Songs of the Last Chinese Poet

© Ouyang Yu

i am a sick man from asia
living listlessly in the last days of the twentieth century
in a country that cannot do anything about my disease
but keeps saying: what do you expect from us doctors
we are not gods
we can't promise you'll get better when you see us
there's nothing much you can do about it
no medicine no cure no remedies except perhaps money
all you do is wait
until it cures itself

i am a sick man from asia
i have been sick ever since they cut off my ancestral roots
in revolution after revolution
introduced from the west
which in our terminology means death
i'm sitting here with a blocked nose
that refuses to take in the fresh air of ideas
a sore throat that saws through the night of post-love and sex
a mouth containing the world's ugliest teeth
that always attract
the intensest gaze
(i wonder why they never come to me to collect these
for archaelogical samples
is it because i'm not sick enough)

i have songs to sing although i have not the language
songs sick and sad a bit silly but not sissy
my heart out of order
like an elevator poised mid-air
my eyes so itchy and red

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they need more scratching than i feel necessary
my songs are wicked songs of a man sick with everything
who has lost his original voice
has not gained a new one and is finding one
in his arse and possibly in the head of his penis
i mean where the pen is

1

our civilization is too long and tortuous
nobody wants to be us
so let us play a game of hide and seek
hide what we have inherited and seek what is not us
let us play a game of changing identities
becoming everybody else except ourselves

2

thinking of destroying everything
thinking of destroying a civilization
a civilization as long as the footwrappings of a feet-bound woman
we are a dying race
no longer can we live on our own
but must we metamorphose by losing our tongue **[why 'dash'?]**
our beautiful sexy body **[why 'dash'?]**
into something we would have been ashamed to see
something hairy something so self-centred
that only a T. V. set can match

but our women are lovely
with their milk white skin pearly pearly pearly
their eyes dark and deep sparking desires of ancient races
who mixed mixed and mixed indiscriminately

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in profuse promiscuity
which is the reason why everybody can die a death of love
in those dangerous pools of pure sex
and come out alive
with more energy and a lifelong longing for the mix of bloods
that creates the purest of pure things

now the ancient desire is upon us
wherever we are
in south africa or america in austria or australia
in canada or canaan in paraguay or paradise
among british or brutish
german or germ
french or frenzy
wherever we go we stay
born exiles willing to die in lands not their own
traitors capable of translating the falsest messages into truth
liars used to revolutionizing the system of invention
every once in a while
hopeless slaves selling our brains like bodies
to the masters of a mad civilization

3

i'm disjointed
my head and my heart are disconnected
i suppose i am writing poetry
out of time and place
i suppose i'm writing for myself
without the slightest idea where it should lead
the spring is at an end
the summer begins to assault my eyes with pollens
i'm what you'd call a missing person
missing from the history of today

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missing from anthologies collections compilations bibliographies
of jealous exclusion **[keep 'of']**
but i'm squeezing in like a piece of rain
from a crevice in the sky
of stunted imagination
their civilization is too much of a good thing
we die
even in life

4

i have laid myself down in the corner of an australian suburb
looking up i see the blue sky forever hanging there
without movement without sound
i wonder why i am here
but my sleep is sweet
it obliterates all the senses all the memories
once again i find myself talking to myself
with a pen or a machine
summer of their festival is boring
i don't have anyone to blame
the poem is the ultimate meaning
i realize i'm writing about nothing
as days near the end
so i am
nearer my beginning
hours of total abandon to senselessness
on a red sofa
like in a red boat of Rambeau's
floating down the river
of forever forgetfulness

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so the poet has gone to death
so he has killed his wife
and his poetry
so what
isn't it his way of writing his last poetry
when from the poet's belly
no poetry is forthcoming
—he has already become a foreigner
a foreign citizen
but has not learnt to speak or write one word of the foreign language
it does not matter
for he has his own
inherited from his tempestuous poet father
and an anonymous mother
who does not necessarily care a thing about poetry
being the survival type

but what's the point of writing poems
when there is really
nothing to worry about nothing sad nothing miserable nothing maddening
when the sky is blue blue blue and the grass green green green
when happiness is the state of the art
the norm
and in everybody's shit
he often wonders to himself
he thinks of his own past
which is days of unschooling
grazing pigs or sheep on the northern hills of china
in a remote mountain village
no one wanted him for better things
he didn't feel himself good for anything either
except to draw a few lines in characters
that did not mean much to him later on
disconnected disjointed and deranged

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like his mind sometimes
they were the reflections of a darker life
like a darker river
more dangerous more psychic
that ran against the placidity of daily life
deep within and full of red noises

the time was such that china was to be no longer its own
it wanted to change its own colour
perhaps out of an age-old desire to destroy itself
which is said to recur every decade
to reappear in other forms the more alien the better
the further away the better
in a word
time is now ripe for a change of blood
so he stopped worrying any more about the future of a dying dragon
let it become a chameleon instead
he thought
let that happen at least first in me

not until he came to this country in a far corner of the earth
down under as if the shitting bowl is now hanging over his head
did he realize that he found his own version of china here
all the ancient qualities he had at his fingertips:
the never-dying birds could chirp all the year round
for there are no seasons of unhappiness
people are so quiet and content
they live and love in a sleep kind of way
in a dream that dreams dreams
children are enormous animals that never grow up
but keep fattening on the cropped lawn
adults forever apply their bored faces
to the window wishing to see someone
perform something extraordinary while passing

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but nothing happens
the poet waits and waits
breeding chickens from duck eggs **[keep 'chickens'?]**
building his hut from the fallen gum trees
and drinking from the rusty tank
rain and dew from an unsterilized sky
he thinks he lives a modern hermit's life
but his wife—oh
it's always the woman
don't you think they are the most modern thing
that things are modernized for no one else but them
that they are so sterilized with cleaning agents
so patronized by big corporations
so pampered by postmodernity and feminism
so sexed by an oversexed society
that they can't for the life of themselves be subject to such primitivity
the awareness of a modern city somewhere in the vicinity is almost
too painful to bear

so the gap the widening gap of gyrations
maddening gyrations at night
of kerosene light accompanied by outbursts of love or hate
is becoming intolerable for both of them—

the old blind fortune-teller has already told him
in becoming something else you become yourself
your lost identity will forever pull you back
towards the centre of chaos
it's better to stay in there
for it's a way of life you have been used to
like if you are used to death
life itself will be a kind of torture for you
it will be worse than death
come back for the day you come back
you will come alive

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whatever the mad old blind fortune-teller said
he did not hear
nor remember
for when he went out that morning
everything was painted red
his island had become a red sail in a fiery sea
he felt so light that he knew something would happen soon
though he knew not what
he felt so ethereal that an eternal separation seemed near
and possible
although he knew it was a kind of union
that would defeat any earthly purpose

so he did what he did
and said what he said

that's the only morning he did not write a line
on an island some twenty thousand miles from his own native land
with an ocean that could not even understand his messages
in chinese

for birds and fish were not interpreters

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time of change
for better or worse
time of change for this nation of sheer humanity

they fly to the far corners of the earth
the far corners of the sky
like sparrows

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they run all over the world
from country to country from island to island
like rats

but they prefer this particular place
with everything wrong
from season to morality

they therefore become wrong themselves
rightly
they denounce everything that has been considered correct

easily they give up their unworthy nationality
easily they lead a hard life
that is nothing but sex and money

slaves who tie themselves to the pole of freedom
traitors whose only home is anchored in the grave of their dead ancestors
shameless rogues who never learn to behave as they are told

but it's the time for a change
life so boring
anything is worth trying

from murder to a world wide chain of promiscuous sex
from man turned woman to man turned animal
from out of this world to out of this universe

but this mindless lot would not care less
their purpose in life is money and sex
and tireless human bickerings and intriguings **[keep plural?]**

