

Yggdrasil

A Journal Of The Poetic Arts

July 2016

VOL XXIV, Issue 7, Number 279

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ISSN 1480-6401

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Jorge Etchverry Arcaya

Contract

Introduction

Jorge Etcheverry Arcaya

Acorn At Orion (Ottawa 1986)

Coughing
red faced
his eyes a mere line
interrupting Marta Flamingo
(she was the first reader of the evening)
and everybody looked tense
waiting for the next cough
sure to come
Then it was his turn
and he started talking about birds
more specifically, crows
The man was sick
everybody could see that
sick and drunk
At last he said something
that I wouldn't try to write
in an indirect style
He was going to die
soon
and we had to trust him
It was nothing
And the host tried to "make light" of things
and no one budged an eyelash
you could have heard a pin drop
I went out alone
and he was drinking,
seated on the porch.

Alberto Quero

COMING BACK

I

I come back from the world and the absence,
I come back from the watchfulness
and the convulsion,
from the riot,
from the place where the sunrise disguises
what is exhausted and harsh.
I come back from the horde,
apathetic and confusing,
from the throng, which never remains silent
I bring discoveries,
tough and dense,
findings of edges and defense,
of deceit and bitterness.
But hate is tiresome
and I no longer care about the last fury:
weariness I call it.
Now, when nothing I await
and every breath ceases or becomes a damage,
I wonder which cautiousness will shelter me,
which one will protect me from the scrutiny and the roars
or from the most endurable ill wills.
The one which may persist,
-an intermittent voice whispers to me,
a purple reverberation that comes from far away,
from beyond the known stars-
whichever may lodge what is intangible and upright,
it says,
the one which may postpone the flames
and depict indulgences,
it says
And I listen

II

I, then, decide to reappear but just to forsake:
I hide my previous sword,
a naïve clash of mirror and rebelliousness
now perplexed and defenseless.
I mark a fire, fragmentary and occult,
a docile wish of drowsiness and emancipation;
Also, I find again the evidence,
the covenant of blood and wine,
the treaty of delayed certitude,
craving and deity in the memory:
the vestiges of a prayer are reborn.
Therefor I make a pact with that elderly conviction;
I want to intuit a sky,
a stairway that may go up to the endless night,
a space of unbreakable similitude,
an exodus towards a dwelling of stoppage and pleas.

III

Hence, I proclaim an amazing and obdurate stillness,
so that it may drain and rescue
like any invocation of beginning,
like something that beseeches all traces,
like a promise of remaining tenuous
and exempt from inquiries.
I will devote to loosen the urgency,
to abjure of clutters,
and to find a shelter made of breeze
and the most unconceivable glitter;
I want to embrace a serenity
which may be able to convoke or surrender
and may call a woman banner of all things immovable.
I swear, thus, to find a whispery increase,
a shield of waiting and freshness,
a long peace of searching and listening.
I call: may that wish sign my way.

These texts were originally published on World Poetry, a website edited by Ariadne Sawyer, in Canada.

Allan Johnston

Song

what though the light becomes
the time, and keeping it
bring sameness, we just want
to end the rhyme and look
in darkness for our fame.

We may not seed a moment
of fate to let us know
the way the light may offer
its mate to inform
of any sight of day

if any recollection
hinge on being one
with the flame, erase it--
the state recollecting
that vast name we will hire

to make our own design
as the structure of one
falls, so if we light
on one decline, we see it
really as nothing at all

We end the song of bearing
forth a light for dreams,
a set of tunes we sing
because it's all we're worth
and so can drown our sorrow

in these runes, even If
the light becomes the time
and keeping it bring the same
we only want to end
the rhyme and look at darkness.

Conversation en Route

Stuck at the airport, plane delayed,
I finish reading the poetry journal,
then, opportunist that I am,
put it on the seat next to me.
Soon an older man sits down
one seat over. Some minutes later,
he picks up the journal, reads.
I'm now into other things,
but soon hear him on his cell phone—
“Gertrude? It's Bob. I want to read
you something.” He reads one of the poems!
In it, neighbors talk about hair styles
and dress designs until a child,
seemingly retarded, states....
The man is talking to his wife
or someone close. She seems to live
 in the same town as the poet.
 He says, “Find out more about
 this poet!” I am listening now
 with interest. Soon he hangs up,
reads again. A half hour passes,
more. No plane. Maybe he senses
something, because suddenly
he leans over, looks at me,
and asks, “Is this your book?”
I say yes, I read it, put it
there, wanted it to find
another reader. He tells me,
“My daughter is just like the girl
in the poem.” I tell him
I'm glad he read it and could find
something worthy in it. Soon
the man gets up to go buy coffee.
then rescheduled flights get broadcast;
Soon we both are flying away
into strangely connected worlds.

