

Kyoto, August 14, 2001

Oliver,

Today I climbed a mountain Northwest of Kyoto, 大山 “daisen” (high mountain), pinnacled at about 1,730 meters. A young mountain geologically speaking, its flanks abrupt as those of a young lady, astonishing, it knocks your air out.

“だいせん” is covered with ancient Shinto shrines at its foot, called “jinja”, surrounded by old stones, graves with illegible inscriptions, green moss climbing on the base of enormous and centenarian trees; everywhere, the sound of water drenching everything, inundate decor.

And sometimes while contemplating “beautiful” stones spewn from the depths of ages returned (or is it me who goes?), I was seized by immanence, “silence of being”.

The Temple of Ogamiyama, at the edge of an endless path of moist steps, as some legs opening on an elusive, the “Origin of the World” of Courbet, a “zip” of Newman, appeared, made of grey wood polished by fingers you can only notice by the matter they took away: Caressing, touching, hitting maybe.

“Then I laid on grass, skull resting on the plain stone and eyes upon the Milky Way, strange gap of astral sperm and celestial urine through the cranial vault of constellations: This opening failure at the top of the sky, apparently formed of ammonia vapor become brilliant into immensity – into the empty space where they are torn apart as a rooster`s crow in full silence – an egg, a poked eye, or my dazzled skull sticking to the stone, which recycles into infinity symmetrical images. Disheartened.” (p. 136, History of the Eye, by George Bataille).

And in the depths of all this forest, so pure it decays, an enormous and bulging bell, that after rinsing your fingers with fresh water you strike with a horizontal beam, to ring forth its empty sound, like a mysterious and divine clitoris willing to yell.

I stayed open-mouthed.

Say hello to Michel for me,

Best,

Eric