

POEMS OF OLD AGE (2002-17)

Andromeda, After

The Scribe Has a Vision

Reading the Secret Treasury (Hizôhōyaku)

An Epigram for K.

Rome 2004 [publ. *Dichtungsring* no. 33 (2004)]

59-60. Autobiography 2004: De Darci Natura

Ah! God

Aequinox

Ode in the Guise of the Most Famous Poetess Psapfo of Mytilene SEPARATE

A Martial Epigram on Martians

Intrumo (Cold Comfort)

Ave Atque Vale: Updating a Classic

"Days – years --" (H)

Pillaging the Gnostics

Haecceitas (This Here & Now)

A Note To Myself: In the Ice Age

Sonnet for Reinventing Tomorrow (Reading Patraquim)

"I seem insane to you"

"O worries, labours, honours..."

73.-81. Thus Spake the Bitter Muse: Do Not Profit by the Blood of Your Fellows! (A Pastiche)

My Lady Hope

To Carry Over

In the Pharmacy

Upon the Discovery of Pharaoh Woseribre Senebkay

4 Limericks for 2015

Winterland

ANDROMEDA, AFTER

& what could one do but embrace the liberator

Copulate in sobbing abandon, fragile

Propagation of tumescent amoebas,

As a fish mouths dying for its fisher.

Mortified flesh, freed from iron & stone,

Freed from the plumbing of deathly fear

For the moment blindly resurrects,

In Haifa or Stockholm, cold & hot.

After Mars, Venus always.

A different sting. Progenitive.

This cheater teacher cheetah life.

26302

THE SCRIBE HAS A VISION

So here we are amidst a burst of irises & peonies,

Inside the rainbow nobody has ever seen, looking

For how to manage this all in words that suggest

All other senses too.

Boy or girl, do not forget senses traffic through sense

With truth. & truth, embraced, may make you free.

1402

READING THE SECRET TREASURY [Hizôhâyaku]

The deranged in command of armies do not know they're mad

Blind people leading the nations do not see their blindness

Reproduced by deep class interests, they're in the dark all their lives

Dying time & time again, they take revenge in killing others

At the end of their deaths they've forgotten there was light.

8402

ROME 2004: HOMAGE TO NAZIM HIKMET'S POEMS ON DEATH

What is to come will come at an unannounced hour

A solitary thief, all alone, on the third floor

& you'll walk up three flights without ringing for me

& maybe start keeping a dog in your old age

To be faithful, looking up at you, head on his paws,

While the Spring with naked feet throws her flowers around

The Graces dance regardless of any sadness, & you look

Too long at the tinted photos beginning to fade.

25404, Festa della Liberazione

AUTOBIOGRAPHY 2004: DE DARCI NATURA

With thanks to brother Nazim Hikmet

Beginnings

I was born in 1930, amphibious year in between disasters
I've left my native city for good in '67
I left it many times before & returned many times since
Until that year, it was 1991

when it left me

Alone with my writings, Nena,
a few friends, smouldering memories,
Mourning, indignation.

When i was 11 i fled from the killers speaking my language
Already i had begun learning other languages
I had refused to learn playing the piano, some obscure
Daimon led me to say
"I'll learn languages instead", deciding
Daimon, his bitter tears
at age eight into my soup scotched
All talk of going to Palestine.

When i was 11 i heard it on the radio
the Germans were bombing Beograd
When i was 69 i saw it on television
the US were bombing Beograd
Between the bombings my life was spared
i owe it to the dead
To speak up against fear: articles for Wall Newspapers
First utopian sketch at 17, first poem at 21
On a May First, already

Elegiac, a girl was leaving me, the Party was leaving me
(I knew the first & was to learn the other). When
I was 13 i changed from
a refugee in my carved-up country
To refugee sundered from my country
amid another language
Crossing a narrow sea with hundreds in a fishing boat, seriously

Too young to be afraid amid minefields, under Nazi bombers
 No more anxious than usual for a *confinato*
 Whose parents could be shot any morning. So i crossed from occupation
 To liberation, into the city of Bari
marvellous to youthful eyes
 Where horse-drawn coaches had a plank
at the back between the wheels
 For daring schoolboys to jump on.

When i was 21 my daimon decided, stubborn daimon,
Walking the sunlit streets of a Spring Sunday
To quit the repetitive certainties of engineering for the discoveries
Of arts & letters, of the planks
 that mean unforeseeable life
People in student theatre
 won out over things in the lab
With my heart in my throat.

