

LOST THE ESTATE OF THE WRITER PETER RUSSELL IN PIANDISCO'

## Precious archive in flames

Destroyed thousands of antique books, diaries, holographs by Montale and Ungaretti

### IN PIAN DI SCO' On fire Russell's books

SANGIOVANNI VALDARNO -- A fire has completely destroyed the personal archives of the British writer and poet Peter Russell. It's a terrible loss: his cultural estate had raised the interest of scholars all over the world. Too late. The writer has been living for six years in Valdarno, in a farm-house, near Pian di Sco, with two store-rooms attached to it. In them were his famous archives. On March 7th, in the middle of the night Russell woke up with a start: his room was full of smoke and the roof was creaking. He called for help but the fire was tamed only after eight hours. The list of what was destroyed has no end. Five thousand rare books, among which one thousand books printed in Russia in the XVIIIth and XIXth century; 500 diaries, essays and manuscripts; holographs by Montale, Quasimodo, Ungaretti, T.S. Eliot and Pound; three thousand books printed in London between 1950 and '60 together with 50 thousand sheets of paper that were to be employed for the first issue of the review "Marginalia".

The probable cause of the fire is almost incredible: it appears that a family of dormice threw a few sheets of paper against the chimney. A brutal practical joke by blind Fortune.

[G.G.]

(*La Nazione*  
9th March 1990)

I SPENT ALL LAST WEEK putting the finishing touches to Marginalia No. 1. The last two sheets went to the photocopier. An advertisement is due to appear in the *Times Literary Supplement* offering Marginalia and a number of my older publications, notably copies of the *Money Pamphlets* by Ezra Pound. I felt on the crest of the wave. But what wave? Nemesis, it would appear!

Last night, 7th March, the kitchen where I work in this ancient Tuscan farmhouse began to get a bit chilly, and I took myself off to bed. I read in bed till 12.30 and then put out the light and tried to sleep, difficult undertaking as I was suffering (and still am!) from an acute attack of lumbago.

00.40 about: I hear familiar scratching noises coming from the roof, which I assumed to be the habitual noise made by the family (or families) of dormice which live there, and are just waking up from their hibernation. The (edible) dormouse is a pretty creature about the size of a squirrel and we've had them with us for several years. They make a lot of racket at night under the roof.

00.50 about: the noises become much louder and begin to sound like pebbles falling on the roof, or stones thrown against the walls. Not even dormice do that. I switch on the light, but the electricity is dead, a not uncommon thing here. The noises become even more suspicious and I drag myself out of bed and start dressing, as the noises are getting loud and coming now from the store-room built on the outside wall of the house, level with my bed. By now I begin to smell smoke.

Very painfully indeed I manoeuvre myself downstairs and out of the front door. FLAMES are pouring out of the magazine window. The entrance to the store-room is in the garden, a fifty metre slope. There's no water supply up there. I realize there's nothing I can do, and I call the fire brigade, 30 Km away in Montevarchi.

Meanwhile the flames have become about three metres high and are threatening the roof of the dwelling part of the building. I somehow manage to drag out gas cylinders and jerrycans of kerosene, and carry out thirty big files of my unpublished writings and litter the garden path with them. By which time my neighbour Stefano, with a hefty Dutch boy of sixteen, arrive having seen the flames from up the mountainside. We get out what valuables we can and then drive a mile down the narrow dirt road to meet the fire brigade and guide them.

Mercifully they arrive in double-quick time, but the fire engine is too broad for the road and has to stop 500 metres short of the

house. The firemen were brilliant, incredibly efficient and serious in their work. They got a pump and hose down to the river that passes the house, and started dousing the flames. By this time the flames had come in under the roof inside the house and I had really lost all hope. However, with minimal damage they put out the flames licking the roof timbers and saved the house.

But then ten tons roughly of books and documents in the storehouse were burnt to the last sheet, the roof collapsed, and the floor was red-hot and we thought it would cave in at any moment, and so drop into the ground-floor.

The fact remains that the contents of the two store-houses are completely destroyed. Amongst these were:

5,000 books of considerable value lying on newly constructed wooden shelving, including a collection of 1,000 Russian language books from the last century, a collection of real rarities. Many first editions and presentation volumes signed by well-known authors. All my Mandelstam & Corbin research & translations. 500 or more of my old notebooks with

my research notes, drafts of many poems I have never got around to copying, and sketches for essays and other prose pieces.

CORRESPONDENCE and other documents and holographs or manuscripts of many well-known authors, amongst them Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Kathleen Raine (very many letters), Montale, Quasimodo, Ungaretti, Vittorio Sereni and others. Fifty years of records, plus copies of all my occasional publications, reviews of my books, interviews and so on.

About 10,000 addresses of friends and old clients from twenty years back, and all the old stock of my publications from the 'fifties and 'sixties. Including the few remaining copies of the *Money Pamphlets* by Pound and of my review "NINE" (1949-56).

Perhaps the thing that hurts the most is the loss of innumerable photographs of my three children between 1974 and the present. Including the negatives.

And on top of that, 50,000 large sheets of high quality paper for the new review "MARGINALIA". Now there is no paper for it, and no money

to buy new paper. The irony is that tomorrow an advertisement for these things should appear in the TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT.

SMALL THINGS like my garden tools, my equipment for painting, furniture, and electric duplicator and a lot of stationary and many stereo records, don't really matter much. I am not insured, and I now just have to get used to the fact that all this material no longer exists. I had looked forward to going through all the old notebooks and transcribing poems never copied, and developing many unfinished prose pieces. At least, I shan't have that trouble now!

Amongst the victims were all the unsold copies of a number of my books of poetry. Now I can proudly say "All my books are out of print"!

AH HELL! Next week, I start editing MARGINALIA No.2. Even if I only send out 100 copies, or even less, it will be worth doing. It's a "miracle" that the part of the house I live in was not burnt down too.

Avanti! Avanti!

Peter Russell  
March 9th, 1990

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THIS IS THE TENTH MAJOR DISASTER I have undergone since a fire destroyed my house, books and mss in 1951 in Sussex! In the month since the fire living and working have been difficult as scaffolding has had to be erected inside the house to support the roof. The rain pours in through the cracked cement floor of the burnt storehouses (the roof above them collapsed) into my kitchen and living-room-study. A new floor can't be laid down till a permit is given by the bureaucrats. Ash and dust blow into the rooms under the now-open eaves and roof-ridge.

