



A Selection of Quotations

Collected by Ian Phillips

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APHORISMS, PROVERBS & SAYINGS

ANONYMOUS

Honi soit qui mal y pense (*Evil be to him who evil thinks*).



Ave Caesar, morituri te salutant (*Hail Caesar, those who are about to die salute you*).



Per ardua ad astra (*Through hardship to the stars*).



Sic transit gloria mundi (*Thus passes the glory of the world*).



Temporar mutantur, et nos mutantur in illis (*Times change and we change with them*).



Magna est veritas, et praevalet (*Great is truth, and it prevails*).¹

¹ 3 Esdras, 4:41

ARCHIMEDES

287-212 BC: Greek mathematician and inventor

Give me somewhere to stand, and I will move the earth.

TREVOR BAYLIS

1937-2018: British inventor

Look down on me if you want to, but don't expect me to look up to you.²

DAVID BOIES

1943-: US lawyer

The more complicated it is, the more important it is to define what your simple truths are.³

PABLO CASALS

1876-1973: Catalan cellist, composer and conductor

I am beginning to notice some improvement.⁴

CICERO

143-106 BC: Roman writer, statesman and orator

Cui bono fuerit? (*To whose benefit was it?*)⁵

² Quoted in The Guardian (2000)

³ US lawyer, referring to the anti-trust case against Microsoft

⁴ When asked why, aged 93, he still practised the cello 3 hours a day

⁵ Pro Milone, XII, 32

GEORGES DANTON

1759-1794: French lawyer and a leader of the Revolution

Il nous faut de l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace (*Audacity, more audacity, always audacity*).⁶

RENE DESCARTES

1569-1650: French philosopher, scientist and mathematician

Cogito, ergo sum (*I think therefore I am*).⁷

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

1859-1930: British writer and doctor

When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, *however improbable*, must be the truth.⁸



Mediocrity knows nothing higher than itself, but talent instantly recognises genius.⁹

SIGMUND FREUD

1856-1939: Austrian physician and neurologist

The truth cannot be tolerant, it admits no compromises and reservations.¹⁰

⁶ Speech to the Legislative Assembly (2.9.1792)

⁷ "Le discours de la methode" (1637)

⁸ "The Sign of Four" (1890)

⁹ "The Valley of Fear" (1914)

¹⁰ "Question of a Weltanschauung" (1932)

JUVENAL

c.60-c.130: Roman satirical poet

Sed quis custodiet ipsos Custodes? (*But who will guard the guards themselves?*)¹¹

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

1813-1855: Danish religious philosopher

You must do something, but inasmuch as with our limited capacities it will be impossible to make anything easier than it has become, you must, with the same humanitarian enthusiasm as the others, undertake to make something harder.¹²

MICHELANGELO BUONAROTTI

1475-1564: Florentine painter, sculptor, architect, draughtsman, poet

Ancora imparo. (*I am still learning.*)¹³



The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low and achieving our mark.

¹¹ Satires, iii.347

¹² "Concluding Unscientific Postscript" (1846)

¹³ Favourite saying

ISAAC NEWTON

1642-1727: English mathematician and physicist

If I have seen further (than you and Descartes) it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.¹⁴

J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

1904-1967: US physicist

Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.¹⁵

C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON

1909-1993: British naval historian and author

Delay is the deadliest form of denial.¹⁶

ALBERT PIKE

1809-1891: American attorney, soldier, writer and freemason

What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.¹⁷

¹⁴ Letter to Robert Hooke (1675-6)

¹⁵ On explosion of first atom bomb, quoting Vishnu from the "Gita", New Mexico (16.7.1945)

¹⁶ "The Law of Delay", 1970

¹⁷ "Ex Corde Locutiones: Words from the Heart Spoken of His Dead Brethren" (1874)

PIERRE-JULES RENARD

1864-1910: *French author*

There are moments when everything goes well; don't be frightened, it won't last.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

1712-1778: *Swiss-born French philosopher, social and political theorist, musician, botanist, and writer*

L'homme est né libre, et partout il est en fers
(*Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains.*)¹⁸

RAFAEL SABATINI

1875-1950: *Italian-British writer*

Born with the gift of laughter and the sense that the world was mad, and that was his only patrimony.¹⁹

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

1850-1894: *Scottish writer*

You cannot run away from a weakness; you must sometimes fight it out or perish. And if that be so, why not now, and where you stand?

¹⁸ "Du Contrat Social" (1762)

¹⁹ "Scaramouche" (1921), Ch. 1

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

1817-1862: *US writer, philosopher and naturalist*

Dreams are the touchstones of our characters.²⁰



If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life of which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.²¹

OSCAR WILDE

1854-1900: *Irish-born writer and wit*

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.²²

ZHOU ENLAI

1898-1976: *First premier of People's Republic of China*

It's too early to tell.²³

²⁰ "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers" (1849), Wednesday

²¹ "Walden" (1854), Conclusion

²² "Lady Windermere's Fan" (1893), I

²³ Reply to request for an opinion on the French revolution

ART, WRITING & SCIENCE

LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI

1404-1472: *Italian artist and architect*

Never take the stylus or brush in your hand if you have not first constituted in your mind all that you have to do.²⁴

JACOB BRONOWSKI

1908-1974: *Polish-born British scientist and writer*

That is the essence of science: ask an impertinent question, and you are on the way to a pertinent answer.²⁵

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: *German-born US physicist and humanitarian*

Since I do not foresee that atomic energy is to be a great boon for a long time, I have to say that for the present it is a menace. Perhaps it is well that it should be. It may intimidate the human race into bringing order into its international affairs, which, without the pressure of fear, it would not do.²⁶



²⁴ On Painting (1435-1441)

²⁵ "The Ascent of Man", Ch. 4

²⁶ Einstein on the Atomic Bomb, 'Atlantic Monthly' (11.1945)

I believe with Schopenhauer that one of the strongest motives that leads men to art and science is escape from everyday life with its painful crudity and hopeless dreariness, from the fetters of one's own ever-shifting desires. A finely tempered nature longs to escape from personal life into the world of objective perception and thought: this desire may be compared with the townsman's irresistible longing to escape from his noisy, cramped surroundings into the high mountains, where the eye ranges freely through the still, pure air and fondly traces out the restful contours apparently built for eternity.

With this negative motive there goes a positive one. Man tries to make for himself in the fashion that suits him best a simplified and intelligible picture of the world: he then tries to some extent to substitute this cosmos of his for the world of experience, and thus to overcome it. This is what the painter does, the poet, the speculative philosopher, and the natural scientist do, each in his own fashion. Each makes this cosmos and its construction the pivot of his emotional life, in order to find in this way the peace and security that he

cannot find within the all-too-narrow realm of swirling personal experience.²⁷



The supreme task of the physicist is to arrive at those natural elementary laws from which the cosmos can be built up by pure deduction. There is no logical path to these laws; only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding, can lead to them ...The state of mind that enables a man to do work of this kind is akin to that of the religious worshipper or the lover; the daily effort comes from no deliberate intention or programme, but straight from the heart.²⁸



Gott würfelt nicht. (*God does not play dice with the world.*)²⁹



The years of searching in the dark for a truth that one feels but cannot express, the intense desire and the alternations of confidence and misgiving until one breaks through to

²⁷ Address at celebration of Max Planck's 60th birthday (1918)

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ Translated by Jean Untermyer as: God casts the die, not the dice

clarity and understanding are known only to him who has experienced them himself.³⁰

SIGMUND FREUD

1856-1939: *Austrian physician and neurologist*

As regards intellectual work, it remains a fact, indeed, that great decisions in the realm of thought and momentous discoveries and solutions of problems are only possible to an individual, working in solitude.

GRAHAM GREENE

1904-1991: *British novelist*

Writing is a kind of therapy; sometimes I wonder how all those who do not write, compose or paint can manage to escape the madness, the melancholia, the panic fear which is inherent in the human situation.³¹

FRANZ KAFKA

1883-1924: *Czech-born Austrian writer*

I think we ought to read only the kind of books that bite and sting us ... We need the books that affect us like a disaster, that grieve us deeply, like the death of someone we loved more than ourselves, like being

³⁰ Lecture, Glasgow University (20.6.1933)

³¹ "Ways of Escape" (1980)

banished into forests, far from everyone, like a suicide. A book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.³²

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

1813-1855: *Danish religious philosopher*

A poet is an unhappy being whose heart is torn by secret suffering, but whose lips are so strangely formed that when the sighs and cries escape them, they sound like beautiful music.³³

WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM

1874-1965: *English writer*

There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.³⁴

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

1893-1930: *Soviet Russian writer*

Art is not a mirror to reflect the world, but a hammer with which to shape it.³⁵



³² Letter to Oskar Pollak (23.1.1904)

³³ "Either – Or" (1843)

³⁴ "Orientations" (1899)

³⁵ Quoted in *The Guardian* (11.12.1974) attributed to Mayakovsky but possibly by Berthold Brecht

A rhyme's

...

a barrel of dynamite.

A line is a fuse
that's lit.

The line smoulders,
the rhyme explodes –
and by a stanza
a city
is blown to bits.³⁶

EDVARD MUNCH

1863-1944: *Norwegian artist*

One evening I was walking along a path, the city on one side of me and the fjord below. I felt tired and ill. I stopped and looked out across the fjord-the sun was setting, the clouds were turning blood-red. I felt a scream passing through nature - it seemed to me that I could hear the scream. I painted this picture, painted the clouds as real blood. The colours screamed.³⁷

³⁶ "A Conversation with the Inspector of Taxes about Poetry" (1926)

³⁷ On painting "The Scream" (1893)

FERNANDO PESSOA

1888-1935: Portuguese writer

When I am at the wheel, I am greater than myself.³⁸



I read and am liberated.³⁹

PABLO PICASSO

1881-1973: Spanish artist

I have always believed and still believe that artists who live and work with spiritual values cannot and should not remain indifferent to a conflict in which the highest values of humanity and civilisation are at stake.⁴⁰



We artists are indestructible, even in a prison, or in a concentration camp, I would be almighty in my own world of art, even if I had to paint my pictures with my wet tongue on the dusty floor of my cell.⁴¹

³⁸ On why he wrote

³⁹ "The Book of Disquiet", "A Factless Biography" No. 55, ed. & trans. Richard Zenith (2001)

⁴⁰ Message sent to American Artists' Conference (December 1937)

⁴¹ "Der Monat" (1949)

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

1799-1837: Russian poet and author

Crime and genius are incompatible.⁴²

RAINER MARIA RILKE

1875-1926: Bohemian-Austrian poet and novelist

Nobody can advise you and help you, nobody. There is only one way. Go into yourself.⁴³



This most of all. Ask yourself in the most silent hour of night: must I write?⁴⁴

MARK ROTHKO

1903-1970: Russian-born US artist

I accepted this assignment as a challenge, with strictly malicious intentions. I hope to paint something that will ruin the appetite of every son-of-a-bitch whoever eats in that room.⁴⁵



I am not interested in the relationship between form and colour. The only thing I

⁴² "Mozart & Salieri", 1830

⁴³ "Letters to a Young Poet" (1902-8)

⁴⁴ *Ibid*

⁴⁵ On accepting commission for Four Seasons restaurant (1958), later returned and now exhibited in Tate Modern

care about is the expression of man's basic emotions: tragedy, ecstasy, destiny.⁴⁶

YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

1884-1937: *Russian writer*

True literature can exist only where it is created, not by diligent and trustworthy functionaries, but by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels, and sceptics.⁴⁷



There are books of the same chemical composition as dynamite. The only difference is that a piece of dynamite explodes once, whereas a book explodes a thousand times.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Quoted in *The Observer* (14.9.2008)

⁴⁷ "The State of Russian Literature", "I am afraid" (1921), collected in "A Soviet Heretic" – Essays (1955)

⁴⁸ "The State of Russian Literature", "A piece for an anthology on books" (1928), collected in "A Soviet Heretic" – Essays (1955)

EUROPE

KONRAD ADENAUER

1876-1967: *German statesman*

European unity was a dream of a few people. It became a hope for many. Today it is a necessity for all of us. It is, ladies and gentlemen, necessary for our security, for our freedom, for our existence as a nation and as an intellectual and creative international community.⁴⁹

WINSTON CHURCHILL

1874-1965: *British statesman*

I look forward to a United States of Europe, in which the barriers between the nations will be greatly minimised and unrestricted travel will be possible.⁵⁰

DANIEL DEFOE

1660-1731: *English writer*

It is not that I see any reason to alter my opinion in anything I have written which occasions this epistle; but I find it necessary, for the satisfaction of some persons of

⁴⁹ Speech in German Bundestag, 15.12.1954

⁵⁰ To Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, 21.10.1942, after the first British victory of the Second World War at El Alamein

honour, as well as Wit, to pass a short explication upon it, and tell the world what I mean, or rather what I do not mean, in some things wherein I find I am liable to be misunderstood.

I confess myself something surprised to hear that I am taxed with betraying my own nest and abusing our nation by discovering the meanness of our original, in order to make the English contemptible abroad and at home; in which I think they are mistaken. For why should not our neighbours be as good as we to derive from? And I must add that, had we been an unmixed nation, I am of opinion it had been to our disadvantage. For, to go no further, we have three nations about us as clear from mixtures of blood as any in the world, and I know not which of them I could wish ourselves to be like—I mean the Scots, the Welsh and Irish; and if I were to write a reverse to the satire, I would examine all the nations of Europe, and prove that those nations which are most mixed are the best, and have least of barbarism and brutality among them; and abundance of reasons might be given for it, too long to bring into a preface.

But I give this hint to let the world know that I am far from thinking it is a satire upon

the English nation to tell them they are derived from all the nations under heaven—that is, from several nations. Nor is it meant to undervalue the original of the English, for we see no reason to like them the worse, being the relics of Romans, Danes, Saxons, and Normans, than we should have done if they had remained Britons; that is, than if they had been all Welshmen.

But the intent of the satire is pointed at the vanity of those who talk of their antiquity and value themselves upon their pedigree, their ancient families, and being true-born; whereas it is impossible we should be true-born, and if we could, should have lost by the bargain.

Those sort of people who call themselves true-born and tell long stories of their families, and, like a nobleman of Venice, think a foreigner ought not to walk on the same side of the street with them, are owned to be meant in this satire. What they would infer from their own original I know not, nor is it easy to make out whether they are the better or the worse for their ancestors. Our English nation may value themselves for their wit, wealth, and courage, and I believe few will dispute it with them; but for long originals and ancient true-born families

of English, I would advise them to waive the discourse. A true Englishman is one that deserves a character, and I have nowhere lessened him that I know of; but as for a true-born Englishman, I confess I do not understand him.

From hence I only infer that an Englishman, of all men, ought not to despise foreigners as such, and I think the inference is just, since what they are to-day, we were yesterday, and to-morrow they will be like us. If foreigners misbehave in their several stations and employments, I have nothing to do with that; the laws are open to punish them equally with natives, and let them have no favour.

But when I see the town full of lampoons and invectives against Dutchmen only because they are foreigners, and the King reproached and insulted by insolent pedants, and ballad-making poets for employing foreigners, and for being a foreigner himself, I confess myself moved by it to remind our nation of their own original, thereby to let them see what a banter is put upon ourselves in it, since, speaking of Englishmen *ab origine*, we are really all foreigners ourselves.

I could go on to prove it is also impolitic in us to discourage foreigners, since it is easy to make it appear that the multitudes of foreign nations who have taken sanctuary here have been the greatest additions to the wealth and strength of the nation, the great essential whereof is the number of its inhabitants. Nor would this nation have ever arrived to the degree of wealth and glory it now boasts of if the addition of foreign nations, both as to manufactures and arms, had not been helpful to it. This is so plain that he who is ignorant of it is too dull to be talked with.

The satire, therefore, I must allow to be just till I am otherwise convinced, because nothing can be more ridiculous than to hear our people boast of that antiquity which, if it had been true, would have left us in so much worse a condition than we are in now; whereas we ought rather to boast among our neighbours that we are a part of themselves, or the same original as they, but bettered by our climate, and, like our language and manufactures, derived from them and improved by us to a perfection greater than they can pretend to.

This we might have valued ourselves upon without vanity; but to disown our descent

from them, talking big of our ancient families, and long originals, and stand at a distance from foreigners, like the enthusiast in religion, with a "Stand off; I am more holy than thou!"—this is a thing so ridiculous in a nation, derived from foreigners as we are, that I could not but attack them as I have done.

And whereas I am threatened to be called to a public account for this freedom, and the publisher of this has been new-papered in gaol already for it, though I see nothing in it for which the Government can be displeased, yet if at the same time those people who, with an unlimited arrogance in print, every day affront the King, prescribe the Parliament, and lampoon the Government may be either punished or restrained, I am content to stand and fall with the public justice of my native country which I am not sensible I have anywhere injured.

Nor would I be misunderstood concerning the clergy, with whom, if I have taken any license more than becomes a satire, I question not but those gentlemen, who are men of letters, are also men of so much candour as to allow me a loose at the crimes of the guilty without thinking the whole

profession lashed, who are innocent. I profess to have very mean thoughts of those gentlemen who have deserted their own principles, and exposed even their morals as well as loyalty, but not at all to think it affects any but such as are concerned in the fact.

Nor would I be misrepresented as to the ingratitude of the English to the King and his friends, as if I meant the English as a nation are so. The contrary is so apparent, that I would hope it should not be suggested of me; and, therefore, when I have brought in Britannia speaking of the King, I suppose her to be the representative or mouth of the nation as a body. But if I say we are full of such who daily affront the King and abuse his friends, who print scurrilous pamphlets, virulent lampoons, and reproachful public banter against both the King's person and Government, I say nothing but what is too true. And that the satire is directed at such I freely own, and cannot say but I should think it very hard to be censured for this satire while such remained unquestioned and tacitly approved. That I can mean none but such is plain from these few lines:—

"Ye heavens, regard! Almighty Jove, look down,

And view thy injured monarch on the throne.

On their ungrateful heads due vengeance take

Who sought his aid and then his part forsake.”

If I have fallen upon our vices, I hope none but the vicious will be angry. As for writing for interest I disown it. I have neither place, nor pension, nor prospect; nor seek none, nor will have none. If matter of fact justifies the truth of the crimes, the satire is just. As to the poetic liberties, I hope the crime is pardonable. I am content to be stoned provided none will attack me but the innocent.

If my countrymen would take the hint and grow better-natured from my ill-natured poem, as some call it, I would say this of it, that though it is far from the best satire that ever was written, it would do the most good that ever satire did.

And yet I am ready to ask pardon of some gentlemen too, who, though they are Englishmen, have good-nature to see themselves reprov'd, and can bear it. Those are gentlemen in a true sense, that can bear to be told of their *faux pas* and not abuse the reprover. To such I must say this is no satire;

they are exceptions to the general rule; and I value my performance from their generous approbation more than I can from any opinion I have of its worth.

