

It is this triumphant note of Democracy that attracts Walt Whitman's warmest and wisest admirers. Let me quote from "Democratic Vistas" a passage which summons the best in all of us to action: "We have frequently printed the word Democracy. Yet I cannot too often repeat that it is a word the real gist of which still sleeps, quite unawakened, notwithstanding the resonance and the many angry tempests out of which its syllables have come, from pen or tongue. It is a great word, whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted. It is, in some sort, younger brother of another great and often-used word, Nature, whose history also awaits unwritten. As I perceive, the tendencies of our day, in the States (and I entirely respect them) are toward those vast and sweeping movements, influences, moral and physical, of humanity, now and always current over the planet, on the scale of the impulses of the elements. Then it is also good to reduce the whole matter to the consideration of a single self, a man, a woman, on permanent grounds. Even for the treatment of the universal, in politics, metaphysics, or anything sooner or later we come down to one single, solitary soul. There is, in sanest hours, a consciousness, a thought that rises, independent, lifted out from all else, calm, like the stars, shining eternal. This is the thought of identity—yours for you, whoever you are, as mine for me. Miracle of miracles, beyond statement, most spiritual and vaguest of earth's dreams, yet hardest basic fact, and only entrance to all facts. In such devout hours, in the midst of the significant wonders of heaven and earth (significant only because of the Me in the centre) creeds, conventions, fall away and become of no account before this simple idea. Under the luminousness of real vision, it alone takes possession, takes value. Like the shadowy dwarf in the fable, once liberated and looked upon, it expands over the whole earth, and spreads to the roof of heaven. The quality of BEING, in the object's self, according to its own central idea and purpose, and of growing therefrom and thereto—not criticism by other standards and adjustments thereto—is the lesson of Nature."

Cosmopolitanism, though not merely citizenship of the world, but of the whole universe, the visible and invisible cosmos, is thus in Whitman an elemental principle. He walks with God, but he is not confined to the cool of the day or the garden of Eden. "No array of terms," he interjects, "can say how much I am at peace about God and about death." And the deeper truth is not