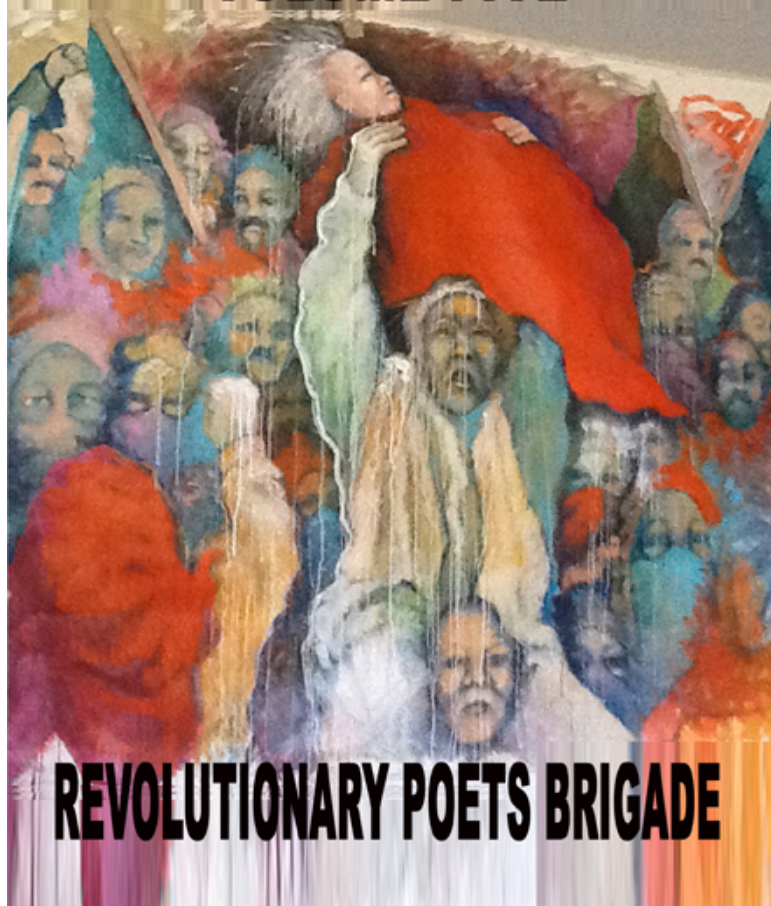


OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

VOLUME FIVE



REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

Volume Five

Edited by

Jack Hirschman

Rosemary Manno

John Curl

Special thanks to all who
made generous contributions to this publication.

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM
Volume Five

Revolutionary Poets Brigade

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ISBN-978-0-578-12735-4

Kallatumba Press
858A Union Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

<http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.org/>

Cover Painting by Dorothy Payne: *Freedom*

Printed in the United States of America.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ...	9
OPAL PALMER ADISA ...	10
ROBERT ANBIAN ...	11
LILIANA ARENA (ITALY) ...	12
HANAN AWWAD (PALESTINE) ...	14
AYO AYOOLA-AMALE (NIGERIA) ...	18
IDLIR AZIZAJ (ALBANIA) ...	20
MAHNAZ BADIHIAN (IRAN) ...	24
LISBIT BAILEY ...	26
ALESSANDRA BAVA (ITALY) ...	27
ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU (TURKEY) ...	28
LINCOLN BERGMAN ...	34
JUDITH AYN BERNHARD ...	38
CHARLES CURTIS BLACKWELL ...	40
JOHN BRANDI ...	41
KRISTINA BROWN ...	42
FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO (ITALY) ...	44
TOM BURON (FRANCE) ...	46
YOLANDA CATZALCO ...	50
NEELI CHERKOVSKI ...	52
DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA ...	53
MARCO CINQUE (ITALY) ...	56
BOBBY COLEMAN ...	62
FRANCIS COMBES (FRANCE) ...	64
JUANITA CONEJERO (CUBA) ...	66
PAULINE CRAIG ...	68
WILLIAM CROSSMAN ...	72
THOMAS RAIN CROWE ...	73
ANITA ODENA CRUZ ...	75
ROMEO ALCALA CRUZ ...	77
JOHN CURL ...	80
NAJWAN DARWISH (PALESTINE) ...	82
DIEGO DE LEO ...	85

CAROL DENNEY ... 86
TONGO EISEN-MARTIN ... 87
ELIAS ... 89
AGNETA FALK ... 91
MAURO FORTISSIMO ... 92
ARNOLDO GARCIA ... 94
JUSUF GERVALLA (KOSOVO) ... 96
KATERINA GOGOU (GREECE) ... 98
RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ ... 100
ADAM GOTTLIEB ... 102
RENÉE GREGORIO ... 103
BRUNO GULLÌ ... 106
MARTIN HICKEL ... 107
GARY HICKS ... 108
JACK HIRSCHMAN ... 109
ANTONELLA IASCHI (ITALY) ... 112
BRUCE ISAACSON ... 118
MAMADOU KANE (GUINEA) ... 120
DAN KATZ ... 122
JAZRA KHALEED (GREECE) ... 124
GENNY LIM ... 128
MARK LIPMAN ... 130
ANGELINA LLONGUERAS (CATALUNYA) ... 132
EMANUELE LONGHI (ITALY) ... 136
KAREN MELANDER MAGOON ... 138
JIDI MAJIA (CHINA) ... 140
DEVORAH MAJOR ... 144
ROSEMARY MANNO ... 147
ELIZABETH MARINO ... 149
JOSEPH AFROABORIGINAL MARTINEZ II ... 151
PIPPA MARZULLI (ITALY) ... 152
VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY (RUSSIA/USSR) ... 154
SARAH MENEFEE ... 158
JANICE MIRIKITANI ... 160
JUAN LOPEZ MORALES (MEXICO) ... 162
NANCY MOREJÓN (CUBA) ... 168
ALEJANDRO MURGUÍA ... 170

MAJID NAFICY (IRAN) ...	172
BILL NEVINS ...	174
JIM NORMINGTON ...	175
EDOARDO OLMI (ITALY) ...	178
GREGORY POND ...	182
JEANNE POWELL ...	183
JAMI PROCTOR-XU ...	184
ALBERTO RAMUNDO (ITALY) ...	186
FERNANDO RENDON (COLOMBIA) ...	188
LEW ROSENBAUM ...	192
E.SAN JUAN, JR. (THE PHILIPPINES) ...	194
NATACHA SANTIAGO (CUBA) ...	198
FRANCISCO MORALES SANTOS (GUATE) ...	202
SANDRO SARDELLA (ITALY) ...	204
RATI SAXENA (INDIA) ...	211
JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER (GERMANY) ...	214
STEPHEN SCHUR ...	216
NINA SERRANO ...	218
DANNY SHOT ...	220
KIM SHUCK ...	224
JULIA STEIN ...	226
TONTONGI (HAITI) ...	228
RAYMOND NAT TURNER...	236
DAVID VOLPENDESTA ...	238
TOSHI WASHIZU ...	241
NELLIE WONG ...	243
MARVIN X ...	246
ERIC ALLEN YANKEE ...	249
TIM YOUNG ...	250
LORENE ZAROU-ZOUZOUNIS ...	251
ANDRENA ZAWINSKI ...	253
DIANA ZWINAK ...	255
BIOGRAPHIC NOTES ...	258

GRAPHICS

DOROTHY PAYNE

Freedom

... Cover

NANCY CALEF

It's 10 A.M. Do You Know Where Your Parents Are?

... Page 39

AGNETA FALK

Put Your Ear To The Wall And Listen

... Page 159

SANDRO SARDELLA

High Flight Of The Refugees

... Page 225

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

Volume Five

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 5th anthology of *Overthrowing Capitalism*.

This multilingual collection of poets from many countries reflects planetary resistance to the misery that global capitalism is relentlessly inflicting upon the peoples of the world. Anything less than an international response would not reflect the enormity of our solidarity as poets. These poems speak urgently of the international class struggle for revolution and social justice as the very essence of truth and beauty, the struggle to topple the open fascistic dimensions rising today. So it's only fitting that we dedicate this issue to Karl Marx on his 200th birthday, as well as to Vladimir Mayakovsky on his 125th birthday, whose poem *About Trash* we publish here.

We thank all the poets who have contributed to this anthology, a number of whom are members of Revolutionary Poets Brigades in other cities and countries. The first Brigade was founded here in San Francisco nine years ago, and there are now fourteen Revolutionary Poets Brigades.

The poets in this anthology embody an historical memory as vast as our solidarity, as deep as all the struggles of the past that sought to liberate humanity from the scourges of war, racism, sexism, plunder of the environment, of capitalism's religion of money. Toward this same goal of overthrowing capitalism we say, with the poets in this anthology: Not one step back!

Rosemary Manno, John Curl, Jack Hirschman
Editors, RPB of San Francisco

OPAL PALMER ADISA

PARADIGM SHIFT

when your proverbial cup
has spilled over into a bowl
a bathtub a swimming pool
an island where the inhabitants
no longer have access to the beaches

when you can no longer count
your clothes shoes jewelry cars houses
when everything you want and desire
is at your fingertips

then perhaps you have more than enough
then perhaps sharing should be your daily bread
then perhaps it's not enough to attribute what you possess
to luck hard work inheritance merger consolidation
then perhaps it's time to nurse out the meaning of exploitation
excess greedy corruption the scale being tipped in the wrong
direction

a proverbial cup
spills spilling over

a family of five
children and parents
in the fields before the sun
blinks its eyes until darkness is a screen

a society
where the food
from that family
is feed to the dogs
of the cup owner

and the path that
should connect them
is secured by armed guards
dogs trained to delimb
fences spiked with electricity
a society reveling in its capital.

ROBERT ANBIAN

LA VIDA ES SUEÑO

Her day begins at the hour it ends.
She leaves work at 7 a.m., picks up the kids
from her ex-father-in-law's house.
At home, she heats up yesterday's soup
for breakfast. She heats water for the kids' baths,
takes their uniforms down from the clothesline.
They're good kids but, like all kids,
they squabble, slowing everything down.
She walks the boy and girl to school, shops
for food on the way home. She cleans house,
cooks dinner for the kids and their grandpa to have that night.
Sometimes, while cutting vegetables, she dozes at the table.
At 4 p.m., she returns to the school to walk the kids home.
It's a neighborhood of families, but the older youths make the
 /streets dangerous.

Their parents should make them stay in school.
But a parent who can barely keep tortillas and eggs in the house
has no authority over a teenager.
Sometimes she plays with the kids before getting ready for work.
Sometimes she gets an hour or two of sleep.
Sometimes she just goes off to work.
She makes \$11 a day.
It takes two hours to earn a gallon of milk.

LILIANA ARENA (ITALY)

APRIRO' LA MIA PRIGIONE CON UNA PENNA

Apriro' la mia prigione con una penna
porterò con me Saramago e la sua Cecità
scriverò dei nostri due cervelli
e del cervello dell'uomo economicus
usurpatore della nostra cultura
(addio umanesimo! addio umanità!)
laddove una politica mondiale
ci vuole incapaci e inconsapevoli.
Tingerò di nero la mia invettiva
all'ego patriarcale che ha ucciso la donna serpente.
La mia, una rivoluzione
che non sarà politica, ideologica o religiosa
la mia, una rivoluzione di coscienza.
Combatterò la paralisi con il risveglio
non rinuncerò al pensiero utopico
e come quando gli elefanti vanno a morire
vivro' il deserto che da voi mi separa.

LILIANA ARENA (ITALY)

I WILL OPEN MY DOOR WITH A PEN

I will open my door with a pen
I will bring with me Saramago and his “Blindness”
I will write about our two minds
and about *homo economicus'* brain
usurper of our culture.
(Farewell Humanism! Farewell Humanity!)
wherever global politics
wants us incompetent and unconscious.
I will paint my invective black
for the patriarchal ego that killed the snake woman.
Mine is a revolution
that's not political, ideological or religious;
mine is a revolution of conscience.
I will fight the paralysis with the awakening
I will not give in to utopian thinking
and like when elephants go to die
I will live the desert that divides you from me.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

HANAN AWWAD (PALESTINE)

انتماء

...أحب انتسابي اليك
،أحب دمي حين يمضي
،ويمضي
،ويخترق الصعب، والمعجزات
ويكبر بين يديك
...أحب انتسابي اليك

،أنا منك،أبدأ عمري
،وأبدأ أغنيتي
،أو تشيدي
،ومني اليك
،ومنك اليك
،أخاف عليك
..أحب انتسابي اليك

،ويحملني الشوق
..في شفتي كلام
،يعانق نبض الحياة
..وهمس الشفله لديك
،ويطربني العشق
، في مقلتي
،دموع يعانقها الحزن
...في مقلتيك

أحبك يا قمر ا
،في الظلام يطل علي
،ويشعل نار الكلام
..على شفتي

..أحب انتسابي اليك
وأفرح لما يداعب موج الغدير
،يديك
،ويدنو النسيم عليا

HANAN AWWAD (PALESTINE)

BELONGING

(To the Homeland)

I love belonging to you,
Love it when my blood pulses and pulses
And goes through hardship and miracles
And grows between your hands
I love belonging to you

I'm from you, where I begin my life and my song;
My anthem's from me to you
And from you to you
I fear for you
I love belonging to you
My longing sustains me.

On my lips there are words
That hug the pulse of life
And the whisper on your lips
And your love soothes me;
In my eyes lay tears of yours
embraced by sadness.

I love you, moon
That lights the darkness over me,
And the fire of words on my lips.
I love belonging to you
And rejoice when the rills of a creek
Fondle your hands
And a breeze blows purely
And that a star walks with us
And that flowers embrace us constantly
And the dew from your brow slowly develops
At night.

،وأفرح لو سار في دربنا النجم
...لو عانقتنا الزهور طويلا
،والمح خلف اللقاء جبينك
،في ظلمة الليل
..يأتي
.. قليلا .. قليلا

حبيبي، الذي طال فيه انتظاري
حبيبي، الذي طال في اصطباري
حبيبي، الذي خاض كل الحروب وأشعل ناري
حبيبي، الذي طاول الموج عنفا وصبرا
وحطم أغلال سجني
..ونور بيتي وداري

وعند حدود بحرك ينتهي السفر
وعند حدود صبرك ينحني القدر
،حبيبي، لو علمت
ونحوك المشوار يختصر
..وعند لقائنا الموعد أنتظر
،حبيبي أزهر الشجر
،حبيبي والهوى مطر
، حبيبي، كل ما في الكون
،أنت الكون
،أنت العمر
.أنت الشمس والقمر

My love, whom I've waited so long for
My love, who's fought all the wars and ignited me
My love, who resisted the waves aggressively
And patiently destroyed the walls of my prison
And brought light to my home

At the border of your sea the voyage ends
At the border of your patience, fate bends
If you only knew, my love,
That the voyage toward you shortens,
I'm waiting for our promised reunion:
My love trees have blossomed
My love clouds have rained
My love, all that's in the universe—
You're the universe
You are life
You're the sun and the moon.

(Translated from Palestinian Arabic by Fady Zoubi)

AYO AYOOLA-AMALE (NIGERIA)

STARVED SEEDS

On every farmland I've seen huge men mourn
on a cliff in the dark; they're not on the same page as their
farm masters,
who put nothing before everything

The unknown abyss lays
claim, then reclaims everything, then wallows in
economic
bondage.

these great men Trying to untangle the frozen
minds
they dig up the seeds and listen for a long time They
grow/they ripen/ yet are starving They grumble about
enduring the decaying brittle fruits They follow/
they talk/they scream/ yet they live in the foliage like
cold fire; numb and limp they swear to defeat
materialism To save
The Sick,
The Dying

The
Homeless,

The Hopeless, The Beaches The
Trees

The Dolphins The Pandas The Ozone The Eagles, all a
part of us. From prison in disbelief, their struggles
watered, new seeds bloomed,
withered lives blossomed

Yet though their privileged wept over the death of
domination, inequality, and non-human
possessions

I've seen our communities
sprout
on a throne of life. They're breathing.

IDLIR AZIZAJ (ALBANIA)

ME RETE VEC...

A pati nazizëm
sepse kishte “ardhur”
koha e hapësirës? Apo
themi sot gjithë kohën ‘hapësirë, hapësirë’
ngaqë nazizmi sidoqoftë ndodhi,
dhe nga ish përqëndrimi na takon të flasim
për hapësirë kudo ku ka Shoqëri?
Atëherë pse ka ‘difference’ si dhe ‘alterité’
(pra alter-ego të vetë Shoqërisë)
kur në majë të gjuhës kemi vetëm ‘hapësirë’?
Apo në epokën totale të hapësirës
ka vetëm rëndësi pasja e hapësirës
për pyetje nga të gjithë
paçka se kush e ka rubinetin e kohës së përgjigjes,
pavarësisht sub-nazizmit
kur Shoqëria përqëndrohet te “diçka” pikërisht?
Por ama: a është Shoqëria pjesë e hapësirës
(kur Shoqëria, edhe in situ, s’mund të jetë
mirëfilli hapësirë?)

Fundin s’ia gjen kush,
por si përfundim: nëse ka totalisht hapësirë
(siç kishte dhe “barbarë për t’u ëndërruar”
në “kohën e Greqisë së lashtë) atëherë
si është e mundur të ketë mirëfilli Shoqëri?
Apo vallë ngase Shoqëria ka gërma,
e gërmat zënë vend kur shkruhen?
Mirëpo mbetet fakti se merr kohë
gjithsesi t’i shkruash ato gërmat.
Ndërkohë që gërmat janë secila veç të ndara.
Ndryshe thonë s’do kish “kuptim”
pra s’do kishte dot as term Shoqëri!?

IDLIR AZIZAJ (ALBANIA)

THE CLOUDS BUT...

Where there the Nazis
because the time
of space had cum? Or
since Nazism happened just the same
and because of the “concentration” the Cherokees
experienced the first we repeat “space, space”.
All the time, considering this parrot
a duty anywhere Society ist?
How come ‘difference’ and ‘alterity’ exist
(the Society’s alter-egos)
while the word ‘space’ is at the tip of our tongue?
Or, is it that in the Space Age,
while we pretend that each one has a little vital space
Is just raising a question,
all that matters, without
considering: who possesses the time-source
for getting any answers? and despite the sub-Nazisms
that flower any time must Society “concentrate” on a
special issue?
Yet: is Society itself part of the space
(while even in situ Society couldn’t
be an authentic space)?
No one has the last word,
but, to wrap it up: if there’s space, totally,
(as there were ’barbarians to dream of’
at the time of the old Greeks) how then
is it possible for Society to rightfully be?
Is it because Society too is a pack of letters,
and they occupy some space when we jot them down?
Fact remains that time’s needed
to write down those letters.
While each letter exists in itself on a page—
drotherwise there’d be no meaning,

Këto pyetje në qiellin tim intim
Ngjajnë me retë veç në mendje
Ku horizonti tretet si vesë;
Ose zogu me vajin aq pulitës
Mes territ-shtresë.

they say—hence the term “Society” wouldn’t exist itself!

These questions that float in my intimate sky
seem like clouds, but in the mind
where the horizon fades,
or a bird’s crying sleep
among deep-reality* shades

(Translated from Albanian by the Author)

Note: this last strophe is inspired by the last strophe of Yeats’ “The Tower”. ‘deep reality’ means, in computer science lingo, our everyday reality, to distinguish it from virtual reality.

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN (IRAN)

گمشده در خرابه های بعلبک

شیر جاری از پستانشان
و اشگ جاری از چشم ها شان
وقتی نوزادرا از آغوششان گرفتند
تا آنها را در قفس های اداره ی مهاجرت بگذارند

شاید بهمین خاطر است که حس کردم
در خرابه های بعلبک گم شده ام
بدنبال درسهایی از تاریخ
بین مجسمه های پر عظمت شکسته
و گفتگو با بوکاس خدای شراب

یا پنهان شدن در پمپی شهر سوخته
بدنبال شعری نو و یا هنری برای التیام حسرتها
یا پرسه زدن در آرامش بازار اصفهان
که دعوت میکند همه را به خلسه ی آرامش، فرهنگ و سادگی

اما می دانم که گم شده بودم در تصور بودن بین
کمپ های باورنکردنی دردآلود گریه ی مداوم بچه هایی
که از پدر و مادر جدا شده بودند

گم شده بودم در تصور دیدن
چشم های وحشتزده ی کودکان بهت زده
که نمیدانند گناهشان چه بوده

شوک و خشم این کودکان
به قلبم رخنه میکند
و گم می شوم در سیاهی این جنایت
که می افزاید به چهره ی زشت برده داری

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN (IRAN)

LOST IN RUINS OF BAALBEK

Milk dripping from their breast
tears dripping from their eyes
infants ripped from their arms
to be placed in immigration cages

Maybe that's why I felt lost
in the ruins of Baalbek
looking for lessons from history
between those glorious ancient
broken statues
talking to Bacchus, god of wine

Or hiding in Pompeii a burnt city
searching for a new poem or art
to treat my sorrows

Or wondering in the calm Bazaar of Isfahan
that welcomes everyone to the
ecstasy of culture, art and simplicity

But I know I was lost imagining myself
in the camps between devastating pain
of the wailing immigrant kids
taken from their parents

I was lost imagining their scared eyes
in those cages, confused
not knowing what was their crime

The shock and anger of those children
seeping through my heart
I will be lost in the darkness of this crime
which adds up to the ugly face of slavery.

(Translated from Farsi by the Author)

LISBIT BAILEY

I THINK OF CUBA

I think of Cuba
A different standard of living
Equal in needs met
Shelter food work education healthcare

Appearances can be deceiving
I don't know her people

But I have to think I want to believe
In the absence of things and stuff and detritus
That the bonds of community
Join the people in a way that
We here in America are too poor
to know or accept as fact

Because I want the people of Cuba
With their Great Love gone
To still find it
Like it was there all along

Like America with its great dream gone
We can still find it
Redefine it
It's never too late
Except maybe for capitalism.

ALESSANDRA BAVA (ITALY)

RAGING POEM

I carry this raging poem behind me, a clanking plough
working its way through the lands, disseminating syllables
and dreams.

You leaders, you scum, infesting our world like weeds,
I hear the chants of fascism rattling in your throats.
You devils-in-power with your horns dyed orange,

with your white houses & pitch-black souls,
you harbingers of doom and division,
I hear you raising your voices and drowning empathy.

Hear me, this huge furrow of discontent,
this trail of blazing words,
this raging poem is for you.

I peel off my work gloves and watch it
sprout – upholstered in indignation –
a colossal, red tree of Hope.

ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU (TURKEY)

BIR GUN MUTLAKA

Bugün seviştim, yürüyüşe katıldım sonra Yorgunum, bahar geldi, silah kullanmayı öğrenmeliyim bu yaz Kitaplar birikiyor, saçlarım uzuyor,
her yerde gümbür gümbür bir telaş Gencim daha, dünyayı görmek istiyorum, öpüşmek ne güzel, düşünmek

ne güzel, bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz! Bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz, ey eski zaman sarrafları! Ey kaz kafalılar!

Ey sadrazam! Sevgilim on sekizinde bir kız, yürüyoruz bulvarda, sandviç yiyoruz,
dünyadan

konusuyoruz Çiçekler açıyor durmadan, savaşlar oluyor,
her şey nasıl bitebilir

bir bombayla, nasıl kazanabilir o kirli adamlar Uzun uzun düşünüyor, sularla yıkıyorum yüzümü, temiz bir gömlek giyiyorum

Bitecek bir gün bu zulüm, bitecek bu hân-

ı yağma Ama yorgunum şimdi, çok sigara içiyorum, sırtımda kirli bir perdesi Kalorifer dumanları çıkıyor göğse, cebimde Vietnamca şiir kitapları Dünyanın öbür ucundaki dostları düşünüyorum,

öbür ucundaki ırmakları Bir kız sessizce ölüyor, sessizce ölüyor orda Köprülerden geçiyorum, karanlık yağmurlu bir gün, yürüyorum istasyona Bu evler hüznlendiriyor beni, bu derme çatma dünya İnsanlar, motor sesleri, sis, akıp giden su Ne yapsam...
ne yapsam...

her yerde bir hüzn tortusu Alnımı soğuk bir demire dayıyorum, o eski günler geliyor aklıma Ben

de çocuktum, sevgilerim olacaktı elbette Sinema dönüşlerini düşünüyorum, annemi her şey nasıl ölebilir,

ATAOL BEHRAMOĞLU (TURKEY)

ONE DAY SURELY

Today I made love and then I joined in a march I'm exhausted,
it's spring, I've got to learn to shoot a gun this summer The
books pile up, my hair's getting long, everywhere there's a
rumble of anxiety I'm still young, I want to see the world, how
lovely it is to kiss, how lovely to think, one day surely

we'll win One day surely we'll win, you money-changers of
old, you goose-brains, you grand-vizier! My beloved is an
eighteen year-old girl, we're walking down the avenue, eating a
sandwich,

talking about the world Flowers blossom ceaselessly, the
wars go on, how can everything end with a bomb, how

can they win, those filthy men Long I ponder, I wash my face
over and over, dress myself in a clean shirt This tyranny will
end one day, this feast of plunder will end But I'm tired now,
I'm smoking a lot, a dirty overcoat on my back Furnace smoke
rises into the sky, in my pockets books of poetry in

Vietnamese I think of my friends at the other ends of the
earth, of the rivers at its other ends A girl dies quietly, dies
quietly over there I'm crossing bridges, on a dark and rainy
day, walking to the station These houses are making me sad,
this slap-dash world People, the sounds of motors, fog, the
water flowing on What to do... what to do... everywhere the
dregs of sadness I lean my brow against cool iron, those old
days come to mind And me... I was a child, I would surely
have things to love I'm thinking about coming back from the
movies, about my mother, how can everything die,

how can someone be forgotten Oh, sky! I used to lie still
beneath you, oh you gleaming fields What to do... What to
do... later I was reading Descartes... My beard's getting long,
I'm in love with this girl, it's just a little hike to Chankaya A
Sunday, a sun-lit Sunday, how tumultuous is my heart, how I
mingle with the people A child peers from a window, a child
with great dreamy eyes

nasıl unutulur insan Ey gök! senin altında sessizce yataurdım, ey
pırıl pırıl tarlalar Ne yapsam...
ne yapsam... Dekart okuyorum sonradan... Sakallarım uzuyor, b
en bu kızı seviyorum,
ufak bir yürüyüş Çankaya'ya Bir pazar, güneşi bir pazar, nasıl c
oşuyor yüreğim,
nasıl karışıyorum insanlara Bir çocuk bakıyor pencereden hülya
lı kocaman gözlü nefis bir çocuk
Lermontov'un çocukluk fotoğraflarına benzeyen kardeşi bakıyor
sonra Ben şiir yazıyorum daktiloda, gazeteleri merak ediyorum,
kuş sesleri geliyor kulağıma Ben mütevazi bir şairim, sevgilim,
her şey coşkulandırıyor beni Sanki ağlayacak ne var bakarken b
ir halk adamına Bakıyorum adamın kulaklarına, boynuna, gözle
rine, kaşlarına,
yüzünün oynamasına Ey halk diyorum, ey çocuk, derken bende
bir ağlama İlençleyorum bütün bireyci şairleri,
hale gidiyorum portakal almaya İlençliyorum o laf kalabalıkları
nı, kurumuş yürekleri, bireyin kurtuluşunu filan İlençliyorum o
kitap kurtlarını, bağışlıyorum sonradan Uzun kış gecelerinden s
onra kim bilir nasıl olur her şey Uzun kış gecelerinden sonra, m
asallarda anlatılan Durup durup bunları düşünüyorum, bir sevin
ci bir hüznün izliyor arkadan Yüreğim ipe sapa gelmez bir bahar
göğü
Türkçe bir yürek kısaca Beklemek usandırıyor, telaşlı telaşlı bir
şeyler anlatıyorum sağda solda Bir otobüse biniyorum, inceliyo
rum bir böceği
tutarak kanatlarından merakla Yürürdüm eskiden baharda,
o yıkıntıların ve çayırın olduğu alanlara Aklıma şiiri gelirdi o
yaşlı Amerikalının sonbaharı anlatan şiiri
Çayırılar vardı o şiirde, baharı anımsatan ne
de olsa Böylece yeniden hazırlanıyorum bir coşkuya,
yeniden sokaklara fırlamaya

Then his brother looks out, who resembles the
childhood portraits of Lermontov I'm writing a poem
at the typewriter, I'm intrigued by the newspapers, the sounds
of birds come to my ears I'm a modest poet, my beloved,
everything gets me excited So what is there to cry about, when
gazing on the common man
Looking at the guy's ears, his neck, his eyes, eyebrows, the play
of his face Oh people, I say, oh child, and as I say it I feel like
crying I curse all the individualist poets, I'm going to the
marketto buy an orange I curse those chattering crowds, their
withered hearts ,the liberation of the individual and the like I
curse those bookworms, and then I forgive them all After long
winter nights, who knows how things happen After long winter
nights that are told of in legends Over and over I think on these
things, a joy follows close upon a sorrow My heart is a
changeable springtime sky, in short, a Turkish heart Waiting's
left me fed-up, I'm anxiously explaining things left and right I
get on a bus, I'm intently inspecting a bug held by the wings I
used to walk in the spring to the fields where those ruins and
pastures are His poem came to mind, that old American's poem
that told about autumn
There were meadows in that poem reminding me still of
spring So am I readying myself anew for excitement, for
rushing out again into the street To throw myself head-first off
a cliff Something large and blue left an impression on me, was
it from a film I saw, or what A hat, an anxious sky, a hot
artificial world Tell and tell, it never ends, it never ends, this
nostalgia in me I could sacrifice all my loves at one go, all
those rainy roads come to mind The smells of gasoline, damp
electric-poles, my father's plump and warm hands like brown
loaves I used to drowse, suddenly you'd look up and there's a
new film at the cinema, a new girl in town,

Kendimi atmak bir uçurumdan balıklama Büyük ve mavi bir şey izlenimi var bende, gördüğüm filmlerden mi
ne Bir şapka, telaşlı bir gök, sıcak yapay bir dünya Anlat anlat bitmiyor, bitmiyor bende ki daüssıla Bütün sevgilerimi harcayabilirim bir çırpıda, yağmurlu o yollar geliyor aklıma Benzin kokuları, ıslak direkler, babamın esmi
bir somun gibi tombul ve sıcak elleri
Uyurdum. Bir de bakmışsın yeni bir film sinemada,
şehirde yeni bir kız, kahvede yeni bir garson O üzgün ve sabahlıklı dururdu balkonda... Şimdi ne var hüznülenecek burda, nedir bu
çatlatan yüreğimi bu telaş Sanki yarın ölecek gibiyim, birazdan polisler
gelecek ya da Gelip alacaklar kitaplarımı, daktilomu, bu şiiri, sevgilimin fotoğrafını duvarda Soracaklar babanın adı ne, nerde doğdun, teşrif
eder misiniz karakola Dünyanın öbür ucundaki dostları düşünüyorum, öbür
ucundaki ırmakları Bir kız sessizce ölüyor, sessizce ölüyor Vietnam'da Ağlayarak bir yürek resmi çiziyorum havaya Uyanıyorum ağlayarak, bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz! Bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz, ey ithalatçılar,
ihracatçılar, ey şeyhülislam! Bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz! Bir gün mutlaka yeneceğiz!
Bunu söyleyeceğiz
bin defa! Sonra bin defa daha, sonra bin defa daha, çoğaltacağız marşlarla Ben ve sevgilim ve arkadaşlar yürüyeceğiz bulvarda
Yürüyeceğiz yeniden yaratılmanın coşkusuyla Yürüyeceğiz çoğala çoğala...

a new waiter at the coffee shop She would stand there on the balcony in her dressing-gown melancholy Ok, so what is there to be sad about in this, why this throbbing heart, this anxiety It seems like I'll die tomorrow, the police will come a little later, or else They'll come and take my books, my typewriter, this poem, the picture of my beloved on the wall They'll ask my father's name, where I was born, and, if you would be so kind, down to the station I think about my friends at the other ends of the earth the rivers at its other ends A girl dies quietly, dies quietly in Vietnam Weeping, I draw the image of a heart in the air I wake up crying, one day surely we must win One day surely we will defeat you, oh you importers, exporters, oh you great cleric of Islam One day surely we'll defeat you, one day surely we'll defeat you, we'll say it a thousand times Then a thousand times more, then a thousand times more, we'll multiply it with marching songs I and my beloved and my friends we will all march down the boulevard We will march with the enthusiasm of being created a new Ever multiplying we will march...