I am having a hard time preparing and typing out six lectures to be given in Tuscany (in Italian) and six more (in English) for the National Congress of Swiss High School Teachers of English at Locarno, all before the end of April. Cold, wet and bedraggled I'm trying to get used to the fact that my archives of fifty years no longer exist. I keep remembering more books, mss and records which have perished. The mountainside is littered with sheets of burnt paper. This note is being sent out with the second hundred copies of MARGINALIA No.1. The first one hundred were posted on March 9th. So far, only one recipient has replied. My large display advertisement in the TLS of 9th March, offering No.1 gratis, after a whole month, has not brought even one request for it (you can't even give it away!). A few dozen people, including some from North America, have asked for my lists of books for sale, but alas! the books are all burnt!

If the readership of the TLS represented the poetry reading public, I would do well to take the hint that there is no interest in my work. In fact, the enthusiasm shown by audiences at my poetry readings in U.S.A., Canada, Fran-

ce, England, Germany, Italy and Jugoslavia (and the extensive sale of my books after the readings), assures me beyond a shadow of doubt that there is a serious public for my kind of poetry. MARGINALIA will continue even if the circulation is only 25. Each third issue will be entirely in Italian.

READERS MAY LIKE TO KNOW that just before the fire I was awarded the International prize for Lyric Poetry "Le Muse" of the City of Florence, previous winners including Ungaretti, Quasimodo, Montale, Rafael Alberti, Ezra Pound, Evtushenko and Henry Moore, Chagall, Manzù. A bronze shield, award of the prize in the Sala cinquecentesca of the Palazzo Vecchio and a dinner for 250 V.I.P.s afterwards, but not a lira in cash! What was it that Aeschylus and Horace did with their shields? (or was it spears?) At least both of them ran away. I am not going to run away.

TO MAKE ENDS MEET after this calamity, I start work tomorrow in our local Public Library. 24 hours a week at £3 an hour. As the Director of the British Institute in Florence said to me last week: "Poetry is not a profession." Just another weekend hobby, like breeding canaries?

I've just heard that the Arts Council have refused any support for production costs of Enitharmon Press. They have offered £4000 on condition that Enitharmon buys a computer. They like to keep the money in the hands of their friends the wealth-makers, it would seem. More of that later!!!

April 9th, 1990  
Peter Russell

January 1st, 1990

## PROSPECTUS

*aliquid in prospectum populi producere?*

MARGINALIA will consist of Notes & Queries, short articles, poems & translations, *actualités*, Poundiana, Quintiliana, notable quotations, unclassifiable outbursts, footstamplings, humor, learned limericks, solemn interludes, *sottiserie*, alchemical and other recipes (definitely off the Beaton Track), ecological elucubrations, green studies, etymological excursions, happy hypocrisies, satire, quips (& cranks), moans & groans, insults, outrages, hoaxes, legpulls, *facetiae*, *ghiribizzi*, *arzigogoli*, *larifari*, etc. No PORNO. One-word 'poems' will be a special 'feature'.

Backed by the NO FOUNDATION, Philo, Penna, it may, or may not, subsist.

The Sole editor, author, compiler, begetter, etc., is guaranteed absolute irresponsibility by the subvener (or sub-venus? subvenous?). It will be a one-man show, an attempt by the Editor to share sixty years of experience and study on the basis that "Knowledge increases ignorance". As the sole convener of the "One-man University" in Venice, which had but one student (*autodidatta*), Russell survived for twenty years, *tam pauper ut proscholus esset grammatici*, but, *nota bene*, he survived.

The IBM composer with which this less-than-a-little review should have been type-set, had to be abandoned in Teheran during the Islamic Revolution, MARGINALIA will therefore be *battuta* by the editor's pre-war portable Olympia and will be photocopied, clandestinely, by Marco, our village policeman, on the Comune's (generally out-of-action) *fotocopiatrice* (N.B., feminine gender). I supply paper.

Circulation will be minimal, -- a few friends, a few enemies, a few prospective patrons -- 25 copies perhaps, if things go well, as is highly unlikely. There will be no advertisements, no payment to contributors, no contributors even. You may well ask what this fatuous *impresa* will be all "about". Its central subject (or object, -- one cannot always distinguish subject from object in the sublime time and space of this ethereal mountain Platonopolis), -- will be the *word*, if only implicitly, -- the word that has been neutralized, gelded, perverted, by the mass media and 'communications', and the exigencies of technology and gadgetry.

## A STATEMENT BY PETER RUSSELL

IT IS GENERALLY AGREED by young and old alike that the past thirty years have been a fallow, even dead, period for poetry, a bit like the last quarter of the 18th century (though that *did* see the early work of Blake and in 1798 suddenly erupted, -- may 1998 do likewise!). Since Pound, Eliot and Stevens ceased writing around 1957 there have been no major English-language poets. It has however been an age of scintillating criticism, especially on Pound.

OUR POETS all have to work full-time at some extra-poetic activity, teaching, copy-writing, journalism, etc., and in recent years far more hours per week have been demanded from the professional man than in the days of Stevens and Eliot. Poets today can only write at weekends or on holidays. They have become wage-slaves. Furthermore, they have to be far more specialized than in the past, and few have time to acquire the encyclopedic knowledge of poets like Goethe, Novalis, Coleridge or Pound (the last a free man, one of the very few in our time, free even when locked up like Sir Walter Raleigh).

POETRY HAS AT LEAST an equal claim, with royalty and prostitution (all originally sacred activities), to be the oldest profession. Even today poetry is respected and taught everywhere in schools and universities, yet it is rarely remunerated unless by minimal sums, if at all. (By pure chance, I have discovered that my own poems are being taught in schools in England, Germany, France and Italy, and even used by University Examination Boards, but I have never been asked permission or paid a penny). There are excellent occasional poets, but the man dedicated wholly to the vocation of poetry needs to work full-time at it, studying virtually every discipline, as well as many different languages, ancient and modern, Western and Oriental. A serious scholar-poet cannot depend on the Penguin Classics. He has to read Plato in Greek, the Vedas in Sanskrit, Rumi in Persian. That requires *time*. The poet needs long periods of cogitation and meditation for his poems to gestate, not to say to work them out on paper. But how can the full-time poet subsist? People say to me "Why not teach in a University and earn an honest salary?" I have taught in eight Universities. During those periods I wrote little, and what I wrote was below standard. Plato in the *Republic* demonstrated it was *essentially* unjust for the practitioner of one art to meddle with another. The poets he exiled from his *Polliteia* were the 'bad poets' (kindred to 'the City of Pigs' as Adeimantus called the welfare or demagogic state of his time). Plato welcomed the poets who wrote of the 'ideas', of the *nous*, or the Divine. MARGINALIA will be light-hearted and undogmatic, even, like Voltaire, irreverent (towards Pig City), but it will be implicitly concerned with the Spirit, with values, with the ground of all Being, which when all is said, is that Self which it is our human task to know.

