

Open & Active Uncertainty: J.H. Prynne’s *Kazoo Dreamboats* and the physics of an indeterminate reality

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Abstract

J.H. Prynne’s lengthy poem *Kazoo Dreamboats*, written during an intense three-week period in 2011, in part explores the challenge to materialist ontologies from the physics of indeterminacies both classical and quantum. The following discussion identifies the scientific content within the multiple contradictions manifest in this work with its acutely paratactic dialectical structure. Prynne has a deep attachment to ancient Chinese philosophical and literary cultures as well as Mao Zedong’s particular brand of Marxist material dialectics. Given Prynne’s unique position among contemporary English language poets, *Kazoo Dreamboats* (or, *On What There Is*) merits close scrutiny and, as the subtitle of the poem suggests, Prynne continues to confront major ontological and epistemological questions through poetic form.

Difficulty: “Sweet Song and Dance” (*Poems* 661, lines 37-8)

Many of the most sophisticated infiltrations of scientific discourse into the British poetry of recent decades has been in the work of J.H. Prynne, Britain’s longest-serving radical literary poet. He has a reputation for work which is syntactically and semantically challenging to the reader, a difficulty that he himself has addressed in an essay of 2010, suggesting that “often difficult language in poems accompanies difficult thought, so that the difficulty of language is part of the whole structure and activity of poetic composition” (“Difficulties” 151). Publication of Prynne’s collected work as *Poems* by Bloodaxe Books in 2005 (2nd edition 2015) brought work formerly limited to small-press publication to a much wider audience and prompted publication of critical commentary in several essay collections, including *A Manner of Utterance* (2009), *Glossator 2* (2010), *On the Late Poetry of J.H. Prynne* (2014), and *For the Future* (2016). In 2018, Neil Reeve and Richard Kerridge also published an annotated edition of one of Prynne’s major poems from 1983, supplementing their earlier full-length study (*Nearly Too Much*, 1995). Michael Tencer in New York has also continued to collate a detailed online listing of work by and about Prynne.

Prynne’s poem, *Kazoo Dreamboats* (or, *On What There Is*), written and published in 2011, is a particularly (in Keston Sutherland’s word) “formidable” example of Prynne’s late writing, intense in its uncompromising surface form at first reading. My intention in this article is to present a broad overview of the poem which, among other things, explores the challenge to materialist ontologies from the physics of indeterminacies, both classical and quantum. The discussion will identify this scientific content among the multiple contradictions explored in the work with its acutely paratactic dialectical structure. Following an introduction to Prynne’s work and the contributing circumstances in which *Kazoo Dreamboats* was written, I will identify the principal structure of the composition, before considering its three major motifs in turn: natural and anthropomorphic dialectical frameworks; tensions between quantum, molecular, and dialectical representations evident through concepts prompted by

Prynne's repeated use of the word "zero"; and the issue of indeterminism as the core concern.

The poem was written during a three-week period in Cambridge University's long vacation (Prynne was formerly Librarian and Director of English Studies at Gonville and Caius College, now a retired Life Fellow and Emeritus Reader in English Poetry), during which Prynne encamped in a Bangkok Hotel, having (as he explained in a *Paris Review* interview in 2016) "decided to compose in a completely alien environment . . . I needed to leave my comfortable home and all my usual appurtenances – books and papers and reference material . . . going to a foreign country in which the spoken language was not English, where I didn't know a single word . . . reasonably economical to get there, and . . . economical to spend some time there" (181). The resulting text appears as a particularly intractable poem in many ways, if immediate meanings are being sought. Closer consideration, however, reveals intelligible meanings (unitary ideas) within a matrix of what Prynne himself recognizes is "a complex system of self-contradictions", a text that offers the reader "the unresolved" but within a "surreptitious buzz" of "poetic movement" ("Poetic Thought" 599). Critics have tackled the poem from several exegetic perspectives. Gerald Bruns offered the first overview in 2013, emphasizing William Langland's *Piers Plowman* as the poem's "chief formal antecedent," and tracing a mixture of ideas from Parmenides, Mao Zedong, Alban Berg, Aristotle, and Leucippus, among others, as contributing to the string of philosophical and scientific concepts "that regulate the poem's progress, if one can call it that" (55). As Bruns recognizes, the poem is not in fact offering a linear progression to a propositional conclusion but, as he puts it, "a variable series of force fields . . . whose patterns and elements follow models of chaos and complexity rather than any principle of linearity or noncontradiction" (55). The poem is thought in a matrix, a clearly complex system that in form and content resembles the indeterminate reality that the poem itself explores, and that the following discussion will seek to elucidate.

By way of further introduction, the occasion of Prynne's eightieth birthday in June 2016 prompted publication of a collection of celebratory essays by Prynne's former students, colleagues, friends and admirers, edited by Ian Brinton, entitled *For the Future*. Among the recollections, John Wilkinson, who was both undergraduate and postgraduate student at Cambridge in the 1970s, recalls Prynne tutorials on the I-staircase of Gonville and Caius College, where Prynne had rooms, as his admission to "a dialectical process", although initially as "a silent but equal disputant", who discovered Prynne's "indefatigable . . . dialectical habit of mind" (82). Prynne has a long-held interest in Marxist material dialectics which has been fundamental to his sixty-year engagement with the political and economic context of his work. In the *Paris Review* interview, he speaks of favouring this dialectic in specifically Maoist guise: "The narrative that Mao Zedong invented and devised to produce a native Chinese style of Marxism was and is still extremely interesting to me . . . that interest is written on the surface and in the crevices all over *Kazoo Dreamboats*" (186). Prynne's engagement with Chinese history and culture is long-standing, as is, doubtless, his insight into the philosophical antecedents that underpin Mao Zedong's natural and anthropomorphic dialectics in their twentieth century guise; antecedents deriving from both Daoist and Confucian traditions. It was Prynne's College tutor from student days, Laurence Picken, a biologist turned Chinese musicologist, who first introduced Prynne to the translation of ancient Chinese poetry. Subsequently, one of Prynne's great friends among Cambridge academics was the twentieth century's pre-eminent sinologist Joseph Needham, author of the monumental *Science and Civilisation in China*. Prynne started

to visit and teach in China in 1986, the year in which he also published his "China Figures" essay as a postscript to the reprint of Anne Birrell's *New Songs from a Jade Terrace* (translations of Hsu Ling's sixth century compilation of seven previous centuries of poetry). Mao Zedong was but one of the latest links in a long chain of Chinese thinkers and, while the equivalent European material dialectic that reached Karl Marx and natural dialectic that reached Engels through Hegel comes from Hegel's reading of the pre-Socratic sixth century BCE Heraclitus, there are closely shared similarities of viewpoint between East and West in the first records of those dialectics at much the same historical time. In unpacking Prynne's intentions and the stylistics of dialectical process in his writing, his interest in Chinese culture, both ancient and modern, comes to the fore. It will also become evident in the following discussion that the physics at both classical and quantum scales that Prynne explores in *Kazoo Dreamboats* sits at the crux of the poem's questioning of these natural, material and anthropomorphic dialectical traditions.

