

A WORLD WITHOUT WARS



OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

VOLUME SIX

REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE

A World Without Wars
OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM
Volume Six

Edited by
Jack Hirschman
Karen Melander-Magoon
John Curl

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

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Revolutionary Poets Brigade

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Edited by Jack Hirschman, Karen Melander-Magoon, and
John Curl

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ISBN-13: 978-0-938392-13-2

Kallatumba Press
858A Union Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

<http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.org/>

Cover Painting by Agneta Falk

Printed in the United States of America.

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Introduction

Overthrowing Capitalism, volume six, is dedicated, as have been its preceding volumes, to the premise that our nation and its global neighbors continue to be threatened by a capitalist system, increasingly endorsed within our government and the corporations it serves. It is also dedicated to the premise that we as a nation must be a model to the world with a system that endorses and perpetuates freedom and human rights nationally and globally, thereby ending motivations for war and violence within and across borders.

Capitalism, whereby profits generated by corporations and the wealthy become the means to governance rather than the will of the people, has become a growing nemesis within our society. Decisions made for the benefit of the wealthy generate a nation increasingly deaf to the needs of its citizens and those seeking succor at its shores. Instead of a nation created to be a beacon to those in need, to those suffering beyond its boundaries, we have become a nation girded against refugees from violence often perpetuated by our own economic adventurism and profit-seeking beyond our borders. We have become a nation that cages babies and separates children from their loved ones under the premise that their mothers and fathers, legal asylum-seekers, are criminals without the right to remain with their children, effectively punishing children as well as their innocent parents.

We have become a nation of homelessness, dominating a world of refugees, a nation that supports foreign countries that oppress others, a nation that is willing to destroy to retain dominance and access to resources. We have turned our back on the values that inspired our war for independence, our intentions, however imperfectly realized, to generate a truly representative democracy, seeking

authority and governance by free people empowered with equal rights.

Equal rights demand equal access to an appropriate standard of living, including not only to sufficient food and water and lodging, but to education, health care, social mobility, and personal privacy; protection from discrimination based on ethnicity, color, gender, or sexuality; and true freedom of speech and the press, developing and endorsing a system of government that represents and supports the people of our country and by extension of our world as well.

In order to achieve equal rights, we must remove our nation and all the peoples of the world from the constraints and oppression imposed by a capitalist system. We must also defend personal, economic, intellectual, and legal rights for all nations and all peoples, including those who seek asylum in our country.

We must become a nation and a world motivated to end perpetual violence and the wars that ensue as a result of a capitalist economy built on the greed that feeds it. We must become a nation and a world motivated to serve and sustain its people. We hope the poetry you read here will help inspire us all to work towards this goal.

Karen Melander-Magoon
Jack Hirschman
John Curl

A World Without Wars

INDRAN AMIRTHANAYAGAM (Sri Lanka)

REVOLISYON PANSE

Lide mwen se pa konplike, monche blan.
Ayiti se sant inivè epi lang kreyòl lang ofisyel

pou tout otorite nasyon zini, tribinale
kriminèl entènasyonal sou ninpot tip krim,

epi otorite NASA tou paske ou konnen
pou lagè nan lavni nou pral bezwen kòd

ki pa tout moun konnen. Se poukisa
mwen met kreyol dispozisyon ou. Lang kòd.

Lang pou eksplorasyon espas. Pou lòd lagè.
Ayiti cheri. Gwo peyi a. Sant tèt mwen.

INDRAN AMIRTHANAYAGAM (Sri Lanka)

A REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT

My idea is not complicated, dear foreigner.
Haiti is the center of the universe and creole

the official language for all authorities,
United Nations, International Criminal Court,

for all kinds of crimes, and NASA as well
because, as you surmise, to fight future wars

we will need codes that not everybody knows...
which is why I am leaving creole with you: your call

as code language, to explore space. For new commands
in war. Dearest Haiti. Great country, center of my head.

(Translated from Haitian Creole by the author)

THOMAS ANTOLIC (Austria)

**OFFENBARUNG
(KAPITULATION RELIGIÖSER KAPITALISTEN
UND KAPITALISTISCHER RELIGIONEN)**

In Kirchen, Moscheen, Synagogen und Tempeln
huldigen sie einem MÄNNLICHEN GOTT.
Und ihre Waffen allesamt sind phallisch
wie ihre Wolkenkratzer und Ideen:
Quellen des Irrsinns, Hunger nach Macht, Zeichen der
Schwäche.
Ein kriegerischer Hüpfmarsch in der Wüstentanzschule.

Wir hören nicht länger zu, verlassen das Pantheon,
Santa Maria ad Martyres, gehen nicht mehr zum
Ticketschalter,
zollen keinen Tribut mehr, ziehen die weiße Katze einer
falschen Wissenschaft vor,
Rituale und Schamanentrommeln,
alogische Sprachen, irrationale Zeichen,
geben zurück was uns nicht gehört,
am Ursprung des Lebens eine Umpolung der Schöpfung,
in die Höhle, die Gebärmutter, die mit Stacheldraht
umwickelt ist,
den wir durchschneiden und hineinkriechen,
Schutz suchend vor dem Erlöser, bis die Vergangenheit
stirbt und er mit ihr,
und der Neubeginn eine andere Welt hervorbringt,
befreit vom Privileg, befreit vom Blut,
dem zerstörerischen Blutbad, in dem die Wächter
ertrinken,
von GiER zerfressen,
ihrem eigenen Konsum.

THOMAS ANTOLIC (Austria)

**REVELATION
(RELIGIOUS CAPITALISTS' AND CAPITALISTIC
RELIGIONS' CAPITULATION)**

In churches, mosques, synagogues and temples
they pay homage to a MALE GOD.
And their weapons are all phallic,
like their skyscrapers and ideas:
Sources of insanity, hunger for power, signs of weakness.
A warlike bouncy march in the desert dance school.

We no longer listen, leave the Pantheon,
Santa Maria ad Martyres, no longer go to the ticket office,
no longer pay tribute, prefer the white cat to a false
science,
rituals and shaman drums,
illogical languages, irrational signs,
give back what does not belong to us,
at the origin of life, a reversal of the polarity of creation,
into the cave, the uterus wrapped with barbed wire,
which we cut through and crawl into,
seeking protection from the Redeemer until the past dies
and he with it,
and the new beginning brings forth another world,
liberated from privilege, liberated from blood,
the destructive bloodbath, in which the Guardians drown,
devoured by GREED,
their own consumption.

Wir stehen am neuen Ufer und schauen den Dämonen zu,
die im reißenden Strom absaufen.
Die Apokalypse ist der Anfang, mit Tränen zwar, doch
hoffnungsreich,
von Staub bedeckt nach der Explosion,
der uns bis zur Unkenntlichkeit geschminkt hat,
das Gesicht bedeckt, bis sich der Rauch verflüchtigt und
wir wieder lernen zu lieben. Nur noch in der Ferne ist
Donnergrollen vernehmbar wie ein unehrlicher Seufzer,
wie der Großvater, der seinen Namen gegen ein paar
Klumpen Gold getauscht hat,
weil er von seinen Träumen getäuscht wurde und seinen
Irrtum erst erkannt hat, als es schon zu spät war und er
sich nichts mehr eingestehen konnte.
Er redete sich ein, Gott sei in ihm.

Die Nacht war jung und plötzlich stand sie da. Ich küsste
sie, umarmte sie, und er beobachtete uns und sah
eifersüchtig zu. Denn ER ist ein eifersüchtiger Gott. Doch
wir machen aus unserer Affäre kein Geheimnis. Vielleicht
macht es ihn sogar scharf, wenn er uns von oben beäugt.
Aber ich bin nur ihr Schüler und lerne mich nicht länger zu
fürchten vor dem was ich sehe und dem Unsichtbaren.
Nimm meine Hand, lege sie auf deine Brüste, führe sie hin
zu deinem Altar und sauge mich auf, verschlinge mich
ganz, sodass ich neu geboren werde.

Wenn die uralten Schwänze in euren Hauptstädten,
vormals Zentren der Macht, zu schrumpfen beginnen,
verschrumpeln und verkrumpeln,
und die Priester ihre Gebete vergessen,
an einen Vater, einen Sohn und einen Geist,
dann ist das keine Blasphemie.
Dann bricht der Morgen an.
Und es wird bloß sichtbar, was von der dunklen Nacht
verborgen war

We stand at the new shore and watch the demons drown in
the torrential stream.

The apocalypse is the beginning, accompanied
by tears, indeed, yet hopeful,
concealed by dust after the explosion,
make-up applied beyond recognition,
covering our faces, until the smoke disappears and we learn
to love again.

Only in the distance can the rumbling of thunder be heard
like a dishonest sigh,
like the grandfather who exchanged his name for a few
lumps of gold
because he was deceived by his dreams and only
recognized his error when it was already too late and he
could no longer admit anything to himself.
He told himself God was in him.

The night was young and suddenly she stood there. I kissed
her, embraced her and he watched us and did so jealously.
For He is a jealous God. But we don't make a secret of our
affair. Maybe it even turns him on as he gapes from above.
I am only her disciple and no longer learn to fear what I see
and the invisible.

Take my hand, put it on your breasts, lead it to your altar
and suck me up, devour me completely, so that I will be
born again.

When the ancient tails in your capitals, formerly centers of
power,
begin to shrink, and shrivel,
and the priests forget their prayers
to a father, a son and a spirit,
it's not blasphemy.
Then the morning comes.
And that which was hidden from the dark night emerges,

und in Fesseln lag, in Sklaverei, die in der Dämmerung
abgeschüttelt wird.

Eine Armee toter Männer verschwindet in ihren Gräbern, je
heller es wird.

Falsche Propheten, die Kinder verführten.

Erst jetzt können wir sie von ihren geilen Blicken
bewahren.

Herr Schelling meinte übrigens, Geister seien ein
poetisches Produkt Gottes.

Schleichschritte einer verliebten Wüstenwachtel.

in shackles, in a slavery that is shaken off at dusk.
An army of dead men disappears into their graves as the
light increases.
False prophets who seduced children.
Only now can we save them from their horny looks.

Incidentally, Herr Schelling believed that spirits were a
poetic product of God.
Stealthy steps of a desert quail, in love.

(Translated from German by the author)

AYO AYOOLA-AMALE (Nigeria)

SHOOTING PAIN

I'm sure they, being of the same mind
of dead thinking stuck together by the head,
---their footsteps arriving as
their actions speak to a few lost to all
as feathers are lost in the flying bird.

Not a thing about the wilting lives,
no meekness for the crumples
in the soul,
just to be the head at the table
feeding on inequality.

With the scent of oppression steeped
in dominance, a time of glooms is
erected;

no one's looking through the stars
as I held the sound of unrest
like a violin

and saw how the waves
wash away the inequity, the iniquity.
and heard the breathings
in the forests,
heard

the heart of change
beat all day
every day,
a daily harvest
we live up to.

LISBIT BAILEY

DISCOURSE FOR THE FOURTH

I read the white truth today
written between the lines of the people
waiting for bread and shelter

heard the lying tune droning on
like nonstop elevator-muzak
I'm not a believer and didn't sing along

tread on into the blighted future
none of us stepping forward for the one
the one that doesn't stand for each of us

can't you see the thread of white truth
warping society? don't be drawn in by
the cloth that flies overhead!

think those stars and stripes
were for all and forever? they were
never meant for each and every one of us.

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN (Iran)

برادرم را کشتند

سال انقلاب
چون چپ بود
سال جنگ چون عاشق بود

دوباره برادرم را کشتند
سال بعد از انقلاب
چون می فهمید

برادرم را کشتند
در خیابانهای فقر و بی کسی
و خواهرم بوتاب را در رجاله خانه ها
زیر پای دیو سیاه کشتند
چون زیبا بود

برادرم را کشتند
خفه اش کردند
زیانتش بریدند
دلش شکستند
و کیسه کیسه هرویین بخوردش دادند
تا سراغ خانه نگیرد

دوباره برادرم را کشتند
وقتی دهانش بوی اعتراض می داد
برادرم را کشتند
وقتی از حرمت خانه اش حرف می زد

و باز هم برادرم را کشتند
در میدان آزادی
پیش چشم جهانیان
به گلوله اش بستند

اما برادرم هنوز نمرده است
و نمی دانند که برادرم
همیشه عاشق است
همیشه می فهمد
همیشه معترض

مهناز بدیهیان (ایران)

*بوتاب سردار زن ایرانی ، خواهر آریوبرزن سردار نامدار
که هردو در راه وطن جان باختند.*

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN (Iran)

THEY KILLED MY BROTHER

They killed my brother
the year of revolution
because he had different ideas

They killed him
the year of war
because he was in love

They killed him again the year after revolution
because he was aware

They killed my brother
on the streets of poverty and homelessness
And they killed my sister Youtub*
under the feet of demon men
because she was a Brave Beauty

They killed my brother
they broke his heart,
cut out his tongue
and choked him

They fed him bag after bag of heroin
so he forgot about home

They killed my brother again
and spoke of the dignity of his homeland

Again they killed my brother
In Freedom Square
and they sprayed him with bullets in the public eye

But my brother is not dead yet
and they don't understand
the reason he will be
in love for ever
he will be aware for ever
and will protest for ever.

(Translated from Farsi by the author)

*Youtub was a general and sister of the famous hero Ariobarzan

BIJAN BARAN (Iran)

نیایش
در آینه برگه نگاه میکنم
برگی میافتد
برگی برده میشود
ومن صدای رویش برگ را دگر را میشنوم
برگ بر باد
ابر بر باد
زمین بر باد
-باد- باد یکرنگی
مرزها را پاک خواهد کرد
-زمین- زمین را
دوباره بکشد ای بی بزک خواهد شد

(ایران) باران بیژن

BIJAN BARAN (Iran)

THE PRAYER

I'm looking at the brook.
A leaf is falling.
A leaf is carried away.
I hear the growth of another leaf.
A leaf in the wind
A cloud in the wind
The Earth in the wind
Wind - the World wind
removes the borders.
And the Earth - the free Earth
becomes again a virgin without make-up.

(Translated from Farsi by the author)

LYNNE BARNES

HEARTPHONE

The next time “Mark Hunt” from “Microsoft” calls,
listen to his spiel for a moment, if you can,
then ask him how he pronounces his name
in his own language.

Tell him you know his job is hard, trying to alarm
the unsuspecting about their computers,
as his boss has told him he must do,
hoping he will trick those he calls
into buying a thing they do not need.

Tell him you believed
the first person who called like this years ago,
but now you are wiser, nothing personal,
do not want to waste his time.

But take just a moment more
to ask if his family is well,
to send blessings to each member from you.
Tell him to tell them you honor him
working the nightshift
to reach you during sunshine in America.

When his moist voice says,
Ma'am, you have touched me,
you have made my day,
it might make yours.

Say peace— *aman*— in Urdu,
or a Hindi *dhyaan rakhen*— take care;
hope that your breath plinks
a faint wind chime of cheer
into his long, dark night of
shoveling for his family
in this boiler plate ditch.

JUDITH AYN BERNHARD

O COUNTRY! MY COUNTRY!

O Country! My Country, our peaceful days are done,
The ship of state has gone aground, the prize will not be won,
No port is near, no bells I hear, the people all are crying,
What steady hands could steer this ship, a vessel broke and
failing;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the crumbled wreck now bled,
Where in the mud a country lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Country! My Country, rise up and hear our plea;
Rise up—for you the truth is flung—for you the word is free,
For you the world had counted on—for you the shores
a-crowding,

For you they call, the working class, their eager faces turning;
Hear Country! Dear homeland!

This voice inside your head!

It is some dream that in the mud,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Country does not answer, its lips are wan and still,
The people, so enriched by greed, have now no pulse nor
will,

The ship of state is on the rocks, its voyage is nearly done,
From fearful trip the fascist ship comes in with object won;

O Ring the bells! O Rabble roar!

But I with mournful tread,

Will tell the fate of Country gone,
Fallen cold and dead.

*Written in commemoration of the Bicentennial of Walt Whitman's birth
and in mourning for the loss of the American Dream.*

ALESSANDRA BAVA

THE DAY NERUDA DIED

Just a few days after the
coup d'état, Poetry died in a house
nestled in the mountains of Santiago.

Twenty years later only,
they buried his body there,
in *Isla Negra*, according to his last

will and desire, close
to his home harboring
on a dune where blue waves

scour Humboldt's icy
currents. Surrounded by
all things maritime, ships in

bottles, maps, beloved
figureheads, that he collected
bulimically, a few steps away from

his very bedroom with a
tin-plate roof that reminded him of
his childhood in the Southern town of

Temuco lashed by harsh winds and
rain where he spent endless hours penning lines
enchanted by the falling drops on the tin rooftops

in the arms of the mighty Andes.
The day he died, five hundred, maybe
six hundred young men stood there in front of

Pablo's house despite the hundreds of

Pinochet's secret agents taking snapshots. When
the coffin left, all of them raised their hand to the sky,

singing *The Internationale*. Everybody knew that
that very evening somebody would have knocked at
their doors, leading them away to Dawson Island as

political prisoners—to never return. This did not prevent
them. Nobody will prevent poetry from living on. Neither
regimes nor politics and, not even Death dancing
his last Chilean *danse macabre*

amid rustling red leaves on an Autumn day of 1973.

*Pablo es aún vivo.**

*Pablo is still alive

ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU (Turkey)

BEBEKLERİN ULUSU YOK

İlk kez yurdumdan uzakta yaşadım bu duyguyu
Bebeklerin ulusu yok
Başlarını tutuşları aynı
Bakarken gözlerinde aynı merak
Ağlarken aynı seslerinin tonu
Bebekler çiçeği insanlığımızın
Güllerin en hası, en goncası
Sarışın bir ışık parçası kimi
Kimi kapkara üzüm tanesi
Babalar çıkarmayın onları akıldan
Analar koruyun bebeklerinizi
Susturun susturun söyletmeyin
Savaştan yıkımdan söz ederse biri
Bırakalım sevdıyla büyüsünler
Serpilip gelişinler fidan gibi
Senin benim hiç kimsenin değil
Bütün bir yeryüzünüdür onlar
Bütün insanlığın gözbebeği
İlk kez yurdumdan uzakta yaşadım bu duyguyu
Bebeklerin ulusu yok
Bebekler, çiçeği insanlığımızın
Ve geleceğimizin biricik umudu...

ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU (Turkey)

BABIES DON'T HAVE NATIONS

Babies don't have nations
I felt this for the first time far from my homeland
Babies don't have nations
The way they hold their heads is the same
They gaze with the same curiosity in their eyes
When they cry, the tone of their voices is the same
Babies are the blossoms of humankind
Of roses the most pure, mostly rosebuds
Some are fair fragments of light
Some are dusky-dark grapes
Fathers, don't let them slip your minds
Mothers, protect your babies
Silence them, silence them, don't let them speak
Who would talk of war and destruction
Let's let them grow up with passion
May they sprout and burgeon like saplings
They're not yours, nor mine, nor anybody's
They belong to the whole world
They're the apple of all humanity's eye
I felt this for the first time far from my homeland
Babies don't have nations
Babies are the blossoms of humankind
And our future's one and only hope.

(Translated from Turkish by Walter G. Andrews)

SCOTT BIRD

THE RED WEST

Inspired by my home, Paradox, Colorado
And so I declare, "The West is Red!" Dear Friends,
And not just in the palette of the landscape
From the Divide to Land's End
And not just in the blood that bleeds
From the people who populate it
And not just in the color of the skin
Of the true indigenous Natives, the Dineh
And not just in the name
Of the river that runs through it, O' maker of canyons

But found in the way that
 Community forms when a
 Common need arises in a
 Comrade who asks for a
 Communal helping hand.

The red of the west begins with a C
And is a nine-letter word that is painted to be
The vilest of evils.
But amidst the perils of a struggling world,
The Red Sea parts, to pave the way
For a fellow brother or sister to say,
"Here's something of mine I freely give to you,"
Out of the true blue of altruism due to
Do unto others what you'd have done unto you.
A side of beef for a roof raised. tarred and sealed
A sickle scythe of wheat fields for a homegrown,
shared meal.
Those nights at the Red Church,
The town's other red C,
Where auctions and potlucks and fundraisers
And funerals and weddings

And concerts of Christmas Cantatas would be
Held for the benefit of the whole,
Or to prevent one of their own from falling into a hole
Of crisis amid the struggle to survive.
Oh how it makes one happy to be alive, at worst
And lucky to help let live, at best

O' that glorious red-blooded C of the West!

Red as a flame upon Carpenter Ridge
High above the canyon's red rock rim
Which conceals the red smolder of copper sun in
The haze of a wildfire veil so thin and dim
That it filters and colors the life held within
And makes it one worth living in.
How then can we regard it as original sin?

That which cannot be denied of our own
Internal inclinations
Which is to extend a helping hand
As it was extended to us before
With the belief that the
Wealth of the well
Of the community...
 Of the communisity...
 Of the communicipality...

Will run dry never more.

VICTORIA BRILL

DOIN' THE NUMBERS

1.

No dignity in labor in twenty-nineteen
Exhausted bodies drag themselves through traffic
For a pittance piecing together meagre sustenance
From 2 or 3 jobs with no benefits
The kids helping out squweegeeing car windows
For crissake
And police don't allow such obstruction
Who use tear-gas and tasers on small bodies
Resistance gets you 20 to life
In this cruel land of plenty for the few.

2.

What is it in a picture that can turn the tide?
Father with 2-year-old face down in filthy muck
Has more power than maybe 4 million dead
In meaningless wars and the ruin of ancient cities
Looted by avid creatures in camouflage
One digital capture = \$4 billion
To camp commandants
Who make bank with our broken hearts
Another small body
Ca-ching ca-ching.

3.

Who here doesn't want to be rescued
From these rotten bloody times?
We all want rescue
And there ain't no rescue out there
Only you and me and us and we,
So what does that mean?
We don't figure this shit out fast
We can all fuggedaboutit

We want to be rescued now
'Cause it's getting so hard and there's only
Ourselves to transform this perishing hell
Into a reasonable placenta.

FERRUCIO BRUGNARO (Italy)

CONTINUANO INTANTO SU TUTTA LA TERRA

La giustizia è sempre più derisa, profanata
scopertamente su tutte le piazze.

La pace
è sempre più schernita, ingiuriata
proprio da chi ora la invoca
e alza le braccia al cielo
col cuore più arido del deserto.
Nessuno vuole prendersi responsabilità.
Le responsabilità di dare un colpo decisivo
a questo putrido letargo
sono troppo grandi.

Continuano intanto su tutta la terra
dure umiliazioni, abbruttimento
per milioni e milioni di uomini.

Compagni
non dobbiamo ascoltare più
decisamente
quelli che vogliono tenerci buoni, calmi
con omelie, lunghe dissertazioni
tanto, per loro, non è possibile
cambiare mai niente.

Non è vero, compagni
questi signori
vogliono difendere la tranquillità
dei loro palazzi
delle loro ottime relazioni;
vogliono difendere i loro lauti introiti.

Questa gente, credete
vive del sangue martoriato dei popoli
si nutre della dura fatica dei popoli;
predica e si ingrassa
sulla pelle degli indifesi, degli affamati.

FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO (Italy)

THEY STILL KEEP ON ALL OVER THE EARTH

Justice is evermore derided, openly
 profaned in all piazzas.

 Peace

is evermore ridiculed, insulted
really by whoever now invokes it
and raises his arms to the sky
with a heart dryer than a desert.

No one wants to take responsibility.