MARGINALIA will be sent out gratis. How can one ask for a subscription when the robber bank charges a minimum of £3.50 or \$6 to negotiate the smallest cheque?

Dr. Johnson and Coleridge both at some stage sat down to write a one-man review; why shouldn't I? Readers, or wags, will of course volunteer, and gratuitously, some very cogent reasons. I am not going to indulge these would-be critics by anticipating their "reasons",

which, after all, are likely to be banal enough. Nor am I in any way in competition with the classics or the romantics, the ancients or the moderns. "Publish and be damned!" is *mutuum* good enough for me, even if it came from a less eminent literary spirit than either Johnson or Coleridge.

THE GREAT TEMPTATION, of course, is to try to say everything at once, to plan the whole in advance as a system, or model, like Roget's *Thesaurus*, of the macrocosm and microcosm rolled into one. Not that Roget made that error, — he merely arranged analytically all the descriptive terms he could think of, according to an approximately accepted view of human knowledge and sensibility. Charles Darling Buck did the same thing in his *Dictionary of Synonyms in the Indo-European Languages* (University of Chicago), and both are indispensable reference books for everybody, if Aristotle's dictum "All men naturally desire knowledge", which opens Book I of the *Metaphysics*, be true (which is exceedingly doubtful).

I like to think of the contents of MARGINALIA, as I envisage them, as items I would like to include in letters to friends. One just can't repeat the same material in letters to every friend, and there's something surely rather displeasing about those "impersonal" personal circular letters that North American professors returning across the Atlantic after a sabbatical write to their European acquaintances. In these backward days when it takes an average of ten to fifteen days for an airmail letter from USA or UK to reach me here in Italy, it's obviously impractical (not to say disheartening) to carry on an extensive correspondence. Voltaire, and Byron and Shelley, were more fortunate, as a study of the dates of their letters and the replies to them make abundantly clear.

So the contents of the review will be essentially fragmentary, or rather, using language more precisely, substantially *fragments*. I am not concerned with the fashionable mania for the fragmentary. I deplore the sort of poet who entitles a poem "Fragment" just as I deplore the mode that popularized the concept of "experimental" poetry. I have in mind, rather, the eminent physicist David Bohm's view that "if we are guided by a self-willed view we will perceive and experience the world as fragmented. Such a view is false, because it is based on our mistaking the content of our thought for a description of the world as it is." Bohm introduces the notion of the implicate order in which any element contains enfolded within itself the totality of the universe. While the hologram is a recent device, this concept is very ancient. Blake, who knew his Plato and the pre-Socratics, is perhaps best known for his line "To see the world in a grain of sand", and it's significant that this line is known to many millions of quite uneducated but intelligent and sensitive people. There is a universality about it; it doesn't have to be intellectually and analytically "understood" in order to be appreciated. Bohm's *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* is published by Ark and by Routledge, as are other books by him in collaboration with the traditional Indian philosopher Krishnamurti. People with an interest in modern physics, of course, know Bohm's works as an important contribution to the contemporary world view. Those who are primarily concerned with traditional "metaphysics" will find them equally to the point.

"Knowledge increases unreality" writes that excellent American poet Gjertrud Schnackenberg in her poem "Darwin in 1881" (in *The Lamplit Answer* published by Hutchinson,



1986). Knowledge also increases ignorance, and this will be an implicit theme in these pages. This is a notion one can trace back at least to Socrates, but it would be an absurd mistake to consider it one of the typical examples of Socratic irony. It is a fact. I shall return to this idea before long and expand amply on it. I want to challenge the view of most modern philologists that much of Plato is comic, a sort of take-off. There's plenty of humor and irony of course in most of Plato's work, he's not uniformly solemn and sublime, but some of the interpreters would have us believe that some of his central and most profound ideas are satirical or merely burlesque. Cornford dismisses the idea that the nine hypotheses and their twenty-eight elaborations are anything but banter at the faulty logic of Zeno and Parmenides. Thomas Taylor, whom none of the moderns even mention (there's a real conspiracy of silence about him), showed very persuasively, convincingly even, that Parmenides' categories represent the "generations of the Gods" and are in line simultaneously with the geometrical (Pythagorean) view, the poetic (Orphic) theology, and the priestly (Chaldaean) dogmatics, themselves constituting what Plato calls the philosophic and dialectical vision. Modern commentators are on the level of the *fumetti* or comics.

## IL GATTO

Il gatto è un animale che ha due zampe davanti, due zampe di dietro, due zampe sul lato destro e due zampe sul lato sinistro.

Le zampe davanti gli servono per correre, le zampe dietro da freno.

Il gatto ha una coda che segue il suo corpo. Essa finisce improvvisamente.

Egli ha dei peli sotto il naso, rigidi come dei fili di ferro. È per questo che egli è nell'ordine dei «filini».

Ogni tanto il gatto desidera avere dei piccoli. Allora li fa: è proprio a questo momento che diventa UNA GATTA.

*Compiuto di un bambino di 9 anni, pubblicato su «Le Figaro», 6-5-1957*

"Plato's references to Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles are more often than not light-hearted *obiter dicta*, and one-sided or exaggerated at that, rather than sober and objective historical judgments." *The Presocratic Philosophers*, ed. Kirk & Raven (Cambridge University Press, 1957, p.18).

If they are right, Plato's *Parmenides* must be the longest, most boring and insipid intellectual joke, the most facetious nonsense ever. In my own experience it is the most profound and lucid description of the Whole, the One, the Divine, and of Being, and the Not-Being which lies beyond the reach of our minds.

I can only compare the *Parmenides* with the profoundest of the Upanishads.

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LAST YEAR, up on the mountains of the Pratomagno, no rain fell all winter. The waterfall was dry, the water level lower than in the heat of August.