The full-length *Paris Review* interview of 2016 is archived at Cambridge University Library. In addition to that interview, an earlier short interview on an entirely separate subject nonetheless proves pertinent. In July 2011, four months before the publication of *Kazoo Dreamboats* and just a matter of weeks before the writing of the poem, Prynne was interviewed by Keston Sutherland for *The Cambridge Quarterly* to mark the publication of a bilingual English-Chinese edition of selections of his poetry. Prynne spoke of the difficulties of translation of his own work, in particular his attempts to show his enthusiastic but inexperienced translators from the English Poetry Studies Institute in Guangzhou how they might "translate the words of these poems, their activity of language, rather than to resolve what might seem to be the question of meaning and then to render the meaning of the resulting interpretation" (204). This issue is a general one for every reader of Prynne's poetry in the sense that translation and meaning-making are the inescapable internal activities of every reading act. Prynne had also addressed the issue of "thought and thought-practice in poetry" in a keynote speech at the Second Pearl River International Poetry Conference in Guangzhou in 2008, published with additional notes in *Textual Practice* in 2010 ("Poetic Thought" 595). In this speech, Prynne refers to "the active process of thinking, mental energy shaped to some purpose" (595), and to the practice of poem-making in which present process dominates over pre-determined content. This is a familiar modernist trope which Prynne takes a step further:

I do not mean this as the personal history of someone thinking, the efforts of conscious mind-focus as pursued by an individual subject, or even an individual poet . . . but [poetic thought] is self-disputing and intrinsically dialectical. What thereby vibrates on the page and in the mind of the reader, in knowledge and memory and moral understanding, this does not belong to the poet, not anymore; it does not belong in the domain of the language system, not anymore; it does not reside in the fabric of dispute about values or competing models of state control, or visions of a future life . . . These are the outer shells of a dialectic energy working through the methods of poetic composition which cannot be defined or contained by its shells but must break them to become altogether new: new poetic thought. (599)

This is quite an assertion and an interesting precursor to a poem which will enact that very practice. A second critic, Robin Purves, has traced the same motifs as Bruns, each of which he derives from Prynne's "Reference Cues" that accompany the poem.

However, Purves particularly emphasizes Prynne's Marxist distinctions between anthropomorphic and natural dialectics, and the notion of "uncertainty" in the micro-world in the quantum guise popularized by Heisenberg. Purves suggests that the multiple discourses in the poem "are interrogated in rearrangements designed seemingly to epitomize Mao's 'basic law of materialist dialects', which is, in turn, tested against the most advanced formulations of contemporary scientific knowledge" (146). One may identify key self-contradictions that are presented in the poem constituting its core structure, central among them being the relationship between natural dialectics and indeterminacy in the micro- and quantized physical worlds. Before examining this in detail, the following section places *Kazoo Dreamboats* in the wider critical context of Prynne's work.

Origin: "Out of the Way of the Way" (Poems 660, 41)

Questions of interpretation of poetic thought in the light of scientific knowledge, as just one of many discourses that Prynne has explored in his work, have been tackled by him through fifty years of published poetry in which notions of resistance to the debasement of language and the inherent difficulty of a poetics engendered by that stance have been central. In the Sutherland interview Prynne went on to say that he sought "to train [his translators] in a dialectic view of the curricular notion of the authority of an *oeuvre*. That is to say, in my case at least it is a contested and internally unstable and internally debated and debatable form of the relation of one structure to another. It is essentially a dialectical process" (*Quarterly* 205). What is true of the corpus of his poetry is also true in the construction of a single poem such as *Kazoo Dreamboats*. While the advice of sixteenth century Chinese literary commentator Xie Zhen remains salutary, that "of poems, some can be understood, some cannot, and some need not be" (Longxi 197), the borderline between can be and need not be is a rich one in the field of Prynne's poetic thinking. Firstly, as the *Paris Review* interview makes clear, *Kazoo Dreamboats* is a piece Prynne wrote with little explicit pre-planning: "In the spring of 2011, I had one of these feelings that I sometimes have, that maybe I'm about to write something. Maybe something's coming along. I had no idea what it might be, I just thought, Well, something is in the works. And the more I thought about it, the more I had no idea what it might be. I wasn't sure I needed to know" (196). In fact, the whole issue of what is or is not knowable became a critical factor in the writing of the resulting poem, hence its subtitle "*or, On What There Is*".

In 1995, in the first book-length critical study of Prynne's work, Reeve and Kerridge wrote of Prynne's 1983 poem series *The Oval Window*: "Whenever a crystal tilts, it reveals another of its many facets, one perhaps hitherto invisible or overlooked. Many of Prynne's poems are crystalline and multi-faceted in this sense. Since there is no single vantage-point to which the whole of the object is open, the highlighting of any aspect depends on the obscuring of others; and the least shift of phrase or word or tone is likely to dislodge and replace whatever feature had apparently established itself" (*Nearly Too Much* 147). Reeve and Kerridge characterized Prynne's "dialectical lyric poetry" as engaged in this "continual dislodging" and they suggested that in a long poem "calling on so wide a range of discourse" the "lingering resonances of meanings, allusions and references that were recognized, or half-remembered, or which somehow [stick] in the reader's mind, [make] the pace of the dislodging process itself uneven and unpredictable, no more able to be watertight than any other system" (147). Written twenty-eight years later, *Kazoo Dreamboats* appears to be constructed in very much the same mode, presenting much the same challenges to the reader as it seems it did for Prynne himself: "*Kazoo* was an unprecedented and unexpected kind of composition. I

was very conscious that it was well out of line from anything I've tried to do before" (*Paris Review* 195).

