

II

Bart saw them for himself, the palm-cooled isles,
The estuaries claimed. And having gained
Them, how Cris coveted his driving dream
To push ahead for what his stubbornness
Still swore was near-- the glory-goods of China.

His words became a sword, to dub or slay,
He helped himself to natives like fish caught
In nets, or timber cut for ship repair.
He gathered sample people to display
In Castile's courts as one more future resource.

Where booted feet erased the bare-soled prints
Of centuries, one brother's voice proclaimed
That all was now possessed by lighter hands
Whose grasp would mutate races, cultures, gods--
And repaint continental palimpsests.

III

Bartholomew was not surprised to see
The ship arrive, the writ for their arrest.
The New World colony had failed. The sight
of Cris in chains disturbed him, yet his prayer
Was only to go home, make peace with God

And die.