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ruins a widespread ruin nationwide ruin
only that country could afford to have
and was happy to afford
it was all him
mao the hair the hat the cat
the tyrant who rose above millions of millions of blind idiots
and made a god of himself
by sacrificing a five-thousand-year tradition
with all its emperors concubines eunuchs courtesans
its castrated historians castigated poets s/killed writers

history is not really a repetition of itself
for who is more western than him
who wanted to achieve unique chineseness
by destroying all that that is most chinese
by embracing a totally alien western notion of communism
originated by a half-savage half-human mar/x
as the foundation of a society that was essentially opposed to anything
as alien as western—

you expected to see the phoenix arise from the ruins of age-long cultures
all you can see now are ants of stunted spirit and mind
crawling busily behind a great monster bent on the destruction
of that civilization
following in the wake of progress and modernization
wishing for the death of yourselves
for a life in some other form
the more alien the better

8

yes i'm an archaeologist from china
having got a scholarship from the australian government
to work on a phd in the field of archaeology

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to this day after some seven years of unsuccess
i still do not understand why they gave me the money at all
to support a project of uncovering
what is never there anywhere in australia
like excavating a virgin mind that knows no human history
i'm more interested for example in getting deeper knowledge
of a building site
as to whether there is any big pipeline or sewerage
running underneath a house that i want to buy
or how to turn the space of a back garden
into another house in the future
recently it has just come to my notice
that i am more an archaeologist
of identities than of anything else
i mean that identity is something resembling the part of history
you are keen on unearthing
when you get to the bottom of it you find
what is originally supposed to be this becomes that
my english is bad and i'm afraid that i do not explain myself
let me put it another way
identity is a piece of tang
that serves only to show the existence of non-tang
if you get it out of the earth
forget about identities
i'm really not interested in archaeology and stuff like that
you can't get a mayan an egyptian a greek a roman an indian a chinese
civilization from the middle of australia nor anywhere on the coast
no matter how long and hard you try
probably counting two million years from this second on
one might find a possible co-existence of a possible multi-
cultural civilization buried with all its distinguished cities like
malbane seednay breezebone addlaird darnwin whorebutt cuntbora
and me a possibly fossilized being if fortunate enough
would they the future archaeologists be able to find out with their
intricate

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sophisticated instruments what is now passing through my mind
then already petrified in a land with nothing to be archaeological about
anyway my three-room house is already bought with specialists'
assurances
that there is nothing cylindrical nor circular passing underneath
not even a rat's hole
that an archaeologist like you doesn't have to worry about anything except
paperwork on the intertextuality of archaeological findings
i suppose he's right
what is there left for an archaeologist to do
when history is only a blank page written with unmemorized years
when a house has to be bought
without anything hollow running under it

9

market gardener yeh that's what i am sort of
gardening for the tiniest market of my own family
they say the law stipulates that you can't use human urine and shit
they say you can use chemicals because it's healthy
for them perhaps
not for me
for gardening is really a shit-it-eat-it process
a bit like pornography
when someone shits it you eat it
or philosophy
when you eat it you shit it
it's just a matter of re-cycling
but that's certainly not/what i mean
is that gardening is pure pleasure in itself
you see a seed soaked through in your hot bubbling urine
that probably has some after-love seed of your own
and watch it absorb all the nutrition from what is released by your bowels
that carries part of your blood and flesh

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while the feeling returns season after season
that you are married to the earth in a shit-it-eat-it way
that the best fruit comes from the worst emissions
and by eating the thing we grow
we are eating ourselves new and raw
with the passage of time

10

don't blame me for having stopped writing altogether
ever since i went west
what am i supposed to write about
and where am i supposed to publish
the chinese newspapers and magazines overseas being so money-minded
and sex-centred
taiwan and hong kong too far away
and the mainland too politically exclusive
my chinese daily growing stale
like an opened beer can
never drunk
or a too old body
that can't sell itself
even when fully exposed to the public view
day and night

how strange it is that you had thought anything was possible
once you went west
which was supposed to be the solution
to all the chinese communist problems:
overcrowding lack of sex weekly political sessions
centralized collectivism
worshipping of a deified personality repressive nationalism
instead
you find parallels:

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overcrowding of objects
lack of good sex in a highly sex-charged society
weekly religious sessions
centralized individualism
worshipping of a personified deity
compressive nationalism
so that it suddenly dawns on you that whatever you write
will be a mirror image of the other
depending on which languages you choose
which perspectives you employ

perhaps it's not so simple
as a writer you feel that your own language is essential
so central that it has to engage with its own themes
in its own terminology
incapable of being expressed by any other languages
no matter how many people are using it
like your own penis
biologically and racially determined
that will only enter the tunnel
of the same language
prepared generations before
by your knowing ancestors
once you are without that language
you are a linguistic eunuch
who will know all the essentials and ingredients of love
like a book
but not the pleasure of it
your new tongue
in the form of the old
becomes babyish

it's probably because of this that you decide to stop writing
though you never even tell me
your oldest friend

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what's the point you say
once the thought-catching machine is invented
you only have to apply its feelers onto your head
to catch the flow of all the thoughts through your brain
and turn them automatically into your own languages
on a floppy disk of either macintosh or ibm
all i do now
you say
is wait for that very moment of human progress
to retrieve all the things i have thought of
from this central-australia of a brain of mine

11

i am a man of multiple identity
born in the year of pigs
left the country in the year of chicken
on a fijian passport that i bought with 30,000 american dollars
first to canada as a british subject
then to the states to marry an american
who turned out to be a polish jew or a jewish pole
after securing a greed i mean green card
i came to australia
because i was told that this is a multicultural society
which suits me fine
but i'm not happy about what i see here
for example in a workplace
during the tea break
people fall into groups according to their different nationalities
they buy and read their own newspapers written in their own languages
only in a brothel do they begin to mix
but i doubt if that is a place for you to produce
anything at all
why not learn from me

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a man of multiplicity
i go back to china for holidays
or join my legal wife in the states
or think of fiji sometimes where i passed in transit
in an airport that looked no different from a thousand others
or speak of canada as if that is my home
never mind those things
for home is really where the heart is
a hive of places
containing the original feelings
of each individual home in each individual place
i am a man of multiple things

12

what am i doing at this moment?
i tell you nothing
absolutely nothing
except play with my thing from time to time
it is a grey day outside
as grey as my macintosh screen
my mind is blank
my body unused
my language is not what i was born with
the summer is in limbo
the years are passing
i hear desires calling
but all the hotlines are busy
and all the dates are missing
i skip through pages
of bodies engaged with bodies
i recall days
of a similar greyness
i don't know what i am

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i don't see why i should be
i'm not happy about things
but i *am* content with it

13

they call me the angry chinese
how can i not be
when i couldn't be what i had wanted to be
a totally different man
from my original society
when i realized for the first time in my life
that the west was a lie
as any ever told in china
except a bit more modernized and advanced
with a bit of humanistic concern for one's self-pride
when i meet with people totally unrelated
confined to their world of pets and pity
when i gradually get used to not speaking to anyone
for months
for years
and to occasionally thinking of killing a few people
especially someone like the owner of a garage
who came over and called out to me:
hi charlie!
or someone like an australian friend who became so sensitive
as not to be able to stand a slight criticism
and never called me again despite repeated calls
when silence became a weapon
absence powerful artillery

i'd be so angry
i'd just dial a familiar number
and hiss into the phone

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wordlessly

hoping that one day
a wireless telephone gun
would be invented

14

left without an interlocutor
i participate in this endless conversation with myself
i am the self and the other
i am the dividing line
i speak to a world that only wakes to listen
hundreds of years from now
by then there won't be an atom of my voice
i am soundless even when i am attempting
to describe the features of my imagination
in a night no different from others
filled with dreams
one for each brain
except the wakeful
there is no more need to go further
i am here with time
moving towards a definite direction
a sooner or later happening

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why are they so unhappy?
why do they live the way they sometimes do
trying to keep each other down?
why do they sometimes worship each other
but never at the same time?

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why do they try so hard to maintain their separatedness?
why do they make love even when they do not really feel like it?
why does the word 'love' never cross their lips?
is it because it is obsolete in a couple of years like everything else?
does living long together always spell eventual separation?
why do they write at all
in their different languages not mutually intelligible?
even thinking worlds apart
why do they live like that hating and loving
without peace reigning for a single moment?
a throw-back on their history of blood and blood?
why do they worship not even themselves?