The responsibilities to strike a decisive blow
 at this putrid lethargy
 are very big.

They still keep on all over the earth
bearing humiliations, degradation
for millions and millions of people.

 Comrades

we shouldn't resolutely listen
 anymore to

those who want to keep us good and quiet
with homilies, long dissertations
so that, for them, it'll never be possible
 to change anything.

It's not true, comrades,

these rich guys

want to defend the tranquility
 of their mansions

their excellent relations,

want to defend their sumptuous collections.

 This nation you believe

lives on the martyred blood of its peoples,
is nourished by the hard work of its people,
 preaches and fattens itself

on the skins of the defenseless and starving ones.

Credete, questo falso amore
va spazzato via con i suoi crocefissi,
va divelto alla radice
 come fanno i cicloni.
Questo amore di desolazione e morte
deve crollare sotto le nostre mani
 unite strette
per la grande umanità, il grande amore
di un universo e una terra calda meravigliosa.

You believe this sham love
is gonna be swept away with its crucifixes,
is gonna be uprooted at the roots
 as if making cyclones.
This love of desolation and death
has to collapse under our hands in
 united clenches
for the great humanity, the great love
of a universe and warm marvelous earth.

(Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman)

KRISTINA BROWN

TRUMP LOVES

Trump loves:

Orban

Duterte

Putin and Xi

Kim Jung Un

Erdogan

Gaddafi and al'Sissi

Saddam Husein, al-Assad

and Mussolini.

Trump has praised them all.

Living or dead

he seldom sees a dictator he doesn't admire.

Sick strength

pathological power

seldom fail to arouse his desire

For more control

more power for himself.

Sometimes a dictator's independence

refusal to fill Trump's pockets

makes his ardor pall.

But Vladimir Putin remains his favorite political

doll.

Trump and Putin sitting in a tree

'K' 'I' 'S' 'S' 'I' 'N' 'G'

First comes love

then come treason

then comes Trump as president

in every season.

Orban

Duterte

Putin and Xi

Kim Jung Un

Erdogan
Gaddafi and al'Sissi
Saddam Husein, al-Assad
and Mussolini,
Dictators
Doers of injustice
Autocrats and exercisers of untrammeled power
Trump loves them all,
Can't wait to be one
Himself.

YOLANDA CATZALCO

RECORDANDO Á MI PAPA

1.
Vino a este país dos veces,
Sin papeles
Ya aquí, arreglo los papeles
Para él y su familia, nosotros.
Por el día, estudiaba con préstamos
Para ser maestro.
Por la noche, trabajaba en las cañerías,
Y en la compañía de sopas
Lavando la maquinaria.
De lavaplatos a maestro de escuela.
Ayudo a fundar El Concilio en Modesto
Para abogar por la cultura Mexicana.
Sus antepasados Aztecas se separaron
De los Aztecas para oponerse a
La trágica practica del reino Azteca
Contra las jóvenes Aztecas.
Nunca va a irse de mi lado
Cuando vaya yo a escuchar poesía
Porque él me llevaba en su carro
A reuniones semanales a Casa Schaffik
Para propagandizar en favor al
Candidato presidencial, contra la violencia,
Del FMLN, Mauricio Funes quien gano
La Presidencia en El Salvador.
Mi papa también manejo y fuimos a
Escuchar al hijo de Roque Dalton.
Tres años me acompañó en
Diciembre para los eventos
Para recaudar fondos para El Sueldo Digno.
En 2012 en camión, fuimos a escuchar
A los/las poetas del Festival Internacional de Poesía
auspiciado por Los Amigos de la Biblioteca
Todos los eventos mencionados en San Francisco.

YOLANDA CATZALCO

REMEMBERING MY FATHER

1.
My father came to this country
Twice, without papers
And here, he legalized himself and us.
During the day, he studied
With loans to become a teacher.
At night, he worked in canneries
And at Campbell's Soup
Washing the machines.
From dishwasher to teacher.
He helped found El Concilio in Modesto
To advocate for the Mexican culture.
His Aztec ancestors separated
From the Aztecs to oppose
The tragic Aztec kingdom practice
Against the Aztec women.
He is never going to leave my side spiritually
When I go listen to poetry
Because every Sunday he drove me to FMLN
Presidential candidate, non violence,
Mauricio Funes at Casa Schaffik
while living in SF.
Funes was elected
President of El Salvador.
My father also drove me to listen to poet,
Roque Dalton's surviving son.
For three years, he accompanied me
to fund raisers
For the Living Wage in December.
In 2012, he accompanied me to San Francisco's
International Poetry Festival hosted by the Friends
of San Francisco Library.

2.
Mi papa vino a este país
En la década de 1950.
Las cosas eran diferentes
Para los inmigrantes.
Ahora, la crisis económica devastadora
Del capitalismo, la globalización
Forza más a los inmigrantes de países
Más pobres que los Estados Unidos
Huir de sus países natales
Por razones del hambre, de la violencia, del temor.
Ahora, los programas de la Reunificación de la
Familia están en peligro de ser reemplazados
Por programas para los inmigrantes
Con mucha educación
En la tecnología. Programas que han sido
Bienvenidos, pero ahora los quieren usar para dividir.
Solo un pueblo movilizado
Contra este sistema capitalista, global
Podrá permitir que los pueblos no sufran
Del hambre, de la violencia, del temor.
Los inmigrantes temen ser deportados,
Inclusivamente, los inmigrantes naturalizados.
Con mi papa en mi corazón, camino por las calles
De San Francisco, de Oakland.
Es importante abogar contra cualquier Administración
Que use a los inmigrantes
Como chivos escapatorias y explicar que el sistema
Capitalista, la globalización
Engendra más maquinaria, tecnología
Que produce más mercancía con menos obreros,
Y por consecuencia, solo derrocando al capitalismo
Nos liberara de la crisis económica.
Necesitamos un sistema cooperativo basado
En las necesidades del pueblo
Donde la tecnología seria dirigida para el pueblo,
Por el pueblo.

Recordando a Guillermo William Cisneros Catzalco

2.

My father came to this country in the 1950s.
Things were different for immigrants.
Nowadays, economic crisis
Of capitalism and globalization
Even more drastically forces immigrants to
Flee from their native countries
Because of Hunger, Violence, Fear.
Now, Family Reunification
Is in danger of being outlawed
By saying only immigrants
With high education in technology
Can come to this country pitting immigrants,
All against each other.
Only a people mobilized to stand up
Against the capitalist system
Can dream of living free from want;
Free from fear.
Immigrants fear being deported,
Including naturalized immigrants.
With my father in my heart, I walk the streets of
Oakland, San Francisco.
It is important to advocate against any
Administration that uses immigrants
As scapegoats for
The crisis of capitalism, globalization.
And explain that capitalism, technology
Inherently produces machinery
That produces more goods with less workers.
Consequently, only by overthrowing
Capitalism with a Cooperative system based
On need, can we live in a country
Where technology is used for the people,
By the people.

Remembering Guillermo William Cisneros Catzalco

NEELI CHERKOVSKI

JEW

you thought they made
you of clay
or gold but you are a Jew
a son of desert people
chosen by fate to wander
with an alphabet
of goats and lambs

you thought they poured concrete
and built a tower of glass and blew bubbles
and wrote a nasty savage mystery
as to how you came to live and to die
in this world filled with iron bars
bronze weapons and stone implements

you slept in Babylon
and dreamed of home
you wept on the cold stone
of a pagan temple
rooted in dream

you cannot hide in his words
they fill up with Sand
you thought that milk and honey
would do it
or that wine and roasted lamb
and pistachio would do it
you believed the lion would do it
or the hippo bathing in the river

you want to be a Chinese sage
but now you sit on the Beijing Stock Exchange
you are still a Jew pure and simple

you should have been a disheveled monk
hiding in a cave on the Himalayas
talking to the snow knee-deep in solitude
able to congratulate the star

but you are just a Jew
only a Jew
you work in the cemetery
going from stone to stone
talking to the dead
preaching to the bones

you were a diamond merchant
but they dragged your ass
into the field and put an apple
in your mouth

you dreamed of a city
but they stuffed you
with themselves
and they wail and fight
and bulldoze and
plow and pray and shit
and play dead and make love

you gave them a candle
and told them to shove it
from both ends.

DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA

THE SQUAD

Ilhan Omar is Somalian and that means
Critical analyses of these (United?) States is not
Allowed on account of being Muslim
And Black
And Other
And for God's sake can the Puerto Rican one
Keep her mouth closed and go back to waiting tables or
Whatever humble minimum wage job she
Had before she decided to be a Congress woman
And by the way you can only achieve that
In this perfect country so
Holding the president accountable is
Akin to treason and punishable
By deportation and
The other one with the glasses and the Islamic name
Hailing from Michigan who
Stretches her mouth out
At every hearing to say what should only be said
By those with God-fearing good old fashioned
American names and the one with the braids
Dear god the braids who comes from Boston
And thinks she's so smart
And okay maybe she is but how smart can she be if
She doesn't know her place and her place
And their place is where it has always and
Forever more
Shall be am I right?
In the back of the bus
In line at the soup kitchen
In the welfare office
The refugee camp
Go back where you came from is
The anthem and
By god you better learn the words
We are making this country great again

Capital letters great
Italicized great
Exclamatorily great
And if that means kids sleep in cages
You better know we mean it
You could end up there too, you know
Every one of you is one generation
Away from a holocaust and
The trains are always running.
Love it or leave it
 My country 'tis of thee
Go back where you came from
 Sweet land of bigotry

Of thee I sing...

MARCO CINQUE (Italy)

BECKY MOSES

Partorita da una terra stuprata
da trivelle affamate di sangue nero
rubato dal corpo moribondo di Nigeria.

Aprivi gli occhi in cerca di luce
ma le ombre incombevano feroci.
Poi, con dolore, schiudevi la bocca
come per dire “madre”, come per dire “casa”
come per dire “cielo”, ma ogni cosa
era un altrove al di là dell’orizzonte.

Quelle mani ostili da cui fuggire
non le puoi cancellare dai ricordi
non puoi Becky Moses, non puoi.

Qualcuno aveva pronunciato “Italia”
e diventò il tuo sogno, l’unico sogno.
Quando non hai niente anche i sogni
costano poco, anche volare così basso
rende l’immensa illusione del volo.
Basta poco: arrivare in Libia
attraversare il deserto
attraversare le orde disumane
attraversare la disperazione
attraversare la paura
attraversare i flutti
attraversare l’ostilità, il pregiudizio
le frontiere... sì, basta poco.

Eri nata per il sorgere del sole
ma il tuo lungo, lungo viaggio
percorso da una vita tanto breve
non è stato altro che un tramonto.

MARCO CINQUE (Italy)

BECKY MOSES

Borne in a land raped
by drills covetous of black blood
stolen from the moribund body of Nigeria.
You opened your eyes in search of light

as the fierce shadows loomed,
Then, with pain, you opened your mouth
as if to say “mother,” as if to say “home”
as if to say “sky,” but everything
was an elsewhere beyond the horizon.

You’re unable to wipe from your memories
those hostile hands from which you fled
you can’t Becky Moses, you can’t.

Somebody mentioned “Italy”
and it became your dream, your only dream.
When you own nothing even dreams
are cheap, even flying this low
makes the illusion of flying immense.

It takes little:
get to Libya
cross the desert
overcome the merciless hordes
overcome desperation
overcome fear
overcome the billows
overcome hostility, prejudice
borders...yes, it takes a little.

You were born for the sunrise
but your long, long trip
covered by such a short life
has only become a sunset.

Il tuo corpo in pezzi, Becky Moses
esposto sul bancone delle occasioni
nel mercato del sesso criminale
prezzi bassi per le notti sulla strada
la tua anima divisa, lacerata, prostrata
e i tuoi sogni naufragati, infranti
come il suono di uno specchio rotto
sotto l'ansimare dei porci perbenisti
che rubavano tutto il tuo respiro
così tanto da non averne più
così tanto da lasciarti senza fiato
sconfitta in una strada di baracche
che nemmeno Satana in persona
avrebbe osato per il proprio inferno.

Becky Moses, cosa ci fai lì, in piedi
ancora col tuo sorriso nudo e inerme
ancora con quel cappellino dov'è scritto
il nome del tuo stesso sicario: Italia?

La giuria dei nomi senza volto
ha emesso l'ennesima sentenza
e le fiamme che t'hanno divorata
non sono un caso, non un inciampo
ma il patibolo del tuo popolo, della tua gente.

Avevi solo ventisei anni Becky Moses.
Ora li avrai per sempre.

Your body in pieces, Becky Moses
exposed on the counter of the sales
at the criminal sex market
cheap prices for nights on the road
and your soul divided, ripped apart, exhausted
and your dreams drowned, shattered
as the sound of a broken mirror
under the panting of the prig pigs
that stole away your breath
so much that you were left with none
defeated in a street of shacks
that not even Satan in person
would have dared as much for his hell.

Becky Moses, what are you doing, standing there
with your naked and helpless smile
wearing that same cap bearing
the name of your own hitman: Italy?

The jury with faceless names
has pronounced the umpteenth verdict
and the flames that have devoured you
aren't by chance, aren't a stumbling block
but the gallows of your people, of your people.

You were merely 26 years old Becky Moses.
You'll be so forever.

(Translated from Italian by Alessandra Bava)

BOBBY COLEMAN

SOMETHING ABOUT THE SITUATION

1.

There's something about the situation
that makes-me-wanna sing instead.
But what is this biting music,
this maniacal gnashing of
teeth in their faces,
these phumphering fools and
pixie-haired pinheads with self-important
pullquotes marching like battalions
and swooshing audio effects
fanfaring their idiocy?

2.

I am a guest at a delightful dinner.
I have brought my best wine and a smile.
A nation staggers, satire is comatose.
A planet dies young, its stunning
hail-mary final retaliation an
apt response to its murder,
a global homicide that very few
wish to even consider stopping.

3.

I left all TV in shards of ridicule after
past election returns had me
prying the screens off their
plastic frames in disbelief.
Now the dinner conversation stops for
the update. Here it is again.
Another vampire zombie-pulpit-monster
on methamphetamines
or some other pharmlavery
blathers on about factions

races and artificial tribes in a
fourth-grade vocabulary.
It's the sound of some music, a drumbeat
of lies, superficially okay enough,
corporations volleying back and forth
claiming high principles for their advantage.
In a pinch, junkfood Sugar-Smacks are
fine for now, swallowed uncritically
like the degradingly non-Presidential
selfie videos for the massive fundraising waste
that every candidate jams into my
virtual door. This is a melody
of madness. There are better songs
I wish to sing with you. Much better.

FRANCIS COMBES (France)

LE PLANETARIAT

à Jack Hirschman

Nous qui n'avons qu'une Terre
à tenir dans nos mains
une Terre à bercer
une Terre à soigner
une seule Terre
pour patrie
une Terre pour habiter
et se tenir debout
les uns avec les autres
Nous qui n'avons rien
que nos mains pour vivre
que nos rêves d'amour
et nos nuits étoilées
Nous dont les ondes
électromagnétiques
parcourent le monde
à la vitesse de la lumière
Nous qui nous parlons
de bouche à oreille
par-dessus les frontières
Nous qui ne sommes rien
mais dont tout dépend
et même le destin
de la planète Terre
nous les nouveaux parias
nous, les ombres claires
nous les en-nombre,
nous les plus nombreux
nous sommes le peuple-monde
le peuple à-venir
nous voici, nous venons
hommes

FRANCIS COMBES (France)

THE PLANETARIAT

For Jack Hirschman

We who have only one Earth
to hold in our hands
one Earth to nurse
one Earth to care for
one single Earth
for our native land
one Earth on which to live
and stand together
one and all
We who have nothing
but our hands for living
but our dreams of love
and our starry nights
We from whom the
electromagnetic waves
traverse the world
at the speed of light
We who speak to ourselves
from mouth to ear
across the borders
We who are nothing
but on whom everything depends
even the destiny
of the planet Earth
we the new pariahs
we, the clear shadows
we the unnumbered,
we the most numerous
we are the common-people
the people to come
we are here, we come
men

femmes
enfants
Terriens
nous sommes
le Planétariat.

women
children
Earthlings
we are
the Planetariat.

(Translated from French by Barbara Paschke)

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 niñas
que se mezcla con las arenas del peligro.
El odio se hace muerte.
La vida se hace polvo.
Cuando la sangre despinta los paisajes
y los niños lloran
y las madres claman
los crueles asesinos del alba
provocan un mar de condenas
que hacen pedazos
sus maléficas entrañas.
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.
Life becomes dust.
When blood blots out the landscape
and children cry
and mothers wail
the cruel assassins of the dawn
provoke an ocean of damnation
that breaks their corrupt hearts
into little pieces.
Good fortune will come to
good people who can
enjoy a child's smile.
On the beach's holy sands
the gathering embrace
of the waves will be for
them alone.

(Translated from Spanish by Judith Ayn Bernhard)

PAULINE CRAIG

A SOLDIER'S LAST NIGHT IN LIFE

It's already way after midnight.
Although we're brothers-in-arms
Who have already dedicated and risked
Our lives for each other and our land
We're each all alone and bone-lonely.
We all know as endless as night seems
By morning, we all may have faced
The ultimate infinite of death.
All soldiers about to die suffer these horrors.
They have my respect, my heart.
Most of us are afraid to sleep tonight
For fear we'll never wake up.

Their soldiers will probably be on us by dawn.
I can see the aura of bonfires and torchlights
Emanating from their camps between the hills
The hordes' low rumblings keep us awake
As the thugs gloat over plans to slaughter us.
Their drunken laughter. The stomping, clacking
Of the hooves of their horses, all fed, saddled
Eager to urge their army to get moving.
They have more war-ravenous, rapacious men
Stronger, swifter horses; tempered steel swords
Bows that can shoot arrows forever.
They're omnivorous now, for our luscious land.
They've slaughtered everyone in every city
On their way to our village.

As I lie on my horse's blanket, pillow my head
In his saddle, I wear my boots to bed
In case the marauders come before I wake.
I wander over to a tree to take a pee. My stomach
Pukes up the raw sickening rabbit we had
For dinner. Nothing tastes any good any more.
I can hear my friends, our soldiers lying nearby
Restless, panicked, scared, resigned to our deaths.

Some of them slobbered down all the ale we brewed
They could drink tonight, and are snoring so loudly
It's almost funny, if it weren't so pathetic, tragic.
They're sleeping through their last night on earth.
My best friend, rolled up under his blanket near me
Doesn't know he sobs anguishingly in his sleep.

Our families will know about our deaths
Soon enough, as the news gets back to them
That we failed to protect them and lost this war.
My wife, who I still call my bride, is pregnant.
She's so eager for our baby.
But now, she's probably grieving over me already.
I wish I could alleviate her pain and live.
But our mothers, wives, daughters dread that
The marauders will rape, torture, impregnate them.
Force them to bear their children. Enslave our sons.
Slaughter our fathers, our old grandparents.
Disappear our families from each other, forever.

I'm terrified of the pain our enemies' sword slices
Will create in my body. I feel so in love with my body.
Nobody else may think it's beautiful, but I do.
I've taught my arm to bayonet any enemy
Between his ribs into his heart if I have to.
When I was a young soldier, an enemy slashed
My father's ear with his sword. I cut off his arm.

I so miss my life already. I'm so lonely for it.
I love my family, my friends, my horse.
My body is still jacked because I'm ordering it
To stay alert, ready if the hordes show up soon
But it's exhausted, wants to give in to rest.
Delicious sleep. Maybe I can just shut one eye
And let my body melt into the earth.
I'm worried, though. If I relax, take a nap
Will a marauder sneak up on my sleeping body
To plunge his sword into my heart?
Will I be murdered, but never know I died?
Maybe now, I'll just close my eyes for a second...

JOHN CURL

REGIME CHANGE

At moments such as these,
when epochs end and begin,
they say a crack
opens between worlds,
just for an instant,
then quickly shuts again.

The great leader is on his deathbed.
His eyes stare at nowhere, rot drips
down his face wrinkles. You can
smell him. The room is airless.
The paint peels off the walls. The
one small dirty window hasn't been
opened in years. A droplet
hovers on the tip of the great leader's
nose. Suddenly he looks his age. In the
waiting room the regime bureaucrats eye
each other suspiciously and finger their
weapons. Outside the casino, in the street,
the crowd murmurs. Around the corner,
the enforcers turn off their body cameras.

They make no attempt to hide it any more.
Abuse is law. Wealth and power beyond
bankers' wildest dreams. The rest of us
strapped to the rack. The executioner
turns the wheel. The speculators wager
on the precise instant our backbones
will snap.

If you're hoping it gets better, you better
just get used to it. It doesn't get any better
than this. This is utopia, Capitalist Utopia, as

good as it gets. I don't know about you, but
I'm tired of waiting.

That rumbling in the distance,
that shuddering in the air,
just the wind maybe, or the shadows
but I don't think so;
something's coming,
you can feel it
you can hear it
the flares in the sun
those tides on the beach
that trembling under our feet,
the clock hands spinning round
and round, the newspapers
blowing down and down
that night train that freight train
a hundred boxcars long
barreling toward us through
the moonless desert night
down this godforsaken
dead-end street.

What's in those boxcars, I wonder,
what are they bringing where?
Total devastation, the
end of life as we know it?
Or the simplest of all
the hardest to reach
just the basics please the
fundamentals
a sunny afternoon
picnic on a blanket,
biting into a ripe peach,
the greenness of the trees,
the kids rolling in the weeds,
homes to live in

healthy food to eat
schools, doctors
a little spending money
and time, precious time.
At moments such as these,
when epochs end and begin,
they say a crack
opens between worlds,
just for an instant,
then quickly shuts again.

Seize the instant.
Regime change now.

CAROL DENNEY

CONVINCE ALL THE POETS THEY'RE CRAZY

convince all the poets they're crazy
convince them they never will fly
it's a bird it's a plane it's delusion
sit down and shut up and then die
be impressed with the man with the money
clap your hands when he waves it around
dance without moving a muscle
sing without making a sound

tell all the artists they're crazy
tell them they're sick and on fire
tell the poets that nobody's listening
they're a fake and a fraud and a liar
convince everybody they're worthless
they'll never catch on or get by
convince all the children they're ugly
and tell them it's hopeless to try

tell all of the artists it's over
it's embarrassing they didn't know
it's a pointless dead end of a journey
and the funeral was years ago
there were bouquets of flowers and speeches
it was really a beautiful day
it would help if they'd pick up the pieces
and just maybe get out of the way

Chorus: tell all the dreamers it's useless
they just didn't get here in time
make sure they all think it's too wide a river
and too high a mountain to climb
make sure they all think it's too wide a river
and too high a mountain to climb

DIEGO DE LEO

WHERE WE STAND

1.

Compagno, last week the history
channel showed victims
of the holocaust in Germany,

millions of people all ages
behind barbed wire, skin and bones
waiting for the “ final solution.”

Even to write about it I get the chills;
I know it happened but to see it
vividly on film affected me deeply.

Atrocities committed on millions
in many countries in this century
history tells us it has happened in

the past too, and you and we can't
do anything about it but cry and
write, entertaining ourselves.

Nevertheless we who are left
to live and suffer must not stay
silent. To do so is unnatural.

The capitalistic system emerged
by taking advantage of class
blindness: capitalism's greedy

gluttony for power and things
takes evil to a higher level. But
our rebellious spirit's noble:

we must fight not simply
for our own survival but for
generations to come.