Since publishing his first poetry collection in 1962, Prynne's work has been a journey, in David Caddy's words, "from a metaphorically based open field lyricism towards a metonymic and etymological challenge to the reader . . . a reading process that avoids closure . . . a continual process towards meaning and comprehension rather than finding answers" (23). Prynne has repeatedly used scientific material, both its language and ideas, within his modernist tradition of multiple discourses. This has included the languages of computation, biochemistry, geology, neurosciences, economics and, in the case of *Kazoo Dreamboats*, of physics. Typically, as Reeve and Kerridge note, "Such vocabularies come into the poem through a process of intercutting, or repeated interruption, so that no single voice, and apparently no line of sense, is allowed to last for long" (*Nearly Too Much* 1).

In what sense might *Kazoo Dreamboats* be "unprecedented" and "out of line" with anything Prynne had tried to do before? Significantly, there was that lack of pre-planning, of having no initiating propositional direction. Prynne admits to the piece proving to be "full of an extremely complex system of self-contradictions which ought to produce serious disorder in the thought process, and I simply said to myself, more or less consciously, I'm going to let it do that. I contradicted some of my deeply held beliefs and opinions. I deliberately, as if by a kind of necessitous instinct, wrote myself into overt opposition to them" (*Paris Review* 196). If a completed piece, *Kazoo Dreamboats* might be considered a prose poem. As an open-ended if not actually incomplete piece in David Caddy's sense, it is at least a piece of (to use Stephen Fredman's term from his book of the same title) "poet's prose." In Gerald Bruns words, the result was "a poem in prose" or, as he puts it: "maybe a work that is neither 'poetical' nor discursive but 'non-generic'" (55). Bruns offers the French term *l'écriture* which he defines as "writing that is neutral with regard to concepts, categories, and distinctions." Bruns is "reminded of Maurice Blanchot's term for the fragmentary assembly: *désœuvrement* (worklessness), 'an arrangement that does not compose but juxtaposes, that is to say, leaves each of the terms that come into relation outside one another, respecting and preserving this exteriority and this distance as the principle—always already undercut—of all signification'" (55). In whatever way we define the text, as Prynne himself says:

When it was all done, and I came to read this work, as if produced from an alien planet, I would ask myself, Do I hold these views? Do I believe these opinions? Do they replace and permanently cancel the points of view which preceded them? Is the damage mortal and deliberate, and am I going to stand by the damage? Or is it just a phase I went through, just some wild extravagance, and do I then revert to being the kind of person that I was before? If so, with what alteration? These are very uncomfortable questions. And I have lived with them because I really was, and am, unable to answer them. In that sense it's the most disordering work I've ever composed, and it has left me in a great confusion of mind. Sometimes I'm quite satisfied with the confusion and sometimes I'm deeply mortified by it. It ought not to be in quite such a state of perpetual jeopardy. The process of composing it was very peculiar and discrepant. (*Paris Review* 196)

In spite of Prynne's assertions of views, opinions, questions and self-contradictions, to ask what *Kazoo Dreamboats*, or any other of Prynne's mature works,

might mean has been taken by a number of critics as an inappropriate question. For example, Nick Totton writes: "I have felt frustrated for some time that most of the critical response to J.H. Prynne's work has focused on *exegesis*: on identifying and describing the exceptionally wide range of reference within the language of the poems and using this to piece together some sort of word-by-word amplification and paraphrase of the texts. In other words, attempting to answer the question: What does this *mean*?" (119; emphasis in original). Totton objects to the approach in which "the poem tends to become a puzzle-test which the reader struggles to solve . . . while the poet/poem never responds, never says Yes or No" (120). In fact, Prynne's own admission in the *Paris Review* interview is that yes, no, and maybe – all of those questions and contradictory answers – are fundamental to the propositional components of the text, both assertive and speculative. Such multiplicity of meaning-making, as Reeve and Kerridge suggested, is not new to Prynne's work. Totton himself cites Jon Clay, writing about the earliest recognizably mature Prynne collection, *Kitchen Poems*, from 1968 – "While [each] poem makes use of entirely accessible references, it does not, it seems immediately clear, represent anything. There are *meanings* here, or references, but there is no *meaning*, which is to say overall representation; there is no higher order before which the poem effaces itself" (Clay 212; emphasis in original). As will become clear, among the multiplicity of identifiable unitary ideas in *Kazoo Dreamboats* there are motifs which emerge, and the most frequently recurring tend towards dominance. Totton's thesis is that "non-representational" poetry is the ultimate in "free-speech" in which that speech "*means* nothing but is *about* everything", and in which the writer has detached himself "from a text which was [his] and now becomes everybody's" (129; emphasis in original). Detachment, yes – reference has been made to Prynne's view on this already, but "*means* nothing" while "*about* everything" is surely a little too accommodating. Prynne did discover meanings through language that he wished to record, setting each against each, even if choosing not to favour one over another:

My rule . . . was never to read any more than the previous ten lines. By the time I got to page twenty-plus, I had no idea what the rest of it was about, because I'd never once turned the pages back to see what the earlier writing had been doing. I was very, very focused. I was in a state of almost constant exhilaration. It seemed like a terrific moment of liberty to be able to write directly onto the paper what seemed to be the next thing to be written down. (*Paris Review* 197)

In accepting the poem as he wrote it to be literally a "wandering in two minds" (*Poems* 640, 9), about many things but not with predetermined objective and not subject to any *ex post facto* redrafting, the multiple ideas, citations and allusions do nonetheless lead the reader, as they led Prynne himself, towards a number of inescapably dominant motifs, with indeterminism being perhaps the most significant. The following short section introduces some of these motifs and offers an overview of their sequential appearance in the poem, before each will be considered in more detail under the subsequent headings.