16

home is a strange place
this morning
like every morning
the sun shines through everything
ugly deranged and temporary
the heart is a bird of irony
that longs for things that no longer exist
the body is a computer
weighed down with megabytes of thoughts
home is where
home is not to be
this earth of our ancestors
is too long to be bothered
strangers are we
to ourselves
to our enemy

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now that the season is drawing to an early close
i am composing this song on a mouth organ
that only exists in my memory of a long long time ago
music is the intimate part that lives in the death
of things that were
each melody contains an untold story
of someone sleeping upon the still river
with a moon as ancient as it is young
of someone who sang songs of his composition to strangers
with an averted face
sang to people who cannot even remember them
after all these years
of someone who wondered constantly to himself
whether he was born for such things
of all the dreams streaming through the strings of a wild violin
whose player is now content with little
as little as his little finger
never long enough

but where do i find the language suitable
for the expression of things only the primitive heart
knows
which having lost all meaningful connections
can't even fit into its own category
nevertheless
i sing this song
with closed eyes
as if i were already dead
returning to my previous life
lived in another planet
revisiting rivers as long as centuries
seeing the moon stopped in motion
mid-flow
despite movements and revolutions

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18

in my ugly face i saw
the other day
an animal dying
an animal not like anything i had seen before
with teeth bigger than any part of the body
and a head battered out of shape
he was chewing something
something that looked like languages
but do not mean
and his thoughts were dripping red through the battered holes
that smelled tigers on the brink
of an overwhelming civilization
and he said
i had striven
for this

meanwhile i saw my face transformed into
a dream-like landscape of dark brown mountains

19

famous people are boring
s/he has to be interviewed about how many times a day
s/he shits or pisses
in what positions s/he makes love
what s/he eats that adds to h(er)is genius
how many hours s/he spends with h(er)is pets
and all that crap

and yet this is exactly what s/he has been dreaming of:

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a future of festive nights swimming in wine and wo/men
of going places meeting VIPs being watched and watched on tvs
by all nationalities
who do not give a damn

but how s/he *seems* to be enjoying h(er)imself
amidst papery publicity
that erases
and de-stablishes

never mind you tell yourself
when all is said and fucked
you'll go down in history
in all the colours of the wordbow

though the coming generations hardly notice

20

manslaughter is man's laughter

21

anger buried deep inside
anger against the homogenous race
bent on self-destruction
anger against the alien race
intent on othering and in/digesting
anger against a childlike world divided according to
whose father earns more and rules more
whose mother is more beautiful thus more fuckable
more re/productive
anger becoming a daily practice
burning into the in/different eyes of passers-by

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anyone who does not have a monosyllabic name
anger of the guy from vietnam who vows to never speak to anyone
white
not even to look at them
therefore thought of as incapable of speaking for himself
by people like Said or Bhabha or Spivak or Kristeva or Jamieson
whatever and whoever
you know they are professors and make good money good business
out of the pockets of their white paternal parents
with an affectionate pat on the head saying
speak back baby
like the sex-bored nymphs
resorting to the final fun of being whipped pissed shat spat spanked
and bound in leather of plastic pleasure
anger accompanying each night of sleep
dreamed in revolution of a radical sort
that wishes for a total destruction of the whole white world
creating a world of colours without whiteness of death
anger anger anger
your name is me

22

who is karl marx anyway
a big man with a bushy jaw
a habit of sleeping late at night and getting up at 12 midday
(did he fuck at all did he shit being such a saint)
two stone steps etched in the british museum
a manifesto predicting a roaming ghost of communism in europe
some books about an asiatic mode of production
he died a long ago

but the chinese oh the damned clever chinese
they picked him up

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and put him on the ancestral pedestal
worshipping him like he was the originator of chinese civilization
giving him a chinese name: Ma Ke Si
something like Horse Can Think
or Horse Can Shit

thus beginning the longest nightmare of chinese history
as the prophets predicted in some uncertain times
that where the seeds of the white demon
struck roots in the yellow soil
(as yellow as gold as yellow as shit as yellow as skin of the race)
there would no longer be peace of mind and body
the lonely fisherman fishing by the river of the Tang Dynasty
the girls washing in the mountain creek
the boys eating lotus root belly on the sand
would pass into forever history
the white and yellow
when combined
produces the deadest thing:

a red disease
that brings out the worst in both
and is interested in nothing but destroying each other
like they have done in two world wars
of sole white invention

oh marx
you mar and mar and mar
for
X times

23

to be nameless

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to be without a state
to be free
as free as freedom itself
to be able to detach oneself from any responsibility of nationality
to be left entirely on one's own to live it out
to be aware of all the futilities
as a most expensive plane slides to its destruction
to be wordless for days and days and days
to be without anyone who can even be described
as attachable by a telephone cord
to be deathless while living a death
to hear the rustle of the dry wind of april and think of something
that happened somewhere before
to be unable to put anything down for fear of emptying the memory
to feel the impossibility of crossing the boundary thin as a skin
to see with an eye self-trained for unspeakable subtlties
the age-old rock that blocks the way of eternity
to traverse centuries of alie(n)ation and humility
to become a third
dimension

24

she said i don't think there is anything worth living for in australia
sometimes i think of death
i make money
so what
everybody does
why do you need the money if you are old and are dying
i'll go out one day and spend all the money i have earned
buying the best clothes
the richest gold ornaments
and shoot the finest photo
and myself

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i become stupid with each passing day
even more stupid than australians
who at least know how to use their money to decorate their faces
knowing that they are ugly
what do we have when we are old
not even a relative to speak of
not even relatively speaking
in a country as empty as my womb
where do i get the seeds when even you are too old to care to sow
i have to get up early tomorrow morning again
cause i have to fill the empty tank with fuel
the price hasn't fallen during the last week
i wonder why
but i can't wait
for the car has to get going
probably i should start playing tattslotto
or buying raffle tickets
like the stupid australians or australian-chinese
we'll see
anyway
life is such
one just doesn't have to think of it

25

heroes are homegrown
enemies are always foreign
successes are sweet
failures are a bad dream
the former doubling the sense of self-importance
the latter deserving only to be forgotten
for history is just a whore
who opens herself only
to those who can afford her

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26

last night i went to bed in the dark
and i laid myself down in state
i opened my eyes
as if i closed them
dark was so dark that i saw my eyes dark
i felt quiet within
i felt quiet without
quietude was it?
beatitude was it?
for i could hear what others couldn't possibly have heard
if they were dead
i mean i could hear
what only a living dead man could possibly have heard
dying and living simultaneously
seeing this world through the other world's eyes
i thought of centuries afterwards
would it matter if i left like this?
lying in state
in the dark
openclosing eyes **[that's fine, I think]**
livedying **[that's fine, I think]**
there was no as if **[that's fine, I think]**
i was the dead who could see and hear and experience what the dead couldn't
have even if they had wanted
the quie(beauti)tude forever
no one came along
only the grass in the house
kowtowing to the songs of the last crickets from an omnipresent nowhere

27

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perhaps a graphic lesson in progressive/past tenses is useful:

China		Australia
developing		developed
living	lived	
hoping		hoped
dying		died

28

yes that's right
i've certainly come down in the world
what is the intellect but the labouring body of someone
who is only too willing to sell
when i see myself in the mirror
i see a ruined landscape
of deranged emotions
of psychotic teeth
of a face as unrecognizable as another face of the same race
i am dealing with words
words that give no comfort
words that hate to express themselves
words that no longer exist for me
words that ask me to give up
for when l(ove) is gone from the wor(l)d
there is only the word

29

i sat in his room
that has nothing to do with his neat person
a pure mess of unwashed socks shoes jeans shirts
clustering together in all the four corners of the room

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letters from home that recalled sadness of an unspeakable kind
photos in scenic spots
the twelve apostles
eildon lake
the great ocean road
gum trees in the water
and some unidentified australian places
he looked happy
caught within the frame of a certain must be beautiful time
for his beloved at the far distant home
the cigarettes
we smoked
he started talking about christianity
i lost interest
the curtain was only half drawn
i wondered how he could possibly live in such a mess
i wondered about its similarity to ours
i wondered about our ability to keep a grinning appearance
while leaving our temporary residence to rubbish
i wondered about the deep racial gene
that forever generates the need for purity
while conscious of our helplessness
we smoked in the semi-dark room
until the last ashes died in the substitute glass
i sighed
it would be like this century after century
year after year
impossibly
us

30

when winter is coming
is death far away?