2.
Compagni, it's abundantly clear
the malevolent fascistic winds
are blowing across our land

and elsewhere, fostered by
vulture Corporate Capitalism.
It's also clear that we must

confront the fascist swastika-
wavers in their perverse fervor
to do harm, whom the so-called

Commander-in-Chief labeled
as "good people." We must
really shame the ass-kissing

politicians who are in it only to
enrich themselves. We must be
resilient by organizing events

where our voices are heard
near and far, loud and clear.
Otherwise we'll be dying on

the vine and, for every man,
woman and child, we're not
gonna let that happen.

ERRI DE LUCA (Italia)

PROCEDURA

Per condannare a morte una persona
serve una maggioranza favorevole.

Il giorno della condanna gli incaricati
passano per le case del paese, presto,
mentre si fa la prima colazione e domandano:
possiamo ammazzare in nome del popolo,
cioè anche vostro?

Preciso che dev'essere domenica, o altra festività,
un giorno in cui si possa deliberare
con calma accanto alle tazze.

Deve anche essere un giorno di sole.

Si conteggia la maggioranza, compresi bambini,
compresi quelli che di solito non votano
ma sulla vita e sulla morte vogliono pronunciarsi.

Quando risulterà una maggioranza favorevole,
si potrà procedere democraticamente.

Gli astenuti sono contati tra i voti contrari.

Perché? Perché sì.

Questa è la procedura più certa
per stabilire la morte a maggioranza.

Chi è contrario alla condanna e non vuole
essere associato al boia, deve
arrendersi di fronte a questo conteggio.

È effettivamente in nome del popolo,
consultato col bel tempo, in una giornata
di festa e appena sveglio.

Chi è contrario deve sapere
con certezza di essere in minoranza.

Altrimenti resta il dubbio
che minoranza sia il giudice, il governatore,
il direttore del penitenziario e il personale preposto.

Sembrano molti ma sono minoranza.

Il braccio della morte è minoranza.

Il braccio della vita ha diritto di fermarlo.

ERRI DE LUCA (Italy)

PROCEDURE

To sentence a person to death
a majority consensus is required.
Early, on sentence day, people in charge
walk from house to house in town
while people eat breakfast and ask:
can we kill in the name of the people -
that is, even in your name?
It should be a Sunday, or other holiday, specifically,
a day when people may deliberate
at leisure over coffee .
It should be a sunny day as well,
the majority is counted, including children,
including those who don't vote
but who wish to express their view on life and death.
When a majority consensus is reached,
it'll be possible to proceed democratically.
Abstaining votes shall be counted among opposing votes.
Why? Because it is so.
This is the most indisputable procedure
to sanction death by majority.
Who's against the sentence and doesn't wish
to be associated with the executioner, must
surrender to this tally,
It's indeed in the name of the people,
consulted with fair weather, on a festive
day and just awakened.
Those who dissent need to know
unequivocally to be a minority.
Otherwise a doubt lingers
that minority is the judge, the governor
the warden and the personnel in charge,
They seem many but are only a minority.
Death-row is a minority.
Life-row has a right to stop it.

(Translated from Italian by Alessandra Bava)

JEAN-LUC DESPAX (France)

VIENS DANS LA RUE

Tu as des pieds pour défilér
Des jambes pour rester debout
Des tripes pour apprivoiser la peur
Des poumons face au mal
Qui ne manque jamais d'air
Une gorge pour le chant
Une voix pour le chemin
Une tête pour résister
Et des mains pour tendre la main
Aux victimes du fascisme:
L'historique, le moderne,
Le froid, l'industriel,
Le fabriqué par officine numérique
Pour être appliqué par la bouche des chiens
Pulsé par les photographes au service des crocs
Tu as un cerveau cultivé pour la paix
Un rire qui ne cherche pas à blesser
Une bouche qui dit ce qu'elle peut de vérité
Un cœur qui plaint les femmes-troncs
Les hommes sandwiches
Ceux que le Minotaure abat
Dans leurs labyrinthes intimes
Un sexe qui n'impose rien
Sinon la liberté des sexes
Des jambes pour rester debout
> > Et des pieds pour défilér.
Si tes jambes et tes pieds
Sont dans un fauteuil
Ou une chaise
Tu es aussi le bienvenu :
Viens dans la rue avec moi.

JEAN-LUC DESPAX (France)

COME INTO THE STREET

You have feet to march
Legs to stand up
Guts to tame fear
Lungs to confront evil
Which always has a cheek
A throat to sing
A voice for the path
A head to resist
And hands to hold out
To the victims of fascism:
Whether historical or modern,
That cold one, that mass-produced one,
Made in digital back-rooms
To be implemented by the mouth of dogs
Throbbled by photographers in the service of fangs
Your brain was grown for peace
Your laughter never sought to harm
Your mouth speaks whatever truth it can
Your heart pities women with no limbs
And sandwich board men
Those whom the Minotaur slaughters
In their private labyrinths
Gender which does not command anything
Other than gender equality
Legs to stand up
And feet to march.
If your legs and feet
Are in an armchair
Or a chair
You're welcome too
Let's take to the streets together.

(Translated from French by Alexis Bernaut)



Sarah Menefee
(with technical help from Keenan Putansu)
I'm From Mars

SOUMAILA DIAWARA (Mali)

AN MAKAN KADI

Ka tia ma kè, an
Dan foi ta la
Sèbètiya wale ani keli
Munu teme giguilatiguè kan
An yèmè ma u ye
Marifa keke farikolo keke
Marifa tan tji ka ni keke bô
An, bè a dan teme tjiènina, wale djugu sèbè tiya
An italikau
An tilebimau
An malikau
An Farafina kau
Bè bè fili y yèrèma
Jama dô ka nafa kama
Yêrê ba ye i ba ku
A te ye a ka dôgô
A ba to i bi yèrè bila
Walassi ka se a bè ma
An ba dia bô yôgôfè
A bè fanga damau ma
An bè balola an bè nina
Dan fara tè ani yogo tjà
An bè fiè sama.
Sini yèsigui babolo
An bè fè ka nisodiya
An bè komu awu
An ba ye Komu awu
Awu kèra môgô sugu sugu ye
An bè ye adama de mi bè dugulo san fè.
Tièu, musou, ani demisènu
Makokoroba ani tièkoroba
Koko ta bolo ga dusukolo.

SOUMAILA DIAWARA (Mali)

È PIACEVOLE IL SUONO DEL NOI

Così tanto da usarlo, il noi.
senza ritegno alcuno
per giustificare atti e fatti,
che a volte vanno oltre l'orrore.
Il Noi è il plotone di esecuzione;
dieci fucili per un corpo.
Dieci pallottole per togliere una vita.
Il Noi, toglie il rimorso. Giustifica il male.
Noi dell'Italia.
Noi del Sud.
Noi Maliani.
Noi Africani.
Si perde la propria identità
per l'interesse di un gruppo.
Poiché il proprio essere si percepisce
come inadatto, piccolo.
La paura spinge all'alleanza.
Fa abbandonare parte di sé stessi
per potersi ricongiungere in un tutto
che non capiamo appieno,
ma di cui godiamo.
Godiamo per la sensazione di insieme
che ci procura e, dunque, di forza.
Noi, che viviamo, siamo.
Esistiamo.
Ma Noi, non siamo diversi da voi.
Respiriamo. Abbiamo progetti.
Vorremo essere felici.
Noi siamo come voi
e vediamo voi come noi,
chiunque siate.
Noi, siamo il popolo della terra.
Uomini, donne, bambini.
Adulti e anziani.
E non abbiamo muri, ma cuori.

(Translated from Bambara into Italian by the author)

SOUMAILA DIAWARA (Mali)

US HAS A PLEASANT SOUND

So much that we use we
without any restraint
to justify our acts and deeds,
that are beyond horror sometimes.
We is a firing squad;
ten rifles for a body.
Ten bullets to kill a life.
We eliminates regret. It justifies evil.
We Italians.
We Southerners.
We Malians.
We Africans.
One loses one's identity
for the profit of the group.
Since one's being is perceived
as small, unfitting.
Fear encourages alliance.
It lets parts of oneself get abandoned
to be part of a whole
We don't understand it fully,
but we enjoy it.
We enjoy the sense of wholeness
that it provides, and thus, of strength.
We who live are.
We exist.
But we aren't different from you.
We breathe. We've plans.
We would love to be happy.
We're like you
and we see like you,
whoever you are.
We're the people of the Earth.
Men, women, children.
Adults and old people.
And we haven't got walls, but hearts.

(Translated from Italian by Alessandra Brava)

MARIA JESU ESTRADA

TRUE FAITH IN UNITY

People say those in power will always eat a gluttonous feast
of misery and profit.

The poor will *always* get poorer.

They will be with us in the shanties of San
Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora

Where *indias* sell harsh mint *chicles* and
Spiderman keychains to American tourists.

In Gaslight District of San Diego, *Califas*
Bleeding cardboard *casitas* and moldy
sleeping bags of shame flap in the dry wind
street

after street

after street.

Under Chicago's viaducts, drivers
sometimes share a look of meaningful
sadness—between texts—maybe throw
pocket change at single mother and prisoner
toddler, in tent-home.

The rich will forever gorge on the fruits of that Puritan zeal,
anointed by years of

Colonization,
Slavery,
Repression,
Racism,
Misogyny,

For money
Tu bien sabes.

¿Y toda mi pobre gente?

¡Que se chinguen!

Dreamers? ¡Que se chinguen!

In fact, fascists already rounding up criminals
forever nationally tattooed—

Gangeros.

Unions preaching that loving proletarian-arm-in-
arm solidarity forever?

¡Que se chinguen!

Y Texas, Florida, Mexico,

Puerto Rico,

Devastated, starving

Commonwealth like Colony. Like a Tourist

Hacienda.

You asking for some sustenance? *¿Quieres pan?*

¿Tú necesitas agua? Some Aquafina in crystalline
bottles?

¿Te hace falta la luz for hospitals? *¿Para vivir?*

Pues, Amen.

I look to my children, who fill me with so much *esperanza*,
and I wonder at their celestial dreams,

Siempre soñando.

Seven-year-old son, prays every day,

“Dear God, *Please* make Trump a better man.”

My heart laughs amazed at his Faith.

My two-year-old *hijita* so sweet, powerfully determined
prays, for her friends, the scared, *los zoo animals, las*
zebras, her light-up shoes.

She knows nothing of Twitter terrorist threats, fake nuclear
news against Iran, North Korea, China,

Against You.

Pues esta bien,

Let's pray for our ruler enemies.

Let's also pray for what could be

That Unity

Where the abundance that *is* now

The technological splendor that *is* now

Will be shared *gratis y sin vergüenza*.
 Unbridled and free for all to have
And my children and your children and We—
—We won't have to pray for their scraps anymore.

AGNETA FALK

FEAR OF OTHER

In dark minds it festers,
bubbles up like blind hatred
with anger fueled by
the tinsel & clowns on
campaign trails
looking for scapegoats.
All that hate resurrected
turns to patriotism,
white supremacy
waiting for orders to attack;
so many flags caught in a
storm blowing in the wrong
direction: too many lost fools
digging their future in blood
without the slightest crack
in their armour to let some
reason in to cover up their
bottomless greed and fear of other.

VADIM FEDOROVICH (Russia)

Известно, что придя в движенье,

Известно, что придя в движенье,
По всем законам естества
В системе общего снабженья
Вода безвидна и мертва.

И ждёт спасения, доколе
Не образует в трубах течь.
Вода не может жить в неволе
Как поэтическая речь.

Она подвижница теченья,
Напора, скрытого в груди.
И из любого заточенья
Всегда пробьёт себе пути.

И если посмотреть на воду,
Примерить жалкий опыт свой –
Лишь вырываясь на свободу,
Вода становится живой.

VADIM FEDOROVICH (Russia)

IT'S WELL-KNOWN THAT

It's well known that
In accordance with all laws of nature,
Water is unseen and dead
On entering the supply network.

And waits to be rescued until
It starts flowing through pipes.
Water, like the language of poetry,
Can't live in captivity.

It's devoted to flowing,
To pressure hidden in the chest.
And always beats its way
Out of any kind of captivity.

And if you take a look at water,
Compare it to our own meagre experience:
As soon as it breaks loose into freedom,
Water becomes alive.

(Translated from Russian by Jenny Wade)

ARNOLDO GARCÍA

SOUL SEAS

My tenderness will absolve my rage
Or else I will have to gnaw off my fingers
So that I can never carry a weapon
other than an ink pot
Where I will dip the nubs of my blindness
to scribble your names...
I will not die on the border of nothingness
I was born to live in a sea of
colors,
pigment,
abandoned bones, continents
tsunamis,
movements,
contradictions,
betrayals,
resistance,
meditations,
forced drownings,
Rinches,
linchings and fatal crossings
a sea that fits in a wound the size of your smile,
carried on the back of the starry loneliness of our night
The muddy languages of
displaced grandmothers
disappeared fathers
mortal mothers
and indigenous grandfathers (who followed the lead of the
women
into the fields and their horizons)
spoke our names
spit us into existence
Kneading their saliva into the dust
with the longest caress,

in their howling breath,
Gestating our skins pockmarked with black moons
Here we are
unbowed,
Even after so many defeats
Planting in their shadows
Dreaming the same dreams over and over
Until the sea herself tells us to quit ploughing the land
to enter the realm of her feathered skin
She repeats:
It is you that has been defeated,
not the land,
not the ancestors,
not the prisoners,
not the martyrs,
not the women who have borne us,
not the deep migrants,
not the people whose labor feeds our souls.
Together we can lay in the sun or bury ourselves in the
darkness
Together we can decide who shall be first and who shall be
last
Who will keep us together from start to finish
Who shall be the ones to carry our sweat on their shoulders
And who shall serve the bread of our love

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

DECLARACIÓN REPASADA

Tenemos estas verdades
de por si evidentes, dijeron,
que todos hombres (*con tal que sean
de ascendencia Europea, no mujeres,
y de ciertos bienes*)
son creados iguales,
que son dotados
por su Creador
con ciertos derechos inalienables
(*tales como los de esclavizar a otros,
quitarles sus terrenos
y de destrozar la Tierra*),
que entre ellos son
la vida (*si entre los escogidos*),
la libertad (*para los privilegiados*)
y la búsqueda (*si puedan*)
de la felicidad (*medida
por cuanto consuman.*)

A esta declaración comprometieron
sus vidas (?), sus fortunas (*esa parte
no metida en bancos extranjeros
y protegidas de impuestos*),
y su “Honor Sagrado.” (?)

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

DECLARATION REVISITED

We hold these truths
to be self-evident, they said,
that all men (*provided they be
of European descent, not women,
& of a certain wealth*)
are created equal,
that they are endowed
by their Creator
with certain unalienable rights
(*such as to enslave others,
take their lands,
& to trash the Earth*),
that among these are
Life (*if among the chosen*),
Liberty (*for those so privileged*)
& the pursuit (*if they are able*)
of Happiness (*measured
by how much they consume.*)

To this pronouncement they pledged
their lives (?), their fortunes (*that part
not stowed away in foreign banks
& sheltered by tax breaks*),
& their "Sacred Honor." (?)

MARIA CRISTINA GUTIERREZ

FASCISM, YOU ASK?

If you ask me about fascism
perhaps I would say ...
Fascism..... Is it not the occupation of Palestine?
Fascism..... Is it not genocide?

Is fascism an empty word
or is it a dead child's face,
or a homeless man,
an uneducated human,
or the undrinkable water in Flint?

Fascism.... Is it not
the killing of Mario Woods,
Alex Nieto, Kenneth Harding,
or Jessica Williams?

Fascism... Is it not
the silence of the masses?
Fascism...Is it not
our ability to ignore the madness?

Fascism.....Is it not
our ability
to ignore the Yemenis,
the Iraqis, the Afghanistanis,
the Venezuelans, the Nicaraguans
the Palestinians?

Fascism... Is it an empty word
or does it have a face, like
racism, White supremacy
Nazi ideology and hate?

While we debate
about how to stop fascism
The world is being....
plundered, exterminated, destroyed
by capitalist savageness and greed.

My brother, my sister,
my comrade, my friend:
What's there to debate?
What is there
that's making us simply
sit down and wait?

KAREN HARVEY-TURNER

RISE UP!

Unleash your mind.
Spit out your docile
Medicated
Miseducation.
The reputation of the system
Is built on lies
You swallowed
With your Mother's milk.
It wasn't her fault
She was bred as a worker
Without rights
A cog in the machine
That kept everyone
Clean and fed.
Never said
what was on her mind
Cause that would cross the line
And she was a good Christian woman.
And your father,
Proud to be a Union man until he died,
Two weeks into his retirement,
Still holding the party line
Like a lifeline to respectability.
Oh he was glad of factory work
Honest work
Better than being a shill
Or picking up rags & metal like his Daddy,
Or breathing in stone dust
Coal dust
the dust of dead forests
The dust off rich man's money.

Now here you are decades later
Where did their sacrifice get you?
Half the country's history is unwritten
Because most every pen and every sword
is covered in blood & money.
Everyone is an Other
Who is out to get your piece
Of the American Pie.

Pie??
Hell PIE
And bread
And circuses
Are only part of the purchase.
The system has bought you
And your complacent insensibility
That masquerades
As loyalty.
Loyalty to a covenant
Broken with the first broken treaty.
Loyalty to a country forged
With the shackles of slavery.
Oh the promises and philosophies
Of living independently
Of old monarchs!
The Empire just crossed
An ocean
And set up shop in
Someone else's backyard.

Not to say
There haven't been moments of clarity
And some fragments of redemption.
But we literally cannot survive
With our heads bent over our smartphones
Lulled by whatever pabulum propaganda
The system feeds us.

Do you want to give the future away
To a few greedy oligarchs?
I look in the mirror
And I say No.
I say
The Empire falls
when you rise up.
Rise Up.

MARTIN HICKEL

capitalism = war

or there would be none of either
profit the only goal
like anything in business
people die because
someone is getting paid

& of all the things
to be paid for
killing pays the best
murder most expensive
most return on investment

& of all the reasons offered
for stealing taxes & making weapons
for oil to carry them the world over
for laying waste to cities & farmlands
for tearing flesh & digging graves

assertions of rights & fairness
excuses about democracy & freedom
lies about bringing fair trade
making money is only one that matters
without money -- war cannot be waged

JACK HIRSCHMAN

THE AGITPROP #3 ARCANE

1.
Spoiled rotten
to the core
pirate state
of wars and
the deaths
they've bank-
rolled, these
capitalists
we witness
every day
that Congress
of criminals
who long ago
shut their ears
to the cries
of the poor
and homeless
—just look
at that detritus
calling itself
Democracy
when all it's
interested in
is saving its
Street of Wall.
Let's bury
the crapshoot
under tons of
good old slush,
unionize against
their privatize,

who see only
dollar-signs,
and filthy are
the thousands
upon thousands
of surveillance
cameras trying
to capture
tomorrow which
is rising, working
and bound to
overthrow this
spoiled rotten
system.

2.

Our crying out
loud won't be
sold, privatized,
won't be told
to march to
Nothing's tune,
is what we all
know is the Union,
for cryin' out loud.
Not only one,
not just three
in this revolt
that's planetary:
we link, we join,

we unite hearts
and minds.
We unionize,
for cryin' out loud.
Today we sow
seeds, grow
the crop called
Liberty, cast
our nets of
demands, unload
cargoes of pickets
on the docks
of Boss Death.
The cut, slashed,
the throwaways,
the homeless
beggars, the poor
of everywhere—
there's no one
who'll not feel the
rolling thunder
of our care
and want to be
part of what
picks up the
whole world
again, Union
upon Union,
like a great
loaf of bread
to be shared
by all and
everyone who
belongs to the
idea of what

Union means:
a life united,
a Union life
forever, for
cryin' out loud!

3.

Revolution's
a truck of tar
steaming on
a summer day,
blisters of black
lava-squoosh
paving the way
of streets of
song, graffiti
of alienated
lungs, the
wild whinnies
down furlongs
of the life of
free horses
galloping in the
International Race.
Revolution's
that beautiful
equine face
in Mayakovsky's
violin scree,
is the New Class
of the Working
Class that's
invincible as
concrete.

EFRAIN HUERTA (Mexico)

MATAR A UN POETA CUANDO DUERME

1

Le dispararon aquí mismo, mire.
Mire y escuche mi sangre. En esta arteria,
de abajo arriba, para que la bala llegara al cerebro
y deshiciera bruscamente su genio y su infinito amor.

(Los chacales *erpianos* se habían dicho:
”Que sea cuando este dormido.
Los pobres poetas son muy sensibles...”)

Lo drogaron para matarlo
---porque para las bestias el mejor poeta
es un poeta muerto.

Mire como ese río se detuvo.
Oiga con cuidado la condenatoria palabra
del ceibo joven y el murmullo dolorido
de las maduras palmeras.

Dios de dioses, que canallisimos fueron
y que suciamente manejaron ese crimen.

2

Tan dulce, tan poeta, tan Roque,
tan mi Roquito Dalton.
Mira que te he llorado, camarada, muchas noches.
Óyeme que te he visto aquí, en México, y recordado
aquella noche de nuestro abrazo en el Tropicana;
las charlas en las afueras del Habana Libre;
en el Hotel Nacional y las discusiones
con el hermano Oscar Collazos;

EFRAIN HUERTA (Mexico)

THE MURDER OF A POET WHILE SLEEPING

1

Look, they shot him right here.
Look and listen to my blood. In this artery,
from the bottom up, so that the bullet entered his brain
and shattered his genius and infinite love.

(The harpy jackals had been saying:
“Let it happen while he’s sleeping.
Poor poets are very sensitive...”)

So they drugged him in order to murder him
-because for the beasts the greatest poet
is a dead poet.

I think about why that river stopped flowing.
It listens carefully to the condemned words
of the young and the painful rustling
of the ripe palm trees.

God of gods, what a gang they were
and how dirty the way they managed that crime.

2

So gentle one, so poet, so Roque,
so my dear little Roquito Dalton.
See, I’ve wept many nights for you, comrade.
Listen to me who’s seen you here in Mexico,
and remembered that night of our embrace in the
Tropicana;
the chats in the outskirts of Havana Libre;
and those discussions inside the National Hotel
with our brother Oscar Collazos;

la noche de diciembre de 1969 en que subiste
a mi habitación (la 544 del Nacional) a despedirte
para no vernos nunca más.

En una bolsa de papel llevabas un tesorito:
un limón gigante, dos naranjas, un jitomate
y el libro de poemas que me debías.

Pero esta noche de marzo,
a casi un año de que te asesinaron,
ya no tengo más libros tuyos
(sólo la carta que te escribió Retamar
y el poema de Mario Benedetti);
no tengo ya sino unas cuantas lágrimas.

Esta noche nuestra, Roquito,
mi Roquito, siento que un poco
un poco de tu nobilísima sangre salvadora
me corre por alguna vena
en esta conspiración de la vida
por hacer más larga mi agonía.

Pienso ahora en Otto-Rene Castillo,
en Huberto Alvarado y en Javier Heraud,
poetas, combatientes, mutilados.

Hoy quiero vivir más,
no mucho, por tu sonrisa magnífica,
flaco queridísimo,
totalmente vivo:
Roque Dalton.

that night in December 1969 when you came up
to my room (room 544 of the National Hotel)
to say goodbye, never to see each other again.
In a paper bag you were carrying a little treasury:
one gigantic lemon, two oranges, a tomato
and a book of poems you owed me.

But this night in March,
nearly a year after they assassinated you,
I don't have many books of yours
(only the letter that Retamar wrote for you
and a poem for Mario Benedetti);
I don't have anything now except these tears.