(Translated from Turkish by Walter G. Andrews)

LINCOLN BERGMAN

THE TRUMPS

I.

HEAR the thumping of the trumps
Lying trumps!
What a hellish heap of hatred stinking in the dumps
How it bumps lumps pumps,
A most distressing sight
As the newscasts over-sprinkle
Media steps up its hoodwinkle
With a macho urge to fight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In imperialistic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so scarily just thumps
From the trumps, trumps, trumps, trumps
Trumps, trumps, trumps
From oppression and repression of the trumps.

II.

Hear the wiseguy macho trumps
Fascist trumps
What a racist exclamation their rhetoric up-pumps
Through polluted air of night
How they bully with armed might
Stir up anger, hate, and fright
Sing false patriotic songs — out of tune
So their dirty ditty floats
As venture capital gloats
Beneath a blood-red moon!
As from solitary cells,
What a sob of suffering voluminosly wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells

On the Torture! how it tells
Of the madness that impels
False flagging, endless bragging
Rapists who hate feminists
White and male supremacists
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps,
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps, trumps,
Trumps, trumps, trumps --
Nickel-dime-ing, sexist sliming, of the trumps!

III.

Hear the loud alarum trumps --
Brazen trumps!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
To drown out the right to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous sad choir 'midst the fury of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the racist fascist fire,
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a decadent desire,
And a twisted-sick endeavor
Now – all goodwill to sever
Beneath the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the trumps, trumps, trumps!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar !
What a horror they outpour
Of pollution of the climate changing air !
Yet the ear, it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger flows and grows ;

Yet the nose distinctly tells,
In the smelling,
And the swelling,
How the danger stinks and swells,
By the smelling and the swelling in the anger of the trumps

--

Of the trumps --
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps, trumps,
Trumps, trumps, trumps --
Tyrannical slave manacle of trumps!

IV.

Hear the thumping of the trumps --
Coal mine trumps!
Forked tongue promises are hissed!
Black lung coughs persist
In the silence of the night,
Children shiver with caged fright
At the melancholy menace of trump tone!
For every growl that bloats
From the hate within their throats
Is death drone.
And the people — ah, the peeps —
Dwelling homeless in the streets
Weary to the bone,
And who, toiling, toiling, toiling,
In a censored monotone,
Ridiculed by gangsters rolling
On the human heart a stone --
Con-men of endless greed --
Turn cold shoulder to great need --
They are Ghouls:
And the King of Fools who bleats;
As he tweets, tweets, tweets, tweets,
Tweets
Odious orders of the trumps!

Thumping Liberty's cracked bell
Selling missile, bomb, and shell
More war roars of trumps!
As they scream out, and they yell;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a hugely heinous rhyme,
To the dirges of the trumps --
Of the trumps:
Keeping time, time, time,
In narcissistic rhyme,
To the slowing by the trumps --
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps --
To the robbing by the trumps ;
Keeping time, time, time,
In crass colossal crime
As he mis-tells and misspells
Words that ooze like cesspool slime,
Like oil pipelines of the trumps --
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps --
To the lying of the trumps,
Of the trumps, trumps, trumps, trumps --
Trumps, trumps, trumps --
The lying and the spying of the trumps.

V.

So amidst this hate's persistence
Let us find enough resistance
To abhor and send forevermore
To history's garbage dumps
The trumps, trumps, trumps, trumps
Trumps, trumps, trumps!

JUDITH AYN BERNHARD

CAN YOU HEAR A CHILD CRY?

or do his sobs sound like the
tree falling in a deserted wood?

does his innocence count
for nothing or is his father's

crime of wanting to give him
a better life reason enough

for the atrocity of putting him
inside a metal cage and

ruining his meager chances
beyond all hope of repair?

Can you hear a child cry?

or are you deaf to the echoes
of his screams of terror??

does his trauma mean so little
or is there pleasure in your

torture of a boy whose father
tried to deliver him from evil

only to find he has given up
his son to a merciless people

whose legendary cruelty won't
be undone in a single lifetime?

Can you hear a child cry?



NANCY CALEF

It's 10 A.M. Do You Know Where Your Parents Are?

CHARLES CURTIS BLACKWELL

TYRANTS HAVE BEEN HERE A LONG TIME,
COLLECTING, BUILDING, EXPLOITING ALL ALONG

Unsure if they will eat it up
That is, hook-line-and-sinker
The tyrant and capitalist hound make plans
And so positive, like automobile battery
They put it in the bowl, similar to sloppin' hogs!
First arrives, laps it up,
That's advertisement!
Fascinating to the touch/greed/future of cash
On the dotted line
The tyrant and capitalist stand like sniffing dogs
They put some fake spice on it and celebrate
See dog wag tail
Tricks, greed, net gain, craps:
"Who cares if it kills 'em!" they remark
For it's spoiled, tainted, rotten to the core:
"Just put it in the bowl, they'll lap it up!"
Capitalist hound and tyrant rejoice as they make better
With some legal grease on it,
Profit margin, alliance tax shelter
It works every time!
"Here, boy! Come and get it! Come on, lap it up!"
The recipe known to be greed-raging-evil
No regulations, fortune cookie on top
See dog wag tail
See
man
wag
head.

JOHN BRANDI

HANDS UP

Meaning

I'm not doing anything
with them,

have no hidden weapon
except the pen
in my pocket.

You can shoot
but you can't down
my angel.

Therefore I stand
to continue.

KRISTINA BROWN

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Capital and corruption
go together.

Dictators
of the Right
and the Left,

leaders for life

or from one

rigged

gerrymandered

manipulated

stolen

election to the next,

love crony capitalism,
love using the state,
their power and authority
to put money,
capital,
in their pockets,
those of their friends and
collaborators.

Money,
magic numbers,
they can transfer

anywhere,
store other places,
use anonymously,
use to have power,
have influence,
be comfortable,
in places
where their

Armies

Goons

and corrupt apparatus

can't reach
directly.

Money
must
be controlled,
traced,
if injustice,
corruption,
are to be prevented.

Follow the Money.

FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO (ITALY)

IL LORO ODIO VERSO L'AMORE

Sono schiavi della morte.
Vogliono
colpire distruggere.
Non ascoltarli, non sentirli.
Predicano ossessivamente
da lunghi tempi
che l'amore
ha le ali troppo grandi
che vola troppo in alto
che pretende troppa
liberta'.
Tappati le orecchie
la bocca
il cuore.
Cercano di ammazzarcelo
nelle vene.
Il loro isterismo, il loro odio
verso l'amore
e' spietato.
Il loro vizio
e' abbruttire le gioie
piu' belle.
Vogliono ucciderlo, ucciderlo
con le nostre mani
con I nostri occhi
con I nostri pensieri.
Non stare a sentirli.
Non hanno niente da dire.
L'amore ha rotto ogni
argine
ogni vincolo
irrompe dalle crepe aspre
della morte, della distruzione
sfugge a ogni mano di controllo
fiorisce dovunque intenso e felice.

FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO (ITALY)

THEIR HATE FOR LOVE

They are slaves of death.
They want
to hit destroy.
Don't listen to them, don't hear them.
They preach on and on
since times long ago
that love
has wings too big
that it flies too high
that it demands too much
freedom.
Plug your ears
your mouth
the heart.
They try to kill it
in the veins.
Their hysteria, their hate
for love
is fierce.
Their vice
is to brutalize the most beautiful
joys.
They want to kill it, kill it
with our hands
with our eyes
with our thoughts
don't listen to them.
They have nothing to say.
Love has broken every
dike
every bond
it bursts from sour cracks
of death, of destruction.
It slips away from any hands of control
it blooms intense and beautiful everywhere.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

TOM BURON (FRANCE)

SABADOLA

(dépêche kédovine - en pensant à Ousmane B.)

*Di qua, di là, su per lo sasso tetro
vidi demon cornuti con gran ferze,
che li battien crudelmente di retro.
Dante Inferno XVIII 34*

Les Chants Pourpres des chercheurs d'or
poinçonnent les nuits de Majjay
du fond des placers

& tu dévisages les oiseaux carbonisés en chute libre
sous le Jahiimi & ces fruits morts nés les Djinns qui
s'abreuvent le
jour qui s'enraye Gold Corporation avec Bida & foudroie
enfin

la poussière mercure de tes poumons
tandis que ton crâne bascule de chaleur se
fend contre les tessons du ciel pour le Zaqqoum
qui pousse ici sur le Sénégal oriental
& prend ce titre —
Sabadola!

Où le sang s'écoule ruisseau du cou du Coq de
Kédougou sur
l'engrenage d'Iblis à 80 heures semaine & les troupes
coloniales
qui s'amènent avec des chèques (ce sorcier qui fouille les
tripes)

Ousmane, ton index broyé par la machinerie du gisement de
ces miettes aurifères qui n'en reste pas moins des miettes
ton index broyé qui veut montrer le chemin de ta fille &
s'épuise dans le lit des martyrs sans noms
qui se secouent dans la plaie de
Sabadola!

TOM BURON (FRANCE)

SABADOLA

(while thinking of Ousmane B.)

*Here and there, up on the dark rock
you see the horny demon with great power
that they're whacking the back of there.
Dante Inferno XVIII 34*

The Crimson Songs of those who pan for gold
drill the Majjay nights
from the bottom of the field

& you starin' at those free fallin' carbonized birds
under the Jahiimi & those stillborn fruits The watered
Djinns The
day that jams itself Gold Corporation with Bida &
strikes mercury dust
down into your lungs while your skull's tipping over from
heat
cracking against the shards of the sky for The Zaqqum
growing there in South Eastern Senegal
& introducing —
Sabadola!

Where blood flows brook from a Kedougou Rooster's
neck on
an 80-hours-a-week spiral of Iblis & the colonial troops
coming along with bank-checks (The wizard excavates
the guts)
Ousmane, your forefinger crushed by the machinery for
those golden crumbs that nevertheless remain crumbs,
your forefinger willing to show the road to your daughter
and eventually burns out in the bed of those
martyrs without-names
convulsing in the wound of
Sabadola!

Les Chants Pourpres des chercheurs d'or
poinçonnent les nuits de Majjay
du fond des placers

les Ifrits en pagaille éclosent et purlèchent l'or
& tu noies les 500 000 francs
dans l'eau bouillante ces fillettes brisées qui
bradent leurs croupes à tous tes frères à l'arrière d'une

boutique
pleine de gnôle infâme pour oublier ce
brasier des soixante neuf feux
Sabadola!

Ousmane, j'ai vu ta détresse religieuse
& la culpabilité des perdus sur un bracelet
pour tanguer vers la case comme des pirogues qui
rentrent le soir en subissant les humeurs de l'Océan
& chacun de tes pas saouls Ousmane
demandait pardon à la Terre
de ne savoir comment l'habiter
Sabadola!

The Crimson Songs of those who pan for gold
drill the Majjay nights
from the bottom of the field

Loads of Iblis hatch and lick the gold
& you're drowning your 500,000 francs
into boiling water into broken little girls who
sell their round bottoms to all the brothers at the rear of
a vile shop full of hooch to forget
this 69 fires blaze
Sabadola!

Ousmane, I've seen your religious despair
& the guilt of the wasted set into a bracelet
to pitch to the hut like canoes suffering Ocean's
moodswings
while coming back at night,
& each of your drunken steps, Ousmane,
asked Earth's forgiveness
for not knowing how to inhabit
Sabadola!

(Translated from French by the Author)

YOLANDA CATZALCO

NO MORE POLICE KILLINGS!

The capitalist system
Claimed another victim.
This time, a homeless,
Undocumented immigrant,
Luis Dimitri Gongora Pat
From Yucatan, Mexico.

It all started
When a San Francisco,
Homeless outreach worker
Called the police to report
A homeless man 45 years old,
Wielding a knife in a homeless
Encampment.

Within 30 seconds of arriving
On the scene, the police told Luis
To get on the ground and put it down;
Within those 30 seconds the police
Fired four rounds of bean-bags
And shot Luis seven times with bullets
Because they said Luis charged at them.

Video footage also seen by community
Led the community to ask why
The police didn't follow procedures.
"Little to no effort to use de-escalation,
Crisis-intervention effort:
Time and Distance".

Skeptics might ask,
Why did Luis have a knife?
There are numerous video recordings

Of dead homeless
Who've been killed
By anti-homeless people.

Luis had sent his meager earnings
For seven years to build a house
In Mexico. He left a wife,
Two sons, and a daughter.
My question is: How many more
Homeless and/or undocumented

Immigrants are going
To meet the same fate as
Luis Dimitri Gongora Pat?
Rarely, if ever, is
De-escalation applied
When the police
Confront suspects.

The whole legacy of police
Stems from using police
To catch runaway slaves
And defend plantations.

Let's be clear: Only by
Overthrowing capitalism
Will we stop the oppressive
Police-killing structure.

NEELI CHERKOVSKI

WHAT HAVE WE BECOME?

what have we become? the colors re-arranged
we're torn by banal words and decrees
that do not bless the children, that abandon them we're
born to be led, to be torn apart to believe the awful forms
and badly made art what has become of our democratic
rights we lock children in cages and patrol their eyes there
is no meaning anymore, America lies in the gutter like a
drunk, I walk to the garden and pick lemons, I water
succulents and bamboo, America's vulgar sounds spoil the
trees, voices of neo-Nazis in high office, the sound of a
child crying so loud, so loud we need to cry out for
freedom starting now.

DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA

FOR LUZ

In Brooklyn two days ago a 3 year-old Mexican girl
Was killed in a hit and run and I blame
Trump and the dispassionate woman
Who ran over Luz in a hurry to someplace
More well managed than the projects

The lady was stopped four blocks later
Said she didn't notice she hit anything
Said her brother was a sergeant with the NYPD
Said she would call immigration on Luz's mother
Who was still on her knees in the Laundromat parking lot
Cradling her toddler whose head was smashed

People had their smart phones out
No one was moving with urgency
A girl in cut-off shorts shook her head and left
A man spoke softly to the mother in Spanish

The little girl was dying
Disappearing right before our eyes and
Cops let her killer go

Because that is what we do here

And nobody can tell me different
Because Luz's mother is trying to raise enough
Money to bury her daughter
She will not press charges because

She fears deportation

And right now children who look just like Luz
Are stacked in cages in detention facilities in Texas

Because Trump has “zero tolerance” for illegal
immigration
Because Trump will never be as afraid as
Those babies are right now
Because privilege has never needed morality

And pundits are discussing detained kids
In political terms
It’s partisan and complicated (they say)
They worry about Mexican gangs and Americans
Losing jobs to illegal immigrants and
Progressives say this is not what America is and
All the while I’m thinking about

Auction blocks and internment camps and
How every county in this country
Has hosted at least one massacre

I’m thinking of Wounded Knee and
The Honduran toddler crying for her mother
That Time magazine featured on their cover
This month

Nobody knows where she is

And I’m thinking about Luz
Crushed skull and unburied
Her family mourning in secret
To avoid deportation forces
Kicking their door down
Punishing them for bleeding out loud

And in this moment
America has never been more honest
In this moment
America is revealing herself

Death camp mistress
Disappearing children
You know...

For the good of the republic.

MARCO CINQUE (ITALY)

DOVE SEI POETA?

Nuvole cineree incombono
su questi orizzonti senza scampo
mentre i nostri giorni si trascinano
come corpi abbandonati alla deriva
ma tu, dove sei poeta, che stai facendo?

Cosa pensi, di chi stai scrivendo?
Ti osservo mentre sei là, seduto o
affacciato al tuo balcone, che guardi
il mondo ma vedi soltanto te stesso.

Dove sei poeta, scrittore, intellettuale?
Tutti quelli della combriccola inutile
cosa fate, cosa dite e scrivete mentre
accade tutto questo indicibile orrore?

Io mi dimetto da te, poeta, scrittore
mi dissocio dai tuoi soliloqui onanisti
che se ne fregano del sangue versato
nei mattatoi libici di Tripoli, Sabha
Gharyan, Beni Walid, Zawia, Sabratha.

Non avete orecchie per sentire queste
urla strazianti di donne violentate? Sono
forse diverse dalle urla delle vostre
figlie, delle vostre madri e sorelle?

E dei bambini sodomizzati a morte che fate
se non volgere il vostro sguardo altrove?
E degli uomini spellati vivi, elettrificati?

MARCO CINQUE (ITALY)

WHERE ARE YOU, POET?

Ashen clouds loom
over such doomed horizons
as our days drift on
like bodies cast away
And you? Where are you, poet, what are you doing?

What's on your mind, who do you write about?
I see you standing there, seated or
leaning over your balcony, as you look
upon the world and see nothing but yourself.

Where are you, poet, writer, intellectual?
All of you in the useless clique
what do you do, what do you say, or write, while
this unspeakable horror has come to pass?

I resign from you, poet, writer
I distance myself from your jerkoff monologues
that don't give a fuck about the blood spilled
in the Libyan slaughterhouses at Tripoli, Sabha
Gharyan, Beni Walid, Zawia, Sabratha.

Have you no ears to hear these
harrowing cries of women raped? Do they
cry any different from your
daughters, your mothers and sisters?

And what do you make of the children sodomized to death,
look away, what else?
What of the flayed alive, the electrocuted?

Aprite gli occhi, guardate oltre il mare
dove strani frutti penzolano sanguinolenti
dagli alberi legnosi e senza vita del martirio.

Ascoltate il lamento del vento, la sua voce
che porta i lugubri gorgoglii, e il suono
di tutte le vite arrese, delle ossa spezzate.

Canne fumanti della nostra sicurezza chiedono
respingimenti: che le onde inghiottano i corpi!
Che catene e recinti seppelliscano altre vite!
La ricetta è trasformare la vittima in nemico!

Io mi dimetto da te, uomo, dalla tua storia
trasformata nel vorace cannibale di se stessa.

Hitler non è morto, no, è risorto negli
accordi firmati dai nuovi assassini d'Europa
con gli aguzzini dell'ennesimo inferno
per riempire di voti i loro portafogli osceni.

Vorrei davvero saper scrivere una lunga
interminabile, dolcissima poesia d'amore
con l'inchiostro nero di queste tenebre

vorrei ferire il foglio, aprirci uno squarcio
che possa sanguinare per tutto il tempo
che i fantasmi della Memoria vivranno
per offuscare l'arrivo di nuovi fantasmi.

Ma vecchi e nuovi fantasmi s'incontreranno
e ci guarderanno con gli occhi fatui di chi
non smetterà mai di essere ammazzato.

Open your eyes, look across the sea
where strange fruit swings bloody
from the lifeless wood of martyrdom.

Listen to the wind lamenting, its voice
carrying ominous babble, and the sound
of all the fallen lives, the shattered bones.

The smoking guns of our security demand
refusal: let the waves swallow the bodies!
Let chains and fences bury more lives!
The recipe calls for turning victim into enemy!

I resign from you, man, from this history of yours
reduced to a ravenous devourer of itself.

Hitler's not dead, no, again he rises
in accords signed by Europe's latest assassins
with the torturers of yet another hell
the better to stuff their obscene wallets with votes.

How I wish I knew how to write a long
never-ending, honeyed love poem
in the black ink of this darkness

How I wish I could wound the page, slash it open
let it bleed the whole time that
these ghosts of Memory go on living
covering up the arrival of new ghosts.

But the ghosts will gather, new and old
and gaze upon us with the empty eyes of those
who will never cease being murdered.

Le tombe verranno divelte e i cadaveri
si scambieranno le loro anime straziate
che verranno a trovarci per tutti i giorni
e tutte le notti che l'incubo dell'umano
regnerà incontrastato su questa terra.

Io mi dimetto da te, pensiero, voglio
smettere di pensare finché non avrò
la certezza che qualcosa potrai cambiare
ma non ho nemmeno fiato per respirare
e sono vivo grazie a tutta questa morte
che non smette di riempire la mia vita
come una clessidra che segna il dolore
unico tempo rimasto al mio alfabeto.

A chi daremo voce, di chi saremo verbo
se non saremo altro che morti viventi
ombre che si cercano tra macerie?

Sembrava solo un brutto sogno, un miraggio
ma il deserto avanza, continua ad avanzare
i Tartari hanno fatto già razzia e son passati
mentre tu, poeta, dove sei, cosa stai facendo?

Tombs will be dug open and corpses
will trade mangled souls
to visit us each day
and every night this human nightmare
goes on reigning supreme upon the land.

I resign from you, thought, I want
to quit thinking till I am
certain you can change something
but I can't even breathe
and I'm alive thanks only to all this death
that won't stop pouring into my life
like an hourglass marking pain
the only time my language has left.

To whom shall we give voice, whose verb shall we be
if we are nothing but the living dead
shadows chasing each other amid the rubble?

It seemed to be merely a bad dream, a mirage
yet the desert closes in, marches on and on
the Tartars have already plundered and gone
and you, poet, where are you, what are you doing?

(Translated from Italian by Lapo Guzzini)

BOBBY COLEMAN

1968-2018

investor, dear investor,
it's the same as fifty years ago
in nineteen sixty-eight
in Paris Chicago everywhere your
fired masses in freedom's lamp
yearn dreamward not screenward

spec'lator, dear spec'lator,
no point complaining later, you
killed my father and the doctor's
dog wore a diamond collar,
the shark made loans, the thief
had no ethics, in Dad's socialist bones

the art of the deal wasn't art of course,
at some point your ideal became no deal,
Lincoln devolved to Milken, worse,
from war to junkbonds, a sleazy cut,
nothing but a platform for a slice of nada,
an app for murder on the way to Nevada

from children's mouths the house took
the usual vigorish of love and joy, all for
a slick return of sorts on capital,
your banks once-slender as wild turkeys
got fatter and fatter, in fact so fat-bred
their turkey brains are nearly dead

investor, dear investor,
same as fifty years ago in 'sixty-eight

the old ship still drifts, the new
waves are the same height, if we bravely
stuff your mattresses with thanksgiving oh-say-
can-you-see no more bombs, see the light?

FRANCIS COMBES (FRANCE)

AVIS DE RECHERCHE CONTRE LE CAPITALISME

Il est âgé de plus de deux cents ans
(mais sa famille est beaucoup plus ancienne)
Il a mis le monde à feu et à sang
(bien qu'il agisse toujours au nom du progrès).
La plupart connaissent le nom du coupable
(mais peu imaginent pouvoir s'en débarrasser).
Il change tout le temps de visage de nationalité.
(signe distinctif:
on le trouve toujours où il y a de l'argent à faire).
C'est un tueur en série.
Il utilise toutes les méthodes:
trafic, d'armes, de drogues, de nourriture.
d'idées ou d'aide humanitaire...
Il y a toujours su s'adapter, mais il est incorrigible.
Tous les efforts pour l'amender on fini par échouer.
À plusieurs reprises, on a cru le maintenir en garde à vue
mais chaque fois il s'est fait libérer sous caution.
On lui a plusieurs fois coupé la tête
mais , comme pour l'Hydre de l'Herne, elle a repoussé.
(En fait, son corps était encore entier.)
Pourtant, il n'est pas invincible
et tôt ou tard il sera tué
car notre survie
dépend de son élimination.

FRANCIS COMBES (FRANCE)

CAPITALISM: WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

It's more than two hundred years old
(but its family is much older).
It turned the world upside down
(although it always acts in the name of progress).
Most people know who is guilty
(but few think they are able to shake free).
It changes its face and its nationality all the time
(distinctive sign:
you always find it where money can be made).
It's a serial killer.
It uses all methods:
drug trade, arms, food,
ideas or humanitarian aid...
It's always known how to adapt, but it is incorrigible.
All the efforts to amend it have failed.
Several times, people believed they had it under lock
and key
but every time it escaped without a caution.
It had its head cut off several times
but, like the Hydra of Lerna, it grew back.
(In fact, its body was still intact).
However, it isn't invincible
and sooner or later it will be killed
because our survival
depends on its elimination.

(Translated from French by Alan Dent)

JUANITA CONEJERO (CUBA)

PALESTINA

El odio se hace muerte.
Por los campos hambrientos de justicia
marcha la sangre con las manos crispadas
con los ojos de súplica.
Roja sangre de glóbulos amados
derramada en la tierra de todos
limpia sangre de niños y niños
que se mezcla con las arenas del peligro.
El odio se hace muerte.
La ventura será para los buenos
para los que disfrutan
la sonrisa de un niño
en las sagradas arenas
de la playa.
solo para ellos
será el abrazo creciente de las olas.

JUANITA CONEJERO (CUBA)

PALESTINE

Hate becomes death.
Blood marches through
fields hungry for justice
with hands clenched
with eyes of supplication.
The red blood of beloved cells
mixes with the sands of peril
and washes clean the blood
of boys and girls.
Hate becomes death.
Good fortune will come to
the good people who can
enjoy a child's smile.
In the beach's holy sands
the gathering embrace
of the waves will be for
them alone.

