1959

International Geophysical Year

Lawrence Lieberman

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq

Recommended Citation


This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.
Was whispered down a hundred years
And is worthy of even a critic's belief.
His sons were honorable men, his daughters
Married well, and when Wang died, bearing
The crescent ruby of semi-godhead upon his heart
And the crimson band of every power around
His wrist, the old professors were careful not to exhume
His youthful indiscretions, the wild, inebriate
Poems the Emperor chose to forgive.
Only his poems seem really dead, thrust
By timid hands beneath an unknown pile
Of parchment, buried deep in the palace vaults.
I hope, some day, to find them,
Spread them for all to read how Wang
Could rhyme and sing with no-man's pride
And a heart so full that he needed neither court
Nor jewels nor the sacred scraps from the Living Moon God's plate.

—Burton Raffel

INTERNATIONAL GEOPHYSICAL YEAR

I

We harness this year
The galactic simoons of space . . .
In forge of our hydrogen and shrapnel success
We scaffold manned bullets:
Challenge to much fabled and fictive discs.

Peace beyond reach,
We infringe the firmament We
The foragers,
Cradled by such our speeded funeral We'll
Land our shells
Abreach the aerie esplanades:

Take heed our threats! Savannahs of the moon.
II

We arrange panoplied counters
Along chiaroscuro—assymetric chessboards.
We fathom no depths
But rocking secure balance
As at
shoals in fjords
Knolls in oases
Atop glacier floes  Now
Orbs and their satellites.

The night’s fracture takes to wing
Its star-sealed promise.
As the moon-lit criminal shore
Sleeps among fallen shards,
Our lucubrious phantoms sort bits and ashes
Flitting lambent above
The budding much-seeded soil.
Let death reimburse the shadows of death,
Replenish the slow-sifted silt of the living.

—LAURENCE LIEBERMAN

MISS DICKINSON’S CONFESSION

I feared the fathom never found
In lakes where starving fish were bound
By too much space.

I feared the wind that left no trace
Of what had come to take its place
Surrounding me.

I feared the night, especially
Without the stars. Day frightened me
When birds were gone.

I feared . . . people most, the fun
They seemed to poke at God through me—
You, my enemy.

—EDWARD J. CZERWINSKI