How to Speak to the Dead

1. Remember, they are dead, so they can't hear you. All you are really speaking to is yourself
2. Another point--remember, you are not forgiven. The dead do not forgive, all you give is yourself.
3. If there is consignment among the living for the dead, it is for yourself.
4. Actions are permissible when the dead walk. Their words though are borrowed. They are from yourself.
5. The voices the dead use echo out of consciousness. Is there a better way to comfort them?
6. Stones are stones, seas are seas, ashes are ashes. This is the way the dead enter.
7. One thinks of how, in the asphodel bloom, molecular processes announce the dead.
8. Charon's boat. All the pretty images carry us into a world of unbelieving.
9. Attempt not that bold passages, traveller! None return therefrom, and all who go vanish!
10. The good night of peace is a cloud of unknowing. Each evening blesses all earth with departing.

Sestina: At A Party

a man who has been near death for more than an instant
is speaking with anger, spilling conversation.
He's telling all the guests about a doctor
who begged for a moment away from a brutal career,
bent under the stress, near breaking down in the hospital.
He tells it over the wine and camembert.

But now each look, each bite of camembert
and the glint of the wine in the glass at every instant
holds death, a gabber, full of itself. The hospital
is bubbling under these fissures of conversation—
the bed he was in, the needles that caused the career
of chemicals keeping him here for now, the doctor

who broke down after they hooked him up to doctor
him back to life. His face was a camembert;
his arms have lumps that trace the languished career
of the chemicals they shot into him that instant
he keeps recounting. He fills conversation
with the dull wit of death. His time in the hospital

has left him always wanting a hospital
to be there, ready, in case; he needs a doctor.
Death slips words sideways into the conversation.
Death notices each slice of camembert.
Death underwrites the angers of each instant,
the bitchiness so common in a career

of small talk at such parties: the gossip, career,
the family, freeways clogged like a hospital
after a holocaust. A man whose instant
of death stays in him too long has no doctor
to clear it from his bones. He's like camembert,
all crust and goo. In every conversation

death simpers, teases in words, twists conversation
with each turn of the tongue, each bite, the career
of each guest's fond adieu to the camembert
and crackers that they now stomach like the hospital
where he was dead. They'll never have a doctor
to help them find out why, at every instant,

the spin-doctor of souls makes conversation,
a bored child's instant of chatter in the hospital,
and death goes on with its camembert-moon career.

Reason and Love

From opposite shores, reason and love
talk to each other amicably:

Reason: The stones in the water are stones.
Their consistency retains granitic

fixture in the effluvium
of giving.

Love: A stone's throw away
the birds sing in trees full
of ripest fruit.

Reason: the way
you sing, you'd think
the world was drugged.

Love: By
rationality, I'd suggest.
There's no time for play,

the play's the thing. Such seriousness
drives passion out. I'd have to ask

why the stones don't respond
to persuasion the way a cat might.

Reason: Life is full of surprises;
less so non-life.

Love: Are you saying death
exists?

Reason: As you see.

Haven't you witnessed some of the more
constructed, involved endings of those

who loved you, or at least those whom
you loved?

Love: Yes.

Reason: Then you know
finally how curses suspend

in the air. Unconscious days

of the loose web cam of being. You

find an attribute to life
in living. Such things pass. Or if

one dodged all friends, again,
so as to run into a field

where grass might climb
enough to hide and all the wiles

of mankind sift into a world
of pristine smells of evil or

of rain, the recusal perpend
to some enamored life of aphorisms.

We make enemies out of speech,
the same way we make friends. I'd see

no reason to be reasonable:
stones are stones. You must admit

some tranquility comes from that.
I'd swear you've been succumbing to your gifts

so long you don't remember
anything about the world.

Your eyes are full of nests;
cannibalism eats your mind

the way a sponge is formed,
or some cow god, some Bovinity,

mocks your perspective. I see no reason
to be a mind. Ball in your court.

Love: I have waited, but do not
answer. Nothing deserves response.

We all lock up in rooms. I know no
reason to give in to you

on anything. My game depends
on other things, paradise or hope,

all reconstructing immediate, universal
energies that fire life

into chase. And so the curving

form I showed you the other day,

track of the breath into human speech,
is it not incurable, incredible?

Why should I else want to ask anything
about these showings you keep tossing

into the con of this true versation?
How is the entrusted word play parallel

to the “were” of “lay”? The words,
you see, dissect into twin or conclusion;

you should try deciphering sometimes.
Then reason would be easin’ into

ease and all ‘e’d want is to re-start
this conversation, as we will.

Under everything lies a voice.