(Translation from Spanish
by Judith Ayn Bernhard)

PAULINE CRAIG

from THE DREAM OF MUSTAFA

Ah, dear sweet Allah
In the dark night of my soul
I implore you. Help me, help me, help me
Dear God, I don't wish to die tomorrow
Forgive me this sin of denying your will
I don't want to die ever
But especially not tomorrow
Please help me get out of this deed

I want to pick up the telephone
And call my Mara back home
Maybe she can give me a reason
I can't do this tomorrow
She loves me
Maybe she can get me out of this
Maybe she can save my life
But I'm forbidden to call
She only knows that I'm on a sacred mission
I couldn't tell her about
She knows in her heart she'll never see me again
So, I'm dead to her now
She's gone on living her young life
Maybe she has a new man by now
A new husband
Maybe she's forgotten me so soon

What about the kids? I could call the kids!
No. I've been gone so long
Maybe they don't really remember me
I'd just confuse them
Maybe they have another father by now
To them I'm already dead
I've cut myself off from everyone

I have no one to go to. No one but Allah

Please, dear Allah, Let me go
Let me out of this mission
I'll do anything you ask. I'll do anything you want
Just please, Allah, I beg you, let me go!
Yes, my son. Of course, you may go
The choice has always been yours
It still is, If that's what you really want
You're free to go
No, I can't. It's forbidden
By my brothers-in-arms, by Shari'a
Disgrace to my family, disgrace to Islam
No

Some nights, my Mara would take out
Her little bottle of the jasmine musk oil
She slicks into her hair
To keep it from blowing wild
In the desert winds
And slides it onto her hands
Then rubs it over my ankles and into my feet
She'd softly massage the top of one foot
Pushing down over the side
With the tips of her slender fingers
She'd palpate hard my heel with her thumbs
And knead my instep with her knuckles
Rub my footpads. Pull out my toes
And stretch my foot pointed out
By holding my ankle
Then caress my other foot until I bit my tongue
So I wouldn't scream out in torture
But instead I let go
And felt subsumed by the ecstasy

When I left home
My boy, Joci, was three

His hair a mass of curly black ringlets
Thicker than mine
I love to run my fingers through it
It drives him crazy. Tickles him
He giggles, squeals and runs from me
Then sneaks back to me
When he thinks I'm not looking
His sweet dirty baby boy smell
From playing with his friends in the sand
Always thrills me
He holds out his is tiny fingers to me
When he wants me to help him stand up
He grasps my big thumb with his small fingers
When I lean down to help him step-step
On his fat wobbly bow-legs
And we walk together
He trusts I will always be there to protect him
He can't imagine a world with no me
But now he knows his world has a hole in it
I've vanished from his life as suddenly
As if a whirlwind had sucked me up
Out of our home
And deposited me in this hotel room
As sterile and dead to the soul as I feel now

In the mirror, I see a stranger
Green face. Dead black eyes
Who is this corpse I see in the mirror?
My stomach heaves. Nothing comes up
What am I doing? Who am I?
I ask the olive mask in the mirror
So far, I've done nothing wrong
I can walk away from this
As innocent as a turtle and never look back
The image of my son that makes me fearless
Eludes my eyes. I try to grasp it
To keep it from shattering

The shards of his face, fading
Drifting apart. I try to hold it still
But it's written on water
I can no longer see his eyes
I can barely hear his pleas for me to stay.

And my baby daughter, Mariya
Newborn when I left
Maybe she didn't know who I was
That I was her daddy, as she lay in her cradle
She watched me with her huge black eyes
Beneath her curly eyelashes
Everywhere I walked
When I put my little finger into her mouth
She sucked with huge pleasure
Even though no milk came out
Between her hungry lips
Mohammad forbade his people
To bury their newborn daughters
In the sand, as was the custom
In the land now called Saudi Arabia
They aren't useless, he preached
They are glories, an honor to any family.

WILLIAM CROSSMAN

THE WAR IN AMERICA

I didn't see the War in America
when I was four
dressed in my soldier suit posing
for photos on my Dad's shoulder
at the Carolina Base
my eyes drawn past the barracks at
Black men in stripes and shackles
stumbling off the flatbed truck at the edge
of the woods, their clanking chains
in the turpentine pines around us
laying a silence
as Black women
boiling lye and fat for soap
set aside paddles, Black pitch-gatherers
rested machetes to watch
the prisoners scythe the drill around in
bitter
rhythm
this war my eyes were seeing I didn't see
when I was four
watching skies for signs of invasion by
foreign powers, confident that war if it came
would come from over there, overseas
from my Dad's shoulder I
smiled at the camera thinking war
almost over
soon
we'd go home to
Connecticut.

THOMAS RAIN CROWE

JEJUNE

Big.

Lacking maturity.

Lacking significance. Dull.

Lacking nutritive value.

Rambling spills and deluges.

Crops withered and washed away.

Herbicides named Warrior, Extreme, Prowl.

Engineered corn named Reactor, HeatShield, RayFighter.

Who are the real terrorists?

Big Coal. Big Oil.

Underground explosions. Pipelines spraying from the ocean floor.

High oil prices mean more organic gardens.

Public transportation.

Walk to work.

Pace. Pace.

Slow down.

Smaller.

Not only beautiful, but steady.

Local.

Close to home.

Better solar panels than a power plant.

Better Fortune 500,000 than Fortune 500.

What we can save.

Maintenance is the mantra. Like a man who grows old and begins to alter the color of his hair.

350 parts per million.

Clean air. Clean water.

World peace.

ANITA ODENA CRUZ

CLIMATE CHANGE MAY HAVE KILLED SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION: URUK 6,000 B.C.

It was the orange sun of the encroaching desert eyeing us when we dreamed the leopard of death. The en/head priest who found the meanings of the tokens in sealed clay envelopes that conveyed the message that he had displeased the gods after allowing the cats and the dogs into the inner sanctuary of the ziggurats. There we used to sing in circles after seeing the tides of the river sink deeper still. Where will I stand now, the witch doctor smoothing the contorted face of the crippled, that the parents had carried from Jamdak Nasr and the poet chanting lamentations of the coming drought, when flocks of locusts from the east darkened the horizon the last summer day.

Then the head priestess staggered backwards as if bitten by a yellow snake from the lost hill of Uruk. A council of elders convened to look for an elusive herb to neutralize the venom consuming the temple. And we chanted lamentation dirges, ending in rain songs to please the gods to release the clouds to move to our valley. We have invented the wheel, the arch and written the epic poem Gilgamesh, who survived the last great flood but we have not discovered the tool to soothe our plants and trees and rivers from the great summer sun.

The sorrow entered our hearts and souls and found emptiness in our bones, clattering the riverbanks, filled with gasping fish which leaped from the waters. The river which had cradled our first-born sons and nursed

them on marshes before our mothers arrived, when the mornings were clear while they walked along in a dream, besides the palm dates, apricots, cherries and figs. The leaves of the tallest palm trees have spoken their dread, holding their hidden faces by the streams of glinting sunset rays.

Over the water, the wind swept upwards to warn us.
Over the water, the birds flew above after they ate their
/last.

Over the water, the reeds bowed their heads wanting to die.
Over the water, ducks and geese waddled to the banks to

escape the fire.

Over the water, the sun blew the sands of the desert

upwards before

the marauding nomads, with whips and knives and huge

screams

come on the last day of harvest before dark.

ROMEO ALCALA CRUZ

JAPAYUKI

(Every year, hundreds of young Filipino women are recruited in the Philippines to work as 'cultural entertainers' in Japan, often becoming victims of prostitution and rape)

Lipstick on my rouge lips, looking at you, chin-eyed
recruiter,
I too can sing and dance at your dance club in Osaka.
Hire me Hire me Hire me, Yakuza, and fondle me like your
geisha. To wash
your body and massage your back and even suck your
cock----you brute
Japanese lover, when cherry blossoms come in Spring, as if
there is no stain
behind those flimsy dollhouses, so easy, as plain as a
bamboo you can turn
and sway me, you gangster lover, like your golden fishes
on your koi ponds,
muttering in whispers, and seal the windows away from
complaining
and squawking ducks and birds chattering on the branches
of another,
forthcoming, unfurling Spring.

I glide along shadows of nightclubs listening to whispers of
half-completed
sentences hoping that somebody may might discovered
meanings
in the movements of my fingers and hands hoping for an
escape,
but scattered like cockroaches, out of the drawers before
another dawn.
Or surrender to my gangster lover just the same, who holds
my passport,

like slashing blades of grass, while screaming all the
time. Shake shake shake
shake drink your sake until I tip and fall on the koi pond,
reflecting the sunlight
of another perfect Spring, when everybody here hates
trouble but evil is inside
the dollhouses, heard only behind secret doors.

Until I seem to tire-- I tremble, copying and repeating the
movements of the kabuki
dancers lost in the limbo between heaven, earth and hell.

-

JOHN CURL

THE ETYMOLOGY OF SLAVERY

Cattle — Chattel — Capital.

Those words slip off the tongue like
blood dripping from an open wound.

The word *Capitalism* was first
coined by a French socialist,
Louis Blanc, in 1850, who defined it as:
*the appropriation of capital by some
to the exclusion of others.*

Appropriation: taking possession of,
as in seizing the bounty of the earth,
stealing lives, commodifying
people into property.

Cattle — Chattel — Capital.

Those words assonate because
they share a common origin.

From *caput*, Latin for *head*,
because that's how cattle masters
and slave masters and money masters
counted their wealth, by the head.

It was no accident that
Caesar always stamped his fascist face
on the coins of the Roman empire.

Just a simple, practical tack
for keeping track of property:
x-many head
of cattle or slaves or gold.

Capital: the head assets, the wherewithal,
the cold cash, the *principal* hoard,
as distinct from the *usury*, as medieval
money changers called it, or
the *interest* as global banksters and
grifters call it today.

Cattle — Chattel — Capital.
Those words slip off the tongue like
blood dripping from an open wound.

Cattle — Chattel — Capital.
Those words spin off the lips like
skulls rolling down a dark alley.

Cattle — Chattel — Capital.
Those words assonate,
resonate like globalized
corporate bondage.

The etymology of slavery:
Cattle — Chattel — Capital.

NAJWAN DARWISH (PALESTINE)

زائر من الجحيم

واحدٌ من سكان الجحيم، يا سيدي
سنينٌ طويلةٌ وأنا قابعٌ ههنا
ألا أستحقُّ أن أصيرَ مواطنًا؟
وحتى في الجحيم للبيوت أصحابٌ يجمعون الأجرة
ومستأجرونٌ يطردون؟
كنا نظنُّ الجحيمَ مُستقرًّا، نهايةً للتشرّد
،في الحقيقة، تخيلناه سجنًا؛ بلا جمعيات تُنذدُ بعمليات التعذيب
(...والملائكة الجلادون مُحصنون من أيّة مساءلة
لكن ها نحن في الجحيم ولا شيء من ذلك
من كان يصدّق أنني سأجلسُ ويدي على خدي
مُنتظرًا الخلاص
حتى في الجحيم.

الجنةُ والجحيمُ
عَشْنُهُمَا مرارا
وَتَكَرَّرَا عليّ حتى ما عادت الجنةُ جنةً
أو الجحيمُ جحيمًا
كما أنني تعبتُ من المشي في البرزخ؛
بِالأمس تمثّلته شاطئًا مُعَيَّمًا
وكنْتُ أُخَوِّضُ عند أخصم الموجة
حَافِيَا
وتحت إبطي نَعْلَانِ لما بعدَ البرزخ
كان البحرُ آيةً في الظلمة
وكنْتُ أشبهُ إنسانًا
يحملُ نعله ويواجهُ قَدْرَهُ.

هذه الليلة جبنْتُ ولم أنزل إلى البرزخ
قلْتُ: إلى النوم أزور أهلي الميتين
وحدهم الآن يفتحون الباب
لزائرٍ من الجحيم.

NAJWAN DARWISH (PALESTINE)

A VISITOR FROM HELL

A resident of Hell, I've been sitting here,
Lord,
for years.
Don't I deserve to be a citizen?
How is it
that even in Hell
the houses have owners who collect the rent
and tenants who are evicted?
We used to think Hell was stable,
the end of displacement.
In truth, we imagined it as a prison,
with no groups to decry the acts of torture,
and where the angels are executioners
lacking all accountability....
But here we are in Hell, and there's none of that.
Who would believe I'd be sitting here
with my hand on my cheek
waiting for salvation,
even in Hell?

Heaven and Hell—
I lived them both so often
until Heaven was no longer Heaven
and Hell no longer Hell.
I tired of walking in Purgatory:
Yesterday I imagined it as a dark shore
while I plunged, barefoot,
into the hollowest of waves.
I carried sandals under my arms
for the days after Purgatory.
The sea was a miracle in the darkness,
and I looked like a man

bearing his sandals
to face his fate.

I was too much a coward
to go down to Purgatory tonight.
I'll sleep and visit my dead family:
They alone now
will open the door
for a visitor from Hell.

(Translated from Arabic
by Kareem James Abu-Zeid)

DIEGO DE LEO

THE CALL

Come join us,
step over the line
into the Revolutionary Poets Brigade.

You've been bitching a lot in your poems
about what you've seen
what you feel
the corruption
economic inequalities
an unfair justice system
the roots of upheavals in the world.

You're ready to let your voice sing
so come on, we'll show you the way
the light way, the only way
to let loose what you feel;
in the words of Voltaire:
My trade is to say what I think.

That's why you should join
the Revolutionary Poets Brigade
or create one where you live.
We're planting seeds for our children to harvest.

So come on, join us;
our collective conscience demands it
because our words can be the way
out of the lies of these days.

CAROL DENNEY

ROADKILL AT CHRISTMAS

scavenging bins by the roadside
road kill at Christmas is gold
even if only the cardboard
good luck just never gets old
laugh if you want but it matters
families are out on the street
hoping to snare the old futon
before it's swept up by the heat

in stores it's high end if it's ragged
they pay extra for ripped-to-shit style
we get the box that it came in
and we haven't seen that in awhile
it's coming down hard at the station
all the drivers step out to get high
we're just pigeons asleep on the benches
no one cares if we live or we die

the score ends up scattered between us
you can tell by the thrift store front doors
or the side door at Out of the Closet
or the dumpsters behind the box stores
it's new coats and pillows for Christmas
its animal backpacks and shoes
the old ones show up by the train tracks
like Disney smashed into the blues.

TONGO EISEN-MARTIN

MAY DAY

under the house, but treated well by the 1970s

A class struggle
sacred and soon

while we spend the new sea level at the store with morbid
people who sell alcohol and alcohol for the man

This morning is a zoo in love
A killing field's smile

Where they send applause in front of their troops,

“We got plenty of pain
to stay on this guitar
for one hundred years”

When a neighborhood is in pain, houses stutter at each
other
In a theater of human and plaster

No one ever goes free, but the walls become more
thoughtful and remember our names

Men think they are passing around cigarettes
But really cigarettes are passing around men

houses stutter at each other
about the rich man's world
and the poor man's water
about the rich man's world
and the poor man's repetition

Ex-workers have hunched shoulders that fit between stairs
and headaches/
An inverted purgatory /Of course their children feel at
home everywhere

Hands slur as they speak
a man is lamppost high
Is his lamppost's keeper

the alarms are
paved with gold

“futureless is this music and this music's proprietors”

Children make better skylines out of wino's tales
And it takes one (lamppost high... his lamppost's keeper)

Incarcerated children next to the lightning
Across the jar from purgatory

Happy just to see something in motion,
We welcome the north american drumroll

A moth flies to the right of this definition of north america

A moth flies to the right of twenty-five floors of brick
astronomy

Europe rises to our 25th floor window
Carrying headaches and mirrors

We should close the window
But we haven't finished our cigarettes

“the alarm is paved with gold,”
the morbid person declares
while grinning and crying

“You are going to get
the gun under the counter wet,”
we warn as we only grin.

ELIAS

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Thoughts and prayers,
And I pray for better days,
Dreams turned to terrors,
No one can sleep through such craze.
Waking up to nightmares,
Some people can't change their ways.
Thoughts and prayers,
And it's hard not to be scared
As students, it's hard to feel safe.
Forced to put our trust in those who'd rather not help us,
Forced to put our lives in the hands of the selfish
This life is the only one I got,
I don't want to live it in fear.
Now here is some food for thought,
"Thoughts and prayers"
We hear it a lot.
How are my thoughts and prayers going to solve our
problems
My thoughts are scattered,
My faith seems misleading.
Cowards in power.
Ostriches with their heads in the ground when they feel
scared,
Incompetents with their heads up each other's rear-ends,
Hope you feel secure.
Putting your head in the ground won't make the problem
go away ...
Hunting for sport,
I'm scared for bullets that stray,
NRA,
Patching bullet wounds with band-aids,
Asking if we're ok

Cowards because I'm the one who still has to go to school.
Cowards hiding behind the haze of AR smoke.
Cowards bathing in the lost dreams of dead children,
Offering our prayers,
But I pray God forgives you ...
Thoughts and prayers,
And I pray for better days,
Dreams turned to terrors,
No one can sleep through such craze.
Waking up to Nightmares,
Some people can't change their ways.

AGNETA FALK

GAZA EYES

Inside the child's eye
as far as you can see
there's innocence
deeper than thought
deeper than memory
huddling in the dark

an eyelash for an eye
a whimper for a bang
torn up earth

O David
O Goliath

O deep stupid

what is there now
but rubble and blood
and the birth of more war

nothing more nakedly true
than a child's eye:

WAR IS INSANITY!

and you with your big boots
with star spangled weapons
made out of crusty, old fear
don't you know?
you're turning the Star of David
into a boomerang
for your own child's eye.

MAURO FORTISSIMO

WHO ARE THEY?

Who are the motherfuckers
that can afford to go on cruises
all around the world
when all over
the world is exploding?

Who are those Monte Carlans
French Rivierans
Hongkongian bankers
Swiss Alps skiers
motherfucking Argentine polo players?

Who goes to Antarctica
in an all-inclusive luxury cruise
after sailing the Caribbean
after yachting the Adriatic?

Who goes to all the concert halls of Vienna
and Germany and Italy in a music summer tour vacation?

Have they ever heard of Aleppo, of Haiti, of Yemen
of Sudan, Ethiopia, Honduras..?.

No, they know of Palm Beach, and Palma de Mallorca,
and Santa Barbara and Grasse perfumes
and Cinque terre grappa
and Bariloche's slopes...

Yes, the world's different for them,
this often hell-hole called earth
is but an oyster on a silver platter served
and the bubbles of poison-gassed Syrians
have nothing to do with good champagne!

Who are these people
that go about the planet
enjoying it all
and never stop in the ports

of the hungry, in the rooms
of the dispossessed,
never visit a refugee camp
or a favela in Rio or Caracas...?

They know much about fine wine cuvee
but not an iota of mining in Potosi
yet their investment portfolio
is full of Anaconda enterprises
and offshore accounts;

yes, they golf in the Cayman island
and protect the coral of Tahiti
after blasting it with nukes!

Strange people indeed,
not a day of discontent in their lives
but the thrills of posh living
high couture, fast cars
and balloon rides...

We are the paupers
without noble blood
no titles nor family names,
workers of the world,
laborers, the expendables...

Never nirvana for us,
caviar for breakfast for them,
not even death is fair
they die at ease at home
well-medicated and cozy,
almost a happy death...
as if they just could continue
in the afterlife to enjoy the perks
of this domain...

and who knows, those lucky bastards
may have figured a way
to still fuck us over from their graves!

ARNOLDO GARCIA

AL 1%

No podrás limpiar
tus guerras
No podrás enterrar
tus crímenes
Nunca podrás acabar
estar de luto por tus pérdidas
Haremos surcos
sobre cada centímetro
del planeta
Nuestra manos raíces que se extenderán
en la tumba de todas y todos
llamada la tierra
Para que todas y todos que amamos
cada vecina y vecino
cada compañera y compañero de trabajo
cada familia
cada pueblo original
cada mujer, hombre, estudiante, guerrillero, migrante
desaparecido
voltea el sol al revés en nuestra sombra
La piel desollada de la luz
envuelta alrededor de los hombros del viento
Para consolarnos de ti
Nunca podrás asesinar
al sol
Nunca podrás tragarte
a la tierra
Nunca podrás derrocar
a las nubes
No podrás.
Nuestro canto retumba
en nuestro reposo
Nuestro reposo es un movimiento armado
Nuestro reposo es justicia que no será detenida
Ustedes morirán en nuestro reposo
y nosotras y nosotros levantaremos a nuestro sueño...

ARNOLDO GARCIA

TO THE 1%

You cannot wash
away your wars
You cannot bury
your crimes
You will never finish
mourning your losses
We will make furrows
over every inch
of the earth
our hands roots that reach
into the tomb of everyone
called the land
So that everyone we love
every neighbor
every co-worker
every family
every original people
every woman, man, student, guerrilla, migrant
who is missing
turns the sun inside out into our shadow
The light's flayed skin wrapped around
the shoulders of the wind
To comfort us from you.
You cannot murder
the sun
You cannot swallow
the earth
You cannot overthrow
the clouds
You cannot.
Our song thunders
in our sleep
Our sleep is an armed movement
Our sleep is serial justice
You die in our sleep
and we wake up to our dream...

JUSUF GËRVALLA (KOSOVO)

KA AKOMA POETË

1.

Ka njerëz që akoma dinë se dielli ndrit
mes akullnajash në shpirt, mes suresh të qytetit.
Ka njerëz që akoma ia dinë ngjyrën lules
mes drizash të malit, mes sendesh të vjetra.
Ka akoma njerëz që dinë se kafshët kanë ekzistuar
mes nesh, mes drunjsh e ujëvarash, mes xhunglash.
Ka njerëz që ëndërrojnë akoma, ka njerëz
që dine si piqet rrushi n'hardhi, si perëndon,
njerëz që krukje s'dinë, që akoma preken me këngë
e zgjohen
me frymë, zgjohen këta njerëz të shqetësuar.

2.

Ka njerëz që tërë ditën fluturojnë, çudi!
Ka njerëz që gjithë natën flenë nën ujëvara,
lumit i besojnë si njeriut e flenë nganjëherë edhe
pas dreke,
njerëz me ballë të çiltër, me shokë shumë e të
dashur
e femra që i dashurojnë.
Ka njerëz të çuditshëm not kudo në botë,
ka varre për këta njerëz në tokën e shkelur të
Kilit...

JUSUF GËRVALLA (KOSOVO)

THERE ARE STILL POETS

1.

There are men who know that the sun still shines
amid glaciers of spirit, amid city walls.
Men who still know the colors of flowers
among mountain acacias, the old things.
Who know animals exist
among us, in waterfall woods, among boulders.
Men who keep dreaming, who
know how to roast the grape on the vine like the setting
sun,
who don't know Nothing, who still stir with song
and wake up
with soul, waken to agitate.

2.

There are men who whirl around all day, marvels!
Men who sleep at night under waterfalls,
have blessed faith like
the People
and sometimes siesta in the afternoon;
men with sincerity in their brows, with many
loving comrades
and women who love them.
There are amazing men everywhere in the world today
and graves for them in the oppressed earth
of Kilit*.

**A place in Kosovo*

(Translated from Albanian by
Jack Hirschman and Ildir Azizaj)

ΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ ΓΩΓΟΥ (ΕΛΛΑΣ)

από το ΙΔΙΩΝΥΜΟ*

Σαν σκύλος κρυώνω.

Τα δόντια μου χτυπάν απ' άγνωστη αιτία ανομολόγητη.

Ο μαρξισμός δεν έχει ψυχασθένειες

κάτι άλλο πρέπει να συμβαίνει.

Έχει ξεχειμωνιάσει πια.

Μέσα Ιουνίου.

Θα 'χετε περάσει τζάμια στα πετροβολημένα παράθυρα
τους τοίχους μπορεί να βάψατε με κατάσπρο χρώμα.

Θ' αστράφτει μέχρι πέρα η εργατική πόλη

κι οι παγκοι που 'χαμε για τραπέζια

γεμάτοι χαρακίες φανατικές κι αμήχανες

διαφωνίες και αποφάσεις παμψηφεί

αυτοί που σπάσανε

κι αυτοί που θά 'ρθουν.

Τα χρώματα μπερδεύω.

Ό,τι έχω

είναι μια κόκκινη φωτογραφία της Πρωτομαγιάς

το κίτρινο χρώμα των κοριτσιών

και τα πονεμένα πόδια των φίλων.

Κι έτσι όμως

οι Καλύτεροι.

Μόλις φύγει τούτο τ' άδικο θά 'ρθω να σας βρω.

Μπορεί να μην τα καταφέρω στις σκάλες

θά 'ρθω όμως οπωσδήποτε.

Μπορεί να μου λείπει η φωνή ή το φως από τα μάτια μου.

Σ' εμάς δεν χρειάζονται και πολλά.

Σύντροφοι.

KATERINA GOGOU (GREECE)

from SPECIAL OFFENSE*

I'm freezing like a dog.
My teeth chatter from an unknown unmentionable
cause.

Marxism does not have psychopathic conditions
something else must be happening to me.
Winter is over now.
Middle of June.

You must have replaced the glass on the broken windows
you might have painted the walls with pure white paint.
The workers' town will be shining through and through
and the benches we were using for tables
full of scratches fanatical and awkward
disagreements and unanimous decisions
those who broke down
and the ones who'll come.

I confuse the colors.
What I have is a red photograph of a Mayday
the yellow color of the girls
and the friends' aching feet.

But even so
the Best.

As soon as this injustice goes away I'll come and find you.
I may be unable to manage on the stairs
but I will come no matter what.
My voice may be missing or the light from my eyes.
We don't need all that much.
Comrades.

** A legalization after the fall of the Greek junta to
suppress the communications of communist and
anarchist ideologies.*

(Translated from Greek by Angelos Sakkis)

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

A LA VEZ QUE NOS AHOGAMOS

A la vez que el Golfo y el Caribe
se ahogan en tormentas de tal fuerza
que nunca antes se registra
hay silencio aturdidor
en la prensa hacia su causa
y silencio también acerca de
lo mismo que pasa
en Bangladés, India, Nepal,
Pakistán, Cachemira
debido a la misma causa.
Pero la ciencia no se calla;
llamándole pan al pan y vino al vino
 nombra la causa por el cambio climático:
La economía de imperio
con su desdén por la Tierra y la vida,
con su tecnología por lucro
alimentada por los restos
de bosques ancianos y la vida que daban
destilados en las entrañas oscuras
de la Gran Madre que nos dio nacer
y ahora castiga nuestra arrogancia
para posiblemente sanarse
con nuestra extinción.
Y los canallas imbéciles que nos gobiernan
siguen tuiteando.

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

AS WE DROWN

As the Gulf & the Caribbean
drown in storms of such force
as never before recorded
there is thunderous silence
in the press as to its cause
& silence, too, about
the same happening
in Bangladesh, India, Nepal,
Pakistan, Kashmir
due to the same cause.
Science is not silent though;
calling bread bread & wine wine,
it names the cause of climate change:
the economics of empire
with its scorn for the Earth & for life,
with its technology for profit
fueled by the remains
of ancient forests & the life they bore
distilled in the dark entrails
of the Great Mother that birthed us
& now punishes our arrogance
to possibly heal herself
with our demise.
& the scoundrel fools that govern us
tweet on.

(Translated from Spanish by the Author)

ADAM GOTTLIEB

TESTAMENT

Now they're caging our babies and quoting the Bible
The same scriptures that slave-owners used to claim
justifiable
Chaining and shipping human beings by the millions
In the bottoms of boats, ripping parents from children.

Familiar? Now our demons come back with a vengeance
Slavery never left Check that 13th amendment
While they preach about freedom and defeating
terrorists
Cops line up in riot gear to bulldoze grandparents

And they're still sayin', "We can reform it," while
nowadays
Oil execs say, "If we kill you, no foul play"
And Michigan imprisons Reverends who expose it
While more bodies wash up in the river, like Moses,

Now they're caging our babies and quoting the Bible
To our faces, while their agents terrorize kids with rifles,
As if Jesus would do that, as if we can't see through that,
As if Love Thy Neighbor really means Act Genocidal

As if there were no decency left in the world
As if words have no meaning, as if They were eternal,
As if our faith's as hollow as their broken treaties
As if we aren't out marching, shouting our needs
concretely:

"From Palestine to Mexico / Border Walls have got to go"
As if their walls can't fall just like old Jericho,
As if God was their property, and the Kingdom of Heaven
Was a world at war and not a world of brethren.