This night is ours, dear Roque,
my Roque, and I feel that a little
a little of your most noble Salvadoran blood
flows through some vein of mine
in this conspiracy for life
to make my agony even greater.

And now I'm thinking of Otto Rene Castillo,
of Huberto Alvarado and of Javier Heraud,
poets, guerrilla fighters, mutilated ones.

And now I want to live longer, not too much,
through your magnificent smile,
skinny, affectionate,
totally alive:
Roque Dalton.

(Translated from Spanish by Jim Normington)

ANTONELLA IASCHI (Italia)

ITALIA: COSTITUZIONE VIOLATA

I nazisti usavano il gas, quel “capitano” il mare!
Decreto legge, dopo decreto legge
lui seppellisce con l’assenso di troppi
la Resistenza e tutti i suoi valori.

Primo comandamento: odiare!
Ormai è usuale armarsi di violenza
infangare le piazze, proteggere i balord
combattere i diritti, seppellire l’Amore.

Che sia di coppia oppure di persone
ancora umane nonostante i tempi
è l’emozione più pericolosa, il nemico,
l’eresia per il rogo, l’anatema temuto.

Così tornano svastiche, si picchiano i “diversi”,
si creano mostri dalla pelle altra,
si insinuano paure e pregiudizi
per dominare pecore allattando serpenti.

Ogni strada ha il suo boia in questi tempi
in cui il silenzio ha un prezzo troppo alto
pagato da persone abbandonate
nelle rotte riservate ai più deboli.

Per noi Donne ritorna il Medioevo
con nuove leggi che vogliono spezzare
le conquiste di tutto il Novecento
e riportarci ad essere pupazzi.

Urlo e ascolto la mia voce muta
infrangersi su inganni e corruzioni
avvallati da masse di ignoranti
giorno, dopo giorno, dopo giorno.

ANTONELLA IASCHI (Italia)

ITALY: VIOLATED CONSTITUTION

The nazis used gas, that “captain,” the sea!
Legal decree after legal decree
it buries, with the approval of too many,
the Resistance and all its values.

First commandment: Hate!
By now it’s common to be armed with violence
staining city centers, protecting foolishness,
fighting against human rights, burying Love.

Which be of a couple, or else of people
still humane in spite of the times;
it’s the most dangerous emotion, the enemy,
the heresy for the stake, the feared anathema.

So swastikas return, “different ones” are beaten,
they create monsters from other skins,
insinuating fears and prejudices
to dominate sheep while nursing snakes.

Every street has its hangman these days
in which silence has a very high price
paid for by people abandoned
along routes reserved for the weakest.

For us Women the Middle Ages returned
with new laws that want to smash
all the 20th century triumphs
and make us go back to being puppets.

I shout and hear my mute voice
crashing against deceptions and humiliating
corruptions enabled by ignoramuses

day after day after day.
Nello scaffale della libreria
giace un libro elegante, cartonato,
con un nastrino bianco rosso e verde;
racconta di diritti e di uguaglianze.

Disattesa, violata, calpestata
a partire dal passo sul Lavoro
diventato oramai per molti figli
catena e frusta di nuove schiavitù.
Dove siete finiti Padri Giusti
dove i vostri valori e le conquiste?
Democrazia sepolta da se stessa:
altre battaglie sono necessarie!

On the shelves of the bookstore
an elegant hard-cover book is lying
with a white, red and green ribbon;
it tells of human rights and equalities.

Unheeded, violated, trampled on
beginning with stepping into Work
that by now's become the chain and
whip of new slaveries for many a child.
Where, Just Fathers, are your values
and triumphs going to end up?
Democracy's buried by itself:
other campaigns are necessary!

(Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman)



Adrian Arias
*I'm The Shadow Of What I Think,
Of What I Feel, Of What I Say*
(mixed media)

SABAH MOHSEN JASIM (Iraq)

Alarab Paul Aladdin - باول علاء الدين العرب - عراقي من كاليفورنيا ، 44 عاما ، ألقى بنفسه احتجاجا على الحرب على العراق من أعالي جسر البوابة الذهبية في سان فرانسيسكو ليلقى حتفه في اليوم الأول من الحرب الجارية على العراق. قبل انتحاره بدأ بقراءة إعلان حول نساء العراق العزّل والأطفال والمسنين. ثم شرع يصرخ: استيقظي أمريكا! هذه الحرب ستعرف بحرب الجبناء والنفط في كافة أرجاء العالم! انتشلت جثته بملابس سوداء وخيط قلادة منسوجة من الحرير حول عنقه من عمل ابنته. يتعين على أمريكا التخلص من قيود القمع الرأسمالي والسعي لتطوير دولة اشتراكية تنبذ كل الحرب "العدوانية".

** هنادي ، طالبة جامعية قتلت برصاص طائش فيما هي عائدة من كليتها عند نقطة تفتيش عراقية في بابل جنوب بغداد عام 2003.

(باول العرب حين يغبطك الفرح)

صباح محسن

جاسم - شاعر من العراق

مرحبا باول*

جئت تنبئنا

- نحن المنسيين-

بمعركتهم الخاسرة ،

لسماسرة بترول جيايرة برابرة

من أعالي جسر البوابة الذهبية

لسان فرانسيسكو

كان بيانك الأول والأخير:

“ استيقظي أميركا! ”

كم من قلوب الأبرياء طائشَ رصاصُها؟

العجائز ، الرضع والأجنة

و هنادي! **

كم من الأطفال غفا على قعقات وحوشها؟

سمية ، حنان وسلام وبلادي

SABAH MOHSEN JASIM (Iraq)

PAUL ALARAB WHEN CAPTURED BY JOY!

Hello, Paul,*
You came to tell us:
--- We, the forgotten
Of the USA, losing the battle to
Those titan petroleum brokers,
The barbarians.
From the top of San Francisco's
Golden Gate Bridge,
The Pacific Rim,
Your first and last statement's
Been announced:
"Wake up, America!"
How many innocents' hearts
Have been victims of stray shots?
Old people, infants, embryos,
Hanadi, as well**.
How many children have fallen,
To those monsters' claws?
Sumaya, Hanan, Salam, Belady...
Mad bombing killed the prayers
In mosque, church or synagogue.
Then the USA declared it would leave!
USA, the occupation you dream to be long
So that a million martyrs may badly decay
And wells be infused with gorse serum
Of wheat and barley incense,
'Til oil would throb
Down to Its last barrel---
How long will it be before
You're driving the innocent into the burner?
Isn't that enough,
Burning, all so
Precious and rare?
Tyrants,
Are here among us,
Buying and selling us!
Should we forget your siege,

قصّفها المجنون أربك المؤذنَ والصلاة
والقداسَ والصليب
وتلوّح بالمغادرة!
أمريكا:
احتلاك ، تحلمين يطول
إلى أن يتحلل المليون شهيد
تتشرب الآبار بمصل الجسم
بعفر الحنطة والشعير
فينبضُ البترولُ برميله الأخير.
إلى م تسوقين الأبرياء لمحارق الفولاذ ،
أما كفاك حرق ما غلا والنفيس؟
العتاةُ الطغاةُ ها هم بين ظهرانينا يرفلون
تبيعين بنا وتشترين
أنسى حصارك الذي لا يزال
بعد عقدين وثمان من السنين ؟
ما كنا نعلم إننا نيام
وان نفيقَ بعد فوات أوان
مهجرين ننصب الخيام
مرحبين فاقدى الذاكرة!
بيائك يا باول،
صراخك المستميت
سافرَ عبرَ موج المحيط
من على الغيوم صوب دجلةَ والفرات
والخليج
والعراقُ عراق
كلما تزيده طعنا يكبرُ جرحُ حبه ويزيد.
اليوم □ يا باول
تنبه الغزاة:

After two decades and eight years,
Whose bad effects are still here?!
We only know we slept
Then woke up, too late,
To find ourselves displaced,
Setting up tents,
Welcoming those invaders,
A far-off memory!
Your statement, Paul,
Your desperate scream,
Has travelled across ocean waves,
Above clouds,
Towards the Tigris, the Euphrates
And the Arab gulf.
Iraq's only Iraq:
The more it gets stung
The more its love grows
And will increase.
Today, Paul,
The invaders are on alert but
Iraqis are careful,
Their minds like their fields
Are the source of their water,
Like their vineyards and
Cane sugar, beet and palm;
Iraqis are painting
---Though being stripped of arms ---
With their bones
The topography of their land,
With woven silk necklaces,
Tenderly touching
Around their necks.

(Translated from Arabic by the author)

* Paul Aladdin Alarab, a 42 year-old Iraqi from California, threw himself in protest at the war on Iraq from the top of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to die on the first day of the war in Iraq. Before his suicide he began to read a statement about the defenseless Iraqi women, children and the elderly. Then he began shouting: Wake

العراقيون منتبهون
عقولهم كحقولهم
كمنابع مياههم كمزارع كرومهم
قصب سكر بنجر ونخيل
والعراقيون يرسمون
- وان جردوا من السلاح-
بعظامهم
تضاريس عراقهم
ينسجونها حول رقابهم
بقلادة من حرير

up America! This war will be known as the war of cowards and oil all over the world! America must throw off the shackles of capitalist oppression and work to develop a Socialist state that renounces all “aggressive” war.

** Hanadi, a university student, was shot dead by bullets while returning from her college at an Iraqi checkpoint in Babel, south of Baghdad in 2003.

ZIBA KARBASSI (Iran)

زیبا کرباسی
به حق جگر

این جا زمین شعر است
از هفت ستون هیكلش
چرثقیل‌ها آویزان
بام‌ها با پشت پرت می‌شوند از
هفت مای ملتش
ما ملتیم
شانه به شانه‌ی هم
هااه
ملتیم با باهوها مان
مشت سوی آسمان می‌پریم
خانه‌ی کلنگی‌تان زیر لگدکوب
بوی رازیانه و تلخون می‌دهد
هر چه دولتی
اجاره‌ای
از هر جنس
هر قماش
ساخت صنعت کارخانه
هرچه دست‌ساز
زیر آرواره‌ی چفت‌مان
مزه‌ی جگر می‌دهد جیگر
به حق حق که گرفتنی‌ست
به حق کلمه که لام تا کامش آدم بود
به حق هفت که هفت بار
در سینه‌ی تیر هفت تپید و قلب افتاد
به حق آفتاب که در غیبتش
چراغ‌های فسقلی شهر
سلیطه‌های منور اند

ZIBA KARBASSI (Iran)

**OF THE JUSTICE OF THE LIVER
& THE GUTS**

this is poetry ground
from seven cranes of herakles
gantries are hanging suspended
roofs toppled off backwards
from seven corners of the homeland
we are the people
shoulder to shoulder aaah !
with our forearms
ferrying our fists at the sky
with the demolished house beneath our marching feet
there is the smell of fennel & tikhum
any state worker & leased people
of all fabrics & any gender
made from construction plant industries
made by hand in factories
under our clenched jaws
it tastes of liver blood
in the justice of justice there to be taken
in the justice of words that from temple to toe are human
in the justice of seven that seven times beats in the chest of
the bullet & the heart fails
in the justice of the sun when in its absence
the town's little lights
are jezebel girls
in the justice of bread that without water can't get down the
throat
in the justice of a name that in my gulp has continuously
repented
becoming my mother

به حق نان که بی آب از گلو پایین نمی رود
به حق نام که در نای من به تکرار آمد و مادرم شد
به حق تیغ که آشنای رگ است
به حق تاریکی که بی دلمش عاشق حرام شد
به حق نمک که «چیچست» را قلفتی بالا کشید
تا رومییه زرتشت طاعون عمامه نمک گیر کند
به حق جگر اگر اگر اگر لب باز کنم
مثل جنگل های گلستان آتش می گیری جیگر
جگرت را چنان به دندان بجوم
که دیوارهای قزل حصار قصر و اوین ات کلاغ بپرند
در خواب شکنجه گرانت خوک ها و گرازهای وحشی و ارونه بدونند
و انقلاب انقلاب بریزد از هفت گوشه ات
و هفت جد و سوراخت سفره شود
استخوان درشت شعرم در گلویت چنان گیر کند
«که تکه های وطنم تنم شعرم این «حبه ی انگور
از حلقوم و
حلقه های
تخم چشم و قزدهات
درسته بیرون بپرد

چیچست : نام قدیم دریاچه ی ارومیه - ۱
حبه ی انگور: اشاره به داستان شنگول و منگول - ۲

in the justice of razors familiar with wrist blood
in the justice of darkness that – devoid of breath – lovers
are wasted
in the justice of salt that sucked up Urmia's sea in one gulp
& so
Urmia of Zartosht was raveled in a flood of salt & cloth
in the justice of the liver's blood & guts
if if if I were to open my mouth
like Golestan's forests you'd be ablaze
I will bite into your raw liver so hard
the walls of Evin & Qezel Hesar & Gohardasht will
become crow-flight
in the dreams of torturers wild pigs & hogs careen
backwards
& revolution revolution will gush from your seven corners
& your seven ancestors & orifices will become a gobbling
table
& the largest bone of my poem
will stick in your throat
so pieces of this blood land & body land & poetry land
will red-yelping-hood-it out from your eyeballs &
your larynx.

(Translated from Farsi by Stephen Watts)

MICHELE LICHERI (Italia)

OTTO ORE NEL CANTIERE

Il martello pneumatico penetra la terra stanca,
percuote la strada antica,
ne sgretola le pietre
e ti ubriaca i timpani sempre.
Nel cantiere dove lavoro,
ti urla contro per otto ore
il motore del compressore instancabile.
Colpi di piccone sulla terra arsa,
sulla roccia dura;
sotto un estremo cielo rosso-azzurro libertario;
colpi di mazza che vibri furioso
in fondo alla trincea fangosa,
o a volte sbeffeggiando il destino.
Bocche dal ghigno sardonico
che olezzano d'alcol e di tabacco;
che imprecano, fischiano e cantano;
corpi michelangioleschi immolati sull'altare del profitto,
titanici e polverosi badilanti
che grondano sudore sui giorni,
sui mesi, sugli anni,
sulle otto ore:
sommate, moltiplicate, indivisibili
per soddisfare lor signori "i padroni" pochi
e stancare gli insoddisfatti, tanti,
che dispongono di una notte breve
per prepararsi a reinterpretare l'indomani:
il solito show delle otto ore.

MICHELE LICHERI (Italy)

EIGHT HOURS AT WORK

The jackhammer reams the weary earth,
batters the hoary pavement,
shatters its cobblestones
stupefies your eardrums always.
On the construction site where I work,
the tireless compressor's motor
screams at you for eight hours.
Pickaxe blows onto the parched earth,
onto the hard rock;
under an absolute sky, azure-red and libertarian;
Sledge-hammer blows you furiously hurl
at the bottom of the muddy trench,
or sometimes taunting fate.
Sardonic sneering mouths
reeking of booze and tobacco;
cussing, whistling and singing;
Michelangelo bodies immolated upon the altar of profit,
grimy shoveling titans
pouring sweat upon the days, terrible racket
on the months, the years,
the eight hours:
added, multiplied, indivisible
to satisfy their lordships "the masters" the few
and exhaust the dissatisfied many,
endowed with a single brief night
to rehearse tomorrow's performance:
the daily eight-hour show.

(Translated from Italian by Lapo Guzzini)

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS

APROXIMACIÓ A L'ESTIU

No és hora de grans gestos
sinó de retocs i variacions
que em portin al meu món,
de teatre, de lectura i escriptura,
de viatges i d'estones amoroses,
de creativitat i llibertat
meves i de la collectivitat.

Jo et saludo, República Catalana,
que reneixes de les cendres
d'un feixisme llarg i mortífer
que no havia marxat mai,
i d'un odi i discriminació de segles.
I ho fas amb tota la illusió,
te'n desprens de manera lleugera
sense parar esment
en la sordidesa coneguda
que volen posar-te a l'espatlla
i que els retornes sense desembolicar.

No pateixis més mentides ni més pols
que empastifen qui les diuen i prou
riu, i viu, i balla la vida,
tarareja-la, dibuixa-la,
esculpeix-la quan et vagi bé
i estiguis amb tu mateixa
en espais de bosc i mar
a peu descalç
mirant el sol i comptant estrelles.

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS

APPROACHING SUMMER

It is not a time for great gestures
but for small touches and variations
that may take me to my world
of theatre, of reading and writing,
of journeys and lovely times,
of creativity and freedom,
my own and those of the collective.

I salute you, Catalan Republic,
reborn from the ashes
of a long and deadly fascism
that had never left,
and from a centuries old hatred and discrimination.
And you do so with all the thrill,
you let go in a light way
without paying attention
to the well-known squalor
they want to place on your shoulders
which you give back to them without unwrapping.

Do not suffer any more lies or dust
that smear only on those who tell them.
Laugh, and live, and dance life
hum it, draw it,
sculpt it when the time is convenient
and you are with your self
in spaces of forests and sea,
barefoot,
looking at the sun and counting stars.

(Translated from Catalan by the author)

GENNY LIM

BLUES FOR AMIRI

Somebody blew up America
And you knew who, Amiri
Somebody blew up the Blues in
9-11 time, in lock-step tempo
with dancing Israelis and royal Saudis
Sh-h-h! There's a devil in the house!
You warned us of the clandestine
Bush-raelis and Saudis
of the Larry Silversteins
copping 4.6 billion for a building
he "pulled" himself
You tipped us to the WTC and paper
media not worth the air it travels on
Somebody blew himself up in order
to blame somebody else
Yeah, sounds lame and insane?
But the truth be stranger than lies
Somebody blew up the Cradle of Civilization
Somebody messed up Mesopotamia
and all her ancient treasures on a handshake!
With all that oil bleeding from her womb
With all the midwives of profit and doom
lusting for the payout of the century!
Oh, somebody pulled the wool over our eyes
and laughed all the way to the World Bank,
Halliburton and Dick Cheney's house!
Somebody staged the planets and the planes
Somebody staged the execution of Saddam
Somebody staged the assassination of Bin Laden
Somebody staged the Boston massacre bombers
Somebody detonated the bombs at the Twin Towers
for a photo-op and reality TV
Somebody drank the kool-aid and
let the wolves run out of the pack-
Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld and Bremer
Somebody stole our votes in Florida and California

and in twenty-one states for run DNC
Somebody took the terrorists out of the country
and left the country in terror
Somebody massacred women and babies and
called it collateral damage
Somebody went to the WTO
to fix all the rules
and the G-4 S to
demand protection
Somebody blew up America
just to up the ante
Somebody blew up America
for the 1% and stole all the wealth
through inside trading and offshore thefts
Somebody left you and me holding the bag
and looking into the empty barrels of guns
Somebody gave us Facebook, Yahoo and Google
so we could be in touch with the NSA at all times
Somebody sent the drones to twerk us
with Miley Cyrus and Justin Bieber!
Somebody blew up America
and replaced it with Homeland Security
Somebody blew up the Blues in
9-11 time, in lock-step tempo
with dancing Israelis and royal Saudis
Somebody pulled the plug on humanity
pulled the caper of the century
pulled the planned demolitions and
left us poor, hungry and homeless
left us asking what Marvin asked,
“What’s going on? What’s going on?”
Instigator of Truth
Laureate of the underdog
the dispossessed and the maligned
Harbinger of things to come
for a high-jacked nation
Poet prophet among
the Assata Shakurs
the Angola Threes
the Leonard Peltiers

the Mumia-abu Jamals
the Chelsea Mannings
the Edward Snowdens
the Sterling Mannings
the Assanges
the Most Wanted revolutionaries
and freedom fighters
the blues people
that Idle No More!
Sing out! Shout out from all
corners of the Bardo
Amiri, America, blow
Blow Baraka, blow, blow
Blow the tomb-raiders to
their hell-realms of hypocrisy
Blow the genetically modified
Motherfrackers' masks off
to drink from their poison pipelines
to face their own dark destiny and
unbearable whiteness of being
Blow, blow up denial!
Blow up fear!
Blow their minds!
Blast the notes!
Blow the sounds and chords!
Bellow the words!
Bring it on loud n' clear!
Bring it on down!
In the evil flames of
Desert Storm
Shock and Awe
Operation Enduring Freedom
New Dawn
all names of the Devil
Blow 'em up! Blow 'em all up!
Somebody blew up America
and the fire down below is you!

ELIZABETH MARINO

CLOSER

“Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.”
We will sleep under a canopy of stars
as do the red and blue encampments.
We’ll encounter each other fresh, in nature
far away from the distractions of the City.
“Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.”

Do black bears smell the unwrapped coffee grounds
and bacon grease from the neighboring campsite
as do the red and blue encampments?
“For twenty dollars more, we could have gotten
An electric hookup, and be near a flush toilet.”
“Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.”
But we came to sleep under a canopy of stars.
That canopy now ripped open – torrents of rain –
as are the red and blue encampments.
In the car heading home, only the sound of tires
hitting pavement, as the City rises into view
as do the red and blue encampments.

“Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.”

[Note: The phrase “objects in mirror are closer than they appear”
is a safety warning that is required to be engraved on passenger
side mirrors of motor vehicles in the United States, Canada,
Nepal, India, and Saudi Arabia.]

MOËZ MAJED (Tunisia)

PUIS VINRENT LES AGES LES PLUS RUDES

Puis vinrent les âges les plus rudes, les heures les plus sombres et les barbares en nombres.

Vinrent des pluies vastes et grisonnantes qui n'abreuvent point de terres ni ne lavent de souillures,

Et vinrent des fins fonds des sables stériles, des nuées d'oracles grégaires portant paroles apocryphes au rang des grandes tables de loi.

Oui, ma mère, ma sœur, mon enfant...

Vinrent en ces jours, aux seuils de nos demeures, de bien sombres présages.

« Nous faudra-t-il un jour quitter ces terres sobres ?

Livrer aux forces vives du souvenir, la poudre indigo de nos aïeux ?

Clore les paupières de nos nobles demeures et appeler nos enfants qui joueraient dans la cour ?

Puis regarder, en cheminant à travers la poussière de nos pas, la leur entremblantée de ce que nous fûmes ?

Défaits, nous n'aurions que la mélancolie à livrer en héritage. »

Mais, en nous, résonnent encore le chant âcre de la déraison, l'ample folie des eaux vives et l'astre aveugle de la foi.

Quant à eux, grands concepteurs des odes funèbres de ce monde, ils peuvent tracer sur de grandes tables de marbre et de bronze les lignes-courbes de nos aubes incertaines...

Ils peuvent dire que rien ne germe, sur nos terres, qui ne soit inscrit dans les grandes colonnes de leurs actes.

Dis-leur, toi l'enfant à naître dans nos langes...

Dis leur qu'avant eux bien des empires crurent en l'éternité...

Bien des empires finirent engloutis dans de grandes délivrances.

MOËZ MAJED (Tunisia)

THEN CAME THE ROUGHEST TIMES

Then came the roughest times, the darkest hours and multitudes
of barbarians

There came vast and graying rains that did not water the lands
nor wash away the stains

And from the depths of barren sands came storm clouds of
gregarious oracles bearing apocryphal words to the ranks of the
grand tablets of law

Yes, my mother, my sister, my child...

They came in those days to the thresholds of our homes, very
dark omens

« Must we one day leave these humble lands?

*Give away to the living powers of memory, the indigo dust of our
ancestors?*

*Close the lids of our noble dwellings and call our children
playing in the courtyard?*

*Then look, while shuffling through the dust of our steps, at the
trembling glow of what we were?*

*Ravaged, we would have nothing but melancholy to bequeath as
our heritage. »*

But, in us, still resounds the bitter song of foolishness, the
abundant madness of the living waters and the blind star of faith.