## MID-WINTER DROUGHT

Mid-February, the mountain torrent's still.  
 The weir above the waterfall is dry,  
 The millpool's dry, stagnant, -- the clouds have fallen ill.  
 The frogs are silent, -- if trout there were, they'd die.  
 Moon, stars and tides, your sparkling vessels spill!

THERE'S A LOT OF TALK OF THE COMING AQUARIAN AGE. Allen Upward, around 1910, thought we were already in it. How many of our bright new Aquarians have actually got up at dawn and looked to see what constellation the rising sun's course cuts through? Whether or no it matters a tinker's cuss, the fact is that we are coming out of the nightmare of a century and more of positivist orientation and barren reductionism. Surely it's time philologists and critics stopped even trying to be "scientific". Northrop Frye, for instance, has opened up vast and unexplored literary territory, but it has always seemed to me that his idea of making criticism into a *science* was not merely ill-conceived but inept (of course, it would appeal to government departments and Foundations which hand out the money our "real rulers" splash around to render the arts harmless and keep Mammon on the throne). *The Protocols of the Elders of Grantland* have weighed heavily on the visionaries and the free creative spirits of our time. Even a "technological" thinker (one can hardly say, a scientific one!), like Eco, in his brilliant scenario, *Il Pendolo di Foucault*, has seen fit to write: "It appears that the allusion in *The Protocols* to education by the visual image as serving to keep the masses cretinised, referred to the educational programme of Léon Bourgeois who had just appointed nine Masons to ministries in his government." (p.380 of Italian edition, tr. by P.R.). The central theme of Eco's "novel of the history of ideas" is the existence of an international conspiracy to gain total control of the minds and bodies of the whole of humanity. It is extremely instructive to compare Eco's fictional construct with another recent book with the same central theme. I refer to that "fascinating" would-be historical documentary *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* by Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln (Cape 1982). The two books run parallel in their presentation of the two thousand year thread of secret gnostic tradition running from the Therapeutae and Essenes, through the Paulicians, Cathars, Albigenses, Templars, Rosicrucians and Masonic sects down to our own day. Eco's brilliant fiction has ransacked precise historical sources to produce a series of very valid psychological studies of devastating ambiguity. Baigent *et al* present their study as strictly historical research based on 'scientific' methodologies, at the same time permitting themselves to speculate very freely indeed, and so to produce what may be a new literary genre, "phantastoria", I would call it (in Italian we call science fiction "fantascien-

za"). Up till recently the historical novel has at least pretended to be in accordance, more or less, with accepted historical fact. Graves' *King Jesus*, with its admittedly fictive marriage of Jesus, is perhaps the model for *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (which includes an even more astonishing 'possibility' of the marriage of Jesus, but presents it as a likely or probable fact, and then interprets 2,000 years of social and religious 'history' in that light). I hope to return to the comparison of these two wonderfully readable books, as indeed I shall also do with Allen Upward's *The New Ward* and *The Divine Man*, which are of course well-known to all serious readers of Ezra Pound.

As evidence of this new "Aquarian", non-positivist, *Simmung*, I also want earnestly to recommend AGENDA's recent special issue on H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) edited by Diana Collecott of Durham University. There's hope yet!

AGENDA (Ed. William Cookson, 5 Cranbourne Court, Albert Bridge Rd., London, SW11 4PE) has just published a Special Issue devoted to "the state of poetry in the United Kingdom and Ireland". The editor sent out copies of fourteen extremely varied, very complex and generalised statements by famous authors from Plato ("All poets are liars") to Geoffrey Hill ("Poetry is responsible..."), and called for five hundred words of comment from very many British poets. Fifty-six replies are printed, of which only one answered to any of the statements. The other fifty-five went off on their own tack, exhibiting varying grades of irrelevance and incoherence. I shall be examining in detail some of the replies in the future issues of MARGINALIA, not because they are particularly perspicacious, but because they are so transparently symptomatic of the rather limited vision of many British poets now.

MEANWHILE, overleaf I present six sonnets (from a sequence of over seven hundred). They were originally published, without permission, by Bert Buttons, the Bard, or vegetable Maro, of Avon (Wilts, not Warcks) in his duplicated poetry sheet, whose name I forget, but which comes out from Quintilius's own city, Aquae Sulis. I shall have a lot more to say about the dubious pleasure of being pirated. Many editors seem to have a deficient sense of literary property, at least of that which has no *commercial* value.

# SIX SONNETS BY PETER RUSSELL

## MIDSUMMER MUSIC

Midsummer music, what have you to tell  
Of the bright spring for which the children long?  
The sandy moon is waning: a soft bell  
Croons in the zany woods its wordless song.  
Come pick the fruits, the plums and apples pluck  
With busy hands before the good boughs break;  
Your horn-of-plenty blow, your summer's luck,  
Before your autumns fall beneath the rake.  
Bless all the fruits (O they were blessed before!),  
Bless the warm earth the children lie upon  
And all the flowers that crowd about your door!  
Think not on winter with his visage wan  
Or of the sleeping seed within the core,  
But taste the fruit before the summer's gone!

## GOING DEAF

Wandering in hell I heard sweet music sound  
Such as at dawn in English woods you hear,  
When near the ram in one ascending bound,  
Exultant, leaps the golden charioteer.  
Stifling, with odious sepia exhalations,  
(The jagged fissures reared great flames to hiss),  
It seemed that all the hatred of the nations  
Had been rekindled in the dark abyss.  
And yet, and yet, music that might have been  
A madrigal of Wilbye or of Byrd --  
Caliban's dreams, -- that weird nocturnal din  
That Anthony in Alexandria heard,  
Or the authentic voice of Imogen,  
Hung on the air. I could not catch one word.

## BRAINSTORM

Sometimes I gaze for hours into space,  
Thoughts like the winds blowing upon the snow;  
Going this way and that invisible they race  
Piling the drifts higher with every blow.  
This blizzard on the dales staggers with every pace,  
In vertical and azimuth a flow  
Of spirals, zigzags, leaps you'd never guess,  
Sweeping the virgin acres to and fro.  
Solid and fluid in one another's grasp,  
Invisible made visible, strict form  
Imposed by formlessness -- on water-powder.  
Then when the winds dwindle to stillness, -- gasp!  
Motion itself solidified, -- the storm, --  
Printed in static snow, silent, blows louder.

