encounters with water distastefully contrast the beauty of the expected sea. Gray utilizes chromed descriptions of the environment as the persona “eats a floury apple,” the biblical allusion accompanied by the accusatory imagery of the “bulldozed acres,” underscoring the dissonance between mankind and nature. Motifs of shells are weaved throughout the poem in the “Shell station” and the “motel (stucco with seashells),” manifesting the persona’s realization of the futility of preserving nature, rendered ineffective due to the significance of urbanisation.

The persona's detachment from his home town is ironically portrayed by his alienation shown in the "locked" toilets and the "closed hamburger stand," elucidating that discoveries are fundamentally governed by context. This is mirrored by the culturally segregating nature of urbanisation as exemplified in the isolating proxemics of the "Abo, not attempting to hitch, outside town," fixating on his recognition of the transience of his violated culture. Gray's critiques of the dysfunctionality between the man-made and natural, portrayed through the Americanization of coastal towns, thus provokes the reevaluation of humanity's burgeoning progress. Yet while surface corruptions can be easily distinguished and admonished, the unexpected discovery of concealed immorality invokes a greater insight into humanity. LeGuin's conceptualization of a utopian civilization in Omelas is reinforced by the cumulative listing of "smiles, bells, parades, horses and orgies," which capitalizes on the reader's credulousness preceding their discovery. This Elysian notion is however diverted from and juxtaposed with the realisation of the misery of a single child that predicates and fuels the affluence of Omelas. Hence, the employment of the visceral imagery "no calves ... sits in its own excrement" induces "disgust, outrage and impotence," the epiphany of the sacrifice and the façade of the utopianism rousing a dichotomous response. Either one of blissful ignorance or perpetual guilt ensues, where the ramifications pertaining to each augment a discrete facet of the human condition.

In this way, some reluctantly shed "tears at the bitter injustice ... begin to perceive the terrible justice of reality, and to accept it," as the metaphor demonstrates the restraint of discovery, enabling the indulgence in the

ecstasy of life. However, mirroring both the personas from Meatworks and North Coast Town, Le Guin pinpoints “ The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas,” the title highlighting the impacts of the awareness of the Utilitarian paradigm and social impiety on those who cannot bear the guilt. Indeed, the author’s depictions of moral turnarounds and the rejection of ultimatums that compromise morality serve as criticism on society’s toleration of injustices, engendering transformations in readers. Therefore, it is through the amalgamation of Gray’s Coast Road: Selected Poems and Le Guin’s The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas that discovery can be scrutinized. Q. Q Gray’s altruistic concerns for society’s degradation due to greed and Le Guin’s periscope outlook on the magnitude of concealed corruptions within society, allowing readers to vicariously discover and expand their human experience.