The hasty errors of my verse I made my excuse for before; and since the time I have been upon it has been but little, and my leisure less, I have all along strove rather to make the thoughts explicit than the poem correct. However, I have mended some faults in this edition, and the rest must be placed to my account.

As to answers, banters, true English Billingsgate, I expect them till nobody will buy, and then the shop will be shut. Had I wrote it for the gain of the press, I should have been concerned at its being printed again and again by pirates, as they call them, and paragraph-men; but would they but do it justice and print it true according to the copy, they are welcome to sell it for a penny if they please.

The pence indeed is the end of their works. I'll engage, if nobody will buy, nobody will write. And not a patriot-poet of them all now will, in defence of his native country—which I have abused, they say—print an answer to it, and give it about for God's sake.

THE PREFACE.

The end of satire is reformation; and the author, though he doubts the work of conversion is at a general stop, has put his hand to the plough.

I expect a storm of ill language from the fury of the town, and especially from those whose English talent it is to rail. And without being taken for a conjuror, I may venture to foretell that I shall be cavilled at about my mean style, rough verse, and incorrect language; things I might indeed have taken more care in, but the book is printed; and though I see some faults, it is too late to mend them. And this is all I think needful to say to them.

Possibly somebody may take me for a Dutchman, in which they are mistaken. But I am one that would be glad to see Englishmen behave themselves better to strangers and to governors also, that one might not be reproached in foreign countries for belonging to a nation that wants manners

I assure you, gentlemen, strangers use us better abroad; and we can give no reason but our ill-nature for the contrary here.

Methinks an Englishman, who is so proud of being called a good fellow, should be civil; and it cannot be denied but we are in many cases, and particularly to strangers, the churlishest people alive.

As to vices, who can dispute our intemperance, while an honest drunken fellow is a character in a man's praise? All our reformations are banter, and will be so till our magistrates and gentry reform themselves by way of example. Then, and not till then, they may be expected to punish others without blushing.

As to our ingratitude, I desire to be understood of that particular people who, pretending to be Protestants, have all along endeavoured to reduce the liberties and religion of this nation into the hands of King James and his Popish powers; together with such who enjoy the peace and protection of the present Government, and yet abuse and affront the King, who procured it, and openly profess their uneasiness under him. These, by whatsoever names or titles they are dignified or distinguished, are the people aimed at; nor do I disown but that it is so much the temper of an Englishman to abuse his benefactor that I could be glad to see it rectified.

They who think I have been guilty of any error in exposing the crimes of my own countrymen to themselves, may, among many honest instances of the like nature, find the same thing in Mr. Cowley, in his imitation of the second Olympic ode of Pindar. His words are these –

“But in this thankless world the givers
Are envied even by the receivers:
'Tis now the cheap and frugal fashion
Rather to hide than pay an obligation.
Nay, 'tis much worse than so;
It now an artifice doth grow
Wrongs and outrages to do,
Lest men should think we owe.”⁵¹

KRISTIAN JENSEN

1971-: *Danish Finance Minister*

There are two kinds of European nations. There are small nations and there are countries that have not yet realised they are small nations.⁵²

JACQUES LE GOFF

1924-2014: *French medieval historian*

... the King of Bohemia, George Podiebrad [1420-1471] ... suggested creating an

⁵¹ “An Explanatory Preface”, “The True-Born Englishman” (1703)

⁵² At ‘Road to Brexit’ conference, Copenhagen, 13.6.2017

assembly which ... in effect constituted the very first plan for an assembly that would represent a united Europe ... In his treatise, the king explicitly declared that the cessation of warfare between the European states should be both the goal and the means of such a union. This treatise written five centuries ago called for a Europe of peace and identified peace as the principal advantage that would stem from a united Europe. In the event of conflicts between members of the assembly, it envisaged intervention by a joint European arbitration force. It called for an official seat for the assembly. It suggested that the original assembly should be able to admit new ... members. It proposed the creation of special taxes and financial provision to fund the assembly. It suggested that five-yearly assemblies should meet successively in different towns ... It also called for the institution of a common emblem, a seal, a treasury, archives, a general council, a procurator fiscal, and other officials. It proposed one vote for every member. Decisions would be taken by majority votes ... It was an astonishing test.⁵³

⁵³ “The Birth of Europe” (2005), Ch. 6

JEAN MONNET

1888-1979: French-born architect of European Union

There will be no peace in Europe, if the states are reconstituted on the basis of national sovereignty...The countries of Europe are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European states must constitute themselves into a federation.⁵⁴

RW SETON-WATSON

1879-1951: British political activist and historian

The desire for isolation, the knowledge that it is impossible – these are the two poles between which the needle of the British compass continues to waver.⁵⁵

RICHARD WRANGHAM

1948-: British primatologist

At the end of the Pleistocene, just before the beginning of agriculture, there might have been as many as 36,000 different societies, each with sovereignty over its home area. Today's figure is 195, and as the number of independent societies has declined, so has the frequency of wars. In the distant future,

humanity could become a single nation: extrapolations from past trends suggest a date between 2300 CE and 3500 CE for a World State to be established.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Declaration to National Liberation Committee, the French Government in exile in Algiers (5.8.1943)

⁵⁵ Britain in Europe (1789–1914): A Survey of Foreign Policy (1937)

⁵⁶ “The Goodness Paradox”, 2019

HOLOCAUST

PAUL CELAN

1920-1970: *Romanian-born poet*

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at
sundown

we drink it at noon in the mornings we
drink it at night

we drink and we drink it

we dig a grave in the breezes there one lies
unconfined

A man lives in the house he plays with the
serpents he writes

he writes when dusk falls to Germany your
golden hair Margarete

he writes it and steps out of doors and the
stars are flashing he whistles his pack out

he whistles his Jews out in earth has them
dig for a grave

he commands us strike up for the dance

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at
night

we drink in the morning at noon we drink
you at sundown

we drink and we drink you

A man lives in the house he plays with the
serpents he writes

he writes when dusk falls to Germany your
golden hair Margarete
your ashen hair Shulamith we dig a grave in
the breezes there one lies unconfined

He calls out jab deeper into the earth you lot
you others sing now and play

he grabs at the iron in his belt he waves it
his eyes are blue

jab deeper you lot with your spades you
others play on for the dance

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at
night

we drink you at noon in the morning we
drink you at sundown

we drink and we drink you

a man lives in the house your golden hair
Margarete

your ashen hair Shulamith he plays with the
serpents

He calls out more sweetly play death is a
master from Germany

he calls out more darkly now stroke your
strings then as smoke you will rise into air

then a grave you will have in the clouds
there one lies unconfined

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at
night

we drink you at noon death is a master from
Germany
we drink you at sundown and in the
morning we drink and we drink you

death is a master from Germany his eyes are
blue
he strikes you with leaden bullets his aim is
true
a man lives in the house your golden hair
Margarete
he sets his pack on to us he grants us a grave
in the air
he plays with the serpents and daydreams
death is a master from Germany

your golden hair Margarete
your ashen hair Shulamith⁵⁷

MEIR FEINSTEIN

1927-1947: Israeli revolutionary fighter

Have you not learnt yet whom you are
fighting in this struggle, unexampled in
human history? Do you believe we are to be
frightened by death - we who for years
heard the rattle of trucks that bore our
brothers, parents, the best of our people to a
slaughter which, too, had no precedent in
history? We who asked and ask ourselves
every day; how are we better than they, the

⁵⁷ "Todesfugue" (Death fugue) (1952)

millions of our brothers? In what lies our
virtue? For we could have been among them
and with them in the days of fear and in the
moments that came before death.

To these recurring questions our conscience
makes one reply: we were not saved in
order to live in slavery and oppression and
to await some new Treblinka. We were
spared in order to ensure life and freedom
for ourselves, for our people, for our
children and our children's children. We
were spared in order that there should be no
repetition of what happened there.

That is why we shall not be frightened. We
have learnt - and at what pain in vain
sacrifices! - that there is a life worse than
death and a death greater than life.⁵⁸

CHARLES FENYVESI

1934-: Hungarian-born US journalist and writer

Having rejected the rituals of Judaism,
Shumi crafted his own. For instance, he
fasted once a year, from sunset to sunset,
not on Yom Kippur, but on July 1, the day
his family perished in Auschwitz.

⁵⁸ At his trial during fight for Israeli independence, quoted
by Menachem Begin in "The Revolt"

He also devised what may be called the mixing of soils. When visiting the cemetery in Derzs, he scattered little bags of the gravelly, ash-laden grey soil he had collected in Auschwitz, where he had gone several times on pilgrimages, as well as bags of tawny sand he had brought from his two visits to the village of Sde Moshe in Israel, where his brothers Bedi and Anti had settled. He also placed, on his father's tombstone in Budapest, roses grown on the graves of his brother Mishi and sister Mara. He took fistfuls of sand from the Derzs cemetery to scatter in Auschwitz and over the family graves in Budapest.⁵⁹

HIRSH GLIK

1921-1945: *Jewish partisan*

Never say that you are on your final road,
Though overhead dark skies of lead may
death forbode;
The long awaited hour's surely drawing
near,
When with a roar our steps will thunder: we
are here!

From land of palm tree to the far-off land of
snow,

⁵⁹ "When the World was Whole" (1990)

Our people come together crushed by pain
and woe.
But where a drop of our blood has touched
the ground,
There our strength and our courage will
resound.

This song is written down with blood and
not with lead,
The birds don't sing it, for it fills the air with
dread.
This song was sung as all around us bullets
sprayed,
And walls collapsed as people hurled their
hand grenades.⁶⁰

HEINRICH HEINE

1797-1856: *German poet*

Dort, wo man Bücher
Verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende
Menschen.
(*It is there, where they burn
books, that eventually they burn men too.*)⁶¹

⁶⁰ "Never Say" (1943), adopted (in Yiddish) as the hymn of the Jewish Partisans at Vilna; Glik died, aged 24, fighting in the Estonian woods

⁶¹ "Almansor: A Tragedy" (1820-21)

PRIMO LEVI

1919-1987: Italian writer and chemist

They [the first Russian soldiers seeing Auschwitz packed with the dead and the dying] did not greet us, nor smile; they seemed oppressed, not only by pity but also by a confused constraint which sealed their mouths, and kept their eyes fastened on the funereal scene. It was the same shame which we knew so well, which submerged us after the selections, and every time we had to witness or undergo an outrage: the shame that the Germans never knew, the shame which the just man experiences when confronted by a crime committed by another, and he feels remorse because his will has proven non-existent or feeble and was incapable of putting up a good defence.⁶²



I reached Turin on 19 October [1945], after thirty-five days of travel; my house was still standing, all my family was alive, no one was expecting me. I was swollen, bearded and in rags, and had difficulty in making myself recognized. I found my friends full of life, the warmth of secure meals, the solidity of daily work, the liberating joy of

recounting my story. I found a large clean bed, which in the evening (a moment of terror) yielded softly under my weight. But only after many months did I lose the habit of walking with my glance fixed to the ground, as if searching for something to eat or to pocket hastily or to sell for bread; and a dream full of horror has still not ceased to visit me, at sometimes frequent, sometimes longer, intervals.

It is a dream within a dream, varied in detail, one in substance. I am sitting at a table with my family, or with friends, or at work, or in the green countryside; in short, in a peaceful relaxed environment, apparently without tension or affliction; yet I feel a deep and subtle anguish, the definite sensation of an impending threat.

And in fact, as the dream proceeds, slowly or brutally, each time in a different way, everything collapses and disintegrates around me, the scenery, the walls, the people, while the anguish becomes more intense and more precise. Now everything has changed to chaos; I am alone in the centre of a grey and turbid nothing, and now, I know what this thing means, and I also know that I have always known it; I am in the Lager once more, and nothing is true

⁶² "The Truce" (1963)

outside the Lager. All the rest was a brief pause, a deception of the senses, a dream; my family, nature in flower, my home. Now this inner dream, this dream of peace, is over, and in the outer dream, which continues, gelid, a well-known voice resounds: a single word, not imperious, but brief and subdued. It is the dawn command of Auschwitz, a foreign word, feared and expected: get up, 'Wstawàch'.⁶³



I must nevertheless admit that I experienced (and again only once) the temptation to yield, to seek refuge in prayer. This happened in the October of 1944, in the one moment in which I lucidly perceived the imminence of death: when, naked and compressed among my naked companions with my personal index card in my hand, I was waiting to file past the 'commission' that with one glance would decide whether I should go immediately into the gas chamber or was strong enough to go on working. For one instant I felt the need for help and asylum; then, despite my anguish, equanimity prevailed: one does not change the rules of the game at the end of the match, nor when you are losing. A prayer

⁶³ *ibid*, conclusion

under these conditions would not only have been absurd (what rights would I claim? and from whom?) but blasphemous, obscene, laden with the greatest impiety of which a non-believer is capable. I rejected the temptation: I know that otherwise were I to survive, I would have to be ashamed of it.

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You who live secure
In your warm houses,
Who return at evening to find
Hot food and friendly faces:

Consider whether this is a man,
Who labours in the mud
Who knows no peace
Who fights for a crust of bread
Who dies at a yes or a no.
Consider whether this is a woman,
Without hair or name
With no more strength to remember.
Eyes empty and womb cold
As a frog in winter.

Consider that this has been:
I commend these words to you
Engrave them on your hearts

⁶⁴ "The Drowned and the Saved" (1986)

When you are in your house, when you
walk on your way,
When you go to bed, when you rise.
Repeat them to your children.
Or may your house crumble,
Disease render you powerless,
Your offspring avert their faces from you.⁶⁵



"Dopo di allora, ad ora incerta,
Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns."

Once more he sees his companions' faces
Livid in the first faint light,
Grey with cement dust,
Nebulous in the mist,
Tingled with death in their uneasy sleep.

At night, under the heavy burden
Of their dreams, their jaws move,
Chewing a non-existent turnip.
Stand back, leave me alone, submerged
people,
Go away. I haven't dispossessed anyone,
Haven't usurped anyone's bread.
No one died in my place. No one.
Go back into your mist.

⁶⁵ "Shema" (10.1.1946)

It's not my fault if I live and breathe,
Eat, drink, sleep and put on clothes.⁶⁶



We gathered in the gym of the Talmud Torah - in the School of Law, as the very old Hebrew elementary school was proudly called - and taught each other to find again in the Bible justice and injustice and the strength that overcomes injustice; to recognise the new oppressors of Ahasuerus and Nebuchadnezzar. But where was Kadosh Barukhu, "the Saint, Blessed be He": he who breaks the slaves' chains and submerges the Egyptians' chariots? He who dictated the Law to Moses, and inspired the liberators Ezra and Nehemiah, no longer inspired anyone; the sky above us was silent and empty; he allowed the Polish ghettos to be exterminated, and slowly, confusedly, the idea was making headway in us that we were alone, that we had no allies we could count on, neither on earth nor in heaven, that we would have to find in ourselves the strength to resist.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ "The Survivor" (4.2.1984)

⁶⁷ "The Periodic Table" (1975) - 'Potassium' (1941)

YITZHAK RABIN

1922-1995: *Israeli soldier and politician*

We have come today from Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the State of Israel. We have come from Jerusalem, the city of the prophets and the city of peace, in order to pay our respects to the fallen -- and to salute the courage of the few, only a handful of whom survived. Here, on this square kilometre, stood the Warsaw Ghetto -- vestige of the 400,000 Jews who lived in this city -- and the city is empty. Where are the writers? Where are the rabbis? the doctors? the musicians? Where are the simple folk? And where are the children? Where is Janusz Korczak?

Scorched earth and a scorched people. My people are no more. Here, and in other ghettos, they fought without a chance of defeating the Nazis. They fought from the roof-tops of houses and from the sewers, the cellars and courtyards, behind collapsing walls and rooms engulfed in flames. They had no chance, yet they were victorious. In human history, the rebels of the ghetto will be remembered as those who kept alive the embers of honour. Their honour was the last asset of one thousand years of Polish Jewry which were consumed by fire -- but their honour did not perish.

They are inscribed forever upon the scroll of grief and fire. We have risen from the ashes of the martyrs, and carry on. The courage of the ghetto fighters was the cornerstone of the foundation of the State of Israel. We are carrying on from that very place, from those painful hours and from those last moments when the hearts of millions of Jews, and many others, ceased to beat. We are the realization of the last dreams and hopes of the six million -- who are no more.

We have come to say to you, and to ourselves, that although human beings betrayed us here in the Warsaw Ghetto, although our faith in mankind proved false, we believe -- and will continue to believe -- in the spirit of the human race. We continue to believe that people, and countries, can change their ways and, in the words of our forefathers, act with 'a new heart and a new spirit.'

Fifty years later, we still refuse to accept. Our minds still do not absorb. Our hearts continue to rage. But we have no desire for revenge. Fifty years later, we believe that every nation must make its historical reckoning -- and many nations of the world have a heavy debt to our historical account. Nations must examine their past and learn

its lessons. There were those who believed that, with the fall of the Nazis, racism would be abolished from the earth. They were mistaken. Fifty years after the fall of Hitler, his successors have arisen in various corners of the world. The most dangerous among them are those who call for the destruction of Israel out of religious fanaticism. But the days of Jewish helplessness are over. We, the Jewish state, will defend every Jew and serve as a refuge for Jews everywhere.

On one of the memorials to the Holocaust in Poland, it is written: 'Let our tragedy serve as a warning.' The entire world is under obligation to learn the lessons of the Holocaust -- and woe to he who denies it. Those who deny the Holocaust have recently increased in number. Of them it is said: the Nazis took the lives of the Jews, and those who deny the Holocaust are now trying to rob them of their deaths. Therefore, may our terrible tragedy the destruction of one-third of our people - serve as a warning to the entire world.

We have come here tonight, in order to strengthen our friendship with the Polish people -- among whom there were some who stretched out their hands and did not stand idly by when darkness fell upon

Europe. We have come to pay respects to those of the Polish people who tried, with the last of their meagre powers and at the risk of their lives, to strike at the Nazi beast.

Standing with me in this square tonight are the millions of citizens of the State of Israel, and millions of Jews. We do not forget, and we find it difficult to forgive. Wherever we go, the memory of the Holocaust goes with us. Cognizant of all that we lost in the Holocaust, and with faith in a better future, I stand here this evening, along with the millions of free people who certainly join me in my petition -- here in Warsaw, where the ghetto was destroyed: No more violence, no more war.

