



in co-operation with
the World Intellectual Property Organization,
the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
and the United Nations SRC Society of Writers

presents

THE STONES OF CIVILIZATION

Friday, May 5, 2006, 3-6pm

**Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium
United Nations Headquarters**

THE STONES OF CIVILIZATION:

“Language is a city to the building of which every human being brought a stone.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

PROGRAM:

Welcome: Bob Holman and Catherine Fletcher

Opening Remarks: H.E. Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations

Readings and performances:

Kewulay Kamara with Lasana Kouyate and Saliu Suso (Sierra Leone, Guinea, the Gambia)

Gwyneth Lewis (Wales)

Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer (Tlingit Nation/USA)

Cathal Ó Searcaigh (Ireland)

Matthew Fitt (Scotland)

Chilean Mission—Isabel Seguel reading a poem in Mapudungun

Vanessa Fisher and Jimmy Smith (didjeridu player) (Dungibara and Wiradjuri People /Australia)

Robert Minhinnick (Wales)

New Zealand Mission—HE Ambassador Rosemary Banks, the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations reading a poem in Maori

Australian Mission—‘InDidgDance,’ Australian Indigenous Cultural Performers: Taryn Beatty, Ryka Satrick, Majeda-Mo’ Beatty, and Xing-Yee Beatty (Indinji, Wuthathi and Kukuyalinji)

Remarks from the World Intellectual Property Organization: Dr. S. Rama Rao

Performances by:

Basque Bertsolariak: Gratien Alfaro, Jean Curutchet, Jesús Goñi, and Martín Goicoechea with Joxe Mallea-Olaetxe (Basque Country/USA)

Aonghas MacNeacail (Scotland)

Mark Abley (Canada)

Iwan Llwyd (Wales)

Dr. Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O’odham Nation/USA)

Gearóid MacLochlainn and Jarlath Henderson (Northern Ireland)

Cliar: Arthur Cormack, Charles Stewart, Mary-Ann Kennedy, Ingrid Henderson, Hector Henderson, Maggie Macdonald (Scotland)

Dr. S. Rama Rao (India)

Closing Remarks: Catherine Fletcher and Bob Holman

KEWULAY KAMARA *(translated from the Kuranko by the author)*

Kaira

Jamaa nu woe ni wura la
Jamaa nu woe ni wura la

Ka fo woe yé
Bi morlu la mana man kumeh kana bi woenu fe
Kumeh'l diyeh ani tonyeh kumeh ma kelen na

Kaira
Kaira soron mandi
Kaira fisa beh di

Kumeh gbelema
Kumeh ti sa
Kuma ti norgo
Kaira!

Ma nala- Kuma
Ma segila Kuma
Min bee foh-la
Woélé ke-la
Min bee ke-la
Woélé foh-la
Kaira

Wali yumeh
Billa la kuma yumeh le fe
Ka yumayeh boh yumanyeh-ro
Ka sembe boh sembe ro
Al meh woe kere

Ka na kaira
Ka segi kair
Al meh woé kera

Peace

*Good evening people,
Good evening people*

*I tell you
Heed not the foolish talk of today.
Sweet words and truth are not the same*

*Peace!
Peace is hard to achieve
But peace is better than all.*

*Words are serious
Words do not rot
Words do not rust
Peace!*

*We come in words
We go in words
What is said
Is done
What is done
Is said
Peace!*

*Good deeds
Follow good words;
Goodness from goodness;
Strength from strength
Let it be*

*Come in peace
Go in peace
Let it be.*

GWYNETH LEWIS (*translated from the Welsh by the author*)

Dechrau'r Anghofio

Heddiw trod y sigl-di-gwt
yn *wagtail*.
Gwyliais yn ofalus
wrth l wasg y nant
symud papurau newyddion y dydd
i lawr or mynyddoedd
i'w rhwygo'n rhacs
ym mheiriant y pentref.

Ni hidiai'r *wagtail*—
roedd yn hunan-gytûn
fel o'r blaen
ac yn moesyngrymu'n ddwfn
i'r golau a'r cerrig.
Doedd e ddim i'w weld
yn aderyn mwy chwim
er bod ganddo lai
o gysteiniaid i'w cario.