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haunted by it
every once in a while

the race deep within us
towards the end

of new beginnings
we feel helpless before a gods-filled universe

abandoned on the remotest island
is a bird with no longer dream eyes

crushed by his own psychological weight
a nightmarish reality that grows on his talons

31

now that the end is near
the centuries that hold no memories
the kings and emperors
the states that rise and fall like the breathing of ocean waves
now that the end is near
the people who wend their way home at the setting of the sun
the man who switches off his headlights when he arrives
the writer who sighs with relief after winning a prize
the kids who look beyond growing up
now that the end is clear
the i that gazes at the screen of the sky for something to appear at last
the i that lives and lives as if for ever
the i that reaches out only to
the i that wonders about being multi-post-everything
now that the end is near at hand
it's no use crying over the blood to be spilled

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it's no use arguing with the newest theories
that stubble out of the barren cerebral field
for the prophets have gone
back to the metropolitan cities
where insanity rules
now that the end is sure to come
the i that feels the chill in the knee caps
at fainted night
when the head cannot support its heavy burden of coming thoughts
now the end is in the air
the wind has already died in the chimney
only some rats
only some creakings of an agony in the bones of the inarticulate house
repetitions of many centuries
to come

32

coming back from teaching these people, a group of familiar anonymities
in the city
you started wondering about existence
you felt specially tired
like a clown on stage
exhibiting his last antics
while your other self
watched in silent tears in the dark of the audience
you tried not to look at anybody at all
although they refused to go away from your sight
until they each reached their predetermined destination
you sat there feeling painful all over
from self-affliction
and self-mortification
that now comes regularly like a woman's period
the thought delivers a blow like a sharp knife

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driven powerfully all the way into your senses
that nothing nothing at all in the world can mean anything at all
except by wilfully making them mean something
the old aquaintances' faces in the auditorium are boring
the women painted and dressed up standing in too-high heels are boring
the men holding glasses of piss-yellow champagne wearing tight ties
are boring
tonight some sort of age-long ritual reached out again
with concoctions make-up near-fake music
to a home/less race
you couldn't utter a word
even if you wanted
for you realized for the thousandth and one times
that there was no hope for either of you
ever since the world lost the key
to that lock that holds the two halves of the universe together
no hope
whatsoever

33

but the blank space has still to be filled in
with things as ethereal as cerebral
as my days drag along
i plan ahead what to write about
the most difficult poems are the easiest
they form their own conformity
and their own *kitsch*
human beings were originally made from machines
they possess computer-like qualities
and are becoming more like inhumans
let me tell you the story of my inability
to write a poem on this particular night
when i am left with virtually nothing to do

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except a bed to go to
and dreams forthcoming
i think to myself that poetry as an art form is dying
like the poet himself
drawn irresistibly into his own shrinking circle of madness
in which he is masturbating with himself and many disintegrated selves
that are more or less the same
with a deep sigh
he tells himself that the world is over
let us enjoy

34

i don't recall what i have written before
i don't really mind
repeating things has become a contemporary necessity
there is nothing new under the sun or moon
we repeat things in ethnically different ways
in being chinese
we are not chinese
a race born apart
unhappy
to be fighting forever with each other
and having done so repent it
with relish
now that we've come overseas
we've got nothing else except two eyes
the eye for money
and the eye for the female body
we gaze deeply into them
what do we see

35

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but let this small boy say something for himself
he wasn't even sure whether here was better than there
and could only think by comparison
that the banana here was much longer larger and yellower than there
that there were so many holidays and so long here
that one didn't get locked into a tiny room for making a mistake
that he could go about in a family car instead of scrambling for a seat
in a bus

he also knew that things were no better in certain ways
that big kids beat small kids
called them dirty names
that australian boys or girls sang ching chong chinaman
and say fuck or idiots or nick off or shit or get lost
and never get punished
that chinese boys do that here too
once they saw you were weak
the school yard was filled with bullies

he often wondered why his parents ever came to such a country
and with him
why he had to learn such a violent language
in which words are easily turned to s/words
man's laughter to man slaughter
and live is but evil spelt backwards

he couldn't understand either
why his parents left him alone all the time
to an eternal book or a game machine or a deserted street
or some fierce bullies
while they themselves were engrossed in the business
of making money which was gradually becoming fascinating to him
for he thought that if everybody was so interested in it
it must have

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enormous power
at least it could buy him endless basket ball cards

at night in his dreams
his little soul was often steeped in heaps and heaps
of bought happiness

36

just as we thought we were becoming them
they left us alone
entirely to ourselves
perhaps for us to make the discovery
that is already there
that the closer you get to each other
the further you push apart
like two magnets
you wonder why this is the case

37

but from the very beginning
you are a failure
you fail precisely because you don't write with the blood of your race:
your language
you fail on many other counts too:
having to compel yourself to abandon your heritage
of a heavy past
and resort to something that you think of as glossily beautiful
as a porn mag cover
and as instantly satisfying
you even thought oh god would i be a criminal so that i could be transported
to australia or any other corner of the earth

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so you planned your destiny in a self-motivated attempt at westernization
you picked up their language
you made acquaintances then friends with them
thinking oh how nice were these people
they were certainly a superior race
with their compassion human understanding incorruptibility by politics
generosity with money faceless honesty
they were an infinitely better race
their magazines only increased this impression that somehow
there was a sumptuous dinner going on there that never ends
or a fucking party where everyone fucks everyone else
and never stops fucking
how free how wonderful how thrilling

until now
when you are left entirely to yourself
facing the possibility of either dying from freedom
or selling yourself as an intellectual whore for any boss to fuck with

38

the writer i met the other day was very articulate
he spoke about nothing but cultural crisis
a cultural crisis that not only faces china but also the west in general
he talked about a people who had lost touch with history and future
who lived totally in the present
believing that their future lies somewhere to the west
he wrote article after article about the re-use of our past
for rejuvenating purposes
with its mythologies three religions and constant philosophers
he also told me the story of a writer who's passionately out of favour with
the west such as japan and the usa
who could never get rid of a sense that in being honourably received
and respectfully treated he was somehow offered a horrendous insult

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it was as if people knew him to be a demanding baby whose every whim
must be satisfied and appeased
otherwise he'd cry wolf
or make trouble

writers
you are fated to be like that
forever sitting under your discontent
hating to live like an orphan in the great orphanage of western
civilization
and hating to live like one of the rat race in your own country
where you complain of insufficient attention
your disease writers let me tell you is that
you have not found me

39

this poem of mine refuses to be written
on either politically correct or incorrect lines
lacking singularly in drugs such as steroids for stimulation
since there is not a drug testing committee for poetry
i might try some steroid some amphetamine some heroin
some chinese medicinal stimulants
made of dogs' dicks or lions' loins or pigs' pus or tigers' tits
without the danger of being another maradonna
to have his football feet cut
i'd gladly welcome the news of a poetry society announcing
test results that lead to a decision to expel me
from the world of poetry once and for all
so i can come back contentedly to the prison i have built for myself
which is literally my own body
'the prison of freedom' i call it
after failing in numerous applications for an academic position
i'd take up the most sacred and crazy calling

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the calling of a dreamer
who sleeps away his life in worthless poetry
one of the academics complains that there are too many poets
nowadays
he doesn't know there are as many academics or perhaps more
but be damned i mean those who claim to be poets
i never want to be one of them
see the way they pose themselves after winning a prize
have you ever seen such monstrous pomposity such stupid self
respect
such masturbatory arrogance?
i suppose primitive poets
did not have such things as prizes to set them apart
like a totally irrelevant race
i believe that in a little while they are going to give away titles like
professor of poetry
president of poetry
pastor of poetry
pisser of poetry
i'm sure that not so long after that all the poets will die
like me
but they die earlier for they are already creating death