With your permission, I would like to conclude with the words of the last prayer recited by those who perished in the Holocaust: '*Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.*'⁶⁸

ROBERT WELTSCH

1891-1982: Czech-Israeli journalist and writer

Tragt ihn mit Stolz, den Gelben Fleck. (*Wear it with Pride, the Yellow Badge.*)⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Speech at Central Memorial Assembly, Warsaw, on 50th anniversary of Warsaw Ghetto uprising (19.4.1993)

⁶⁹ Judischer Rundschau, a Zionist newspaper (4.4.1933)

FRANZ WERFEL

1890-1945: *Austrian-Bohemian novelist and dramatist*

A dark commandment compels this people without a country and without a language to make a gift to others of all it owns of its life of the spirit and not to keep anything back for itself. Once again Israel is on the road, its bundle on its back and no valid passport in its pocket. Frightened, it appears among the good nations that still allow it entry (for how long?) and raises its hands.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ "Israel's Gift to Humanity", *Das Neue Tag-Buch* (1938)

HUMAN NATURE, HUMAN LIFE

ARISTOTLE

384-322 BC: *Greek philosopher and scientist*

Man is by nature a political animal.

ROBERT BURNS

1759-1796: *Scottish poet and lyricist*

O wad some Power the giftie gie us, to see
oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us.⁷¹

DANTE ALIGHIERI

1265-1321: *Italian poet*

Considerate la vostra semenza;
Fatti non foste a viver come bruti,
Ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza.

*(Think of your breed;
You were not made to live as brutes,
But to pursue virtue and knowledge.)⁷²*

⁷¹ "To a Louse" (1786)

⁷² "Divine Comedy", "Inferno" (1307), canto 26, Ulysses addressing his ship's crew before their final voyage, recalled by Primo Levi at Auschwitz

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: *German physicist and humanitarian*

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds. The mediocre mind is incapable of understanding the man who refuses to bow blindly to conventional prejudice and chooses instead to express his opinions courageously and honestly.⁷³

HILLEL

70 BC?-10 AD?: *Babylonian-born rabbi*

If I am not for myself, who is for me; and being for my own self what am I? If not now, when?

IMMANUEL KANT

1724-1804: *Russian-born German philosopher*

It is unbelievable what a human being, even while suffering, can achieve through strong willpower - suffering might, in fact, be the only means of obtaining that height of willpower.⁷⁴



⁷³ On controversy of Bertrand Russell's appointment to City University of New York, quoted in New York Times (13.3.1940)

⁷⁴ "Von der Macht des Demuths"

Out of the crooked timber of humanity no straight thing can ever be made.⁷⁵

DANIEL KAHNEMAN

1934-: *Israeli-American Psychologist*

Our comforting conviction that the world makes sense rests on a secure foundation: our almost unlimited ability to ignore our ignorance.⁷⁶

PHILIP LARKIN

1922-1985: *English poet*

They fuck you up, your mum and dad.
They may not mean to, but they do.
They fill you with the faults they had
And add some extra, just for you.

But they were fucked up in their turn
By fools in old-style hats and coats,
Who half the time were sappy-stern
And half at one another's throats.

Man hands on misery to man.
It deepens like a coastal shelf.
Get out as early as you can,
And don't have any kids yourself.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht" (1784)

⁷⁶ "Thinking Fast, And Slow" (2011), Ch.19

⁷⁷ "This Be The Verse", from "High Windows"

JACK LONDON

1876-1916: American writer

There is an ecstasy that marks the summit of life, and beyond which life cannot rise. And such is the paradox of living, this ecstasy comes when one is most alive, and it comes as a complete forgetfulness that one is alive. This ecstasy, this forgetfulness of living, comes to the artist, caught up and out of himself in a sheet of flame; it comes to the soldier, war-mad on a stricken field and refusing quarter; and it came to Buck, leading the pack, sounding the old wolf-cry, straining after the food that was alive and that fled swiftly before him through the moonlight. He was sounding the deeps of his nature, and of the parts of his nature that were deeper than he, going back into the womb of Time. He was mastered by the sheer surging of life, the tidal wave of being, the perfect joy of each separate muscle, joint, and sinew in that it was everything that was not death, that it was aglow and rampant, expressing itself in movement, flying exultantly under the stars and over the face of dead matter that did not move.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ "The Call of the Wild" (1903), Ch. 3

SÁNDOR MÁRAI

1900-1989: Hungarian writer

But deep inside you was a frantic longing to be something or someone other than you are. It is the greatest scourge a man can suffer, and the most painful. Life becomes bearable only when one has come to terms with who one is, both in one's eyes and the eyes of the world. We all of us must come to terms with what and who we are, and recognize that this wisdom is not going to earn us any praise, that life is not going to pin a medal on us for recognizing and enduring our own vanity or egoism or baldness or our potbelly. No, the secret is that there's no reward and we have to endure our characters and our natures as best we can, because no amount of experience or insight is going to rectify our deficiencies, our self-regard, or our cupidity. We have to learn that our desires do not find any real echo in the world. We have to accept that the people we love do not love us, or not in the way we hope. We have to accept betrayal and disloyalty, and, hardest of all, that someone is finer than we are in character or intelligence.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ "Embers" (1942), translated Carol Brown Janeway, Ch. 14

JOHN MILTON

1608-1674: *English poet*

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.⁸⁰

FERNANDO PESSOA

1888-1935: *Portuguese writer*

Whenever my ambition, influenced by my dreams, raised up above the everyday level of my life, so that for a moment I seemed to soar, like a child on a swing, I always – like the child – had to come down to the public garden and face my defeat, with no flags to wave in battle and no sword I was strong enough to unsheathe.⁸¹



The generation I belong to was born into a world where those with brains as well as a heart couldn't find any support. The destructive work of previous generations left us a world that offered no security in the religious sphere, no guidance in the moral sphere, and no tranquillity in the political sphere. We were born in the midst of

⁸⁰ "Paradise Lost", I, l.13

⁸¹ "The Book of Disquiet", "A Factless Biography" No. 59, ed. & trans. Richard Zenith (2001)

metaphysical anguish, moral anxiety and political disquiet.⁸²

BERTRAND RUSSELL

1872-1970: *British philosopher and mathematician*

The fundamental cause of the trouble is that in the modern world the stupid are cocksure while the intelligent are full of doubt.⁸³

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

1788-1860: *German philosopher*

There is only one *innate* error, and that is that we are here in order to be happy.⁸⁴

ETIENNE PIVERT DE SENANCOUR

1770-1846: *French writer*

L'homme est périssable. Il se peut; mais périssons en résistant et, si le néant nous est réservé, ne faisons que ce soit une justice.

*(Man is perishable. That may be; but let us die in resistance and, if nothingness lies ahead, let us not act as if it were just.)*⁸⁵

⁸² *Ibid* No. 175

⁸³ "The Triumph of Stupidity" (1933)

⁸⁴ "The World as Will and Idea" (1859), II, 49

⁸⁵ "Obermann" (1804)

GEORGE STEINER

1929-: French-born American writer, philosopher and literary critic

Living and eating are indeed absolute necessities, but also bleak and secondary in the light of the explanation and communication of great and final things.⁸⁶

TECUMSEH

1768-1813: Native American Shawnee chief

So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their view, and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide.

Always give a word or a sign of salute when meeting or passing a friend, even a stranger, when in a lonely place. Show respect to all people and bow to none.

When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself. Abuse no one and nothing,

for abuse turns the wise ones to fools and robs the spirit of its vision.

When it comes your time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.

⁸⁶ "Lessons of the masters" (2003)

JEWISH IDENTITY

JUDAH BENJAMIN

1811-1884: *American politician and lawyer*

The gentleman will please remember that when his half-civilised ancestors were hunting the wild boar in the forests of Silesia, mine were the princes of the earth.⁸⁷

BIBLE

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down,
yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hanged our harps upon the willows in
the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away captive
required of us a song; and they that wasted
us required of us mirth, saying,

Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a
strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right
hand lose her cunning.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue
cleave to the roof of my mouth.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Reply to a senator

⁸⁸ Psalms 137:1-6

LUDWIG BÖRNE

1786-1837: *German political writer and satirist*

It's a kind of miracle! I've experienced it a thousand times, and yet it still seems new to me. Some find fault with me for being a Jew; others forgive me; still others go so far as to compliment me for it; but every last one of them thinks of it. They seem caught in the magic circle of Jewishness; none of them can get out of it.⁸⁹

ELIAS CANETTI

1905-1994: *Bulgarian-born German writer*

Jews will still have to exist even when the last Jew is wiped out.⁹⁰

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

1804-1881: *British politician*

Yes, I am a Jew, and when the ancestors of the right honourable gentleman were brutal savages in an unknown island, mine were priests in the temple of Solomon.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Letter to Jeanette Wohl (7.2.1832)

⁹⁰ "The Human Province" (1973), Notes for the Year 1942

⁹¹ Reply to a taunt by Daniel O'Connell

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: *German physicist and humanitarian*

Where dull-witted clansmen of our tribe were praying aloud, their faces turned to the wall, their bodies swaying to and fro. A pathetic sight of men with a past but without a present.⁹²



Should we be unable to find a way to honest co-operation and honest pacts with the Arabs, then we have learned absolutely nothing during our 2,000 years of suffering and deserve all that will come to us.⁹³



Jewry has proved that the intellect is the best weapon in history ... It is the duty of us Jews to put at the disposal of the world our several-thousand-years-old sorrowful experience and, true to the ethical traditions of our forefathers, become soldiers in the fight for peace, united with the noblest elements in all cultural and religious circles.⁹⁴



⁹² On visiting the Wailing Wall, recorded in travel diary (3.2.1923)

⁹³ Letter to Chaim Weizmann (25.11.1929)

⁹⁴ Address to Jewish meeting, Berlin (1929)

The intellectual decline brought on by shallow materialism is a far greater menace to the survival of the Jew than the numerous external foes who threaten his existence with violence.⁹⁵



The bond that has united the Jews for thousands of years and that unites them today is, above all, the democratic ideal of social justice, coupled with the ideal of mutual aid and tolerance among all men ... The second characteristic of Jewish tradition is the high regard in which it holds every form of intellectual aspiration and spiritual effort.⁹⁶



The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence - these are the features of Jewish tradition which make me thank my stars that I belong to it.⁹⁷



The word God is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human

⁹⁵ New York Times (8.6.1936)

⁹⁶ "Why Do They Hate The Jews?", Collier's magazine (26.11.1938)

⁹⁷ "The World As I See It" (1934)

weaknesses, the Bible a collection of honourable, but still primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish. No interpretation no matter how subtle can (for me) change this. These subtilised interpretations are highly manifold according to their nature and have almost nothing to do with the original text. For me the Jewish religion like all other religions is an incarnation of the most childish superstitions. And the Jewish people to whom I gladly belong and with whose mentality I have a deep affinity have no different quality for me than all other people. As far as my experience goes, they are also no better than other human groups, although they are protected from the worst cancers by a lack of power. Otherwise I cannot see anything 'chosen' about them.

In general I find it painful that you claim a privileged position and try to defend it by two walls of pride, an external one as a man and an internal one as a Jew. As a man you claim, so to speak, a dispensation from causality otherwise accepted, as a Jew the privilege of monotheism. But a limited causality is no longer a causality at all, as our wonderful Spinoza recognized with all incision, probably as the first one. And the animistic interpretations of the religions of

nature are in principle not annulled by monopolisation. With such walls we can only attain a certain self-deception, but our moral efforts are not furthered by them. On the contrary.⁹⁸

INGRID FLITER

1973-: Argentinian-Jewish pianist

Jewish people have a direct connection to the important, deep feelings in life without any filter. As much as they are connected to life, they are connected to death; as much as they are connected to smiling, they are connected to crying. Even in the major klezmer pieces there is always a tiny tear hidden. Never completely happy!⁹⁹

SIGMUND FREUD

1856-1939: Austrian physician and neurologist

I owe only to my Jewish nature the two characteristics that had become indispensable on my difficult life's way. Because I was a Jew, I found myself free from many prejudices which limited others in the employment of their intellects, and as a Jew I was prepared to join the Opposition

⁹⁸ Letter to Eric Gutkind (3.1.1954)

⁹⁹ Interview, 'Gramophone', October 2018

and to do without the agreement of the 'compact majority'.¹⁰⁰

HEINRICH HEINE

1797-1856: German writer

I see now that the Greeks were only beautiful youths, but that the Jews were always men, strong, unyielding men, not only in the past, but to this very day, in spite of eighteen centuries of persecution and suffering. Since that time I have learned to appreciate them better, and, were not all pride of ancestry a silly inconsistency in a champion of the revolution and its democratic principles, the writer of these pages would be proud that his ancestors belonged to the noble house of Israel, that he is a descendant of those martyrs who gave the world a God and a morality, and who have fought and suffered on all the battlefields of thought.¹⁰¹

MILENA JESENSKÁ

1896-1944: Czech journalist, writer and translator, correspondent of Kafka

Jews of course have the best and deepest jokes. Out of the agony of their terrible fate stream jokes dripping with blood.

¹⁰⁰ Address to B'nai B'rith (1926)

¹⁰¹ "Confessions" (1853-4)

GUSTAV MAHLER

1860-1911: Bohemian-Austrian composer and conductor

I am three times homeless. As a Bohemian among Austrians, as an Austrian among Germans and as a Jew throughout the world. Always a stranger, never welcome.¹⁰²

RAPHAEL J. MOSES

1812-1893: American politician

I feel it an honour to be one of a race whom persecution cannot crush, whom prejudice has endeavoured in vain to pursue, who after nearly nineteen hundred years of persecution still survive as a nation and assert their manhood and intelligence.

Would you honour me? Call me Jew.¹⁰³

ROMAIN ROLLAND

1866-1944: French writer

The Jews have been true to their sacred mission, which is, in the midst of other races, to be a foreign race, the race which, from end to end of the world, is to link up the network of human unity. They break down the intellectual barriers between the

¹⁰² Quoted by Alma Mahler in her memoirs

¹⁰³ Campaigning for Congress, having been taunted by an opponent for being a Jew (1878)

nations, to give Divine Reason an open field.¹⁰⁴

ISAAC ROSENBERG

1890-1918: *English poet and painter*

Moses, from whose loins I sprung,
Lit by a lamp in his blood
Ten immutable rules, a moon
For mutable lampless men,

The blonde, the bronze, the ruddy,
With the same heaving blood,
Keep tide to the moon of Moses,
Then why do they sneer at me?¹⁰⁵



Through these pale cold days
What dark faces burn
Out of three thousand years
And their wild eyes yearn,

While underneath their brows
Like waifs their spirits grope
For the pools of Hebron again -
For Lebanon's summer slope.

They leave these blond still days
In dust behind their tread
They see with living eyes

¹⁰⁴ "Jean Christophe", Part X "The New Dawn" (1912)

¹⁰⁵ "The Jew" (1916)

How long they have been dead.¹⁰⁶

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564-1616: *English dramatist and poet*

He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half
a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at
my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my
bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine
enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew.
Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands,
organs, dimensions, senses, affections,
passions? fed with the same food, hurt with
the same weapons, subject to the same
diseases, healed by the same means,
warmed and cooled by the same winter and
summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us,
do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not
laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and
if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we
are like you in the rest, we will resemble
you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what
is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian
wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be
by Christian example? Why, revenge. The
villainy you teach me I will execute, and it

¹⁰⁶ "Through These Pale Cold Days", his last poem, enclosed with a letter (28.3.1918), postmarked 2.4.1918, the day after he had been killed in action, still awaiting his transfer to the 'Judains', the Palestine-based regiment of Russian Jews

shall go hard but I will better the instruction.¹⁰⁷

MARK TWAIN

1835-1910: *American writer*

The Jew made a marvellous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream stuff and passed away. The Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone. Other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew ... is now what he always was - exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age ... no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind.¹⁰⁸

STEFAN ZWEIG

1881-1942: *Austrian writer*

I never wanted the Jews to become a nation again and thus to lower itself to taking part with the others in the rivalry of reality. I love the Diaspora and affirm it as the

¹⁰⁷ "The Merchant of Venice", III.i

¹⁰⁸ "Concerning the Jews", Harper's Monthly (September 1899)

meaning of Jewish idealism, as Jewry's cosmopolitan human mission.¹⁰⁹



It is generally accepted that getting rich is the only and typical goal of the Jew. Nothing could be further from the truth. Riches are to him merely a stepping-stone, a means to the true end, and in no sense the real goal. The real determination of the Jew is to rise to a higher cultural plane in the intellectual world. Even in the case of Eastern orthodox Jewry, where the weaknesses as well as the merits of the whole race are more intensely manifested, this supremacy of the will to the spiritual over the mere material finds plastic expression. The holy man, the Bible student, is a thousand times more esteemed within the community than the rich man; even the wealthiest man will prefer to give his daughter in marriage to the poorest intellectual than to a merchant. This elevation of the intellectual to the highest rank is common to all classes, the poorest beggar who drags his pack through wind and rain will try to single out at least one son to study, no matter how great a sacrifice, and it is counted a title of honour

¹⁰⁹ Letter to Martin Buber (1917)

for the entire family to have someone in their midst, a professor, a savant, or a musician, who plays a rôle in the intellectual world, as if through his achievements he ennobled them all. Sub-consciously something in the Jew seeks to escape the morally dubious, the distasteful, the petty, the unspiritual, which is attached to all trade, and all that is purely business, and to lift himself up to the moneyless sphere of the intellectual, as if ... he wished to redeem himself and his entire race from the curse of money. And that is why among Jews the impulse to wealth is exhausted in two, or at most three, generations within one family, and the mightiest dynasties find their sons unwilling to take over the banks, the factories, the established and secure businesses of their fathers... They obey the same subconscious instinct, to free themselves of cold money-making; that thing that confines Jewry; and perhaps it expresses a secret longing to resolve the merely Jewish - through flight into the intellectual - into humanity at large. A "good" family therefore means ... a Jewry that has freed itself of all defects and limitations and pettiness which the ghetto has forced upon it, by means of adaptation to a different culture, and even possibly a universal culture. That this flight into the

intellectual has become disastrous for the Jew, because of a disproportionate crowding of the professions, as formerly his confinement in the purely material, simply belongs to the eternal paradoxes of Jewish destiny.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ "The World of Yesterday" (1941, published posthumously, 1943)

JUSTICE & LIBERTY

AMERICAN DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.¹¹¹

SAINT AUGUSTINE

354-430: *Algerian-born theologian*

Audi alterem partem (*Hear the other side*).

EMMA LAZARUS

1849-1887: *American poet*

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset fates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities
frame.