Thus it all took shape, in the yellow afternoons of Zagreb
In the sunlight blazing back blue from Adriatic wavelets
Between the lines of Balzac
& Shakespeare, the Russians & Krleža,
Tito & Hegel, Engels
& Lenin on the two souls
All irretrievable now, the communist
youth, confident hopes,
& i was on my Way.

Reflections

Some grow up to know well the names & kinds of trees, others
Of city streets (Mirkec knew all those of Zagreb
Better than any taxi-driver)

i grew up knowing departures
Thru guarded borders, but reading Dante, & Bert, & Nazim
Understood i was one of the demographic tens of millions
Exiled by injustice.

I am lucky: i've slept mostly in my own bed, even if at times
In poor rented rooms, & only twice, briefly, in friendly
Camps for refugees, a pet nightmare

like the car backfires

Bursting upon my ear like German bombs;
i haven't really hungered
Tho near enough to guess at it

& quite near enough to understand terror & humiliation
& how reason is the only shield & sword
In proletarian hands, labour-power
sellers of brawn & brain

Like BB, my example in politics:
"a party consisting of one person"
(His writings, friends, his unforgotten memories)
"Closely allied to communists".

I've loved many women of my time, loved the best image
Of my possible self in & together with them
Monogamy comes to me as a kitten purring at my
Ankle, i stroke its head
distractedly, with real affection.

I'm changeable but always loyal, i envy only the dead
Milton, Marx & such ilk.

I rode a bicycle around Zvonimirova Street as a boy
A Vespa around Zagreb & an NSU scooter to Lošinj
At the age of 30 i flew
for the first time, Dubrovnik to Beograd
I've had three small cars, two accidents, & left driving gladly
Preferring to steer my thots down unforeseen roads
I've survived the worst of capitalist *realia*, bombs & cars
I've been lucky

To escape & learn to know much Europe, much North
America, the warm seas & breezes of the Caribbean
& Mediterranean, & of course Japan
that princess descended from the Moon
Cruel & kind; & i learned from the gods of the sea waves

of the Sava
& Thames & Avon & the Seine, Saint-Laurent & the Spree,
The plangent fates of humanity

& returned to the waves some insights i learned. My poems
In two languages, published in obscure places
On three continents, have been read by a few friends, so many
Numbers for the absent biographer

the poems are the best me
& the best i can say for myself is
i kept the faith comrades
In this sad & wondrous time.

Retrospect

What did i want? The pursuit of happiness when young, but more & more
One thing: to live this brief life on beautiful Earth
Not like exploited tenant

buckling down to parasite bosses
Nor like landlord, but like steward
handing on to those coming after
Our family house preserved, cleansed from the worst vermin
Maybe even repainted.

I wanted to believe, as brother Nazim, in the trees,
The wheat, but above all the sea -- *thalassa, thalassa!*
& in my strange fellow forked

animals, man unkind,
In my own class, presumed intellectuals: alas, i could not
Even women not rarely failed me
or i failed them, class
Corruption runs deep...

I grew discontented with the worsening
times, not happy to be
A nay-sayer like mad Swift, but making the best of a bad obligation
As the addictive drug of destruction
spread our rulers among,
Disliking not merely our murdering set-up but on top of it
The cruel gods of our small cosmic sector, the sadistic

Godlet of blind biology. Systems stand together no more.

Surely other universes must be better made, surely

We could make even this botched world better!

More similar to Mozart

beauteous like Botticelli

Stern & compassionate like all great teachers, a forgiving mother

Infinite like the wine-coloured sea.

264-1504

AN EPIGRAM FOR K.

You ask me why wd i love you, Key. Easy --

You are intelligent: my penis perks up

Expecting you to murmur non hackneyed phrases

Like maybe the Goldberg Variations from Kraftwerk

Warm into my neck with yr hacked-up breath.

30604

AH! GOD...

1. (Prologue)

Ah! god of the ocean-going rivers

Enlighten me

Into the wisdom of the flow

Its little vortices & eddies

Its central calm current

Which will get there somehow

Muttering overflowing

finally

One with the banks

The Earth gave it.

To the gods indeed belongs

The end, O Alcman. People are not

Yet fit.

19804

2.