40

three years on
i no longer know what nationality i am
i am a bit of everything
i was reading herman hesse some ten years ago
in a wuhan university library
and i had the impression that i not he had written the entire book
should i owe the success to the translator
or to the author
neither

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i should owe that to myself
to that something within that is capable of infinite metamorphosis
that something that at once denies the existence of my own being
and creates a totally alien one
was it that that prompted my friend to say that he had not realized
that he had been living all along like rousseau until he read him
in chinese translation

or put it more simply
is this an unconscious spiritual colonization
by an unwitting colonizer
are we willing conspirators
in an increasingly unbalanced international game?

but we have lost forever lost
like thieves
our writers steal from them
and stuff their notes
and who are praised for being so much like us
the slit-eyed and single-fold eyed
no longer exist
for they have all gone to their western/ized doctors
and had the double-fold-eye operation

i am thinking of a time
probably in a hundred years
when all over china and asia
macdonalds are the standard meal
teams play american or english or australian football only
presidents premiers party chairmen professors
converse in admirable oxford harvard or even aussie english
everybody drives a car
nobody needs a divorce as nobody really marries
freedom is as easily available as a can of coke
and as easily disposable

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critics judge according to the rules set by marx engels nietzsche
Derrida Lacan Foucault Bhabha Said Barthes
anyone who speaks a european language
has sunken eyes big nose and armpits that need constant
dressing
with deodorant
writers are proud of the fact that they can speak and write in a
second
language better than they do in their
first
their mother
tongue
raped then force-married by the newly-found **[I prefer the combination]**
father
tongue
and the masses
once you give them something good to eat
they will go with you
if you give them a skin for free
they'll wear it
if you give them a colour
they'll take it as long as it is whiter than their own
and freer of charge
god must have said somewhere that this world eventually will
be under christianity and an english one at that

what would you do when *that* happens

ah well
i'll speak chinese
i guess

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sometimes you feel so empty
that instead of finding holes in yourself
you find holes everywhere
australia itself is one big hole
like an enormous beehive
with all the intellectual holes that you want to fill in
westerly southerly easterly northerly
overland upland underland downland wonderland bystand
meanjin makar mattoid scripsi tirra lirra going down swinging
hobo hecate helix hiku
social alternatives racial alternatives sexual alternatives transexual alternatives
you have sealed them all up
with a 45-cent book of poetry

and with an sae **[self-addressed envelope]**
that eventually bounds back to your own hole of holes

42

how long are you going to write this poem
no idea
how many days have we got for this century
six years five months and twenty seven days
what are we going to do with them
just get along
as billions of people have done before
but does poetry make a way of life?
when you are half mad
when nothing else matters
do you not sometimes feel totally irrelevant
that nothing in life holds any meaning for you
not even sex
just think of the deletion after the ejaculation

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the desolation of post-sex
in which you only want to enter a dead sleep
a nightmarish land
with its marish quality of pre-death
we are now at an end
this life we have updated to such a degree
that with a colour photocopier
we can easily xerox ourselves
on an A4 or A3 of zero blankness
bored with life with all its advanced paraphernalia
we look forward to legalized excitement
of the utopian euthanasia

ah men

43

there are no people for me
i live entirely
for myself
in this perfect prison
of freedom
at night
in the winter
i talk to myself
remembering the past
about myself
the world within
is all i have
i squeeze it
until i myself
come out
in myriad forms

fainting with freedom

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the poet is gradually dying
he does not know why but thinks that he does
he is consummately married
without love
before he falls into sleep
he often wishes that he had brought his pen and paper to bed
to write down those half-dreams
he has not even the courage to contemplate suicide
because he thinks that he has seen through
the pre-thought of those poetic suicides
he has become so bored with life
that he himself becomes boring
he eats regular meals
he farts regularly
he shits even more regularly
unless he has diabetes
he waits
in vain
for letters from home
deep at heart
he knows
there is no longer any home
even the heart
has deserted us
a dated gadget
to be discarded
when we need
to update ourselves
like a computer or machine

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45

what's the point of continuing this self-killing business
night after night feeling after feeling thought after thought
what's the point of applying to god for permission to enter heaven
when the easiest alternative is to go to hell
what is there left in the world that can once more elicit heroism
primitive vitality untainted beauty that does not aim at emptying things
either out of the pocket or penis
what is there that can stop me effectively from sleeping
on a deathless night and yawning, disgusted
at general humanity and myself
what is there i wonder that can restore me
to my prenatal state of otherness

ay, what is there that can stop me from laughing out loud
at the absurdity of such a helpless life

46

the more i live like a man
the more i feel less like a man
i have not yet learnt to behave properly
in a human society
i thought the difference between the east and the west
would make all the difference
until now when i realize that there is no essential difference
that they are all human beings except myself
so in despair i picked up Mein Kampf
and my eyes reddened
at those hot words
but i am no more german than chinese
i am a totally different space
posited as it were between and above

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human divisions and essentials

47

tell me truly lex
what you think of me
you are a nice bloke
shit and piss
i don't believe it
you work very hard
yes but to no avail
only to kill the madness
you are not handsome but a great guy
i know why i haven't got any friends
well you've got me
who knows that it will not turn out to be all sham
for our life is just a dream that doesn't leave a trace when we're gone
too right

48

a dream of another form
that lives in memories other than our own
for when i am no longer here
someone else somewhere else will read this
page printed with present moments
lived for a second and lost forever
like all the previous centuries
a song no longer sung because of the dead language
in the heart

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there is no race worse than this one
of which i am a member
brought up believing in fighting each other to death
without the courage to fight face to face
but with a snake's cunning to kill in the dark
we are the most deadly race in the world
i know it in my blood
others love us
we hate us
we are born to be subjects of a distant tyranny
our names under eventual change
to be something different
anything different
is our destiny
one day i'll see to it that a greater god
destroys all of us
a diseased species

50

time has come for us to tell our stories of misery
as the world's biggest exporter of excruciating suffering
and ludicrous lunacy
we now enter upon a golden age never before experienced
in our too tortuous history
our films win patronizing prizes for their lively dramatization of
concubinage and fetished feet with small fs
our writers though they can't write the bloody language
get transformed i mean translated into someone else's mother
tongue
our actresses are literally opened up
in return for free
dom

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a four-letter word with a big F
and for those who are eating out of a foreign hand
like me
it's a golden opportunity to auction
everything from the bottom of the rotten drawers
to the national skeletons
to flood them the masochists in the west
with drenching tears blood phlegm
and finally a kaleidoscopic death

for this country is a street hawker among nations
that sells priceless products wrought entirely with human tribulation

good on them

51

the winter sets in again
with its grey rain dark leaves of clouds
schizophrenic cars crawling on crippled wheels
with all the suburbs withdrawn into turtle shells
of inward madness
bent on navel-contemplating
i was drinking a cup of tea
thinking of this line that just came to my mind:

when you are gone you'll end up nothing
but this handful of words

the future is already crowded enough with futurologist prophecies
tomorrow is but another today and one of many yesterdays
the world is turning faster and faster
around the axis of the west
the slow things are thrown out into space

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the fast things solely exist for fastness' sake

but this handful of words
will disperse in the night of humanity
like so many before
hidden away in the ocean of human misery
sung and silenced
by the mouths supposedly newer
but actually duller and woodener
although louder and more machine-like

52

just at that time the chinese professor came along
and said to me
hi there why worry
the world is not going to die
least of all the chinese
who will become the strongest the most intelligent the most beautiful
in the history of mankind
once more china will become the centre of the world
and all the barbarians on the outskirts of the chinese empire
the blue-eyed the hook-nosed the smelly-armpitted the blond-haired
the abnormally big-sized
will all come to us
and learn our language in order to talk like us behave like us
they will discard their own gods and turn to us for a new god
or new gods which we have plenty of on offer
we shall kill all their men except those who are willing to surrender
and all their women except those who are reluctant to leave us
we'll have one more cultural revolution
to put them all on reeducation courses
to learn from us
to do things exactly the way they are told in chinese