¹¹¹ 1776

Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your
poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to be free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these the homeless, tempest-tossed, to
me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"¹¹²

¹¹² "The New Colossus", Inscription for the Statue of Liberty

LAST THOUGHTS, DEATH & GRIEF

O. HENRY

1862-1910: *American writer*

Turn up the lights, I don't want to go home in the dark.¹¹³

THOMAS HOBBS

1588-1679: *English philosopher and political theorist*

I am about to take my last voyage, a great leap in the dark.¹¹⁴

RAMSAY MACDONALD

1866-1937: *British politician*

A lone dog in the desert howling from pain of heart.¹¹⁵

BERTRAND RUSSELL

1872-1970: *British philosopher and mathematician*

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a

wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy -- ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness -- that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss. I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and though it might seem too good for human life, this is what -- at last -- I have found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I have tried to apprehend the Pythagorean power by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my

¹¹³ Last words

¹¹⁴ Last words

¹¹⁵ Describing himself on the death of six-year-old son David

heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.¹¹⁶

ALAN SEEGER

1888-1916: American poet

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade ...
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.¹¹⁷

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667-1745: Anglo-Irish satirist and writer

Ubi saeva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit (*Where savage indignation can lacerate his heart no more*).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Prologue to *Autobiography* (written 25.6.1956, published 1967)

¹¹⁷ "I have a Rendezvous with Death" (1916)

¹¹⁸ Epitaph, inscribed on grave, St Patrick's, Dublin

DYLAN THOMAS

1914-1953: Welsh poet

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,

Curse, bless, me with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.¹¹⁹

STEFAN ZWEIG

1881-1942: Austrian writer

After one's sixtieth year, unusual powers are required to make another wholly new start. Those I possess have been exhausted by the long years of homeless wandering. So I hold it better to conclude, in good time and with erect bearing, a life for which intellectual labour was always the purest joy and personal freedom the highest good on this earth.

I salute all my friends! May it be granted them yet to see the dawn after the long night! I, all too impatient, go on before.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ "Do not go gentle into that good night" (1951)

¹²⁰ On his suicide in Brazil (21.2.1942), despairing of the defeat of fascism and so ever returning to Europe

MISCELLANY

BIBLE

Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin (*God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.*)¹²¹



Quo vadis (*Where are you going?*)¹²²

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU

1841-1929: French statesman

America is the only country which miraculously has gone directly from barbarism to degeneration without the usual interval of civilisation.

OLIVER CROMWELL

1599-1658: English soldier and statesman

I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.¹²³

¹²¹ Daniel 5:25

¹²² Vulgate, St Joanne, 16:5

¹²³ Letter to General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (3.8.1650), quoted by Jacob Bronowski at Auschwitz in "The Ascent of Man"



You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!¹²⁴

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: German physicist and humanitarian

“Why should I? Everyone knows me there” (on being told by his wife to dress properly when going to the office). “Why should I? Nobody knows me there” (on being told to dress properly for his first big conference).

SIR WILLIAM SCHWENCK GILBERT

1836-1911: English dramatist, librettist, poet and illustrator

Ah! Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!¹²⁵

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

1813-1855: Danish religious philosopher

If I were to wish for anything, I should not wish for wealth and power, but for the passionate sense of the potential, for the eye

¹²⁴ Addressing the Rump Parliament (20.4.1653)

¹²⁵ “Princess Ida” (1884), Act III

which, ever young and ardent, sees the possible. Pleasure disappoints, possibility never. And what wine is so sparkling, what so fragrant, what so intoxicating, as possibility!¹²⁶

JOSEPH LIEBERMAN

1942-: American politician

It's like saying the veterinarian and the taxidermist are in the same business because either way you get your dog back.¹²⁷

MAURICE DE MACMAHON

1808-1893: French general and politician

*J'y suis, j'y reste (Here I am, here I stay).*¹²⁸

GROUCHO MARX

1890-1977: American comedian

I don't know what they have to say,
It makes no difference anyway,
Whatever it is, I'm against it.
No matter what it is or who commenced it,
I'm against it.

Your proposition may be good,
But let's have one thing understood,

¹²⁶ “Diapsalmata,” vol. 1, Either/Or (1843, trans. 1987)

¹²⁷ Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate on being compared with Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, 8.8.2000

¹²⁸ At Sevastapol (September 1855)

Whatever it is, I'm against it.
And even when you've changed it or
condensed it,
I'm against it.

I'm opposed to it,
On general principle, I'm opposed to it.¹²⁹

MENANDER

342-293 BC: *Greek dramatist*

Whom the gods love dies young.¹³⁰

PIETRO METASTASIO

1698-1782: *Italian writer, poet and librettist*

Every noble acquisition is attended with its
risks: he who fears the one must not expect
to obtain the other.

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667-1745: *Anglo-Irish satirist and writer*

I cannot but conclude the bulk of your
natives to be the most pernicious race of
little odious vermin that nature ever
suffered to crawl upon the surface of the
earth.¹³¹

¹²⁹ "Horse Feathers" (1932), lyric by Bert Kalmar and Harry
Ruby

¹³⁰ "The Double Deceiver"

¹³¹ Referring to the English. Gulliver's Travels, 'Voyage to
Brobdingnag' (1726), Ch. 6



When a true genius appears in this world,
you may know him by this sign, that the
dunces are all in confederacy against him.¹³²

STEFAN ZWEIG

1881-1942: *Austrian writer*

But in *Clerembault* we are shown that even
the weakling, even the mediocre man, every
one of us can be stronger than the whole
world if he have but the will. It is open to
every man to be true, open to every man to
win spiritual freedom, if he be at one with
his conscience, and if he regard this
fellowship with his conscience as of greater
value than fellowship with men and with
the age. For each man there is always time,
for each man there is always opportunity,
to become master of realities. Aert, the first of
Rolland's heroes to show himself greater
than fate, speaks for us all when he says:
"It's never too late to be free!"¹³³



For an idea never glows so brightly as in the
mind of the solitary thinker; and in the
darkest hour we were able to draw
consolation from the signal example of this

¹³² "Thoughts on Various Subjects" (1711-1726)

¹³³ "Romain Rolland - The Man and his Work" (1921)

poet. One great man who remains human
can for ever and for all men rescue our faith
in humanity.¹³⁴

MUSIC

SAMUEL BECKETT

1906-1989: *Irish writer*

Music always wins.¹³⁵

ARRIGO BOITO

1842-1918: *Italian composer, writer and librettist*

There's only one way to finish better than
with *Otello*, and that's to finish triumphantly
with *Falstaff*. Having sounded all the shrieks
and groans of the human heart, to finish
with a mighty burst of laughter – that will
astonish the world.¹³⁶

BERTHOLD BRECHT

1898-1956: *German playwright and poet*

In the dark times
Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing
About the dark times.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ *ibid*, conclusion

¹³⁵ Uttered when composing radio play “Words and Music” (1961)

¹³⁶ Letter to Guiseppe Verdi (July 1889)

¹³⁷ Motto to Svendborg Poems (1939,)

ELIAS CANETTI

1905-1994: *Bulgarian-born German writer*

Music is the best solace ... Even when it is set to words, its own magic prevails ... Its course is freer than anything else that seems humanly possible, and this freedom contains its redemption. The more densely populated the world and the more machine-like the formation of life, the more indispensable music has to become.¹³⁸

FRANZ GRILLPARZER

1791-1872: *Austrian poet and dramatist*

The art of music here entombed a rich possession; but even far fairer hopes. Here lies Franz Schubert.¹³⁹

WANDA LANDOWSKA

1879-1959: *Polish-French harpsichordist*

I study. I scrutinise. I love, and I recreate.¹⁴⁰

LENIN (VLADIMIR ILLYICH ULYANOV)

1870-1924: *Russian politician*

Music is a means of unifying the masses.

¹³⁸ "The Human Province" (1973,) Notes for the Year 1942

¹³⁹ Epitaph on tombstone (1828)

¹⁴⁰ On interpreting Bach, quoted in 'Bach: An ever-shifting recorded landscape' by Nicholas Kenyon, 'Gramophone', October 2018

JACK LONDON

1876-1916: *American writer*

With the aurora borealis flaming coldly overhead, or the stars leaping in the frost dance, and the land numb and frozen under its pall of snow, this song of the huskies might have been the defiance of life, only it was pitched in the minor key, with long-drawn wailings and half-sobs, and was more the pleading of life, the articulate travail of existence. It was an old song, old as the breed itself - one of the first songs of the younger world in a day when songs were sad. It was invested with the woe of unnumbered generations, this plaint by which Buck was so strangely stirred. When he moaned and sobbed, it was with the pain of living that was of old the pain of his wild fathers, and the fear and mystery of the cold and dark that was to them fear and mystery. And that he should be stirred by it marked the completeness with which he harked back through the ages of fire and roof to the raw beginnings of life in the howling ages.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ "The Call of the Wild" (1903), Ch. 3

GUSTAV MAHLER

1860-1911: *Bohemian-Austrian composer and conductor*

The symphony is the world. It must embrace everything.¹⁴²



Endlich, ein fortissimo! (*At last, a real fortissimo!*)¹⁴³

ARTUR SCHNABEL

1882-1951: *Austrian pianist*

The notes I handle no better than many pianists. But the pauses in between the notes - ah, that is where the art resides!¹⁴⁴

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

1788-1860: *German philosopher*

The effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence.¹⁴⁵



The composer reveals the innermost nature of the world, and expresses the profoundest

¹⁴² To Sibelius (1905)

¹⁴³ After conducting Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony having spent the day at Niagara Falls (1906)

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in Chicago Daily News (11.6.1958)

¹⁴⁵ "The World as Will and Representation" (1819/1844), I, 2

wisdom in a language that his reasoning faculty does not understand.¹⁴⁶

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564-1616: *English dramatist and poet*

[Jessica]: I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

[Lorenzo]: The reason is your spirits are attentive.

For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and
neighing loud,

Which is the hot condition of their blood –
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual
stand,

Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music.¹⁴⁷



The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet
sounds,

Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus:

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, I,3

¹⁴⁷ "The Merchant of Venice", V.i

Let no such man be trusted.¹⁴⁸

OF FAMOUS MEN

BEETHOVEN

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

1770-1827: *German composer*

Precepts. To do good whenever one can, to love liberty above all else, never to deny the truth, even though it be before the throne.¹⁴⁹



Every day brings me nearer to the goal which I feel but cannot describe. And it is only in this condition that your Beethoven can live. There must be no rest. If I can be only partially liberated from my affliction then I will come to you as a complete and mature man and renew our old feelings of friendship. You will find me as happy as I am fated to be on this earth, not unhappy - no, that I could not bear - I will seize fate by the throat; it shall certainly not bend and crush me - Oh, it would be so lovely to live a thousand lives.¹⁵⁰



¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Letter to Vocke (22.5.1793)

¹⁵⁰ Letter to Wegeler (16.11.1801)

Prince! What you are, you are through accident of birth. What I am, I am through my own efforts. There are princes, and there will be thousands of princes more, but there is only one Beethoven!¹⁵¹



La liberté, et le progrès sont le but dans l'art, comme la vie entière. (He constantly said that his art had a purpose, to bring consolation to a suffering humanity.)¹⁵²



I carry my thoughts about with me for a long time, sometimes a very long time, before I set them down. At the same time, my memory is so faithful to me that I am sure not to forget a theme which I have once conceived, even after years have passed. I make many changes, reject and reattempt until I am satisfied. Then the working-out in breadth, length, height and depth begins in my head, and since I am conscious of what I want, the basic idea never leaves me. It rises, grows upward, and I hear and see the picture as a whole take shape and stand forth before me as though cast in a single piece, so that all that is left is the work of

writing it down. This goes quickly, according as I have the time, for sometimes I have several compositions in labour at once, though I am sure never to confuse one with the other. You will ask me whence I take my ideas? That I cannot say with any degree of certainty: they come to me uninvited, directly or indirectly. I could almost grasp them with my hands, out in Nature's open, in the woods, during my promenades, in the silence of the night, at the earliest dawn. They are roused by moods which in the poet's case are transmuted into words, and in mine into tones, that sound, roar and storm until at last they take shape from me as notes.¹⁵³



Never did music of mine make so deep an impression on me, even the remembrance of the emotion it aroused always costs me a tear.¹⁵⁴



Der Schwer gefasste Entschluss. Muss es sein? Es muss sein. Es muss sein! (*The most*

¹⁵¹ Letter to Prince Lichnowsky (1805)

¹⁵² Quoted by Romain Rolland

¹⁵³ Attributed conversation with Louis Schlosser (April 1823)

¹⁵⁴ On Cavatina, 5th movement, of String Quartet No. 13, Op. 130

*difficult resolution to make. Must it be? It must be. It must be!*¹⁵⁵



Plaudite, amici, comædia finita est (*Applaud, friends, the comedy is over*).¹⁵⁶



Strange, I feel as if up to now I had written no more than a few notes.¹⁵⁷

HECTOR BERLIOZ

1803-1869: French composer

When the monument was uncovered, applause, cheers, trumpet fanfares, drum-rolls, volleys of gunfire, and the pealing of bells - in fact all the noises expressing admiration that constitute the voice of fame among civilised nations, burst forth anew and paid respect to the statue of the great composer. Today, then, the thousands of men and women, young and old, who have spent so many sweet hours with his works, whom he has so often carried away on the wings of his thoughts to the highest regions of poetry; the enthusiasts whom he has excited to the point of delirium; the

¹⁵⁵ Autograph score, Last movement, String Quartet No. 15, Op. 135

¹⁵⁶ On deathbed (March 1827)

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*

humourists whom he has diverted by so many witty and unexpected turns; the thinkers to whose reveries he has opened immeasurable realms; the lovers whom he has moved by reawakening the memory of their first tender affection; the hearts, wrung by an unjust fate, to which his energetic accents have given strength for a momentary revolt, and who, rising in their indignation, have found a voice to mingle their screams of fury and grief with the furious accents of the orchestra; the religious souls to whom he has spoken of God; the nature-lovers for whom he has so faithfully depicted the carefree contemplative life of the countryside in the beautiful summers days, the terror of the hurricane, and the consoling ray threading its way through the tattered clouds to smile on the anxious shepherd and restore hope to the terrified tiller of the soil - all these intelligent and sensitive souls on whom his genius has shed its radiance, turned to him as toward a benefactor and a friend.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ On unveiling of the first statue to Beethoven - in Bonn (12.8.1845)

GREGORY CORSO

1930-2001: American poet

The fall of man stands a lie before Beethoven, a truth before Hitler.¹⁵⁹

NICK DEAR

1955-: English writer

Princess Lobkowitz: Unusual, though, wasn't it?

Josef Haydn: Unusual? He's done something no composer has ever done. He's placed himself at the centre of his work. He gives us a glimpse into his soul. I expect that's why it is so noisy. But it is something quite new. Quite new. The artist as hero. Everything is different from today.¹⁶⁰

T S ELIOT

1888-1965: American-born poet

There is some sort of heavenly or at least more than human gaiety about some of his later things which one imagines might come to oneself as the fruit of reconciliation and relief after immense suffering.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ "Man", from "Long Live Man" (1962)

¹⁶⁰ Fictional exchange on first performance of the Eroica symphony, 1804, from screenplay to 'Eroica', 2003

¹⁶¹ On string quarter op.132 in letter to Stephen Spender, 1931

WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER

1886-1954: German conductor and composer

Fidelio is a Mass, not an opera - its emotions touch the borders of religion. [...] After all we have experienced and suffered in recent times, this religious faith has never seemed so essential as it does today. ... This is what constitutes the unique power and grandeur of Fidelio. [...] What Beethoven was trying to express in Fidelio cannot be encompassed by any form of historical classification but extends beyond the narrow limits of a musical composition - it touches the heart of every human being and will always appeal directly to the conscience of Europe.¹⁶²

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

1749-1832: German poet, dramatist, novelist and scientist

You have been at great pains to picture for me a great and beautiful nature in its achievements and its strivings, its needs and the superabundance of its gifts. It has given me great pleasure to accept this picture of a truly great spirit ...

The ordinary human mind might, perhaps, find contradictions in it; but before that which is uttered by one possessed of such a dæmon, an ordinary layman must stand in

¹⁶² Programme note for Salzburg production, 1950

reverence, and it is immaterial whether he speaks from feeling or knowledge, for here the gods are at work strewing seeds for future discernment and we can only wish that they proceed undisturbedly to development. But before they can become general, the clouds which veil the human mind must be dispersed ...

To think of teaching him would be an insolence even in one with greater insight than mine, since he has the guiding light of his genius, which frequently illumines his mind like a stroke of lightning while we sit in darkness and scarcely suspect the direction from which daylight will break upon us.¹⁶³

THEO VAN GOGH

1857-1891: Dutch art dealer, brother of Vincent

I should not be surprised if my brother were one of the great geniuses and will one day be compared to someone like Beethoven.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Letter to Bettina von Arnim (6.6.1810), responding to hers talking of Beethoven, his character and reverence for Goethe

¹⁶⁴ To Just Havelaar (1886)

FRANZ GRILLPARZER

1791-1872: Austrian poet and dramatist

Standing by the grave of him who has passed away we are in a manner the representatives of an entire nation, of the whole German people, mourning the loss of the one highly acclaimed half of that which was left us of the departed splendour of our native art, of the fatherland's full spiritual bloom. There yet lives - and may his life be long! - the hero of verse in German speech and tongue; but the master of tuneful song, the organ of soulful concord, the heir and amplifier of Handel and Bach's, of Haydn and Mozart's immortal fame is now no more, and we stand weeping over the riven strings of the harp that is hushed.

The harp that is hushed! Let me call him so! For he was an artist, and all that was his, was his through art alone. The thorns of life had wounded him deeply, and as the castaway clings to the shore, so did he seek refuge in thine arms, O glorious sister and peer of the Good and True, thou balm of wounded hearts, heaven-born Art! To thee he clung, and even when the portal was closed wherethrough thou hadst entered in and spoken to him, when his deaf ear had blinded his vision for thy features, still did he ever carry thine image within his heart,

and when he died it still reposed upon his breast. He was an artist - and who shall arise to stand beside him?

As the rushing behemoth spurns the waves, so did he rove to the uttermost bounds of his art. From the cooing of doves to the rolling of thunder, from the craftiest interweaving of well-weighed expedients of art up to that awful pitch where planful design disappears in the lawless whirl of contending forces, he had traversed and grasped it all. He who comes after him will not continue him; he must begin anew, for he who went before left off only where art leaves off. Adelaide and Leonora! Triumph of the heroes of Vittoria - and the humble sacrificial song of the Mass! - Ye children of the voices divided thrice and four times! heaven-soaring harmony: "Freude, schoner Gotterfunken", thou swansong! Muse of song and the seven-stringed lyre!. Approach his grave and bestrew it with laurel!

He was an artist, but a man as well. A man in every sense - in the highest. Because he withdrew from the world, they called him a man-hater, and because he held aloof from sentimentality, unfeeling. Ah, one who knows himself hard of heart, does not shrink! The finest points are those most easily blunted and bent or broken! An

excess of sensitiveness avoids a show of feeling! He fled the world because, in the whole range of his loving nature, he found no weapon to oppose it. He withdrew from mankind after he had given them his all and received nothing in return. He dwelt alone, he found no second Self. But to the end his heart beat warm for all men, in fatherly affection for his kindred, for the world his all and his heart's blood.

Thus he was, thus he died, thus he will live to the end of time.