Come, sweet silken Muse of many songs,
Of the beautiful sounds from your mother Gaia,
Calliope, everlasting melody, a wholly
New one begin for this late singing:

Happy is that one who, guided by wisdom,
When accomplishing his days may look back
Without too much unneeded regret.

Happy is the one who understood in time
Before the sap shrank in his veins
The members-melting desire, that descends
Demanding more, offering more
Than sleep & death, nor is its sweetness in vain,
The peace of love received from green-eyed girls
The peace of love given to violet-eyed girls
Victorious all of us in loving combats,
Of the tribe of winged dreams

3.

Happy is the one who understood early on
The gods give us all this brief stay together
This now this here this moment we may call
History in which something of one
May live on in other flesh or stone, or
Die utterly, born in vain.

For when strident strife rules, the un-blinded one is
Only a singleton human, owl hooting in vain
From up on the beam.

Witless it was
Not to foresee.

4.

Tykhe, destiny-bearing daughter of the ever-rolling Ocean,
Narrow the path, pitiless the need,
Heart-breaking the waste, Yugoslavia gone the way of Atlantis,
Shining moment, tolerant cradle of many tongues,
Where Law was a-building, & Justice had a chance,
& Peace ruled, three sisters nourished at the same breast,
-- For a time, for a time --

All swallowed by the gargantuan throat of Greed. Did i
Do what i could? Certainly not, almost none of us. Unexpected,
The cloud of oblivion arose. Maya
Beguiled us, tender & unfailingly cruel, the easy
Life, whispering the voice of falsity, weaving
Bewilderment, forgetfulness of bloody history, evil stepdaughter
Of sweet-gifting Aphrodite.

5.

For when combats are not loving & giving
When they turn hating & taking, perverse & sterile
(Say heaping money on cruel money),
Better to have been a bird
Who wings it on the flower of the wave, with halcyons,
From the heart, holy bird purple-coloured as the sea
Wounding itself but no others...

Yet how dare one say "fly away like a bird", blind to misery,
Stupefied, unaware,
When the corrupt ones aim their bank-loans in the dark of the night
To shoot the humble, the confused, the upright,
& have destroyed most of what was good:
Brotherhood & Comradeship, gone with the hurricane
In merciless mercification. Flaming coals are coming, the inevitable
Terrible whirlwind they sow & we all reap.

Soon, soon after this life the Islands of the Blessed
From whom the gods keep insoluble worries away. There, there,
Honey-voiced may approve of me the sister Muses.

AEQUINOX

The victories & the defeat in the lowlands are behind us
The defeats & the victory in the highlands are before us
What we need today is embodied reason, & a caress.

13305

A MARTIAL EPIGRAM ON MARTIANS

Qui legis Oedipoden caligantemque Thyesten
Martial X.4

Why are you staring so raptly into Orcs & Elves
Why gulping down Conan, Potter & th'insufferable Lewis
What are to you rebelling robots, or what help
To your wasting lives the circenses of media clerics
Brainwashing the new imperial plebeians?

Imbibe

What life shall recognize & call out "This is mine!"
Even if Aliens or dragons, such story shall taste of us humans,
The ways we oppress & love each other, in what cave
Are we ourselves & how may we get out into the light
Of the blue Sun.

But no, mr. Jones, you don't want to
See yourself, cognize your killing cruelties: so at least
Read your Tolkien! You may shut the book & think
Why he loved cleansing wars.

26706

COLD COMFORT (INTRUMO)

In a dream a dragon came to me, looked at me,
Splendour of shimmering copper scales

& scarlet thorns, scythe-taloned. I looked
Back, at the amber mist around his huge eyes, above

The fuming nostrils. The red-black smoke from her mouth
Hissed: "Don't despair, short-lived Earthling. Soon
You shall die, soon will expire your kind's cosmic contract.
This muddied globe your Mother is unforgiving as our winds.

But in the new creation the Mother shall whelp, a few shards
May be dug up & deciphered by successor populations,
Hexapodes perhaps, stabler far, winged like ourselves:

A few testimonials, like the ones you found of Gilgamesh
& Intrumo, shall show yours was a redeemable kind.
>What a pity!< the unsentimental hexapods will chirrup,

Winging on to their inscrutable business of conviviality".
26806

AVE ATQUE VALE: UPDATING A CLASSIC

Martial X 47

These matters make for a happier life
Or so i learned while night falls:

A work that you above all else love
& which nourishes its wo/man, with some surplus;
An apartment with two rooms of my own
All full of books, large tables
& a double bed; a woman friend
& lover to lighten the common burdens
So that between us rules sunlight & warmth;
Avoid quarrels but never stop rebelling
Against the blindfold on Justice's eyes;
Reasonable health, the little donkey that bears you
Thru life must be cosseted, watered, fed;
Some friends to talk with, on Internet
Yet sometimes see in flesh; simple food,

Meat thrice a week at best, tasty,
Not spiced, a glass of wine at night,
Heart-stopping sex, but after forty more rarely;
Sleep that knits up the ravelled care of day.