Gwichiodd *swallows* Sir Aberteifi
uwch fy mhen,
eu hadenydd fel corcsgriw,

yn agor gwin
rhywiol y noswaith.
Mae eu cri
yn rhan annatod
o'm henaid i,
sŵn eu hoen
yn ddyfnach nag ieithwedd,
neu ddistawrwydd, neu boen.

What's in a Name?

*Today the wagtail family finally forgot
that I once called it sigl-di-gwt.*

*It didn't give a tinker's toss,
kept right on rooting in river moss,*

*(no longer mwsogl) relieved, perhaps,
that someone would be noticing less*

*about its habits. Magpies' fear of men
lessened, as we'd lost one means*

*(the word pioden) of keeping track
of terrorist birds out in the back.*

*Lleian wen is not the same as 'smew'
because it's another point of view,*

*another bird. There's been a cull:
gwylan's gone and we're left with 'gull'*

*and blunter senses till that day
when 'swallows,' like gwennol, might stay
away.*

NORA MARKS DAUENHAUER AND RICHARD DAUENHAUER:
a poem by David Kadashan, from Hoonah, 1968 (in Tlingit and English)

You created me, Chookaneidí.

You created me.

This is why I, too, feel for you.

Yes!

This is the way Xwaayeenák is.

(Willie Marks) *Áawé.*

In this world

we're still holding each other's hands.

Neither do we overlook our dead.

Yes!

At this moment

a kát adagánni, gu.aal kwshé a tóodei wuxoogóok

yee yadaax kaawadaayi aa.

(Keet Yaanaayi) *Yéi kgwatée xá.*

Sagóox naxsatee yéi áyá yee jiyís tuxdátan

(Naawéiyaa) *Gunalchéesh.á.*

Yeeysikóo yee kaani yán

yee aat hás.

(Keet Yaanaayi) *Gunalchéesh.*

(Naawéiyaa) *Gunalchéesh.*

Yéi áyá.

Aaa!

Yándeí gaxyeenáak.

Yee sani hás, aadéi s kunoogu yé yéeyi

yéi koonaxdayeinín

aaa,

yee tuwú daa ooxlit'aayi átx'.

Yee yáx' yéi hás a daanéi noojéen,

aaa,

yá a eetée kuxdziteeyi aa yeedát.

Yéi áyá.

(Keet Yaanaayi) *Gunalchéesh.*

(Naawéiyaa) *Gunalchéesh.*

CATHAL Ó SEARCAIGH (*translated from the Irish by Seamus Heaney*)

Caoineadh

(I gcúimhne mo mháthar)

Chaoin mé na cuileatacha ar urcht mo mháthara
An Lá a bhásaigh Mollie - peata de sheanchaora
Istigh i gcreagacha crochta na Beithí.
Á cuartú a bhí muid lá marbhánta samhraidh
Is brú anála orainn beirt ag dreasú na gcaorach
Siar ó na hailltreacha nuair a tímíd an marfach
Sbna beanna dodhreaptha. Préacháin dhubha ina scaotha
Á hithe ina beatha gur imigh an dé deiridh aisti
De chnead choscrach amháin is gan ionainn iarraidh
Tharrthála a thabhairt uirthi thíos sna scealpacha.
Ní thiochaí mé a shásamh is an tocht ag teacht tríom;
D'fháisc lena hucht mé is í ag cásamh mo chaill loim
Go dtí gur chuireas an racht adaí ó íochtar mo chroí.
D'iompair abhaile mé ansin ar a guailneacha
Ag gealladh go ndéanfadh sí ceapairí arán préataí.
Inniu tá mo Theangaidh ag saothrú an bháis.
Ansacht na bhfilí - teangaidh ár n-aithreacha
Gafa i gcreagacha crochta na Faillí
Is gan ionainn í a tharrtháil le dasacht.
Cluinim na smeachannaí deireanacha
Is na héanacha creiche ag teacht go tapaidh,
A ngoba craosacha réidh chun feille.
Ó dá ligfeadh sí liú amháin gaile - liú catha
A chuirfeadh na creachadóirí chun reatha,
Ach seo í ag creathnú, seo í ag géilleadh;
Níl mo mháthair anseo le mé a shuaimhniú a thuilleadh
Is ní dhéanfaidh gealladh an phian a mhaolú.