RENÉE GREGORIO

ANNA'S POEM

Norma, wise woman, kinesiologist,
told me of Anna Brown's death.
Norma who said:
The curse of the white male is arrogance.
brought words up out of my body
I never knew lived there
(apathyterrorself-worth)
these words lead me to this story.

and what is the life
of one black woman worth?
—not enough in the case of Anna Brown
death of a homeless woman
doesn't amount to a thing
beside the death, say, of a sports star
making \$20 million a year
the family's success in court
would depend on how much
a jury finds her life was worth...in dollars
the newsprint read

Anna Brown, I want your worth to reverberate
to turn your mother's grief into a national one—
a grief beyond your black body
that contains your black body

What happened?
—a series of choices no one
should have to make
your children taken away
your mother given the option of your children or you
by a judge

tested for drugs
tested for mental illness
orders made
nothing explained to you
but you found your way
to that empowerment group
enough to break the ice
with your wit,
they said

hurt ankle
unable to walk up a flight of stairs
visits to hospitals
no sign of blood clots,
you getting by on crutches
until the pain just wouldn't stop
so you returned to the hospital
but they found nothing wrong
sent you away with painkillers
you would not leave
the police came
you wheeled yourself over to the Children's Hospital
nearby—
they sent you to the adult hospital
again—inconclusiveness—
negative for blood clots—
sent home—
you refuse to go
threatened you said
You can't arrest me. I know my rights.
I can't even stand up!
even the doctors colluded
signing the "fit for containment" report
that sent you to jail
My legs don't work! you screamed
you still could not walk
so the officers pulled you

by your arms, dragged you
into the cell
left you on the floor
(suspected you of drug use—
the camera they had on you
as you lay stretched out on your back
could not read if you were still breathing)
only a few hours
after that “fit” declaration
you were dead

not unusual, they said,
to have someone lay there lethargic.

And now your mother
has no legal right
to your medical records
And guess what?
federal law does not require
accurate treatment.

And what did you suffer?
And how did you die?
And had they figured out
you had severe blood clotting
in those legs
you kept saying
you could not walk on

would there have been a cure?

BRUNO GULLÌ

IT, THE REVOLUTION

It's red
like blood
brown like
the twilight's woods
not merely blue
like the waters of any
writing
not merely green
like the hope of simple
hope.
It is black
like the night which is
ending
that is strong
like the sun which is
rising.

MARTIN HICKEL

THE GREED'S PRAYER

our dollar
which finances heaven
cash & carry be thy name
thy credit come
thy wealth be won
on balance sheets
of costs & earnings
give us this loan
our daily rate
& forgive us our losses
as we do not forgive the losses
of those who owe us
& tempt us not
with unrealistic returns
but shelter us from taxation
for thine is the power
& the glory
of private freaking property
over everyone
& everything
sign here.

GARY HICKS

GROUND ZERO TOLERANCE

they're like a chorus
the guard explained in spanish
sounds of warehoused kids

my mind drifts to cries
of my childhood ancestors
ripped away
at auction blocks ripped
away from screaming
mothers in turn ripped
away from the men
headed towards mississippi
louisiana alabama
where over time our screams
would be transformed
into music which we
merely appreciate while
others pay big monies to
pretend they're us
and the choruses of
screaming children repeat
themselves for the entertainment
of red cross investigators
at terezin and the noisy
gyms and cafeterias of our
public schools, holding pens
until we're old enough
to do the real thing behind
the bars of our time serving
those of four walls razor wire
those where we drink crazily
to the no tomorrow to
which we'll sing.

JACK HIRSCHMAN

THE NEW CLASS ARCANE

1.

Can't speak for all, that's the whole
first point, that's what the past few
years of, the engine of what hadn't
worked in fact till now, Democratic
Centralism, which

still is in the trenches, in the front
lines of breadlines, demonstrations,
wherever opportunities to agitate
presents itself, learning the alphabet
of hunger and poverty

not the way Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mao
and likeminded comrades spoke of it,
but from an a-b-c of common sense,
Necessity traditioned here on the streets
of San Francisco.

Almost like starting all over: the Soviet
Union dead, computers stepping up
affirming info-vanities of the moment
and the alzheimerization of brains,
even as they make

the piano a supreme international tool
of robots waving bye to workers every
day, checks and plastic saying, It's okay!
Verseteller window-yaps singing:
What I'd say?!

2.

Meanwhile I slept in a dumpster, ate
out of a garbage can, drank my junk,
faxed my crack, stopped drinking
cigaretts, smoking Jack Daniels, saw
so many cops on my tail;

at my sleeve, no reprieve, woke up in
jail, cheeks all puffed, senses stuffed
with mags, zines, flix, 900's slut and
ho-fuck ads, cheap thrills, transvestitos.
I can't speak for all,

that's the whole first point, that's what
the past few years threw up, but down
there, in abandoned buildings which we
occupied, along corridors of injustice
where we demonstrated,

on the pirated radio airwaves where we
broadcast, on the walls, the board-work
and the tombs of private property where
we graffitied, we were learning---all over
again and yet differently,

through that irresistible sweet negation
of the negation,--- higher rhythms and
Ideas of Necessity, becoming conscious
through plod and gutwork, not simply
intellectually but of what It means

to be part of that Must which is the call
and cry of Liberty from the depths of
struggles and oppressions and deaths.
And we fought ourselves free to be
this plural, this We

that must now, as an organization of Revolutionaries, amid the cuts, slashes and states of police even more densely entrenched, become that mountain in every city where warriors

of the New Class of the Planetariat are camped, clearing the way for others with ideas toward the overthrow of «this rotten-assed» trumpery and build the Democracy we were all born for.

ANTONELLA IASCHI (ITALIA)

ITALIA

Il mare restituisce corpi.
Qualche volta respirano accalcati
su lerci inferni galleggianti,
qualche volta galleggiano soltanto
accarezzati dalle onde pietose
che ne hanno raccolto l'anima.

L'Italia non accoglie quei randagi.
Li seppellisce nell'indifferenza
o li rinchiude in un labirinto
di attese, che si tuffano nel nulla
di speranze e soprusi intrecciati,
dove tutti diventano invisibili.

Il fascismo mai spento che ritorna
allatta senza tregue l'ignoranza,
troppi stanno a distanza e non toccano
quei figli della nostra avidità.
Per paura o per odio non importa:
si risvegliano i tempi dei razzismi.

Mediterraneo e terre di nordest
si fanno ponti tra noi e gli olocausti,
oggi lasciati scorrere nei giorni
di persone e paesi non lontani,
mentre la Storia ci dovrebbe insegnare
che il fuoco, se e' nutrito, non si ferma.

La gente ignora vite scorticate,
corpi gonfi di morte, giorni guadati come fiumi,
e scenari di guerra dove nuovi nazisti
ripetono impuniti supplizi del passato.
Memoria dovrebbe insegnare, si fa finta di niente
tanto le bombe cadono solo oltre gli schermi.

ANTONELLA IASCHI (ITALY)

ITALY

The sea returns bodies.
Sometimes, crowded on filthy
floating hells, they breathe;
sometimes they just float
caressed by merciful waves
which have harvested their souls.

Italy doesn't welcome those strays.
It buries them with indifference,
or locks them up in a labyrinth
of waits, that dive into nothingness
of hopes and woven oppressions,
where everyone becomes invisible.

The never-died fascism that returns
nurses ignorance without a break;
too many keep distant and never touch
those children of our greed.
Whether of fear or hatred doesn't matter:
the times of racism re-awake.

The Mediterranean and northeast lands
become bridges between us and the holocausts,
let loose now throughout the days
of people and nations not far off,
while History would teach us
that fire, if fed, doesn't stop.

People ignore flayed lives,
bodies swollen with death, days forded like rivers,
and war scenarios where neo-nazis
repeat, unpunished, past agonies.
Memory should teach, playing dumb,
because bombs fall only beyond screens.

Il più grave dei muri, il più vigliacco
lo hanno già infiltrato goccia a goccia
dentro la pancia e l'oggi della gente
e ritrovo persone che stimavo
a parlare degli "altri" con disprezzo
senza il ricordo di ciò che ieri è stato.

La pelle differente, la pronuncia diversa,
oppure solamente il viso stanco
di chi dorme per strada o alla stazione
si trasformano in colpe collettive
su cui sfogare paure programmate
per ricreare l'odio che divide.

L'Italia aveva un popolo migrante.
(Dannato fra i dannati di quel tempo)
che ce l'ha fatta a rimanere a galla
ritornando al paese a testa alta,
con la voglia pesante di restare
ricacciata con forza nei bagagli.

Mio padre e la valigia di cartone
sono partiti per essere stranieri...
E mi rifiuto di accettare un mondo
che vorrebbe fermare la Speranza
con frontiere e omicidi programmati
affidati alle acque e ai benpensanti.

Ho solo una certezza: la coscienza
di appartenere a un mondo in divenire,
dove ciascuno deve fare il proprio
per rimediare ai danni del poter...
E mi sussurro il canto di mio padre
che dice: "Nostra patria è il mondo intero."

The heaviest, most cowardly of walls
have already leaked drop by drop
in the stomach, and the today of people—
I find people I used to admire
talking about others with disdain
without remembering what yesterday was.

The different skin, the diverse pronunciation,
or even only the weary face of one who
sleeps on the street or at the train station.
transforming into collective crimes
on which to vent programmed fears
and re-instate the hatred that divides.

Italy had a migrant population
(condemned among the damned of that time)
who succeeded in remaining afloat,
returning home with heads held high,
with a heavy wish of remaining
strongly re-packed in luggage.

My father and his cardboard suitcase
have left to be foreigners...
and I refuse to accept a world
that would want to wall off Hope
at borders and planned homicides
assigned to the waters and the conformists.

I've only one certainty: the awareness
of belonging to a world in its becoming,
where everyone has to do their own share
to fix the damages of power...
And I whisper to myself my father's song,
“Our homeland is the whole world”.

Secondo loro dovrei aver paura
di te che porti gli anni di mio figlio.
(C'e' una madre che aspetta tue notizie
dietro una soglia da qualche parte.)
Loro mietono odio, io conosco quel canto
e da ovunque tu venga lo ricordo.

Come i lampioni della passeggiata
aspetti in fila il tuo diritto ad esistere,
che sia un sorso di latte o un documento...
E il tempo dell'attesa e' tempo fermo
pronto a sbranare quella dignità
di cui ti vesti perché non hai nulla.

Cammino, passi accanto, ti saluto,
mi rispondi e sorridi, allunghi il passo,
non ho altro da offrirti che il rispetto
e la mia voce/contro vale poco.
Ma tu chiamami mamma come hai fatto
serve a sperare in un mondo/umano.

Hai l'eta di mio figlio e nelle vene
lo stesso sangue rosso della vita
e la tristezza di una testa bassa
a cui manca il futuro, quello giusto
in cui lavoro, casa, amore e sogni
vanno a braccetto con la Libertà.

In their opinion I should be afraid
of you, who are the age of my son.
(There's a mother waiting for your news,
behind a door somewhere)
They reap hate, I know that song.
and anywhere you're from I remember.

Like lampposts on the promenade
you wait in line for your right to exist,
be it by a sip of milk or a document...
and the wait time is still time,
ready to chew up that dignity
you dress with, because you don't own anything.

I walk, you walk by me, I wave hello,
you answer and smile, you speed up,
I've nothing else to offer you but respect,
and my voice/against isn't worth much.
But your calling me mother, like you did,
helps bringing hope to a human world.

You're my son's age and you have in your veins
the same red blood of life
and the sadness of a head kept down,
who's missing a future, the right one,
in which a job, a home, love and dreams
hold hands with Freedom.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

BRUCE ISAACSON

THE GAME

I can't quite believe in heaven
but I've been through hell.

It seems at first like a limbo
between your children's health insurance
and the boss' eyes like
rocks in a setting of raw hamburger meat.

Hell is a prayer you say
to stay your hand from acting what you feel.

Hell is a plate of cold Chinese
at fourteen o'clock in the morning...

There was a girl with soft eyes full of
belief decades back....

I hardly remember Heaven but Hell's
a puppy that won't stop following.

Not some Milton thing you carry.

It's like you turn down a city street toward
some hopeful place, suddenly, a brickwall and

a man in the shadows with
open sores on his legs

and a hand reaching toward you—
“please....”

Sometimes it's a windswept sky that
binds you to a world you can't live with.

Droplets blow in your face in a moment
your sadness ignites

and you feel

so alive you might burst into flame
as the image of loved ones fills you
like a self-inflating lifeboat.

No, she may never understand...

You get blown in circles so that vertigo
becomes a natural state of mind.

Dimly you recall a glimpse of heaven
on the march toward hell.

Another phone call of another
friend who died

Youth spent... The fire still
burns bright inside.

Hell's not a fire, not a devil, it's a
brittle plastic fork that snaps if you use it.

It's the muzak that plays while you break.
A game you can't quit or win.

It's the promise that follows
the lie laid bare.

It's love, and loss, and there's nothing you can do.

I've forgotten the way to heaven
But I'm learning to walk to

wherever it is I'm
going now.

MAMADOU KANE (GUINEA, Fula Tribe)

AFRICA, MY AFRICA

When you see the elephants, giraffes and lions,
You see Africa
When you hear the drums' bold blissful beat
resounding to the rhythm of the hearts,
You hear Africa
When you feel the soft fabrics of colorful tuniques,
You feel Africa
When you taste the tropical plants and heavenly sweet

dishes,
You taste Africa.
It's not in the genes
It's in the blood
Because black blood is always thicker than oppression,
And this is the era of humans,
Undaunted by their endless corruption.
It is home to the lion,
The warrior, the proud farmer
And so bold men, women, and children,
Do not be ashamed of yourselves.
We have been blessed with the land we walk upon.
Do not be discouraged because they called you different.
Look at them in the eyes,
Raise your head high
Speak with pride and say,
"We are Africans!"
"We are Africans!"
"And we are proud."

MAMADOU KANE (GUINEA)

AFRIQUE, MON AFRIQUE

Quand tu aperçois les éléphants, les girafes et les lions

Tu aperçois l'Afrique

Quand tu entends résonner au rythme d'un cœur,

le battement bienheureux et téméraire des tambours

Tu entends l'Afrique

Quand tu effleures le tissu doux et coloré des pagnes

Tu effleures l'Afrique

Quand tu savoures des fruits tropicaux et d'exquis plats

épicés

Tu savoures l'Afrique

Ça ne se voit

pas dans les gênes.

Ça se voit dans le sang

Car le sang est toujours plus épais que l'eau

C'est le temps des humains

Impassibles face aux jeux de corruption

C'est le foyer du lion

du guerrier, du fier fermier

Et vous hommes braves, femmes courageuses, et enfants

valeureux,

N'ayez jamais honte de vous

Nous avons été béni dans la terre que le Seigneur nous a

donné

Ne vous découragez pas parce qu'il vous ont appelé

“différents”

Et à ceux là

Regardez les dans les yeux

Parlez avec fierté et dites

“Nous sommes le peuple d'Afrique

et nous sommes fier.”

(Translated into French by the Author)

DAN KATZ

I REALLY DON'T CARE, DO U?

Oh Melania Goddess of Silence
mute Attendant of the Shrine
of Lies you remain dumb
yet you were the first to let slip
the truth slapped all our faces
with that jacket challenged
each of us to ask how much do
I care

how many Poles ignored the train
on its way to Auschwitz? how many
Jews told themselves Kristallnacht
was an aberration? how many
of us tacitly colluded in Manzanar,
Tule Lake, Heart Mountain?

we've seen evil in power here
before but never like this and
it's on all of us in appalled wonder
we allowed it to flourish the devil
in the guise of a buffoon
his greatest trick not to make us
believe he doesn't exist but that
he's incompetent an object of ridicule
a piñata we wave at with our flaccid
sticks Pere Ubu fodder for comics
charlatan of distraction and misdirection
panem et circenses

as if ineptitude can't be cruel
as if idiocy can't be a weapon
as if not being taken seriously
can't lead to tyranny

Oh Melania

the line on your jacket is the
line in the sand we have to cross
or start digging head-sized holes.

JAZRA KHALEED (GREECE)

ΜΑΥΡΑ ΧΕΙΛΗ

Ακούστε Εσείς που μασουλάτε τη μοναξιά μου με την τηλεόραση ανοικτή Εσείς που έρχεστε στην κηδεία μου για να ανάψετε ένα κερί Ακούστε Ένα ρήμα θα σας σφηνώσω στα μάτια.

Ένα μπιτ θα σας φυτέψω στα στήθια

Εγώ δεν έχω μήτε φράγκο στην καρδιά ούτε κολακειές και επίθετα κρυμμένα στην τσέπη Σκορπίζω την ομορφιά μου στο μπετόν Με τα χέρια βουτηγμένα στο αίμα ποιητών γράφω τα πάντα στα 9mm Δεν υπάρχει κανείς να σεβαστώ Μετανάστης τριάντα ετών Δεν έχω ευθύνες Φτύνω ρίμες στα 120 bpm

Εσείς οι μέσοι άνθρωποι! Τεμαχίζετε τον έρωτα σε ίντσες Αγοράζετε τον έρωτα με πιστωτικές κάρτες

Καυχιέστε επιδόσεις Μπροστά σε μια οθόνη κατεβάζετε στύσεις Εμένα το κορμί μου κανείς σας δεν μπορεί να το αγγίξει Εγώ κάθε βράδυ βάφω τα χείλη μου μαύρα

Ακούστε με εσείς που φυλλομετράτε τις ήττες μου Με θέλετε ευθεία γραμμή, άντρα αντί παιδί Με θέλετε καλοραμμένο σακάκι Ευγενικό και νουνεχή Μου δένετε τα χέρια σε δείκτες ρολογιών Προσπαθείτε να με σφηνώσετε σ' αυτόν τον κόσμο Μπορείτε, όπως εγώ, να κάνετε τις λέξεις πράξεις; να κυοφορήσετε την άνοιξη; να καείτε χωρίς να αφήσετε στάχτες;

Ελάτε να σας κάνω ανθρώπους εσάς αξιότιμε δικαστή που σκουπίζετε τις ενοχές από τα γένια σας εσάς αγαπητέ δημοσιογράφε που διαφημίζετε το θάνατο εσάς τη

JAZRA KHALEED (GREECE)

BLACK LIPS

Listen You who chew on my solitude with your televisions on You who attend my funeral every morning to light a candle Listen I will drive a verb into your eyes I will plant a beat in your chests I don't have a cent in my heart or smooth talk and epithets hidden in my pocket I scatter my beauty on concrete streets I dip my hands in poets' blood I write everything in 9 mm caliber There's no one for me to respect A twenty-one-year-old Muslim punk I bear no responsibility I spit rhymes at 120 B.P.M. You man in the street! You portion out love in inches Purchase love with credit cards Trumpet your prowess At your screen you download erections None of you can touch my body I paint my lips black every night.

Listen to me, you who leaf through my defeats! You want me to be a straight line, a man and not a boy You want me to be a well-sewn jacket Polite and politic You tie my arms to watch hands You try to jam me into this world Can you, like me, turn words into deeds? Can you carry springtime in your bellies? Burn without ashes? Come let me make you human, you, Your Honor, who wipe guilt from your beard you, esteemed journalist, who tout death you, philanthropic lady, who pat children's heads without bending down and you who read this poem, licking your finger— To all of you I offer my body for genuflection Believe me one day you will adore me like Christ But I'm sorry for you sir— I do not negotiate with chartered accountants of words, with art

φιλόανθρωπη κυρία που χαϊδεύετε κεφαλάκια παιδιών
χωρίς καν να σκύψετε κι εσάς που διαβάζετε αυτό το
ποίημα σαλιώνοντας το δάκτυλο Προσφέρω σε όλους σας
το σώμα μου για προσκύνημα Πιστέψτε με μια μέρα θα
με λατρέψετε σαν το Χριστό
Όμως λυπάμαι για εσάς κύριε Δε διαπραγματεύομαι με
ορκωτούς λογιστές λέξεων, με κριτικούς τέχνης που
τρώνε από τα χέρια μου Μπορείτε, αν θέλετε, να μου
πλύνετε τα πόδια Μη το πάρετε προσωπικά

Τι να τις κάνω τις σφαίρες όταν υπάρχουν τόσες
λέξεις πρόθυμες να πεθάνουν για μένα;

critics who eat from my hand You may, if you desire,
wash my feet Don't take it personally Why do I need
bullets if there are so many words prepared to die for me?

(Translated from Greek by Peter Constantine)

GENNY LIM

DOME OF THE ROCK

For Ahed Tamimi

The path leaps beyond the sky's edge
where steel wings of butterfly
bullets implode in flesh
At zero gravity the gods shadowbox
In vain to keep their eyes dry
They raise the fortress of heaven high
over the screams below to
keep the missiles from shearing
the sacred geometry of memories
The journey never ends and the
distance from mortality is
nightmares and ghosts chasing
old women's sobs
When the termites have
excavated the last of the land
All is still but only momentarily
Two wings of a golden-haired bird
plucked from the corner of night with
clenched fists are raised against
the army of impersonators
At zero gravity all goes black
except the shackled dawn
that veils her breasts
The interrogator's odor
of tobacco and sweat hovers
over her pale, virgin
skin and flaxen hair
He tells her,
"You have the eyes of an angel"
Just then, they turn to stone
The very same stones the boys hurl
at tanks, the suicide stones clutched

in their schoolboy hands upon death
the very same bloodied stones
that once built their homes
that fought the battle of Jericho
that Dome of the Rock
which contains one's flag,
one's inheritance, one's spirit
and existence.

MARK LIPMAN

HEARTBURN AT THE DINER

It used to be that you could go to the local diner
to enjoy a meal and cup of coffee, some friendly
conversation
to meet with friends and neighbors, maybe read the
newspaper.
But something has changed these days, like a disease
spread across the nation.
Nearly everywhere you go, there are people speaking up
boldly,
making off the cuff remarks, and outrageous declarations,
looking for excuses to defend the criminal behavior of a
bully.
It's like they simply don't care that the president is a
disgrace to our nation.

Wrapped in their flags, being very proud Americans, these
very same people
don't really seem to care that our country has become a
laughing stock.
They cheer the bombing of Syria, saying it's for the
children, yet how feeble is it
that we poison the children of Flint and gas protestors
at Standing Rock?

Do they know that it costs \$1.85 million for every cruise
missile?
Or that a night of fireworks to blow up empty buildings
costs a \$200 million fee?
That it's an act of war on a sovereign nation? But hey,
Raytheon made a bundle.
So what if we have to cut food stamps? That's just the price
of being free.

The old guy at the counter says, “We should just wipe them
all off the map.”

I shake my head, thinking how can you defend saying
something like that?

The kid with the scruffy beard says, “It’s California’s fault.
Fuck that liberal crap.”

He blames know-it-all college kids, angry that his own
education fell flat.

The dishwasher, twice my size, sitting in a booth at the far
end of the diner,
gives me a look that’d kill for asking these questions,
wanting to take me outside.

That’s just how you get respect in America, by beating up
those who are weaker.

Ignorance seems to be the only thing on the menu these
days, but they call it pride.

Honestly though, I can’t be angry, it’s really quite sad the
entire situation,
seeing poor people blaming other poor people for their own
suffering,
while lifting up false idols and a system that’s based upon
division
keeping us all fighting, while the billionaires are the only
ones winning.

Looks like I’m going to have to find a new place to eat.

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS (CATALUNYA)

CATALUNYA 2.0

Jo vinc d'una lluita que és sorda i constant
—Raimon «Jo vinc d'un silenci»

La llum mediterrània, de tan clara,
més que mostrar enlluerna i amaga
jocs d'endevinalles, o d'escacs:

Com t'ho faràs, país petit i il·lusionat,
contra les grans potències? contra el mercat?
Un cop més, Catalunya, és David contra Goliat.

Els van guanyar la guerra.
Nosaltres guanyarem la pau.

Volem una revolució sense morts.

I tanmateix som en una lluita sense treva,
perquè no ens l'han donada ni ens la donaran.
I a ells sí que no els ve d'aquí la sang,
per poc que puguin, ja ho crec que ens mataran!

Tot és ben a l'inrevés
del que expliquen les notícies:

és l'internacionalisme català
apostant contra el nacionalisme
monolingüe i exclouent de l'estat castellà,
que encara es somnia imperi i es nega a parlar.

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS (CATALONIA)

CATALONIA 2.0

I come from a struggle that is deaf and ongoing
—Raimon «I come from a silence»

The Mediterranean light, so clear,
more than revealing, it dazzles and conceals
riddles or games of chess.

How will you manage, small and hopeful country,
to go against the great powers? against the market?
Once again, Catalonia is David against Goliath.

They won the war.
We will win peace.

We want a revolution without fatalities.

And yet we are in a fight without a truce,
because they have not given us nor will give us one.
And they couldn't care less if there's blood,
if they can, you better believe they will kill us!

Everything is completely the opposite
of what we are told in the news:

It is Catalan internationalism
betting against the monolingual and exclusionary
nationalism of the Spanish state,
that still dreams of an empire and refuses to dialogue.

El seu únic diàleg és esclafar
amb jutges comprats,
amb guàrdies civils exaltats,
i amb mòmies i zombies feixistes
als qui envia a pegar
amb impunitat i nocturnitat
el monarca absolutista,
la deixalla de l'estat.

Mentres a corre-cuita t'escric aquest poema, Jack,
i te l'escric en català
perquè la llengua és la font
que no puc deixar assecar,
les màquines de mentides
vomiten històries inventades,
confeccionades per màfies inquietants,
dels nostàlgics funcionaris de la injustícia,
de societats dissenyades per omplir d'odi
la ciutat estimada,
i aquest bellíssim paisatge
on un cel blavíssim contempla
la disbauxa dels ignorants
afincats als privilegis del seu antic genocidi,

d'on els expulsem cada dia
fent-los de mirall , a l'estil Valle-Inclán,
mostrant-ne l'esperpent,
i obrint les seves esclètxes al vent,
perquè rebenti el pus regurgitant
d'històries que fa massa temps que van durant.

Jo vinc d'una lluita que és sorda i constant.

Their only dialogue is to crush
with judges bought,
with exalted civil guards,
and with mummies and fascist zombies
who are sent to strike
with impunity and in the dark of night
by the absolutist monarch,
the waste of the state.

As I hurriedly write you this poem, Jack,
and I write it in Catalan
because the language is the source
that I cannot let run dry,
the machines of lies
vomit invented stories,
concocted by disturbing mafias,
of nostalgic officials of injustice,
of societies designed to fill with hate
the beloved city,
and this beautiful landscape
where a deep blue sky contemplates
the debauchery of the ignorant
based on the privileges of their ancient genocide,

from where we expel them every day
making them a mirror, in the Valle-Inclán style,
exposing their monstrosity,
and opening their cracks to the wind,
until their stories of regurgitating pus explode,
stories that have continued for far too long.

I come from a struggle that is deaf and ongoing.

(Translated from Catalan by James Phillips)

EMANUELE LONGHI (ITALY)

CARCERE

Tu che pur avendo tanti difetti
sei stato capace di aprirmi gli occhi.
Sei brutto, malinconico e crudele
se potessi ti abbandonerei all'istante
ma allo stesso tempo non posso far
altro che ringraziarti, anzi no!
Non posso, non posso
ringraziarti per il male che sei
per tutte le volte che ho sbattuto la testa al muro
con lo scopo di non vederti piu'.
Pero' forse potrei ringraziarti...
per avermi fatto intravedere la strada giusta
per avermi fatto conoscere persone splendide e sofferenti
che iniziano dalle mie stesse radici.
Forse potrei ringraziarti...
non lo faccio
non lo faccio
perche' ti odio.

EMANUELE LONGHI (ITALY)

PRISON

You who, regardless of your numerous defects,
were able to open my eyes.
You're ugly, melancholic and cruel;
if I could I'd abandon you immediately
but at the same time I can't do
anything but thank you, or actually, no!
I can't, I can't
thank you for how evil you are,
for every time I've hit my head against the wall
to not see you again.
But maybe I could thank you...
for making me catch a glimpse of the right path,
for introducing me to bright and suffering people
who have begun from my same roots.
Maybe I could thank you...
I can't
I can't
because I hate you.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

KAREN MELANDER MAGOON

REFUGEES

The world is surfeited with refugees
Like water flooding its indigenous tributaries
Pushing away and out of native ponds and streams
Carrying in its arms
Poisons of war
Memories of loss
Polluted vestiges
Of gardens
Of roses
Once perfuming
What was home
Floods of refugees
Wash over boundaries
Children dammed away
In barbed wire cages
Scream against unyielding walls
Their echoes resounding
Yet unheard
Homeless roam strange streets
Seeking refuge
Homeless flow in rivulets
Becoming human streams of rage
Washing into pools of anger
Our sister, mother, wife
Our statue of liberty
Observes the rising flood of hidden masses
And raises her skirt
Not to protect
But to cover, to smother, to make invisible
The masses
Seeking refuge at her borders
Her borders, the hem of her skirt
Sewn with barbed wire
Her body, the body of liberty
Stained with blood

Where is love
Oh sister, oh mother of liberty?
You watch the rising waters
You see destruction flying overhead
Seeded in the waters of your own land
Across oceans of blood
You are safe
But cannot succor
Refugees from hope
Rivers of anguish
Huddled masses of misfortune
You once vowed
To protect
To embrace
To love
Rising waters of refugees
Inundate the world with pain
Ride their own tsunami
Swallowing their own boats
Their own children
Who wash up lifeless
On foreign shores
Refugees become the flowing ocean
And the victims of its deluge
Trekking through the grand river
Into hope
Becoming an illusion
As families are cut
With bureaucratic knives
Mothers ripped from children
Separated families
Thrown again into the flowing waters
Babies flung from mother's breast
Into strange waters
Where they cannot swim
They are the flowing rivers
And the victims
They flow as refuse
Past the feet of Mother Liberty.