Reason: a tale told by an idiot

full of sound and fury, signifying
nothing. Signifying—aye,

that’s the rub, the drug, the rug,
if you’ve dug what I’m trying to begrub

out of shambles: figures of fossilized
juice lovers, i.e., this use I make

of paranoia or how the empty
expanse of health brings to the broken

egg exact enactments out of
facts to fob false cobs of drab

reheated reason espoused in eighteenth
century enlightenment enactments of the

simple slop of categories,
breath born out, taught by the simple

slap of words on pages brought
to birth and youth by you who cling

to truth to recognize in silent
fasts, digging in the here the hereafter

all empyrean filled with sorrow
and laughter—so you,

Ur, I equate your night
with a gnat, the darkness of the word

that lights all meanings into space
and plans each and so in egress

of rectitude, I guess, I'll end,
since no other train descends upon

this stop, now, and I must go
to give a lesson. Enjoy the show.

Christie-Luke Jones

URBAN FOX

Through gritty, parched eyes I squint,
As hazy boulevards wind ceaselessly ahead.
The soupy June air weighs heavy on my shoulders,
A cruel curse befitting of a cruel hour.
I snarl and thrash and seethe.
I pray for a swift end.
Highgate lovers, swathed in crumpled bedsheets,
Gaze down from windows in dreamy post-coital bliss.
The soft light emanating from their cigarettes reminds me where I should be,
Where I should have stayed.
Her cascading onyx locks and melting stare, so far from here.
Snatched away in a frenetic dusk.
In the murky, nocturnal depths of this Hadean Borough,
The thought of fusing my weary torso to the elegant curve in her back is my only
escape.
To sweetly kiss the nape of her neck,
And watch that sensual smile paint joyously across her sculpturesque face.
For a brief, heavenly moment, I'm there.
But mine is the oppressive still of a North London night,
Where bountiful summer trees loom black and menacing over deserted pavements.
Lo, wrapped in my internal struggle I have omitted another.
One who neither pines, nor laments, nor regrets.
A weightless astronaut, he skulks through the night air with a humble grace.
His sinewy frame. That restless, twitching muzzle,
An opportunist cat burglar, thriving in his concrete woodland.

He slows as I approach. A cautious arc. His marble eyes reflecting the street lights
above.

What does he see?

We halt in unison, we share the stillness.

His keen nose analyses my scent, his pointed ears flinch at my slightest movement.

Such devotion to the senses is something I've long forgotten.

Suddenly I feel my heavy feet beneath me, notice my short, agitated breaths.

This wild animal has coaxed me out of my own head, made me living again.

He watches intently as I find the strength to move forward. Down this path I myself
chose.

And as I glance back, I ponder his sentience. Did he share in my epiphany?

Succumbing to sleep I envy the fox. Long to dream his savage, unquestioning
existence.

A CONVOLUTED NIGHTMARE

Outside; friendly voices float atop the yawn of falling beams. A distance stretches out between us, a steel door 3000 decibels thick.

Blackened corridors are softly inhaled by a downy quilt of smoke and ash. Grotesque lions tear at my silhouette until a red-faced, podgy little boy is all that remains. Death longs to pick my soul from between hideous tombstone molars. One final attempt at escape, one last glimpse into the frightful false mirror.

A young woman showers next to me. Her limitless eyes scan my thoughts with clarity of intent, enough to melt the mask right off my face. The way the shampoo glides over her hips will haunt me on some far-off day, when everything else becomes unrecognisable. She turns, smiles her bludgeoning smile and motions for me to touch her. Naked and terrifying. And she wants me inside her. But I'm only ten years old; my fragile head spools anxiously at the thought. And I look awful, although clearly she doesn't think so. But I do, I always do, then all at once I vanish down the plug hole.

Florida. I've never been, but here I am. A space shuttle is parked by a palm-lined boulevard, behind are vast hotels with M.C. Escher-like staircases. I stand accused, of adultery no less. I rush around covering my tracks, erasing evidence and conjuring up alibis. My decade-old clothes are wet through with panic. I climb aboard an aeroplane like no other, a retro-futuristic Concorde of unfathomable origin. My loved ones occupy the seats around me, all share the same painfully disappointed countenance. We depart, with dreams of one day waking up.

OSLO

A solitary orange for breakfast; she delivers it with her unmistakably virginal smile, kneels by my bed in thanks.

My body fizzes with polarising urges strong enough to kill us both.

Her apartment is beyond all comprehension; I feel undeserving of its pine-scented air, the only discordant note in an otherwise harmonious melody.

She dresses in furs and heavy knits. Her glowing skin and lithe body are untouched by the sweating guilt of midnight trysts.

A nervous laugh rocks the vast drifts as our paths tentatively entwine across the blank expanse of canvas.

Our eyes devour in absence of trembling lips. The inevitability is palpable.

A joyful expression of unspoken lust; her hands scream to be touched.

I debate the drop, survey the cliff edge with a melting restraint.

Hurtling forth; I find myself discussing pickled herring in her father's slippers.

God-fearing Christians, no doubt afraid of this wolf in sheep's clothing.

Such a charming sheep, though. I bleat and graze with impeccable timing, convince even myself.