Content: "The Sentence in Word Build" (*Poems* 652, 17)

In offering first a broad description of the poem, consider Prynne's counterpoising of the scientific understanding of indeterminism, evident at both classical and quantized dimensions, against earlier ideas about the physical world from, for example, Aristotle,

Leucippus, and Parmenides to whom he gives voice. Robin Purves has suggested that the poem is "keen to 'trade up' the contradictions" in order to "disestablish" certain anthropomorphic notions which Prynne has elsewhere criticized (145). Such contradictions in relation to nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientific knowledge that Prynne raises, as a self-proclaimed realist and materialist, expose a philosophical stance which has its roots, as mentioned previously, in the material dialectics of Mao Zedong. From the *Paris Review* interview, one suspects this becomes one of the challenges to Prynne's "deeply held beliefs and opinions" (196). In engaging with an indeterminate material reality, Prynne's Maoist material dialectics and his aversion to the traditional notions of harmony and balance that he has expressed elsewhere (for example, "A Brief Comment on Harmony" at the Xi'an Conference), are linked to an ancient, essentially Daoist (and indeed earlier *Zhouyi*), inheritance in the Chinese tradition of natural dialectics (see, for instance, MacKay 7-9). Again, we can emphasize that these strands are presented in all their contradictions in the poem without authorial resolution. Given this is the "most disordering work" that Prynne had ever composed, leaving him even five years after its publication "in a great confusion of mind," for readers the disorder and confusion can be found in both the complexities of compositional structure and in the unresolved questions posed in the text. Yet while Prynne may have found himself undermining some of his own former ontological beliefs, as he affirmed to the scholars of the English Studies Institute in Guangzhou, "not resolving and closing a dialectic of uncertainty, but keeping this uncertainty open and active" (*Quarterly* 206) is the lifeblood of poetic thought, and that belief is everywhere manifest in *Kazoo Dreamboats* and to be born in mind by its reader.

Before briefly conjuring a plausible semantic thread through the labyrinth, consider, firstly, the overall structure of the poem. Its ten thousand words are presented as twenty-three pages of apparently prosaic text, aligned to the margin on the left of the page only, sub-divided into twenty-four paragraphs, each of which is line-spaced and separated from its predecessor with major indents to those opening lines. A further four, line-spaced, separated paragraphs are not indented. Eight additional paragraphs are double-indented and justified, highlighting themselves as direct quotations. Closer examination of the text reveals Prynne's use of comma and full-stop, even though the text does not have a conventional prose sentence syntax. The poem on early reading is clearly giving close attention to language and diction, reading and listening, in a modernist juxtaposition of many a Poundian luminous detail and insistent Flaubertian *mot juste*.

An initially reductionist analysis will help in getting to grips with the complex text. Skeletally, picking out key features that appear sequentially, the poem begins with a visionary narrator speaking in the manner of Langland's *Piers Plowman*: "I saw willing and discrete the season not yet for sorrow advanced . . . I saw it amount in plenteous access burning by folly markers right to the crest" (*Poems* 639, 1-6). Contrasted with what that first-person "I" (on twenty-five occasions in the poem) sees at the visible scale are multiple references to an incoherent, unpredictable, unseen physical reality beneath the visible (639-640). Prynne uses quotes from a teaching text by Adrian Parsegian entitled *Van der Waal's Forces: A Handbook for Biologists, Chemists, Engineers and Physicists* (a compilation of standard numerical methods) to help delineate this hidden world, setting it against Parmenides's understanding of nothing as an unchanging void, derived from his fifth century BCE text *On Nature*. Interestingly, Parsegian's was the only book that Prynne took with him to Bangkok and to which he would refer while writing *Kazoo Dreamboats*, knowing "it was going to be an important book to me" while "I couldn't tell you why" (*Paris Review* 196).

Reflections on nothing and non-being follow with Mao's notion of contradictions as the driving force of nature, which he expressed in his 1937 essay "On Contradiction", before incoherence is again asserted (*Poems* 641-643). Alban Berg's aspiration for a polytonal, six-note chord, serial form, from a 1929 lecture on his opera *Wozzeck*, is countered with the indeterminate classical particle ensemble's "inverse sixth-power dependence" (645) as defined in Parsegian. Reflections on the unity of the whole as a concept versus freedom of thought also follows, a freedom reflected in the poem's own continuing linguistic wanderings (646-647). Zero-point energies and their relation to quantum indeterminacies are raised through further Parsegian selections, alongside the problem of language's inability to catch meaning (648-650). Aristotle's fourth century BCE affirmation of the multiplicity of what is, from Book 1 of his *Physics*, in refuting Parmenides, is yet another reference that Prynne conjures (649); and the notion of contradictory aspects as necessary to existence in Mao's essay is also further quoted (651-2). The poem's conceptual contents and constructed form up to this point have reflected the facts of indeterminacy at the micro-scale in which there are "no predictable continuities" (653, 23). From this the poem extrapolates the notion that "one can only listen in the immediate present to each moment as it occurs" (653, 24) and to the scale of human life in which "appearance is determined by uncertain spectral data" (653, 40), an extrapolation that is, interestingly, not questioned in the poem.

Leucippus, as a fifth century BCE atomist philosopher, is quoted identifying the material world as turbulent and complex (655) and the poem then further enacts that turbulence as incoherence through final passages of acutely disjunctive parataxis (655-660). If the poem is presenting words as free of comprehension or function within "an ontology of internal contradiction" (Bruns 67), it also concludes with a brief counterpoint quotation from Richard Bradley's 2002 study of Neolithic and Bronze age stone circles with their solar-lunar alignments focused between stones (661), this undoubtedly being a search for both comprehension and function; before the poem's authorial exit "toiling and spinning and probably grateful, in this song" (661). The poem has thus enacted a succession of contradictory ideas within a network of multiple reference and extreme collagic language. Of the motifs to be discussed in this essay, the dialectical bears consideration first, as the next section will discuss.

Dialectics: "Internal Contradiction In Every Single Thing" (*Poems* 642, 29)

The debate over natural dialectics in relation to an anthropomorphic dialectical materialism among Marxist theorists is a longstanding one. The issue is whether physical reality has an inherent dialectic, that is to say a dynamic dualism on all scales that drives the processes of change through the oscillations of counterpoised forces. Alternatively, is this merely a descriptive discourse inescapably linked to human conceptual and linguistic limitations, these being a function of our scientific understanding of the physical world, itself partly determined by economic and social conditioning? Purves has quoted Georg Lukacs on the Marxist assertion that, while an objective dialectics of nature may exist independent of humans, the "conceptual apparatus of scientific knowledge" (Purves 144) is "determined by the economic structure, by social being" (Lukacs 104). Prynne has equally argued against the anthropomorphic imposition of notions of balance and harmony on such a natural dialectic ("A Brief Comment on Harmony", Xi'an Conference), and expressed his admiration for Mao Zedong's approach, drawing from a deep-seated Chinese tradition. Classically, in China, a natural dialectic has been rooted in materialist cause-and-effect relationships in the way the physical world is seen to function. The scientific assertions that Prynne cites in *Kazoo Dreamboats*, as presented principally through extracts from

Parsegian's text, both qualify and contradict that natural deterministic dialectic as a function of scale; the world functions as cause and effect on one scale but is statistically indeterminate on another, and fundamentally indeterminate on yet another. In delineating these truths, *Kazoo Dreamboats* only raises implicit questions of relevance around the validity of extrapolation; propositions that assert and counter one another are left to hang in the air. The fact that Prynne, by his 2016 interview admission, exposes what turn out to be his own intellectual inconsistencies of belief and is prepared to offer that confusion unresolved, is part of what makes this poem with all of its intense difficulties for the reader a genuinely worthwhile addition at the leading edge of poetic composition.