Do not cease, for this is life, from finding out
Just what you can do that makes sense
& whore after no other gods:

so you can look

At your approaching end not fearing nor wishing it,
Having applied yourself as best as it went
To a bad job, a world ordered so badly,
A universe wondrously defying sense.

28706

A HAIKU

Days -- years -- decades, where
Have they gone? This small
Wind trembling at my doorstep

241106

PILLAGING THE Gnostics

Et in hora mortis nostrae

See, i talk so that i may leave
I tell you what i heard & saw
In the leaves of grass in the drawn sweaty faces,
I teach you as i slowly learned it
I talk that i may leave this world
Where i never had enuf time
In peace.

I lived on Earth a short time, i didn't have time.
A short span of time. Pay attention
So you can hear me. If i came, who

May i be, may i have been, may
I have become? I drank the water of life
The water of pleasure. Now i advance toward
The water of forgetfulness.

Greetings to you, my sister & my brother!
Do not be so deathly afraid of sweet-gifting Venus,
Mother & lover, not yet known! I lived on Earth
A short time, i praised it, i suffered it.
I learned a little, i taught a little, a multitude
Of sisters, of companions, only
A few knew me,

I knew only a few, only little. I tell you
Disintoxicate yourself! Renounce your deadly path,
Walk on the Way which leads you to be free.
No Yahweh no kings to dominate, no masters
Except the Masters who know, so far as they know.
You are self-condemned, self-enchained. Renounce
Your chains.

You made for yourself a heavenly Lord & leader.
He turned around & enslaved you, shut
Your eyes & ears, raised up an inbred caste
Inimical to Justice & Knowledge, to Venus Of All People.
You turned to derision this house given unto you
As a heredity & a promise, it will be
Pulled down.

Only knowledge can unfold liberty, an
Undying desire. Let this tree grow, so you may grasp
The fruits of freedom. All of us possess
A chip of knowledge, a teardrop of liberty
Within ourselves. Do not let this pearl
Drop into the viscous flow of arrested
Time. Wake up

From the drugged dream of reason. Who
Are you? Whose brother & sister are you?

Where are you going? Do you judge all matters
In order to be judged? O the anxiety of not reaching,
Of reaching & not grasping! Do you see
High Venus, star moving across resplendent skies?
I tell you truly:

This is the hour of our death
This is the cosmic hour of persecution
This the hidden hour of our ignoble oblivion.
You can live toward a good death or a bad death.
Life is when two sexes are in each other as light
Liberty, as amity. Thus we become citizens of
Fair Earth, Heaven.

5-7307

PROBLEM

próblema (from *pro-ballesthai*): protrusion, salience, project,
foothills, bulwark, what is held or put before one, point at issue
For Sanja L

I am where i am not, & i am where i
Literally do not want to be & yet
Find no better place to be. This
Protracted instant in which i am held
Protruded projected thrown before one, myself.
A galley slave smoothing his rowing bench
In memory of what was then, a salience,
A bulwark. This is here, this is now.
You are history.

I need a spy-glass to see the liberated festive
Zones, floating worlds of woodcuts & songs,
The magic ships trod by puppets quite like ourselves
Who may meet what they awaited & do not turn
Into brittle cancerous glass, for they're puppets
Our superior shadows, cast by the burning bush
In the clear desert of the boards that mean life,
Held or put before us, in the foothills,
1 poe '02-17

Touched by tongues of fire. O their arrow-ships!

He has a problem, said the voice
He got the spyglass he wanted.

13307

HAECCEITAS (THIS HERE & NOW)

Things are there a this a shape
Necessary for this here & now
Exposed unchanged in the light that they bathe
The space that they are.

& i? Am i a thing or a looker-on?
Both -- and? & you too
With this red hair & those green eyes
That nose mouth breasts moist lap?
Enter: here too are gods.