As for them, great designers of the funeral odes of this world,
they can draw on the great tablets of marble and bronze the
curved lines of our uncertain dawns...

They can say nothing will sprout on our lands that isn't inscribed
on the great columns of their actions.

Tell them, you the child to be born in our swaddling clothes...

Tell them that before them many empires believed in eternity...

Many empires ended swallowed up in a great deliverance.

(Translated from French by Barbara Paschke)

BIPLAB MAJEE (India)

নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষ

বিপ্লব মাজী

এইআমার নিসর্গ-পাঠকক্ষ
পশ্চিম ও দক্ষিণে জানলা খোলা
আলো আর বাতাস এসে উপচে পড়ে

দক্ষিণে কয়েকটা বাগান পেরিয়ে
স্কাইস্কেপার আকাশরেখা বদলে দিচ্ছে,
হাইরাইজের যে কোন জানালা থেকে
দূরবীণ লাগিয়ে আমাকে দেখতে পারে যে কোন চোখ,
ব্যক্তিগত পরিসরের ভাবনাই আর করি না

পশ্চিম দিগন্তবিস্তৃত নিসর্গ, আদিবাসী আকাশ
আর কংসাবতী নদীর বাঁক, রেলব্রিজ চোখে পড়ে,
পে-লোডার আর ক্রেনের গর্জনে ভেঙে যাচ্ছে মেঘ;
এসব দৃশ্যও কদিন পরে হারিয়ে যাবে
মাথায় টুপি কজন লোক জমিজরিপে ব্যস্ত, বিশ্বায়ন

পুবের দরজা দিয়ে বন্ধুরা ঢোকে
উত্তরে মুখ করে মুখোমুখি বসে,
কাঠ ও কাঠের পার্টিশনের ওধারে কম্পিউটার, স্ক্যানার,
লেজারপ্রিন্টার

অবসর জীবনের অর্ধেকজীবন আমার এখানে কাটে
প্রায় পাঁচহাজার বই মানব সভ্যতা সতৃষ্ণ আমার দিকে তাকিয়ে
থাকে,
কখন কাকে কাছে টেনে নিয়ে চিন্তার সমুদ্রে ডুবে যাবো

জুলজুল চোখে চেয়ে থাকে সাদা পাতা ও পেন
কখন আমি একের পর এক বর্ণমালা সাজিয়ে
আমার ভাবনাগুলো মগজ থেকে ঝাঁটিয়ে বিদেয় করব

এই আমার নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষ
একটা অন্য পৃথিবী ও মহাকাশ
যার নির্জনতার বয়ে চলেছে নিভৃত জীবন...

BIPLAB MAJEE (India)

ECO-STUDY ROOM

Here is my Eco-Study room
The windows of South and West are open wide
The light and air come and overflow it.
Few gardens in the South
the skyscrapers change the skyline.
Any eye can watch me from the windows of the skyscraper
with a binocular.
I do not even think of any personal sphere.
The nature spread at the horizon of the west, the tribal sky
and the turnings of
the river Kangsabati, the railway bridge comes to my notice.
The clouds are getting broken at the roaring sound of the
Payloader and the Crane.
All these sights may be lost after a few days—
Some people with hats on are busy measuring
the land...
This is globalization...
My friends enter from the door of the East and
sit facing in the direction of North in front of me
The computer, scanner, ledger printer are there at the other
side of the
partition of wood and glass
Half of my life is spent here
Some five thousand books and the human civilization stare
at me with thirst in their eyes
When shall I pull one of them near to me and dip myself
down into the thoughtful sea.
The white pages and pen look at me with dazzling eyes
When shall I arrange the alphabets one after another and
give vent to my ideas from my brain.

This is my Eco-Study room
This is a different world and another galaxy

৩.

এই আমার নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষ

পশ্চিম ও দক্ষিণের জানালা খুললেই দেখা যায় ভুবন গ্রাম

ভুবন গ্রামের বিপরীত বিশ্বে

এক অন্ধকার ভারতবর্ষ আছে

যেখানে থেকে মানুষরা তাকিয়ে থাকে ওয়ালস্ট্রিটের শাইনিং
বিশ্বে—

বিশ্বায়ন

এক জীবন্ত বুনো পশু

কর্পোরেট পুঁজির ডানায় ভর করে

পৃথিবীর প্রতিটি দেশে উড়ে যাচ্ছে

বিশ্বায়নে

অমৃত যেমন আছে, বিষও আছে

মনন ও বোধির জানালা খুলে রেখে

তাকে গ্রহণ করাই ভালো

আমার নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষের বাঁদিকের কাঠের টেবিলে

ল্যাপটপ

যেখানে আমি হিমায়িত করে রেখেছি

পৃথিবীর যাবতীয় তথ্য বিস্ফোরণ—

আমি জাগালেই জেগে ওঠে

একের পর এক ঘুমন্ত শহর—

প্রতিটি শহরে এসেই

বিদ্যুৎ তরঙ্গের মতো মিশে আছে

সোনালি সড়ক, হাইওয়ে

প্রতিটি শহরে

নাগরদোলার মতো ঘুরছে ভোগ্যপণ্য

শপিংমল, বিগবাজার, বিপিও, আইনক্স

লোভ আর লোভ

লোভই কি আজ মানুষের সুখের সমার্থক ?

তবে জ্ঞান ?

in the loneliness of which the solitary life flows on.

Once the windows of the West and the South are open
The global village is visible

There is a dark India opposite this global village
wherefrom people stare at the Shining World of Wall Street.

The globalization

is like a live wild animal

who flies at all the countries

depending on the wings of capital of the corporate house

In globalization

There is nectar as well as poison

Opening the window casements of thinking and intellect

It is better to accept it.

There is a laptop on the wooden table at my left side

I refrigerated all the explosion of information

As soon as I got up

The cities wake one after another

The golden triangle and the highway mingle together

like the waves of electricity in every city

In every city

the consumer goods, Shopping Malls, Bigbazar, BPO and

Inoxes move round like a merry-go-round

Greed is all around

Is greed synonymous with happiness of man?

What is the use of Knowledge then?

The stain of blood remains there

in economics, politics and human philosophy

which have in fact destroyed Nature

300 Pharaohs are demanding 500 million slaves...

Sitting in a sinking ship through a flowing lament

To what end are we proceeding?

This is my Eco-Study room

প্রকৃতি ধ্বংসে আজ অর্থনীতি, রাজনীতি
মানব দর্শনে লেগে রক্তের দাগ,
৩০০ ফ্যারাও চাইছে ৫০০ মিলিয়ন ক্রীতদাস...
ডুবন্ত জাহাজে বসে প্রবাহমান আর্তনাদ—
এ আমরা কোথায় চলেছি ?

এই আমার নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষ
এখান থেকেই আমি হেঁটে যেতে পারি
অসীম অজানা বিশ্বে—
এখানে বসেই আমি
পৃথিবীকে ডেকে এনে
শব্দমালায় সাজাতে পারি—
এখানে বসেই আমি
প্রতিদিন বেড়িয়ে আসি
অজ্ঞানতার অন্ধকার থেকে—
মুক্ত জ্ঞানলোকে...

আমি চাই
ভুবনায়নের বিপরীত বিশ্বেই
আমার এ নিসর্গ পাঠকক্ষ
ভবিষ্যতে উড়ে যাক
কবিতায় বিশ্বে দেখা দিক
প্রকৃতি ও মানুষের যৌনক্রিয়া—

যা থেকে জন্ম নেবে
নতুন সভ্যতা নতুন পৃথিবী...

I can tread over the endless unknown world from here only
Sitting here only, I can call the earth
And decorate the earth with the garland of words
Sitting here only
I come out in the open world of knowledge every day
from the darkness of ignorance

I want
my study room to fly away to the future
which is there in the anti-world of global village
Let the intercourse of Man and Nature be visible
In the world of Poetry
From where a new civilization and a new world will be
born...

(Translated from Bengali by Nandita Bhattacharya)

JOSÉ MARTÍ (Cuba)

BANQUETE DE TIRANOS

Hay una raza vil de hombres tenaces
de sí propios inflados, y hechos todos
todos del pelo al pie, de garra y diente;
y hay otros, como flor, que al viento exhalan
en el amor del hombre su perfume.
Como en el bosque hay tórtolas y fieras
y plantas insectívoros, pura sensitiva
y clavel en los jardines
De alma de hombres los unos se alimentan:
los otros su alma dan a que se nutran
y perfumen sus dientes los glotones,
tal como el hierro frío en las entrañas
de la virgen que mata se calienta.

A un banquete se sientan los tiranos,
pero cuando la mano ensangrentada
hunden en el manjar, del mártir muerto
surge una luz que les aterra, flores
grandes como una cruz, súbito surgen,
y huyen, rojo el hocico, y pavoridos
a sus negras entrañas los tiranos.
Los que se aman a sí, los que la augusta
razón a su avaricia y gula ponen:
los que no ostentan en la frente honrada
ese cinto de luz que en el yugo funde
como el inmenso sol en ascuas quiebra
los astros que a su seno se abalanzan:
los que no llevan del decoro humano
ornado el sano pecho: los menores
y segundones de la vida,
solo a su goce ruin y medro atentos
y no al concierto universal.

JOSÉ MARTÍ (Cuba)

TYRANTS BANQUET

There is a vile race of stubborn men
full of themselves, and made
from head to toe, with claws and teeth,
and there are others, like a flower, exhaling
in the wind their perfume for the love of men.
In the forest there are turtle-doves and wild beasts
and plants insectivorous, pure sensitive
like carnation in the gardens.
From the souls of men the first ones feed themselves
the others give their souls so that voracious ones
can nourish planting their gluttonous teeth in its perfume,
like the iced iron in the bowels
of the virgin whom it kills stealing the heat.

The tyrants sit at the banquet table,
but when they plunge their bloody hands
deep into the delicacy dish, from the murdered martyr
gashes a light that frightens them,
flowers big as crosses suddenly appear
and the tyrants flee, bloody red snouts,
filled with terror, toward their black bowels.
Those who love only themselves, those who submit
the august reason to avarice and voracity,
those who do not bear on an honorable forehead
the ribbon of light that consumes the yoke,
like the immense sun that reduces in embers
the stars pouncing in their breasts:
those whose healthy chest does not carry
human dignity: they are the lower,
lesser-ones of life,
preoccupied with profit only, attending to their mean
pleasures
and not to the universal concert.

Danzas, comidas, música, harenes,
jamás la aprobación de un hombre honrado,
y si acaso sin sangre hacerse puede
hágase...clávalos, clávalos
en el horcón más alto del camino
por la mitad de la villana frente.
A la grandiosa humanidad: traidores,
como implacable obrero
que un féretro de bronce clavetea,
los que contigo
se parten la nación a dentelladas.

Dances, cuisine, music, harems,
never the approval of an honest man,
and if it could happen without shedding blood,
do it....nail them, nail them
to the highest pillory of the road
by the middle of their worthless forehead.
Traitors to the great humanity,
like the implacable worker
nailing the bronze sepulcher,
surrounded by those
destroying the nation bite by bite.

(Translated from Spanish by Mauro Fortissimo)

PIPPO MARZULLI (Italia)

COMANDAMENTI

”Scegli il lavoro che ami e non lavorerai neppure un giorno in tutta la tua vita.” (Confucio)

- 1) L’Azienda e’ il signore tuo dio, che ti fece uscire dalla disoccupazione, dall’ufficio di collocamento.
- 2) non avrai altro dio all’infuori di Lei/Lui.
- 3) non avrai tessera ne’ porterai bandiera dei movimenti operai passati, presenti, futuri.
- 4) non sciopererai.
- 5) la parola dell’Azienda, sara’ per te verità assoluta.
- 6) non ti assenterai per malattia nel giorno Produttivo.
- 7) denuncerai il collega meno produttivo perché la Meritocrazia e’ il fondamento della vita.
- 8) se donna, non avrai figli perché la maternità offende la santità dell’Azienda.
- 9) l’Azienda potrà monitorare la tua vita privata per evitare che la protesta ti conduca sui sentieri malvagi della libertà.
- 10) non sciopererai.

PIPPO MARZULLI (Italy)

COMMANDMENTS

“Choose the job you love and you will not work not even for a day in all your life.” (Confucius)

- 1) The Company is the Lord thy god, that made you out of unemployment, from employment's office.
- 2) thou shalt have no other god besides Her/Him.
- 3) thou shalt have no badge nor carry the flag of the labor movements of the past, of the present, of the future.
- 4) thou shalt not strike.
- 5) the Company's word will be for you absolute truth.
- 6) thou shalt not excuse yourself for sickness in the Productive day.
- 7) thou shalt report the less productive coworker because Meritocracy is the fundament of life.
- 8) if woman, thou shalt not have kids because maternity offends the holiness of the Company.
- 9) the Company can monitor your private life to avoid that protest will lead you on freedom's evil paths.
- 10) thou shalt not strike.

(Translated from Italian by Giovanni Romano)

KAREN MELANDER-MAGOON

**ROADS FROM AL-MUTANABBI STREET,
BAGHDAD, IRAQ**

All roads lead from Al-Mutanabbi Street
Built from poetry
Built on roads now desolate with destruction
Now bearing witness to the aftermath
Of terror and death
Yet still holding the name of a poet
The poet Mutanabbi
Born almost a thousand years
After Jesus had walked the streets of Nazareth
And was crucified for questioning
Killed for making friends with outcasts
The poet Mutanabbi claimed
Horses, night, and the desert as his friends
And the sword, the spear, paper, and the pen
Twenty-six ghosts walk Al-Mutanabbi Street
Ghosts who brush by the old open-air market
Market of books
Market of ideas
Market of Mutanabbi
Bombed on March 5, 2007
By a suicide bomber and a car
Killing over two dozen souls
Injuring over one hundred more
Where the books still talk among themselves
Sneeze at their own dust
Remember their ancient stories
And the terrifying day of their demise
Ghosts of books spilling out into the street
Where children play
In the rubble of literacy
Not to be forgotten
All streets lead to Al-Mutanabbi Street

All streets lead from Al-Mutanabbi Street
The cobbles watch the poets
Remember the horses and wagons
Remember the children
The cobbles talk among themselves
Of live poets
And dying remnants
Ripped from an open air market
Twelve years ago
All streets of the oppressed
All streets where poets and artists dwell
Are today Al-Mutanabbi
Are today the books and ideas
Talking among themselves
Of live poets
And dying remnants
Whose blood will glow through history
In every city
In every street
Where books may bleed

SARAH MENEFEE

the cry

a child's cry
from a cage

puts all heaven
in a rage

(after Wm Blake)

~

feet get sore
back and forth
in the imperium

the people march
on hungry bellies

and fiery soles

~

one foot
played innocent

cuz it was the other foot
that kicked me

but I knew who to blame:
the ravening head!

~

look how
they've all

grown pale
snouts

~

the air is full
of the cries of
the stolen children

and a whiff of
the smoke of
the burning West

~

you think because our armies limp
along in duct-taped boots
they can't?

our invisibles won't be seen
till at your necks

~

life came down
in a lightning bolt

*

it rises up

NANCY MOREJÓN (Cuba)

**CALIBÁN, Y ROBERTO, SOBRE UN CABALLO DE
LA VÍBORA**

Unas palabras exactas
vierten su pureza en un catauro isleño
y sólo aspiran el rumor, su limpia pasión por el idioma.

Frente al mar, Calibán baja la cabeza,
mientras acepta el aguacero ante su único amor.

El poeta joven descubre al tomeguín
anclado sobre la frente de su hermano,
sobre la antigua arena de los sueños.

Calibán llora ante las naves de Odiseo
y ante la cierta luz de una mujer, tiembla
como esos cervatillos que le entregara
«la que hierde de lejos», bajo el talón de Aquiles.

Roberto, libre, junto a su propia sombra,
deambulando en su palacio cotidiano
mientras busca la puerta de salida hacia otra nueva
posibilidad.

Roberto, libre, como nunca jamás.

Los astros, en lo alto, buscan su transparencia
ante las colinas:

Las torres, levantadas.

Un cántaro a lo lejos empuña la flor de veinte siglos:
La palabra vieja es el inicio de la vida.
La palabra nueva es el inicio de la muerte.

Las palabras son madre y padre y ventura

NANCY MOREJÓN (Cuba)

**CALIBAN, AND ROBERTO, ON A HORSE FROM
LA VIBORA**

A few precise words
spill out their purity into an island basket
and just breathe the whisper, his pure passion for language.

Facing the sea, Caliban lowers his head
while he accepts the downpour facing his only love.

The young poet discovers a tanager
anchored to the forehead of his brother,
on the ancient sands of dreams

Caliban weeps facing the ships of Odysseus
and facing the true light of a woman, he trembles
like a fawn that will lead him
“she who wounds from afar” under the heel of Achilles

Roberto, free, next to his own shadow,
wandering in his everyday palace
while seeking the exit door toward another new
possibility.

Roberto, free, like never before.

The stars, high above, seek transparency
in the face of the heights:
The towers, rising

A jug in the distance holds the bloom of twenty centuries:
The old word is the beginning of life.
The new word is the beginning of death.

Words are mothers and fathers and the luck

de los trotamundos. Calibán las escucha y las toca.
Calibán las comprende, y las abraza con ternura,
junto al temblor del niño aquel
montado, en su inocencia, en su palabra pura y audaz,
sobre un caballo de La Víbora.

of globetrotters. Caliban listens to them and touches them.
Caliban understands them, and embraces them with
tenderness,
next to the shuddering child, the one
riding, in his innocence, on his pure and daring word,
on a horse from La Vibora.

(Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke)

* Roberto Fernandez Retamar is the author of the essential essay,
“Caliban.” La Vibora is a neighborhood in Havana.

MAJID NAFICY (Iran)

به مناسبت چهلمین سالگرد انقلاب
بازگشت به باغ گوته

اگر پسرت از تو بپرسد
که بهترین روز انقلاب کدام بود
به او چه خواهی گفت؟
آیا بی درنگ می گویی: ۲۲ بهمن ۵۷؟
روزی که همراه با مردم دروازه ی زندان اوین را گشودی
و در آشپزخانه، آبکش های بزرگ برنج را دیدی
که زندانبانان کهنه برای ناهار پالوده بودند
و زندانبانان تازه برای شام خود پختند،
و تو همراه با عزت طبائیان
به نه توی بندها پا گذاشتی
و در بند سلول های انفرادی
برای چند دقیقه ی بی پایان
پشت دری خودکار، به دام افتادی
جایی که عزت سه زمستان دیرتر از آن
به میدان تیر برده شد.
شاید بگویی: ۲۶ دی ۵۷
روزی که شاه برای بار دوم از ایران گریخت
و شورشیان تندیس شکن در میدان شهر
پدر او را از اسب پایین کشیدند
و تو در تاریکی تکه ای از کلاه او را
برای یادگاری از زمین برداشتی
و به عزت که در کنارت ایستاده بود گفتی
که نمی دانی خواب می بینی یا بیداری
مانند شبی که نخستین بار عشق بازی کردید
و تو ناباورانه چشم هایت را می مالیدی.
نه! نه!
دیگر دلت برای هیچیک از آن دو روز تنگ نمی شود
زیرا زندان تازه از زندان کهنه مخوف تر است
و خودکامه ی امروز ستمکارتر از خودکامه ی دیروز.
تنها دلت برای یک شب تنگ شده

MAJID NAFICY (Iran)

A RETURN TO THE GARDEN OF GOETHE

If your son asks you
When was the best day of the Revolution
What will you tell him?
Will you say instantly: February 11, 1979?
The day you opened the gate of Evin Prison alongside the people
And saw huge colanders of steaming rice in the kitchen
Which old jailors had rinsed for their lunch
And new jailors cooked for their dinner,
And you with your lover Ezzat Tabaian
Stepped into a labyrinth of solitary cells
And for a few endless minutes
Were trapped behind an electronic door
From where Ezzat three winters later
Was sent to the execution field.
Perhaps you will say: January 16, 1979
When the Shah fled Iran for the second time
And the statue-breaking rebels at a Tehran square
Dismounted his father from his horse
And in the dark, you picked up a piece of his hat
From the ground as a keepsake
And told Ezzat at your side
That you did not know if you were awake or asleep
Just as the night when you made love
For the first time
And you rubbed your eyes in disbelief.
No! No!
You miss neither of these two days
Because the new prison is more horrific than the old one
And the new tyrant more ruthless than the previous one.
You miss only one night
When on October 14, 1977
At the fifth night of Ten Nights of Poetry
With your novelist friend Hooshang Golshiri

وقتی که در ۲۲ مهر ۵۶
 در پنجمین شب از ده شب شعر
 همراه با هوشنگ گلشیری زیر باران
 قدم زنان به باغ گوته رفتی
 تا به "آوازه‌های بند" سعید سلطانپور گوش کنی
 که تازه از زندان درآمده بود
 و چون پلنگی زخمی می‌غرید.
 در آن ده شب درخشان
 شنصت گوینده و نویسنده ی "کانون"
 از چهار سوی میهن گرد آمدند
 تا از زیبایی و حقیقت
 با چند آوایی سخن بگویند:
 عمران صلاحی شعری به زبان ترکی خواند
 و طاهره صفارزاده سلام نامه ای به اسلام.
 نه اولی خشم فارسی زبانان را برانگیخت
 و نه دومی قهر چپ‌گرایان را.
 هزاران هزار خواننده ی شعر
 از سراسر کشور به آنجا آمدند
 تا گواهی دهند که نیاز شعر
 آزادی در سخن گفتن است.
 آیا در آن شبهای روشن
 اسلام کاظمیه می‌دانست که تا دو دهه ی دیگر
 در پاریس، راه هوا را بر خود خواهد بست؟
 آیا مصطفی رحیمی پیش بینی می‌کرد
 که سالها پس از تحمل شکنجه و زندان
 خود را از بام خانه پایین خواهد انداخت؟
 آیا به آذین حدس می‌زد که پس از بازداشت
 در "صدا و سیما" علیه خود شهادت خواهد داد؟
 آیا سعید سلطانپور می‌دانست که در شب عروسی اش
 دستگیر شده و سپس تیرباران خواهد شد؟
 آیا سیاوش کسرائی خبر داشت که سرانجام
 بی‌کمان در کابل ... نه ... در وین خواهد افسرد؟
 در شب‌های شعر، صحبت از آزادی و برابری بود
 و کسی از قانون الهی سنگسار سخن نمی‌گفت.
 هیچکس نمی‌دانست که در ۱۷ دی

You walked to the Garden of Goethe in the rain
To listen to “Songs of Prison” of Saeed Soltanpour
Who had just been released from prison
Roaring like a wounded panther.

In those bright ten nights
Sixty members of the Iranian Writers’ Association
Gathered from four corners of the country in Tehran
To speak of truth and beauty polyphonically.
Omran Salahi read a poem in Turkish
And Tahereh Safarzadeh an ode to Islam.
Neither the first enraged the Persian speakers
Nor the second provoked the leftists.
Thousands and thousands of lovers of poetry
Had gathered there from across the country
To testify that poetry
Demands freedom of expression.