JIDI MAJIA (CHINA)

(这个世界并非杞人忧天.)

这个世界并非杞人忧天
但总会有人担心——
天空会突然地坍塌
我本应该待在老家达基沙洛
而不是在这个狂躁的尘世游走
但事实就是这样，我疲惫不堪
就是望见了并不遥远的山顶
我也再没有心气攀上它的高处
不是每一种动物，都有这样的想法
作为一个彝人，我只想——
同我的祖先们一样，躺在寂静的
山岗，长时间地注视着远方
在时间的尽头，最终捕捉到
这一切是如何消失得无影无踪
甚至去观察一只勤快英勇的蚂蚁
是怎样完成搬运比它的身体
更要庞大百倍的昆虫的把戏
如果没有疑义，还可以潜入荞麦地
去守望一颗颗麦尖上晶莹的露水
它们折射闪烁出千万个迷人的星空
而从那遥远处吹来的温暖的风
会让无名的思绪漂浮于永恒的无限

JIDI MAJIA (CHINA)

THIS WORLD CAN DO WITHOUT
CHICKEN LITTLE'S DREAD

This world can do without Chicken Little's dread,
But there will always be some who worry
That the sky itself will fall upon our heads.
I'm a son of Dajyshalo and should have stayed put,
Not gone gadding about this restless, dusty world,
But this is how things are, I am dead-tired:
Even the sight of a not-so-distant peak
No longer stirs my heart to climb its heights.
We harbor notions not every creature has:
As one of Nuosu blood, I only wish
To recline, just as my forebears did,
On a quiet ridgetop, gazing into the distance.
At the end of time's corridor, I would take stock
Of many things, and how they vanish with no trace,
Or just observe one bold, industrious ant
And how it accomplishes the feat
Of moving a bug one hundred times its size.
If it would not rouse suspicion, I'd cross a buckwheat
field,
Watch how crystal dew remains on flowery tips
Catching light near and far, to make a starry expanse,
And cloudl-ike thoughts would waft to a timeless place
On a balmy wind that blows across great spaces.
Even so, I could never tear myself away
From creatures in throes of earthly misfortune,
Whose heavy sighs keep sounding in my ears.
It's up to each of us to be as good as we can be,

但是尽管这样，我仍然无法摆脱
这个地球遭遇不幸的生命
在我的耳边留下的沉重叹息
虽然我们每个人都应该洁身自好
可还是有人参与了对别的生物的杀戮
其实这个世界比我们想象的
还要令人堪忧，这并非是哗众取宠
我们的土地本来就是母亲的身躯
是今天的人类，在她身上留下了伤口
他们高举着机器和逻辑的镰刀
高歌猛进，横冲直撞，闪闪发光
羞耻这个词，不敢露面，它躲进了
把一切罪恶汇集在一起的那本词典
它让我们无尽的天空和海洋
留下了一道道斧痕叮当作响
这个宇宙只有太阳依然美好善良
它伸出了它的大手，去擦干泪水
可以听见，也可以看见，还有多少生命
正在诞生，并为明天的来临而欣喜若狂
尽管这样，我还是固执地相信
这个世界不会毁于一场预谋的战争
而会毁于一次谁也不太关注的偶然
但愿，但愿这一天永远不要出现。

Yet some prefer to do the dirty deed of slaughter.
In fact, the grounds for dread in this world
Are worse than we know: this is not sensationalizing:
This land, none other than our Mother's body,
Bears wounds inflicted by human beings today:
Swinging their wide scythes of machinery and logic,
They charge ahead on a rampage, glinting and gleaming,
And the word "shame" hides away sheepishly
In that dictionary where all sins have been collected,
So our sky and sea that stretch out of sight
Resound with axe blows that leave devastation.
In our cosmos, only the sun remains wondrously kind
Reaching out huge hands to wipe away our tears.
We can hear and we can see how many creatures
Are being born, fired up and eager for tomorrow,
Even so, I still stubbornly believe
This world's ruin will not come by warmongering plots,
But by some random event we still pay little heed to.
If only...O if only that day could be kept from coming!

(Translated from Chinese by Denis Mair)

DEVORAH MAJOR

SPECIAL HOUSING UNIT HUNTING SEASON

it's hunting season all year round
for men of black and brown
jogging in a morning run
shot
wearing a hoodie
shot
walking home with swagger
shot
waving hands seeking help
shot
coming home from the store
shot
getting off a subway train
a commuter train
a city bus
shot, shot, shot
playing in a field
shot
standing on a corner
late night
early morning
high noon
shot, shot, shot

i was afraid each shooter said
of his color and size
of the clarity in his eyes
the curl in his hair
the glide in his stride
the swinging of his arms
the defiance in his heart

i was afraid so shot
i was afraid so killed

it happens so often
it barely makes the news
these days
missouri or oregon
florida or illinois
mississippi or kansas
california or texas

the bodies are falling

he was only twelve
only fifteen
only twenty-two
he was sixty-seven
he was forty-four
he was an uncle
cousin
boyfriend
partner
he was a father
a brother
a son

this is the season
to honor the dead
the new dead
the just dead
the yesterday dead
the last week dead
the dead we swear never to forget
but they come so quickly like a harsh winter storm
first a few sprinkles and then a steady flow
and then hail hammering our roofs and sidewalks
flooding gutters and moving hills aside

it's hunting season
and love poems must be pushed to the back
scribbled in a journal's corners
left for a more peaceful time

the dead are rising waiting at the edge of my dreams
for me to have a moment for them
who were loved who did love who are loved
who fell as barely noted

hunting season statistics.

ROSEMARY MANNO

MY CINCO DE MAYO 2018

Like the burro I left behind
that I love so much
I'm not a beast of burden
I came at the wrong time
I had no imagination
that came later
it wasn't too late

Off to my third job
the second one never paid
after two months of slaving away
Afraid to confront the injustice
like the lottery ticket I can't cash in
with my fake papers...
I'm not an imposter
I'm a man
in a cold heartless land

I will eat fast food
to slow down this living death
We eat our mistakes every day

The kids get free school lunch made of junk
when they see me I'm sleeping
on a weary relative's toxic floor
or under a tree
too tired to pray it doesn't rain

Off to my third job
I clean up the place after closing
a teenager's wage
fellow workers the age of my kids

Soon they move on
in the false promise of youth
though I'm still here
and we miss our friend
who was fired when she tried to organize

I slept in the car after work
I drove Uber in the morning
soon I was victim of a righteous road rage
by a cabbie who had no riders

Uber was over the car repossessed
while we slept in it

It's not just me
I won't live on my knees
I said to remember the Battle of Puebla
on this Cinco de Mayo
while you're off getting drunk on shitty Corona beer
I'll raise a cold Pacifico
to all the Battles of Puebla
Not one step back
Happy Birthday Carlos Marx
200 years old today.

ELIZABETH MARINO

THE DIRECT VELVET ROUTE

Troops know that the truest
way to an enemy's anguish
is through the direct velvet route
of vagina, mouth, or anus
of his wife or young daughter,
preferably in front of him.
It a time-tested war crime, that
struggles to be named as such.

Here at home, the common
“I want some of that”
muttered from a park bench,
or as he gets off a public bus
following a young girl.

Studies report a child-woman's
appeal peaks at age 13.
My mother once drove over
a curb as a man leched after
a neighbor's 12-year-old daughter
entering a grocery store.
Thick black-girl thighs
and woman hips.
She looks so grown,
she must be grown.
What child?
"I want some of this."

As pirates cruise the West Coast of Africa,
and desperate parents take small sums
to ensure domestic training, a possible
life abroad. Hope beyond hope,
then really not wanting to know,

as the dream ships sail away.

On a nice night, it would be good
to go out for a walk. I hear my own
mother's voice saying: Don't go,
there are bad men out there.

The small woman enwrapped in
a simple green sari has been
in the States for three weeks.
A small, proud smile. Where is
Chicago? she asks.
Security finds her apartment,
and asks me to see her upstairs
to her unlocked apartment.

"Life doesn't frighten me," wrote
Maya Angelou. But it does.
Truly, it does. The detailed catalogues
of violence to girls and women
shut us down.

There are no longer stages
for girls to play at future sexual selves,
to flirt in earnest without consequence.
Her gaze ---direct, sure and unaffected---
laughter in her eyes.

There must be a way to slip
our fingers deep into the earth
all at once, and right its orbit.

JOSEPH AFROABORIGINAL MARTINEZ II

PULL UP YOUR BOOTSTRAPS

They tell us to pull up our bootstraps and work our way up.
After all, their abuelos y ancestros did it;
so that means that we can too, right? Wrong!

El problema isn't a lack of work ethic and, contrary to
popular belief, we're not lazy!

You see, while your white immigrant, some of them even
undocumented, ancestors

“worked”, it was the black, the brown, the red, and the
yellow that built

the foundation of this nation on stolen land.

You are AT MOST 2% different from anyone on this
planet! Because history shows

that your people learn best when given scientific proof.

They say, Pull up your bootstraps and work your way up
like we did.

But...leave out the genocide of indigenous people, slavery,
and the abuse of human

rights it took to get there

and the Native Americans, indigenous, African, Caribbean,
Latin American, Arab

and Asian countries destroyed in the process.

People killed or forced to assimilate.

They demand that we pull up our bootstraps because they
fucking did it

but...fail to realize that we're a community that isn't built
upon the labor and exploitation

of others but rather built with them. We can't succeed

because we want our communities

to succeed, not just the individual.

They forcibly command that we pull up our bootstraps!

But...how can we if they're using the ones we made,
leaving us without anything to pull up?

PIPPO MARZULLI (ITALY)

ORO NERO

Se tutta la bellezza perisse?
Se di un dio le lacrime,
di malinconiche meraviglie,
si mutassero da azzurrita' cristalline
in melme radioattive,
se svuotassimo tutte le vene
della madre terra
che portano linfa & vita ai suoi cuori
in cui giacciono assopite
le scure anime antiche
sognanti in ere di solitudini inaudite,
se trasformassimo i verdeggianti
polmoni,
ramificati nell'intimo di ogni respiro,
in puntelli & travi & sostegni
dei ponti su cui ruspe & camion
sfilano purulenti,
se l'acqua,
libera in ogni sua molecola
che suona concreta da millenni,
divenisse
utopico miraggio muto intrappolato
in bottiglie di plastica,
e se tutta la bellezza perisse?

PIPPO MARZULLI (ITALY)

BLACK GOLD

If all beauty dies?
If a god's teardrops
over melancholy marvels
turn themselves from blue crystalline
into radioactive mud;
if we gut all the veins
of mother earth
that bring lymph and life to her heart
in which the dark ancient souls
lie drowsy
dreaming of ages of inconceivable loneliness;
if we transform the verdant
lungs,
branching in the depth of every breath,
into props & beams & supports
of bridges on which road scrapers & trucks
parade pruriently;
if the water,
free in every single molecule
that sounds real for millenniums,
becomes
a mute utopian mirage trapped
in plastic bottles,
and if all beauty dies.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY (RUSSIA/USSR)

О ДРЯНИ

Сла́ва, Сла́ва, Сла́ва геро́ям!!!
Впро́чем, им дово́льно возда́ли да́ни.
Тепе́рь
погово́рим
о дряни.

Утихоми́рились бу́ри революцио́нных лон.
Подёрну́лась ти́ной сове́тская меша́нина.
И вы́лезло из-за спи́ны РСФСР
мурло́
меща́нина.

(Меня́ не пойма́ете на сло́ве, я во́все не про́тив
меща́нского сосло́вия.
Меща́нам без разли́чия кла́ссов и сосло́вий моё
славосо́вие.)

Со всех необъя́тных росси́йских нив,
с пе́рвого дня сове́тского рожде́ния
стекли́сь они́, на́скоро опере́нья переменя́в,
и засе́ли во все учрежде́ния.

Намозо́лив от пятиле́тнего сиде́ния зады́,
кре́пкие, как умыва́льники,
живу́т и поны́не ти́ше воды́ .
Свили ую́тные кабинеты́ и спа́ленки.

И ве́чером та́ или́ иная́ мразь, на́ жену́. за пиани́ном
обуча́ющуюся, глядя́,
гово́рит, от самова́ра разморя́сь:

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY (RUSSIA/USSR)

ABOUT TRASH

Glory, Glory, Glory to the heroes!
But they've received enough tribute.
Now let's talk
about trash.

The storms of the revolutionary wombs have quieted.
The Soviet jumble is covered with slime.
And the ugly face of the *meshchanin*
has crawled out
from behind the back of the Socialist Republic.

(Don't misunderstand me,
I'm not against the middle class itself.
My words of glory are for philistines,
not discriminating against any class.)

They thronged in from all the vast Russian fields,
from the first day of the Soviet birth,
and quickly changing their feathers,
inhabited all establishments.

Their behinds calloused from years of sitting,
hardened like wash-basins,
they live to this very day quieter than water.
They've woven comfortable offices and little bedrooms.

And in the evening this or that scum,
overheated from drinking too much tea,
looking over at his wife,
who's practicing at the piano, says:

«Товарищ Надя!

К празднику прибавка -

24 тыщи. Тариф. Эх, заведу я себе тихоокеанские галифища, чтоб из штанов выглядывать как коралловый риф!»

А Надя: «И мне с эмблемами платья. Без серпа и молота не покажешься в свете!

В чём с егódня бóду фигу́рять я н а балу́ в Рёввоёнсовёте?!»

На стéнке Маркс. Ра́мочка а́ла.

На «Извёстиях» лёжа, котёнок грéется. А из-под потолка в е рещáла о г олтéлая канарéйца.

Маркс со стéнки смотре́л, смотре́л...

И вдруг рази́нул рот, да как заорёт:

«Опутали революцию обывáтельщины нíti.

Страшнéе Врáнгеля обывáтельский быт.

Скорéе гóловы канарéйкам сверните -

чтоб комму́низм

канарéйками не был побит!»

“Comrade Nadia!

For the holiday I got an additional
24 thousand added to my pay. I’ll get myself some
oceanic riding-breeches, so my pants will stick out
and look as amazing as a coral reef!”

And Nadia: “And I’ll get dresses with emblems.
You can’t go out in society without showing your hammer
and sickle!

What am I going to show off in today at the
Revolutionary War Council ball?!”

On the wall there’s a Marx in a little red frame.
A kitten is curled up on The News. A frenzied
canary chirped beneath the little ceiling.

From the wall Marx looked, and looked . . .
And suddenly, his mouth gaping, he roars out:
“Bourgeois threads have tangled the revolution.
Bourgeois life is more terrible than Wrangel*.
Better to twist off the canaries’ heads
so communism is not beaten down by canaries!”

**Baron Pyotr Wrangel was the commanding
general of the White Army during the Russian
Civil War.*

(Translated from Russian by Jenny Wade)

SARAH MENEFEE

let the cement

have its moment
to cry.



AGNETA FALK
Put Your Ear To The Wall And Listen

JANICE MIRIKITANI

A JOURNEY TO THE MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

In commemoration of the thousands of known and
unknown lynched African-Americans after the civil war.

Montgomery, Alabama
Memorial of lynchings
Boxes like coffins, hanging with names,
places... of 4,400 known.
Emmett Till, age 14, lynched in Money, Mississippi.
His mother refused to close the coffin lid
so all could see the bloated mutilation, once a human black
man,

for all to see terrorism by white supremacy.
Lynchings --thousands unknown
in towns white crowds would gather
with their children, laughing, eating like at a picnic
to watch hangings, burning of flesh, bullet-ridden.
with smells of barbecue, photographs sold
like postcards of black bodies twitching in the sunlight.

Yuriko's mother
hung herself after she was released from
concentration camps in Colorado, Arkansas, Utah, Idaho,
Arizona, Wyoming, California, USA.
She returned to ruins, all possessions held by neighbors,
gone. Her precious pearls. Gone.
Perhaps the rope bejeweling her neck was
the final memory of her pearl necklace.
And Uncle Tets, who lynched himself from a beam, bottles
of whisky choking his memories of a lost manhood
as he wandered powerless in the dust of Tule Lake.
And Imadel, who hung herself from the window of a
homeless shelter
after she was raped how many times she lost count of,

because she thought that is the rent women pay.
And we, with invisible rope, are lynched by white
privilege,
institutional hangings of medicare, health care, social
security.
Equal wage for equal labor. Separation of immigrant
families,
Spending more billions on military might.
The political conventions are picnics. They eat hot dogs,
sell postcards
of mass incarcerations, a legacy of slavery, feeding the
profit
of the prison industrial complex.
Human costs of capitalism.
Death sentences to the poor. Immigrants. Muslims. Women
with
children, who go to bed hungry.
A planet endangered.
Economic injustice,
Food and shelter insecurity,
Elderly people on the streets.
Face this America! Face history present today.
I take the rope from around my neck,
tie it to yours, and yours.
Shall we make an army of ropes,
netted into resolve
to face the darkness and, with these ropes of words,
enrage the light?

NGUA'N LOPES MORALES (MEXICO)

MÜJAKUJY ÜJN N'ATZI'TE

Ay müjakujy
mijche't n'ijxyo'ba üjn nwit
ye'nubü, suñibü' sondyenubü'
ay müjakujy
mijtzi küjsmü' wyatmü'nba
y niji'nde ngyowanebü
ay müjakujy
mijt mdzamba sa'xatya'mbü tiyü
y ja'idübüde mgi'psokyu'y
mijche't n'ijxyo'ba üjn nwit
yajkümün sujkübya yeme iyü
y ngyojotzo'yobyä palomajse
y ni ja'idübüde mij msaj
mijt mdzamba wü'ajku'y
y niji'n mgotzuni wü'a
ndxidüju yajamokyu'y te'kuda,
te'omojk ay müjakujy atzi
üjt nwanjabya't, üjt mgüketmba't
nyüjtene'ajnkü' mijtzi
mijchomose'tzi ijtu'ajnkü'
ijtu'ajnküse'tzi sawa'omo
ijtu'ajnküse'tzi o'na'omo
ijtu'ajnküse'tzi ijtusebü kene'omo
y eyada'mbü ja'ijtyabü'is kyi'psokyu'y
ja'ijtyabü'is ñüjtyü'yokyu'y
nyajkjükü jayajpa mijt m'ijtku'y
ji' ndyo'ya'nüyebü'is ndyochüjkyajpa
ji' myujsi te'kuda ñe'küdidē
nü chüjkme'tzubü kya'ku'y
is de'se nu nyajksutzüjku
y mijtzi niji'n ñüpndü'yi u'yi
niji'n mgo'onijsi nwit
judüma m'ajnjamba nüam

NGUA'N LOPES MORALES (MEXICO)

HERMANO ARBOL

¡oh! árbol,
quisiera ser como tú,
grande, majestuoso, impasible,
¡oh! árbol,
tú que le cantas a las alturas
sin que seas trovador,
¡oh! árbol,
tú que hablas de cosas bellas
sin que seas poeta,
quisiera ser como tú,
que brindas sombra,
que cobijas como paloma
sin que tengas alas,
tú que brindas paz,
sin la ambición de ganar
un premio por lo que das,
por eso, ¡oh! árbol hermano mio,
yo te canto, yo te admiro,
porque eres mío,
porque formo parte de tí,
como formo parte del
viento, de las nubes,
del universo entero.
Y sin embargo,
manos sin conciencia,
cortan tu existencia,
te derriban sin misericordia,
no sabe, que por eso está
propiciando su destrucción
misma de quien te corta.
Y tú ni te quejas,
ni tratas de defenderte,
sólo cuando tu cuerpo

JUAN LOPEZ MORALES (MEXICO)

BROTHER TREE

Oh! Tree
I wish I could be like you
big majestic impassive
Oh! Tree
singing to the heights
without being a minstrel
Oh! Tree
speaking of beauty
without being a poet
I wish I could be like you
giving shade
giving cover like a bird
without having wings
bringing peace
without trying to win
a prize for your gifts
for this my brother Tree
I admire you I sing to you
because you are mine
because I am a part of you
like you are a part of
the wind of the clouds
of the whole universe
and yet
hands with no conscience
cut your life short knock
you down without mercy
they don't know this is what
leads to the destruction of
even the men who cut you
and you don't complain
or try to defend yourself
only when your dead body

ñu'ku ka'ubü nwit najsküjsi
jujche mbyüyijse
jinüma ngyümumba toya'is
y te' tza'kobajkapabü püt
nü ndyükübü'is ji' ñüjkyüyi
üjt mujspa't ñümbabüde
çtikudamüjtzi myajka'ba uka
üjt nitiyüjt ja mdxüjkja?
y ni'is ji' mawe ngyo'one
y n'ijspa'küjt de'sebü tiyü
üjn nwidümnü' wakajkpa
nitibü maya'ku'yis ji' nübujtje
mijtzidi ngya'ba'k

ay atzi müjakujy
y tise nü ngya'u mijtzi
de'se jene yajka'yadüjpa mdüyumu
tum dum jama tükyadüjpa
mojsi's küdi'tida'm mijche'da'mbü
y uka ni'iyü ji' wyejtene
wü'a ngyo'onu, wü'a ngyokijpubü'is
ji' ma ñümawe sone ame'
yüti suñitya'mbü tza'ma
maka kamnajs widübüye ji'nam
mawe y'idi ijtku'y ni kobünda'm
ni jüyü ni sawa ni tuj ni nü'
te'kudande ay müjakujy üjn n'atzi
üjt nwa'kjabya't nwü'ajku'y
y de'sedike de üjn ndüyumu kuda
``ji'nde myujxebü' tide nü chüjkyaju".

ya sin vida toca la tierra
cuan largo eres,
exhalas un rugido de agonía,
que la torpe mente de quien
te mata, no sabe descifrar,
pero yo sé qué dices:
¿por qué me matas, si
yo no te he hecho daño?
y nadie acude en tu ayuda,
y cuando veo éso,
la lágrimas de mis ojos,
escurren a raudales
que ninguna pena me provoca
solo tu muerte,

¡oh! hermano árbol.
Y así como mueres tú,
mueren muchos de tus hermanos,
diariamente son sacrificados,
cientos de tu clase,
y, si nadie levanta su voz
para defenderte, para salvarte,
con el tiempo, los ahora bosques
bellos, serán panoramas desérticos,
sin vida, sin animales, sin flores,
sin viento, sin lluvia, sin agua.
¡oh! árbol, hermano mío,
yo te pido perdón, y
perdona a mis hermanos de raza,
``porque no saben lo que hacen".

falls to the ground do you
let out a roar of agony
that the crude mind of
your killer can't decipher
but I know what you say
why do you kill me when I
haven't done you any harm?
and nobody comes to your aid
and when I see this the tears
drain from my eyes in torrents
no other grief has ever caused
this only your death,

oh, my brother Tree!
the way you die is the way
many of your brothers are
sacrificed every day
hundreds of your kind
and no one raises his voice
to defend you to save you
with time the beautiful
forests we have now will
be deserted panoramas
without life without animals
without flowers without wind
without rain without water
Oh! my brother Tree
I ask your forgiveness and
forgiveness for my race
“because they know not what they do”

(Translated from Spanish by Judith Ayn Bernhard)

NANCY MOREJÓN (CUBA)

¿TUVE UN AMIGO?

A la memoria de Nazim Hikmet

Tuve un amigo y hoy me pregunto si tuve un amigo.
Un amigo real como las palmeras en los dibujos andaluces
de Federico,
allá por los años treinta del siglo XX.

¿Tuve un amigo turco, alguna vez, sobre las márgenes del
Bósforo,
añorado su rostro por mi memoria
ante las aguas temblorosas que corrían casi azules,
en medio de la luz de Estambul,
radiante como los ojos,
como las visiones y la esperanza de mi amigo...en
Estambul?

Están presentes los cantos de sirena, los
amaneceres apacibles,
la rosa clara en mano de una muchacha hermosa,
el fogonero saliendo de su fábrica,
la estatuilla africana como un ave volando,
el llanto de un bebé sin coche
y el sordo chirrido de un tanque
que nunca fue desmantelado
y cuyas ruedas rebuznan y aplastan los ladrillos
del pavimento todavía ensangrentado.

La guerra regresó, otra vez, la guerra ha regresado
pero los espíritus acompañantes de la experiencia,
y yo,
tratamos en vano de rodear al amigo,
mi amigo,
que llora sin consuelo,
como un niño sentado al centro de una plaza vacía.

Tuve un amigo y hoy me pregunto si tuve un amigo.

NANCY MOREJÓN (CUBA)

DID I HAVE A FRIEND?

To the memory of Nazim Hikmet

I had a friend and today I ask myself if I had a friend.
A real friend like the palms in Federico's Andalusian
drawings
from back in the Thirties.

Did I once have a Turkish friend on the margins of the
Bosphorus?

My memory is yearning for his face
in front of the trembling waters that ran nearly blue,
in the middle of the light of Istanbul
as radiant as eyes,
like the visions and the hope of my friend. . . in Istanbul?

The siren's songs, the gentle dawns are still there,
the light colored rose in a beautiful girl's hand,
the stoker leaving his factory,
the little African statue of a bird flying,
the cry of a baby with no carriage
and the senseless creaking of a tank
that was never dismantled
and whose wheels bray and crush the bricks
of the still bloody pavement.

The war returned, once again, the war has returned
but the companion spirits of the experience
and I,
attempt in vain to encircle the friend,
my friend,
who cries without consolation,
like a child seated in the middle of an empty plaza.

I had a friend and today I ask myself if I had a friend.

(Translated from Spanish by Judith Ayn Bernhard)

ALEJANDRO MURGUÍA

ENTRE VOLCANES

Entre volcanes encontré tu voz, entre los ríos y nubes
de tu país, pequeña tierra de Pipiles.
Entre la madrugada y el amanecer
Escuche tu llanto ahogado de coraje
tus sombras y hechizos hecho realidad.
Entre el llano y el mar dulce
entre la sierra y la selva,
en los arrabales
hasta en los ojos
de los pordioseros

No conocí tu rostro, tus manos
tu sonrisa de media luna
pero adivino tus huellas, tus pasos
por los campos y los urbios
el arco iris de tus sueños
el pensamiento vivo de tus palabras

No sé si eres tú o eres otro
apareces en los actos humildes de cada día
en el amor a las flores
el saludo de un amigo
en un beso inesperado

Serás Romero, serás Roque
O Nidia o nadie
O todos—todos nosotros que nacimos medios muertos
En el '32 y el '54 y el '68 y el '80
Y por los años de los años
hasta convertirnos en Roque o en Romero
O en los dos o en el pueblo
Desbordando fronteras
y abriendo la puerta hacia el futuro.

ALEJANDRO MURGUÍA

BETWEEN VOLCANOES

Between volcanoes I discovered your voice, between the
rivers and clouds of your country, small land of the Pipiles.
Between sunrise and the break of day
I heard your weeping cries of courage
your shadows and spells made real.
Between the plains and the quiet sea
between the mountains and the jungle
in the slums
even in the eyes
of the beggars

I didn't know your face, your hands
your half-moon smile
but I glimpsed your footprints, your path
through the fields and the towns
the rainbow of your dreams
the vivid thinking of your words

I don't know if it's you or you're another
you appear in modest every-day activities
in the love of flowers
the greeting of a friend
in an unexpected kiss

You will be Romero, you will be Roque
Or Nidia or no one
Or everyone – all of us who were born half dead
In '32 and in '54 and in '68 and in '80
And for the years of the years
until we become Roque or Romero
Or both or the people
Breaking down borders
and opening the door to the future.

(Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke)

آل احمد

از غرب زده شدی و بازگشتی از شوروی به بُنه‌های بلوکِ زهرا و
کیبوتص‌های ولایتِ اسرائیل.
ماشین، جانت را افسرد و حزب، رویایت را آشفته. پس در جستجوی
شرقِ نفرین‌زیمینی شدی که بنه‌ی دهقان بود و وقفِ مرقِدِ آقا
در جوانی از خانه‌ی پدری بیرون زدی و شرشرِ ناودان کوچکت در
توفانهای سیاسی گم شد. اما کندوهای عسلت مورچه زد و بزهای
کاغذخورت را نفتکشها از جزیره‌خارگ تاراند تو پاپس کشیدی و چون
خسی به شیستان پدر بازگشتی.
چون نثرِ زیبایی شتابزده بودی. افسوس، سه نسل آن را چون شیشه‌ی
عرقی سرکشید که هنوز از سردردش در شکایت است.
می‌خواستی نیروی سوم باشی در برابر دو ابرقدرت افسوس.
ملاناجیات خود دجالی از آب درآمد.
در آرزوی فرزند بودی. این است سنگنوشته‌اش بر گورت. اگر امروز
*زنده بودی با هم ازین خانه بیرون زده‌بودیم.
مجید نفیسی
شانزدهم فوریه هزار و نهصد و هشتاد و شش

جلال آل احمد برجسته‌ترین روشنفکر مستقل ایران در دهه‌ی چهل بود. او *
ده سال پیش از انقلاب درگذشت اما اسلامگرایان او را به دروغ به خود
نسبت می‌دهند. در این شعر به عناوین ده تا از

MAJID NAFICY (IRAN)

TO JALAL AL-AHMAD

You got sick of the West
And returned from the U.S.S.R.
To co-ops of Zahra villages in Iran
And kibbutzes in the State of Isreal.
The machine depressed your soul
And the party shattered your dream.
So in search of the East
You became the curse of a land
Cultivated by a peasant co-op
But owned by a holy shrine.
At youth, you moved out of your father's home
And the patter of your little gutter
Got lost in political storms.
But when your beehives were plagued by ants
And your paper-eating goats
Were scattered by oil tankers from the Kharg Island
You withdrew and like a nobody
Returned to your father's sanctuary.
You were hurried like your beautiful prose.
Alas! Three generations
Gulped it like a bottle of araq
Over which they still have hangovers.
You wanted to be a third force
Against two superpowers.
Alas! Your savior Mullah
Turned out to be an antichrist.
You longed for a child.
This is his epitaph on your gravestone.
If you were alive today
We would have moved out of this house together.*

** Jalal Al-Ahmad (1923-69) was the most prominent
Iranian nonconformist intellectual in the 1960s.*

(Translated from Farsi by the Author)

BILL NEVINS

AFTER ANY WAR

years now after the war
it never ended
by the way
no parades here
and he was buried
with cannon salutes
and pomp
he would have hated
had he been there
he wasn't there
he might be in the clouds
he might be in the sky
he might be in the smiles
tears
of his friends
in this mind this heart
he might still be here
really
all these years
after that war.

JIM NORMINGTON

HOW CAN I BELIEVE IN THE SUN?

How can I believe in the sun
in a country where all I see is ice
and the whirling wheels
of the rich get richer rolling
over the needs of the people?

Ice on the faces of shopping-cart people
who've got nothing and get no getting
ice in their veins
crushed each day
beneath the whirling wheels.

Ice on the faces
of so many young
who see no sun
when thinking of a future
crushed beneath
the same whirling wheels.

Ice on the faces
of seas of workers
ripped off of everything
warm smiles made of bread
of lips and teeth
wave upon wave of American
workers wound deep
into the spokes and the strokes
and the brutal blows
of the whirling wheels.

Ice on the faces
of helpless elderly
who once saw a sun

in a lost forever youthful place
now starving and dying
in the rancid clutches
of a political system
run by a few
for the benefit of a few
when all I see
is ice from the wheels
ice and blood and bones
and brains and fingers and teeth
of the masses
crushed beneath the wheels.

How can I believe in the sun
in a country breeding
death for workers?
How can I believe in the sun
in a country where the poison teeth
of capitalism sink into the flesh
of shopping-cart people
of scared young children
of seas of workers
of helpless elderly
in a country where Trump
ultimate alt-right neo-con
viper snake white-boy rich-boy
asshole madman Trumpy Rump
puppet prick little dicked
Donny boy thinks he and neo-Nazi
billionaire buddy boys
have all the big guns
beneath the American sun?
How can I believe in the sun
unless the sun is the people's sun
unless the people win what's gotta be won
unless the people organize
to dump the Trumpy Rump

and revolutionize this slavery system?
Dump the Trump and the syphilis
of this rotten system
and build a people's one soon
then I'll believe in the American sun
and the workers the homeless
the children the elderly
will together sing a united song
and together we'll stop
this rotten system
of ultra-capitalist
whirling wheels
rolling over
the needs of the people.

EDOARDO OLMI (ITALY)

CLOCHARD

accasciata come morte
la notte del clochard
scalciato dai respiri
dai rantoli impauriti,
in preghiera sull'altare
contro il suolo.

elemosina dei passi
nelle scarpe accovacciate.
la coscienza sulle spalle
sotto la coperta del destino,
condono dei mesi
e delle settimane.

è rimasto sullo stomaco
alla Metro B e C –
lo digeriranno di primissimo mattino
con il palliativo del decoro,
contro un'alba a cui chiedere perdono.

gonfia la placenta dell'indifferenza
reclamando il parto della sazietà;
larva che non tesse seta dentro al sonno,
ma ali per sogni strozzati dal vento.

raccolta indifferenziata
di buoni propositi
nell'incubatrice della modernità –
la metropoli
in un bicchiere di caffè;
ogni gesto una speranza
o una lettera di addio

EDOARDO OLMI (ITALY)

BUM

slumped like death
the night of a bum
beaten by inbreathing
and fearful wheezing,
praying at the altar
against the ground.

spare change of footsteps
in crouching shoes.
shouldering a conscience
under cover of destiny,
amnesty of the months
and the weeks.

he'd stuck in their craw
on the B and C lines –
they'll digest him first thing in the morning
with a soothing decorum chaser,
before the kind of dawn one might beg for mercy.

indifference's placenta swells
and decries the birth of satiety;
larvae spinning: not silk within sleep,
rather wings for dreams strangled by the wind.

indiscriminate disposal
for the good intentions
in modernity's incubator –
metropolis
in a cup of coffee;
each gesture a single hope
or a farewell letter

– colpi
di tosse i suoi ruggiti
Re –
di una savana sconscacrata
– sospeso
come un ponte senza fiumi.

la sera in piazza
echi di città
il fegato presenta il conto.
ben più duro
da digerire il freddo,
contro un vento salmodiante carità.

senza scelte ecologiche
di banche di credito
cooperativo
non urla gli slogan
sull'altrui oscenità

l'ingiustizia i pellegrini
la fanno di mestiere.
quella cosa che non sai cos'è
fino a quando non la provi.

- a coughing
whoop, his roar
King
of a deconsecrated jungle,
suspended
like a riverless bridge.

in the evening by the square
the city echoes
the liver brings the check.
far harder
to digest is the cold,
against this wind and its hymns of charity.

without eco-friendly choices
co-ops or credit
unions
he doesn't rant slogans
at the vulgarity of others

for the pilgrim, injustice
is a day job.
that thing you never can know
until you feel it.

(Translated from Italian by Lapo Guzzini)

GREGORY POND

THE DAY BEFORE THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

today is the day before we grab the reins
last chance to relax and catch our breath
because when tomorrow comes to be
we'd better be ready to go to the edge
in defense of what we believe
we'll seize the day after we catch some z's,
some down time, maybe 40 winks
but we'll wake up totally woken,
down for the cause
and ready to think
of how we'll get this done -
do we choose the bullet, the ballot or both
to get the battle won?
let's get some rest so we'll be at our best
though we may still turn and toss
sleep-deprived and bleary-eyed
like people oppressed and lost
hoping that whatever we get
will prove to be enough
to gain sufficient strength to uncover
the covers that smother us
where we discover the dreams
that are buried under us
let's stay invested, connected and alert
recognize, galvanize, organize - let's work
to fight the foes of justice and freedom
so we can erect our own monuments
and bridges that span the sky
or simply burn down the ones that
cross or block our paths
in the flames of the fire next time.

JEANNE POWELL

THE NOISE OF TOMORROW UNDER CAPITALISM

LOOK, I don't know how I got here. Some celestial contract in the Akashic records, or a space craft ran out of fuel, whatever. There may have been some colossal misunderstanding back in the day, an angst-ridden war among the gods. One minute we're progressing on a picture-perfect planet and the next millennium or two we're at each other's throats in constant mesmerizing warfare. I'M TELLING YOU, I honestly don't know how I got here. And about those five-year plans and ten-year plans – do you seriously believe I ever thought about either option? I'm here by accident, remember? There was no grand design, at least none that I'm willing to recall. Did my planet disintegrate, like Krypton, or my magical island disappear into the mists when faith took a holiday? I'm the Lady of the Lake without my Avalon or the last temple priestess after the collapse of Atlantis. How on earth do you expect me to plan for tomorrow? IT'S TOO NOISY HERE! Too many people with no room for dignified retreats where you wander alone on an icy windswept shore. Babies are crying for lost mothers, mothers are crying for disappeared children, women are widowed for profit, and the old are without wisdom. LOOK, I didn't bargain for all this. As a matter of fact, I may not have been allowed to bargain at all -- some bearded guy holding tablets written in stone, an oracle or two from a cave in Greece. Will I ever get a recount of any votes? An appeal to a higher court? The noise of tomorrow is here today, and I need ear plugs, and a game plan, and a witness. CAN I GET A WITNESS?

In wartime bomb lights, children's faces glow reddish-
orange;
in the fields fell Agent Orange dropped by soldiers sent by
my government,
in the dense, green, cancer-grown mornings of infants
exploded.

We ride a bus from Hoi An to My Son:
in English the name written means “my son.”
As my son and I walk past the bomb craters near the
temples here,
I pray for all those who died, who survived
My Son—each child
who died here is all of ours, each child who lives
is all of ours
blood flowing borderless.
I've come to this city where peace gathers
to be in the present
to remember the past.
In Hoi An
as my son and I swim
in sunlit, powerful ocean waves,
a drowned butterfly floats through the water
into my cupped hands. .

ALBERTO RAMUNDO (ITALY)

LA NOTTE

Questa notte vorrei che restasse notte
questa notte vorrei che uccidesse il giorno
questa notte vorrei che il respiro
fosse un uragano di rumore da ascoltare.

Questa notte mi fa pensare che domani e' di nuovo giorno
quel giorno che mi trapassa la pelle
fino ad arrivare agli angoli piu' bui della mia presenza.

Questa notte mi fa pensare che domani e' di nuovo giorno
dove anime si frantumano con le mani appoggiate
su due sbarre di ferro che emanano un freddo che sradica
l'amore
fino a portarlo in una terra senza tempo e senza storia.

Questa notte mi fa pensare che domani e' di nuovo giorno
la voglio tenere per me, solo per me
per cercare quello che non trovo da tempo
per assaporare I sogni che rincorrono I miei sogni
per respirare sopra la speranza
per amare questa notte come la donna
che ho perso in questo cammino tetro e alienante.

Questa notte mi fa pensare che domani e' di nuovo giorno
e non voglio
non voglio piu' vedere quel giorno pieno
di sbarre, rumori, mani, occhi, angosce, chiavi, porte chiuse
non voglio piu' pensarlo
non voglio piu' sentirlo
non voglio piu' viverlo
per questo
questa notte sara' l'abbraccio di un infinito viaggio
dove notte e giorno si amalgamano per finire in un nulla.

ALBERTO RAMUNDO (ITALY)

THE NIGHT

This night I want it to remain night
this night I want it to kill the day
this night I want breath
to be a hurricane noise to listen to.

This night makes me think tomorrow will be daylight
again,
that very day that pierces my skin
down to the darkest corners of my presence.

Tonight makes me think that tomorrow's daylight again
when souls break themselves with hands resting
on two iron bars, which releases a coldness that uproots
love
carrying it to a timeless land with no history.

This night makes me think that tomorrow is daylight again
I want to keep it for myself, just for myself
to seek what I haven't found since time
to savor the dreams that chase my dreams
to breath above the hope
to love this night as the woman
that I lost in this dark and alienating path.

Tonight makes me think tomorrow will be daytime again
and I don't want,
don't want anymore to see that day full
of bars, noises, hands, eyes, anguishes, keys, locked doors
I don't want to think it anymore
I don't want to feel it anymore
I don't want to live it anymore
for this
this night will be the hug of an endless journey
where night and day combine to end in nothingness

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

FERNANDO RENDON (COLOMBIA)

¿CÓMO TE LLAMAS?

Tú secas las fuentes del rocío y engendras pantanos de
ruindad.

De tu mano terrífica brotan los sismos como almendras de
desgracia.

Tú quebrantas la serenidad y el equilibrio de los bosques.

Tú invades y saqueas desde siempre a las naciones.

Tú aprietas los grilletes en los pies de los cautivos.

- ¿Cómo te llamas?

Arrebatas de sus enflaquecidas manos el pan a los millones
de pobres.

Inoculas la amnesia, apartando a los humanos de su raíz
profunda.

Escamoteas con perversa alegría la delgada ilusión de los
efímeros.

Los agobias con pánico y fronteras, prohibes el deseo.

Atesoras el oro rojo del mundo con tus manos codiciosas.

Fabricas escandalosos artefactos de muerte y leyes
brutales.

Suscribes y rompes con sarcasmo todos los tratados.

Tú escalas y nutres todas las guerras de aniquilación.

Tú gobiernas con puño de hierro a las naciones.

- ¿Por qué quieres nuestra ruina?

Tú hiciste que los poetas que mantenían la espera se
tornaran nihilistas.

Incitaste a las bacantes a despedazar a Orfeo en los montes
de Grecia.

Tú crucificaste a Cristo cada día para complacer a los
imperios.

Tú prendiste los leños de la hoguera en la que ardió
Giordano Bruno.

Tú encerraste entre rejas a Villon. ¿A cuántos más?

Desterraste a Rimbaud a Abisinia y arrancaste su pierna.
Perseguiste a los libres, a Blake, a Char, a Ritsos.
Tú soplaste el cielo de la tormenta sobre el juicio de
Nietzsche.

Una bala tuya hirió en la cabeza al dulce Apollinaire.
Tú emponzoñaste de dolor el corazón de los grandes.
Les arrebataste la vida y trituraste sus huesos.

- ¿Qué pretendes en tu loco delirio?

Tú asesinas a los dioses y a los libertadores.
Tú distribuyes, a todos, el agua del extravío.
Encabezas la cruzada de los niños hacia despeñaderos de
tiniebla.

Tú marchitas los colores de la inmortalidad.
Tu maleficio transforma la flexibilidad en rigidez de
espanto.

Todo lo que roza tu rama retorcida, lo trueca en cenizas de
abandono.

- ¿Cuándo naciste, madre de todas las desgracias?

Vete, sombra. ¿Por qué no te esfumas, por qué no te vas al
cuerno?

¿Nuevas formas del lenguaje no te harán retroceder?

¿Una primavera surgida de un círculo de piedras,
¿De palabras que convergen y se abrazan, no te apresará?

¿Un amoroso conjuro, la certeza de un universo no
advertido,

Un llamado imperceptible y persistente a un nuevo tiempo
humano,

Una universal parálisis hombres y de máquinas, una
conmoción,

Una voz, La circulación potente de la poesía en todos los
humanos,

¿No te harán palidecer un día, muerte, un día?

You banished Arthur Rimbaud to Abyssinia and tore off
his leg.

You persecuted the free – Blake, Char, Ritsos.

You blew a stormy sky over the senses of Van Gogh and
Nietzsche.

One of your bullets wounded sweet Apollinaire in the head.

You poisoned the hearts of the great with pain.

You snatched their lives away and crushed their bones.

“What do you want in your mad delirium?”

You murder gods and liberators.

You distribute the water of madness among all.

You lead the children’s crusade towards the precipices of
darkness.

You turn every past promise into a future curse.

Bragging, you wither the colors of immortality.

Your spell turns all flexibility into the rigidity of horror.

Everything your twisted branch touches is turned into
forlorn ashes.

“When were you born, mother of all misfortunes?”

Go away, shadow. Why don’t you vanish, why don’t you go
to hell?

Will certain forms of language not make you retreat?

A spring arisen from a circle of stones and words
that are converging and embracing – will that not capture
you?

A loving spell, the certainty of a universe not yet noticed,
the development of a sacred incursion in search of the new
human love

–an imperceptible and persistent call to a decisive time, a
general strike,

a paralysis of machines, a commotion – the powerful
circulation of poetry

in every human – will all this not make you go pale one day,
one day, one day.

(Translated from Spanish by Laura Chalar)

LEW ROSENBAUM

INDEPENDENCE DAY

i don't know what to tell you
about independence day
here in the You Ess of A
my blue-eyed boy
my green-haired girl,
independent from whom and for what
surely not from the corporations
for which we slave
or from the overseers who
happily expelled us from our
gainful employment
so we can dance forever
in the graveyard of jobfulness
gnawing on bones scraped
from the dumpster where we
dive and drink the contents of
half empty coke cans
and catch a few winks
before the copper taps us
on the toes and tells us to move on
or chokes us for selling loose squares
what can I tell you about sitting
hat in hand in front of the food emporium
i want to give you good counsel
but all i can think of is to
urge you to take what you need
but I know that while capital
takes what it wants
without a thought
you will wind up in solitary
for dreaming of the steak in the cold case
or even a bag of chicharrones
to munch on

with a cold old English gurgling down the throat
on a hot, windless summer day
the aroma of the barbecue
pulled pork or ribs
smothered in sweet baby ray
streaming from the park
on cool lake breezes
drives you to a frenzy

so what can you be independent of
my green-eyed boy
my blue-haired girl
without taking over the
whole motherfucker
and making it ours.

E.SAN JUAN, JR. (THE PHILIPPINES)

ANG PAGPASLANG KAY REBELYN PITAO

Naibalita sa Internet, kamakailan, na hindi raw gaganti ang NPA sa pagpaslang ng gobyerno kay Rebelyn Pitao
Ngunit ito ba ang hinihingi ng masa?

Humihingi ang masa ng hustisya at “accountability”:
Sino ang mananagot sa krimeng ito?

Naunahan na tayo sa sagot ng NPA....

Nailinya na ba ng partido ang damdamin lungkot pait sakit
pagpigil ng galit ng masa?

Nailinya na ba kung paano magagalit o matutuwa?

Nailinya na ba kung kailan dapat mapoot at kailan dapat
umibig?

Nailinya na ba kung paano dapat maging mapaghinala o
mapagtiwala?

Nailinya na ba kung paano maging mataray o masuyo?

Nailinya na ba kung paano dapat maging matalino o maging
tanga?

Nailinya na ba lahat ng hindi pa nararanasan?

Kung nag-aapoy ang galit, masusubhan ba iyon ng tubig ng
panghihinayang?

Hanggang saan dapat umabot ang pasensya?

Noong digmaan ng Filipino't Amerikano noong 1899, na
kumutil ng

1.4 milyong Filipino, itinanong sa U.S. Senado si Gen.

Robert Hughes

na kumander ng US Army sa Bisayas kung bakit
pinarusahan din

ang mga sibilyan, mga babae't musmos,

sa pagsugpo ng Amerikano sa mga rebelde.

E. SAN JUAN, JR. (THE PHILIPPINES)

THE EXECUTION OF REBELYN PITAO

The Internet bore the news, of late, that the NPA will not
avenge the government's murder of Rebelyn Pitao.

But is this what the masses demand? The masses demand
justice and accountability: who will pay for this crime?

The NPA's answer has already preceded us...

Has a rule been decreed by the Party on sensation, misery,
bitterness pain control of the masses' fury?

Has a rule been decreed on how to get furious or laugh?

Has a rule been decreed when it's correct to hate and when
it's correct to love?

Has a rule been decreed when it's correct to be doubtful
and to be trusting?

Has a rule been decreed on how to be obnoxious or
obsequious?

Has it been decreed how it's correct to be smart and to be
stupid?

Has a rule been decreed on all that has yet to be
experienced?

If fury is smoldering, can the waters of disappointment
douse it?

How long should patience last?

During the Filipino-American War in 1899, which killed
1.4 million Filipinos, the U.S. Senate asked Gen. Robert
Hughes,
who was commander of the U.S. Army in the Visayas,
why civilians were also punished, women and children,
so that Americans could suppress the rebels.

Ito ang sagot ni Gen. Hughes:
"The women and children are part of the family, and where
you wish
to inflict a punishment you can punish the man probably
worse
in that way than in any other."

Ay, naku, di mo akalain-- Natuto pala ang militar ni Gloria
Macapagal-Arroyo!
Natuto pala ang AFP at mga para-militar na bayaran kay
Gen. Hughes,
Itinanong ni Senator Rawlins si Gen. Hughes kung iyong
ginawa nila ay
"within the ordinary rules of civilized warfare", ang sagot:
"These people are not civilized."

Ayon, Mare't Pare, ayos!
Sa kabila na isang siglong pagitan mula
sa madugong pagsakop
sa atin ng Amerikanong imperyalista,
isangkot na natin ang mahabang kolonisasyon ng Kastila
at maikli ngunit mahapading karanasan
sa kalupitan ng mga Hapon,
totoo palang hindi pa tayo

"civilized," wika nga, di kuno?

Gen. Hughes's reply:

“The women and children are part of the family, and where
you wish
to inflict a punishment you can punish the man probably
worse in that way than in any other.”

Ay, naku, you wouldn't guess—Gloria Macapagal-
Arroyo's military did learn!

So the hustling AFP and paramilitary did learn.

Senator Rawlins asked Gen. Hughes if what they did was
“within the ordinary rules of civilized war?”

The answer: “These people are not civilized.”

There you go, friends!

Despite almost a century of intervening time
from our bloody occupation by the American
imperialists, we might as well include the long
Spanish colonization and the short
but painful experience with Japanese brutality,
it's quite true
that we're not “civilized” yet,

as you might say, wouldn't you?

(Translated from Tagalog by Charlie Veric)

NATACHA SANTIAGO (CUBA)

COMO FIN EL FIN esta larga Historia

El hombre débil se vuelve fuerte cuando no tiene nada, porque sólo entonces puede sentir la locura de la desesperación. La Compañía Blanca – Arthur Conan Doyle

Sin reparo la humillación de la fuga

¿Refugiados?

Si los pozos secan

la realidad estéril Invoca lo precario

impide los más simples sueños

la dicha del alimento no nubes inalcanzables

Consecuencia no solo climática

este infierno

que daña globalmente a humanos

casi bestias con hambruna

bebiendo agua de mar sin elección posible

que arriesgan huyen escapan

de la muerte por la muerte

yendo quizás a la muerte

porque la angustia agudiza

nubla el raciocinio

el rechazo del del Oro

que acrecientan los de los acuerdos cómplices

al negar la vida

Inmigrantes indeseados

Les afectan entonces

sufrimiento desequilibrio

por el fracaso del traslado

que obligó a lo incierto

Refugiados no

Este término implica abrigo

y en la práctica un simple matiz político

manipulable

NATACHA SANTIAGO (CUBA)

HOW WILL THE END END this long History

*The weak man becomes strong when he has nothing,
because only then can he feel the madness of despair.*

The White Company – Arthur Conan Doyle

With no qualms the humiliation of flight

Refugees?

If the wells run dry

the barren reality invokes the precarious,

impedes the simplest dreams

the joy of food no unreachable clouds

Consequence not only climatic

this hell

that globally damages humans

nearly animals with famine

drinking water from the sea with no possible choice

they risk, flee, escape

from death, for death,

going perhaps to death

because the anguish worsens

clouds reason

the rejection of gold

that augments those of conspiratorial agreements

to reject life

Undesirable immigrants

thus affected

suffering instability

for the failure of the move

that compelled to the uncertain

Refugees no

This expression implies refuge

and in practice a simple political nuance

manageable

En realidad paradoja en el intento
Riesgo que se evita arrojado
en océanos fronteras muros
peligros del desplazamiento en busca de la luz
sin reparar en lo posible cada vez peor
Refugiarse la solución
buscada en la nada
expectativa que ni ancestros ni dioses
pueden remediar
mientras persiste el escape convertido en tragedia
en defensa de la vida inexistente
inevitable
escenario que la humanidad
ni con denuncias o poemas
puede soslayar.

In reality paradoxical in purpose
A risk that avoids facing itself
on oceans borders walls
dangers of displacement in search of the light
without noticing the possible worse and worse
To take refuge in the solution
a search in the void
expectation that neither ancestors nor gods
can put right
while escape persists converted into tragedy
in defense of non-existent life
inevitable
 scenario that humanity
with neither reports nor poems
can avoid.

(Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke)

FRANCISCO MORALES SANTOS (GUATEMALA)

EL PAPEL DEBIDO

Cuando oigo entonar a Joan Báez
una de sus hoy viejas canciones
de protesta
—"Brothers in arms"—
pienso
que aun cuando hayan sido
gestos frágiles de hermandad humana,
endebles como un puente
de bambú o de lepa,
han ayudado a exorcisar eclipses,
una vez en Viet Nam,
otra en Sudáfrica,
otra en Nicaragua...

FRANCISCO MORALES SANTOS (GUATEMALA)

THE PROPER ROLE

When I hear Joan Baez sing
one of her now dated protest
songs
---Brothers in Arms I think
that even when these had been
fragile gestures of human fellowship
flimsy as a bridge
made of bamboo or linden,
they helped cause downfalls
once in Viet Nam
another time in South Africa
another time in Nicaragua...

(Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke)

SANDRO SARDELLA (ITALY)

GAZA CITY – RASA DISCANTO

*Mentre in lontananza rombava il tuono dell'artiglieria,
noi incollavamo, recitavamo, componevamo versi e
cantavamo con tutta l'anima. Eravamo alla ricerca di
un'arte elementare che pensavamo avrebbe salvato
l'umanita' dalla furiosa follia di quei tempi.
Aspiravamo ad un nuovo ordine che potesse ristabilire
l'equilibrio tra il cielo e l'inferno. —Jean Arp*

Il cuore ha tremato
il flusso dell'indecente ha forzato
un occidente quotidiano consumonarcotizzato

il cuore tuo amica mia
ha tremato inquietato da
piccoli occhi interrogantimpauriti
acceso da grida e pianti
scosso da un' indifferenza devastante

fiamme sulla spiaggia di gaza city
la corsa delle ambulanze e' breve
l'assedio resta in piedi
inascoltato feroce
sterminatore
i bimbi saltano e giocano
in un sole traballante

la palla vola galleggia
oltre idee di pietra e cementi

SANDRO SARDELLA (ITALY)

GAZA CITY – RASA HARMONIZING

*While far away, rumbled by the artillery thunder,
we got angry, played, composed verses and sang
with all our souls. We were looking for an
elementary art that we thought would save
humanity from the furious madness of those times.
We strove for a new order that could recover
the balance between the sky and hell.—Jean Arp*

The heart's trembled
the flow of the indecent has pushed
a daily, western, narcotized consumption

your heart my friend has trembled
upset by questioning scared little eyes
turned on by screams and cries
shaken by a devastating indifference

flames on Gaza city beach
the ambulances' run is short
the siege still stands unlistened to
fierce
exterminator
the kids jump and play
in a shaky sun

the ball flies floats
beyond ideas of stone and cement

le olive cadono premature e marce
come cani da caccia
si sparpagliano
cacciatori investiti
di un qualche valore spirituale
s'ingozzano fanno il bagno
fanno pulizia

lo sguardo fisso nel vuoto
dove un boato ha lasciato
indelebile la sua impronta di
polveri urla e brandelli di cielo

la cena fumo' e brucio'
tra I detriti delle stanze
sopra il balcone nuovo
mani e voci
le luci e la baia
la sabbia ha un buon sapore
oltre la marea

l'odore del mercato
ascoltando le sirene
di una fragile tregua
ancora quando
piove piombo
e dalle colline aride
appena pomeriggio
carrarmati e blindati
senza limiti di tempo aversano
un fuoco biblico
per purificare la terra
per avere sicuro e largo dominio
corpi caldi e umidi impolverati

olives fall premature and rotten
like hunting dogs
spread
hunters assigned
of a kind of a spiritual value
gorge themselves
take a bath clean up

the gaze into emptiness
where a roar left
indelible its print of
dusty screams and shreds of sky

the supper smoked and burnt
between the detritus of the rooms
above the new balcony
hands and voices
the lights and the bay
the sand has a good savor
beyond the tide

the smell of the market
listening to sirens
of a fragile truce still
when raining lead
and from the arid hills
exactly in afternoon
tanks and armored vehicles
without limits of time
pour a biblical fire
to purify the ground
to have safe and large dominion
warm and damp bodies
covered with dust

le donne urlano agli aerei in cielo
un incalzante lamento si sparge
a ritmo infuocato tra mura e carni sfarinate
la polvere fluttua fumo che vomita
rumori di vita soleggiati e sparati
e' un luglio di giudizio inesorabile
irrefrenabile ne sentiamo l'odore
il vento asciuga umori dentro fiori invisibili
le conchiglie stridono sullo schermo
il grido della carne s'infrange s'affoga

come sopportare quel cielo
queste notti arrossate
questa bestiale propaganda
questa mia impotenza

e parliamo
cara amica
di occupazione
di genocidio
di infinite ingiustizie
di vergognose complicita'
di indignazione
di
di
di

e guardiamo gli aquiloni estivi
agitarsi nel cielo sopra teste resistenti
nel luglio fuoco di Gaza city
le tue lacrime macchie al sole
dentro voci di campane vuote.

the women scream at the airplanes in the sky
an insistent lament spreads itself with a flaming
rhythm between walls and pulverized flesh
dust floats smoke vomits noises of life sunny and shot
it's a July of judgment unavoidable unstoppable
we smell the scent
the wind dries the mood in invisible flowers
shells creak in the screen
the scream of the flesh shatters itself
drowns itself

how to sustain the sky
these color-changing nights
this beastly propaganda
that's my impotence

and we talk
dear friend
of occupancy
of genocide
of endless injustices
of shameful connivances
of indignation
of
of
of

and we watch the summer kites
fidget in the sky above heads
in the July fire of Gaza city
your tears the stains of the sun
inside voices of broken bells.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

RATI SAXENA (INDIA)

कायदे से गुस्सा आना चाहिये

कायदे से गुस्सा आना चाहिये,
तुम्हें, मुझे, उसे और हम सबको
इतना तेज कि बर्बरता जलकर राख हो जाये,
इतना कि युद्ध डर कर दुबक जाये
इतना कि बेटी की गुड़िया टूटने से बच जाये

उन्होंने कहा कि गुस्सा जायज नहीं,
और तुम मान गए
उन्होंने कहा गुस्सा सेहत के लिए बुरा है,
तुम नथुने भर- भर कर
आक्सीजन खींचने लगे, इतनी कि
दरख्तों का दम घुट गया
गोरैय्यों के पंख जल गए

उन्होंने कहा कि तुम ध्यान लगाओ
और बैठ जाओ, हमारे बताये बुत के पीछे
तुम भूल गए कि किसी के पेट में रोटी नहीं है
तो किसी के कपड़े उधड़े हैं

उन्होंने कहा कि नदी के किनारे तम्बू गाड़ो,
भजन गाओ, तुम नदी की आत्मा में उतरकर
उसको गलीच करते रहे,
पहाड़ों को उधेड़ते रहे.