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and to be us by marriage
or sex
don't worry
you don't have long to see this happen
although they now treat me like dirt
dragging me around in seminars without even paying me a cent
putting me in cold colleges with noisy overseas students
leaving me entirely on my own to do my laundry
buy my vegetables and meat in a cheap market
play my casino and tattspokies with my own ignorant compatriots
never mind
there will be a day when we'll have them suffer the same fate
and eat our shit
there will be a day you see

53

my heart is gradually turning to stone
all the best things in the world mean nothing to me any more
love friendship loyalty success money beauty possession
human existence is the most disgusting form of forgery
to be human is to be endless misery
to be without one moment's delivery from that prison
we call ourselves
even going out of ourselves would not save us
as long as we are human bound and human hued
a thoughtful death now reigns
in our hearts
like the winter
we go elsewhere imagining life is elsewhere
leaving death behind
but death follows with dream
and life returns in memory

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these poets write their poems the way they masturbate
they eat them as they eat their sperm
they shit them as they publish them
these poets read their poems as they exhibit themselves
they expose their private parts saliently to the compliant eye
they make history heavy with empty names
they empty history of its meaning with their mean-too-much words
these poets go in circles they get grants they live on campus
as resident poets
they put out posters for their readings once in a while
from beginning to end from end to beginning
all in a big stingy family
these poets listen to each other read poems
they drink beer they pat each other on their intimate shoulders
they display their books on the corner stands without bothering
whether anyone is going to buy them
these poets have parties and read poems to each other
they expose themselves and change partners occasionally
if the poetic mood suits them
these poets gather hang together
if not physically at least alphabetically
they relate not by thought or emotion
but by their very racial instinct **[keep this please]**
these poets live
less like the snow than the frost
that thinly covers the morning grass
seen for a moment
then gone forever
leaving the transient chill in the bone

these poets

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55

now i understand why all the ancient chinese poets used the word
'chou'
how can you not feel chou when you live a thousand miles away from home
and do not see a mail coach for months on end
how can you not feel chou when you realize with a suddenness
not easy to come by that even your wife is but another total stranger
who sleeps beside you night after night
how can you not feel chou when you see someone like you
spending his hours waiting for a whore in a dubious parlour
how can you not feel chou when you watch millions of cars flash by
day and night without one single eyelid turned your way
how can you not feel chou when you envision a future with another of you
living in another place trying to make sense of it all
how can you not feel chou when you look out at the car the lawn
the mail box the palm tree the house that contains you
how can you not feel chou when you see the kids grow up
and think oh what if they live like you
how can you not feel chou when you think of all those poets
living their varied life compressing it into the single word
'chou'

56

old china has a habit of pulling people back
from wherever they have gone
no matter how cruel how cold how rotten how stinking how wicked
how inhuman how devious how cunning how insincere how hateful
how foul how tyrannical how indifferent how political how godless
old china has a habit of pulling me back
whenever my mind overstays itself overseas

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whenever i grow weary of a white future
or mixed
whenever like so many willing slaves from china
serving their white masters
intellectually or physically
i tell myself that i must kill myself before i kill others
old china has a habit of pulling me back towards its black spot
its centre of authenticity
old china
old old china
has a habit

57

i often wonder why we are so fond of fighting
at such close range
why we elevate fighting to such a height of human dignity
is there something within us that hankers after something close
so close that it repulses
and why it is not us who invented the telephone and all that sort of thing
that remote controls or communicates
why we haven't invented guns or canons or nuclear weapons
that can kill from a detached distance with unconcern and irrelevance
is there also something there within them that so abhors the close
that they pursue something as non-existent as ephemeral
as god
and the reason why they are so fond of words is that they only believe in
the existence of themselves in words that things far away must
necessarily be good
they keep you at a distance
we shorten it
i wonder if some god perhaps a chinese one
would not one day split the earth into two
leaving each to contented each

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happy with the wholeness of half

58

i am so angry tonight
with nothing in particular
that i stop writing
the bloody line

59

i have a dream that my language has become latin
that i speak to people uncomprehendingly
since we picked it up
we've had it over five thousand years
probably longer
now that it's had its day
it's time it went latin's way
to its self-prepared grave
we have turned ourselves into other nationalities
by learning other languages
german french italian english
even swahili and yiddish
as long as it is not the dead heavy chinese
let it live only on the bamboo
let it thrive only on the tip of some boring academic tongues
for we are a people destined for going

60

on a grey winter morning of melbourne
i happened to think of mao

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that totalitarian tyrant of a poet
that great helmsman of disasters death and disease
that evil star shining over china
i wondered what he would do in australia
pretty bored stiff by a sleepwalking melbourne
a self-centred sydney a casino-rotated adelaide
a melancholic tasmania
and hectares and hectares of nothing-nothingness
kingscross would not satisfy his gargantuan appetite
with its lean vulgar dirty broad australian accents
asian girls asking for too much
he'd be so bored as to design something for fun
something like a mobilization of all ethnic australia
for revolution to overthrow all the existing parties
parties only good at shouting at each other
calling each other ugly names
parties with too mean a heart
like australia
he felt a bit mean too
with his rich seed

he should have come to me
his alter ego
who has been scheming ever since
to disrupt all the existing systems
to re-create this part of our universe
to replace the white mentality
with a mixed future of multi-colours
to kill anyone who demands respect before he pays due respect
with such a tiny little thing as a poem

61

there is no more beauty to sing of

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beauty is but a nothing
that appears and reappears on covers
to an easy to buy and abandon degree
it's time all its opposites came out
the distorted the devious the diseased
the abnormal the incorrect
the weak the small the slow-witted the bad-tempered the constipated
in a word the ugly
for ours is an Age of Abnormalities
triumphant in unreason
enjoying to the root of one's penis and pussy what pleasures
the darkness of the heart can offer us
the ugly is out in the open
having fun and revenge
to write centuries of their deliberate absence
back into this plain presence

beauty
see how the ugly smears your multi-print-run face
with unharvestable seeds

62

who is the bloody poet who says that when the winter comes
is the spring far away?
isn't that as much as to say that when the spring comes
is the winter far away?
here i am
awaiting the spring's coming
like a helpless woman
daydreaming a passionate rapist
with his cum written large on the sky wall
the wattles now in their seven-day best
their cum insistently golden

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the sky hopelessly grey
another mac screen
as i finish my last lines before the spring is coming
with its ominous news of summer autumn and winter
i wonder where to put in my disk
in this computer with a sky-wide screen
to transfer and save
i wonder if human intelligence will not eventually
make it easier for us to simply lie down
and watch the sky
and think our thoughts into the limitless expanses of grey

63

language is my life
and sexperience
a way of singing
the world is going going going
and i have not learnt how to tie it up
in a couple of lines or lies
my head hung very heavy and low
as heavy and low as my private parts
i'm one of those in bleak black
sitting with bent heads
i'm dead a thousand times over
and now i'm dying again

64

continents are tilting towards the west
dangerously
indeed all the world
flows in *that* direction

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the earth is no longer round
but a mountain-like thing
with top middle and bottom
in fact the earth has never been round
dominated by the ascension of barbarians
the civilized sit at the bottom
as always
content with their passivity
the progress progresses towards its own end
man is but a machine
for how can i not feel sad when every possibility is exhausted
and we are only repeating ourselves
and feeling self-congratulatory
i mean once more they are right
for we are all capitulating
by pawning our identity
worth nothing more than a word

65

the end is close at hand
the end of history
following the end of ideology
the end of a tale more than twice-told
by the intelligent
sometimes bordering on the idiotic
with a foucaultish instinct for destruction
the intense bald mind
as mad as the madness of the problem
into which it penetrates
the end is near
like an ever-approaching earthquake
that must have its fun wreaking havoc
the end's sheer pressure

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is heavy upon us
so that we begin to float
in ephemerality
and live at zero degrees