The oppositions in a dualistic schema, through which might be seen a dialectic within every natural process, are traditionally recognized by the Chinese as inseparable aspects of the *Dao*, the Way of things (see, for example, Alan Watts *Watercourse Way*). Where universal change is the inescapable reality on all scales, spatial and temporal, all process manifests itself through opposing distinctions, opposition being even more subtly an assertion of what is better described as a polarity at each end of a spectrum of possibility, or perhaps envisaged as a counterpointed pair in a continuous process characterized as cyclic or spiral. The Chinese designations of *yin* and *yang* refer to the description of any conceptual pairing in any transformation, a designation of a moment in an unending process. The dynamic quality is evident in their origin: *yin* and *yang* originally referring to the shady and sunny sides of a mountain, regions forever changing with the Earth's rotation. A philosophical Daoist in the spirit of Laozi (Lao Tzu) and Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu), rather than a follower of the East Asian folk religion of the same name, advises human beings willingly to accommodate to this ultimately inescapable reality – to go with the flow, for there is, in reality, no way out of the dualistic forces that constitute the Way.

After his own fashion, Mao Zedong would state at the opening of his 1937 essay from which Prynne quotes in *Kazoo Dreamboats*: "The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics" (Mao 23). Mao is identifying the dualism of all things as delineating the whole (two sides to every coin) and envisaging them in active opposition to one another. The Maoist ontology takes a continuous shifting of emphasis between opposing forces, but not directed towards any sense of dynamic equilibrium, or somehow being centred. While balance for a Daoist was no more than fitting into the flow of how things are in the moment, typically an asymmetric balance and not necessarily a middle way, for a Confucian that more symmetrical balancing of opposing forces became much more characteristic. Mao steps away from accommodating both sides; his emphasis is on the dynamic opposition of sides acting head to head, with one or other coming out on top. At the macro physical scale of the visible world, evident to both traditional Chinese philosophies and to Mao Zedong's variant, materialist exchange processes are inescapably rooted in a cause-and-effect, deterministic, ontology.

The question arises, however, as to whether such a dialectic descriptive schema of reality, accounting as it does for what is observable in the macro world, stands up in the face of the statistically indeterminate material world on the scale of classical particle physics, let alone that of an inherent indeterminacy at a barely material quantum scale. Parsegian's text spans the subject on both sides of this scalar division. As soon as we understand the existence of particles, as did nineteenth century Dutch physicist Johannes van der Waals, we have to give up notions of tracking individual interaction events and accept averages of particle behaviour en masse. Mao's complementarity of opposites as a motive force driving one individual unitary force against the other

remains conceptually tenable if analytically intractable. Nonetheless an inherent motif force in all material things becomes Mao's justification by analogy for deriving a Marxist intellectual schema in which contradictions (for example between proletariat and bourgeoisie or between interpretations of February and October Revolutions in Russia) are resolved by criticism and self-criticism, force and counter-force, leading by his logic to the repeated purges of permanent cultural revolution. The Party member must remain vigilant, critical, and argumentative at all times, if the Marxist-Leninist imperative is to triumph. As Prynne put it in the *Paris Review* interview, "the 1937 essay *On Contradiction* is one of [Mao's] major essays . . . [He] has a complex understanding of the task of the dialectic. He believes that dialectic is the principle of relationship and activity within the material order itself, the actual order of nature, and not just within the intellectual order. It has meant a lot to me" (188). Prynne's interest in, and seeming admiration for, a Maoist approach does leave the less committed reader perhaps struggling to detach the intellectual framework of Mao's beliefs from the reality of the Great Leap Forward (1958-61) in which Mao's leadership succeeded in starving tens of millions of people, not to mention the vandalism and brutality of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. Perhaps the lesson is that complex questions require more than simple answers and *Kazoo Dreamboats* finds itself, perhaps inadvertently, certainly unexpectedly to Prynne, presenting just that case.

Prynne comes face to face with the contradiction between a twentieth century scientifically-defined reality and a materialist ontology that underpins some of his long-held political beliefs, those that we might call old-fashioned British Leftist Marxism, with its admiration for the younger Mao Zedong as a counter to what had become understood of Stalin's reign in Russia. In his 2011 interview with Sutherland (just a few weeks before writing *Kazoo Dreamboats*) Prynne said:

I [don't] regard this word dialectical as just a vague abstraction. I have good reason for using this term . . . And there is no doubt that my thinking about the question of dialectic in relation to a curriculum was strongly influenced by Mao Zedong's notions concerning the structure and programme for a revolutionary practice. And I read all of Mao Zedong's early essays about contradiction as directly instructive to my sense about the notion of a curriculum, and the notion of teaching and learning in a language to students whose language was not the one I had myself . . . And I think this is my unusual commitment to the study of China, that I am interested in its ideological formation, its evolved political history. I'm interested in the contests and conflicts which express that political history and in the structural thinking which underpins the attempt to define alternative viewpoints and positions and programmes for the history of China, ancient and modern. (*Quarterly* 188)

The focus of the next section will be on Prynne's approach in *Kazoo Dreamboats* to specific questions of classical and quantum indeterminacy as they impact on the ontological models already raised.