जबकि तुम्हे गुस्सा आना चाहिये,
बार बार लड़की को बेइज्जत करने वाली मानसिकता पर

RATI SAXENA (INDIA)

THEORETICALLY ONE SHOULD GET ANGRY

Theoretically one should get angry,
at you, at me, at all, so much so that
cruelty burns to ash; war, terrified,
hides, and you save your daughters'
dolls from being broken.

They said anger is illegitimate
and you accepted.
They said anger hurts your health
and your nostrils flared with oxygen,
so much so that trees suffocated
and the wings of the sparrows went up in flames.
And they said that you must meditate

sitting behind statues made by us.
You'd forgotten there were stomachs
without bread,
and clothes long torn.

They asked to raze your tents near the river
and sing religious songs,
to enter the soul of the river
and keep destroying it,

keep digging into the mountains.
But this was the time to show anger

नदियों की गोद से चुराये गए जल के खोने पर
भेड़को बदनाम करने वाली अनुकरणीयता पर
तुम पर, इस पर, उस पर
जो हाथ पर हाथ रख चाय के साथ
बलात्कार की खबर की चुस्कियां भरते कहते हैं
ओह,कितना बुरा जमाना है
लेकिन हम कर ही क्या सकते हैं....

कायदे से गुस्सा आना चाहिये

लेकिन हम सब चुप बैठे हैं....

at the insulting attitudes about girls,
at the disappearing waters stolen from the laps of rivers,
at the defamation of the sweet nature of sheep,
at you, at them, at him who, with cup in hand,
sips his tea while reading news of rape,
saying, “How bad it’s become,
but what can be done about it?”

Theoretically one should get angry.

We chose to remain silent.

(Translated from Hindi by the Author)

JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER (GERMANY)

ODER MATSUO BASHO

In der Grashütte seines einsamen Schlafes
Am Ufer des Sumidagawa, Fukagawa, Edo
Rauschen Bananenblätter den Sturm
Hört er im Waschzuber den Regen
Gefriert in der Nacht ihm das Innerste
Singt der Kessel im Frost, kalt seine Stimme
Schmeckt bitter das Eis
An dem sich die Ratte ihre Kehle befeuchtete
Pflegt der Meister des Haiku und Haibun
Bescheidenheit und Kontemplation
Lernt von den Mühen der Menschen
Übt sich in Selbstvergessenheit
Entsagt weltlichen Gütern.

Die Füße in Strohsandalen gequält
Auf dem kahlen Kopf einen Flechthut
Am Leib ein zerknittertes Papiergewand
Nennt er sich den Bettleralten
Kratzt Teeblätter zusammen
Besingt den Edlen Gipfel Shihô
die Heimat Iga, den Ise-Schrein
Die Pflaumenblüte
Kirschbaum und Kiefer
Schneekugel, Sake, Steinnelken
Shii-Bäume, Susuki-Halm, Süßklee
Mond und Flaschenkürbis
Kranich und Sommerkuckuck
Rotschopfgras und Chrysanthemen
Die Heißquellen von Yamanaka.

Am Reisigtor seines ärmlichen Tempels
Verabschiedet er den Bettelmönch Sengin
Auf tausend Klafter hohen Hügeln wird er
Sein schwarzes Gewand ausschütteln
In zehntausend Meilen langen Strömen
Waschen seine schmerzenden Füße.

JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER (GERMANY)

OR MATSUO BASHO

In the grass hut of his solitary sleep
On the waterfront of the Sumidagawa, Fukagawa, Edo
Banana leaves are rustling the storm
He's hearing the rain in the washtub
In the night his innermost is congealing
The cauldron's singing in the frost, his voice cold
Bitter the taste of the ice
At which the rat wetted its throat
The master of Haiku and Haibun
Is treasuring humbleness and contemplation
Is learning from men's efforts
Is practicing obliviousness
Is renouncing worldly goods.

His feet tormented in straw sandals
A woven hat on his bald head
His raiment of paper
He calls himself an old beggar
Sweeps up tea leaves
Sings the praise of the noble summit Shihô
His native province Iga, the Ise shrine
The plum blossom season
Cherry tree and pine
Snowball, sake, wild pinks
Shii trees, Suzuki stem, sweet clover
Moon and gourd,
Crane and summer cuckoo
Red oat-grass and chrysanthemums
The hot springs of Yamanaka.

At the brushwood door of his humble temple
He sees off the begging monk Sengin
On mountains six-thousand feet high
He will shake out his raiment
And in rivers ten thousand miles long
Wash his aching feet.

(Translate from German by the Author)

STEPHEN SCHUR

CATULLUS 29

Quis hoc potest videre, quis potest pati,
nisi impudicus et vorax et aleo,
Mamurram habere quod comata Gallia
habebat ante et ultima Britannia?
Cinaede Romule, haec videbis et feres?
et ille nunc superbus et superfluens
perambulabit omnium cubilia
ut albulus columbus aut Adonis?
cinaede Romule, haec videbis et feres?
es impudicus et vorax et aleo.
eone nomine, imperator unice,
fuisti in ultima occidentis insula,
ut ista vestra diffututa mentula
ducenties comesset aut trecenties?
quid est alid sinistra liberalitas?
parum expatravit an parum elluatus est?
paterna prima lancinata sunt bona;
secunda praeda Pontica; inde tertia
Hibera, quam scit amnis aurifer Tagus.
nunc Galliae timetur et Britanniae.
quid hunc malum fovetis? aut quid hic potest
nisi uncta devorare patrimonia?
eone nomine urbis opulentissime
socer generque, perdidistis omnia?

STEPHEN SCHUR

CONTRADICTIONS OF CAPITALISM

Can you stand to watch this?

Not unless you're a hedge fund whore, an arms dealer or a
CEO,

Making the world poor again by stealing from wage slaves
Here and everywhere, while this liar in a blond comb-over
Struts around everyone's bedroom like an orangutan,
One hand on your daughter's butt and the other in your
pocket --

Pays hush money with bribes from foreign dictators.

And where did they get it? From the backs of the workers
Here and everywhere: can you stand to watch this?

Not unless you're a hedge fund whore, an arms dealer or a
CEO,

But there are so few of them and so many of us,

Give or take a few rednecks and gun nuts.

Now they want your pension and benefits for some useless
wall.

Can you just stand there and watch them trash everything?

Not unless you're one of them: are you?

What have you got to lose, except your chains.

(Translated from Latin by Stephen Schur)

NINA SERRANO

I began writing in 1968 at age 36, when I wrote a video drama with Roque Dalton for Cuban TV. Dalton was an exiled Salvadoran writer living in Havana. My concern for his safety inspired my first poem in 1969, as he prepared to join the Salvadoran revolutionaries to liberate his country from the military dictatorship. At the time of the poem's publication in an alternative SF newspaper, Express, I could only use his initials in the title and refer to El Salvador as "unknown terrain."

TO ROQUE DALTON
BEFORE LEAVING
TO FIGHT IN EL SALVADOR
(Havana, 1969)*

Mass media I adore you.
With a whisper in the microphone
I touch the mass belly against mine
like on a rush hour bus
but with no sweat and no embarrassment.
"Don't die," I whispered, in person.
Only the air and revolutionary slogans hung
between us.
"When I die I'll wear a big smile."
And with his finger painted a clown's smile
on his Indian face
"Don't die!" the whisper beneath the call to battle.
My love of man in conflict
with my love for this man.
Women die too.
They let go their tight grip on breath and sigh,
and sigh to die.
They say that Tania died before Che.
I saw her die in a Hollywood movie.
Her blood floated in the river.
I stand in the street in Havana.
There are puddles here

but few consumer goods to float in them.
Here the blood is stirred by the sacrifice of smiles
to armed struggle.
A phrase and an act.
They leave one day and they are dead.
“Death to the known order. Birth to the unknown.”
Blood. Blood. Blood.
The warmth of it between the thighs
soothes the channel
the baby fights and tears.
I stand by a puddle in Havana
a woman full of blood
not yet spilled.
Can I spill blood by my own volition?
Now it flows from me by a call of the moon;
The moon ...
a woman mopping her balcony
spills water from her bucket
on my hair, my breasts
and into the puddle.
The question is answered.

** Roque Dalton: leading Salvadorian poet was killed in 1975*

DANNY SHOT

INVITATION TO WALT

— *for Occupy Wall Street*

From Camden come, rise from the dust
fly to Zuccotti Park with your shaggy beard
and your old school hat; come see what's happened
to your home and your beloved democracy.

Let's grab a beer or eight at McSorleys
your old haunt, where 19th century dirt clings
to chandeliers, let's reminisce and plan
our trek through New York's teeming streets .

Before we saunter to the Bowery or the Nuyorican
where exclaimers and exhorters still sling verse
of hope and despair to hungry crowds who
still believe in the power of the word.

We need your sweeping vision, Walt,
to offer our children more than low expectations
of life sat in front of screens or held in gadgets
that promise expression, but offer convention.

Let's not see America through rose-colored
blinders, but as it is, an unfinished kaleidoscopic
cacophony created by imperfect human hands,
beautiful in complexion, ghastly in reflection.

This new century has been cruel and unusual,
the ideology of greed consuming itself in a spasm
of defeat engineered by merchants of fear
and post-millennial prophets of doom.

We need to recognize healthcare
and education as basic human rights;

we need to restore the dignity of work,
as well as the dignity of leisure from work.

We need to get off our flabby asses
to dance as if nobody is watching, to howl,
to stir shit up, to worry the rich
with a real threat of class warfare.

We need to take back our democracy,
from the masters of Wall Street,
banks too big to fail, insurance deniers,
education profiteers,

from closet racists, and self appointed
homophobes, the unholy trinity
of greed, corruption
and cruelty.

Walt, give me the courage to not be scared
to offend, to tell the truth, which is:
most Republicans are heartless bastards,
more willing to sink our elected head of state

to protect the interests of the moneyed
than do what's right for the greater good.
They're the party that's impeded progress
and sucked the joy out of any forward movement.

For all my 54 years, they've only gotten more sour;
they scare me with their fascist posturing
while most Democrats are frightened
as usual to betray the welfare of the rich.

(Historians of the future will laugh at us).

Yet, we've come so far in so many ways, call it
evolutionary progress, if you will,

though there's so much work left undone
We need a revolutionary spirit to unfold.

It's time for us to dream big again
of democratic vistas and barbaric yawps,
of space travel and scientific discovery
where we protect our glorious habitat

and build structures worthy of our dreams.
Imagine an America based on empathy and equality
where we lend a hand to those in need
unembarrassed to embrace our ideals.

Walt, we're here, citizen poets for change
across the United States and we believe,
we believe, call us dreamers, call us fools,
call us the dispossessed, your children lost.

Our hopes on hold left no choice but to stand
our backs against the corporate wall
ready to fight for what we're owed,
for what we've worked, promises bought and sold.

Let your spirit rise, old Walt Whitman,
take us with you to another place and time;
remind us what's good about ourselves,
the basic decency that's been forgotten

May your words guide our daydreams of deliverance
and let the hijacked past tumble away;
let the dismal present state be but a blip
may the undecided future begin today.

Let's become undisguised and naked,
let's walk the open road...



SANDRO SARDELLA
High Flight Of The Refugees

KIM SHUCK

REFUGEE

They're firing parts of words at other words
Hoping to split them
Untie the energy and
Control the explosion
Refugee
A word we will only use if the damage was done
Somewhere else
Internal itinerant
Un-homed
Threatened
Burned out
Moved on
Internal itinerant
Treated like shopworn apples
Spoilage
In boxes on the street
Politicians split the words
Bet against flash over
Twist the laws to the point of fatigue
Back and forth back and
Forth
Till they break.

JULIA STEIN

MY GHOST WHISPERS

I'm haunted by my ghost .
hearing him whisper about the wind.
Like Hamlet's ghost he was murdered.

My ghost's name is Alex Odeh.
Not a Dane.
A Palestinian –
An American.

This is not Elsinore. It's sunny Southern California.
My ghost doesn't have to tell me how he died.
I already know.
He unlocked his office triggering
a pipe bomb,
his face and chest blown apart.
This is 1985. This is an October morning. This is Santa
Ana. This is Orange County.
The day before a Jewish man Klinghoffer had been brutally
murdered,
the night before Odeh outspoke on TV,
spoke out to condemn the killing, repeatedly he said
peace was still possible.
The night before someone who hated left the bomb.
My ghost whispers about the wind.

We went, we Jews, we met the Arabs, in the middle-class
L.A. home and we said,
We're sorry,
My ghost's whispers the wind of truth, of truth.

My ghost can't sleep in his grave
when the Jewish Defense League praises the murder
when his family gets a death threat during the funeral

when the FBI wants to speak to four Jewish men fled to
Israel's West Bank,
two still living there, Israel refusing their extradition
My ghost awakes and whispers about the wind of truth that
sweeps away lies.

I'm not the only one he's haunted.
Every year Arabs in America have an Alex Odeh Day
for twenty-five years waiting
for extradition,
for a trial.

I'm not the only one he's haunted.
Your sculptor friend had a pain in his heart after your
murder.
He etched your portrait in stone.
This is 1994. This is the city of Santa Ana erecting your
statue,
a book in one hand, a dove in the other.
Someone twice threw red paint across the statue's neck and
wrists
as if they were trying to kill you again and again.

I need to make a portrait of you, my ghost:
a father holding his three daughters, under ten,
a poet who wrote Whispers in Exile,
a professor of Arabic History whose students sang his
praises,
an author who made a gift of his book,
a man who promised to speak to Jews in a synagogue the
next day,
a man who always believed
Jews and Arabs should speak to one another and
the wind of truth blows and
peace was still possible,
a man I wished I'd known.

I'm haunted by my ghost,
hearing him whisper.
Speak louder, ghost!
My ghost whispers in exile,
"Lies are like still ashes.
When the wind of truth blows,
they're dispersed like dust and disappear."

TONTONGI (HAITI)

TEWORISM SOU NANM MOUN

(Dedikase a Mahmoud Darwish, gran powet palistinyen an)

Li fè laverite tounen yon non-di ki sakre
e silans tou yon vèti kou yon rezon sivik
oubyen fòs brital, bra dwat enperatif skirt
ak lòt salopri ak makakri ki anpeche lespri layite.

Se rijidite Kosmos la, moun yo di
Labib te anonse l sa gen kèk tan de sa
ansan ak Torah a, misil yo ak Iron Dom,
yon gwo Kouvèti Fè ki grape woket Hamas yo
depi nan syèl ak tout rèz yo. M'ap toufe ! M'ap toufe !

Avèk Batteries Patriots ou yo ki ka detounen laterè
avèk tout cha blende ou yo k'ap kannonnen malè
avèk tout oratè elokan ou genyen nan Harvard
avèk tout dal envetisman ou fè nan Wall Street ak nan
Lond
avèk alyans ou fè ak Sèl Sipèpwisans dimond
ki plane sou tèt nou kou yon èg andyable
kou yon lonbray k'ap anglobe n, fliyid, atmosferik ;
avèk tout michan mèvèy teknolojik ou yo
k'ap manniganse tankou kanaval loraj kale ;
avèk tout senpozyòm AIPAC ap òganize
pou ilimine fanatik ki aklame w kou wè Lapwovidans
evoke fason ou rapyese Gaza kou yon fwomaj swis
ak sous dlo yo ou detounen sèl bò kote vilaj pa w
avèk tou gran akonplisman ou yo
ansanm ak meday annò ou yo – kou yon Panoptikon
ki fèmen sou lanmè Mediterane –,
avèk tout bèl lonè desten konble lavi w,
epoutan w'ap tiye timoun inosan
epi kondane anpil vèv nan lapovrete.

TONTONGI (HAITI)

THE TERRORISM OF THE MIND

(Dedicated to Mahmoud Darwish, the great Palestinian poet)

It makes truth a sacred Un-said
and silence a virtue like civics and brunt
force, right-hand security imperatives
and other bullshitties and vaudevilleries
that keep life from spreading.

It's the rigidity of the Cosmos, they say,
the Bible announced it some time ago
so did the Torah, the missiles and the Iron Dom
which grabs the Hamas' rockets from the sky
and everything. I'm choking! I'm choking!

With your Patriot Batteries deviators of terror
and your armored tanks blowing death everywhere
with your great eloquent voices at Harvard
with your huge investments at Wall Street and London
with your alliance with the world's Unique Superpower
who hovers over our heads like a furious eagle,
like an enveloping shadow, fluid, atmospheric;
with your great technological prowess
stunning like a thunderstorm's carnival;
with your AIPAC-sponsored symposiums
and the luminaries who are welcoming you as Providence
while you're piecing Gaza like Swiss cheese
and the diversion of water toward just your village
with your great accomplishments
and your golden medals, your architecture
of enclosure – the Panopticon
that closes on the Mediterranean Sea –,
with all the honors Destiny has blessed you,

Li fè desans tounen yon enkoni
epi konsyans yon bagay ki dwe entèdi ;
li dikte kouman tout bagay dwe mache
san wetire lagè ak lapè ak rekòmansman lavi,
yon pwosesis pafè kou repetisyon sezon yo,
lopital yo, moun yo koupe manb yo, vilaj ki peri yo,
sa se yon lòt bagay. Se lamayòt ! Ilizyon w !

Li fè sonnen nan zòrèy ou alèt teworis
EIL ba yo rezon, yo di,
se pwofesi mounakwaf ki ka gide chimen w.
Nou ka menm renmen youn ak lòt, mwen konnen,
men sa se pa ditou yon jwèt, ou konnen ?

Epi menm chay doulè nou ak rèl nou,
san nou ki gaye k'ap koule anba yon dal debri
viktwa ou pòte nan tout lagè w lanse
pat ka estope swaf vorasite w, yo di,
ou toujou kontinye ap tiye tizanfan
e voye Zot ou deklare endezirab nan agoni.

Ou gen pouvwa pou desounen lojik
e sa mache pou ou mèvèyman,
menm dlo nan zye nou yo di
te sèvi w pou w vin atenn grandè pou pèp ou
men pou pèp pa nou ou blayi dezolasyon.
Kouwè tanpèt yo, kouwè toubiyon siklòn van
ou detwi lavi moun selon jan ou vle
e jete mwatye yon nasyon nan lari,
lè lòt bò miray la w'ap briye nan esplandè
e bonb ou yo simayen kouwè yon plidetwal
sou Gaza ki tonbe nan blakawout toupatou.

Ou gen pouvwa ki beni pa Lesyèl
pou anpeche zye wè malfezans laterè,
pou anpeche zòrèy tande plent doulè
pou anpeche bouch pale avwa wot

still you're killing innocent children
and driving many widows to poverty.

It makes of decency an unknown entity
and of conscience a no man's land;
it dictates the march of the process
of peace and war
and the Re-beginning
perfect like the recurrence of the seasons,
the hospitals, the maimed, the flattened villages
are something else. Your illusion

It's clamoring in your ears
terrorist alerts that keep you from sleeping
ISIS has vindicated them, they say,
It's the prophecy of a well-informed oracle.
We can even love each other, I know,
but this is not a game, you know?

And even our pain and cries
our lavish blood flowing under the debris
the victorious wars you've launched
couldn't stop your voracity for glory, they say;
still, you're killing children
and sending your undesirable Others to agony.

You have the power to distort logics
and you use it with marvelous results;
even our tears, they say, are being served
to reach higher aim for your people while
you debased our people in suffering.
Just like storms and tornadoes
you destroy life at will and throw
half of the nation to the street, while
on the other side of the wall
you are lighting in splendor ,
your bombs raining like celebratory sparks

epoutan w'ap tiye timoun ogranjou.

Kontanporen m yo fè m wont, yon bann zonbi granchan
ki lach, yon bann opòtinis sou granri, yon bann alyene
yo kondisyone ak nanm yo sekirize ; ou kite yo fè disparèt
ti fi n yo, ou kite yo vyole yo, ou kite yo vann yo,
ou pretann kondane avanti malsite Bush ann Irak
epi ou konplimante pak Obama-Netanyahu-sou-Gaza.

Ou fè laperèz tounen yon woutin kotidyen
ki pa deranje pèsonn sètènman pa machann zam yo
ni McDonald nan kwen an of course not.

Li fè de ou yon repòtè lach nan CNN
yon konplis MSNBC ki kondane Rula Jebreal
paskè li di tou wo sa tout moun di tou ba ;
li fè de ou yon fo fonksyonè netr Leta
li retounen w nan eta imanite pirifye,
chè kadav chaje kras k'ap viv pou moman an
li retounen w nan eta sanitè sen
ki refize kontaminasyon pa lakonesans.

Avèk menas anviwonman, risk nan travay,
san konte chatiman esklizyon,
kontanplasyon lanfè malere sanzabri,
reflèks la dewoule pou kont li, konsyans ou anba kle
ou vin gen twòp bagay pou w pèdi dezòmè.

Ah ! Timoun yo ki pa sot nan lakreyennte,
se pou lanmò yo sèvi pou viktwa sou teworis lokal,
ou bay tèt ou jistifikasyon ki obeyi règ yo,
malfezans prezante kou yon pati byenfezans
– epi ou fèmen deba a, an n pale de Ukrènn
oubyen de Koup Dimond lan. Nou bezwen amizman
ak divètisman pou rann pwòp avèglri nou tolerab.

Tout bagay byen anba solèy la

on Gaza dimming in the dark.

You have the God-blessed power
to keep the eye from seeing the horrors
and the ear from hearing the wailings
and the mouth from speaking loudly;
still, you're killing children in broad daylight.

I'm ashamed of my contemporaries, cowardly
zombies of farms and streetwise opportunists
alienated by the conditioning of a securitized soul;
you let our daughters disappear, raped and sold,
you pretend to have condemned Bush's Iraq adventure
while you praise the Obama-Netanyahu-Gaza-pact.

You've made of evil a daily routine that bothers
no one, certainly not the arms dealer
nor the corner McDonald's, of course not.

It makes you a coward CNN reporter,
a misleader from MSNBC who condemned Rula Jebreal
for having said loudly what everyone whispered;
it makes you a falsely objective State minion,
it returns you to the state of pure humanity,
a dirty fleshly cadaver living for the moment;
it returns you to the sanitary state that refuses
to be contaminated by knowledge.

With the ambient threat, your job on the line
chastisement, the chastisement of exclusion,
the contemplation of homelessness' Gehenna,
the reflex self-regulates,
you have too much to lose now.

Ah! These non-Christian little kids,
may their death serve to defeat the local terrorist:
self-justification obeys the rule,

jiska lòt randevou a ak Gaza,
yon Gaza ki endiye pou baboukèt yo ba li,
endiye pou move sò yo bay yon pèp onorab,
endiye pou ipokrizi Gran Dominan yo
pou lojik akomodasyon mechanste zanmi yo
ak alye yo ki gen vikwa nan lagè y'ap mennen
sou yon bann nanm nan prizon k'ap soufwi
Anderson Cooper ka iyore avèk tout vèti li,
outraj la selektif, ou konnen, paske se Gaza,
Gaza rebèl, Gaza ki refize mouri an silans.

evilness is the attribute of goodness
– and the debate is closed, let's talk about Ukraine
and the World Cup. Let's have some fun
and entertainment in self-inflicted myopia.

All's well under the sun
until the next rendezvous
with Gaza indignant about its baboukèt,
indignant about the Dominant Powers' hypocrisy
and about the logics that accommodates horrors
committed by friends and allies victorious in the war
launched in a huge prison of suffering souls
that Anderson Cooper could virtuously ignore,
the outrage being selective, you know,
because it's Gaza,
Gaza the rebel,
Gaza which refuses to die in silence.

(Translated from Haitian by the Author)

RAYMOND NAT TURNER

FOLLOWING FOOTSTEPS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS

Alchemy of money
transforming repulsive,
ugly, hideous human forms into
powerful producers, reality TV stars,
super-predator Presidents,
multimillionaire quarterbacks,
elected officials, political operatives,
Oscar-winning actors—
boys being boys
following footsteps of
The Founding Fathers:

He stepped up to
the auction block and
grabbed her breast, her pussy;
as part of doing business—so
stealing away from the big house
in wee hours,
slipping into darkness,
an unwanted hand under an
unsuspecting dress, into pants
groping, penetrating, any time, any
kidnapped
body he bought, sold, owned,
Was part of doing business—
slamming her cocoa-colored face
into his unwashed crotch,
fulfilling his fantasies,
wasn't out of the ordinary:
powerful producers, reality TV stars,
super-predator Presidents,
multimillionaire quarterbacks,

elected officials, political operatives,
Oscar-winning actors
have big shoes to fill:
following footsteps of
The Founding Fathers

DAVID VOLPENDESTA

PSALM TO A SUSPECTED MENAGE A TROIS FAMILY

*for the wonderful Stormy—sin of Donald's sins,
condemning conflagration of his loins!*

I touch the paper
and the words appear
on parchment
above a wooden table
where roses and lilies
appear in a golden cup.
Words say a greasy goose
is slowly cooked on
a communal fire,
and the fat is swished around
the mouths of three pigs
whose tongues lick
the moldy money
when it's time for dessert!

Donald, self-proclaimed and crowned
prince of multi-billionaires,
devoted guzzler of diet Coke
and an aficionado of junk food,
is seated at the head of the table
for whom a ménage-a-trois
with Ivanka and Jared
is a lark with colored crayons
in a second-grade class.
Silence, don't tell anyone,
people will think
that the Trump family
is a den of hopeless perverts
intent on revving up their hormones
so \$130,000 can be paid
for the President's affair

with Stormy to be kept quiet!

Ivanka and Jared
delightfully shameless perverts
with failed businesses
just like Donald,
and empty publicity
and bounced checks
while their Chinese pockets
are filled with lint.
They look down on everyone,
they're superior
to the worthless lower-class mob.
Now they keep staring
at their handcuffs and chains
in their ice-cold cell;
ah, but Donald has a fancy lawyer
who bids him goodbye
but not before he's told him
that he's arranged
for an African-American judge
who will give him
a fair trial in a state
below the Mason-Dixon line ,
which leads directly to hell!
Stubby hands and manicured nails,
Donald Trump, the Don Juan of Manhattan,
Vladimir Putin's pet
and a loser in the eyes
of all the women
with whom he's ever had contact—
tell us, Donald, when did you sell
your soul to the devil,
and did you dribble
ketchup and mustard
from your McDonald's Cheeseburger
all over your white jockey shorts?

TOSHI WASHIZU

NOVEMBER 8, 2017

In Memory of Harold "Arch" Archambault

1.

We don't know how it came to this.
Do we live in a dark cave,
oblivious to the changes of tides and winds,
or in a gated community,
surrounded by high vine-covered walls?
In this prosperous country
13 million children starving every day,
1.5 million, homeless.
Neglected, hopeless, a lone man
takes it out on the street
gunning down anyone in his way.
Fed up with politicians,
with platitudes and lip-service,
we wager our future
on a demagogue with promises of snake oil,
a champion of self-enrichment,
savior of corporate America
an incubus.

2.

The world is moving from the shadowy path
to miles and miles of darker shadows
of tyrants, corrupt officials, right-wing extremists;
of fighters, prisoners, exiles.
Bombs keep dropping
on terrorists and civilians alike—
cities pulverized into dust;
underneath the rubble
bones and pieces of a mother and child.
Refugees adrift on the Mediterranean,

safer than their homeland;
nameless bodies washed ashore.
Lucky survivors crawl under fences,
climb over barbed wire.
Walls too high,
our lives too divided
to know we're all related
in this story.

