

M POLO

He must have
often wondered why it was so — the unravelling
mystery, the smooth feel of
“new but painful”
even where the sky roamed,
hurling down unread maps,
charts,
testimonials,
tiny droplets of hope:
heavy steps, the soul leaps to be drawn from
its shards,
to be borne upon restless wings, fleet-footed
steeds;
God’s breath:
to be off somewhere without a trace,
without a reason,
a curse,
a goodbye.

History tells that we
travel in circles, travel in wheels, like
shaggy-haired lions, the “beast of utter wilderness.”

Marco Polo curses us; watches us as if
possessed that there is no acclaim,
no commitment, no reward. Slowly he
crashes down the centuries,
gathers us in the contempt of his eye,
leaving only his bones within us.
Aged to powder, caught on winds,
the remains drift on clouds to China,
“the beast of utter darkness.”
He counts his treasure,
unafraid now of ridicule, he and his
beast lie quietly wherever they wish.