Indeterminism: "For Fields Thus Filled" (*Poems* 640, 37)

Regarding the nature of the physical world which Prynne frames as "*On What There Is*", among multiple and disparate historical interpretations as distinct from a contemporary scientific one, there is an equivalence between the concepts of *logos*

(λόγος) in the West and *dao* (道) in China, both as expressions of an understanding of the way things are, the way the world works, and both partly rooted in the incompatibilities between percept and concept. Each is tied to the limitations of language (see, for example, *Tao and Logos* x, and Zhang Longxi's subsequent text). As Prynne puts it in *Kazoo Dreamboats*: "What language is this unable to be spoken" (*Poems*, 657, line 5). He goes on to refer to the inescapable linearity of language and its constraints on semantic sense as "the speech corridor" (652, 17), and then in the resulting writing process as "the sentence in word build is additive", while "logic partitions the stream" (652, 17-18). However, through the technique of cross-referenced allusion, the attempt to escape these restrictions offers a broadening of semantic possibilities in which "sense outriders thicken its purpose" (652, 18). It is a commonplace of cognitive linguistics that meaning-making arises from the interaction of both conscious and unconscious thought with language as the link; language in itself is not a container of meaning but a prompt to thought's meaning-making, both conscious and unconscious (see, for example, Jackendoff 243).

As directly quoted by Prynne, Parsegian asserts "The language must be able to talk about real materials in which electric fields or charge fluctuations occur, oscillate with natural frequencies of the substance, and die away over time" (Parsegian 244; *Poems* 649, 6-9). Given the limitations of language in the meaning-making process, beyond the identifiably material the issue of speakable versus unspeakable with reference to quantum scale behaviour has been a challenge to physicists from the earliest days of sub-atomic studies. However, the nineteenth century had its own earlier struggles with understanding through language when physicists such as van der Waals first posited a reality at the molecular scale that went beyond the envisaged ideal gas behaviour of dimensionless particles. The role of individual interactions within a gas or liquid in which the numbers of particles are so large as to be only amenable to statistical analysis brought an inescapable indeterminism, although one thought to be incalculably complex only in principle. The fact that analytical solutions to n-body problems remain intractable today without significant numerical approximation is testimony to that enduring classical indeterminism. In *Kazoo Dreamboats*, those oscillations, actual and imagined, which "die away over time" prefigure Prynne's attention turning to quantum scale realities and to notions of the void as "not nameless" (649, 36) and "this field of being . . . full or empty or changing through time" (649, 30-31).

While his referencing of inherent uncertainties at the quantum scale takes indeterminism to an even deeper level, for the moment it can be noted that Parsegian's text is not a study in quantum, or even classically indeterminist, philosophy. The reader is simply taken through a practical range of mathematical recipes for deriving approximate solutions to the analytical problems arising from conjectured experimental situations, all of them based on assumptions around inter-particle interactions at the molecular scale – the van der Waals forces of the book's title. What Prynne seems to have taken from having this, as previously mentioned the only book he took with him to Bangkok, are not only a modest number of essential direct quotations and some technical language that appealed but also, perhaps, a focus for his thinking. Against this scientific description of physical reality, as the poem progresses Prynne is able to raise various metaphysical and philosophical conversations on being and non-being, and on what is and what is not.

As an example of Prynne's practice in this context, the speaker is found "wandering in two minds later rather than sooner found" (640, 9), suggesting a longstanding uncertainty which he is only now addressing. Reinforced with "better a little loss to say, than ever a long sorrow on the day after, abridged to clear" (640, 10-

11), the speaker seems to proclaim the need to explore that uncertainty rather than avoid it, any avoidance likely to be regretted at a later date. Thoughts by this second page turn swiftly to the micro-scale: "Nothing shall come of continuous diminish but across its boundaries if they exist for sure everything is possible and can be computed" (640, 20-22). Is this the boundary between the observable and the invisible, distinguishing that which is measurable from that which is not, let alone between the invisible and the inconceivable? Then comes the ironic humorous invocation: "speak parrot and to discernibly good approximations" (640, 22-23), to which the parrot does then speak, followed for the fifth time so far in the poem by the first-person voice: "I saw it utmost, to know partly is by now not to unknow" (640, 24-25), a recognition that knowing part of what is is at least to not be totally ignorant.

Two direct quotes follow from different sections of Parsegian's text – Prynne setting out the crux of the scientific side of the argument regarding a proposed dialectics of nature: "We now recognise that 'empty space' is a turmoil of electromagnetic waves of all frequencies and wave lengths. They wash through and past us... we are all bathed in this 'vacuum infinity' of virtual electromagnetic waves" (Parsegian, 10; *Poems* 640, 29-32); and "The natural motions of the charges within a material will necessarily create electric fields whose time-varying spectral properties are those known from how the materials absorb the energy of applied fields" (Parsegian, 242; *Poems* 640, 33-36). Here are statements of fact that apparently empty space is far from being empty and that the interaction energies of invisible particles and the energetic fields they inhabit are reciprocal. As the poem asserts: "This is and must be the thought of nothing . . ." – the inescapable reality – ". . . that cannot be apart from what is, neither as or by cause, what it is to be, relentless and unsame" (640, 41-43). All particles at the atomic and molecular level experience mutual electrostatic attractions and repulsions at close quarters as a result of either permanent or flickering dipoles of various kinds. In other words, a particle need not necessarily carry a permanent unit charge but may display partial charges, for example at each of its ends, temporarily arising from what we might crudely describe as its outer electron cloud slopping about. Electrons, being nearly two thousand times less massive than any individual nuclear particle, move rapidly in response to surrounding electromagnetic fields and against the relative inertia of the molecule's nuclear scaffold. In focusing on these charge-fluctuation forces, Parsegian is referencing a boundary on one side of which lies an overtly material world (literally that of matter in its conventional states), albeit invisible, in which thermal agitation of atomic and molecular particles engenders the fleeting electric and magnetic fields, the time-averaged net effect of which generates the detectable van der Waals force. The inescapable indeterminism for each interaction event arises only since the individual particle's interactions are lost among a statistically huge number of other events.