Bitter truth: we know we shall not be.
Animals, more & less than.
Things, more & less than. Forms that feel.

Warmth is a dissipative structure
Your smooth skin a miracle of negentropy
The small adorable crow's-feet at your eyes
Forerunners of tectonic crevasses drought
The lap will bear children & desiccate
It will not be. Yet things are there.

What is done has been done
What is undone has been undone
When they are redone it will not be this.
Things are reversible but not for us.

Seize the shining day seize the fertile night
1 poe '02-17

Deep deep down the dark shore
There-things & not-there non-things unreal
Amid non-persons here there & everywhere
I too am here now with you
Athirst for justice unreconciled

My green essence:
Psyche, Chloe.

12-211007

A NOTE TO MYSELF: IN THE ICE AGE
(A COUNTER-PROJECT TO XIUNG XI-LING)

All that we feel is the freezing storm
But who is there to grieve for the warmth?
As you're leaving, bequeath this wish:
Everybody should afford happiness!

19408

SONNET FOR REINVENTING TOMORROW
(READING PATRAQUIM)

A slow step à la derive
the way lost how does one make maps
Athirst for a face to drink in
another map of coloured stone stony

The prospect for a simple gesture of elegance
inaugurating us the seventh day
From dictionary the entries justice incarnate
& you on the tornado shore

Yet the corrupt gods shaping us woe is me
as we invented them overhead a roof

1 poe '02-17

The wrong solitude so common
as gills in the sea apnoeic
The hands that drove the rivers crazy
unused useless today
2-4908

I seem insane to you. I'm not sorry.
But tell me your reasons. "Because you go on
About justice, because you were always bewitched
By the Great Goddess." Indeed i do, indeed
I was, i am. This folly, all ye gods
& sea-nymphs, may it never leave me!
14109

O worries, labours, honours & small fame earned for duties well done
Go, find successors to carry you, care for you
A god calls me away, far from you. Having sailed
The wide oceans, roamed from Rome to Tokyo & forth,
My little skiff is now steered into a small haven,
The servant will be dismissed, soon.
31109

THUS SPAKE THE BITTER MUSE: DO NOT PROFIT BY THE BLOOD OF YOUR
FELLOWS! (A PASTICHE)

With filial greetings to *Tanakh* prophets, who believed the only
copyright resides in the voice that speaks to & through them all.
Dedicated to Rich D. Erlich, in poor return for all his counsels &
encouragement

The words of the Assembler of Sayings, one of the defrocked ones in the lineage of Benjamin. The word of the Muse our Lady came to him in the days of rebellious Mazdak the Liberator, & throughout the days of betrayal & ruin when Mazdak was killed & of the murderous Warring States, & until the crash of the Great Plague coming from above by the power of inhumanity & its followers, when Jerusalem went into exile & the Assembler too died.

*--And the Muse looked frowning at him, & said, What are you doing?
Don't you see how they profit by the blood of your fellows?*

--O Muse my goddess & lady,
Have pity upon me! How have I
Offended you? I have not sat
In the company of revellers & drugged away
My brains, I have not been an oppressor.
I have sat lonely because of your hand upon me
For you have opened my eyes,
You have shown me red of the morning
& it has turned into black of the evening.
Why must my pain go on, my wound
Fester open, no healing in sight?
You have been to me like a delightful spring
That fails, water to quench my thirst
That cannot be relied upon.

I have spoken to your people
As i knew, not precisely enough,
& now i am too old.
O Muse, my strength & my stronghold,
My beauty & my desire,
My refuge in long days of trouble,
I am like a tamarack in the desert
That does not sense the coming of rain,
I am set in the scorched wilderness, placed
In a barren land without a human face.
I am hungry & thirsty,
Harvest is past
Summer is gone
Grapes have ripened
Autumn is gone
But we have not been saved.

Because my people are shattered i am shattered
I am dejected, seized by desolation.
My heart is crushed within me,
All my bones are trembling.
Is there no balm in aesthetics?
Can no physician be found?
When one is found, why is he straightway
Killed? Why has no healing
Come to my poor people?

O to be in the desert

1 poe '02-17

At an oasis, a caravanserai for the weary,
O to leave my people
To go away from them
To cultivate a little garden
& not be afraid.
For they whore after Mammon
& after the Lord of the Hosts,
Their running is wickedness
Their straining is iniquity.
A band of rogues,
They kill, lie & destroy.
They advance from evil to greater evil,
& they do not heed You, Lady,

They profit by the blood of their fellows.