66

but even when the flowers are blooming/blossoming/opening
i see no heroes anywhere
the age is laden with an australian boredom
an australian lack of heroism
and an australian hatred of idealism
men and women look older than they are
each s/trained to be a specific screw fit into the unfeeling machine
each a student studying for profits
only mass-produced liquors
can fire their elephantinely slow temper
to something above zero degrees
but they spray into flowers of flesh
what they have drunken in
the hero is now succeeded by the normal person
who is normal in everything
and does everything according to operation manuals
or recipes or doctors' prescriptions
the normal person is our age
while the mad the crazy the insomniac the serially murderous
are unemployed or hospitalized or self-employed only
like myself
the normal person is our hero
who has the right qualifications
and runs the right business
to get back his taxes
the normal person is the Coming Person
in the twenty-first century

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like the australian in the twentieth

67

night is too long again
when it is drawing towards the reluctant spring
the coldness causes vibrations in the tight loins
against a future that is fast receding from one's past memory
i am singing this unfinished song again
before it is too late
when someone sets my computer on fire
the impotence of poetry
the self-congratulatoriness of the poets
intent on masturbating their minds in the face of some unseen images
the west has specialized itself to such a degree
they can never hope to be whole again
while they are trying out their potential of living death
we are dying
a culture that has no longer anything of its own
even the hands born for the ancient script
are now twisted for the tricks of this sinister language
designed as commodity
for a superior species
that believes that it can live after death

68

the dreams are no longer viable
the feasibility study is but one
of the impossibilities
for the future
we are living in the ruins of history
in our memory of a past

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no longer available
except in
words
we love
ever so timidly
our freedom
but someone else's boast
and a sure road to self annihilation
we lie down in this forgotten corner of the earth
carving our fitful dreams
on the greyness of the screen
even when they never appear the same
aware of the approaching age
we look and look
but find nothing in the mirror of ourselves

69

or is it we who cut our own roots
with such a mess of mixed bloods
should we blame ourselves for deserting our ancestral homes
to seek a futureless future
why is there such a pull back towards the yellow earth
despite all the high-tech temptations
is there anyone like us like me
living at zero degrees
between times and spaces **[i'd like to keep this]**
of conflicting concerns
left entirely to our naked selves

why do we do what do we do
why do we keep being human
why do we live so
oh

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70

addicted to writing
they have gradually lost their tongue
and become a writing race
their fingers
a ten-digit brain
when you ask them questions
they stare at you
and give you a piece of paper
with worthy words
they superiorize themselves
with an A4 size MLA style works cited
they are tough
'cause they've got the better language
their life so much part of a writing process
their faces are literal words
printed and published

on easily burnable pages

71

that's right
i've got a degree in acupuncture and herbal medicine
that is not recognized here
they think it's not scientific
we allow two systems to run parallel back home
they have only one running supreme
never mind
i'll stay and probably cure a couple of willing minds
with my long needles

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that can reach the deepest recesses of their soul
and body
i can feed them a handful of herbs
to make them feel how it is to be primitive
and a good primitive again
i can practise
in secret places
where the oversexed impotence
can be returned to normal
the calm violence
can be put back in peace
where the declining pulse
once examined
the overpowering desire
can be switched off with an interior massage
i don't know
i've only got needles and herbs
of pre-modernity

72

the spring is slow in august
flowering trees carefully conceal their scent
from a bird-loud landscape
there is nothing of home in the air
my footsteps that tread on the path leading to uncertainty
leave not a trace
my fast-spinning wheels roll over free whore-ways
with only a passing fancy
detached
i watch closely my dreams
from reality
dreams that curiously have many toilets in them
that tell toilet tales

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dreams not worth a cent
like so many dreams of the poets
who have nothing but their own dreams of toilets
to offer
and for free

the spring is on display from the flowers of dark trees
and the birds even sing in the gas fireplace
this poet now is contemplating his next round of bullets
one at a time at himself
to split him up
to stitch him together
to halve him
to quarter him
to blast him to pieces
to do violence at will
while singing his last song of a spring
that has no spring in it

73

for those who come from the same stock
of patent skin pasteurized blood and imperial build-up
there is no problem
they take off their language
as they shed their shorts
and manipulate the other one
as adeptly as they play with a sex worker
not an atom of dislodgement
not an iota of betrayal
they pick it up as if it belonged to them long ago
as if something better than god had already stipulated it
for their future benefit

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why you then should have such a problem
why you can't enjoy the full nakedness spread before you
with all its delicate nuances and tasty innuendoes
why you should cry over a problem-free medium
meant for you to penetrate the rock-hard facade
of superficiality
why can't you simply live the way so many are living
keeping their identity intact
while assuming a false but legal name
for protection
or fun
why should you keep away from the doctors
who are offering you a treatment for various problems
on a centenary basis
why is it that you can't accept them as they you
why should you worry about a purity that no longer exists
and has never existed except in theory

why after all
should you watch a foreign program in your own script

74

the world has never been so problematic as now
and human beings are problematized
incapable of solving their own widening chasms
in race gender ideology politics religion culture even food
telecommunications serve to de-communicate **[keep serve to]**
and de-humanize
in a couple of years a woman will be declared incompatible
with a man as a chicken with a duck
with full scientific support and throaty theories
the world will become hell itself because of
human intensity and density

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and the gods of war will descend
to arrange a total destruction of the human species
to wipe it out like liquid paper

there will be no pity

75

shall we allow the west to disappear
where then will the sun set
shall we make the east go
then how can we avoid a similar problem
dissolving the dividing line
is the easiest solution
in words
like two magnets
these ancient concepts of divide and rule
pull apart when they come together
it's not that they shall never meet
it's rather that they shall always meet
and part company and meet again
and part
even in a single person
the line divides finely
among a mix of things

when i become you
i have you
and you have me
something is still there that sets the distinction

76

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he told me that he'd go back as soon as he got his citizenship
he said that this was not something to be proud of
but a necessity
you couldn't possibly delete his blood
and replace it with something else
a citizen was only in name
your face remained the same
your eyes
your walk and talk
to go back means to live forever with your duality
a foreigner in name
a hometowner in features
a stranger with a familiar accent
he smiled his sad smile
and blinked his tiny eyes
he said that a rice heart was hard
to change into a bread one
that to live the language down
you'd need a second life
he said he never did have much hope
in a mixed destiny
and all that empty talk
unless
he emphasized
all barriers were brought down to create a homogenous society:
man for man woman for woman chinese for chinese
white for white
everything for everything of its own origins
he shook his head at
and delighted in
such obvious absurdities

he assured me once again
that he'd go back
as soon as he secured

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his australian citizen
ship

77

history is now facing their direction
it is not a matter of who will win or who will lose
it's a matter of geographical psychology
or psychological geography
in which the sun *seems* to rise
in the west
rivers of the world
all run westwards
as the minds and the bodies do
a postmodernized weather reigns supremely blue
dreams
mass produced
come true every other second
as ideas are
a white self
having othered all the colours
of the rainbow
is selfing the rest in its embrace
spreading like a flood of quicksilver

things have fallen apart
not for their world

78

the middle country is no longer there
the centre has gone elsewhere
let's worship them

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the white one as our god
let's translate our language
into other foreign tongues
let's turn ourselves into themselves
let's vacate this land of ghostly ancestors
and sell the dead emperors to the rich
let's educate our young with a better situated ethics
let's be conquered in our sheer passivity for conquest
inherited from a savaged past
let's enjoy the pleasures of political and cultural masochism
and respond vicariously to an ever stronger desire
for de-doing something

let's compose this last song of our twilight civilization
on the stinking feet just unbound

79

we are whales who are beaching themselves on the western shore
we are whales who seek another world
we are whales who can't grow out of their enormous ugliness
we are whales with an empty hall within
we are whales being driven back to sea
we are whales born with a collective unconscious of euthanasia

wearewhaleswearewhaleswearewhaleswearewhales

80

the spring is scented with anonymous headlessness
time has become the sky
that haunts in a scarred dream
sick with an age-long hat
red

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poets like ants
have crept all over the earth
in sane pursuit of madness
the poetical space
has once more filled with a post-poetry echo
of irrelevance
the more
becomes the less
reduced then to invisibility
we are confronted with the question
of how post is post really
how can we be pre again
numerous academics
have carved their names
on the instantly forget/table
anonymity of word-induced things
magazines
of bullets
of films
aimed at their own self-referentiality

the question is
how can a name exist
among non-existentiabilities of names

81

ismism
a topic for the future
now enters
for how can we not esta(pu)blish an ism
without meaning to destroy some
other isms
without centralizing this ism

