

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

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My Lady Hope

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## 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 [Hizôhōyaku]

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



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



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

1 poe '02-17

& 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,



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



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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 savia  
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

#### ESCHATOLOGY: ON LOVE AND DEATH

Amor mío, si muero y tú no mueres, [...]

Pudimos no encontrarnos en el tiempo.

- - - - -

También veo las muertes que están entre nosotros [...]

Y respiro en el aire la ceniza y lo destruido

Pablo Neruda

--Por N, como siempre--

My love, in these bygone times, gone  
For good i must remember, if you die before me,  
You must remember, if i die before you, how green,  
Deep, broad, was the valley & love we lived

Together, often apart, never disjoined. Meandering,  
Waters & winds of our Earth took us thru sunshines  
& black thunders, shook yet did not break us:  
We could have failed to meet in the time.

Soon we shall perfect our deaths and dying, no regrets,  
Leave this little enchafed heart-break island  
Our yapping hearts shall abandon, not retract,  
Unreconciled mustangs of galloping dreams, lover of mine,

Black-haired mountaineer of devotion borne  
To death, like me, upon the Black Mountain.

1 poe '02-17

27-29517