In those ten bright nights
Did the novelist Islam Kazemiyeh know that two decades later
He would suffocate himself in Paris?
Did the scholar Mostafa Rahimi foresee
That years after suffering torture and prison
He would jump off the roof of his house?
Did the novelist Behazin predict that after arrest
He would incriminate himself on state TV?
Did the poet Saeed Soltanpour know
That on the night of his wedding
He would be arrested and executed soon after?
Was the poet Siavash Kasrai aware that at his end
He would perish powerless in Kabul...no, in Vienna?
In the Nights of Poetry the discourse was freedom and equality
And nobody spoke of the “divine” law of stoning.
No one knew that on January 7, 1978
The clergy would raise their flag in Qom
And gradually the slogan of Islamic Rule
Would replace the slogan of Housing and Freedom.

درفش حسینی در قم بالا می رود
و آرام آرام به جای “مسکن” و “آزادی”
“حکومت اسلامی” شعار روز می شود.
بیا به باغ شعر گوته برگرد
دوباره زیر درختان باران خورده بنشین
و بی اعتنا به گاردی ها
که از پشت دیوارهای باغ
با بی سیم هایشان حرف می زنند
به مریم، دختر محمد قاضی گوش کن
که پیام پدر را برای تو می خواند.
دریغ که تیغه ی جراح، تارهای صوتی پدر را گسسته
ولی خوشا که گوهر سخن را از او نگرفته است.
بیا به خانه ی دانش و هنر برگرد
و تنها قلب افراد را
بیت ایمان بدان
بیا از باغ دلگشای گوته
به بهترین روزهای دوران انقلاب بازگرد.
شاید در این سفر
پسرت همراه تو گردد.
مجید نفیسی
۱۷ نوامبر ۲۰۱۱

Come, return to the Garden of Goethe's Poetry
Sit again under rain-laden trees,
Oblivious to riot police
Talking to each other on their walkie-talkies
Behind the walls of the Garden,
And listen to Maryam, the daughter
of the translator Mohamma Qazi
Who is reading her father's speech for you.
Alas! A surgeon's knife had severed her father's vocal cords
But thankfully did not remove the essence of his speech.
Come, return to the house of science and art
And regard only the heart of the individual
As the House of Faith.
Come, and from the refreshing Garden of Goethe
Return to the best days of the Revolution.
Perhaps in this journey
Your son will accompany you.

(Translated from Farsi by the author)

JIM NORMINGTON

RADIOACTIVE KNIVES

MayDay Manifesto 2019

The moonlit San Francisco Bay
Was once the most beautiful bay in the world
A bay full of fish-life
& wildlife too
This beautiful San Francisco Bay
Where I grew up & where Each
Day as I write these lines
Money-hungry corporations
Like Chevron Oil
Dump millions of gallons
Of toxic waste
Into this once beautiful bay
Oh, this is what modern man
With his corporations
& his politicians
Has done to the most beautiful bay in the world
& a Fascist president applauds it all
In the name of freedom
& that Chevron sign
Lit up in neon
Shows us all what we've become
& radioactive rain keeps falling
& all the leaky-eyed poets know As
The beautiful bay keeps dying As
The entire water planet
Keeps dying
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
When radioactive knives are falling
On all the people everywhere
Shopping cart people forever busted
On squeaky wheels
What words can a poet drag down from the sky

To stop the toxic bleeding wheel
Spun by greedy corporations
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
To get old Tamalpais to sing again
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
To stop the toxic wheel from spinning
Great flocks of birds in huge black clouds
Now long gone to stone
As radioactive knives keep falling
Into the food chain What
Words can a poet Drag
Down from the sky
To bury the bastard Fascists forever
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
To drown Mafia Don
& his rabid pack of puff-bellied thugs
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
When chem trail clouds sprayed out jet planes
Filter down poisonous oxides
Into the food chain
What words can a poet drag down from the sky
For no more corporate/ocracy
No more desperate poor!
No more homeless hunched in death heaps!
No more demagogues!
No more Imperialist puppet presidence proxy wars!
NO MORE FASCISM!

HILTON OBENZINGER

AFTER CAPITALISM IS GONE

1

All the children will come home
All the mothers and fathers will come home
All the gangs will put their guns away
All the politicians will forget how to lie
All the soldiers will forget how to shoot
All work will become joy
All joy will become love
All the poems and plays
Will wipe the tears from our eyes
Shakespeare will finally be paid all he's worth
All the housekeepers will get paid all they're worth
All species will loaf and laugh
Animals Birds Fish
All will take it easy
All our breaths will rise and fall
All the dead will return to their tombs, satisfied
All the rivers will be pure and alive
All the rulers and the rich will be forgotten
We will be able to go to the supermarket
And buy groceries
With our good looks

2

Welcome to the Great Museum of Capital
Here are the archives
All the ephemera and inflated ideas
All the cruel rationales
Here are hunks of labor congealed into money
Paychecks and pink slips are attached to the walls

Relics of a time when we had to rely
On the good graces of investors and bosses
Bankers are pinned to display cases like butterflies
Police cars and armored cars are nailed to the floor
Fossil fuels have become fossils once again
In the Museum you can ponder
Displays of plastic water bottles
Heaped into giant piles
And pet rocks
You can contemplate the portraits
Of those who stole freedom
Paintings of those who stole our bodies
In slave ships and tenements
Fools who stole from all future generations
Without a thought or a care
In the portrait gallery they look like ordinary people
Sitting in their chairs with small dogs
On their laps
When we enter the Museum of Capital we are shocked
But when we leave we are grateful
To be alive in a world where all of this is gone
Readiness is all
That's true
And we had been ready for centuries
And ripeness is all, too
We drop from trees like heavy fruit
And have no idea how we became so sweet
Once we threw off Profit

3

Now that capitalism is gone
We can cross the border of exchange value
And discover that there are no borders
And no exchange
And all of our work is valued

It's hard to tell where one's genitals end
And your neighbor's tender places begin
At least according to Karl Marx's 1844 manuscripts
The division of labor in the sexual act
No longer divides
Once there was a bookstore named "Borders"
And that made no difference at all
Once you cross into a book there are no maps
You need to find your way out through your wits
And your vocabulary
People throughout the world forget
The lines that used to cut across our bodies
And today we walk across every border
Into each other's arms

TIMOTHY OCHOA

GENTRIFICATION

was built in a boardroom by people
who used to be too afraid to step off
the “L” in the very neighborhood they now own.
18th and Racine was home to El Corazón.
Casa Aztlan.
once vibrant, bright and colorful.
a sanctuary that gave us a sense of home.
how easy it is to wipe a culture clean
with a few strokes of a brush and some paint.
capitalism brought us coffee shops and gastro-pubs.
eliminating one bodega at a time.
discarding our existence like a child’s toy sold for quarters
at garage sale
investing in everything but our schools.
they tried to bribe us through our bellies, while disregarding
our minds
capitalism inflicted one of the worst types of violence; a
violence that leaves few visible bruises.
you see, they rendered brown people invisible
and without a voice.
one by one, we were priced out of the homes
we raised our children in.
but Pilsen is no longer for sale.
it is as close as I can get to Michoacán.
we don’t have to choose between gangs and the juice bars.
a neighborhood can be brown and safe.
we will not be
displaced. discarded. uprooted. persecuted. rendered
voiceless.
invest in our school not “school choice”
invest in jobs and people, not buildings and taxes
invest in local artists not commercialism
tear down the capitalist system or we will do it for you
brick by brick.

JERRY PENDERGAST

GAPS

Commercials used to sing
“Fall into The Gap”

Passing a Gap
outlet
I think of the gap
between
labor costs
and garment workers’ wages

Should I adore the maquilas
where Gap clothing is spun?
Should I adore the offices
where Gap commercials are spun?

I remember
slanting, shifting into gaps
on the line of scrimmage
for stunts, blitzes
goal line defenses
called shooting the gaps

A mannequin in the window
models pre ripped jeans
I think of someone
restitching, patching
a rip from a fall
or holes from long time wear
and wash.

Will a maquila worker mannequin
ever model jeans
with bullet holes

punishment for organizing
to narrow
the gap between her life
and the maquila owners
And the Gap board of directors
who “regret the incident”?

Will we see a surgeon mannequin
trying to close the wound
in dim lighting

EDWINA PENDARVIS

POLITICS ON THE OLD LEFT

Anarchists, say Marxist-Leninists,
are no good on the second day
of the revolution;
when the fighting is over,
you have to turn them out
or leave them behind
or lie to them about how
the rules will dissolve
like stitches closing an incision.

GREG POND

at the border #4

we know that those
who are the biggest diversity foes
will usually try to find a way
to separate you and me from us
so that we doubt each other
rarely agree and never trust
meanwhile those in control
always defend their own
and find ways to rationalize
to excuse and condone
the way this nation has chosen
to deal with the border crisis
which is to close the door
on asylum-seeking families
and show limited humanity
to folks who pose much less of a threat
than the lingering remnants of isis
or our ballooning national debt
migrants are demonized
whose only crime
was to choose not to die
in lands they've grown up
in lands that they still love
but lands turned so ruthless
dangerous and corrupt
that many had to take their families
risk their lives, walk for miles
and sometimes run
to escape the gangs, the machete
the government or the gun
to be lucky enough
to make it to our border
thinking their
immediate fears are done
but finding out much to their dismay
another nightmare has just begun.

JEANNE POWELL

COMFORT FOOD

under a burning sun
Marie crouched in the marketplace all day
watchful and lean.
her 5 cent pies were the best in the business
and business was brisk.
early in the week Marie worried
the wagon from the mountains was late
she needed the special dirt
trucked into Port au Prince once a week.
and the weather caused her to frown
overcast skies were bad for business.
she needed the sun to be harsh and unrelenting
like the politicians and soldiers
so she could bake. But first the mixing.
rich mountain dirt then precious water,
sugar from broken cane stalks
herbs rescued from dry earth.
stir and stir then shape the pies by hand.
lay them out like corpses
lining the boulevard when there is war
and there is never-ending war.
lay out the mud pies to dry
crucial to have a fierce and fiery sun.
her thin body bent over the pies
bent down in gratitude to the sun.
the good weather held all week
fresh mud pies were ready to sell.
her people were starving so business was good
and in the soft breezes at midnight
the ghost of Toussaint L'Ouverture
wailed through avenues stained with blood.

JULIE ROGERS

ASYLUM

for *The immigrants*

*Aliens have been sighted in fields across America-
no one can explain the light. JR*

Run. find your whole,
hole in & dig. No past here,
invisible—thought you were hidden *but*
suddenly you're seen
even in the dark.
Dirt under your nails
tunneling through deep history—
no longer privileged to work for the privileged
signs of arrival and departure everywhere
hanging over the revolving door
that takes you in or out—
waking to face yourself shadowed
living hide & seek
lost and found on both sides
of a wall in a country
you're unsure of
w/o papers to explain
you're already home.



Gerhard Bondzin
The Path of the Red Banner
Kulturpalast, Dresden, 1969
(mural detail)

LEW ROSENBAUM

WHAT TIME IS IT?

What time is it in mid-town Chicago?
Lower Wacker Drive burrows beneath
the web of streets that cover Chicago's
capital of corporate accumulation and cruelty
serving the entrails of the high rise heroes
of the Commercial Club and
World Business Chicago
In the crevices of the walls that line the drive
huddle people without shelter
just as they have since the 1930s
driven out,
cleansed out time and again
only to return
because they have no place else to go
here or the other encampments around the city
sprawled in doorways and alleys
camouflaged amid bushes in parks
more or less exposed to the elements
or the pollution of passing cars.
Less than a mile away
Ken Griffin, Illinois's richest thief,
Citadel's hedge fund manipulator,
bought a condominium
for which he paid more
than anyone had ever paid
in Illinois for a home
over 55 million bux
before that, he thought he might like
to rub elbows with English royalty,
he bought a home just down the road from
Buckingham Palace (set him back a cool 100 mill)
but don't cry for Kenny's loss dear friends
he'd already dropped more than twice that

to build a mansion on land that snuggles up
to Mar a Lago's American royalty
and — get this — half-way through
he stopped construction
he'd changed his concept and began to
deconstruct — to build a new grand palace
and then, to cap it all, needing a place
to lay his head in New York City
he bought the top three floors of a
Manhattan high rise
for over 230 million
a new record for a home purchase
in the free market of the You Ess of A.
Makes me wonder
why *do* people tent under Wacker Drive
when they could buy a condo on
Michigan Avenue's magnificent mile?
maybe if they just got a job
flipping burgers at McDonald's
oh wait. half of them do work
and robotic burger flippers expelled the other half
from their insecure flop-job
where there never were two nickels
to rub together and dream of food.
Why do people tent under Wacker Drive
when ten percent of new rental apartments
are affordable?
for whom? "rent control" spirals out of control
squatting on the sidewalk, against the wall,
a grin on his brown weathered face exposes
the gaps in his teeth as he spits the words out
gestures towards his patch of concrete
they ain't raising my rent here.
Why do people tent anywhere in this city of opportunity,
when cities pass laws encouraging eviction
if someone in the household commits a crime
any crime

or even has a guest who has a criminal past
welcome to the streets of Chicago
Which brings me back to high-rise hotshot honcho Ken
Griffin
whose billions blossomed like fetid fruit from folks like
the burger flippers under Wacker Drive
stolen from lost wages and flipped foreclosures
what gives him, with his crime-in-the-suites pedigree,
the right to hold us hostage to his indulgence
and that whole surrealestate felonious mogul crew he hangs
with
put them and their corporate capitalist kindred in prison
make all their holdings public
open up the penthouses to the homeless
that's what time it is.

GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK (Ireland)

bráisléad briste

gabhadh díoltóir bráisléad
(arís) ar thraein
in Mumbai
coigistíodh na bráisléid
dearg, buí, gorm, corcra agus araile

ar a slí go dtí
stáisiún na bpoilíní
chonaic sí bogha ceatha –
bráisléad briste –
sa spéir
 gan dath

σπασμένο βραχιόλι

μια πωλήτρια βραχιολιών
σε ένα τραίνο της Βομβάης
συνελήφθη (ξανά)
τα βραχιόλια της κατασχέθηκαν
κόκκινα, κίτρινα, μπλε, μωβ, και άλλα
στον δρόμο
για το αστυνομικό τμήμα
είδε ένα ουράνιο τόξο -
ένα σπασμένο βραχιόλι -
στον ουρανό
 άχρωμο

(Translated into Greek by Sarah Thilykou)

GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK (Ireland)

broken bangle

a bangle seller
on a Mumbai train
was arrested (again)
her bangles confiscated
red, yellow, blue, purple, et cetera

on her way
to the police station
she saw a rainbow –
a broken bangle –
in the sky
 colourless

(Translated from Irish by the author)

SONNY SAN JUAN, JR (Philippines)

PUNTA SPARTIVENTO

“In the naked and outcast, seek love there.” –William Blake

Kamusmusa’y pinaglahuan, Mahal ko
Hinubdang kariktan ng lawa, bundok at ulap na
maaliwalas--Bakit malulungkot?
Sa kabilang ibayo nagliliyab ang mga bulaklak, pula, dilaw,
asul o kulay luntian

Ngunit ang nakaraan ay sumisingit sa ganda’t aliwalas ng
kalikasan
Bumibiyak sa pinagbuklod na puso’t humahati sa
pinagtipan
Nagugunita ang pinakasabikan
“Ininis sa hukay ng dusa’t pighati”
Alaala ng kinabukasan—
anong balighong simbuyo ang naibulalas ng dumaragsang
hangin?

Sa dalampasigan ng lawa dito sa Punta Spartivento
kung saan naghihiwalay ang hangin—sa kaliwa o sa
kanan--
Tila walang pagpapasiya, itinutulak sa kaliwa o kinakabig
sa kanan
Pinaghahati ng tadhana o kapalaran?
O itinitulak ng pagkamuhi, kinakabig ng pagmimithi?

Anong uring ibon doon sa kabilang pampang—
pumapaimbulog, pumapailanlang?
Tila kuko ng mandaragit ang humahagupit ngayon
Nagsisikip ang dibdib, balisa sa pagkabigo, pinagtiim ang
bagang

SONNY SAN JUAN, JR (Philippines)

PUNTA SPARTIVENTO

“In the naked and outcast, seek love there.” –William Blake

Innocence has flickered out, my Beloved,
The disrobed glory of the lake mountains clouds is the
gift offered by nature
From the distant shore burn the flowers symbolizing the
promised blessings....
But what wings of the past sneak in
shrouding the beauty and sanctity of our meeting?
splitting the unity of desire, dividing our tryst?
Remembering the violated victims “plunged in the grave of
suffering and despair....”
Souvenirs of the future--
what tidings are trumpeted by the turbulent winds?
They killed Juvy Magsino, Benjaline Hernandez, Eden
Marcellana, Rafael Bangit, Alyce Claver...
On the shores of Punta Spartivento, the waves encounter
each other and separate--
right or left, here and there--as if without any decision,
pushed to the right
or pulled to the left
divided by fate or fortune?
driven by hatred, attracted by hope?
What sails have traveled to the other shore--moving to and
fro, up
and down, hither and thither?
Famished claws of vultures are striking down--
Scarcely does the wanderer sense the crimes that have
occurred
and are now occurring--
755 murdered, 181 abducted and abused--
Was it all a waste, Salud Algabre?

Buhay ma'y abuting magkalagot-lagut—walang kailangan....

Doon ang pag-ibig sa mga hinagupit ng walang-katarungang orden,
doon sa mga dukha't ibinukod ng kabuktutan.

Agaw-dilim sa Punta Spartivento, humhati't bumibiyak sa agos ng panahon at karanasan
Sa pangungulila, kumikintal sa gunita ang mga mandirigmang sumakabilang buhay
Di matatarok ang lalim ng pag-ibig sa tinubuang lupa

Patuloy ang paglalakbay sa kabila ng hanggahang humahati't naghihiwalay sa atin

Mahal ko, namimilaylay sa iyong labi ang damdaming biyaya ng nahubdang kamalayan
Nakintal sa dalumat, sa pagitan ng panganib at dahas, ang kailangan at di-kailangan
Ang walang halaga at may halaga, pinaghahati't pinaghihiwalay...

Pinagpala ang mga kaibigang namundok at nag-alay ng kanilang buhay
Pinagpala ang mga walang pag-aaring nagdusa't nagdurusa para sa kinabukasan
Pinagpala ang mga bayaning naghiwalay at humati, nagbukod at nagbiyak
Magtatagpo ang lahat sa Punta Spartivento ng pakikipagtuos.

“Even if a life is extinguished?” how many more leaps?

Those tortured by this unjust order link us together,
they connect and are joined by what has
disappeared, drowned by barbarism....

Dusk falls on Punta Spartivento....
dividing and splitting the flow of experience....

In my solitude, all the combatants who have perished are
inscribed
in the psyche, transcending the claws and fangs
of this port that divides and fragments---
My beloved, in your lips treads the dawn of the promised
beatitude,
grafted into the cut of grief and rapture,
of what is needed and not needed,
of what is valueless and what is valued,
while we embrace, our jaws clenched,
attacking the shore’s whirlwind.....

Blessed are the thousands of victims of the oligarchy and
compradors
in the fissure of the past now sunk and tomorrow
heaving up, surging

Blessed are the comrades who separated and divided,
selected and cut up
The world will know who deserted and who volunteered,
those who fought and those who fled--
Everyone will meet here at the Punta Spartivento of the
revolution

(Translated from Tagalog by the author)

NATASHA SANTIAGO (Cuba)

COSAS DE LA POESÍA

“Lo infinito existe
Para concebirlo, hay que formarse dos ideas:
la de conjunto de seres y la de negación de límite.”

José Martí

I

Hojas de hierba
libro prohibido que ha sido y será
posible perfeccionar
Siempre
Asesinato es igual a terrorismo
desde Abraham Lincoln
“aquella poderosa estrella muerta del Oeste”.
Y el poeta se resiste
aborrece la ausencia de libertad
mientras algunos que aducen
continuamente
ánimo y términos anglófonos
no saben realmente de ti.

II

“... yo puedo más que vosotros, porque
soy amor”.

Walt Whitman

Hojas de Hierba
Perfección al infinito
sin recorridos insulares
sólo la intención de discernir
unir
Engrosa como Canto de si mismo
la i ma gen
que destaca el verbo aún intrascendente
por consagración al Amor
Lección: ir a ellas y ellos
los jóvenes
que dejan de serlo
cuando calculan.

NATASHA SANTIAGO (Cuba)

SOME THINGS ABOUT POETRY

“The infinite exists
To conceive it, two ideas have to grow:
the entirety of being and the denial of limits.”
José Martí

I

Leaves of Grass

forbidden book that has been and will be
Always
possible to perfect
since Abraham Lincoln
“that mighty dead star of the West.”
Murder is the same as terrorism
And the poet resists
abhors the absence of freedom
while others argue
courage and English idioms
continuously
they really know nothing about you

II

“ . . . I can do more than you, because
I am love.” *Walt Whitman*

Leaves of Grass

Perfection to infinity
without insular routes
only the desire to discern
link
Swell like Song of Myself
the i ma ge
highlighting the still insignificant verb
by devotion to Love
Lesson: go to them and they
the young ones
will cease to be so
when they figure it out.

(Translated from Spanish by Judith Ayn Bernhard)

SANDRO SARDELLA (Italia)

PRIMAVERA DEL '19 DISCANTO

(a Giulio Stocchi e Nanni Balestrini)

1

è più che un tremore
è come una scossa prolungata e vibrante
è una contrazione continua che fa farfugliare
è la guerra ai poveri
è la guerra dei poveri ai poveri
è nella laguna dei tradimenti
è nella deriva infestata di una miscela tra resistenza e
contrabbando
è che non smette di mordere dentro
è un odore d'aprile di timidi tepori di lievi sudari di
bandiere
è Giulio Stocchi "Compagno Poeta" sempre la rabbia di
quei giorni
è "La cantata rossa .. " ribelle che non tace ai tempi bui
è dove cantano i gamberi
è dove i fiori non hanno paura della polvere sulle scarpe
è un'antica allergia alla libertà
è starnuti d'amore
è passi cinesi per una ballata rap
è un'insensibile indifferenza da paura
è una fragile solitudine di canarini in miniera
è prima che torni il fuoco armato
è parole nel silenzio dei violini
è l'orizzonte che parla

2

è che c'è un capriolo in tangenziale
è confine come separazione come connessione e
attraversamento
è Balestrini che andò seducente vorticoso di parole di
rivoluzione

SANDRO SARDELLA (Italy)

SPRING '19 DISCANTO

(for Giulio Stocchi and Nanni Balestrini)

1

it's more than a tremor
it's like a drawn-out shuddering quake
it's a constant spasm that makes you sputter
it's war on the poor
it's the war of the poor on the poor
it's in the lagoon of betrayal
it's in the infected wafting of some blend of resistance and
contraband
it's that it won't quit biting inside
it's an april scent tepid timid glow of slight shrouds of flags
it's Giulio Stocchi "Comrade Poet" forever the rage of
those days
it's "The red cantata .. " insurgent unsilenced in the dark of
the age
it's where prawns sing
it's where the flowers don't fear a little dirt on the boots
it's an ancient allergy to liberty
it's sneezing out of love
it's Chinese steps to a rap ballad
it's numb indifference out of fear
it's the brittle solitude of canaries in a coalmine
it's before the return of artillery fire
it's words in the silence of violins
it's the speech of the horizon

2

it's that there's a deer on the interstate
it's border as in separation as in connection and crossing
it's Balestrini who went swirling seductive with words of
revolution

è teatro delle parole materia composta scomposta
ricomposta
è necessario leggere le “Istruzioni Preliminari”
è che ce n’è per tutti
è che ti pensi a colori e sei o bianco o nero o in
bianco&nero
è la luna sul Colosseo che sputa sul Viminale
è l’acciaio in fumo dell’avvelenata Taranto
è sentiamoci qualche volta nel pericoloso bisogno di
scrivere lettere
è lo sventolare libertario degli striscioni antisalvini
è domenica all’alba
è che me ne vado come un ricordo scomodo
è il respiro profondo delle nuove foglie

3

è la vergogna di tenersi addosso la tuta da lavoro
è Steve Lacy troppo dimenticato
è persone, umani, che lottano per essere giusti senza guerra
è viaggio di primavera desolato dell’Europa di oggi
è guardate questo paese
è geroglifico cangiante verde acerbo
è pittura gorgogliante sontuosa e spinosa di Renzo Ferrari
è vibrazione di luce vivente
è volantino di poesia che cammina di Ferruccio Brugnaro
è vergogna italiana senza memoria
è basta kani non solo in poesia
è lo zero virgola della voracità degli infelici
è per strada persone inebetite incollate allo smartphone
è tenendo per mano l’ombra
è il grido di “Gioia e Rivoluzione” di Demetrio Stratos
è tenendo per mano il sole
è la notte che mi tortura
è a fronte alta nonostante tutto
è Compagni ascoltate (ancora) le loro voci.

it's a theatre of word matter composed decomposed
recomposed
it's necessary to read the Preliminary Instructions
it's that there's plenty to go around
it's that you think you're full color and then you're white or
black or black-and-white
it's the moon over the Colosseum expectorating onto
Viminal Hill
it's the steel going up in smoke in poisoned Taranto
it's let's catch up once in a while in the dangerous urge to
write letters
it's the libertarian flutter of banners against Salvini
it's Sunday early dawn
it's that I'm leaving like an inconvenient memory
it's the deep breath of new growth

3

it's the shame in leaving on your work clothes
it's Steve Lacy far too forgotten
it's people, humans, fighting for justice without war
it's the dismal spring road trip of today's Europe
it's just look at this country
it's green unripe iridescent hieroglyphic
it's a bubbling sumptuous spinous painting by Renzo
Ferrari
it's the quivering of living light
it's a walking poetry pamphlet by Ferruccio Brugnaro
it's Italian disgrace without memory
it's down with dogz not just in poetry
it's the decimal point of the gluttony of the dispossessed
it's out in the street vacant people epoxied to smartphones
it's going hand in hand with darkness
it's Demetrio Stratos crying "Joy and Revolution"
it's going hand in hand with the sun
it's the night that tortures me
it's head held high no matter what
it's Listen, Comrades (again) for their voices.