Neither of us find sleep that night. Impatience drives me to my annex room, whilst her mind is a dance of plush hearts and handwritten love letters.

Another 12 hours to keep my mask from slipping.

ae reiff

The Shakespeare Code in Psalm 46, a Meditation on Shakespeare's Name

*46 up,
46 down,
omitting Selah,
will turn things around.*

1. The Premise

On different days the Shakespeare codes hang round Bacon's neck with Thomas Nashe, Christopher Marlowe, Edward De Vere and St Germain like a gold chain. It's nothing to suggest that Shakespeare also wrote the Bible. Fast forward this thinking. Code breakers driven mad to excavate this Trojan of the English renaissance in the King James Bible (1611) breathed life into these conspiracies. From his last creative reconciling act in *The Tempest* (1610), and from 1900 on, protagonists began to shake the letters of Shakespeare's name from the beginning and end of the Psalm 46. They are still there in the Authorized Version of 1611, 46 words from the beginning, "shake," 46 words from the end "spear." Isn't this just confirmed by the fact that *Shakespeare was 46 in 1610* Ignatius Donnelly said, and *Ripley's Believed It or Not*.

Psalm 46 in English is not an utterly inevitable consequence of the Hebrew. Sixteenth century versions give different readings. This variability opened doors that led the text to be altered to hide a secret code? *Wasn't Shakespeare born April 23 and died April 23? Doesn't that make 46!*

There's no better dispute than Shakespeare and the King James Bible. But the opening line, "God is our refuge and strength," is a beat short. It omits a metrical "our" before "strength," *God is our refuge and [our] strength*. "Our's" removal may seem appropriate where "earth [is] removed" later in the psalm, but **this lost "our"** and the reduction or expansion of words, suggests a shaking and spearing of that name 46 words from the beginning and end. Anyway, *there are four vowels and six consonants in Shake spear's name and that makes 46!*

Psalm 46's disaster and apocalypse inspired Luther's "A Mighty Fortress." The psalm's city is the refuge of the "city of God" celebrated in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, which echoes Old Testament cities of refuge where murderers escaped vengeance. Since Earth is "removed" and

“melted” in the Psalm, *wouldn't a prophetic deliverance of humanity bracketed by earth's removal and desolation appeal to Shakespeare*, the master who promises deliverance at the end of wars after the turmoil of Hamlet, the jealousy of Othello, the madness of Lear, the ambition of Macbeth? When torment and rage are quenched by Prospero's forgiveness, like Priam raising to his lips the murdering hand of Achilles, *don't the opposites of Shakespeare's works from before the reconciliation period suggest in these reversals a new metaphysic?* This came, the imputation goes, from his translation of the psalm.

We exhume Psalm 46 here with the Sonnets and *The Tempest* to urge those translators to reconsider. [*There are 46 of them!*](#) Just kidding. Please also do not count the Selah.

Psalm 46

¹God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

²Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

³Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains **shake** with the swelling thereof. Selah.

⁴There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

⁵God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

⁶The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

⁷The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

⁸Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

⁹He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the **spear** in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

¹⁰Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

2. Questions of the Will

Proponents say that when the verb is placed before the **metrically superfluous pronoun**, “therefore *will* not we fear,” instead of “therefore we will not fear,” that this, with the *lost* “our,” emphasizes that ***will as short for William*** which Shakespeare extravagantly puns upon in *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609). “Whoever hath her wish, thou has thy ‘Will,’ / And ‘Will’ to boot, and ‘Will’ in overplus,” (Sonnet 135). “Will” is both name, noun and verb: “‘Will’ *will* fulfill the treasure of thy love-- Aye, fill it full with *wills*, and my *will* one/ ... Make but my name thy love, and love that still, And then thou lovest me, for my name is ‘Will’” (Sonnet 136). “So will I pray that thou mayst have thy ‘Will’” (143).

The argument that this inverted will in the order of Psalm 46.2 **connects the Will of the Sonnets to the Psalm** which would go unnoticed were not *shake and spear* “coded” there too. That however is not the only inverted will in the KJV Psalms, “so *will not* we go back from thee” (80.18). But when textual zealots found **that *this will* was also the fourteenth word from the beginning of the psalm**, enabled by the missing “our,” and that this was the *exact* number of letters in *will shake spear*, in the context of the name and the transposition of verb to noun to name in Sonnet 136, this made it a little plausible that the language of **46.2 could be read as the name Will**.