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while peripherializing
other *zuyi* s
ismism is thus born
at a perfect time
to eradicate
once and for
all the dead live half-dead rotting isms
and let us say
the next age
is
for ismism

82

when all is sung and said
this poet is not yet dead

when the media turns us into a freakshow
the poet has nothing to say

he has to write his bloody poem
and throws up and comes

the misery is their own making
the pleasure in their aching

the world spins too fast
for them to thin(k)atch up **[meaning to think up and catch up]**

they'll come around our way
signs are already too many

for us even to see
ourselves held as heroes

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they are coming our way
as the books used to say

to celebrate the dying process
let's sin/g this song and vomit

puking oh

83

the spring is deep now
dropping every second
with petals of reluctance
from scentless trees
the poetry machine
lying long idle
and rusty
is now stirring
propelled by the strange wavelengths
of a strange language
the world has just come
spreading its wasteful seeds
on the body of time
the poet is nowhere to be found
the city
shamelessly engaged in its orgy of fake festivals
is one single exhaust pipe
distinctions no longer matter
differences disappear
with the coming of their ideologieeee
and theorieeee

spring is now deep in its own despair

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shaped like a farce

84

broken lines written all over scrap paper
such as this:
the male prostitute's soliloquy
or this:
i play with my despair
or this:
review of his own works
unpublished
once more
i dumped into the spittoon
a platoon
of poetry
rejected through
the arseholes of lit. mags
(i mean littered maggots)
in the next century or so
let’s kill all the editors
and publish from headtop
now you want minimalism

you **dickhead**
that's what you can minimalize yourself into

85

he has to enter
this guy who is never a poet
has never wanted to be one
he has to enter on the stage dominated by his better half

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the other half of the sliced apple
he doesn't love poetry
he loves physics
the power to control to manipulate to make things go
his way
and chemistry
the magic of producing new human beings
in test tubes

the first time he went to new york
he was most impressed with the forest of tombstones
arranged in mute perfection
down below
the years that followed
relegated him to a silent machine
of dangerous proportions
barely contained within a skeleton of
acquired ideology language deficiency syndrome

it was at this time when he had finished penetrating
the 1994
paid deep throats
that he realized with resignation and relish
that love was no longer possible
that friendship was fake all right
that he literally had his tongue on cheek **[yes, on cheek]**
the cheek of written pages
that supervision had revised him to such a degree
that his last maginot was in his eyes [the Maginot line in 2nd W.War]
which daily became triangular

he rang home
a place where only his memory lived
a living memorial
and told his sister

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that the money he was sending home
was stained
he didn't say with tears
nor did he specify other ingredients of a horror story
that hollywood would love to shoot

he bought a gun
loaded with mathematical precision
and racial instincts
and walked directly into his dream

we shall hear no more of him
because he killed six of his better halves
and was cremated
at their expense

86

the professor has just gone back to china
leaving behind him these words:

it is an open enough place
but the house of every heart
is locked from inside
and there has never been a key

87

spring is the season of death
the beauty is singularly
placed under the ugliest gaze
it reminds of what is not
the falling flowers

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the darkening sun
the trees that fade in the shade
the tombstones surrounded with freshness
once more
i find my tongue gone
meaning becomes less
and less
it must be for some other people
that this country has been imagined
some other community
it must be for some other world
that this person has been born
some other earth
like in the dream of this morning
in which he went fishing again
with a hookless rod
in the white void of imagination

there was only him
and the fresh morning fish

88

meanwhile i was composing this poem
when crossing the one way

it goes:

the man in the sitting position
thinks he has the power
of holding me in his gaze
but my eyes and my thoughts
turn one way too
with him

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and he sees the back of me
as i do his
with one second's difference

89

the guy never looks at me
even when he is passing
i know if he is not a vietnamese
or chinese
he must be asian
he never looks at me
he never speaks
he is as silent as silent can be
but he is doing a degree
in our language
how can he become eloquent
and articulate
if he never opens his mouth
or eyes
how can he sulk through his life
like that
and what has he got against us
but he never looks at me
he never smiles at me or us
he never speaks a word in our presence
i understand his parents must be refugees
he must have suffered terribly at home
a terrible place
i understand him and empathize with him
but he never looks at me
even when passing

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he never speaks
i can't tell if there is hatred in his eyes
he never looks at me
i can't say if i like him
he never gets close to me
i don't know why he does all this
until one day i discover
that he is inside me
but his head still tries to turn away
in other directions

90

the two women walking hand in hand
you don't have to stare at me so defiantly
through your lesbian eyes
i have already seen a world of total freedom
inhabited by beings who no longer make a fuss about distinctions
i have seen a man sleeping with a car
calling it my baby
i have seen a woman fucking a dog
for pure pleasure
dear me
it's not for us to judge
ours is still one bound by our own limits
and they can kill
freely
'cause they can recover the dead pretty quickly
and produce babies in tubeloads
love is push-button easy
these beings
devoid of feelings
any humans of today can identify
enjoy their death-turned life forever

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how lucky

91

love and hate
they are the two legs

if you move one
you have to move the other

they walk the enormous distance
between life and death

if you amputate one
the other is crippled

92

we are a dying race
fat new nations
are sucking the carcass of this giant
invention
for strange sustenance
juices that flow from the generosity
of misery
and pain

we are a dying race
our country is our own grave
to escape
we play identity games
a nation being replaced by many notions

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we are a dying race
we actually seek pleasures
of death
where we dream this unbroken dream
of life for other people

we are a dying race
we are

93

the wife and the husband were sleeping together
in the quiet of a sunday morning
when probably all the neighbourhood
had gone to church
the wife sighed and said
this is what i have been looking for all my life
an undisturbed wakeful dream
the husband found himself murmuring
to himself
but i think that they'd never come to you
of their own accord
never ever in this life
unless you go to them
like patients going to see a doctor
or the unemployed going to a job centre
or the helpless to a helper
the wife sighed and said
i guess you are right
but
she added
ah fat didn't care
she said that if they look down on me

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i equally look down on them
all i need
is this one-week-three-hundred-dollar
money

tired of talking about that
the husband erected himself
in her hand
and came
upon a sudden stopping of the birds in the sun
and the wife
utterly amused
washed herself for the morning

94

the more i sing my songs
the shorter they become

my hair is white
my night is long

my he/art now shrinks
to a post long(u)age

95

when the poet died
after killing his wife and himself
a novelist friend wrote from china
commenting that such poets should die more
one just isn't enough

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well this poet has just given up his calling
and turned to teaching his own language
to a herd of s/low learners
like a prostitute
he sells his knowledge
born of the tongue
and is repeatedly abandoned
after each impersonal session
to a street with people who would never know each other
for either this or the next life
and to the nightly guy
who was blowing on his flute
greensleeves
never even raising an eyelid at passers-by

the poet's heart died at that very moment
when he felt that there was no need to go on
except kill himself bit by bit every day or week
by teaching total strangers
as if through a T.V. screen

96

tired of being a chinese
he went overseas
but everywhere he went
he encountered this race of enormous death
and incorrigibility
he had tried to avoid them
he had tried to terminate communications
to uproot the thoughts and feelings related to them
to move away from that most hated word
ever invented by man

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at the end of years' futility
he is no longer surprised to see
his face turned into a parchment
written with otherwise inaccessible characters
that declare:

i am no longer there
this is not me what you see

97

the sample-collector still has not turned up
while my body is rotting
my song is drawing to an end
as jarring voices are rising
incontinent reviewers
constipated critics
pussy-holing reporters
article-obsessed academics
red-eyed editors
toilet-papery publishers
all are pouring out the venom
hidden within for ages
of a collective unconscious

but the singer is not there
the poet is already dead
the name signed on the paper
is as short-lived as the hand

let them all rejoice
on this grand occasion
of the poet's death
let them all feast

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on the carcass of the poet's work
for he has predicted:

THE WEST WILL WIN

21/9/94 (End)
22/10/97 (revised)

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