You, however, who have followed after us hitherward, let not your hearts be troubled! You have not lost him, you have won him. No living man enters the halls of the immortals. Not until the body has perished, do their portals unclose. He whom you mourn stands from now onward among the great of all ages, inviolate forever. Return homeward therefore, in sorrow, yet resigned! And should you ever in times to come feel the overpowering might of his creations like an onrushing storm, when your mounting ecstasy overflows in the midst of a generation yet unborn, then remember this hour, and think, We were

there, when they buried him, and when he died, we wept.¹⁶⁵

JASCHA HEIFETZ

1901-1987: Lithuanian-born American violinist

I play works by contemporary composers and for two reasons. First to discourage the composer from writing any more and secondly to remind myself how much I appreciate Beethoven.

ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD

1897-1957: Austrian composer

Compose a piece yourself, my dear, and then try listening to Beethoven.¹⁶⁶

LENIN (VLADIMIR ILLYICH ULYANOV)

1870-1924: Russian politician

Listening to Beethoven makes you proud of the miracles that human beings can perform.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Funeral oration for Beethoven (29.3.1827)

¹⁶⁶ Attributed contribution to screenplay of "Deception" when fictitious composer Hollenius is asked why he has turned off a radio recital of Beethoven (1946)

¹⁶⁷ Quoted by his widow, Nadezhda Krupskaya, in "Memories of Lenin"

JEAN-FRANÇOIS LE SUEUR

1760-1837: Berlioz's teacher

Let me get out. I must have some air. It's amazing! Wonderful! I was so moved and disturbed that when I emerged from my box and attempted to put on my hat, I couldn't find my head.¹⁶⁸

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

1809-1847: German composer

When she lost her last child, Beethoven at first did not want to come into the house; at length he invited her to visit him, and when she came he sat himself down at the pianoforte and said simply: "We will now talk to each other in tones," and for over an hour played without stopping, and as she remarked: "he told me everything, and at last brought me comfort".¹⁶⁹

FRANZ SCHUBERT

1797-1828: Austrian composer

After this, what is left for us to write?¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ On first encountering Beethoven's Fifth Symphony

¹⁶⁹ Letter (1831), after a visit in Milan to Baroness Dorothea von Ertmann (1781-1849), one of Beethoven's students and possibly the greatest contemporary exponent of his piano works

¹⁷⁰ On hearing Op.131, five days before his death (14.11), quoted in Zachary Woolfe "At Mozart Festival, Dvorak and Others Shine" The New York Times 8.8 2011)

ROBERT SCHUMANN

1810-1856: *German composer*

It has a grandeur which no words can express. It seems to me to stand on the extreme boundary of all that has been attained by human art and imagination.¹⁷¹

MARION SCOTT

1877-1953: *Music critic, writer and performer*

In ancient mythology and in the Greece of the War of Independence, a belief still held that when a hero died the heavens showed portents. Only three years before, as Byron lay dying at Missolonghi, an April thunderstorm had broken over the island. Night was coming on: the lightning lit up the dark outline of islands and lagoon. Soldiers and shepherds sheltering in their huts exclaimed: 'Byron is dead'. It was so.

Beethoven, the hero, similarly departed. It was late afternoon on 26th March: Frau von Beethoven (one of the sisters-in-law) and Huttenbrenner, the friend of Schubert, were watching by the dying man. Soon after five 'there came a flash of lightning accompanied by a peal of thunder which garishly illuminated the death chamber'

¹⁷¹ On Op.131, "Music and musicians, essays and criticisms" (1877), F.R. Ritter tr. ed.

said Huttenbrenner. 'Beethoven opened his eyes, lifted his right hand and looked up for several seconds with his fist clenched and a very threatening expression...When he let the raised hand sink to the bed, his eyes closed half-way. My right hand was under his head, my left rested on his breast. Not another breath, not a heartbeat more.'¹⁷²

JOSEPH SONNLEITHNER

1766-1835: *Austrian librettist*

Die Hoffnung flüstert sanft mir zu:
Wir werden frei, wir finden Ruh'.

*(Hope whispers gently to me:
'We will be free, we will find rest.')*¹⁷³

RICHARD WAGNER

1813-1883: *German composer and anti-Semite*

Surely the saddest thing ever said in notes¹⁷⁴.



[Beethoven] strikes the strings into a dance the like whereof the world had never heard.

¹⁷² "Beethoven", Master Musician Series

¹⁷³ 'Fidelio' Act 1 Finale, First Prisoner, as prisoners are allowed out into the sunlight, 1805 – an encapsulation of Beethoven's philosophy

¹⁷⁴ "Beethoven" (1870) on Adagio, 1st movement, String Quartet #14, Op.131

'Tis the dance of the whole world itself: wild joy, the wail of pain, love's transport, utmost bliss, grief, frenzy, riot, suffering ...¹⁷⁵

GHANDI

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: *German physicist and humanitarian*

A leader of his people, unsupported by any outward authority: a politician whose success rests not upon craft nor the mastery of technical devices, but simply on the convincing power of his personality; a victorious fighter who has always scorned the use of force; a man of wisdom and humility, armed with resolve and inflexible consistency, who has devoted all his strength to the uplifting of his people and the betterment of their lot; a man who has confronted the brutality of Europe with the dignity of the simple human being, and thus at all times risen superior.

Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, on Allegro finale

¹⁷⁶ On Gandhi's 70th birthday (1939)

FREUD

SIGMUND FREUD

1856-1939: *Austrian physician and neurologist*

No one who, like me, conjures up the most evil of those half-tamed demons that inhabit the human breast, and seeks to wrestle with them, can expect to come through unscathed.¹⁷⁷

MARTHE ROBERT

1914-1996: *French essayist and writer*

And so, in order not to die, Freud declared in the book that may be regarded as his authentic testament, that he was not Solomon son of Jakob, nor yet Sigmund the turncoat son, whose very name gave promise of the highest destinies, that he was no more a Jew than Moses had been, although the Jewish people had been born of this foreign leader and guide. But just as Moses had broken with his native Egypt and its rulers, who persecuted him for his advanced ideas, so Freud had severed all inner ties with the Germany of his time, and not only with the Germany of the Nazis but with everything within him that was still German. So that when it came time to leave

¹⁷⁷ "Dora" (1905)

the stage where he had filled his rôle so valiantly, he could say he was neither a Jew, nor a German, nor anything that still bore a name; for he wished to be the son not of any man or country, but like the murdered prophet only of his life's work.¹⁷⁸

STEFAN ZWEIG

1881-1942: *Austrian writer*

The struggle of this strongest will, this most penetrating mind of our time, against destruction became increasingly cruel; only when he realised clearly - he, to whom clarity always had been the highest quality of thinking - that he would not be able to continue to write, to function, like a Roman hero he permitted the doctor to end his pain. It was the noble end of a noble life, a death memorable even among the hetacombs of that murderous time. And when we friends lowered his coffin into English soil, we knew we had given it the best of our homeland.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ "From Oedipus to Moses - Freud's Jewish Identity" (1974)

¹⁷⁹ "The World of Yesterday" (1941, published posthumously, 1943), on the death of Sigmund Freud, in London (1939)

KAFKA

MILENA JESENSKÁ

1896-1944: *Czech journalist, writer and translator, correspondent of Kafka*

He was shy, timid, gentle, and kind, but he wrote gruesome and painful books. He saw the world as full of invisible demons, who tear apart and destroy defenceless people. He was too clear-sighted and too wise to be able to live; he was too weak to fight, he had that weakness of noble, beautiful people who are not able to do battle against the fear of misunderstandings, unkindness, or intellectual lies. Such persons know beforehand that they are powerless and go down in defeat in such a way that they shame the victor. He knew people as only people of great sensitivity are able to know them, as somebody who is alone and sees people almost prophetically, from one flash of a face. He knew the world in a deep and extraordinary manner. He was himself a deep and extraordinary world.

He wrote books that belong to the most outstanding works of German literature. They express the struggles of today's generation, but without any tendentious words. They are truthful, naked, and painful, so that even where they speak

symbolically, they are almost naturalistic. They are full of dry mockery and the sensitive gaze of a person who has seen the world so clearly that he could not bear it and had to die; he did not want to retreat and save himself, as others do, even by the noblest intellectual subconscious errors.¹⁸⁰

PESSOA

HAROLD BLOOM

1930-: *US literary and cultural critic*

As a foil to the Latin American poets I offer the amazing Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), who as a fantastic invention surpasses any invention by Borges. Pessoa, born in Lisbon and descended on the paternal side from Jewish conversos, was educated in South Africa and, like Borges, grew up bilingual. Indeed, until he was twenty-one, he wrote poetry only in English ... But powerful as many of Pessoa's lyrics are, they are only one part of his work; he also invented a series of alternative poets - Alberto Caeiro, Álvaro de Campos, Ricardo Reis among them - and proceeded to write entire volumes of poems for them, or rather as them. Two of them -

Caeiro and Campos - are great poets, wholly different from each other and from Pessoa, not to mention Reis, who is an interesting minor poet.

Pessoa was neither mad nor a mere ironist; he is a Whitman reborn, but a Whitman who gives separate names to "my self", "the real me" or "me myself", and "my soul", and writes wonderful books of poems for all three of them as well as a separate book under the name of Walt Whitman. The parallels are close enough not to be coincidences, particularly since the invention of the "heteronyms" (Pessoa's term) followed an immersion in Leaves of Grass. Walt Whitman, one of the roughs, an American, the "myself" of Song of Myself, becomes Álvaro de Campos, a Portuguese Jewish ship's engineer. The "real me" or "me myself" becomes the "keeper of the sheep", the pastoral Alberto Caeiro, while the Whitmanian soul transmutes into Ricardo Reis, an Epicurean materialist who writes Horatian odes.

Pessoa provided all three poets with biographies and physiognomies and allowed them to become independent in regard to him, so much so that he joined Campos and Reis in proclaiming Caeiro as

¹⁸⁰ Obituary of Kafka in *Národní listy* (6.6.1924)

his “master” or poetic precursor. Pessoa, Campos and Reis were all influenced by Caiero, not by Whitman, and Caiero was influenced by no one, being a “pure” or natural poet with almost no education who died at the High Romantic age of twenty-six. Octavio Paz, one of Pessoa’s champion’s, summoned up this fourfold poet with a fine economy: “Caiero is the sun in whose orbit Reis, Campos and Pessoa himself rotate. In each are particles of negation or unreality. Reis believes in form, Campos in sensation, Pessoa in symbols. Caiero doesn’t believe in anything. He exists.”¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ “The Western Canon” (1994)

ORATORY

WINSTON CHURCHILL

1874-1965: *British statesman*

Victory at all costs, victory is spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there can be no survival.¹⁸²



We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and the oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.¹⁸³



Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that if the British Empire and the Commonwealth last

¹⁸² House of Commons (13.5.1940)

¹⁸³ *ibid* (4.6.1940)

for a thousand years men will still say “This was their finest hour”.¹⁸⁴



Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.¹⁸⁵

DOLORES IBARRURI (LA PASIONARIA)

1895-1989: Spanish political leader

It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees.¹⁸⁶

MARTIN LUTHER KING

1929-1968: American civil rights leader

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago, a great American in whose symbolic shadow we stand today signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as the great beacon light of hope to millions of negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as the joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. But one hundred years later the negro still is not free. One hundred years

later the life of the negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later the negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later the negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

So we've come here today to dramatize the shameful condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a cheque. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men - yes, black men as well as white men - would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note in so far as her citizens of colour are concerned. Instead of honouring this sacred obligation, America has given the negro people a bad cheque - a cheque which has come back marked 'insufficient funds'. But we refuse to believe that the bank of injustice is bankrupt; we refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in

¹⁸⁴ *ibid* (18.6.1940)

¹⁸⁵ *ibid* (20.8.1940)

¹⁸⁶ Speech in Paris (3.9.1936)

the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we've come to cash this cheque, a cheque that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilising drug of gradualism. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit pass of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children. It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This, the sweltering summer of the negro's legitimate discontent, will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation now returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the negro is granted citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of

our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

There is something I must say to my people who stand on the worn threshold which leads into the palace of justice: in the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the highest plain of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our recreative process to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvellous new militancy which has engulfed the negro community must not lead us to distrust of white people. For many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realise that their destiny is tied up with our destiny.

We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights 'When will you be satisfied?' We can never be satisfied as long as the negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel,

cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We can never be satisfied as long as the negro's basic mobility is from a small ghetto to a large one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their dignity by signs stating 'For Whites Only'. We cannot be satisfied as long as a negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow gaol cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina and go back to Georgia. Go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not

wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

So even though we face difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed "We hold these truths to be self-evident ... that all men are created equal".

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering in the heat of injustice, sweltering in the heat of repression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification - one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and

black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into the beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to gaol together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring".

And if America is to be a great nation this must happen. So, let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire! Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York! Let freedom ring from the

heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and mole hill of Mississippi! From every mountainside, let freedom ring!

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!".¹⁸⁷



Thank you very kindly, my friends. As I listened to Ralph Abernathy and his eloquent and generous introduction and then thought about myself, I wondered who he was talking about. [Laughter] It's always

¹⁸⁷ Speech at the Lincoln Memorial (28.8.1963)

good to have your closest friend and associate to say something good about you, and Ralph Abernathy is the best friend that I have in the world.

I'm delighted to see each of you here tonight in spite of a storm warning. You reveal that you are determined [Audience:] (Right) to go on anyhow. (Yeah, All right) Something is happening in Memphis, something is happening in our world. And you know, if I were standing at the beginning of time with the possibility of taking a kind of general and panoramic view of the whole of human history up to now, and the Almighty said to me, "Martin Luther King, which age would you like to live in?" I would take my mental flight by Egypt (Yeah), and I would watch God's children in their magnificent trek from the dark dungeons of Egypt through, or rather, across the Red Sea, through the wilderness, on toward the Promised Land. And in spite of its magnificence, I wouldn't stop there. (All right)

I would move on by Greece, and take my mind to Mount Olympus. And I would see Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Euripides, and Aristophanes assembled around the Parthenon [Applause], and I would watch them around the Parthenon as they

discussed the great and eternal issues of reality. But I wouldn't stop there. (Oh yeah)

I would go on even to the great heyday of the Roman Empire (Yes), and I would see developments around there, through various emperors and leaders. But I wouldn't stop there. (Keep on)

I would even come up to the day of the Renaissance and get a quick picture of all that the Renaissance did for the cultural and aesthetic life of man. But I wouldn't stop there. (Yeah)

I would even go by the way that the man for whom I'm named had his habitat, and I would watch Martin Luther as he tacks his ninety-five theses on the door at the church of Wittenberg. But I wouldn't stop there. (All right) But I wouldn't stop there. (Yeah) [Applause]

I would come on up even to 1863 and watch a vacillating president by the name of Abraham Lincoln finally come to the conclusion that he had to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. But I wouldn't stop there. (Yeah) [Applause]

I would even come up to the early thirties and see a man grappling with the problems of the bankruptcy of his nation, and come

with an eloquent cry that "we have nothing to fear but fear itself." But I wouldn't stop there. (All right)

Strangely enough, I would turn to the Almighty and say, "If you allow me to live just a few years in the second half of the twentieth century, I will be happy." [Applause]

Now that's a strange statement to make because the world is all messed up. The nation is sick, trouble is in the land, confusion all around. That's a strange statement. But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough can you see the stars. (All right, Yes) And I see God working in this period of the twentieth century in a way that men in some strange way are responding. Something is happening in our world. (Yeah) The masses of people are rising up. And wherever they are assembled today, whether they are in Johannesburg, South Africa; Nairobi, Kenya; Accra, Ghana; New York City; Atlanta, Georgia; Jackson, Mississippi; or Memphis, Tennessee, the cry is always the same: "We want to be free." [Applause]

And another reason I'm happy to live in this period is that we have been forced to a point where we are going to have to grapple with

the problems that men have been trying to grapple with through history, but the demands didn't force them to do it. Survival demands that we grapple with them. (Yes) Men for years now have been talking about war and peace. But now no longer can they just talk about it. It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence in this world; it's nonviolence or nonexistence. That is where we are today. [Applause]

And also, in the human rights revolution, if something isn't done and done in a hurry to bring the colored peoples of the world out of their long years of poverty; their long years of hurt and neglect, the whole world is doomed. (All right) [Applause] Now I'm just happy that God has allowed me to live in this period, to see what is unfolding. And I'm happy that he's allowed me to be in Memphis. (Oh yeah)

I can remember [Applause], I can remember when Negroes were just going around, as Ralph has said so often, scratching where they didn't itch and laughing when they were not tickled. [Laughter, applause] But that day is all over. (Yeah) [Applause] We mean business now and we are determined to gain our rightful place in God's world. (Yeah) [Applause] And that's all this whole

thing is about. We aren't engaged in any negative protest and in any negative arguments with anybody. We are saying that we are determined to be men. We are determined to be people. (Yeah) We are saying [Applause], we are saying that we are God's children. (Yeah) [Applause] And if we are God's children, we don't have to live like we are forced to live.

Now what does all this mean in this great period of history? It means that we've got to stay together. (Yeah) We've got to stay together and maintain unity. You know, whenever Pharaoh wanted to prolong the period of slavery in Egypt, he had a favorite, favorite formula of doing it. What was that? He kept the slaves fighting among themselves. [Applause] But whenever the slaves get together, something happens in Pharaoh's court, and he cannot hold the slaves in slavery. When the slaves get together, that's the beginning of getting out of slavery. [Applause] Now let us maintain unity.