Lament

(*In memory of my mother*)

*I cried on my mother's breast, cried sore
the day Mollie died, our old pet ewe
Trapped on a rockface up at Beithí.
It was a sultry heat, we'd been looking for her,
Sweating and panting, driving sheep back
From the cliff-edge when we saw her attacked
On a ledge far down. Crows and more crows
Were eating at her. We heard the cries
But couldn't get near. She was ripped to death
As we suffered her terrible, wild, last breath
and my child's heart broke. I couldn't be calmed
No matter how much she'd tighten her arms
And gather me close. I just cried on
Till she hushed me at last with a piggyback
And the promise of treats of potatoe-cake.
Today it is my language that's in its throes,
The poet's passion, my mothers' fathers'
Mothers' language, abandoned and trapped
On a fatal ledge that we won't attempt.
She's in agony, I can hear her heave
And gasp and struggle as they arrive,
The beaked and ravenous scavengers
Who are never far. Oh if only anger
Came howling wild out of her grief,
If only she'd bare the teeth of her love
And rout the pack. But she's giving in,
She's quivering badly, my mother's gone
And promises now won't ease the pain.*

MATTHEW FITT: *a poem by Mike Cullen from **The Smoky Smirr o Rain** (in Scots)*

Acid Burns

Moose, moose, moose, moose, moose,

Moose, moose, moose, moose, moose,

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

Ha, where ye gaun, ye cowlan ferlie

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie bonnie gonnies burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie bonnie gonnies burn the hoose doon

Thy poor earth-born companion

Pump up the bogles

Pump up the bogles

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

Hoose

Hoose

Hoose

Hoose

Thurs a poem in the hoose

in the hoose

in the hoose

Thurs a poem in the hoose

in the poem

in the hoose

Thurs a moose in the poem

in the poem

in the poem

Thurs a moose in the poem in the hoose

By yon bonnie banks go bonnie bonnie bonnie bonnie

yon bonnie banks go bonnie bonnie bonnie bonnie

Welcome

To your

Gory bed wee

Sleekit

Timâ€™rous

Hoose.

Thurs a louse in the house

in the house

in the house

Thurs a louse on the moose

in the hoose

in the poem

Thurs a louse in the house

ana moose on the loose

Thurs a moose on the loose in the hoose.

BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBY yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose

doon

By yon bonnie banks go burn the hoose doon

Burnin

Burnin

Burnin

Burnin

HOOSE!

ISABEL SEGUEL: *a poem by Elicura Chihuailaf Nahuelpan (translated from the Mapundungun by the author)*

**Nienolu Üy Tañi Newen
Ta Iñche**

Pewman ta we Küyen mew, pi
ka küzawkefiñ ta lelfün
Petu ñi zugu genon
ka rayen rume genon femün
(welu zoy alü kamapu)
Tüfawla ñi pu ñawe zeumalkefiñ lien ruka
ka kürüf negvmüñ ma meke enew ñi logko
pürakawellkülen wente relmu
Witrunko ta iñche
Umawtulen amuley lafken iñche mew
ka nepey ta mawizantu
Nienolu üy tañi newen ta iñche, pi
tuway mane chi antü: Tami ül.

**Because I Am The Force
Of The Unnamed**

I have dreamed of the crescent moon, it says
and I have worked the fields
Before there were words
before there were flowers, I existed
(and farther away)
For my daughters I build the house of silver
as I ride my horse above the rainbow
hair streaming in the wind
I am the running water
The ocean goes to sleep inside me
the mountain awakes
For I am the power of the nameless, it says
the light around the sun: your song.

ROBERT MINHINNICK: *a poem by Emyr Lewis (translated from the Welsh by Robert Minhinnick)*

Taliesin

yn gudyll ifanc uwch Argoed Llwyfain
profais ddyfodol y byd,
hogiau'n marw drwy drais a damwain
llygaid dall a gwefusau mud,
ffroenais eu braw ar yr awel filain,
tafodais eu gwaed ar y gwynt o'r dwyrain
a gwelais drwy'r oesoedd lawer celain,
brodyr a brodyr ynghyd.

yn eryr oriog uwch caeau Fflandrys
cofiais y cyfan i gyd,
cofiais drannoeth y lladdfa farus,
gwledda brain ar gelanedd mud,
arwyr toredig yn hercian yn ofnus
a'r baw yn ceulo'n eu clwyfau heintus,
clywais weddïau mamau petrus,
a heddwch yn amdoi y byd.

yn bengwin styfnig ger Porthladd Stanley
eisteddais drwy'r brwydro i gyd,
llanciau ifanc lleng Galtieri
yn disgwyl diwedd eu byd;
a dyma fy hanes eto eleni
yn gwylio'r byddinoedd ar diroedd Saudi,
yn ddodo drewllyd o flaen y teli
yn heddwch fy nghartref clyd.

