

## Apotheosis Of Sand

Push your empire to the oceans.  
You will not live to see the stars move.  
I take the counselors  
in your night sky  
and reshape them into fools.

Stamp your features on a coin.  
I am a billion changing hands—  
paupers' hands, no less—  
to wear your likeness down  
to a second infancy.

The mother veins you mined from  
await their children's return,  
washed back to them as the ores  
you spent your reign learning to smelt.  
I need but rain and air.

There is no tempering  
to keep your blades from me.  
My blades are millennia.  
I will not sheathe them  
to hear the boasts of your gods.  
I split gods into sigils  
and give to each the dead  
of conquered tribes

who see now in their silence  
what you have yet to see  
in your proudest roofs, your grasping columns,  
your mirrors hung and the carved language of your rule—  
the articulations of sand.

Let your most gilded age assure you:  
in my wastes are dunes enough  
to choke the halls  
of your most distant  
and renowned seed.

by Aron Bernstein