**3. Bullocky**

[Judith Wright, from *The Moving Image*, 1946)

Beside his heavy-shouldered team

thirsty with drought and chilled with rain,

he weathered all the striding years

till they ran widdershins in his brain:

Till the long solitary tracks

etched deeper with each lurching load

were populous before his eyes,

and fiends and angels used his road.

All the long straining journey grew

a mad apocalyptic dream,

and he old Moses, and the slaves

his suffering and stubborn team.

Then in his evening camp beneath

the half-light pillars of the trees

he filled the steepled cone of night

with shouted prayers and prophecies.

While past the campfire's crimson ring

the star struck darkness cupped him round.

and centuries of cattle-bells

rang with their sweet uneasy sound.

Grass is across the wagon-tracks,

and plough strikes bone beneath the grass,

and vineyards cover all the slopes

where the dead teams were used to pass.

O vine, grow close upon that bone

and hold it with your rooted hand.

The prophet Moses feeds the grape,

and fruitful is the Promised Land.