Taliesin

A sparrowhawk soaring, I saw
Argoed's English auguries
and so predicted an army of days,
suns' pale faces above shields' black rims,
an empire built of empty eyes and mouths,
and I felt a wind cold as the corpse-skin
of our brotherhood.

Then I was an eagle, going somewhere else,
when I flew over Flanders and remembered then
how the future would look,
the next day's gridlock in the trenches,
the wound-psalms, the filth prayers,
the mothers like nervous serving-girls
at the grave's banquet.

Not long ago

I was an albatross, patient above Port Stanley,
seeing Galtieri's boys
discover what the end of time feels like.
And now here comes another crowd,
their boots melting on the Baghdad road,
and the whole world watching
through a dodo's eye.

A PERFORMANCE BY 'INDIDGDANCE,' AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PERFORMERS: *Taryn Beatty, Ryka Satrick, Majeda-Mo' Beatty, And Xing-Yee Beatty (In Indinji, Wuthathi, And Kukuyalinji)*

Jalama - 'Welcome Dance': This traditional Aboriginal dance of Australia describes the welcoming process. As we are invited to a different land it is important to give honor to the traditional landowners. The 'welcome dance' will generally start the ceremony and welcome all tribes present. This song is performed as a chant repetitively. Jalama is repeated whilst the actions represent 'welcome/coming together/gathering' actions.

Ugadanji - Kangaroo: This traditional Aboriginal dance of Australia depicts our most famous native animal - the kangaroo. This dance depicts the animals movements, lifestyle and dreaming. The *ugadanji* (kangaroo) is considered to many tribes as their totem (their dreaming). This song is also performed as a chant along with calls. The song words below are repeated whilst the dancers mimic the ugdanji's (kangaroo) actions:

Ugadanji Mudginba
Ugadanji Mudginba
Ngyangli
Ngyangli

HE SECRETARY NICOLA HILL: a Maori Poem

E Noho E Ata

E noho e Ata, te hiri o Waikato
E huri to kanohi ki te Hau-a-uru
Nga tai e ngunguru i waho te akau
Aue - hei - aue

Takihia atu ra te moana i Aotea
Kia whatiwhati koe i te hua o te miro
Te tihia o Moerangi te puke okiokinga
Aue - hei - aue

To pikitanga ko te Aho-o-te-rangi
To heketanga ko Karioi maunga
To hoe nga ki Whaingaroa
Aue - hei - aue

Whiua o mata ki Kawhia moana
Ki Kawhia tai, ki Kawhia tangata
Ko te kupu tena a ou tupuna
Aue - hei - aue

E hoe to waka ki Ngaruawahi
Turangawaewae o te kingitanga
Ko te kupu whakamutunga a Matutaera
Aue - hei - aue

Be seated Te Ata

Be seated Te Ata, the Queen from Waikato
Turn your face to the Western shores
And the waves that surge beyond the reef
(no translation)

Stroll along the shores of Aotea Bay
Plucking the fruit of the miro tree
With the top of Moerangi as your hill on which to rest

You will ascend because of Te Aho-o-te-rangi
And descend by Karioi Mountain
To paddle the canoes into Raglan Harbour

Caste your eyes upon Kawhia Bay
Upon Kawhia shore, and Kawhia the chief
For those were the words of your ancestor

So paddle your canoe to Ngaruawahi
The standing place of the Kingdom
For those were the final words of King Tawhiao

The song is an action song which celebrates the elevation of Te Atairangikaahu as Māori Queen in 1966. It is a song that invites her to travel along the Western boundaries of her tribal zone, and names each place to identify her rule there. It returns to Ngaruawahia which is the seat of the Māori Kingdom and the ancestral home of the people of Waikato of which she is also Paramount Chief. Te Aho-o-te-rangi was an ancestor of hers who lived in the regions she visits in the song.