## SHAKUHACHI

The slumber-birds at sleep in nothingness,  
The ghost flutes heard upon the midnight lake;  
Mist hid the moon -- celestial melodies  
Down from the vault like snow began to flake.  
Kyoichiku's dream that he was in that boat  
Alone but with his favourite bamboo flute,  
The magic shakuhachi's timeless note  
Answered in time -- water his silent lute.  
The night-wind plucked the trees like strings --  
Great blossoms in the sky, -- a gong, -- the cranes  
In sound depicted, building summer's nests.  
And heaven to earth, and earth to heaven sings,  
Moonbeam and snowflake, -- sound waxes and then wanes,  
Grass script in space -- and breath that times the rests.

## INDIANA SNOW

The snow fell all the night without a sound  
And in the morning everything was white, --  
Trees, bushes, outhouses, not just the ground,  
Were blanketed with powder, -- woolly, light, --  
Crunchy like sand or sugar, crystal bright.  
The squatter shrubs hunched each into a mound  
Like candy floss spun round the twigs, -- alight,  
And with a pink and blue fluorescence crowned.  
A robin landing, dab of blood and amber  
Upon the spotless linen of the field  
Threw up a shower of snowflakes like a shell  
Striking loose earth against a rising camber,  
Or bursts of fire against a sandbag shield.  
The bird flew off. Silence and stillness fell.

## DECEMBER HONEYSUCKLE

Often she bares her breasts in secret to me  
And puts June honeysuckle cleaving there.  
Dragons and pious satyrs could but stare,  
Their Ashtoreth promising dominie  
To all who have the natural eyes to see.  
This virgin in December, debonair,  
A dew-drenched bronze chrysanthemum will wear  
Where maidenhair or spleenwort ought to be.  
Beneath the poplar in the dense thorn-thicket  
Till mid-July the nightingale had sung --  
The roses flushed, making sweet cordial fruit.  
Foggy November's troubadour the cricket  
To the sharp briar's metallic grating clung,  
And rosy hips, then bronze, swung dissolute.



## NOVALIS

*HEINRICH VON OFTERDINGEN**ZUEIGNUNG*

Du hast in mir den edeln Trieb erregt  
 Tief ins Gemüt der weiten Welt zu schauen;  
 Mit deiner Hand ergriff mich ein Vertrauen,  
 Das sicher mich durch alle Stürme trägt.

Mit Ahndungen hast du das Kind gepflegt,  
 Und zogst mit ihm durch fabelhafte Auen;  
 Hast, als das Urbild zartgesinnter Frauen,  
 Des Jünglings Herz zum höchsten Schwung bewegt.

Was fesselt mich an irdische Beschwerden?  
 Ist nicht mein Herz und Leben ewig Dein?  
 Und schirmt mich Deine Leibe nicht auf Erden?

Ich darf für Dich der edeln Kunst mich weihn;  
 Denn Du, Geliebte, willst die Muse werden,  
 Und stiller Schutzgeist meiner Dichtung sein.

In ewigen Verwandlungen begrüßt  
 Uns des Gesangs geheime Macht hienieden,  
 Dort segnet sie das Land als ewger Frieden,  
 Indes sie hier als Jugend uns umfließt.

Sie ists, die Licht in unsre Augen gießt,  
 Die uns den Sinn für jede Kunst beschieden,  
 Und die das Herz der Frohen und der Müden  
 In trunkner Andacht wunderbar genießt.

An ihrem vollen Busen trank ich Leben;  
 Ich ward durch sie zu allem, was ich bin,  
 Und durfte froh mein Angesicht erheben.

Noch schlummerte mein allerhöchster Sinn;  
 Da sah ich sie als Engel zu mir schweben  
 Und flog, erwacht, in ihrem Arm dahin.

*THE DEDICATION*

You have excited in me the noble aspiration  
 To see into the wide world's soul;  
 The touch of your hand has kindled in me a faith  
 That carries me sound and safe through the worst of storms.

With intimations you nursed the child,  
 And walked beside him through the enchanted water meadows;  
 Like a child's first image of the tenderness of woman  
 You have aroused in the young man's heart impetuous ardours.

What holds me fast – witched – to earthly sorrows  
 When I am yours heart and soul for ever,  
 Shielded and sheltered always by your love?

Through you, I can consecrate myself to the loftiest art,  
 For you, Beloved, have a will to become the Muse,  
 And the secret genius of my heart's dictation.

The secret power of song is for ever greeting  
 Us here below in everlasting transformations;  
 There, as eternal peace, she blesses the land,  
 Here meanwhile, as youth, she folds us in her arms.

She it is who rains lightly into our eyes,  
 Who has bestowed on us the sense of every art,  
 And whom the uplifted and the flagging heart alike  
 In rapt intoxication miraculously drinks in.

At her full breast I sucked at life itself;  
 Through her I have become everything I am,  
 And filled with joy I can uplift my countenance.

The most exalted thought in me slumbered;  
 Then I saw her like an angel hovering over me,  
 And awake at last, into her arms I flew.

*Bèzimenōj*

Starinskā ūra ormāru spāvā.  
Kāzālĵke nĵene veĉ se ūdōm žūtē.  
Umōrnā lāmpa tīho octāvā  
prōstore ūskē, sāmotniĉkē pūte.

Jā nē znām gdĵē sam. Nēšto tāmno slūtē.  
ūmōrnē ōĉi. Nōĉ je. Tōpla. Plāva.  
Tāko je tēško kada stvāri šūtē  
i kad se mĵješā prošlōst, sām i jāva.

Pa gāsīm stāru lāmpu, sklāpām ōĉi.  
Nĵtko mi nēĉe u pōsjete dōĉi,  
ni tāt, ni gōst, ni drūg, ni drāgā žēna.

Nāslonim glāvu na krĵlo samōĉi  
i slūšām zvĵždūk vlākōvā u nōĉi.  
— O, gdĵē si sāda, gdĵē si, Bèzimenā?

Gustav Krklec

*Bezimenoj**(To the Nameless One)*

The old timepiece on the mantle-shelf is idling,  
Its hands have long been yellowing with the smoke.  
The lamp's nodding flame only describes  
Constricted spaces, solitary journeys.

I've no idea where I am, — my smarting eyes  
Darkly surmise something. It's night, hot, deep blue.  
It's hard when everyone and everything keep silent,  
And when the past butts in confounding wakefulness with dreams.