--Verily, *thus spake the bitter Muse*,
Do not be afraid, O mortal, for
You shall die as all animals do,
Nothing worse can happen to you but
To die badly having lived badly.
So do not say "I am too old",
& do not say "I am not worthy".
I have made of you my spokesman
& you stand before me. If you produce
What is needed out of the dark times
You shall be pleasing & i shall be pleased.
For i set before you the way of life
& i set before you the way of death

& the Muse put out her gracious hand & touched my mouth & my forehead, & she said to me:
See I appoint you as my Speaker
To the classes & empires,
To ignorant sweaty faces
Of lean people drinking beer
& to devious rat faces
Of obese people drinking bourbon.
Go tell the truth of abomination
That my people may overthrow the violent
In self-defence, lest even worse befall,
Call them to destroy & to build,
To uproot & to plant.

Verily, *said the embittered Muse*,
They bend their tongues like bows
& shoot poisoned word arrows
Thru a thousand thousand loudspeakers.

They have trained themselves to falsify pictures
Through a thousand thousand screens.
Their words are used to deceive
Their brains are used to spread plagues.
Their might is great & conscience nil
They are famous in the world
For treachery not honesty,
For lying not professing truth.

And the Muse said, Because they forsook the teaching I had sent them by poets & prophets, because they did not follow the Word but their own covetous heart & Mammon & the Lord of the Hosts, as their fathers had taught them, verily, i am going to feed people wormwood & make them drink a bitter draft. Tornadoes tsunamis & volcanic eruptions shall be as nothing to what i see them doing to each other, wearing top hats & spats, quoting competing Sacred Scriptures in black or white coats.

From the battlefields & the stock-markets
Disaster shall break loose upon all the denizens
Of what was a fair planet.
Each speaks to his fellow in friendship
But lays an ambush in his heart.
Every man beware of his friend!
Every woman beware of her man!
Trust not even a brother or sister,
Unless they defend against the violent.

For the mountains I am weeping,
For the pastures in the wilderness I sing a dirge,
They're laid waste, they are sere,
& no birds sing. Beasts & fish &
Birds of the sky have been & are gone.
I weary of this failed animal Homo
I send some of you as a final warning
This is your Last Chance Saloon,

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

--And the angered Muse spake to me again & said: What do you see? I replied:

I have been shown a system that is a seesaw,
An arrested balance going nowhere in a hurry,
& those up are kept by those down,
They worship mental sloth & Mammon,
Violence & the Lord of the Hosts,
Not the loving caress of the Goddess.

--And she said to me: You have seen right,
For I am watchful to have you say the right.
So prepare yourself, arise & speak to them,

All that i tell you to.
Do not break down before them
Lest i break you before them.
I make you today a scapegoat,
An otter & a masked rider,
A prism & a telescope,
A pirate against kings & officers
A raider against priests & bureaucrats.
They will attack the truth-tellers,
Jail them, torture them, kill them
By thousands: Rosa Lev Che Antonio...
Ah i lack time for all the names
But they shall not overcome
For i am with you, though many die
(*Declared the Muse & Goddess*)
To see whether your species can be saved
For it hasn't played out its melody.

Your people of renown & leaders,
Your great academics who should know better,
Have not asked themselves "Where is the Lady,
Great Mistress of gods & of people?"
The guardians of the teaching ignored me,
& the prophets prophesied by Mammon
In Malibu mansions & Park Avenue homes.
The rich who rule defy & hate me,
Those with obese devious faces
Drove furiously on the road to the crash
Pushing toxic trades with the speed of light.
The leaders of their cyborg armies
Consorted with the Beast of Abomination
Coolly looking at the rivers of blood
From their heights. O i will go on
Accusing you all (*said the Goddess*):
My humans have exchanged bitter medicine
For cancer wrapped in sweet images.
Be appalled, O heavens, at this
Be horrified, utterly dazed!

Verily, *said the bitter Goddess*,
I shall put stumbling blocks before these people
Over which they shall stumble,
Fathers & daughters alike
Mothers & sons alike
Neighbour & friend shall perish
Even my prophets shall perish
So that the planet may be cleansed.