A PERFORMANCE BY BASQUE BERTSOLARIAK: GRATIEN ALFARO, JEAN KURUTXET, JESÚS GOÑI, AND MARTÍN GOICOECHEA WITH TRANSLATION BY JOXE MALLEA-OLAETXE

Berstolari poetry is a traditional, oral, improvised popular poetry form with a structured rhythm and meter, recited/sung in Euskara (Basque), the only non-Indo-European language in western Europe (in Eastern Europe Estonian, Finnish, and Hungarian are also non-Indo-European) and one of the oldest linguistic communities in Europe. It is one of the four minority languages in Spain along with Catalan, Galician, and Valencian. The Basque Country (Euskadi), straddles the Pyrenees Mountains on both sides and consists of seven provinces: four on the Spanish side—Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Araba, and Nafarroa, and three on the French side—Lapido, Benafarroa, and Zuberoa. The *bertsolaritza* tradition is practiced by *bertsolariak* (versifiers) in Basque Country, as well as out west in places where there are communities of Basque-speakers, such as Nevada, Wyoming, and San Francisco, and the *People's Poetry Gathering* welcomes *bertsolariak* Martin Goicoechea, Jesús Goñi, Jean Kurutxet, and Gratién Alfaro from the west coast for their first performances in New York City.

It is fitting to present Basque poetry at this *Poetry Gathering* dedicated to the world's endangered and contested languages because language is integral to Basque identity. There is not a word in the Basque language for a "Basque." Basques refer to themselves as Euskaldunak, "speakers of Euskara" (some prefer the spelling "Euskera"), and they refer to their homeland as Euskal Herria, "Land of Basque Speakers" so "it is language that defines a Basque."

VANESSA FISHER AND JIMMY SMITH: *A Dungibara Story (Translated From the Duungidjawan by Vanessa Fisher)*

Yanjaran-bam ya:ye-nji njinngangurra
Badja-ru guwe ya:yi minja-nga wane-yu yo:we-ri
Mana ban wane-ø
Waga mana galang
Dadu wane-ø
Waga
Minja-nga guwe wane-yu
Damba mana wane-yu nga:m-bu
E'e' galang mana
Damba mana galang
Mana wura wane-o njunam-gari
Wanja yo:we yan-gu wa:rre-yu damba mana waga
yayumba-me
Nja-o yo:we-ru wanja yo:we di:re-yu yo:ran
Djan guwe ba-yi ya:-yi guwe mandji yin-ji
Gari'nji guwe wane-ø
Waga guwe badja-na ya:ø
Wane-ø guwe
Ya-nji guwe mana
Nginngangurra

Two old women were talking to each other in the creation
One of them said, "What should (we) leave for our children?"
"(How about) leaving grass?"
"That is not good," (one answered).
"(How about) leaving some trees?"
"No," came the answer
"What should (we) leave then?"
"We will leave a road (for them) (the other woman suggested).
"Good, that is good!"
"That road is good."
That's all right, leave that for the children.
When they will go and will hunt there is no road there now
They will see the road when they grow up to be people.
Then a man came and said that he was a friend.
Leave it here then.
Don't say something else.
Leave it then.
Then he (the man) went.
The creation time.

IWAN LLWYD (*translated from the Welsh by the author*)

Carreg Cennen

(Un o gadarnleoedd yr Arglwydd Rhys ar hyd ddyffryn Tywi. Syrthiodd i ddwylo'r Saeson ym 1282.)

Roedd yn arfer gwarchod y briffordd,
yn un o gadwyn o gestyll
ar hyd lannau Tywi:

Y Dryslwyn, Dinefwr ac yma ym
mhen y dyffryn
yr uchaf ohonyn nhw i gyd,
yn cadw llygaid barcud ar y byd:

erbyn heddiw rhaid gadael y briffordd,
dilyn y lonydd troellog, diarffordd,
y cefnffyrdd sydd wedi hen adael y map,

sy'n cuddio'n y pantiau tu hwnt i Trap,
lle mae'n rhaid oedi
i adael i dractor neu fws fynd heibio:

ac yna gadael y cerbyd a dringo
heibio'r hwyiaid a'r defaid corniog,
cyn cyrraedd â dynau'n llawn gwynt:

dim ond bref y gwartheg a chwiban
sigl-i-gwt,
ac ymhell, bell uwchben
awyren a'i chynffon wen

ar y briffordd i'r byd newydd:
yna un arall, ac un arall ar eich chwt,
yn hedfan drwy'r machlud ar Dywi:

roedd yr Arglwydd Rhys wedi ei gweld hi -
mae ei gastell yn dal ar y briffordd o hyd,
y briffordd aruchel i ben pella'r byd.