I snuff the rickety lamp and close my eyes.  
Nobody's going to come on a visit now --  
Neither a thief or a stranger, nor a friend or the woman I love.

I lay my head in the lap of solitudes,  
And listen to the train-whistles coupling the night.  
Where are you now who never had a name?

Gustav Krklec  
tr. by Peter Russell

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## QUINTILIUS

WHO WAS QUINTILIUS? Some say he was Dionysus, or Dionysius (but which one?), some that he was Commodianus, the worst of all Christian poets, others say he was ghost-writer for Claudius Claudianus. Roger Sharrock, writing in *The Tablet* (London, 13 Oct. 1984) said: "The first of the Elegies of Quintilius must be the best English imitation of the Latin love elegy."

*Three Elegies of Quintilius* was published in 1954. Anvil Press in 1974 published a volume of nine *Elegies of Quintilius*. Since then, Peter Russell has been working on a vast collection of mouldy Q *mss* and is slowly shaping *The Apocalypse of Quintilius*. JOHN MATTHIAS, in "Another Chicago Magazine" updates us with the following:

A very different kind of elegy entirely proves to be the major interest of Peter Russell's selected poems, *All for the Wolves*. These elegies were "translated" by Russell from the work of one "Quintilius," all of whose poems save for two late pieces written "in his madness" appeared previously in Russell's *The Elegies of Quintilius* (Anvil Press, 1975). This earlier volume contains six elegies (the fourth in two versions, one "made after Mr. Pound's *intervento*"), endless notes and appendices, and a biographical introduction about Quintilius himself, "a figure of admitted obscurity." Here are some of the facts about our poet:

Cittinus Aurelianus Quintilius Stultus (ad 390-427) was the son of a Transpontine freedman (cf. fragment of Lib. I, Ode IV in Schlugel, *Spicilegium Facetarum* [1881], vol. IV, pp. 703-704). His early studies, if Lib. II, Ode IV – again, a disjointed fragment – be borne in mind, would appear to have been exclusively legal. Later he became an intimate of Verus and his circle, dying according to Flavianus Adeodatus, of a surfeit of lentils (*Scandals and Importunities of the Grammarians*, Lib. V, Cap. III); although, in view of Flavianus' marked antipathy to all but Montanist literature, this account must be accepted with the most severe reserve. Of Quintilius' writings we possessed until recently six Elegies and two complete Odes only (Lib. I, Odes I and II), together with a few additional fragments from the first and second books. There were, it appears, four books originally. Flavianus mentions also an heroic poem with the medical subject: *Ars Vomitoria*. Among the MSS which the noted humanist, Guarino Veronese, lost when he was shipwrecked, was a copy of the Odes Book II, recensed from a Mandaean transcript. It will be remembered that Savonarola is reported to have said when he heard the news: 'The Church can afford the loss.' The two extant Odes (*Codex Ureglius*) formed the favorite early morning reading of the Supreme Pontiff himself, at that time Alexander VI. The text is not given, as it is still being freed from interpolation (University of Tucson: *Studies in Early Romanic Philology* XI, III [1938]).

It is very difficult to stop quoting this marvelous spoof of classical scholarship, a parody which rises to new heights (descends to new depths?) in the notes on the new elegies. The poems themselves are in part a pastiche of late Latin poetry which might profitably be read beside Tony Harrison's translations of that *actual* late poet of Greek paganism, Palladas. But Peter Levi is certainly correct when he writes in a very sympathetic review of *All for the Wolves* that while the poems are a matter of brilliant pastiche and parody, they are also "passionately convincing. They are an extremely funny learned joke, Quintilius being an invention, but they are full of truth to life, being based on real characters, conversations and places, particularly Santayana, the Ligurian coast of Italy, and Cagnes-sur-Mer, where Peter Russell used to bicycle through forest fires to drink in the vast and rancorous learning of Quintilius from Richard Aldington and Roy Campbell. I do not think either of those writers, or Santayana himself, need be displeased if they are best remembered one day through the *Elegies of Quintilius*." That last seems an extraordinary statement. But Levi is deeply convinced by Quintilius and the rest of Russell, claiming that to praise his book "is to invest in one's own future reputation as a critic." [And yet he finds Russell to be so little known that in writing about him he feels as though he had virtually "invented such a poet."] The poet's most engaging persona writes from Cagnes-sur-Mer about The Golden Age, but also about aspects of that age when all is for the wolves:

Times there have been when in the Ligurian hills  
Quintilius dreamed a space and all was changed –  
The learned Muses on their sacred mountains praised  
And Arts and Sciences pursued for Virtue's cause  
(Not the foundations of rich merchants or the schools  
Open to all and propped up hypocritically with funds  
Extorted from the purse of each unthinking citizen):  
Here in the little oppidum of Cagnes all trace of human crime  
Shall disappear; a leader shall arise  
To teach each Province of the weary world its way  
To a new age when wars shall cease and harsh times grow gentle...

If something of Ezra Pound (and something too of Pound's politics) both engages and troubles the reader behind the pastiche and parody in this passage, he should know that he is reading not a minor disciple, but a truly important Poundian, editor of the journal *Nine* (precursor, really, of *Agerda*), and *An Examination of Ezra Pound* published in 1950 when most of the world had either forgotten Pound or felt that he deserved to stay precisely where he was. And that parenthetical passage on the schools anticipates the strange sojourn of Quintilius in Canada – a journey documented meticulously in the notes – where, disguised perhaps as Mr. Russell, he had about as fine a time at the University of Victoria as Pound's old colleague Wyndham Lewis had while disguised

as René Harding in the Ontario of *Self-Condemned*. It was during the period in Victoria that Russell "translated" the poems of Quintilius "written in his madness," arguing that "incontrovertible evidence of an archaeological, that is, a material nature of Quintilius's actual presence at Cultus lake may persuade the incredulous that Canada existed in the cultural sense before the establishment of the Canada Council. It should however be emphasized that the name 'Cultus,' misunderstood by the early settlers around A.D. 1956 as having something to do with culture in the modern Canadian sense, is in fact a very ancient Interior Salish word originally meaning 'bear's excrement' (*cult-axx*)."