Secondly, let us keep the issues where they are. (Right) The issue is injustice. The issue is the refusal of Memphis to be fair and honest in its dealings with its public servants, who happen to be sanitation

workers. [Applause] Now we've got to keep attention on that. (That's right) That's always the problem with a little violence. You know what happened the other day, and the press dealt only with the window breaking. (That's right) I read the articles. They very seldom got around to mentioning the fact that 1,300 sanitation workers are on strike, and that Memphis is not being fair to them, and that Mayor Loeb is in dire need of a doctor. They didn't get around to that. (Yeah) [Applause]

Now we're going to march again, and we've got to march again (Yeah), in order to put the issue where it is supposed to be (Yeah) [Applause] and force everybody to see that there are thirteen hundred of God's children here suffering (That's right), sometimes going hungry, going through dark and dreary nights wondering how this thing is going to come out. That's the issue. (That's right) And we've got to say to the nation, we know how it's coming out. For when people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory. [Applause]

We aren't going to let any mace stop us. We are masters in our nonviolent movement in disarming police forces. They don't know

what to do. I've seen them so often. I remember in Birmingham, Alabama, when we were in that majestic struggle there, we would move out of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church day after day. By the hundreds we would move out, and Bull Connor would tell them to send the dogs forth, and they did come. But we just went before the dogs singing, "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around." [Applause] Bull Connor next would say, "Turn the fire hoses on." (Yeah) And as I said to you the other night, Bull Connor didn't know history. He knew a kind of physics that somehow didn't relate to the trans-physics that we knew about. And that was the fact that there was a certain kind of fire that no water could put out. [Applause] And we went before the fire hoses. (Yeah) We had known water. (All right) If we were Baptist or some other denominations, we had been immersed. If we were Methodist or some others, we had been sprinkled. But we knew water. That couldn't stop us. [Applause]

And we just went on before the dogs and we would look at them, and we'd go on before the water hoses and we would look at it. And we'd just go on singing, "Over my head, I see freedom in the air." (Yeah) [Applause] And then we would be thrown

into paddy wagons, and sometimes we were stacked in there like sardines in a can. (All right) And they would throw us in, and old Bull would say, "Take 'em off." And they did, and we would just go on in the paddy wagon singing, "We Shall Overcome." (Yeah) And every now and then we'd get in jail, and we'd see the jailers looking through the windows being moved by our prayers (Yes) and being moved by our words and our songs. (Yes) And there was a power there which Bull Connor couldn't adjust to (All right), and so we ended up transforming Bull into a steer, and we won our struggle in Birmingham. [Applause]

Now we've got to go on in Memphis just like that. I call upon you to be with us when we go out Monday. (Yes) Now about injunctions. We have an injunction and we're going into court tomorrow morning (Go ahead) to fight this illegal, unconstitutional injunction. All we say to America is: be true to what you said on paper. [Applause] If I lived in China or even Russia, or any totalitarian country, maybe I could understand some of these illegal injunctions. Maybe I could understand the denial of certain basic First Amendment privileges, because they haven't committed themselves to that over there. But

somewhere I read of the freedom of assembly. Somewhere I read (Yes) of the freedom of speech. (Yes) Somewhere I read (All right) of the freedom of press. (Yes) Somewhere I read (Yes) that the greatness of America is the right to protest for right. [Applause] And so just as I say we aren't going to let any dogs or water hoses turn us around, we aren't going to let any injunction turn us around. [Applause] We are going on. We need all of you.

You know, what's beautiful to me is to see all of these ministers of the Gospel. (Amen) It's a marvelous picture. (Yes) Who is it that is supposed to articulate the longings and aspirations of the people more than the preacher? Somewhere the preacher must have a kind of fire shut up in his bones (Yes), and whenever injustice is around he must tell it. (Yes) Somehow the preacher must be an Amos, who said, "When God Speaks, who can but prophesy?" (Yes) Again with Amos, "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." (Yes) Somehow the preacher must say with Jesus, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me (Yes), because He hath anointed me (Yes), and He's anointed me to deal with the problems of the poor." (Go ahead)

And I want to commend the preachers, under the leadership of these noble men: James Lawson, one who has been in this struggle for many years. He's been to jail for struggling; he's been kicked out of Vanderbilt University for this struggling; but he's still going on, fighting for the rights of his people. [Applause] Reverend Ralph Jackson, Billy Kyles; I could just go right on down the list, but time will not permit. But I want to thank all of them, and I want you to thank them because so often preachers aren't concerned about anything but themselves. [Applause] And I'm always happy to see a relevant ministry. It's all right to talk about long white robes over yonder, in all of its symbolism, but ultimately people want some suits and dresses and shoes to wear down here. [Applause] It's all right to talk about streets flowing with milk and honey, but God has commanded us to be concerned about the slums down here and His children who can't eat three square meals a day. [Applause] It's all right to talk about the new Jerusalem, but one day God's preacher must talk about the new New York, the new Atlanta, the new Philadelphia, the new Los Angeles, the new Memphis, Tennessee. [Applause] This is what we have to do.

Now the other thing we'll have to do is this: always anchor our external direct action with the power of economic withdrawal. Now we are poor people, individually we are poor when you compare us with white society in America. We are poor. Never stop and forget that collectively, that means all of us together, collectively we are richer than all the nations in the world, with the exception of nine. Did you ever think about that? After you leave the United States, Soviet Russia, Great Britain, West Germany, France, and I could name the others, the American Negro collectively is richer than most nations of the world. We have an annual income of more than thirty billion dollars a year, which is more than all of the exports of the United States and more than the national budget of Canada. Did you know that? That's power right there, if we know how to pool it. (Yeah) [Applause]

We don't have to argue with anybody. We don't have to curse and go around acting bad with our words. We don't need any bricks and bottles; we don't need any Molotov cocktails. (Yes) We just need to go around to these stores (Yes sir), and to these massive industries in our country (Amen), and say, "God sent us by here (All right) to say to you that you're not treating His

children right. (That's right) And we've come by here to ask you to make the first item on your agenda fair treatment where God's children are concerned. Now if you are not prepared to do that, we do have an agenda that we must follow. And our agenda calls for withdrawing economic support from you." [Applause]

And so, as a result of this, we are asking you tonight (Amen) to go out and tell your neighbors not to buy Coca-Cola in Memphis. (Yeah) [Applause] Go by and tell them not to buy Sealtest milk. (Yeah)[Applause] Tell them not to buy-what is the other bread?-Wonder Bread. [Applause] And what is the other bread company, Jesse? Tell them not to buy Hart's bread. [Applause] As Jesse Jackson has said, up to now only the garbage men have been feeling pain. Now we must kind of redistribute the pain. [Applause] We are choosing these companies because they haven't been fair in their hiring policies, and we are choosing them because they can begin the process of saying they are going to support the needs and the rights of these men who are on strike. And then they can move on downtown and tell Mayor Loeb to do what is right. (That's right, Speak) [Applause]

Now not only that, we've got to strengthen black institutions. (That's right, Yeah) I call upon you to take your money out of the banks downtown and deposit your money in Tri-State Bank. (Yeah) [Applause] We want a "bank-in" movement in Memphis. (Yes) Go by the savings and loan association. I'm not asking you something that we don't do ourselves in SCLC. Judge Hooks and others will tell you that we have an account here in the savings and loan association from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. We are telling you to follow what we're doing, put your money there. [Applause] You have six or seven black insurance companies here in the city of Memphis. Take out your insurance there. We want to have an "insurance-in." [Applause] Now these are some practical things that we can do. We begin the process of building a greater economic base, and at the same time, we are putting pressure where it really hurts. (There you go) And I ask you to follow through here. [Applause]

Now let me say as I move to my conclusion that we've got to give ourselves to this struggle until the end. (Amen) Nothing would be more tragic than to stop at this point in Memphis. We've got to see it

through. [Applause] And when we have our march, you need to be there. If it means leaving work, if it means leaving school, be there. [Applause] Be concerned about your brother. You may not be on strike (Yeah), but either we go up together or we go down together. [Applause] Let us develop a kind of dangerous unselfishness.

One day a man came to Jesus and he wanted to raise some questions about some vital matters of life. At points he wanted to trick Jesus (That's right), and show him that he knew a little more than Jesus knew and throw him off base. [Recording interrupted] Now that question could have easily ended up in a philosophical and theological debate. But Jesus immediately pulled that question from mid-air and placed it on a dangerous curve between Jerusalem and Jericho. (Yeah) And he talked about a certain man who fell among thieves. (Sure) You remember that a Levite (Sure) and a priest passed by on the other side; they didn't stop to help him. Finally, a man of another race came by. (Yes sir) He got down from his beast, decided not to be compassionate by proxy. But he got down with him, administered first aid, and helped the man in need. Jesus ended up saying this was the good man, this was the great man

because he had the capacity to project the "I" into the "thou," and to be concerned about his brother.

Now, you know, we use our imagination a great deal to try to determine why the priest and the Levite didn't stop. At times we say they were busy going to a church meeting, an ecclesiastical gathering, and they had to get on down to Jerusalem so they wouldn't be late for their meeting. (Yeah) At other times we would speculate that there was a religious law that one who was engaged in religious ceremonials was not to touch a human body twenty-four hours before the ceremony. (All right) And every now and then we begin to wonder whether maybe they were not going down to Jerusalem, or down to Jericho, rather, to organize a Jericho Road Improvement Association. [Laughter] That's a possibility. Maybe they felt it was better to deal with the problem from the causal root, rather than to get bogged down with an individual effect. [Laughter]

But I'm going to tell you what my imagination tells me. It's possible that those men were afraid. You see, the Jericho Road is a dangerous road. (That's right) I remember when Mrs. King and I were first in Jerusalem. We rented a car and drove

from Jerusalem down to Jericho. (Yeah) And as soon as we got on that road I said to my wife, "I can see why Jesus used this as the setting for his parable." It's a winding, meandering road. (Yes) It's really conducive for ambushing. You start out in Jerusalem, which is about twelve hundred miles, or rather, twelve hundred feet above sea level. And by the time you get down to Jericho fifteen or twenty minutes later, you're about twenty-two feet below sea level. That's a dangerous road. (Yes) In the days of Jesus it came to be known as the "Bloody Pass." And you know, it's possible that the priest and the Levite looked over that man on the ground and wondered if the robbers were still around. (Go ahead) Or it's possible that they felt that the man on the ground was merely faking (Yeah), and he was acting like he had been robbed and hurt in order to seize them over there, lure them there for quick and easy seizure. (Oh yeah) And so the first question that the priest asked, the first question that the Levite asked was, "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" (All right)

But then the Good Samaritan came by, and he reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?" That's the question before you tonight. (Yes)

Not, "If I stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to my job?" Not, "If I stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to all of the hours that I usually spend in my office every day and every week as a pastor?" (Yes) The question is not, "If I stop to help this man in need, what will happen to me?" The question is, "If I do not stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to them?" That's the question. [Applause]

Let us rise up tonight with a greater readiness. Let us stand with a greater determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge, to make America what it ought to be. We have an opportunity to make America a better nation. (Amen)

And I want to thank God, once more, for allowing me to be here with you. (Yes sir) You know, several years ago I was in New York City autographing the first book that I had written. And while sitting there autographing books, a demented black woman came up. The only question I heard from her was, "Are you Martin Luther King?" And I was looking down writing and I said, "Yes."

The next minute I felt something beating on my chest. Before I knew it I had been stabbed by this demented woman. I was rushed to Harlem Hospital. It was a dark Saturday afternoon. And that blade had gone through, and the X rays revealed that the tip of the blade was on the edge of my aorta, the main artery. And once that's punctured you're drowned in your own blood, that's the end of you. (Yes sir) It came out in the New York Times the next morning that if I had merely sneezed, I would have died.

Well, about four days later, they allowed me, after the operation, after my chest had been opened and the blade had been taken out, to move around in the wheelchair of the hospital. They allowed me to read some of the mail that came in, and from all over the states and the world kind letters came in. I read a few, but one of them I will never forget. I had received one from the president and the vice president; I've forgotten what those telegrams said. I'd received a visit and a letter from the governor of New York, but I've forgotten what that letter said. (Yes)

But there was another letter (All right) that came from a little girl, a young girl who was a student at the White Plains High School.

And I looked at that letter and I'll never forget it. It said simply, "Dear Dr. King: I am a ninth-grade student at the White Plains High School." She said, "While it should not matter, I would like to mention that I'm a white girl. I read in the paper of your misfortune and of your suffering. And I read that if you had sneezed, you would have died. And I'm simply writing you to say that I'm so happy that you didn't sneeze." (Yes) [Applause]

And I want to say tonight [Applause], I want to say tonight that I, too, am happy that I didn't sneeze. Because if I had sneezed (All right), I wouldn't have been around here in 1960 (Well), when students all over the South started sitting-in at lunch counters. And I knew that as they were sitting in, they were really standing up (Yes sir) for the best in the American dream and taking the whole nation back to those great wells of democracy, which were dug deep by the founding fathers in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

If I had sneezed (Yes), I wouldn't have been around here in 1961, when we decided to take a ride for freedom and ended segregation in interstate travel. (All right)

If I had sneezed (Yes), I wouldn't have been around here in 1962, when Negroes in Albany, Georgia, decided to straighten their backs up. And whenever men and women straighten their backs up, they are going somewhere, because a man can't ride your back unless it is bent.

If I had sneezed [Applause], if I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been here in 1963 (All right), when the black people of Birmingham, Alabama, aroused the conscience of this nation and brought into being the Civil Rights Bill.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have had a chance later that year, in August, to try to tell America about a dream that I had had. (Yes)

If I had sneezed [Applause], I wouldn't have been down in Selma, Alabama, to see the great movement there.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been in Memphis to see a community rally around those brothers and sisters who are suffering. (Yes) I'm so happy that I didn't sneeze.

And they were telling me. [Applause] Now it doesn't matter now. (Go ahead) It really doesn't matter what happens now. I left Atlanta this morning, and as we got started

on the plane—there were six of us—the pilot said over the public address system: "We are sorry for the delay, but we have Dr. Martin Luther King on the plane. And to be sure that all of the bags were checked, and to be sure that nothing would be wrong on the plane, we had to check out everything carefully. And we've had the plane protected and guarded all night."

And then I got into Memphis. And some began to say the threats, or talk about the threats that were out (Yeah), or what would happen to me from some of our sick white brothers.

Well, I don't know what will happen now; we've got some difficult days ahead. (Amen) But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. (Yeah) [Applause] And I don't mind. [Applause continues] Like anybody, I would like to live a long life - longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. (Yeah) And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. (Go ahead) And I've looked over (Yes sir), and I've seen the Promised Land. (Go ahead) I may not get there with you. (Go ahead) But I want you to know tonight (Yes), that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.

[Applause] (Go ahead, Go ahead) And so I'm happy tonight; I'm not worried about anything; I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. [Applause]¹⁸⁸

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809-1865: *American statesman*

It is said that an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent a sentence to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him with the words: "And this, too, shall pass away." How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction!¹⁸⁹



Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged on a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great

¹⁸⁸ Last speech, eve of assassination (4.4.1968)

¹⁸⁹ Speech to Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, Milwaukee (30.9.1859)

battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate - we cannot consecrate - we cannot hallow - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poorer power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Gettysburg Address (19.11.1863)

BARACK OBAMA

1961-: American statesman

If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.

It's the answer told by lines that stretched around schools and churches in numbers this nation has never seen; by people who waited three hours and four hours, many for the very first time in their lives, because they believed that this time must be different; that their voices could be that difference.

It's the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled - Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of Red States and Blue States: we are, and always will be, the United States of America.

It's the answer that led those who have been told for so long by so many to be cynical, and fearful, and doubtful of what we can achieve to put their hands on the arc of

history and bend it once more toward the hope of a better day.

It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America.

A little bit earlier this evening I received an extraordinarily gracious call from Senator McCain. He fought long and hard in this campaign, and he's fought even longer and harder for the country he loves. He has endured sacrifices for America that most of us cannot begin to imagine. We are better off for the service rendered by this brave and selfless leader.

I congratulate him, I congratulate Governor Palin, for all they have achieved, and I look forward to working with them to renew this nation's promise in the months ahead.

I want to thank my partner in this journey, a man who campaigned from his heart and spoke for the men and women he grew up with on the streets of Scranton and rode with on that train home to Delaware, the vice-president-elect of the United States, Joe Biden.

And I would not be standing here tonight without the unyielding support of my best

friend for the last 16 years, the rock of our family, the love of my life, the nation's next first lady, Michelle Obama. Sasha and Malia, I love you both more than you can imagine, and you have earned the new puppy that's coming with us to the White House.

And while she's no longer with us, I know my grandmother is watching, along with the family that made me who I am. I miss them tonight, and know that my debt to them is beyond measure. To my sister Maya, my sister Auma, all my other brothers and sisters - thank you so much for all the support you have given me. I am grateful to them.

To my campaign manager David Plouffe, the unsung hero of this campaign, who built the best political campaign in the history of the United States of America. My chief strategist David Axelrod, who has been a partner with me every step of the way, and to the best campaign team ever assembled in the history of politics - you made this happen, and I am forever grateful for what you've sacrificed to get it done.

But above all, I will never forget who this victory truly belongs to - it belongs to you.

I was never the likeliest candidate for this office. We didn't start with much money or many endorsements. Our campaign was not hatched in the halls of Washington - it began in the backyards of Des Moines and the living rooms of Concord and the front porches of Charleston.

It was built by working men and women who dug into what little savings they had to give \$5 and \$10 and \$20 to the cause.

It grew strength from the young people who rejected the myth of their generation's apathy; who left their homes and their families for jobs that offered little pay and less sleep; it grew strength from the not-so-young people who braved the bitter cold and scorching heat to knock on the doors of perfect strangers; from the millions of Americans who volunteered, and organized, and proved that more than two centuries later, a government of the people, by the people and for the people has not perished from the Earth.

This is your victory.

I know you didn't do this just to win an election and I know you didn't do it for me. You did it because you understand the enormity of the task that lies ahead. For

even as we celebrate tonight, we know the challenges that tomorrow will bring are the greatest of our lifetime - two wars, a planet in peril, the worst financial crisis in a century.

Even as we stand here tonight, we know there are brave Americans waking up in the deserts of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan to risk their lives for us.

There are mothers and fathers who will lie awake after their children fall asleep and wonder how they'll make the mortgage, or pay their doctor's bills, or save enough for their child's college education. There is new energy to harness and new jobs to be created; new schools to build and threats to meet and alliances to repair.

The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep. We may not get there in one year or even in one term, but America - I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we will get there. I promise you - we as a people will get there.

There will be setbacks and false starts. There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as president, and we know that government can't solve every problem. But I will always be honest with

you about the challenges we face. I will listen to you, especially when we disagree.

And above all, I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation the only way it's been done in America for 221 years - block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand.

What began 21 months ago in the depths of winter cannot end on this autumn night. This victory alone is not the change we seek - it is only the chance for us to make that change. And that cannot happen if we go back to the way things were. It cannot happen without you, without a new spirit of service, a new spirit of sacrifice.

So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other. Let us remember that if this financial crisis taught us anything, it's that we cannot have a thriving Wall Street while Main Street suffers - in this country, we rise or fall as one nation; as one people.

Let us resist the temptation to fall back on the same partisanship and pettiness and immaturity that has poisoned our politics for so long. Let us remember that it was a

man from this state who first carried the banner of the Republican Party to the White House - a party founded on the values of self-reliance, individual liberty, and national unity.

Those are values that we all share, and while the Democratic Party has won a great victory tonight, we do so with a measure of humility and determination to heal the divides that have held back our progress. As Lincoln said to a nation far more divided than ours: "We are not enemies, but friends... though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection."

And to those Americans whose support I have yet to earn - I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices, I need your help, and I will be your president too.

And to all those watching tonight from beyond our shores, from parliaments and palaces to those who are huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the world - our stories are singular, but our destiny is shared, and a new dawn of American leadership is at hand.

To those who would tear the world down - we will defeat you. To those who seek peace and security - we support you.

And to all those who have wondered if America's beacon still burns as bright - tonight we proved once more that the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope.

For that is the true genius of America - that America can change. Our union can be perfected. And what we have already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.