Carreg Cennen

(*One of a string of Welsh castles built by the Lord Rhys along the Tywi valley in Carmarthernshire. It fell to the English during the conquest of 1282.*)

*It was a guardian of the highway,
one of a fetter of fortresses
along the banks of the Tywi:*

*The Dryslwyn, Dinefwr and here at
the head of the valley
the highest of them all,
keeping a kite's eye on the land:*

*today you must leave the highway,
follow the lost, twisted lanes,
the back-roads that discarded the map,*

*hiding in the hollows beyond Trap,
where you have to give-way
to tractors and the occasional bus:*

*and abandon the car and climb
past the drakes and the long-horned sheep
before creeping breathless to the summit;*

*no sound but the cattle's low and a
wagtail's cry,
and high, high overhead
an aircraft's white autograph*

*crossing blue to the new world,
then another, and another on its tail,
dissecting sunset on the Tywi:*

*the Lord Rhys had a sentinel's eye -
his fortress still surveys the highway,
the super-highway to the ends of the earth.*

DR. OFELIA ZEPEDA (translated from the Tohono O'odham by the author)

Ju:ki

'Im 'at hu 'i-e-ju: g ta^s
kia, ^sa'i si s-toni
we:s ha'icu 'an 'a^s 'i pi hoiñag
mumuwal s-ba:big 'an da'a
we:s ha'icu 'at 'i-e-ba:bigi.

N-o:g 'o 'ab dah^ã
si ta'i mo'ok c ko:^s
ñ-we:nag 'o gnhu wo'o kc ko:^s
gogs 'at 'am bic ki: we:big
'e:heg 'o an ga:k
we:s ha'icu 'at 'i-ba:bigi.

Tk 'e a pi ^sa:muñhim an 'i-dadhiwa g cewagi
ju: 'at! ju: 'at!
da'iwu^s 'at g ñ-o:g
"me k am ma'i^sp g ñ-pilkan"
"me k 'u:i g 'e-hehliga"
We:s ha'icu 'at hahawa 'i-hoi
ju: 'at! ju: 'at!
da'iwu^s 'at g ñ-we:nag
da'iwu^s 'at g gogs
we:s ha'icu 'at hahawa 'i-hoi.

Rain

The sun has moved down that way a bit,
And yet it is so hot.
All movement has almost stopped.
A fly goes by so slowly,
everything has slowed down.

My father is sitting there,
His head is tilted back and he's asleep.
My sister is laying over there asleep.
The dog passed by, he is looking
for shade,
everything has slowed down.

And yet the clouds have slowly settled in.
It's raining, it's raining!

My father jumps up
"Run and cover my grain!"
"Run and get the clothes on the

line!"
Everything is now moving and alive.
My sister is up.
The dog is up.

everything is now moving and
alive.

MARK ABLEY

Glasburyon

1

Shakespeare was an upstart, Dante a dabbler
compared to Shamil Bakhtasheni -
he of the snowpeak sagas, the quince-blossom lovesongs
and a leopard's argument with God. Not a word
of his work was dipped in printer's ink
and most of it is long forgotten;
little wonder, for the master lived
and died in the Artchi tongue,
spoken only in a windburnt village
where Dagestan falls towards the sea. The language
pleasured Shamil like a lover, giving him
poetry without an alphabet, listeners
without a page. His grave is rumored to lie
among the roots of an apricot tree
on the scarp of a Caucasian mountain
where, if you believe the villagers, once
a month the wind recites his lyrics.

2

She flew from Boston to Port Moresby
for this: an outboard ferry-ride

past a dripping wall of trees
to a yet unstudied village where

the Mombum language survives;
the wall splits open; she clambers out

and strides from the dock, escorted
by a flock of blue-winged parrots

to find the gathered islanders
seated on the red soil beside

a reed-thatched bar, watching *Fatal
Attraction* on satellite TV.