I am putting my words into your mouth as fire
If these people remain obdurate, they shall be
Firewood, which it will consume:

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

--& i prepared myself, apprehensive
But not too afraid, & said,
O foolish people, clever only
At cheating each other,
You have eyes but cannot see
You have ears but cannot hear!
From the greatest down to the smallest
You are all greedy for profit,
Priest & prophet act falsely,
The rich & the scribe speak falsely.

You boast of healing the people
Saying "All is well, all is well"
When nothing at all is well.
You have acted shamefully
But do not feel shame
& cannot be made to blush.
Your ears are blocked by greed & filth,
Your eyes are blinkered by the lust of domination. See,
The Lady's word has been spoken,
But for you it is an object of scorn,
You wilfully turn away. But I am
Filled with the wrath of the High One,
I cannot hold it to myself.

Pour it on the infant sending SMS in the street,
On the company of youths in the discotheque!
Yes, men & women alike shall go under,
Elders in asylum, babes in the crib,
Their homes shall go up in flames
Their fields shall be seared.
They shall stumble when the Goddess
Raise fires & floods against them.

Consider the ancient ways:
What is the road to happiness?
Travel it, find peace for yourselves
& peace for this ravelled globe.
But they said "We will not", for they were afraid
Freedom was a disorder. Hear well, nations,
Simplicity is too difficult for you

The end of your schemes is disaster.
Let your misfortune rebuke you
Let your affliction reprove you
Mark well how bitter it is
To forsake the Way of the Lady.

How can you say "I am not corrupt
I haven't gone a-whoring after Mammon's Banks
I haven't burned flesh with the ravening Lord of the Hosts"?
Look at your million-fold crimes in Iraq & Palestine,
Consider how you destroyed my people of Yugoslavia
Bombing Beograd worse than the Nazi Stukas,
How you starved my first-born of Africa
Like a hyena crunching bones of cadavers
Snuffling at the wind in her eagerness
Whose passion cannot be restrained.

Like a thief chagrined when he is caught
So are the speculators surprised when the stocks crash
So are the demagogues when wars are over.
Where is Mammon in your hour of calamity?
Let him arise & save you if he can!
Let the Lord Who Destroys also produce justice!
Your garments are drenched
With the lifeblood of the poor
You ravage entire continents like a meteor megacrash
Tens of thousands are drowned in immigrant boatloads
O wasting generation, hear the word of the Lady:

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

--& now, *said the bittersweet Goddess*,
I have made you an assayer of my people
A refiner of the earth of which they are made.
The bellows puffed mightily,
The lead was consumed by fire,
Yet the smelter smelted to no purpose,
The dross was not separated out,
I shall reject this base metal.
They are copper & iron, stubborn & defiant,
They deal basely & act corruptly.

You who build your cities upon injustice
& your penthouse upon exploitation
Of nature & your fellows, you who work the needy
For profit taken from their living labour,
Who think "I built me vast palaces
With spacious penthouses on the ninetieth floor

Provided with platinum & mahogany
Painted by the most expensive painters",
Do you think you are any nobler
Because you compete in mahogany
Because you eat off gold
Because you show off ebony or alabaster?

Can the capitalist change his lust for profits
Or the leopard & hyena their spots?
Just so much can those do good
Practiced in the arts of doing evil!
If you eat & drink simply
Ply a loving justice
Stop polluting brains & braes,
All will be well on any floor.
If you do not, you shall have
The burial of an ass, dragged out,
Lying outside the gates of Jerusalem,
A wretched broken pot,
A smashed vessel no one wants.

Is Man a serf, a slave?
Why is Columbia given over to plunder?
Wild beasts have roared over her
Hyenas raised their cachinnations
Her land has been made a waste
His cities desolate & polluted.
China India & United Europe
Jostle in the selfsame darkness.
How high is the price you are paying
For leaving the ways of justly living
Which I showed you through earlier anointed --
That what there is shall belong
To those who are good for it:
Work to the workers,
Learning to those learning,
Children to the motherly
Communism to the poets,
& poetry to every wo/man.