Following the stylistic decision to quote directly from Parsegian's prose, Prynne moves straight back into his own syntactically complex language, presenting a forty-nine-word passage which includes reference to "fields thus filled it was no dream" (640, 37), "hot pies!" (his exclamation) (640, 38), and the invocation to "be blithe" (640, 38-39), changes markedly different in tone from the dry Parsegian quotations. Prynne will also have a bit of fun with dialectic and dielectric in the poem, the latter being introduced here in an invocation: "mother admit me by dielectric promise of this field" (641, 9). Not everything in the text need be taken too seriously, there are a good number of comic interjections. Finally, a third Parsegian quotation follows, this time as an indented ten-line paragraph:

"In all matter there are continuous jostlings of positive and negative charges; at every point in a material body or in a vacuum, transient electric and magnetic fields arise spontaneously. These fluctuations in charge and in field occur not only because of thermal agitation but also because of inescapable quantum-mechanical uncertainties in the positions and momenta of particles and in the strengths of electromagnetic fields. The momentary positions and electric currents of moving charges act on, and react to, other charges and their fields." (Parsegian 5; *Poems* 641, 11-20)

This is essentially a rerun of the quotations Prynne has already offered, so it is a little surprising he should have included it, except that it introduces (from Parsegian's own Introduction) the first reference to quantum scale behaviour. Given Prynne's method of writing this poem ("never once turned the pages back to see what the earlier writing had been doing", (*Paris Review* 197)) and his not redrafting subsequently, perhaps it simply represents a writer's refocus after a few hours' sleep. The quantum scale perspective, however, introduces a more profound indeterminism that fundamentally undermines both a traditional dialectics of nature and a Maoist dialectics of contradiction, undermining if one is looking to "trade up" (Purves 145) to a political ontology by analogy with nature. The next section considers another motif in the poem, that of the physical reality associated with the word zero, taking the reader even closer to quantum-scale realities.

Zero: "In the Field Most Winking" (*Poems* 642, 18)

Prynne's poem is not a sequential argument in which a proposition is supported through logic strings from premise to conclusion. The writing is the process of inquiry. Prynne is "wandering in two minds" (640, 9), seeking in Parsegian's account the essentials in "discernibly good approximations" (640, 22-23) appropriate to himself as non-specialist. His own reflections are, by definition, literally a bouncing back and forth between mirrored explanation-interpretation-explanation in the dialectic fashion. Prynne's attention to Parsegian's account of the small-scale behaviour of physical reality in which action and reaction engender the field, acts as prompt in this moment of the poem towards other considerations: "Their spontaneous cries in this field told him an older tale" (*Poems* 641, 21). Prynne will pursue this older tale of historical philosophical reflections on the distinctions between being and non-being, through classical writers (Leucippus, Parmenides, Melissos of Samos, Aristotle, among others listed in Prynne's "Reference cues") as the poem develops. As for the scientific connection, a dozen lines later Prynne is referring to "zero-point" (641, 34) and he will use the word zero, both with and without the word point, as noun and adjective over a dozen times in the poem.

Parsegian's text clearly confirms for Prynne that, in addition to the nineteenth century's statistical indeterminism, on the twentieth century side of the physical and conceptual boundary lie the contributions of quantum-mechanical indeterminacies to the inter-particle interactions at the molecular, and therefore material, scale. The issues are familiar. Classical analogues such as position, momentum, and electromagnetic field strength, are typically assumed for the sub-atomic (quantized) components of charged or partially charged atoms or molecules in a material, as if these are meaningful identifiers in a quantum world for which we have no actual independent confirmation. Parsegian supplies the analytical approximations that quantify those contributions to the charge-fluctuation forces. The ontological conundrum for the materialist Prynne comes in the quantum-scale inherent-indeterminism's incompatibility with a materialist

dialectic; in other words, in the absence of clear cause-and-effect relationships at the quantum scale. Nonetheless, as Parsegian makes clear, both the deterministic (although untraceable) plus the inherently indeterministic factors together both function as contributors to overall charge-fluctuation forces, co-operating through action and reaction at the molecular scale.

Following the first zero reference, Prynne returns to Parsegian as a direct source after several pages of poet's prose in which the poem quotes from Mao's dialectics of contradiction and Alban Berg's lecture on *Wozzeck*. The Parsegian quotation is then the first explicit mention of Heisenberg's principle, here as part of the poem's fourth indented paragraph:

". . . The zero-point fluctuation is an immediate consequence of the uncertainty principle. Observed for a time inverse to its frequency, an electro-magnetic mode or degree of freedom has an uncertainty in its corresponding energy, an uncertainty proportional to the time of observation" (*Poems* 649, 1-6; Parsegian 284)

The poem will subsequently express a consequence of Heisenberg's indeterminacy, in measurement problem guise, as "you do not see into the life of things, dimensionless or not, except by harvest of data plotted against uncertainty" (655, 38-39) and: "appearance is determined by uncertain spectral data..." (653, 41). The physicist will point out that all observations are made within limits of defined accuracy (uncertainty) but will also surmise it is the deeper indeterminacy inherent to the quantum mechanical formulation that most disturbs Prynne. The poem evolves in part into an exploration of the concepts prompted through the word zero, appearing as it does fourteen times in a range of semantic associations which focus repeatedly and deeply on the notions of nothing, of emptiness, and of being which arises out of nothing in virtual form. While absolute zero as a gross measure of the minimum material temperature is familiar, zero-point energy is perhaps less so, being the residual energy that even the coldest of quantum (and therefore inherently indeterminate) entities might display. Parsegian confirms that in distinguishing causal from indeterminate contributions to charge-fluctuation forces, "zero-point electromagnetic-field fluctuations in a vacuum are as valid as fluctuations viewed in terms of charge motions" (Parsegian 9). This energy concept derives from the work of Henrik Casimir who was first to calculate the electromagnetic energy of interaction between surfaces in 1948. Prompted by Niels Bohr, Casimir's insights led him to understand that the baseline zero energy value (the energy at a theoretical infinite separation between surfaces necessary for his calculation) actually equates to the zero-point electromagnetic field fluctuations in a vacuum, and specifically as fluctuations viewed in terms of charge motions. A resulting pressure can be envisaged unexpectedly generated in a vacuum as arising from virtual particle impacts, or alternatively as generated by vibrations in the quantized electromagnetic field. Unlike the simulated and immersive virtual world of popular usage, virtual particles are as conceptually real to the physicist as any other as they are envisaged popping in and out of indeterminate existence at quantum scales, facilitating energy exchange, not observable, not therefore measurable, but nonetheless with individually calculable properties. Parsegian points out that Heisenberg's uncertainty relation (mathematically expressed) predicts this infinitely incalculable (because indeterminate) non-zero value for zero-point energy that arises from the fluctuations,

hence a "vacuum infinity" of virtual electromagnetic particles or "waves that bathe us" (Parsegian 10).

