Maximus to Gloucester, Letter 27 [withheld]

I come back to the geography of it,
the land falling off to the left
where my father shot his scabby golf
and the rest of us played baseball
into the summer darkness until no flies
could be seen and we came home
to our various piazzas where the women buzzed

To the left the land fell to the city,
to the right, it fell to the sea

I was so young my first memory
is of a tent spread to feed lobsters
to Rexall conventioneers, and my father,
a man for kicks, came out of the tent roaring
with a bread-knife in his teeth to take care of
a druggist they'd told him had made a pass at
my mother, she laughing, so sure, as round
as her face, Hines pink and apple,
under one of those frame hats women then

This, is no bare incoming
of novel abstract form, this

is no welter or the forms
of those events, this,

Greeks, is the stopping
of the battle

It is the imposing
of all those antecedent precessions, the precessions
of me, the generation of those facts
which are my words, it is coming

from all that I no longer am, yet am,
the slow westward motion of
more than I am

There is no strict personal order
for my inheritance.

No Greek will be able
to discriminate my body.

An American
is a complex of occasions,
themselves a geometry
of spatial nature.

I have this sense,
that I am one
with my skin

Plus this—plus this:
that forever the geography
which leans in
on me I compell
backwards I compell Gloucester
to yield, to
change

Polis
is this