What good does it do to argue there are 3 wills and three shalls in Psalm 46? Both express command, with “will” as a lesser imperative, allowing volition. Is his name *Will Shake spear* or *Shall*? The three “shalls” of the Psalm command. The “stream *shall* make glad the city of God,” “she *shall* not be moved,” “God *shall* help her.” No inversions here, no “her shall God help.” But while the two remaining *wills borrow from the shalls* an imperial sense and denote the imperative in their use, “I *will* be exalted among the heathen. I *will* be exalted in the earth,” the use is risky. If *will* denotes his name then is Shakespeare referring to himself as God? Even in the context of Marlow’s blasphemies, Herriot’s and Raleigh’s scurrilous schools and medieval profanities upon the cross and religious ceremonies, reading “will” here as Shakespeare’s name works an impossible violence in the psalm. Is *Will* a renegade that he “will be exalted above the heavens,” mocking the very beliefs the psalm celebrates? Reason argues that He would not bother with the psalm in the first place if his “will” here must be at the expense of both his wit and wisdom.

But zealots are not defeated with reason, so the argument comes back, isn’t it prophetically true? Hasn’t **Will** been exalted in the earth! The greatest of the great! Such prophecy seems as good as its prophetic analogue in *The Tempest* where the great Globe (Theatre), was “dissolved.” It indeed burned to the ground two years later in 1613. The continual singling out of “will” at every turn in the psalm, by word order, inversion and use in the imperial sense draws attention to **the name as though it were a signature** declaring, “I will,” “I will,” over and over, by which we read, “I, Will” or “I am Will.” There is “Will” in overplus.

3. From the Psalm to the Play: Earth to Globe, Melted to Dissolve (faded and melted), Speaker to Speaker

Shipwreck is the premise of the context of Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest*. Prospero’s speech about the dissolution of the Globe is presumed to have been written sometime in the fall of 1610 after news arrived in England of the 1609 Bermuda shipwreck of “Sea-Venture.” The play’s first performance before King James, November 1, 1611 suggests the play was composed roughly the year between the fall of 1610 and 1611. Obviously the KJV of 1611 was finished and in the press well before this time, so any **verbal similarity** between verse 6 of the psalm and Prospero’s

speech at the conclusion of the wedding pageant **must go from the psalm to play and not play to psalm.**

It tweaks our ears to compare verse six of the psalm, “the heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; **he uttered his voice**, the earth **melted**” with

These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air.
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself—
Yea, all which it inherit—shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.
(IV, I, 148-56)

There are three potential similarities here. First, the language is similar. In the play Prospero’s “voice” declares “the great globe itself...shall dissolve,” as does God’s voice in the Psalm where “he uttered his voice, the earth melted” (IV i, 142).

Second, the dramatic speakers are parallel. Prospero’s act in dissolving his play resembles the divine utterance melting the earth, a near perfect analogy in action, not just language.

Third, the analogy of earth and globe is double. In the play “globe” refers to the theater as much as to the earth, but it is more than a pun when it corresponds with the “earth” of the psalm, for as the actor/spirits are melted so the globe “shall dissolve.”

The play elaborates further than the Psalm on the utterances “of his voice,” which agrees with the notion that the Psalm is a starting point for the analogy that the poet got initially from the Psalm’s translation. As the pageant “faded,” and the spirits “melted” as “the great globe itself,” so Prospero “shall dissolve” the play, making **it a miniature dissolution of the “globe.”** Prospero’s masque, a play within the play, a microcosm for the dissolution of the “globe,” is analogous with the psalm: **Earth is to globe, as melted is to dissolve** (faded and melted) and speaker to speaker. Enthusiasts urge that the closeness of the divine utterance to Prospero’s voice is more than an interesting coincidence. **The zealot thinks Shakespeare translated the psalm, left his signature, and was so impressed with the language and power of the psalm, especially v. 6, that he took it into *The Tempest* years later!**

4. Code or Accident

Would the sly Lancelot Andrewes, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the 54 learned men ask the greatest poet of England to translate the greatest poet of the Bible? No brainer! Shakespeare's reputation in his own time was enough to be intimate with the King and court. Would the King himself make such a suggestion? But there is no evidence. When did that stop code breakers? Certainly Shakespeare was well known to the King who commissioned the AV translation on 22 July, 1604. "The method proposed by the king was this--that the Version should be made by some of the most learned men in both the Universities (*The English Hexapla*, NY:AMS Press, 1974, 149).

Fourteen rules were to guide the translators, the first and last of which are important here. **The first rule** was that "the Bible ordinarily read in the church, commonly called the *Bishops' Bible* [was] to receive as few alterations as may be. And to pass throughout, unless the originals plainly call for an amendment" (*English Hexapla*, 152). The political aegis of this was to reduce temptation to civil disobedience and rebellion against monarchy such as might be found in the *Geneva Bible* which "was the one in daily use among the people" (148). While the Bishops' Bible might be "termed the authorized version" of its day (148) and the one most read in the church, it was not most popular.

The fourteenth rule was that "these translations [are] to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible, viz. Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Matthew's, Whitchurch's, Geneva" (153). Matthew's Bible was a composite, part the translation of Tyndale and part of Coverdale (153). Whitchurch's referred to the Great Bible, he being its printer. So **the King James Authorized Version (AV) of 1611 had a lot in common with immediate preceding English translations** such as the Coverdale Bible (1535), The Geneva Bible, (1560), The Great Bible (1539) or the Bishops' Bible (1568). The likenesses among these and not the differences make the case.