3

Reason tells me it doesn't matter
if the final speaker of Huron
goes grey in a suburb of Detroit
where nobody grasps a syllable
of his grandmother's tongue.

Reason tells me it's not important
if Basque and Abenaki join
the dozens of unproductive
languages lately disposed of; what's

the big deal, where's the beef?

Reason is scavenging the earth.
"More, more," it cries. You can't tell it
to use imagination. You can't
ask it to stop and listen
to the absence of Norn.

4

Tega du meun or glasburyon,
kere friende min -
"If you take the girl from the glass castle,
dear kinsman of mine,"

so a voice claims in a Norn ballad,
plucked by a rambling scholar
off the lips of a toothless crofter

he found on a Shetland island
in 1774; soon the language
was a mouthful of placenames -

yamna-men eso vrildan stiende
gede min vara to din.
"As long as this world is standing
you'll be spoken of."

5

That music? It's only
a wind bruising the chimes
in a crystal fortress
high on Mount Echo.

Each time we lose a language.
the ghosts who made use of it
cast a new bell.

The voices magnify. Soon,
listen, they'll outpeal

the tongues of earth.

AONGHAS MACNEACAIL (translated from the Scots Gaelic by the author)

bial beag

a bheòil bhig
an inns thu dhomh nad chànan ùr
mar a lion
do mhàthair leat,
eil cuimhn agad

a bheòil bhig
an seinn thu dhomh
nad chànan ùr
na h-òrain òg
a thòisich tìm

a bheòil bhig
an dèan thu cruth
do bhiathadh dhomh

a bheòil bhig
dé'n cleas,
an toir thu tuar
do latha dhomh

seas, seas
a bheòil bhig,
cha tuig mi thu,
tha eas do lidean
taomadh orm
mar dhealain geal
a sàthadh feòil chruaidh m'fhoghaidinn

a bheòil bhig
a bheòil bhig,
an ith thu mi

a bheòil bhig,
cha tus an aon
tha gairm do bhith

a bheòil bhig,
sporain nan fuaim
nad ròs réidh
's tu cala 'n t-suain

a bheòil bhig
nuair a thilleas tu
a gleann nam balbh
an inns thu dhaibh
nach cual thu fòs
nad chànan ùr
nach toil leat cràdh

little mouth

little mouth,
tell me
in your new language how your mother
filled with you,
remember that?

little mouth,
sing to me
in your new language
the young songs
that started time

little mouth
make for me
the shape of your feeding

little mouth
what's the sport,
give me the colour
of your day

hold, hold
little mouth
too fast for me,
your syllables
flood over me
in torrents of
white lightning,
stabbing the hard flesh
of my patience

little mouth,
little mouth
would you eat me?

little mouth,
you're not the first
to say *i am*

little mouth
purse of noises
still as a rose,
now harbour of sleep

little mouth
when you return from
the dumb glen
tell those
who haven't heard
your new language
that you don't like pain

GEARÓID MACLOCHLAINN AND JARLATH HENDERSON: *a poem by Gearóid MacLochlainn (translated from the Irish by Seamas MacAnnaidh and Gearóid MacLochlainn)*

Teanga Eile

Mise an teanga
i mála an fhuadaitheora,
liopaí fuaite le snáthaid,
cosa ag ciceáil.

Mise an teanga
sínte ar bhord an bhúistéara
in oifigí rialtais, géaga ceangailte,
corp briste brúite
curtha faoi chlocha ar chúl claí
roimh bhreacadh an lae.

Mise an teanga
a fhilleán san oíche, ceolta sí, Micí Mí-ádh.
Snámhaim trí na cáblí aibhléise,
ceolaim os íseal
i bhfiliméad an bholgáin ar do thábla.
Eitlím trí na pasáistí dúdhorcha rúnda
faoin chathair bhriste.

Mise an teanga a sheachnaíonn tú
ar na bóithre dorcha,
i dtábhaitní. Croí dubh.

Fanaim ort faoi lampa sráide buí
ag an choirnéal.
Leanaim do lorg mar leannán diúltaithe.

Mise an teanga a thostaigh tú.
Ortha mé,
i bpóca dubh an fhile choir
i muinín déirce.