(Translated from Italian by Lapo Guzzini)

RATI SAXENA (India)

बस इतना ही तो करना है

बस इतना ही तो करना है
बस इतना ही करना है तुम्हे
एक तीली जलाओ, इत्मीनान से उस कूड़े की तरह फेंक दो
जो तुम्हारे लिये आयातित किया जा रहा है

फिर आग से लपटों में, जलने दो
उन सब कालिखों को
धर्म गुरुओं की गुफाओं को
ठेकेदारों की बदबुओं को

बुझाने मत देना इस आग को
अब इसी से तुम्हें चूल्हा जलाना है
तमाम भूखे पेटों के लिये
खाली दीमागों के लिये
जिन्दा रहने की चाहों के लिये

बस इतना ही तो करना है तुम्हे
तबियत से सुलगाओं एक तीली
तमाम रुहों के अंधियारों के खिलाफ
खूबसूरत अहसासों के साथ
जलाओं बस एक तीली
मशालें अपने आप जल उठेंगी.

RATI SAXENA (India)

YOU HAVE TO DO ONLY THIS MUCH

You have to do only this much:
light a match, throw it
assuredly towards the trash
that is being brought in for you

Then let burn in flames
all that soot,
the caves of dharma gurus,
the stench of the vanguards

Don't extinguish this fire
because you have to cook in it
for many an empty stomach,
for absent minds,
for the desire to be alive

You have to do only this much:
light a match with pleasure
against the darkness of all souls,
with beautiful sentiments;
light just one match;
flambeaux will get lit themselves.

(Translated from Hindi by the author)

BARBARA JOE SCHMIDLAPP

THE INTERNATIONAL OPERATOR

He has an ancient crank telephone
bought at an auction. He turns the handle
and generates enough current
to make his genitals stir and swing.
He connects to the long-distance operator
where at the *futbal* field, Santiago Chile
the nameless ones are being executed. Victor Hara
sings his songs that attempt to make this
poem whole. Somewhere
midst the fragments of pestilence
and pain the black and metal rain
drops from the telephone wires
and forms the name
Michael Vernon Townley
who assassinated Orlando Letelier
and then the names Nixon, Kissinger, and Bush.
In Spanish the guards listen to
his last words, *See-ya*. And the cord
is coiled about the neck of the nearly naked
teenager as she reads the love poems of Neruda.
The man from the CIA listens.
He tries to keep his body from moving
from turning turning into dust. Her words
shuttering and shattering against his ear. She
gyrates her young and nervous hips and hangs
herself upside-down over the living room couch.
The company man turns
the language of love into
the language of the killing field.
The image in the poem, deep into
scars, scares. The concentrated
power. Greed. Lust. Distance. Longing.
The burns the wire makes on the genitals.

Sitting on a wire a blackbird's claws
wrapped in a circle close in
to a noise squeezing cutting off into
a gasp the last song of a man condemned
to never know that, as he falls down,
he lifts us. He is that kind of man.
We are that kind of fool.
We dream of a hand on the trigger
ready to harvest bankers and politicians.
It's late. I cannot sleep.
Even in a fever my grandson,
who is barely one, reaches
his arm lifting and I
hold him up for his hand to play
along the light switch. In the morning
in the distance it is light enough to see
the gathering of mercenaries. The cold reality
of things wraps spirit 'round sound
and the words he learns are not names of objects
but activities made real by resistance
to his fingers. I whisper words
he will one day understand.
And the many meanings of words
all words do not disturb
him or me. He will know who
is the enemy. He will know what to do. This
is the time for singing and a time
for grieving. It's better
better than all of this bleeding.

The joy of my life
taken from me
a red-tail hawk in a tree
sixty, seventy feet
a wild cherry and me
in the still point
of a distant presence
in a surround of crows

caw caw cawing the measure
of their annoyance, and now
my displeasure hopping
in a flutter of feathers
to another limb and sounding
broken as I am
with the turmoil of crows
diving at the hawk crying
denying their impotent
attacks at the hawk's
assured complacency
he is no red tail
he is impenetrable
he is the product of myth
he is the American eagle
he is an armed drone
he is madness and mayhem
the attack continues
the crows scream
the ultimate predator sits
denying its fate
to have turned into metaphor
sad symbol of power and pain
the wastage of liberty and life
there in this distant view,
the birds me and you
there's no eagle no crows no
walnut and cherry trees
it's smart bombs
Fallujah Baghdad Kabul
abstract and distant killing
a remote electric claw
and the caw and call to this
the crows scream
remember resist revolt

KIM SHUCK

WHEN PROTECTION HAS BECOME

After the word has been bought and paid for
They announce the beginning and call it after
something they own

Word

They torture it

Pull away the skin of it with

Slow

Intention

Membrane from meat

Tiny movements of the smallest knife

Lifting out the bleeding core

The best spells take patience

Take muscle

Every recut word

Has a core of money

A core of fear

In our criminal enterprise

We peel pressed words from large family

Traditions

Out of the creases of our unnamed, impossible, extinct

Lives

We set our unowned words on the scatter winds

Our feral and bolted words

Improvised and flying

So that they fall slowly

In unimagined heroic healing

In border cages and secret hysterical cells

In meetings of the important and terrified

To give them back their birth name

JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER (Germany)

oder traktl

der die menschheit sah
aufgestellt vor feuerschlünden
nacht in traurigen hirnen
neunzehnhundertvierzehn
bei grodek dann
seufzten die geister der erschlagenen
zehn lagen übereinander geschichtet
stöhnten die gepeinigten
schwer verwundet in der scheune
seine augen weit aufgerissen
blank das entsetzen
was kann ich tun?
wie soll ich helfen?
es ist unerträglich
der menschheit ganzer jammer
hier hat er ihn angefasst
machtvoll unversieglich
o weißer engel
schwester du

JÜRGEN SCHNEIDER (Germany)

or traktl

who saw humankind
standing before jaws of hell fire
night in brains filled with sorrow
then at grodek
nineteen fourteen
the spirits of the slaughtered sighing
groans of the tormented
ten atop one another in layers
gravely wounded in the barn
his eyeballs ripped wideopen
stark stare's ghastriness
what can I do?
how should I help them?
It is unbearable
the whole human howling
here it had seized hold of him
sheer force unfailing
O white angel
you, Sister.

(Translated from German by Scott Thompson)

NINA SERRANO

COPS KILL BLACK MEN

Cops kill black men
Everybody knows it even if we don't mention it
We can't call the police
when it might be prudent
because we fear that someone
who is black may be anywhere nearby
and might end up dead over a small civil matter
compared with human life
The news story says a black man was sleeping in the car
with a gun in his lap in the parking lot
Afraid to wake him
5 cops shot him in unison 25 times
He was a young man
now mourned by grieving family and friends
So did he have a gun in his lap
while he slept in the driver's seat
or was it planted there by his murderers
to explain his death to the taxpayers
How could he fall asleep with a gun in his lap
so near his privates
what if he triggered it in his sleep
Wouldn't that thought alone keep him awake
Too many guns, everywhere guns
In England the police didn't used to carry guns
If only we didn't just copy their language
but considered their constabulary tradition
worth emulating
As Gilbert and Sullivan said
"A policeman's lot is not a happy one."
Crime and punishment make a shadow
where our hate, fear, and violent anger is controlled
We cast the police as the guardians of our safety
The jails as our protection

Laws as our rules of behavior
The devil laughs, pitchfork in hand,
administrating justice
where money is might and right
in a racist unjust system trying to fool destiny
as we pollute and consume
the fundamental elements needed for human survival
We choke on the smell of the sulfur of evil
in this eternal conflict
between good and bad
hate and love

MAZAHER SHAHAMAT (Iran)

به درازا کشیده بود جنگ
باید به خط مقدم می بردیم درختان را
درختان پیدا
پنهان
فراری
و آنان که نهال ضعیفی بودند
سرشان را تراشیدیم
و لباس فرم پوشیدند
اما
در اولین آتشباری
همه افتادند
مردند
سوختند
درختان سربازان خوبی نبودند
و ما
بدترین کارشناسی نظامی را فکر کرده بودیم
هر درختی تابوت خودش بود
شعر از مظاهر شهامت (ایران)

MAZAHER SHAHAMAT (Iran)

THE WAR WAS TAKING LONG

The war was taking long,
we had to take trees
to the frontlines.

Trees visible, hidden, escapees.
We had to shave the heads of
those weak saplings.
They wore uniforms,
but with the first pouring of fire
they all fell to the ground, died, burned.

The trees were not good soldiers,
our military calculations were wrong,
each tree became its own casket.

(Translated from Farsi by Mahnaz Bahidian)

KESHAB SIGDEL

GORGON'S SHOW IN THE TOWN HALL

They invited everyone to the show—
My wife, my wife's first husband
My stepdaughters and myself—
In the gala room of the town hall.
'We look forward to your gracious presence!'
Gracious isn't just a word!
It's a gesture of our civilization:
Be ready to adhere to the cosmopolitan etiquettes,
Shy away from the clichés and the slangs,
Make sure the shoe is polished and shined
And the skirts ironed with the best crease—
Do you have the latest version of the palmtop?
What is your favorite brand to drink?
Is your car modeled in an environment friendly way?
Aren't you sick with those immigrants in your colony?
These aren't just questions—
They were scanning for our gullibility-graph
Because they wanted to ensure
We are psychologically ready to see the Gorgon's head!

And yes, we did everything to attend the show:
Who doesn't want to see the Gorgon's head?
A myth that we heard as a children's story
Was about to come true!
My grandfather had told the story to my father
And he to his son!
"Anyone who sees the Gorgon's head
Turns into a stone himself!"
(Erratum: These days, they say, it's not stone, but gold!)
Gorgons are democratic!
Egalitarian!
Never panic about your race,
Forget the gender, class, or nationality you belong to!

Town hall indiscriminately offers you everything
To see, smell, feel, and taste
Until you get intoxicated enough
To pull open the curtain
And see the Gorgons!

Gorgon's head is a rare show
(But no one has ever existed to tell what Gorgon looks
like!)

But they had promised us this rare chance
There were advertisements on TVs and radios
In the morning papers and the social sites
They wanted us to join the show
And cheer and applaud
The scheme of the "gold body."
We were all excited and thrilled
About the Gorgons in the town!

Post scriptum:

*Yes, they went to the town hall
We'll never know if they saw the Gorgons
Or if they were transformed into the golden bodies
(If so, who own those gold bodies now?)
But since then, they never returned to their place
The Mayor of our town declared—
They were the most civilized subjects in the town
Who showed interest in everything the town had to offer!
The Municipal office has now built stone statues
In their loving memory!*

PPS:

*(Stone inscription: These statues are erected with generous
support from Look-head Co. Ltd.)*

Warning:

stick no bills on the statues as a tribute to these heroes

SANDRO SPINAZZI (Italia)

COMUNISTA

Fuori moda
quasi fosse un taglio
di capelli
fuori di testa
come se il farneticare
generale
fosse sano
fuori dal tempo
quando estremo
venduto
se moderato
colpevole
di crimini passati
quasi che
cristianesimo
capitalismo
democrazia
non grondassero sangue
quanto l'orrore
nazifascista
vivo e vegeto
oggi come ieri
sorrisetti saputelli
smorfie televisive
giovani rimbecilliti
pose firmate
interesse privato
etica zero
mani strofinate
sentimenti fasulli
ordine pulizia
polizia malevola
denaro infame
morte

SANDRO SPINAZZI (Italy)

COMMUNIST

Out of fashion
like a haircut
out of mind
like general raving
could be sane
out of the time
when extreme
sold
if moderate
guilty
of past crimes
almost seems that
christianity
capitalism
democracy
aren't dripping blood
as the horror
of nazi-fascism's
alive and well
today as yesterday
little smartass smiles
tv's smirks
young morons
designer's poses
private interest
no ethic
rubbed hands
fake feelings
order cleanliness
infamous money
death
and all this wealthy
sneering
at every hope

e tutto lo sghignazzare
benestante
a ogni speranza
sarebbe questo il prezzo
imposto
come voi dite
dal mercato
l'incubo
per quale barattare
il sogno ?
come un vestito
spiegazzato
d'altri tempi
come il cigolio
di una gabbia
spalancata
il sacro
di ogni cosa
irriso
vilipeso
risalirà la china
della storia
quando le parole
distorte ridicolizzate
torturate
suoneranno di nuovo
come spari
pieni di senso
come trombe squillanti
per ogni orecchio
rimasto pulito
chi vuol sentire sentirà
e gli ultimi
finalmente
un giorno
saranno i primi
com'è giusto
che sia.

will this be the price
imposed
as you said
from the market
the nightmare
to trade
the dream?
like a yesteryear
dress
crumpled
like the squeak
of a cage
wide open
the holiness
of everything
mocked
vilified
will climb back up the slope
of history
when words
distorted debunked
tortured
will sound again
like gunshot
full of meaning
as shrilling trumpets
for every ear
that remains clean
who wants to listen will
and the lasts
finally
one day
will be the firsts
as it's right
to be.

(Translated from Italian by Katy Bird)

DOREEN STOCK

TO THE GUN DEALERS

There being some sixty-three thousand of you in America
more than two times the number of McDonalds and
Starbucks

combined, I've thought long and hard about a suitable
chorus for this ode

I've decided on *Cry, the Beloved Country*, because in the
ancient Sixties

my entire 10th-grade class once read it chapter-by-chapter
and at the end,

the hero, Kumalo, is left weeping for his son, executed for
an act of gun violence.

Cry, the Beloved Country because the actual number of
guns in our sixty-three thousand storefronts,

unprotected by any laws for how

they are to be stored at any given location, are that many
wild lions

living in our communities without cages.

Cry, the Beloved Country, because thefts do occur, you
know, at the time

I was teaching 10th grade we had no lock-down drills, and
we were reading

a novel about South Africa.

Cry the Beloved Country, because now we have them, lock-
down-drills, special,

just for my three grandchildren, and many many Kumalos
are left, weeping right here.

MATTHEW TALEBI

REQUIEM FOR CHILDREN

Don't kill babies and kids: they're innocent, fearful.

Don't kill children: they're all tearful.

Leave them alone to play their games, hide and seek
and potsy .

Maybe skating or "Johnny on the pony".

They don't know greed, hatred and war.

Have moms and dads who give them love,

As you do yours.

Don't hurt them.

You have no right to burn them,

They're the essence, a running stream of life, the future of
humanity.

Don't bomb to irradiate them, don't terrify them.

Brilliant stars of planets, they're in valleys and high
mountains,

Not the ones on epaulettes.

Blind to skin-color, they never know evil. Don't shoot
them.

They haven't even tasted the wonders and pleasure of
adolescence.

Leave them alone with their smiles and happiness to live.

Don't ... kill them.

HUANG VU THUAT (Viet Nam)

NÓI VỚI HỌNG SÚNG

Nhân gem bức ảnh bác sĩ Piter Martinez(Cu Ba)

lấy đầu bịt hong súng

Tao biết mày có mặt trong cuộc đời này từ lâu
cả những điều mày which nhất
máu à nước mắt
khi mày khắc ra lửa
hàng triệu người ra đi
hàng triệu cuộc chia ly
hàng triệu đôi chân trên nạng gỗ
sự chết va khổ đau cho mày lên ngôi

cổ họng mày sâu hun hút
như hàm cá sấu
như miệng núi lửa
như hố đen bí ẩn giữa thiên hà
tao gặp mày từ chiến trường Đức Pháp Ý Nga
Trung Hoa Nhật Bản
miền Siria Iran Irac khói trùm kín đêm ngày
tao không ngờ chiến nay
nghiễm nhiên thành thoi trong bảo tàng lịch sử

tao cũng gặp mày với cái cổ xoắn song trên
tượng đài nước Mỹ
các làng quê thành phố Việt Nam
bàn chân mày rải khắp
như ngày xưa cha ông đi tìm đất hứa
có một điều mày không bao giờ hiểu
không bao giờ thấy
không bao giờ biết
vi sao tao đưa đầu lợt thỏm trong cổ họng mày

tao chỉ muốn nòng súng kia biến thành
chiếc bình xanh biếc
để cắm vào nơi đó những bông hoa.

HUANG VU THUAT (Viet Nam)

TALK TO A GUN-MUZZLE

*To see the photo of Dr. Peter Martinez (Cu Ba),
use the head to cover the gun muzzle.)*

I know you've been in this life for a long time
and the things you like most,
are blood and tears;
when you spit fire
millions of people are gone,
millions of lives are separated,
millions of pairs of legs are on crutches:
it's death and suffering, for you to ascend the throne

your throat's very deep and smoldering
like a crocodile jaw
like a volcano mouth
like a mystic black hole in the middle of the galaxy
I met you on the battlefields of Germany, France, Italy, Russia,
China, Japan,
the regions of Syria, Iran, Iraq where smoke covered
all of night and day.
I can't believe this afternoon:

unruffled, resting inside the history museum
I met you again with a twisted neck (the knotted barrel)
in the American monument;
Vietnam villages and cities with
your feet scattered everywhere
like in the old days when your dad went in search of the
promised land.
There's something you never understood
never saw
never knew.

Why do I put my head inside your throat?
I just want that gun muzzle to turn into a blue vase
to place flowers in there.

(Translated from Vietnamese by Hai Pham)

ENRIQUE GRACIA TRINIDAD (España)

NO

No hay bandera que valga un sólo muerto.
No hay fe que se sujete con el crimen.
No hay dios que se merezca un sacrificio.
No hay patria que se gane con mentiras.
No hay futuro que viva sobre el miedo.
No hay tradición que ampare la ignominia.
No hay honor que se lave con la sangre.
No hay razón que requiera la miseria.
No hay paz que se alimente de venganza.
No hay progreso que exija la injusticia.
No hay voz que justifique una mordaza.
No hay justicia que llegue de una herida.
No hay libertad que nazca en la vergüenza.

ENRIQUE GRACIA TRINIDAD (Spain)

NO

There is no flag that is worth a single death
There is no faith that subordinates itself to crime
There is no god that merits a sacrifice
There is no country that improves with lies
There is no future that lives on fear
There is no tradition that protects disgrace
There is no honor that bathes itself in blood
There is no cause that requires misery
There is no peace that feeds on vengeance
There is no progress that requires injustice
There is no voice that justifies a gag
There is no justice that comes from a wound
There is no freedom that is born from shame

(Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke)

DAVID VOLPENDESTA

FORBIDDEN PSALM TO IPHIGENIA

for Steve Hellman

*I can hear it, touch it,
it moves so slightly at my fingertips,
it's telling me it's always blowing;
I can feel it
but men, the strong masculine powerful men,
who hold no fear in their hearts
these heroes whose weapons will conquer Troy
to capture Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world
for whom men would die,
say the wind doesn't move,
that it refuses to blow!*
Yet I feel it softly kiss my forehead,
and hold my small hands.
In front of me is a path
slowly winding to the top of the mountain
to a marble altar where I will be sacrificed
so that the wind may blow
and men, the rugged men
may engage in killing each other
because that's what rugged men do!
Ah, but the melodic wind is blowing,
I feel it, hear it, and smell its fragrance of lemon
and fresh rain scenting my palms.
Why can't warriors with a sword and shield feel what a 13-
year-old girl feels?
But rugged warriors hide from their feelings!
*How can they sense what a 13-year-old girl feels in the
depths of her heart?*
The sharp point of a cold knife
must be raised above my breast
and blood will be spilled so that the wind may blow!
Ah, and who has decreed this, the gods?

The same gods who started this war?
But why have all the gods said this?
Have the goddesses said this as well
or are the gods and goddesses divided;
*wouldn't it be easier to have just one god
who is both female and male?*
Ah but what do I know, I'm only a 13-year-old girl
*men only use 13-year-old girls as an excuse so they can
slaughter one another!*

On the beach is my father, Agamemnon,
the pride of Greek warriors,

covered with sand and mud.
He's the leader of the Greek army
where all the soldiers are professional killers,
skilled in the art of slaughter
and he leads them to the glory of the blood baths
where moans and cries of agony scream for revenge!
Animals with jagged claws and sharp teeth
feel their veins and arteries sliced by swords and knives
by ravenous Greeks *whose lust for murder is insatiable!*
Agamemnon wants blood to flow as a reward
to his courageous men who will scream with delight as they
slaughter the Trojan Heroes
who will keep falling to the ground, their limbs mangled,
their sweaty heads rolling on the ground decapitated!
If only the wind had blown, if only it
hadn't remained calm
and instead we learned to live peacefully
and Helen had never beheld Paris with his pretty looks and
his black heart filled with poison!
Then I, Iphigenia, would never have been laid upon the
altar
as my father, my brave and doubly heroic father lifts his
knife to carve up my flesh!
Yes, I am to be sacrificed so the wind may blow.

I am a 13-year-old girl, but men don't think of girls or
for that matter women
when it's time to proclaim glory from other men
because women know nothing of the glory derived from a
sword!

In Greek society women aren't even a factor, men
determine everything, men say what's important.
Well I say that's wrong, yes, I, a 13-year-old girl
because I know *I have a soul*, a cornucopia of tender
feelings and soft tears,
but men scoff at that and say that tears are the expression of
women not of men!