If you do not accept correction
You will be destroyed.
I will scatter you like straw
That flies before the simoom.
This shall be the portion,
The proper measure you'll receive.
Send for the dirge-singers, let them come,
Quickly start a wailing for Humanity,

Summon the skilled women, let them come,
That your eyes may run with water,
Your ears hear lamentations. For death
Is climbing through your windows,
Entering your fortresses of torture,
Flying with the missile-toting bombers --

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

22-28209

TO CARRY OVER

A compliment to John Berger

We exiles are all
Specialists in packing
We know what to leave behind

We take with us
Suitcases that we can lift
We leave behind us
Connections & ways of life

We take with us
Birthdays, marriage anniversaries
The shelters of gestures & jokes
The words for bread & coffee

We know desperately well
Railway stations & airports
We anesthetize this Fate
By crosswords & mystery stories

Our luggage is
Anxiety & hope
To survive
To work

Wherever we come, languages shift
To the dismay of lexicographers
The orthography grows unreadable
We build new houses of words

We are carriers
Transported & deported
Thus metaphors

This wine our blood

The poetry of mulatto tomorrows
Will be in our languages
We carry it
Like cattle-cars cattle

The maximum diameter of the universe
Is 240 times 10 to the 24th kilometres
We had no need
For this calculation

It's not so easy
Bridging Milky Ways
We are thirsty
Carrying goods over

London 14509

MY LADY HOPE

To the memory of Anne McLaren, 1948 onward

I dreamt of Lady Hope tonight
She smiled on me so sweetly,
Fair as in days of our keen youth
When she kissed me very sweetly.

“Where did you go, my Lady, my love,
What countries saw your features?
Your flaming gaze, your sunburnt hands,
Your reach to other futures?”

“I’ve always been here, young man of mine,
Here where the wise can see me,
You grew up & lost your keen eye
& the faint are not able to see me.”

“We all must grow up, my Lady, my love,
How can I again see you?”
“Remember how knowledge led you to love,
Hold fast to that, & you’ll see me.”

“But you’re no longer a girl, my love,
Rosy as dawn & eyes shining.”
“We all grow up, old man of mine,
I’m a woman now, eyes shining.”

4510

IN THE PHARMACY

I need you, I told the pharmacist
You accelerate my heartbeat
You awaken my appetite
You quench my desert thirst
You are just what the doctor prescribed.

You’re a pretty package
You sharpen my sight
My hearing quickens when you sound out
My muscles tense & relax
My tendons knit together.

It’s just that your instructions for use
Are unclear, they seem Greek to me
Or Corean or Mongolian or Xosa
I know the words but not the meaning
Or maybe they’re quipu knots
Difficult to read or untie.

How am i to deal with you
Take you into me
Devote myself to you --
Or maybe stop depending on you --
Unless the readings are clear?

203-271212

UPON THE DISCOVERY OF PHARAOH WOSERIBRE SENEKAY
(SECOND INTERMEDIARY PERIOD)

So there's some hope for us still -- four thousand
Years later, an archeologist of the Final Darkness
Will find a written trace & say: „Mirlenien
Reigned here, son of Ka, adoring the Goddess Nut
& the comradely people in arms, in order
To afford happiness. His tomb
In exquisite pink marble is alas much
Destroyed in the Age of Plunder, the magnificent
Paintings only in part preserved. His skeleton shows
A height much above normal. A totally forgotten
Page of history looms hereby
Darkly up.”

17214

4 LIMERICKS FOR 2015

There was an old person of Zagreb
Who went visiting Mashrek & Mahgreb
But the Caliphate fire
Generated his ire
And he returned from Mahgreb to Zagreb.

There was an old man from St. Xavier
Quite enamoured of Yugoslavia

1 poe '02-17

When he saw it was gone
He felt wrong was done
And went the way of Yugoslavia

There is a creature called God
Whose creation is often quite odd
A world ruled by banks,
Killing drones & tanks
Does no credit to a creator God.

Collapsing Yugoslavia
Could have found a savior
Had it come to pass
That its ruling class
Could have quite altered behavior.

6-7415

WINTERLAND

Ça nous est dû. Le sang! le sang! la flamme d'or!

Rimbaud

ancor giovane d'anni e bella ancora

Leopardi & Sereni

After death shall all turn simple:
Vases find their yellow tulips,
Lawyers prove their law, books
Choose their readers, finally warm
Wax freezes stiff. There calls for no
Further alarms a closed door, mirrors
Cease looking for more figures, no
Alarums wax in the peace of identity
1 poe '02-17

Extinction mutes regrets, vivid years

Are spared encumbrances.

Do i wish

I could live on, blue eye, mind in a vat,

Crying in vain for a body, so modestly,

This bloody minimum owed to all of us:

Still young in years & fertile still.

2-41215