In the poem's reflections on nothing, the reader is taken back to consider a state of non-being: "I saw back to nothing" (648, 11) immediately prior to the previous Parsegian quote ("the zero-point fluctuation . . ." (649, 1)). That quote is followed by a reference to the "many whites" (649, 14) in a quotation from Aristotle's *Physics*, white as representing nothingness, white as the mix of visible frequencies in sunlight, white as multiple, not unique as an absorbing-reflecting surface (envisaged perhaps as a selection of Robert Ryman paintings). Having planted ideas of vibrations, fluctuations, zero-point uncertainties, and the blankness of empty-not-empty fields fading away with time and distance, the poem takes us back to nothing: "this field of being . . . is it full or empty or changing through time . . . if hardly can be spoken of" (649, 13), reminiscent of Laozi's enigmatic Daoist commentary. The poem continues: "there is no place void of being, for the void is nothing" (649, 26) and nothing which if not existing "must be full of non-existence" (649, 34), having a "brim" between itself and all that is not void, and "not nameless but at its natural frequency" (649, 36), its vibration and fluctuation. Prynne invokes "the song of birds that do not sing" (649, 38) before leading to a "deeper level" in which "all these charge or field fluctuations . . . occur spontaneously in a vacuum devoid of matter" (649, 42; 650, 3). This is the scientific fact to be set against "Parmenides's thesis that Being could never emerge *ex nihilo*" (Purves 145). The poem then takes the reader "downward to darkness" (650, 3), to "be in thought's realm full of emptiness as a jug from which water is or has been poured, not in time only but by logic of regularity as, is the inside space jug-shaped whether full or empty, in habit water or non-water" (650, 9). From out of thought's emptiness, "each word feels out for the next [with] its soft vibration" (650, 34), before quoting Mao: "each of the contradictory aspects within a thing" transforms "itself into its opposite" (651, 26). From this mesh of diverse speculative threads, the first-person persona speaks again: "I saw these gaps of explanation" (651, 29), "I saw the grains" (651, 27), "I saw this notion" (651, 31). Prynne is exploring, offering, debating, and undermining notions that link to what is and is not observable, and what we imagine the void which-is-not-empty and the nothing-that-is-not-nothing to be. The physicist John Bell conjured a term for those entities that might or might not exist at the quantum scale, observable or not; he called them "be-ables" (from "maybe-ables", Bell 52), potentially real at least for the purposes of theoretical exploration of observed effects.

If we choose to accept classically correlated characteristics for quantum phenomena, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle is commonly expressed through the relationship between position and momentum (certainty in one defining both the measurable and inherent uncertainty in the other); it is equally true for the relationship between energy and time in an evolving quantum mechanical system (such as a fluctuating or vibrating one). Since the latter relationship is an inverse one, the shorter the time (equating to the higher the fluctuation frequency) the higher its energy, and potentially this tends towards a physically impossible infinite value, hence so-called vacuum infinity. This is the description that Prynne uses. He does, however, add his own imaginative addendum to Parsegian's "vacuum infinity of virtual electromagnetic waves" (Parsegian 10; *Poems* 640, 32) with "provoked and then quelled in reciprocal perturbation" (640, 32-33), these last two words a rewrite of Parsegian who prefers "mutual" to "reciprocal" (Parsegian 7, 2). Prynne doubtless found a more proactive dialectical exchange in his own choice of word. A reciprocity of mutually emitted and absorbed vibrations at resonating charge-fluctuation frequencies is the overall picture, most energetically within condensed phases (liquids and solids). This reciprocity is an

example of a physical dialectic which fits what was perhaps Prynne's prior ontological preference for a natural dialectic. Recalling a previously noted quote from Parsegian's book: "The natural motions of the charges within a material will necessarily create electric fields whose time-varying spectral properties are those known from how the materials absorb the energy of applied fields" (Parsegian 242; *Poems* 640, 33-36), this fluctuation-dissipation process recognizes that the frequencies of externally applied electromagnetic waves that are absorbed experimentally mirror the frequencies of charge-fluctuations of the resonating particles within the material and re-emphasizes an action-reaction dialectic in operation. It is difficult for the reader not to find a metaphor in this for the poem's own semantic emergence through a fluctuation-dissipation process. Given Prynne's stated purpose in engendering poetic thought, readers are entitled, indeed expected, to identify such a resemblance whether intended by him or not.

Conclusion: "Sweet Joy Befall Thee" (*Poems* 661, 38)

The three principal foci of attention in this article are not the only motifs, but they do underpin both the form and much of the content of *Kazoo Dreamboats*. There is an inescapable tension between quantum, molecular, and functionally dialectical representations of the natural world at the larger scale, which emerge in the poem. That Prynne has found and dug down into these ontological and epistemological difficulties in conjuring this lengthy and complex poem, bears witness to his exceptional place among contemporary poets. Given the intense mix of language as prompts to conceptual meaning-making in the poem, Gerald Bruns has suggested that "acute parataxis is the poetic equivalent of scientific complexity" (64). One might quibble, since complexity is the reality, not merely a function of descriptive method, even the scientific, but certainly *Kazoo Dreamboats* enacts the indeterminacy while perhaps paradoxically offering multiple unitary ideas with which to thread a way. As already mentioned, Prynne has discussed notions of poetic thought and the nature of language as "produced by meaning" in the spirit of contemporary cognitive linguistics, speaking and writing a few years before his poem of 2011 ("Poetic Thought" 598-599). His objectification of a poet's oeuvre "brought into being by recognition and contest with the whole cultural system of a language" (598) leads subsequently beyond "the domain of the language system" (599). The impact of the poetic artefact that is *Kazoo Dreamboats* is to both contrast and enact that beyond, and it understandably left Prynne himself "in a great confusion of mind" as "the most disordering work I've ever composed" (*Paris Review* 196). Perhaps Prynne's lifetime of evaluating and valuing "philosophy, poetry and history" (Bruns 67) is contradicted by that which he has come to understand from science about the underlying nature of the cosmos. A modernist poem need offer no neat conclusions. *Kazoo Dreamboats* (or, *On What There Is*) certainly does not; all questions are left open. For the anxious, faced with chance behaviour apparently undermining cause, effect and purpose, bleak conclusions might be drawn. Yet human behaviour need not be ruled by analogy with an indeterminacy in the micro-world; determinism is everywhere in evidence at the human scale. Perhaps we can therefore take simple pleasure in Prynne's acute poetic questioning and relish his final invocation:

To be this with sweet
 song and dance in the exit dream, sweet joy befall thee is by
 rotation been and gone into some world of light exchange, toiling
 and spinning and probably grateful, in this song. (661, 37-40)

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