I truly feel sorry for men; they are unaware that they
are plotting their own funeral
with their bravado and their need to be in charge so they
can dominate everything in their path.
It's so obvious they haven't the slightest idea of what
they're doing!

Fools, can't they feel that the wind is always blowing?
But men only hear *what they want to hear*,
that's why they think the wind isn't blowing
and it isn't blowing... at least not for them!

TANE WARD

NOTES ON WOKENESS

Awaken
From slumber
From ignorance
Like the enlightened
Rise from the material prison
Of the colonial world.
Awaken from the hipster
Appropriation of Black vernacular.
Awaken from trendiness
And using knowledge as an agent of division
And hierarchy.
To sleep
To be ignorant
To be kept ignorant
Of your situation
Of your oppression
Of the way things really work Is how things really work.
So wake up!
Wake up to what?
Information posing as knowledge? Shadows passing as
forms? Clique-based inclusion as “wokeness”?
Who is enlightened?
Was it not once a metaphor
For the birth of our liberal society?
Were not the slaveholding rapists who
Wrote the constitution
The woke of their day?
The definition is confounding. Not to be asleep
Not to be in a dream
The dream is a lie
That all men were created equal
So if you’re suffering it’s your own damn fault.
The heart of American racism is the dream.
Meritocracy is the bed we lie in
It is the lie we sleep with

And build institutions on Wake up!

Understand this is built on lies

So what?!

What has it ever meant to know something?

When has an intellectual frame ever freed us?

Our world is rooted in practice.

Knowledge in hierarchy is repressive.

It is another dream we awaken into

When we think we ascend

Without first passing through this world of shadows.

We come to life

Through getting out of bed, Brushing our teeth,

And going to work.

We awaken when

We overthrow capitalism,

And create social systems

Rooted in reconnecting to the earth

And each other.

We become woke when we become one.

No longer confined to the dream of individualism.

Or the dream that we are separate

Or different

In a way that dictates an ability, or inability,

To grasp knowledge.

A wise man once said

“I have a dream”

Invoking a multicultural utopia

Rooted in colonial continuity

How much can we say he was woke?

Or that we are woke?

Or that any of this is more than a dream?

Or that any of us have truly ascended?

Awaken

Get out of bed

Brush your teeth Overthrow capitalism Pray to creator

For enlightenment

That is always growing Greater and brighter And stronger.

Get woke.

GAYLIN WEST

DOES YOUR HUSBAND WORK FOR I.C.E.?

Does your husband work for I.C.E.?

Does he treat the children nice?

Is he kind and respectful to the brown folk in his care?

Is he nice? Is he fair?

When your husband's off at work, would you know if he's
a jerk?

Does he (maybe) look away if his partner's being cruel?

Would he object or play alone or would he think the guy is
cool?

If she's dark and has no papers, does your husband think
it's right

to stuff her in a kennel and forget about her plight?

Does he come and love ya? Does he sleep good at night?

Does your husband work for I.C.E.?

Does he treat the brown folk right?

Is he fair? Do you care?

When you ask how work is goin', do you want him to be
open?

Just what would you have him say when you ask about his
day?

“Grabbed that baby off his mother—hear them screamin’
for each other—; it’s a hard job but I’m copin’, I’m okay.”

Does your husband like his work? Does he like taking
orders?

Does he say, “It’s not the money.

What we do protects our borders!

It’s to keep us all safe, honey,

‘cause we’re very afraid that this unarmed brigade

will get in here and take all our money.”

Does your husband work for I.C.E.?
Is he nice?

When your hubby's had a few with the boys after work,
does he come home to you all chillin' and mellow?
Or does he turn into a scarier fellow
who's ready to explode?
See, when he's at work there's no end of soft targets,
and his buddies—they all keep the code.
But when ugly comes home, where do you lam
when danger's a stranger who looks like your man?
I guess what I'm saying, what I want you to hear, is:
Be wise when you choose what to fear!

(Hope he's nice!)

CATHLEEN WILLIAMS

DIONNE SPEAKS

I was born a country girl
down in the Delta near Memphis
rode in the bed of a pickup rattling
to the market
from our Arkansas farm
the first of 18 children the oldest one
I birthed 14 kids myself

family my world
and to me
the whole round world
a family

the first person I called was Mama
when I heard James had been shot
I called her from the car
speeding behind the ambulance
racing the police escort
James my son shot
one day before his 17th birthday

all screaming down together
past neighborhood hospitals
down to the San Joaquin E.R.
where the sheriffs brought out their dogs
straining at leashes
to keep me back
to keep my mama back
to keep back all the family now screeching in
reckless and frantic

I fought to see him and found him there
already wrapped and gone

James my son
the only thing that saved me
was that I didn't believe

now in her kitchen
stainless steel pots
still warm on the stove
Dionne asks me to imagine
to close my eyes and try to imagine
how I would feel
if my son was killed
murdered by the police
the machine bearing down cutting
like a harvester with its blades
the breathing jointed slender stalk
that was his body
41 rounds

Dionne met the mother of Emmet Till
who wanted the world to see
her son's face
smashed and misshapen
and Dionne too
cried out
I want the world
to see the x-rays
to see the torn organs
in the shattered chest
the bullets
that battered through his bones

American as the Delta
in her angry disbelief
her innocence, her rage
James James James

your death made your mother see
how the harvest is brought in

the harvest of forced submission
the harvest of beloved sons

Rest In Peace

James Rivera Junior, 7/23/93-7/22/10

NELLIE WONG

CONSUMED

Long Island, New York
Wal-Mart employee
34 years old, an African American man
A temporary worker stampeded to death at 5:00 A.M.
By 200 shoppers on Black
Friday, day after Thanksgiving
Who's to blame?
Wal-Mart's lack of security?
Many waiting all night for doors to open
At the crack of dawn?
Wal-Mart's statement
Through unseen suits
Sends their prayers
Who's to blame?
The economic crisis?
People whose homes are being foreclosed?
People who don't know
If their next paycheck may be the last?
People in frenzy to buy
That flat-screen TV
That Nintendo game
That I-Pod, that Blackberry
That barbecue that will cook for hundreds
That North Face jacket
That rocking horse
That Armani knock-off
That pair of Nikes priced at inflated dollars?
Who's to blame?
Who's to blame?
Who's to blame?
The Dow down 680 points
The official U. S. in recession
The terrorists in Mumbai
The stores opening up at 5:00 A.M.
Thanksgiving?

ANDRENA ZAWINSKI

CINDERMAN

Those Saturdays when he'd pull an extra shift,
I'd trail the buckled sidewalk to the shadowy
pedestrian tunnel. As he checked to see me backing
along fences, ducking into bushes, I watched him.

Long legs sure in stride marching off to make another
month's rent, black lunchbox swaying, latch ticking
in sync with his steps in clunky steel toed boots,
he smoothed his work shirt, straightened his cap,

a young man, his worth tied to being of use,
laboring toward a whistle and a timecard
at the end of the stretch of an extra stint. Back home,
I would wait for his stories to spill through the flat:

His pal Polish Pete screwing up on the line again,
bad joke Indian Joe told that made him laugh anyway,
Old Mack the foreman crazy enough to get married
to the shop secretary in these times at his age.

Like any Cinderman, he'd scrub the dark from his face
and hands making a murky mess of the porcelain sink,
slump at the kitchen table with a shot of Smirnoff
where earlier he gulped down a brew of Maxwell House.

I lived in this world of a man whose muscles always ached,
who drank too much, who never could make ends meet,
lived for him to pull me onto his lap each night to nuzzle
under his arm, fall asleep in the musky scent of him,

until he'd heave me up with a grunt, trudge up the flight
of stairs, loose steps groaning under the weight
of my limp body leaden with sleep, arms and legs draped
about the curve of his hunched back. Sandman, in my eyes.

ANDREA ZUCCOLO (Italia)

COSÌ SIA

Se non vedo il vostro piede
se non ascolto il vostro passo
non per questo non leggo
le infinite vie
delle nostre vene.

Con l'inchiostro io scrivo
il destino del sangue
ancor prima che il sole
si rapprenda
e scompaia.

Scrivo
la parabola che
sborda il margine
e si schianta sull'orlo
della terra.

« Ehi voi ... doganiere in divisa ...
scansatevi in tempo ... per diooo!
Venite meno al precetto
d'un ordigno?

Costituitevi parte lesa
offesa, vilipesa.
In nome della patria
di vostra cognata
di tutta l'armata.

Risuolatevi le scarpe.
Gendarmi di tutte le unioni
piecet... arm!!! ».
Un minuto di silenzio...

ANDREA ZUCCOLO (Italy)

AMEN

If I don't see your foot
if I don't hear your pace
this doesn't mean I can't read
the infinite roads
of our veins.

I write in ink
the destiny of blood
even before the sun
clots
and disappears.

I write
the parable that
hems the margin
and crashes on the rim
of the Earth.

« Hey you ... custom officer in uniform...
move over in time...by Godddd!
You duck the rule
of a bomb?

Associate in action as injured,
offended, defamed party.
In the name of the homeland
of your sister-in-law
of all the Army.

Resole your shoes.
Policemen of all ensembles
Ordeer...arms!!!

niente corone
le rose per le vostre puttane.

Vi attendo in paradiso
dove i conti si regolano
a sberle di bronzo.
Se non lo sapete
aprite i denti
le resurrezioni
sono monumenti.

Così sia.

A minute of silence...
no wreath
of roses for your whores.

I wait for you in heaven
where scores are settled
in bronze slaps.
If you're unaware
open your teeth
resurrections
are monuments.

Amen.

(Translated from Italian by Alessandra Bava)

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE POETS

INDRAN AMIRTHANAYAGAM is Sri Lankan-born, writes a poem in Haitian for the weekly *Haiti en Marche* newspaper. His American poems will be published by Hanging Loose Press in New York City. THOMAS ANTONIC is also a musician and filmmaker. His most recent book of poems is *Flickering Cave Paintings of Noxious Night-birds*, a bi-lingual German and English collection. He lives in Vienna, Austria. AYO AYoola-AMALE is an activist Nigerian poet and lawyer. She's preparing her selected poems for publication in the U. S. A and is a member of the World Poetry Movement in Medellin, Colombia. MAHNAZ BADIHIAN is a painter, translator as well as a poet within the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of San Francisco. Her latest collection, *Raven of Isfahan*, was published this year. LISBIT BAILEY is also a member of the RPB of San Francisco, as well as an Archivist for the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, for which she's organized poetry readings. BIJAN BARAN is a poet and literary critic who's published many books. He lives and works in Washington, DC. LYNNE BARNES has recently returned from a visit to Kenya. She is one of the leading poets of San Francisco vis-a-vis her engagement with social and political themes. ALESSANDRA BAVA is a poet and translator from Italian. Her most recent publication is the translation of the *Anthology of Contemporary American Women Poets* (Ensemble, 2018). Turkish poet ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU recently edited the *Poetry Planetariat* newsletter of the World Poetry Movement, of which he is one of the founders. He's a major Turkish poet. JUDITH AYN BERNHARD is a poet and translator from Spanish for the RPB of San Francisco. Her book of poems is *Prisoners of Culture*. She also teaches writing workshops. SCOTT BIRD's poems appear this year in *Pocketful of Pride*, published to mark the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. He lives in San Francisco. VICTORIA BRILL is a painter who most recently began writing poems

and has joined the RPB of San Francisco. KRISTINA BROWN is a valued member of the RPB of San Francisco and an engaged activist in all the activities of that organization. The great Italian poet FERRUCCIO BRUGNARO's poems have recently been translated into French and Soanish. He lives in the Venice-Marghera zone of Italy. YOLANDA CATZALCO is a longtime activist poet who's been very present in the Bay Area Green Party actions. NEELI CHERKOVSKI has recently overseen the City Lights publication of the Complete Poems of Bob Kaufman. His own poems are appearing in a Turkish translation this year. DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA is the daring author of one of the most important African-American books of poetry in recent years, *They Are All Me*. She lives in Denver, Colorado. MARCO CINQUE is poet, photographer, musician, and one of the founders of the RPB of Rome, Italy. He's one of that country's most politically engaged poets. BOBBY COLEMAN, one of the founders of the RPB of San Francisco, is engaged in running for office with the SF Board of Education. One of France's most active political poets currently, FRANCIS COMBES, author of the great book of poems, *Common Cause*, continues his powerful international works. The poem of the Cuban poet JUANITA CONEJERO, which was in the 5th Overthrowing Capitalism Anthology with lines missing, is here correctly published. JOHN CURL, one of the editors of this anthology, this year has published the novel, *The Outlaws of Maroon*, about children in New York City during the years of McCarthyism. DIEGO DE LEO's latest book of poems is *From Spring to Spring*. He is a member of the San Francisco RPB and became a poet in his late 70s. He's now 84 years young. ERRI DE LUCA is one of the leading social and political poets of Italy at this present time. CAROL DENNEY is a Berkeley writer, painter and musician born in east Los Angeles and prone to radical thought. She is the editor of the *Pepper Spray Times*. JEAN-LUC DESPAX is former president of the French PEN Club and director of the

review *Commune*. He's author of dozens of books of satirical and political poetry. SOUMAILA DIAWARA is a 31-year-old Mali poet who's lived in Italy for the past four years. He has published two books of poetry in Bambara and Italian, *Our Civility*, and *Dreams of A Man*. MARIA JESU ESTRADA is a poet and teacher and a member of the RPB of Chicago. AGNETA FALK of the San Francisco RPB is also a well-known painter and, with Nancy Calef and Jody Weiner, a caretaker of the Live Worms Art Gallery in North Beach. VADIM FEDOROVICH is a Russian poet and new member of the World Poetry Movement centered in Medellin, Colombia. ARNOLDO GARCIA is a bi-lingual poet and painter and an activist in the Berkeley/Oakland area of California. RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ is the present Poet Laureate of Berkeley, the first one in that city. He's been nominated for a Pushcart Prize three times. MARIA CRISTINA GUTIERREZ tends to *The Black and Brown Social Club* in San Francisco's Mission District. She is a longtime activist and poet. KAREN HARVEY-TURNER is a member of the RPB of Chicago. MARTIN HICKEL is with the RPB of San Francisco and is a singer as well with the *Conspiracy of Beards* chorus, performing Leonard Cohen's songs. The Tibetan Golden Antelope Poetry Award of China was given to JACK HIRSCHMAN, one of the editors of this Anthology, earlier this year. EFRAIN HUERTA, the great Mexican poet, was born in 1914 and died in 1982. ANTONELLA IASCHI lives in Italy, is author of poetry and plays, and believes that "narrating the street" is the best weapon by which to exist and resist the current fascisms. SABAH MOHSEN JASIM is a member of the Iraqi Writers Union. He lives in Iraq and has translated Lawrence Ferlinghetti's *Poetry As Insurgent Art* into Arabic. ZIBA KARBASSI is a deeply respected Iranian poet living in exile between London and Paris. She has published five books of poetry, all of them written in Farsi. The Sardinian poet MICHELE LICHERI has authored many volumes, most recently a "Buongiorno" series of chapbooks

addressing and affirming aspects of Sardinian life. GENNY LIM, emeritus Poet Laureate of Jazz in San Francisco, read this year in Italy through the auspices of the Casa della Poesia's Sergio Iagulli and translator Raffaella Marzano. After many years in the U.S., ANGELINA LLONGUERAS has returned to her native Catalonia, where she is incredibly active with those fighting for Catalan independence from Spain. The Tunisian poet MOEZ MAJED was this year at an international festival in Hanoi, Vietnam, and is himself a festival organizer in Tunisia as well as one of its leading poets. BIPLAB MAJEE is an Indian poet who has authored 10 books of poetry, 5 novels, and children's books as well, and he has been the recipient of national and international awards. ELIZABETH MARINO is a member of the RPB of Chicago, an educator and, as she says, "an aging provocateur." This is her fourth time in the Overthrowing Capitalism series. JOSE MARTI (1854-1895) is the poet and patriot of the independence of Cuba from Spain, and a founding father of Cuba's breakaway from the U.S. through its communist revolution. Bari, Italy's RPB, as well as other Brigades in Italy, are the organizational triumph of poet PIPPO MARZULLI, a tireless worker and Antifa event-creator. KAREN MELANDER-MAGOON, one of the three editors of this Anthology, is a poetic-political activist who also has a history of singing opera in Europe for many years. SARAH MENEFEE's poetry often appears in the People's Tribune, reflecting her involvement with the homeless people organizing and resisting demonization in the Bay Area. The voice of one of the finest poets of contemporary Cuba, that of NANCY MOREJÓN, is here remembering Roberto Retamar, the fellow poet who passed away this year. MAJID NAFICY is an Iranian poet living in Los Angeles whose poetry often reflects the situations in his native land. JIM NORMINGTON is a Northern California poet who has published 12 books and is the translator of the poetry of Efrain Huerta and Alfonsina Storni from the Spanish language. HILTON OBENZINGER's most recent book

is *Treyf Pesach (Un-kosher Passover)*. He is working on the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America project at Stanford University. TIMOTHY OCHOA is a powerful new poetic voice and also for the past 13 years a teacher at Oswego East High School. His Mexican heritage feeds his poetry. EDWINA PENDARVIS is a poet engaged in the struggle against the trumpery of our time. She writes of that struggle lyrically. JERRY PENDERGAST is a free swinging poet of social and political struggles, which he manifests with a great mosaic of referencing as well as righteous feeling. GREGORY POND is African-American, a member of the RPB of San Francisco, and a poet of the streets and of his people. JEANNE POWELL is an African-American poet and essayist in San Francisco, as well as a teacher and events organizer for many years. JULIE ROGERS has published many books, among the most recent is *House of the Unexpected* (Wild Ocean Press). She lives in Oakland. GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK is the venerable Irish Poet and translator who's among the leaders in bringing the Irish tongue to the ears of the contemporary world of poetry. LEW ROSENBAUM is a poet active both in the League of Revolutionaries for a New America and the Chicago RPB. SONNY SAN JUAN, JR. currently heads the Philippines Studies Center in Washington, DC and is one of the foremost Marxist voices in poetry and literature in the U.S. NATACHA SANTIAGO is a well-known Cuban poet and teacher in Havana where she lives. The poems of SANDRO SARDELLA are being translated by diverse hands into the American language for publication in the U.S. Sandro lives in the Varese area of Italy, where he also paints. RATI SAXENA, the poet of India, is a member of the World Poetry Movement and the organizer of international festivals of poetry in her country. BARBARA JOE SCHMIDLAPP is a Canadian-American poet from the midwest, whose work has been an enthusiastic response to the title/theme of this Anthology. JURGEN SCHNEIDER, in addition to his fine poetry, is also an excellent translator into German of Jack

Hirschman's poems. NINA SERRANO is author of the *Heart Suite Trilogy* of poems and a play, *The Story of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg*. MAZAHER SHAHAMAT is a poet and novelist who lives and writes in Iran. He has published a number of poetry collections. KIM SHUCK is the current Poet Laureate of San Francisco, whose Laureate book, *Deer Trails*, was published this year by City Lights Books. KESHAB SIGDEL was born in Nepal in 1979 and is a teacher of English there as well as a poet with the World Poetry Movement, and a cultural organizer of Asian groups. SANDRO SPINAZZI is preparing his *Selected Poems* for publication in the United States. He lives in Marghera, Italy. DOREEN STOCK is a prodigious poet and also has this year published *My Name Is Y*, a memoir of an anti-nuclear demonstrator. She divides her time between the Bay Area and Argentina. MATTHEW TALEBI is a poet who lives in the Los Angeles area. SCOTT THOMPSON is a longtime translator of the poets and writers of Germany, including Goethe, Benjamin, Hegel, Trakl, and Sartorius, among others. HUANG VU THUAT is a leading North Vietnamese poet from Hanoi. ENRIQUE GRACIA TRINIDAD was born in Madrid in 1950 and, since 1992, has devoted himself to recitals of his poetry. He has published many books of poems. DAVID VOLPENDESTA is a member of the San Francisco RPB, and the author of the book of poems, *Friends Who Are Living*. TANE WARD is the pen-name of Ricardo Ramirez, a writer from Austin, Texas. His first book, *The Maze of Creation: An Alchemist's Guide to the Center*, was published this year. GAYLIN WEST is an artist and poet who lives in the North Beach area of San Francisco. CATHLEEN WILLIAMS is a Sacramento poet and editor of the important newspaper of the Poor, *Homeward*. She is also a member of the RPB of San Francisco. NELLIE WONG is a Chinese-American poet, feminist, and socialist born in Oakland. She is a member of the Academy of American Poets and the author of many books of poetry. ANDRENA ZAWINSKI is a Pittsburgh-born working-class

poet who lives in Alameda, California and is the recipient of the Oakland PEN Josephine Miles Prize for her poetry. ANDREA ZUCCOLO is a poet, actor, and educator who lives in Udine, Italy.

AND OF THE TRANSLATORS:

WALTER G. ANDREWS, who translated the poem of Ataal Behramoglu written in Turkish, teaches Ottoman and Turkish literature at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is the author/translator of *Ottoman Lyric Poetry*. ALEXIS BERNAUT is a Paris-born poet and translator of the poem of Despax. Bernaut is also known for his translations of the poems of American poet Sam Hamill, who died last year. STEPHEN WATTS is the noted poet of London and the translator of the poem of Karbassi in this Anthology. He often appears accompanying her at public readings of her poems. LAPO GUZZINI, who translated the Italian poems of Licheri and Sardella, is originally from Ancona, Italy but lives in the Bay Area now. He's translating a book of *Discanti* of Sardella. He formerly headed the now legendary Emerald Tablet Gallery in North Beach. NANDITA BHATTACHARYA is the wife and translator of Biplab Majee's Bengali poem. She has a master's in English and is an Editor with India's Writer's Forum. MAURO FORTISSIMO, who's translated the classic poem of Marti in this Anthology, is an Argentinian-Italian musician, painter, poet and the featured performer in the movie *Twelve Pianos*. He is an indefatigable organizer of sundry musicians and artists in San Francisco. BARBARA PASCHKE, who translated the French poems of Combes and Majed and the Spanish poems of Morejon and Trinidad, is a member of the RPB of San Francisco, and the ongoing Roque Dalton Cultural Brigade. GIOVANNI ROMANO, who translated the poem of Marzulli in this book, returned this past summer to his native Udine, Italy, after some years in San Francisco, where he translated poems from Italian for the past two

Overthrowing Capitalism anthologies. The Greek poet SARAH THILYKOU translated into Greek the Irish of Rosenstock. She is also a member of the World Poetry Movement. KATY BIRD is an educator in the Marghera area of Italy. She is English-born and the translator of the poem by Spinazzi, of whom she is the wife. HAI PHAM, who translated Vu Thuat's poem from Vietnamese, is a student who lives in the San Francisco area.

AND THE ARTISTS:

AGNETA FALK has done the Mixed Media Cover work of this anthology, called *Soul*. She is a well-known artist who's recently shown at the Live Worms Gallery in North Beach. The Black&White photograph of Native American homeless man, Tanis Higgs, was taken by SARAH MENEFEE, who is active with the group, *First They Came for The Homeless*. ADRIAN ARIAS, a new member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of SF, is a noted poet and visual/happening artist. His work is called: *I'm The Shadow Of What I Think, Of What I Feel, Of What I Say*. It's a Mixed Media work. GERHARD BONDZIN (1930-2014), an honored artist and muralist who lived in Dresden, Germany, created *The Path of the Red Banner* in 1969 as a mural.

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 that 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>