Second Tongue

*I am the tongue
in the kidnapper's sack.
Lips stitched, feet flailing.
I am the tongue
bound on the butcher's block
in government offices,
a battered, broken corpse
ditched at dawn.
I am the tongue
who comes in the night.
I am jinx
swimming through flex
and electricity cables.
I sing softly in the element of the bulb
on your table.
I am Johnny Dark, Creole.
I wing through secret pitch-black passageways
beneath the broken city.
I am the tongue
you shun on dark roads, in pubs.
I am hoodoo
waiting for you on the corner
under the yellow street lamp,
stalking you like a jilted John.
I am the tongue
you silenced. I am patois.
I am mumbo-jumbo, juju,
a mojo of words
in the back pocket
of the weirdo poet
busking for bursaries.*

CLAR: a song by William Ross, 'S Truagh Nach D' Rugadh Dall Mi (in Scots Gaelic)

'S Truagh Nach D' Rugadh Dall Mi

Is truagh nach d' rugadh dall mi
Gun chainnt is gun lèirsinn
Mas fhac' mi t'aghaidh bhaindidh
Rinn aimhleas nan ceudan
Bho'n chunnaic mi bho thùs thu
Bu chliùteach do bheusan
Gum b' fhasa leam am bàs
Na bhith làthair as t'eugmhais

*Oh that I were born blind
Without speech and sight
Before I saw your feminine face
Which has been the ruin of hundreds
From when I first saw you
Your conduct was renowned
It would be easier for me to die
Than to live without you*

chorus

Filoro, filoro, filoro hug eile
Filoro, filoro, filoro hug eile
Air fail ili o agus ho ro hug eile
Chan fhaigh mi cadal sàmhach
A ghràidh, 's gun thu rèidh rium

*Filoro, filoro, filoro hug eile
Filoro, filoro, filoro hug eile
Air fail ili o agus ho ro hug eile
I will not sleep soundly
My love, if we are not reconciled*

Gur binne leam do chòmhradh
Na smeòrach nan geugan
Na cuach 's a mhadainn Mhàighe
Neo clàrsach nan teudan
No'n t-easbaig air Latha Dòmhnach
'S am mòr-shluagh ga èisteachd
Neo ged a chunntadh stòras
Na h-Eòrpa gu lèir dhomh

*Sweeter is your conversation to me
Than the thrush of the branches
Or the cuckoo on a May morning
Or the stringed harp
Or the bishop on Sunday
And the assembled crowd listening to him
Or if I counted all the riches
Of Europe as my own*

Is truagh nach robh mi fàgail
An t-saoghail seo ro chianail
Bha dòchas faoin gam thàladh
'S e'n gaol rinn mo dhìobhail
Ge fada bhuam a shiubhlas tu
Ri m' bheò bhithinn riut dileas
'S nuair thigeadh Latha na Cruinne
'S i Mòr Ros a dh'iarrainn

*Oh that I were able to leave
This awful world
Foolish hope beguiled me
It was love which destroyed me
Though you may travel far from me
All my life I would be faithful to you
And when the Day of Reckoning would come
It would be Marion Ross I would want*

A song of unrequited love from the Skye-born poet William Ross, who was reputed to have died of a broken heart when the object of his affection - Marion Ross - headed for Liverpool to marry another. Ross actually died of tuberculosis, a far less romantic fate.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सन्गोस्तु+अकर्मणि

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमदिम्
पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय
पूर्णमेव+अवशष्यते

ॐ असतोमा सत्+गमय
तमसोमा ज्योतिर्+गमय
मृत्योर्मा अमृतम्+गमय

ॐ भूर्भुवत्+सुवः
ॐ तत्+सवतिः वरेण्यम्
भर्गोः देवस्य धीमहि
धियो योनः प्रचोदयात्

That is Full; This is full
The full comes out of the full
When the full is taken from the full,
What remains is full.

Lead me:
From untruth to truth
From darkness to light
From mortality to eternity

To work alone art thou entitled but not to its fruit
Do not aspire the results, nor desist from doing your duty.

Remove pain, sorrow; Conquer destruction
Bestow on us creation, life and happiness
Give us that supreme light and divinity
Illuminate our intellect and creativity to lead us along the righteous path.
Peace, Peace, Peace

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