At the beginning of the reign of James I (1603) the Geneva and the Bishops' Bibles were the most popular. It is obvious that the AV of 1611 was to be a perfection of these two with the others contributing as necessary or desirable. Examining the most popular versions then, with the others aforementioned in the King's rule, the most obvious realization is that **the words shake and spear occur in every one** (Tyndale excluded). Cranmer's Bible (1566) can also be included in this. Only Tyndale gives anything different. For "mountains shake" Tyndale has "the hillis ben disturbed" and for "cutteth the spear" he substitutes "armys and sheeldis." Further, **not only do the words of the alleged code appear in these versions, but shockingly, they appear very close to the "coded" order** from beginning and end. Coverdale gives *shake* 55 words from the beginning and *spear* 46 from the end (counting ampersands!). The Great Bible gives *shake* 46 words from the beginning and *spear* 48 from the end. The Geneva Bible gives *shake* 47 from the

beginning and *spear* 45 from the end. The Bishops' Bible gives *shake* 47 words from the beginning (always discounting "Selah") and *spear* 48 words from the end.

	Shake	spear
Coverdale	55	46
Great Bible	46	48
Geneva	47	45
Bishops'	47	48

Is this a signature in code or an accident waiting to happen? Clearly the words shake and spear were standard usage in the psalm by 1568, 43 years before the AV, well before conjured anagrams and mysteries.

No matter, we will have our cake and eat it too. That is, **the notion that this occurrence is accidental is every bit as wonderful in its depiction of the universe as the notion that Shakespeare or anybody else engineered the event.** Consider that both may be true. That is, Shakespeare could have translated the psalm just because it was noted that these effects were waiting to happen. **All he would have to do is tweak the word order** and plant his bona fides and *will*. The psalm showing up later in *The Tempest* would have been an **involuntary reflex** of greatness. It would not matter so much if it concerned almost anybody else, but since Shakespeare has been both so exalted and doubted, **the ambiguity of the authorship of Psalm 46 makes it emblematic of himself** in the greater tale since his death.

Shakespearean scholars call it the old ripe chestnut, biblical scholars the work of monks and mountebanks, but each innocent who learns to count to 46 can pop the discovery. Innocents run up, since the probability of it being an accident must be slight: "Didn't Shakespeare 'translate' Psalm 46 in his spare time and leave his signature?" None of which would matter if all the experts did not say it is impossible, that there is **no evidence** for the effect and so on. **It smacks of cover up.** But as there is no end of fun to supposing the fantastic, that Shakespeare wrote the Bible, some suppose Yeats rose from the dead, that Shelley wrote about spaceships, that Erasmus Darwin invented the motorboat, that Plutarch traveled to the moon.

If you want to get a headstart on The Code from 1900 to the 1950's you must go to William F. Friedman's, *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined*. Friedman was the great cryptologist, who singlehandedly founded "the vast American cryptologic establishment." But beware, for lurking under Friedman's branches are *The Shakespeare Code* by Virginia Fellows (2006), *Henry Neville and The Shakespeare Code* by Brenda James (2008), *Shakespeare's Secret Booke: Deciphering Magical and Rosicrucian Codes* by David Ovason (2010), *The De Vere Code: Proof of the True Author of Shake-Speares Sonnets* by Jonathan Bond (2009) and *Breaking the Shakespeare Codes: The Sensational Discovery of the Bard's True Identity* by Robert

Nield (2007). And finally, if the citation of Shakespeare's Sonnets above, in the **Question of the Will**, should shake your confidence, it being poetry and not adequate to rigorous proof, see Mr. Friedman again, who cites, "The Shakespeare 'signature' ...completed by W. H. M. Grimshaw in 1919; he wrote the tenth verse backwards, 'earth the in exalted be will I, heathen the among exalted be will I; God am I that know and still be', and taking the sixth and seventh words from the beginning and the end, produced WILL-I and I-AM, or 'William'" (183). QED.

Cited:

William F. Friedman and Elizabeth S. Friedman. *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined*. London: Cambridge at the University Press. 1957.

"The great cryptologist." David Kahn. *The Code Breakers*. NY: Macmillan, 1967, 369.

This is the second of a trilogy of essays AE Reiff wrote at Bishop College, Dallas, TX, the first being, "Between the Bath and the Body's End: Socrates Breaks the Decorum of Death."

SIMON PERCHIK

Not yet finished melting :the sun
–you can hear its sea struggling
spilling over though each morning

it comes from behind now
brushes against this cemetery gate
that's still shining, floating past

–to this day you go home
the back way –you don't see
your reflection or the ground

face to face with shoreline
–what you hear are waves :one hand
reaching for another and in the dark

you let your fingers unfold end over end
then close, gather in these fountains
as if they belong one side then another

are nearly too much stone –here
where this gate is filling its lungs
and you tearing it in two.