This election had many firsts and many stories that will be told for generations. But one that's on my mind tonight is about a woman who cast her ballot in Atlanta. She's a lot like the millions of others who stood in line to make their voice heard in this election except for one thing - Ann Nixon Cooper is 106 years old.

She was born just a generation past slavery; a time when there were no cars on the road or planes in the sky; when someone like her couldn't vote for two reasons - because she was a woman and because of the colour of her skin.

And tonight, I think about all that she's seen throughout her century in America - the heartache and the hope; the struggle and the progress; the times we were told that we can't, and the people who pressed on with that American creed: Yes, we can.

At a time when women's voices were silenced and their hopes dismissed, she lived to see them stand up and speak out and reach for the ballot. Yes, we can.

When there was despair in the dust bowl and depression across the land, she saw a nation conquer fear itself with a New Deal, new jobs and a new sense of common purpose. Yes, we can.

When the bombs fell on our harbour and tyranny threatened the world, she was there to witness a generation rise to greatness and a democracy was saved. Yes, we can.

She was there for the buses in Montgomery, the hoses in Birmingham, a bridge in Selma, and a preacher from Atlanta who told a people that "we shall overcome". Yes, we can.

A man touched down on the Moon, a wall came down in Berlin, a world was connected by our own science and imagination. And this year, in this election,

she touched her finger to a screen, and cast her vote, because after 106 years in America, through the best of times and the darkest of hours, she knows how America can change. Yes, we can.

America, we have come so far. We have seen so much. But there is so much more to do. So tonight, let us ask ourselves - if our children should live to see the next century; if my daughters should be so lucky to live as long as Ann Nixon Cooper, what change will they see? What progress will we have made?

This is our chance to answer that call. This is our moment.

This is our time - to put our people back to work and open doors of opportunity for our kids; to restore prosperity and promote the cause of peace; to reclaim the American dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth - that out of many, we are one; that while we breathe, we hope, and where we are met with cynicism and doubt, and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people: yes, we can.

Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.¹⁹¹

PERICLES

c.495-429 BC: Athenian statesman, orator and general

Most of those who have spoken here before me have commended the lawgiver who added this oration to our other funeral customs. It seemed to them a worthy thing that such an honour should be given at their burial to the dead who have fallen on the field of battle. But I should have preferred that, when men's deeds have been brave, they should be honoured in deed only, and with such an honour as this public funeral, which you are now witnessing. Then the reputation of many would not have been imperilled on the eloquence or want of eloquence of one, and their virtues believed or not as he spoke well or ill. For it is difficult to say neither too little nor too much; and even moderation is apt not to give the impression of truthfulness. The friend of the dead who knows the facts is likely to think that the words of the speaker fall short of his knowledge and of his wishes; another who is not so well informed, when he hears of anything which surpasses his own powers, will be envious

¹⁹¹ Victory speech, Grant Park, Chicago (5.11.2008)

and will suspect exaggeration. Mankind are tolerant of the praises of others so long as each hearer thinks that he can do as well or nearly as well himself, but, when the speaker rises above him, jealousy is aroused and he begins to be incredulous. However, since our ancestors have set the seal of their approval upon the practice, I must obey, and to the utmost of my power shall endeavour to satisfy the wishes and beliefs of all who hear me.

I will speak first of our ancestors, for it is right and seemly that now, when we are lamenting the dead, a tribute should be paid to their memory. There has never been a time when they did not inhabit this land, which by their valour they will have handed down from generation to generation, and we have received from them a free state. But if they were worthy of praise, still more were our fathers, who added to their inheritance, and after many a struggle transmitted to us their sons this great empire. And we ourselves assembled here today, who are still most of us in the vigour of life, have carried the work of improvement further, and have richly endowed our city with all things, so that she is sufficient for herself both in peace and war. Of the military exploits by which our

various possessions were acquired, or of the energy with which we or our fathers drove back the tide of war, Hellenic or Barbarian, I will not speak; for the tale would be long and is familiar to you. But before I praise the dead, I should like to point out by what principles of action we rose ~ to power, and under what institutions and through what manner of life our empire became great. For I conceive that such thoughts are not unsuited to the occasion, and that this numerous assembly of citizens and strangers may profitably listen to them.

Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. Our government does not copy our neighbours', but is an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while there exists equal justice to all and alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty an obstacle, but a man may benefit his country whatever the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private business we

are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbour if he does what he likes; we do not put on sour looks at him which, though harmless, are not pleasant. While we are thus unconstrained in our private business, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented from doing wrong by respect for the authorities and for the laws, having a particular regard to those which are ordained for the protection of the injured as well as those unwritten laws which bring upon the transgressor of them the reprobation of the general sentiment.

And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; our homes are beautiful and elegant; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish sorrow. Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as our own.

Then, again, our military training is in many respects superior to that of our adversaries. Our city is thrown open to the world, though and we never expel a foreigner and prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to

an enemy might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face. And here is the proof: The Lacedaemonians come into Athenian territory not by themselves, but with their whole confederacy following; we go alone into a neighbour's country; and although our opponents are fighting for their homes and we on a foreign soil, we have seldom any difficulty in overcoming them. Our enemies have never yet felt our united strength, the care of a navy divides our attention, and on land we are obliged to send our own citizens everywhere. But they, if they meet and defeat a part of our army, are as proud as if they had routed us all, and when defeated they pretend to have been vanquished by us all.

If then we prefer to meet danger with a light heart but without laborious training, and with a courage which is gained by habit and not enforced by law, are we not greatly the better for it? Since we do not anticipate the pain, although, when the hour comes, we can be as brave as those who never allow

themselves to rest; thus our city is equally admirable in peace and in war. For we are lovers of the beautiful in our tastes and our strength lies, in our opinion, not in deliberation and discussion, but that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act, and of acting, too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance but hesitate upon reflection. And they are surely to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense both of the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger. In doing good, again, we are unlike others; we make our friends by conferring, not by receiving favours. Now he who confers a favour is the firmer friend, because he would rather by kindness keep alive the memory of an obligation; but the recipient is colder in his feelings, because he knows that in requiting another's generosity he will not be winning gratitude but only paying a debt. We alone do good to our neighbours not upon a calculation of interest, but in the confidence of freedom and in a frank and fearless spirit. To sum up: I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action

with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the state. For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and of succeeding ages; we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other panegyrist whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of the facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valour, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity. Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf.

I have dwelt upon the greatness of Athens because I want to show you that we are contending for a higher prize than those

who enjoy none of these privileges, and to establish by manifest proof the merit of these men whom I am now commemorating. Their loftiest praise has been already spoken. For in magnifying the city I have magnified them, and men like them whose virtues made her glorious. And of how few Hellenes can it be said as of them, that their deeds when weighed in the balance have been found equal to their fame! I believe that a death such as theirs has been the true measure of a man's worth; it may be the first revelation of his virtues, but is at any rate their final seal. For even those who come short in other ways may justly plead the valour with which they have fought for their country; they have blotted out the evil with the good, and have benefited the state more by their public services than they have injured her by their private actions. None of these men were enervated by wealth or hesitated to resign the pleasures of life; none of them put off the evil day in the hope, natural to poverty, that a man, though poor, may one day become rich. But, deeming that the punishment of their enemies was sweeter than any of these things, and that they could fall in no nobler cause, they determined at the hazard of their lives to be honourably avenged, and to leave the rest. They

resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness; but in the face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer, rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonour, but on the battlefield their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory.

Such was the end of these men; they were worthy of Athens, and the living need not desire to have a more heroic spirit, although they may pray for a less fatal issue. The value of such a spirit is not to be expressed in words. Anyone can discourse to you for ever about the advantages of a brave defence, which you know already. But instead of listening to him I would have you day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it, who in the hour of conflict had the fear of dishonour always present to them, and who, if ever they failed in an enterprise, would not allow their virtues to be lost to their

country, but freely gave their lives to her as the fairest offering which they could present at her feast. The sacrifice which they collectively made was individually repaid to them; for they received again each one for himself a praise which grows not old, and the noblest of all tombs, I speak not of that in which their remains are laid, but of that in which their glory survives, and is proclaimed always and on every fitting occasion both in word and deed. For the whole earth is the tomb of illustrious men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men. Make them your examples, and, esteeming courage to be freedom and freedom to be happiness, do not weigh too nicely the perils of war. The unfortunate who has no hope of a change for the better has less reason to throw away his life than the prosperous who, if he survive, is always liable to a change for the worse, and to whom any accidental fall makes the most serious difference. To a man of spirit, cowardice and disaster coming together are far more bitter than death striking him unperceived at a time when he is full of courage and animated by the general hope.

Wherefore I do not now pity the parents of the dead who stand here; I would rather comfort them. You know that your dead have passed away amid manifold vicissitudes; and that they may be deemed fortunate who have gained their utmost honour, whether an honourable death like theirs, or an honourable sorrow like yours, and whose share of happiness has been so ordered that the term of their happiness is likewise the term of their life. I know how hard it is to make you feel this, when the good fortune of others will too often remind you of the gladness which once lightened your hearts. And sorrow is felt at the want of those blessings, not which a man never knew, but which were a part of his life before they were taken from him. Some of you are of an age at which they may hope to have other children, and they ought to bear their sorrow better; not only will the children who may hereafter be born make them forget their own lost ones, but the city will be doubly a gainer. She will not be left desolate, and she will be safer. For a man's counsel cannot have equal weight or worth, when he alone has no children to risk in the general danger. To those of you who have passed their prime, I say: "Congratulate yourselves that you have been happy

during the greater part of your days; remember that your life of sorrow will not last long, and be comforted by the glory of those who are gone. For the love of honour alone is ever young, and not riches, as some say, but honour is the delight of men when they are old and useless.

To you who are the sons and brothers of the departed, I see that the struggle to emulate them will be an arduous one. For all men praise the dead, and, however preeminent your virtue may be, I do not say even to approach them, and avoid living their rivals and detractors, but when a man is out of the way, the honour and goodwill which he receives is unalloyed. And, if I am to speak of womanly virtues to those of you who will henceforth be widows, let me sum them up in one short admonition: To a woman not to show more weakness than is natural to her sex is a great glory, and not to be talked about for good or for evil among men.

I have paid the required tribute, in obedience to the law, making use of such fitting words as I had. The tribute of deeds has been paid in part; for the dead have them in deeds, and it remains only that their children should be maintained at the public charge until they are grown up: this is the

solid prize with which, as with a garland, Athens crowns her sons living and dead, after a struggle like theirs. For where the rewards of virtue are greatest, there the noblest citizens are enlisted in the service of the state. And now, when you have duly lamented, everyone his own dead, you may depart.¹⁹²

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

1882-1945: American statesman

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is pre-eminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself - -nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to

¹⁹² Funeral Oration at the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War (430 BC), trans. Benjamin Jowett (1881)

convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance.

We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our

forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because the rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed, through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

True they have tried, but their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced by failure of credit they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership, they have resorted to exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They know only the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the

ancient truths. The measure of the restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow men.

Recognition of the falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political position are to be valued only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honour, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live.

Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation asks for action, and action now.

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our natural resources.

Hand in hand with this we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial centres and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavour to provide a better use of the land for those best fitted for the land. The task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the values of agricultural products and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure of our small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the Federal, State, and local governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the

unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, and unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities which have a definitely public character. There are many ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped merely by talking about it. We must act and act quickly.

Finally, in our progress toward a resumption of work we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order; there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments; there must be an end to speculation with other people's money, and there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

There are the lines of attack. I shall presently urge upon a new Congress in special session detailed measures for their fulfilment, and I shall seek the immediate assistance of the several States.

Through this program of action we address ourselves to putting our own national house in order and making income balance outgo. Our international trade relations, though vastly important, are in point of time and

necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy. I favor as a practical policy the putting of first things first. I shall spare no effort to restore world trade by international economic readjustment, but the emergency at home cannot wait on that accomplishment.

The basic thought that guides these specific means of national recovery is not narrowly nationalistic. It is the insistence, as a first consideration, upon the interdependence of the various elements in all parts of the United States--a recognition of the old and permanently important manifestation of the American spirit of the pioneer. It is the way to recovery. It is the immediate way. It is the strongest assurance that the recovery will endure.

In the field of world policy I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor--the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others-- the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.

If I read the temper of our people correctly, we now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence on each other;

that we cannot merely take but we must give as well; that if we are to go forward, we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline, because without such discipline no progress is made, no leadership becomes effective. We are, I know, ready and willing to submit our lives and property to such discipline, because it makes possible a leadership which aims at a larger good. This I propose to offer, pledging that the larger purposes will bind upon us all as a sacred obligation with a unity of duty hitherto evoked only in time of armed strife.

With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems.

Action in this image and to this end is feasible under the form of government which we have inherited from our ancestors. Our Constitution is so simple and practical that it is possible always to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential form. That is why our constitutional system has proved itself the most superbly

enduring political mechanism the modern world has produced. It has met every stress of vast expansion of territory, of foreign wars, of bitter internal strife, of world relations.

It is to be hoped that the normal balance of executive and legislative authority may be wholly adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of public procedure.

I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken nation in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the Congress may build out of its experience and wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

But in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, and in the event that the national emergency is still critical, I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis--broad Executive power to wage a war against the

emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.

For the trust reposed in me I will return the courage and the devotion that befit the time. I can do no less.

We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of the national unity; with the clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction that comes from the stern performance of duty by old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded and permanent national life.

We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action. They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it.

In this dedication of a Nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Inaugural Address (4.3.1933)

FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER

1956-: German statesman

Seventy-five years ago today, the Second World War came to an end in Europe.

8 May 1945 marked the end of the Nazi reign of tyranny, the end of night-time bombing raids and death marches, the end of unprecedented German crimes and the end of the Shoah, that betrayal of all civilised values. Here in Berlin, where the war of annihilation was conceived and from where it was unleashed, and whither it returned with the full force of destruction – we had planned to commemorate this day jointly with others.

We had planned to commemorate the day together with representatives of the allies from East and West who made huge sacrifices to liberate this continent. Together with our partners from every corner of Europe that suffered under German occupation, and yet were willing to seek reconciliation. Together with the survivors of German crimes and the descendants of those who perished, so many of whom reached out to us in reconciliation. Together with everyone around the world who gave this country the chance of a fresh start.

We had planned to remember, too, with the older generation in Germany who experienced that period themselves. Who as children knew hunger and violence, who were driven from their homes. After the war, it was they who rebuilt this country, both in the East and in the West.

And we had planned to commemorate this day with the younger people of today, who, three generations later, ask what the past can teach them now. To them I say, ""It is you who are the key! It is you who must carry the lessons of this cruel war into the future!"" For this reason we had invited thousands of young people from around the world to Berlin today, young people whose grandparents were enemies, but who themselves have become friends.

That is how we had planned to mark this 8 May together. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled us to commemorate this day alone – separated from those who mean so much to us, and to whom we are so grateful.

Perhaps this state of being alone will return us in our minds to 8 May 1945. On that date the Germans really were alone. Germany had suffered military defeat, political and

economic ruin, and moral collapse. We had made enemies of the entire world.

Today, 75 years later, we are forced to commemorate alone, but we are not alone! That is today's good news. We live in a vigorous and well-established democracy, in a country that has been reunified for 30 years, at the heart of a peaceful and united Europe. We are a trusted member of the international community and reap the fruits of cooperation and partnership around the world. We Germans can definitely now say that the day of liberation is a day of thanksgiving!

It has taken three generations for us to admit it wholeheartedly:

8 May 1945 was indeed a day of liberation. But at the time the vast majority of Germans did not perceive it as such.

The liberation of 1945 was imposed from outside. It had to come from outside – this country had descended too far into the evil, the guilt, it had brought upon itself. Likewise the economic reconstruction and democratic renewal in the western part of Germany were only made possible by the generosity, far-sightedness and readiness for reconciliation of its former foes.

But we, too, played a part in the liberation. In our internal liberation. This did not take place on 8 May 1945, on a single day. Rather it was a long and painful process which involved facing up to the past, investigating what people knew and what they had colluded in. Raising painful questions within families and between the generations. Fighting to stop silence and denial from prevailing.

It took decades – decades in which many Germans of my generation gradually learned to find their peace with this country. Decades in which our neighbours came to trust us again, decades that allowed a cautious resumption of relations, from ever closer union within the European Communities to the treaties concluded in the course of West Germany's Ostpolitik.

And it was in these decades that the people of Eastern Europe's courage and desire for freedom grew until they could no longer be kept behind walls – leading to that gladdest moment of liberation: Germany's peaceful revolution and reunification. These decades of struggling with our history were decades that allowed democracy to mature in Germany.

The struggle continues to this day. Remembrance never ends. There can be no deliverance from our past. For without remembrance we lose our future.

It is only because we Germans look our past in the face and because we accept our historic responsibility that the peoples of the world have come to trust our country once more.

And this is why we, too, can have confidence in this Germany. This is the core of an enlightened, democratic spirit of patriotism. No German patriotism can come without its cracks. Without a clear awareness of light and darkness, joy and sorrow, gratitude and shame.

Rabbi Nachman once wrote: "No heart is as whole as a broken heart." Germany's past is a fractured past – with responsibility for the murdering of millions and the suffering of millions. That breaks our hearts. And that is why I say that this country can only be loved with a broken heart.

Anybody who cannot bear this, who demands that a line be drawn under our past, is not only denying the catastrophe that was the war and the Nazi dictatorship. They are also devaluing all the good that

has since been achieved and denying the very essence of our democracy.

""Human dignity shall be inviolable."" This first sentence of our constitution is and remains a public reminder of what happened in Auschwitz, of what happened in the war and during the dictatorship. It is not remembrance that is a burden – it is non-remembrance that becomes a burden.

It is not professing responsibility that is shameful – it is denial that is shameful!

But what does our historic responsibility mean today – three-quarters of a century after the fact? The gratitude we feel today must not make us complacent. We must never forget that remembrance is a challenge and a duty.

""Never again,"" we vowed after the war. But for us Germans in particular, this ""never again"" means ""never again alone"". This sentence is truer in Europe than anywhere else. We must keep Europe together. We must think, feel and act as Europeans. If we do not hold Europe together, also during and after this pandemic, then we will have shown ourselves not to be worthy of 8 May. If Europe fails, the ""never again"" also fails.

The international community learned from this ""never again"". After 1945, it forged a new foundation out of all it had learnt from this catastrophe, it built human rights and international law, rules to preserve peace and cooperation.

Our country, from which evil once emanated, has over the years changed from being a threat to the international order to being its champion. And so we must not allow this peaceful order to disintegrate before our eyes. We must not allow ourselves to be estranged from those who established it. We want more cooperation around the world, not less – also when it comes to fighting the pandemic.

""8 May was a day of liberation."" In my opinion, these famous words of Richard von Weizsäcker's have to be reinterpreted today. When they were spoken, they constituted a milestone in our efforts to come to terms with our past. But today they must point to our future. For liberation is never complete, and it is not something that we can just experience passively. It challenges us actively, every day anew.