Readers of Seamus Heaney (or of *ACM* #12) will remember Heaney's metamorphosis into "an inner émigré, grown long haired / And thoughtful; a wood-kerne / Escaped from the massacre, / Taking protective colouring / From bole and bark..." Quintilius makes his escape as Brock the Badger in a poem of his madness "found inscribed on the winding sheet of the corpse of a sacred prostitute in recently excavated Temple of Isis in Mestre." It is impossible to read this poem without thinking of its desperately sad ancestor in the work of John Clare.

A badger, they call me, the priests and the military tribunes,  
The *rufuli*, rhetors and noisome rhapsodes,  
The lying scribes in their scribaria  
And the advocates in their short greasy togas.

Of a Sabbath they will come together  
And put on the tunics of hunters  
And come to my house-door with logs and with sulfur,  
And spinning the oaken stick  
In the deep groove of my mother's womb  
Set fire to birch twigs and then to the musty pile,  
And smoke me out

But I am wily -- I have three back doors  
(For borrowed wives and other emergencies)  
And I know better than to leave my precious belongings  
Unprotected in an empty house

#### *Vanius*

Into the virgin forests where badger dreams  
Hang from the white undersides of the alders  
By the side of shining nymph runs...

One wishes Brock the very best of luck.

JOHN MATTHIAS

#### QUINTILIUS

#### IN POCULIS POESIS

I have taken to squeezing a lemon into my black Etruscan wine.  
Purists may be offended. I trouble not my head  
About them, (or the impure), any more than I do  
For kingdoms and republics, for priests or for arbiters  
Even of elegancies. My own campaigns, my battle-scenes of yore,  
The bloodied vallies and hills of all too narrow beds,  
Are now some terraced acres and a rushing stream,  
Secure domains, respectively, of hens and ducks. Let Gallus  
Surrender his eagles to the wing'd boy, I have no standards  
To give up. My *galline* are called *ex ordine ictuum rostri*.  
Lesbia, Lycoris, Volumnia, Cytheris, Cynthia,  
Delia and Corinna, this last my preferred, all boiling fowls bound for the stews.  
Me the Bactrian mountain waters serve for the soiled dishes  
And I have bound myself to my scrolls like guilty Ixion or Catharina  
The Alexandrian pupa to their stupid wheels, *studiiis vigilare severis*.  
And I shall not be gainsaid. Life is a continual exacerbation anyway,  
And I shall mix things in my cups that are the truth,  
With things that are like the truth, and with other things yet  
Not unmixed, O Hermes of byways, with abundance of untruth.

Generous wick with the oil of the coconut palm  
 Kindling each evening our own nuptial flame,  
 Witness you were of the love-act a number of times  
 Nightly, in the city of Sfax in my youthful days,  
 Till Daunia left me to shiver in an empty bed.  
 She it was who originally insisted on this  
 Petting and kissing by lamplight till long after dawn  
 Made weak the once-upright flame at our bedside.  
 Possible outcomes or permanency never entered  
 Our heads that were full of sex-games and gladiators;  
 The arena by day and the dust of our bed by night  
 With the trim wick glowing, and the wail of musicians  
 On the other side of the forum, with flutes and a drum  
 Loading the evening air with voices and wine,  
 Kept us too busy for thoughts of a home or of infants.  
 Now she has left me, now she's run off with another  
 (Rotten scum of a fellow from Rome with more  
 Gold in his purse than ever my father had  
 Before the drachma crashed and the markets went dead), --  
 With him she's gone off, they leave on the next boat for Rome.  
 She knocked on my door in the morning to say goodbye  
 "Don't weep, Quintilius, you will soon find another nice girl  
 To warm you in bed and wash your hair before sleep.  
 You'll forget your sweet Daunia long before she  
 Ceases to long for a former lover in Sfax."  
 I couldn't bear to hear more of these words, so quickly  
 Went out into the backyard with the chickens  
 And wept, leaving the rest of her message to fall  
 On the polished brass knocker, my father's pride.  
 I had often thought I was going to end up a failure;  
 At the worst I had thought "This girl will be a good  
 Wife to me now I'm a failure at everything else  
 Unbraiding her hair in the evening and lulling our babes  
 To sleep as the sun goes down on our modest house",  
 But had never troubled to ask her. Now she has gone,  
 And the bright streets of Rome will claim her the rest  
 Of her girlish days. Perhaps I shall die single  
 Not troubling to cook myself breakfast or  
 Keep more than a few half-bottles in the house  
 Of cheap red wine, and a jar of black olives.  
 Delicacies cost such a lot --  
 Without her to want an occasional bracelet  
 I shall die with my palms clean of the dust of gold  
 And be none the worse off. "O Mother Venus  
 What can your poor sons do deserted by girls  
 They have ever taken for granted? It hurts.  
 Send either another Greek courtesan  
 Who is tired of life in the brothels, and is seeking a home  
 Modest enough for dull me to provide for,  
 Or end this unnecessary slowness of days.  
 I'll make her a good husband I promise you;  
 Just find me a house with a field not too far from the city  
 With space enough for chickens, a cock, a pig and a cow:  
 Let it have three or four gnarled and split olive-trees  
 With ripe berries in early November; let it  
 Have ample room for the winter-wheat and a terrace  
 Of large-leaved vines for the summer months.  
 And don't forget to remind your old father  
 To make sure there's rain when it's needed. Dear Goddess  
 I'd soon take root at the edge of the city of Sfax  
 Provided my new wife doesn't turn out a scold  
 And further invasions don't interrupt the quick-footed hours  
 With parties of homeless and hungry looking for food."  
 What a fool I was not to ask that girl at the time:  
 Her soft fingers made sweet our evening food  
 And she never refused to delight in the joys of Love.  
 I doubt I shall find another, at least in this age.

## COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 1955

THREE ELEGIES OF QUINTILIUS. By Peter Russell. Tunbridge Wells: The Pound Press, 1954. 28 p.

This little book (a fourth elegy has been mimeographed and included), by Peter Russell, is an interesting addition to literature. The poems are said to be translations from the work of a still unknown Latin poet of the fourth century. Mr. Russell, no doubt correctly, gives his dates as A.D. 397-427.