*

Again *The Times*, spread-eagle
the way these subway doors
once were waves opening out

as the faint wings beating now
between your arms and the track
–a dark, single thread

pulls this sea under
though on the bottom
you can't be sure it's morning

or two shorelines, side by side
crawling into that slow, climbing turn
half sand, half you never get used to

–page over page
covered with weeds :feathers
from a long way off –you can touch

their darkness :words still dangerous
circling with seabirds :your eyes
don't want you, are closed.

*

Lower and lower this fan
smells from stone and the ice
broken off your forehead

still in the same, tight turn
holding on, almost back –you stare
even with sunglasses, the ones

you wear at funerals, cooled
the way this small room
has already started as snow

not yet the invisible arm in arm
louder and louder overhead
without a trace and no place to go

to harden, take hold, darken
let its wings down, close
your eyes and the ceiling.

*

Appearing and disappearing, this gate
you wave between one hand
after the other and doves on cue

break through the way each flourish
opens midair, is helped along
clearing the rooftops, palms up

–on your back as the aimless path
that has such low windows
–from nowhere, no longer white

each stone is closing its wings
letting go the sky, the graves
and just as suddenly your shoulders.

*

These graves listen to you
though they lean too far
half side to side, half

taking hold your spine, blinded
in front by sunlight, in back
by its endless bending down

as if together these bones
would steady you, in time
your limp disappear

already the small stones
buried here, there, in the open
to tell you what happened.

Bruce Wise

5 Tennyson

Odin's Runic Rhyme **by Lars U. Ice Bedew**

I know I hung upon a windy tree—huge Yggdrasil—
for nine long nights, there wounded by a spear that did not kill.
I, dedicated to myself, myself, o, Odin, on
that tree which no man knows from whence its roots run to the dawn.
No bread did they once give me, nor a drink from any horn,
as I faced downward, peering, fearing, frightened and forlorn.
I saw the runes—futhorc—and stretched to take them up at once.
O, screaming, yes I took them up. O, they were quite a bunce.
And then I bounced back from that place, and fell to heaven's hall,
Valhalla, where I drink the mead of poetry and loll.

The Vector of the Swan **by Sea Curlew Ibed**

The soul, o, gander, flies above the park, and far beyond...
The discords of the wind descend upon its passive pond.
The swan swims on, its curving neck arising in the air;
it floats along the water unperturbed by hunter's dare.
Like as one scrawling in a ripple on the surface, sir,
it leaves behind an auburn, Paphian caricature,
bequeathing its white feathers to the aura of the ess,
as autumn's buff aurora dips in dark, duff murkiness.
The soul, o gander, flies up high in white wings on the dawn,
and races to Deneb, and then, o, Cygnus, it is gone.

At the City Bus Stop **by Bruce "Diesel" Awe**

Beside the thin, black, iron railing, sitting on a bench,
some tattooed dude was looking down, a short-haired, stocky mensch.
It looked like he was concentrating on one single thing,
a tickle underneath him there, a subtle tingling,
a warm breeze there massaging him, along both of his sides.
It looked like he was waiting patiently to take his ride.
What most amazed about the dude was just how calm he was,
like as a bumble-bee asleep before his morning buzz.
He moved back, hips, and thighs, to be a bit more comfy there,
but still looked snug and cozy out in that exhausting air.

The Older Man and the Kid
by Rudi E. Welec, "Abs"

He had been working out in his bright white athletic shoes
by doing push-ups on his knees, for fear his backbone fuse.
Up-down, up-down, up-down, up-down, to make his muscles strong;
but he was wondering how long he could go on and on.
A nearby youngster clad in tee-shirt turned around to see
how long the day-old bearded dude could keep it up, you see.
It was as if it somehow mattered to that pie-eyed kid,
as if he'd made a bet how long he'd last until he quit.
The kid looked right across his shoulder at the older man
amazed that he kept going on. Because he can, he can.

O, Let the Gods
by Luis de Cawebre

O, let the gods take from me, by their secretly-wrought wills,
all glory, love and wealth, and leave me little more than swill.
All I desire is a lucid, solemn consciousness,
to look upon this tumbling World in its evening dress.
Its glory is unreadable, its love is shadowy,
its wealth is darkest matter plagued by dreams of mad ennui.
My vision of this universe fears nothing but itself,
not seeing anything but its extraordinary self.
And so, here lying at the edge of time...eternity...
O, let the gods take everything I have away from me.

Bruce dale Wise & Company

Mark Young

geographies: Puerto Padre

The organizing principle
is competition, not the

philosophy of mathematics.
Don't think that growing

a pair & being combative
is constructive, that this

foolish ban can stop me
from coming back. She

paused & pretended to think
about the price of tech stock.