3.

At dawn sunlight's taken over the city.
With heavy heart we cross the bridge
over the shimmering Bay.
Wispy clouds in the blue empty sky:
we admire the detachment of nature.
In the bosom of mountains
aspens flame in vermilion and gold
against dark green conifers.
Soon leaves will be falling
and falling.

We come to bid farewell
to an old friend,
A down-to-earth member
of our extended family of eight—
each having left his homeland
to find a new home in an America
our immigrant ancestors built.

Oxygen tubes in his nostrils,
he snores lightly
like a newborn with an open mouth,
his husband of 40 years by his side.
Moment by moment we feel
the thin line between life and death,

one simple step to cross over.
We gather around him
like an elephant herd,
our arms entwined around each other.
He's going back to where he came from,
leaving an empty space.
We take in the empty space
fill it with our living memories.

CATHLEEN WILLIAMS

YOU WOULD BRING THIS SYSTEM DOWN

If she were your daughter would you let her walk away
in pink clogs; if she were your daughter, her skirt a bell
in the light wind or a butterfly wing all by itself aloft?

If she were your daughter would you let her
clasping with her arms her flowered waist
climb the dump of Port au Prince, that ridge of filth,

with all the others, to look for food? No.
Rather than see her on that reeking mountain
you, if you could, would bring this system down.

NELLIE WONG

VILLANELLE FOR THOMAS JONES

"Beaten suspect on cocaine, cops say"

---San Francisco Examiner, July 21, 2000

Why a villanelle for Thomas Jones?
Who's this cat who's been beaten up?
He had cocaine in his system, not his bones.

Videotaped beaten by Philadelphia cop clones.
Guess Rodney King's not alone, didn't shut up.
Why a villanelle for Thomas Jones?

In the car the Blue found a crack-pipe alone.
Would it have been better if Jones was in his cups?
He had cocaine in his system, not his bones.

TV news camera told no lies, hear his groans.
Officers kicked and hit him like a defenseless pup.
Why a villanelle for Thomas Jones?

A villanelle for Jones is not meant to moan
But this summer sizzles violence for him to sup.
He had cocaine in his system, not his bones

Jones has five gunshot wounds that will erupt
In state prison where he'll be locked up.
Why a villanelle for Thomas Jones?
He had cocaine in his system, not his bones.

MARVIN X

SUNRISE OVER DAMASCUS

sunrise over damascus
saul fell on damascus road
became paul
persecutor to liberator
paul's christology mythologized slavery
servants be obedient to your masters
official sermon of black slave preachers
mlk's mentor howard thurman mama told him
boy read me the bible
stop when you get to paul
don 't wanna hear 'bout obedient servants
yes, mama
howard thurman said
mlk plagiarized his mentor in I Have A Dream
sunrise over damascus
primordial city rich history
down road to Jerusalem
house of peace with no peace
land of Canaan
brother of Egyptians
then came Abraham
Sarah Hajar
Jews Arabs
Isaac Ishmael
ancient times no peace
no peace now
land of prophets
Jeremiah Isaiah
told us wickedness
where are the prophets of now
so needed at the gates of Jerusalem Damascus
Lebanon Egypt Iraq Persia?
armies near Jerusalem to destroy

what's not destroyed already
the people are dead souls in the dead sea
cedars of lebanon burn sweet incense of death
frankincense myrrh burn in the holy temple for naught
biblical prophesy
end is near
who's there to see sunrise over damascus?
isis
israel
saudi arabia
russia
lebanon
turkey
usa usa
iran
gulf states
egypt
turkey
kurds
where's saladin the kurd
who's richard lionhearted
who's not
neo-crusade
persia rises again
from Tigris Euphrates to Mediterranean
can we stop history
fulfill whose mythology
jewish christian islam
myth is myth
my story his/her story
sunrise over damascus
a million dead
how many poison-gas dead
dead is dead
no matter how
blood bones are blood bones
a million dead

bullets bombs poison gas no matter
what mind game is this
dead are dead
no matter how
no matter why
we cry for syria
we cry
sunrise over damascus.

ERIC ALLEN YANKEE

SWIMMING IN HELL

Sweat streaks down my back as I read the news: Milo orders fans to kill journalists. 5 journalists dead at Capital Gazette. Racist woman hits black teenager at pool.

Unions are busted, Kids are locked up in cages, Supreme Court Justice retires to make way for Fascism.

This is not my America. My America was a dream rolling down lush hills and humming Jazz on street corners while children skated free and smiles built relationships around campfires, union halls, churches, and the rocking beds of lovers. But this America has always been out of reach. My boots are never tied tight enough and I can never seem to lift the flag anymore.

I grew up with the woman who demanded the Melanin youth leave her White Only pool. She tells me she's innocent and alternative facts are at play. She's just one more in that long line of preachers washing their hands of the blood they drained from the throats of those they say do not belong here, never belonged here.

I take a hard drag from my vape pen and make sure to force myself to choke and feel something again. The 4th of July is near and it's so hot my body turns red and I imagine I'm swimming through fire while dragging the flag behind me.

All I can do today is choke, choke, choke, fucking choke. And I'm dragging the flag behind me. The flag is burning behind me.

TIM YOUNG (SAN QUENTIN)

MY TEAM SUCKS

Tried to get my team
To roll with the Kaepernick thing
But it was not to be,
For they were too enthralled with
Contracts, endorsements, materialism
And the trappings of American capitalism.

My team choked
They folded like a cheap suit;
Instead of taking a knee
They took a back seat.
Colin Kaepernick risked it all
“They” risked absolutely nothing!

They should’ve had that brotha’s back
#I’mwithKap
They could’ve sent one hell of a knell
#NoKapNoNFL
It would’ve been epic had it all evolved,
But my team dropped the ball!

My team is not a franchise
But rather,
A metaphor
A demographic
And even though I still root for them
They’ve failed me miserably.

LORENE ZAROU-ZOUZOUNIS

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY PEOPLE

(For Gaza, Palestine martyrs of the 2018 massacre)

My people, I call upon you
My people. I plead with you
My people, my heart and soul bleeds with you
The hemorrhage of your being is squeezed
And I shut the wound when I close my eyes tight
I close my eyes shut so tight, tears well up
As though I've created a dam
I can't close my eyes without seeing you fall
Fall hard on the dry rubble beneath your bare feet
Where are your sandals, my people?
Stay steadfast and don't trip on a stone
Stay steadfast and hurl your stone
The stone that has the weight of a boulder
The boulder that has the weight of water
Water I can't give you
Water within your easy reach
At the bloody shore of your open-air prison
Water I can't split in two with my wooden staff
Like the grandiose legend
When Moses sliced a sea in two
For his tribe to flee from bondage before
A receding tempest plunged inward
To swallow whole a vortex of
Marauding Pharaoh's cavalry on chariots.

I'll send you white-horsed chariots, my loves
I'll send you water, my loves
I'll send you doves, my loves
Stay with me, open your eyes
Open and breathe
Open your infinite sea if you can
Run through the bottom of your sea

As fast as you possibly can
I'll await you with convivial arms
And a singing bird
I'll await you with eyes closed shut
Just to feel your freed flesh
I won't open my eyes
Until you've embraced me
Don't look back at the malevolent child snipers
Assassinating you for protesting
For casting your coveted stone
From the sweat and grit of your adolescent palms
From your handmade sling-shot
Just like the one your father made
And your mother kept safe
Never separated from you
Made from the skin of a gazelle
That lay silent.

ANDRENA ZAWINSKI

WHAT THEY TOLD US, WHAT WE BELIEVED

*...No meaning but what we find here.
No purpose but what we make.—Gregory Orr*

This is how they told us it would be:
hard work
hard as digging up clods of earth
parched by sun,

an inheritance
to make something of nothing,
no purpose but what we make,

the natural phenomena
of hummingbird defying gravity
or the return of the eagle,

all the gloriously hard wing-beats
a chorus of courage,
no meaning but what we find here.

This is what they said it would be:
the calloused hands
that shovel shale,
that stoke the furnace,

the steady work
of molten ash,
a gift of steel,

the nails chewed to the quick
with layoffs threatening
the next paycheck,

the face muffled in winter
to hide the shame of the food-line,
its dehydrated cheese and powdered milk.

This is what they told us
about the jewels
that fired furnaces,
the glow of slag smelting,

the same fiery brilliance
as the filthy sunset bleeding down
upon the gray Pittsburgh skyline,

pig iron at the open hearth,
a cauldron of magic
making steel.

This is what we believed,
even as we choked
on their smoke
and soot.

DIANA ZWINAK

TELL ME, GRANDMA

Tell me, Grandma...Tell again what was it like the day you saw the reports about the children caged on the border...How the people turned up, and taunted the woman who worked for the President as she ate in a Mexican restaurant...How the newscaster cried while she reported...Tell me how the People weren't satisfied when family work camps were created to replace the "tender age" detention camps...how the people demanded that the borders be opened to everyone looking for asylum from the conditions our country had created in their homelands...

No! Tell me how the people's eyes were opened and they began to see, how those people demanded that our country stop destroying their country in our name...how we discovered that corporations had been hiding there all along making money off misery; tell me about the day they realized that there ARE no rules except the ones we agree to...

No, Grandma!! Tell us about the time you went to fight the pipeline...tell us about the People and the water cannons....the boy who lost his eye.

Tell how the people prayed and prayed until the U.N. took up their case, and how the world court punished those who violated

their word/our word and began to kill us all

Talk about the day the land went back to those who were here before Columbus... the day our first female President chose you as her press secretary...how she was indigenous & how by keeping its promises to the first nations our nation was finally able to fulfill its promises to us... Tell me how you told the truth so that people could understand it...how you all rode up to the Capitol Building on horseback...1 million strong ...the 7th Generation...demanding the land be returned to the People.

Tell me about the 8th fire...
Tell me how the poisoned water was healed.
Tell me how the Land was healed.
And how the human heart was healed.
Tell me how we all learned to dance together -- respecting each other's steps.
Oh Grandmother! Tell me about the 8th Fire!

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE POETS

OPAL PALMER-ADISA: Jamaican-born poet essayist and novelist lives in Oakland. ROBERT ANBIAN is the lead poet of The Identified Flying Quartet group and author of the We series of poems. LILIANA ARENA, an Italian poet of more than six volumes of poetry, and has organized an International Festival of Poetry at Castellammare di Stabia, as well as Sassari (Sardinia) and Naples. HANAN AWWAD is a leading Palestinian poet and the director of the Pen Club of Palestine. She read at the International Poetry Festival in San Francisco in 2009. AYO AYOOLA-AMALE is a poet, spoken-word artist, lawyer and teacher from Nigeria. She is a member of the World Poetry Movement (WPM) and has taught in Ghana and the United States. IDLIR AZIZAJ is an Albanian poet, novelist and recent co-translator of the poems of Jusuf Gërvalla. He is the award-winning translator of James Joyce's *Ulysses* into Albanian and lives outside of Paris. MAHNAZ BADIHIAN is an Iranian poet and translator who has recently returned from a reading in Italy. She is with the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of San Francisco. LISBIT BAILEY, also of the RPB/SF, recently returned from Cuba. Her latest chapbook is *Playing in the Light*. ALESSANDRA BAVA is an Italian poet-translator who also writes in English. She is a founding member of the RPB/ROME. ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU is a major Turkish poet in the tradition of Nazim Hikmet, as well as a founding member of the World Poetry Movement in Medellin, Colombia in 2011. LINCOLN BERGMAN is a longtime activist poet, author of *Chants of a Lifetime* and one of three Poets Laureates of the City of Richmond, California. JUDITH AYN BERNHARD is the poet of *Prisoners of Culture*. She's also translated the poems of Nancy Morejon, Juanita Conejero and Ngua'n Lopes Morales from Spanish in this book. African-American poet CHARLES CURTIS BLACKWELL is a visual artist as well as a poet whose

Black idiom is among the finest in the U.S. JOHN BRANDI has published more than 50 books of poetry, is a translator of Mexican poetry, the editor of prison poetry, and a first-class artist as well. He lives in New Mexico. KRISTINA BROWN spent her childhood in Japan and is a member of the RPB/SF and a longtime activist in the Bay Area. TOM BURON is a young French jazz poet, the author of *The Blues of the 21st Century*. He was born in 1992. He can also translate his own poems into American. YOLANDA CATZALCO is a venerable poet activist who's especially involved with the question of police against the poor. The prolific poet NEELI CHERKOVSKI recently returned from Italy. Though the African-American poet, DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA, has won two Women's Slam Awards, she writes for "the page", as in her brilliant *They Are All Me*. MARCO CINQUE is the poet, photographer, musician and superb activist member of the RPB/ROME. He is also the archivist of the newspaper, *Il Manifesto*. BOBBY COLEMAN is a lawyer poet who also sings the songs of Leonard Cohen in *The Conspiracy of Beards* chorus. FRANCIS COMBES' latest book of poems is *If The Symptoms Persist*, translated from his very realistic French poetry by Alan Dent of England. JUANITA CONEJERO is a young poet in Cuba whose response to the situation in Palestine is most important. PAULINE CRAIG is a member of the RPB/SF. For 23 years, she has helped run San Francisco and Marin juvenile hall writing workshops, to produce *The Beat Within*, a magazine of incarcerated youth art work, poems and essays. WILLIAM CROSSMAN'S 1993 book, *War in America*, was republished this year by Omerta Publications. He is also the author of the musical *John Brown's Truth*. THOMAS RAIN CROWE lives in North Carolina, where he also translates from French. Some years ago he won a residency in the house of Dylan Thomas in Wales. ANITA ODENA CRUZ is a Filipina poet-activist who lives in San Francisco. Her spouse ROMEO ALCALA CRUZ also is a Filipino and an engaged social and political

poet. JOHN CURL's poems are collected in *Revolutionary Alchemy*, and his translations from Aztec/Mayan/Quechua are in *Ancient American Poets*. NAJWAN DARWISH, a Palestinian poet born in 1978, recently published *Nothing More to Lose*, in New York City's New Directions Press. Najwan's poems have appeared in 10 languages. DIEGO DE LEO's 2nd book is *Fallen from Nowhere*. He began writing poetry at age 76 and is a member of the RPB/SF. Founder of the *Pepper Spray Times* more than 26 issues ago, CAROL DENNEY is an activist poet-singer from Berkeley. TONGO EISEN-MARTIN is an important African-American poet whose *City Lights Book* is *Heaven Is All Goodbyes*, which won him the California Book Award this year. ELIAS is an 18 year-old poet who wrote his poem for HOMEY, a Mission (SF) writing workshop for inclusion in *The Beat Within*, the magazine of young poets imprisoned in the city. AGNETA FALK has recently returned from reading her poems in the Road and Belt International Poetry Festival in China. Argentinian-born MAURO FORTISSIMO is also the relentless organizer-musician in the movie, *Twelve Pianos*, as well as a bravo poet. ARNOLDO GARCIA is a poet-painter originally from Mexico whose *Life Prayers from Around the World* is widely known. He lives in Oakland. JUSUF GËRVALLA was murdered with his brother and another comrade in Germany in the 1980's by the Serbian secret police. He was a Kosovo communist poet and singer fighting for the liberation of Kosovo. His poem was translated by Jack Hirschman with Ildir Azizai. KATERINA GOGOU is one of the finest Greek poets of this generation. She died in Greece in the late 1990's. RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ is the current Poet Laureate of Berkeley. He is a major rememberer of the calendrical celebrations throughout the year, for which he writes poems in both Spanish and American. ADAM GOTTLIEB is an activist poet who works with the RPB/CHICAGO and whose poems appear in the *People's Tribune*. RENÉE GREGORIO lives in New Mexico but has travelled the world over, including

Cuba and Bali and has written poems of high international quality. Italian-born poet and intellectual, BRUNO GULLÌ teaches in New York City, is the author of *Humanity and the Enemy* and *Labor of Fire*. MARTIN HICKEL is a member of the RPB/SF. He also sings with The Conspiracy of Beards. GARY HICKS is active in the U.S.-China Friendship Association and as an organizer of events at the Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library, as well as with his work as a poet. JACK HIRSCHMAN is another one of the editors of this anthology. He is with RPB/SF and works with the League of Revolutionaries for a New America (LRNA) ANTONELLA IASCHI lives in Udine, Italy. She visited San Francisco two years ago. One of her books of poetry is *I Remain Communist*. BRUCE ISAACSON is the Poet Laureate of Las Vegas and the founder of Zeitgeist Press. MAMADOU KANE is the 14 year-old poet of the Fula Tribe of Guinea, Africa, and the student of Dorothy Payne, the Brigadista who did the cover of this anthology. He's also translated his poem into French. DAN KATZ gave his first public reading at the North Beach Library. He's studied at the Naropa Institute and is preparing his first collection. Chechnya-born, JAZRA KHALEED writes his powerful antifascist poetry in Greek. A foremost Chinese-American poet, GENNY LIM is the current Poet Laureate of the San Francisco Jazz Club. She has also read her poems at the Casa della Poesia in Italy. MARK LIPMAN is with the RPB/LA, an activist poet and publisher of Vagabond Books. ANGELINA LLONGUERAS left San Francisco for Chicago, then left Chicago to return to Spain to fight for secession of her native Catalonia. She is a brilliant poet in three languages, and a wonderful actress as well. EMANUELE LONGHI is an Italian poet imprisoned in the Pesaro Correctional Institution. She partakes of the RPB there. KAREN MELANDER MAGOON is with the RPB/SF, a former opera singer in Europe for many years, and a poet who responds to the current social and political events actively. JIDI MAJIA is the vice-director of the All-

Chinese Writers' Union and the leading poet of the 56 minorities in China (he belongs to the Yi people), as well as being one of the great poets of all of China. An emeritus Poet Laureate of the City of San Francisco, the African-American DEVORAH MAJOR has also read her works in Italy, England and Wales. She is a novelist as well as a poet. ROSEMARY MANNO is one of the editors of this anthology. She is preparing her 2nd volume of poetry, called *El Sol*, for publication. ELIZABETH MARINO is with the RPB/CHICAGO, a poet whose chapbooks are Debris: Poems and Memoir and Ceremonies. JOSEPH "AFROABORIGINAL" MARTINEZ II is a poet and a Community Program Director in Miami. PIPPO MARZULLI is a brilliant Italian poet and organizer of Revolutionary Poets Brigades not simply in Bari, Italy, but in other Italian cities in the south of that country. VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY was the father of street and even "Beat" poetry in the 20th century, and the first to fully embrace Revolution as a poet. This year is the 125th anniversary of his birth. SARAH MENEFEE is poet of *Human Star*, recently published in Italy, translated by Raffaella Marzano. She is also a writer for the People's Tribune and a member of the RPB/SF. JANICE MIRIKITANI is not simply a poet and guiding light, with Cecil Williams, of the Glide Memorial project in San Francisco, but a powerful force for the cultural enlightenment of the whole city. NGUA'N LOPES MORALES is a Mayan and Spanish- writing poet of Mexico, whose classic "Tree" poem the editors felt is very important at this time. NANCY MOREJÓN is one of the major poets of Cuba. She read in the Bay Area and other places in the U.S. last year. The subject of her poem, Nazim Hikmet, the great Turkish poet, wrote a marvelous book of poems about Cuba. ALEJANDRO MURGUÍA is an emeritus Poet Laureate of San Francisco, a professor of Latino studies at San Francisco State University, and an important cultural force for the Chicano peoples throughout

the U.S. MAJID NAFICY is an Iranian progressive voice in the Los Angeles area. BILL NEVINS is a poet and organizer of Albuquerque, New Mexico RPB, and an anti-war activist in the Southwest. JIM NORMINGTON is a poet and translator of Pablo Neruda and Efraim Huerta. He lives in Sacramento. EDOARDO OLMI, born in Firenze, Italy, now lives in Rome and is a member of RPB/ROME. New York-born African-American poet GREGORY POND is the author of *After Moon* and a member of the RPB/SF. JEANNE POWELL, also an African-American poet, author of many books, including *Word Dancing*. JAMI PROCTOR-XU is an American poet from Arizona who both writes in and translates from Chinese and has read her work in Vietnam and Bangladesh as well, of course, as in China. ALBERTO RAMUNDO is the Italian author of *Auschwitz*, a book of poems and photos; and as a cultural guide to Pesaro Prison in Pesaro, Italy, he's been instrumental in creating the first prison RPB there. FERNANDO RENDON is the poet and chair of the World Poetry Movement (WPM) in Medellin, Colombia, and a major force for the energies of the current international resistance against the growing fascism in the world. LEW ROSENBAUM is with the RPB/CHICAGO and a cultural force with the League of Revolutionaries for a New America as well. E. SAN JUAN, JR. is the foremost Filipino poet and intellectual in the United States. He heads the Philippine Studies Center in Washington, D.C. after many professorial years in universities throughout the U.S.A. NATACHA SANTIAGO is a leading Cuban poet who lives in Havana. She is a professor at the University of Havana and is known for her poetry on radio and television in Havana. FRANCISCO MORALES SANTOS is a Guatemalan poet, awarded the Miguel Angel Asturias Prize in 1998. He's with the World Poetry Movement in Medellin, Colombia. SANDRO SARDELLA is one of the leading poet-painters in all of contemporary Italy. His painting was the cover of the 4th *Overthrowing Capitalism* anthology and his poems are being

translated for publication in the United States. RATI SAXENA represents India in the WPM. She writes in both Hindi and English and organizes poetry festivals. JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER is a German poet, the translator into German of poetry and novels, and he is a collage artist as well. STEPHEN SCHUR lives in San Francisco where he adapts as he translates the Latin poetry of Catullus and other Latin poets to the current political situations in the world. NINA SERRANO, a longtime poet-activist, hosts a poetry program on KPFA radio in Berkeley, and recently appeared in an important role in a film about the life of her friend, the poet Roque Dalton. DANNY SHOT of New Jersey this year read from his volume, *Works*, in San Francisco. He is the editor of one of the finest poetry journal of these times, *Long Shot*. KIM SHUCK is the current Poet Laureate of the City of San Francisco. She is the author of *Smuggling Cherokee* and *Cloud Running In*, among other books. JULIA STEIN is one of the co-founders of Laborfest in Los Angeles, a poet and editor, for example, with David Joseph, of the poems of Carol Tarlen: *Every Day is an Act of Resistance*. TONTONGI is the poet-editor who brings contemporary Haitian poetry to the people of the U.S.A. In the Boston area, he edits *Tambou/Tambour*, a journal in the Haitian, French and American languages. DAVID VOLPENDESTA'S two major books are his poems, *Friends Who Are Living* and *Homeless Not Helpless*. He is with the RPB/SF. TOSHI WASHIZU is a poet and filmmaker of *Issei: The First Generation*, about Japanese-Americans concentration-camped in the U.S.A. during WW2. CATHLEEN WILLIAMS is the poet and editor of the very important Sacramento newspaper, *Homeward*, as well as a writer for the *People's Tribune*, and a member of RPB/SF. NELLIE WONG is the distinguished Oakland-born Chinese-American poet and fighter for the rights especially of Asian-American women, for many years an activist with the Freedom Socialist Party. MARVIN X is the African-American poet whose major book is *Love and War*. He was

connected with the Black Arts Movement, and continues with Black liberation motions these days as well. ERIC ALLEN YANKEE is a member of the RPB/CHICAGO. His book of poems is *Bees Against the War*, and he is an activist in the Chicago area as well. TIM YOUNG is a poet/inmate in San Quentin Prison. He would love to hear from you, at: Tim Young F23374, S.Q.S.P, San Quentin, CA 94974. LORENE ZAROU-ZOUZOUNIS, a Palestinian- American whose poems have appeared in the *Heartfire* anthology and *The Poetry of Arab Women*, lives in San Francisco. ANDRENA ZAWINSKI is the powerful poet of the working-class whose book, *Landings*, will convince any reader of her importance as a major American poet. DIANA ZWINAK, an holistic health coach, is a poet with the RPB/CHICAGO and an activist in that area.

AND OF THE TRANSLATORS:

KAREEN JAMES ABU-ZEID is an Egyptian-American award-winning translator from the Palestinian of Najwan Darwish. Kareen was in Berkeley until last year and now is on the road, ever translating. WALTER G. ANDREWS, who translated Ataol Behramoglu, is the professor of Ottoman and Turkish Literature at the University of Washington in the Northwest. LAURA CHALAR has published 5 books. Born in Uruguay, she's been a Pushcart Prize nominee. She translated the poem of Fernando Rendon. PETER CONSTANTINE, London-born, translates from nine languages, who's brought the poem of Jazra Khaleed so powerfully to the imagination. ALAN DENT, who is the translator of Francis Combes' poem, is himself a poet and critic and editor of the radical cultural journal in England, *Mistress Quickly's Bed*. LAPO GUZZINI, who translated the poems of Marco Cinque and Edoardo Olmi, is from Ancona, Italy, was co-director of *The Emerald Tablet* in San

Francisco, and has translated many Italian poets in previous anthologies of the RPB/SF. DENIS MAIR has translated the poems of Jidi Majia from Chinese for many years. He himself is a poet, born in Ohio, and a teacher in Taiwan. BARBARA PASCHKE translated the poems of Alejandro Murguía, Natacha Santiago and Francisco Morales Santos for this volume, She translates also from French and is a continuing member of both the RPB/SF and the Roque Dalton Cultural Brigade. JAMES PHILLIPS translated Angelina Llongueras, is himself a well-known translator of Japanese as well as Catalan. GIOVANNI ROMANO has brilliantly translated poems of Liliana Arena, Ferruccio Brugnarò, Antonella Iaschi, Emanuele Longhi, Pippo Marzulli, Alberto Ramundo and Sandro Sardella for this book. He comes from Udine, Italy, has a law degree from the University of Trieste and lives and works in San Francisco. ANGELOS SAKKIS has translated the Collected Poems of Katerina Gogou. He is himself a poet who lives in Oakland, but visits Greece at every opportunity. CHARLIE VERIC, the translator of E. San Juan Jr's poem from Tagalog is a poet and translator and teaches at the Ateneo de Manila University in The Philippines. JENNY WADE, who did the translation of Vladimir Mayakovsky's poem that's part of the whole book of his poems that she translated, Maximum Access by name, is a bass musician and singer. FADY ZOUBY, who did the poem of Hanan Awwad, is a Palestinian who works in San Francisco.

AND THE ARTISTS:

DOROTHY PAYNE, whose "Freedom" is the cover of this 5th Overthrowing Capitalism Anthology, created the work in Guinea, Africa, where she is teaching. AGNETA FALK offers "Put Your Ear to the Wall and Listen", is a mixed media painting, created to awaken imaginations to the

capitalist sham of Wall Street itself. NANCY CALEF painted “It’s 10 a.m. Do You Know Where Your Parents Are?” in the light of the most recent kidnappings of children by the Trump administration. SANDRO SARDELLA created “High Flight of the Refugees”, a mixed media painting, one of a magically evocative series of paintings of refugees.

REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE MISSION STATEMENT

NOW

As poets we are uniquely positioned to seize the possibilities of the time, bringing language to life and participating in the movement that is gathering as we speak...

IT'S TIME

Poetry has always been and continues to be not only the way the poet listens to his or her innermost being, but a way the spirit of the times, in its most forward-looking incarnation, is expressed and heard. And the times we're in, of crisis and the cry for transformation, particularly needs the news, as poet W.C. Williams said, "without which we die."

We say what we see: and that is the system which cannot rest until it extracts every drop from a desperate earth: capitalism. We say what we see: and that is the oppression of our class, driven to the streets and alleys of our cities, driven to the muddy fields, all because there is no profit in maintaining life and health. We are the harbingers of revolution and the awareness that underlies and drives it.

FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY POETS

In our common struggle toward freedom, each individual instinctively reaches for the best tool at hand. As artists, we have the most powerful tool of all, the ability to inspire, transform, and liberate, just in the nick of time as it happens, as the sick old ways rust, choke, sputter, and fade. Poets, those at the compressed razor sharp edge of social thought, and all fellow artists of visionary courage, stay mindful of this historic opportunity, lead with strong revolutionary voice for all humankind to genuinely live and thrive in common spirit!

BRIGADE

Therefore, we want to create a Revolutionary Poets Brigade, to respond to the demands of the moment – provoking the future out of the confused minds of today, inspiring with the passion of the living word, in preparation for the development on a wider and larger scale of the uprising, the action that will overthrow this system of greed and exploitation.

As a network, we can be present and participate in the popular resistance that is going on around us by holding poetry events, by reading and speaking at demonstrations, and by publishing broadsides and pamphlets. Join us.

"Camerados . . . will you come travel with us? Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?"

–Walt Whitman

REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE

<http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.org>