Before the elegies is printed as an introduction a little Latin poem, or compilation, the object of which is no doubt to secure a permanently classical background to what follows. For it is a cento of much Ovid and a little Catullus, as follows:

"How many kissings  
are enough and more for me?"  
(*Cat.*, 7, 1-2)

"The elm loves vines, vines abandon not the elm;  
Why am I so oft separated from the mistress of my heart?"  
(*Ov., Am.* II, 16, 41-3)

"What boot your sacrifices? What now avail the sistrums  
of Egypt? What your repose apart in faithful beds?"  
(*Ibid.*, III, 9, 33-4)

"Applaud thy Mars, O soldier! Arms I detest; peace is my  
delight, and love that is found in the midst of peace."  
(*Ibid.*, III, 2, 49-50)

"What are you doing, wretch? You will lose my girl  
the prayer of her heart."  
(*Ibid.*, III, 2, 71)

"Be wrathful if you will, 'tis forbidden joys delight;  
she only charms whome'er can say: 'I fear!'"  
(*Ibid.*, III, 4, 31-2)

"And does anyone still respect the freeborn arts,  
or deem tender verse brings any dower?"  
(*Ibid.*, III, 8, 1-2)

"And yet more by night than in the light of day — Night is  
welcome to women beneath whose neck an embracing arm  
is placed."

"I, in my widowed couch, can only court a sleep with lying  
dreams; while true joys fail me, false ones must delight."  
(*Ov., Heroid.*, 13, 105-8)

It is unfortunate that the translator has not hastened his promised publication of the original palimpsest, so that the reader may compare versions and see for himself how well the task has been accomplished. But as luck would have it, for the past few years, the reviewer has been reading manuscripts of the sixth-century poet Maximianus, and others. In the process of working through these, he has had the good fortune to come upon a florilegium which contains a few fragments of Quintilius.

It is not the present intention to anticipate Mr. Russell's publication of the Latin elegies or to eclipse the lustre which will result from such an edition. The curious reader, however, who may desire to pass judgment upon the translation, is entitled to glimpse a few lines of the original. In conclusion, therefore, we shall add only the opening lines of each poem together with Mr. Russell's sterling translation.

## I

O quotiens, filum moderata luce benignum,  
incendens flamma corpora nostra tua,  
dum tremulum in vacuo lecto me Daunia cessit,  
tu nostro lusu testis amoris eras!

Generous wick with the oil of the coconut palm  
Kindling each evening our own nuptial flame,  
Witness you were of the love-act a number of times  
[Nightly, in the city of Sfax in my youthful days,]  
Till Daunia left me to shiver in an empty bed.

## II

Quintilius trepido discessit languidus aestus:  
Africa prima sibi fervida causa fuit.  
(Segnis enim fuerat custos his pauperis agri)  
et tabulae damni causa timoris erant.

Quintilius has moved: he found the heat  
Of Africa too much for an indolent smallholder.  
Recent proscriptions also threatened him  
(He said) with confiscation of his farm.

## III

Dum cadere ante fores durabunt arbore grossi,  
iam tenuis, semper spes resoluta cadet.  
Olim sperabam requiem mihi rure futuram  
unde mihi Bacchus lenia vina daret.

As long as the unripe figs keep dropping outside our door  
So long will my modest hopes keep falling away.  
A time there was when I envisaged a future  
Of peace in the country, tillage of fruitful vines.

## IV

Femina Quintilio qualis nunc bella pretenda est?  
Diva movit venerem vel scelerata tuam?  
Vel quae iam tenuit cellas (hesternaque virgo!)  
ex grege, quem statuit Livia magna, cato?

What kind of a femina, now, is it, Quintilius, you're after?  
What goddess, or baggage, engages your amorous nature?  
Is it the latest recruit — some almost recently virgin —  
In the highly trained cohorts stationed in Livia's portals?

E.N. O'NEIL (1954)  
University of Oregon



*ridentem dicere verum  
quid vetat?*

DOGS  
said Plato  
are truly  
philosophical

POETS  
should be  
muzzled

STRUCTURALISM

now  
is on *parole*

Post-mod is  
OUT

Solomon Babu Rushdie  
Said "Religion's all wrong, don't you see?  
I've measured my pen  
Against two billion men  
And a God who is jealous of me."

FEMMINISMO

S'ignora  
Signora

"I am  
therefore I am  
*used*"

MACISMO

Il marito  
è smarrito

"I AM  
therefore  
*amused*"

A female professor called Prudence  
Was unwilling to sleep with her students  
Her convincing excuse  
Was "Why reproduce  
That immature beast *homo ludens?*"

VETERAN 1988

After forty years in the wilderness I don't feel up to sending out spies,  
Let alone conquering Canaan.

Has pretty much all rubbed off.

A gallon of blood, -- No Sir!

The blood I am bloodied with

A glass of wine, yes!

\*\*\*\*\*

Is England still there?

## HIGH MASS, LOW MASS, or MASS MEDIA?

## THE BOARD'S BLARE

Our Starver, Art without leaven,  
 Bellowéd be thy Fame;  
 Thy lingam come; thy will be gun,  
 On Campus as it is in Tavern.  
 Give us this day our Big Success.  
 Review at length our vacuousness  
 As we review those who evacuate with us.  
 And read us not in Profundity;  
 But circulate widely our drivel;  
 For Thine is the Foundation,  
 The Grants and the Glory,  
 For Sabbatical after Sabbatical.  
 Eh, men?

## CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

A certain old learned Chaldee  
 Buried wine in his tomb for a spree  
 When Schliemann broke in  
 He found a poor Djinn --  
 Not vintage 3,000 B.C.

## FOOL POET

Life forced this poet pence to beg,  
 For he could not afford an egg.  
 The poet dying fondly muttered  
 " / knew which side my bread was buttered."  
 And just before the poor beggar died,  
 He said "It was on neither side."  
 But when that fool was truly dead,  
 More fools cried out "He had no bread."  
 The honest craftsman earned fuck all.  
 Men simpered "he obeyed the call."

## CULTURAL NEO-COLONIALISM?

The enthusiastic  
 young Jewish  
 (New York) professor  
 of Chinese in Paris  
 has just read the new  
 Mandarin translation of  
*Finnegans Wake*  
 "I never really quite  
 understood it before"  
 flashing his violet eyes

AVUNCULAR  
for Aurunculeia

Vis-à-vis the reviews  
 (their congenital nepotism)  
 Are the faeces of nieces  
 any better than  
 The refuse of nephews?

## DISPLACED PERSON

At the Hilton Hotel in Vancouver  
 Or the Hilton Hotel in Tehran  
 Foreigners like Persians  
 With perambulators and  
 Numerous dark children  
 Remind me I am in the crazed  
 White America of the mind