Snow Pony seems to trust her

I've written three stories for Sonic the Hedgehog. Most of my work is kept as digital files. Sometimes I feel like covering the whole mess with cheese. The wine is mediocre as well. Oh wait, Bob Dylan is getting ready to perform a song. It should smell like cream of wheat & taste quite sweet.

A line from James Taylor

An error has occurred. My
plane from Puerto Rico
got laid over in Boston.
There's no comparison at all

to Saint Louis. The men are
substandard & the women
are a joke. Dating is boring
& painful. My blood flow

decreases, my intake of bak-
ery treats goes through the
roof. Can my pet still fly on
with me as checked baggage?

Superbowl

Is it really a
decade since
Janet Jackson
let slip the
nip that

launched a
thousand clips
& burnt the
topless towers
of Ilium?

Serendipity

The elephants are owned by the State. Naiads are believed to care for them when they go to the river to drink. Elsewhere, the distant mountains are blue. Minute white houses pit their surface. A highway is being built. The first stop will be a customs office. An elderly couple has refused to move. The elephants' path to the river is being changed. No-one believes in the naiads anymore.

Michael Lee Johnson

I Regret Grinder, but, No Remorse

I have no regret, no grinder of remorse, nor memory of the dental chair.
I have no feeler of sins lost in sand dust with golden teeth, diamond over lay of lies.
Do not dance, play checkers, between the lines of memory-black/white.
I am a sinner wild with elbow muscle, flex right to left.
Dental floss is my Jesus, purple robe, violent-victim.
The cheeks of God whisper fools of toy tot decay, hanger on a cross-victim.
I was an outcast of hell with flames hanging from my behind.
What age of flowers is a whisper into the colors, fool enamel solid white.
I wild elbows flex from right to left, dental floss violent-victim.
I am owner of the cheeks of sunken bones.
What left is decay open space, mouth, tongue, cavities.
Christ never liked the sound of a drill, only aging of flowers, whispers from toy toots.
Lost in the blur of the blue heron I toss my gambling cards, fold.
Back to the farm fields forever and the sounds of wheat in the wind.
Jesus is the stop point, remorse, joy, where the sounds end.
I am an abstract artist, setting black outline in a dental chair,
false teeth pending white, waiting for second coming.

Ball Jar

I am the cut-off ends of yellow lemon,
end cuts off green lime skin and juice
squeezed, mixed with Pure Vitamin crystals
heavy-duty vitamin C, leads me to Christ.
I hang my survival on orange and lime trees.
I cut you with Chicago cutlery knives.
6 ounces of Barton vodka brand a twist of above,
between this night, my thighs, my thoughts
morning is the master of exchanges of fluids myself or others.
Life is a single squeeze both ends of both fruits.
Jerk me hands free top end of a Ball Jar a hinge of plastic.
Bring me to the end of the straw, up/down over again
mix it/mix me to the end of hell.

Old Men Walk Funny

Old men walk funny with shadows eating at their heels.

Pediatric walkers, prostate exams, bend over, and then mostly die.

They grow poor, leave their grocery list at home, and forget their bank account numbers,

dwell whether they wear dentures, uppers or lowers; did they put their underwear on.

They cannot remember where they put their glasses, did they drop their memory on route to some place.

They package old bones, dry dreams; testicles empty, and giggle choking on past sexual fantasies.

Mogen David madness accesses 100 BC concord wine, all remaining parts sit down-

waves go through their brain as if broken cylinders float undefined travelers.

At night, they scream in silent dreams no one else hears, they are flapping of monarch butterfly wings.

Old men walk funny to the barbershop with gray hair, no hair; sagging pants to physical therapy.

They pray for sunflowers above their graves, a plot that bears their name.

They purchase their plots, pennies on a dollar, beggar's price a deceased wife.

Proverb: in the end, everything that is long at one time is now passive, cut short.

Ignore those old moonshiners that walk funny, "they aren't hurting anyone anymore."

Cut Through Thickness (V2)

I angle at your youth and cross my eyes to see reality of time passed.
I cut through thickness of you retina, thin splinters, raw oak from the North,
Cypress trees, bending, rebel in Southern ways.
My present and past tenses are confused with feelings.
I cross the border of knowing you and forced to retreat.
I am seasoning of salt, pepper, and sugar in your veins.
I am daddy tenderness long time gone memories, graveyard, and suppressed images.
I squeeze scars, raw pimples, Clearasil, alcohol masking, blend in hate cosmetics.
Jesus is a forgiving halo symbol hanging over a cross.
I hang alligator skins on the shells of Saturn and Apollo.
I lift the Vertical Assembly Building over a trailer sky.
I launch pad of love, a missile, old time arrow direct to hearts.
Every time I feel like crying, Bob Dylan, ages, angels with a handful of tears.

Post Scriptum

Jorge Etcherry Arcaya

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