In 1945 we were liberated. Today, we must liberate ourselves.

From the temptations of a new brand of nationalism. From a fascination with authoritarianism. From distrust, isolationism and hostility between nations. From hatred and hate speech, from xenophobia and contempt for democracy – for they are but the old evil in a new guise. On this 8 May, we commemorate the victims of Hanau, of Halle and Kassel. They have not been forgotten in the midst of COVID-19.

""If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere."" These words were spoken by Israel's President Reuven Rivlin on Holocaust Remembrance Day in the German Bundestag earlier this year. If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere. But today there is nobody to liberate us from these dangers. We have to liberate ourselves. We were liberated – freed to be responsible for our own actions!

I am well aware that this year 8 May comes at a time of great upheaval and great uncertainty.

Not just because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but very much exacerbated by it. We do not yet know when and how we will emerge from this crisis. But we know how we entered it: with great confidence in this

country, in our democracy, in what we can shoulder together. That shows how very far we have come in 75 years. And it gives me hope for all the challenges ahead.

We cannot come together for a commemorative event because of coronavirus. But we can grasp the silence. We can pause to reflect.

I ask all Germans to remember silently the victims of the war and the victims of National Socialism. Wherever your roots may lie, take a moment to revisit your memories, your family's memories, the history of the country in which we all live. Think what the liberation of 8 May means for your life and your actions.

75 years after the end of the war, we Germans have much to be thankful for. But none of the positive achievements since that date are safe in perpetuity. 8 May was not the end of the liberation – preserving freedom and democracy is the never-ending task it has bequeathed us! ¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Speech on 75th anniversary Victory in Europe Day, 8.5.2020

POETRY, LYRICS & PROSE

LAURENCE BINYON

1869-1943: *English poet*

They shall grow not old, as we that are left
grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years
condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the
morning
We will remember them.¹⁹⁵

JACQUES BREL

1929-1978: *Belgian singer, songwriter and poet*

Bien sûr, nous eûmes des orages
Vingt ans d'amour, c'est l'amour fol
Mille fois tu pris ton bagage
Mille fois je pris mon envol
Et chaque meuble se souvient
Dans cette chambre sans berceau
Des éclats des vieilles tempêtes
Plus rien ne ressemblait à rien
Tu avais perdu le goût de l'eau
Et moi celui de la conquête

[Refrain]

Mais mon amour

¹⁹⁵ "Poems for the Fallen"

Mon doux, mon tendre, mon merveilleux
amour
De l'aube claire jusqu'à la fin du jour
Je t'aime encore, tu sais, je t'aime

Moi, je sais tous tes sortilèges
Tu sais tous mes envoûtements
Tu m'as gardé de piège en piège
Je t'ai perdue de temps en temps
Bien sûr tu pris quelques amants
Il fallait bien passer le temps
Il faut bien que le corps exulte
Mais finalement, finalement
Il nous fallut bien du talent
Pour être vieux sans être adultes

[Refrain]

Et plus le temps nous fait cortège
Et plus le temps nous fait tourment
Mais n'est-ce pas le pire piège
Que vivre en paix pour des amants
Bien sûr tu pleures un peu moins tôt
Je me déchire un peu plus tard
Nous protégeons moins nos mystères
On laisse moins faire le hasard
On se méfie du fil de l'eau
Mais c'est toujours la tendre guerre

[Refrain]

*(Certainly, we've had stormy times.
Twenty years of love--it's a crazy love.*

*A thousand times you took your luggage
A thousand times I took off.
And each piece of furniture
in this room without a cradle calls back
the flashes of old tempests.
Nothing makes sense.
You've lost your taste for the waters
and I for the conquest.*

[Chorus]

*But, my love,
my sweet, my tender, my marvellous love,
in the clear light of dawn until the end of the day,
I love you still, you know. I love you.*

*Myself, I know all your spells;
you know all my charms.
You've protected me from pitfall to pitfall.
I have forgotten you from time to time.
Of course, you took a few lovers;
time had to be spent well,
the body must rejoice.
Ultimately, in the end,
we had to have a good deal of talent
to be this old without being grown-ups.*

[Chorus]

*The more time marches us on (toward our
funerals),
the more time torments us.
But is it not the worst trap
for lovers to live in peace?*

*Certainly, you no longer cry as quickly;
I tear myself apart a little later--
we protect our secrets less.
We leave less to chance,
we're cautious of the current of the waters,
but it's always "the tender war."*

[Chorus]¹⁹⁶

LORD BYRON

1788-1824: English poet

*She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.*

*One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.*

*And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,*

¹⁹⁶ "La Chanson des Vieux Amants" (1967)

A heart whose love is innocent.¹⁹⁷

RANIERI DA CALZABIGI

1714-1795: Italian poet and librettist

Che farò senza Euridice
Dove andrò senza il mio ben
Euridice, o Dio, risponde
Io son pure il tuo fedele.
Euridice! Ah, non m'avvanza
più soccorso, più speranz
ne dal mondo, ne dal cel.

*(What will I do without Euridice?
Where will I go without my wonderful one?
Euridice, oh God, answer
I am entirely your loyal one.
Euridice! Ah, it doesn't give me
any help, any hope
neither this world, neither heaven.)*¹⁹⁸

JAMES CONNELL

1852-1929: Irish socialist and writer

The people's flag is deepest red,
It shrouded oft our martyred dead,
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
Their heart's blood dyed its every fold.

(chorus)
Then raise the scarlet standard high.

¹⁹⁷ "Hebrew Melodies", "She Walks in Beauty" (1815)

¹⁹⁸ Libretto for Gluck's opera 'Orfeo et Euridice' (1762)

Within its shade we'll live and die,
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
We'll keep the red flag flying here.

Look round, the Frenchman loves its blaze,
The sturdy German chants its praise,
In Moscow's vaults its hymns are sung
Chicago swells the surging throng.

It waved above our infant might,
When all ahead seemed dark as night;
It witnessed many a deed and vow,
We must not change its colour now.

It well recalls the triumphs past,
It gives the hope of peace at last;
The banner bright, the symbol plain,
Of human right and human gain.

It suits today the weak and base,
Whose minds are fixed on pelf and place
To cringe before the rich man's frown,
And haul the sacred emblem down.

With heads uncovered swear we all
To bear it onward till we fall;
Come dungeons dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.

WILLIAM JOHNSON CORY

1823-1892: English poet

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you
were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and
bitter tears to shed.
I wept as I remember'd how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him
down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old
Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at
rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy
nightingales, awake;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he
cannot take.¹⁹⁹

DANTE ALIGHIERI

1265-1321: Italian poet

Per me si va nella citta dolente,
Per me si va nell'eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente...
Laciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate!

*(This way for the sorrowful city,
This way for eternal suffering,
This way to join the forgotten people...*

¹⁹⁹ "Heraclitus", translation of epigram by Callimachus

*Abandon all hope, you who enter!)*²⁰⁰

CHARLES DICKENS

1812-1870: English writer

It was the best of times, it was the worst of
times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the
age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief,
it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the
season of Light, it was the season of
Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was
the winter of despair, we had everything
before us, we had nothing before us, we
were all going direct to Heaven, we were all
going direct the other way.²⁰¹



It is a far, far better thing I do, than I have
ever done; it is a far, far better rest I go to,
than I have ever known.²⁰²

JOHN DONNE

1572-1631: English poet and preacher

No man is an Island, entire of itself; every
man is a piece of the Continent; a part of the
main; if a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory

²⁰⁰ "Divine Comedy", "Inferno" (1307), canto 3, inscription at
the entrance to Hell

²⁰¹ "A Tale of Two Cities" (1859), Book i, Ch. 1

²⁰² *ibid*, Book iii, Ch. 15

were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind: And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.²⁰³

ERNEST DOWSON

1867-1900: *English poet*

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips
and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath
was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the
wine:
And I was desolate and sick of an old
passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my
fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm
heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and
sleep she lay
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth
were sweet
But I was desolate and sick of an old
passion,

²⁰³ Devotion 17

When I awoke and found the dawn was
grey:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my
fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the
wind,
Flung roses, roses, riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of
mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old
passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was
long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my
fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger
wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps
expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is
thine:
And I am desolate and sick of an old
passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my
fashion.²⁰⁴



²⁰⁴ "Non Sum Qualis Eram Bonae Sub Regno Cynarae" (I am not what I was in the reign of good Cynara) (1896)

Love and desire and hate:
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and
roses;
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.²⁰⁵

JOHANN FRANCK

1618-1677: German poet and hymnist

Trotz dem alten Drachen,
Trotz des Todes Rachen,
Trotz der Furcht darzu!
Tobe, Welt, und springe,
Ich steh hier und singe
In gar sichrer Ruh.

*(I defy the old dragon,
I defy the jaws of death,
I defy fear as well!
Rage, World, and spring to attack:
I stand here and sing
in certain peace.)²⁰⁶*

²⁰⁵ "Vita Summa Brevis Spem Nos Vetat Incohare Longam"
(Life's brief span forbids us to enter on far-reaching hopes)
(1896)

²⁰⁶ "Jesu, meine Freude" (c.1653), set by J S Bach in Motet
#3, (1723)

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

1749-1832: German writer and statesman

Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen
blühn?

Im dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn,
Ein sanfter Wind von blauen Himmel weht,
Die Myrte still und hoch der Lorbeer steht -
Kennst du es wohl?

Dahin! Dahin!

Möcht ich mit dir, o mein Geliebter, ziehn!

*(Know you the land where the lemon-trees
bloom?*

In the dark foliage the gold oranges glow,

A soft wind hovers from the sky,

The myrtle is still and the laurel stands tall-

Do you know it well?

There! There!

I would go, O my beloved, with thee!)²⁰⁷



Meine Ruh ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

Wo ich ihn nicht hab,
Ist mir das Grab,
Die ganze Welt

²⁰⁷ "Wilhem Meister's Lehrjahre" (1795-6), III.i, set by
Schubert, Schumann and Wolf

Ist mir vergällt.

Mein armer Kopf
Ist mir verrückt,
Mein aremer Sinn
Ist mir zerstückt.

Nach ihm nur schau ich
Zum Fenster hinaus,
Nach ihm nur geh ich
Aus dem Haus.

Sein hoher Gang,
Sein' edle Gestalt,
Seines Mundes Lächeln,
Seiner Augen Gewalt,

Und seiner Rede
Zauberfluss,
Sein Händedruck,
Und ach, sein Kuss.

Mein Busen drängt
Sich nach ihm hin.
Auch dürf ich fassen
Und halten ihn,

Und küssen ihn,
So wie ich wollt,
An seinen Küssen
Vergehen sollt!

*(My peace is gone,
My heart is heavy,*

*I will find it never
and never more.*

*Where I do not have him,
That is the grave,
The whole world
Is bitter to me.*

*My poor head
Is crazy to me,
My poor mind
Is torn apart.*

*For him only, I look
Out the window
Only for him do I go
Out of the house.*

*His tall walk,
His noble figure,
His mouth's smile,
His eyes' power,*

*And his mouth's
Magic flow,
His handclasp,
and ah! his kiss!*

*My peace is gone,
My heart is heavy,
I will find it never
and never more.*

My bosom urges itself

toward him.
Ah, might I grasp
And hold him!

And kiss him,
As I would wish,
At his kisses
I should die!)²⁰⁸

ROBERT HERRICK

1591-1674: *English poet*

Whenas in silks my Julia goes
Then, then (methinks) how sweetly flows
That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes, and see
That brave vibration each way free,
O how that glittering taketh me!²⁰⁹

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

1779-1843: *American lawyer and amateur poet*

Oh, say, can you see by dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's
last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so
gallantly streaming?

²⁰⁸ "Faust" (1806-32), set by Schubert

²⁰⁹ "Hesperides", Upon Julia's Clothes

And the rockets' red glare, the bombs
bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that our flag
was still there.
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet
wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave?²¹⁰

KARL GOTTFRIED VON LEITNER

1800-1890: *Austrian author and publicist*

Dort blinket durch Weiden
Und winket ein Schimmer
Blaßstrahlig vom Zimmer
Der Holden mir zu.

Es gaukelt wie Irrlicht
Und schaukelt sich leise,
Sein Abglanz im Kreise
Des schwankenden Sees.

Ich schaue mit Sehnen
Ins Blaue der Wellen
Und grüße den hellen,
Gespiegelten Strahl.

Und springe zum Ruder
Und schwinge den Nachen
Dahin auf den flachen,
Krystallinen Weg.

²¹⁰ "The Star-Spangled Banner" (14.09.1814), verse 1

Fein Liebchen schleicht traulich
Vom Stübchen herunter
Und sputet sich munter
Zu mir in das Boot.

Gelinde dann treiben
Die Winde uns wieder
See-einwärts zum Flieder
Des Ufers hin dann.

Die blassen Nachtnebel
Umfassen mit Hüllen
Vor Spähern den stillen,
Unschuldigen Scherz.

Und tauschen wir Küsse
So rauschen die Wellen,
Im Sinken und Schwellen
Den Horchern zum Trotz.

Nur Sterne belauschen
Uns ferne, und baden
Tief unter den Pfaden
Des gleitenden Kahns.

So schweben wir selig
Umgeben vom Dunkel,
Hoch überm Gefunkel
Der Sterne einher.

Und weinen und lächeln,
Und meinen enthoben

Der Erde schon oben,
Schon drüben zu sein.

*(Yonder blinks through the pasture
And winks a pale shimmer
From the room
Of the beloved toward me.*

*It sways like a will-o'-the-wisp
And rocks softly,
Its reflection in the circle
Of the swelling lake.*

*I gaze with longing
Into the blue of the waves,
And greet the bright,
Reflected ray.*

*And I jump to the rudder,
And I swing the small boat
Thereward upon the flat,
Crystal way.*

*The fine beloved sneaks cautiously
From the little room downward,
And she hurries chipperly
Toward me into the boat.*

*Gently then the wind
Chases us again
Lakeward, away from the plants
On the shore out there.*

The pale night fog

*Embraces, as a covering
Look-out, the still,
Innocent joke.*

*And we exchange kisses,
While the waves rustle
In sinking and swelling
In spite of the listeners.*

*Only stars observe us
From afar, and bathe
Deeply under the path
Of the boat.*

*So we sway blissfully,
Surrounded by darkness,
High above the twinkling
Of the stars herein.*

*And we cry, and we smile,
And imagine, lifted above
The Earth, already up,
Already above to be.)²¹¹*

PIETRO METASTASIO

1698-1782: Italian writer, poet and librettist

*L'amerò, sarò costante:
Fido sposo, e fido amante
Sol per lei sospirerò.
In sì caro e dolce oggetto
La mia gioia, il mio diletto,*

²¹¹ "Des Fischers Liebesglück", set by Schubert (1827)

La mia pace io troverò.

*(I shall love her, I shall be constant:
Faithful spouse, and faithful beloved,
Only for her shall I sigh.
In so darling and sweet an object
My joy, my delight,
My peace shall I find.)²¹²*

WILFRED OWEN

1893-1918: English poet

*Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we
cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our
backs
And towards our distant rest began to
trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their
boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame;
all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that
dropped behind.*

*Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!---An ecstasy of
fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and*

²¹² Libretto for Mozart's opera, 'Il Re Pastore' (1751)

stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...

Dim, through the misty panes and thick
green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking,
drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too
could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his
face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted
lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent
tongues,---

My friend, you would not tell with such
high zest
To children ardent for some desperate
glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.²¹³

²¹³ "Dulce et Decorum Est:" (1917-1918)

VIOLETTA PARRA

1917-1967: Chilean composer, songwriter, folklorist,
ethnomusicologist and visual artist

Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me dió dos luceros, que cuando los abro.
Perfecto distingo lo negro del blanco
Y en el alto cielo su fondo estrellado,
Y en las multitudes
El hombre que yo amo.

*Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me ha dado el oído que en todo su ancho
Graba noche y día grillos y canarios
Martillos, turbinas, ladrillos, chubascos
Y la voz tan tierna de mi bien amado.*

Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me ha dado el sonido y el abecedario.
Con él las palabras que pienso y declaro,
"Madre," "amigo," "hermano," y luz
alumbrando
La ruta del alma del que estoy amando.

Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me ha dado la marcha de mis pies cansados.
Con ellos anduve ciudades y charcos,
Valles y desiertos, montañas y llanos,
Y la casa tuya, tu calle y tu patio.

Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me dió el corazón que agita su marco.
Cuando miro el fruto del cerebro humano,

Cuando miro al bueno tan lejos del malo.
Cuando miro el fondo de tus ojos claros.

Gracias a la vida, que me ha dado tanto.
Me ha dado la risa, me ha dado el llanto.
Así yo distingo dicha de quebranto,
Los dos materiales que forman mi canto,
Y el canto de ustedes que es el mismo canto
Y el canto de todos que es mi propio canto.

Gracias a la vida
Gracias a la vida
Gracias a la vida
Gracias a la vida

*(Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me two beams of light, that when opened,
Can perfectly distinguish black from white
And in the sky above, her starry backdrop,
And from within the multitude
The one that I love.*

*Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me an ear that, in all of its width
Records – night and day – crickets and canaries,
Hammers and turbines and bricks and storms,
And the tender voice of my beloved.*

*Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me sounds and the alphabet.
With them the words that I think and declare:
“Mother,” “Friend,” “Brother” and the light
shining.*

The route of the soul from which comes love.

*Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me the ability to walk with my tired feet.
With them I have traversed cities and puddles
Valleys and deserts, mountains and plains
And your house, your street and your patio.*

*Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me a heart, that causes my frame to
shudder.*

*When I see the fruit of the human brain,
When I see good so far from bad,
When I look deep into your clear eyes.*

*Thank you to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me laughter and it gave me longing.
With them I distinguish happiness and pain –
The two materials from which my songs are
formed,
And your song, as well, which is the same song.
And everyone’s song, which is my very song.)²¹⁴*

FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT

1788-1866: German poet, translator and professor of
Oriental languages

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,
Mit der ich sonst viele Zeit verdorben,
Sie hat so lange nichts von mir vernommen,
Sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei gestorben!

²¹⁴ “Gracias A La Vida” (1966), made famous by Argentinian singer Mercedes Sosa (italic verse excluded from song)

Es ist mir auch gar nichts daran gelegen,
Ob sie mich für gestorben hält,
Ich kann auch gar nichts sagen dagegen,
Denn wirklich bin ich gestorben der Welt.
Ich bin gestorben dem Weltgetümmel,
Und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet!
Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,
In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied!

*(I am lost to the world
With which I used to waste much time;
It has for so long known nothing of me,
It may well believe that I am dead.
Nor am I at all concerned
If it should think that I am dead.
Nor can I deny it,
For truly I am dead to the world.
I am dead to the world's tumult
And rest in a quiet realm!
I live alone in my heaven,
In my love, in my song!)*²¹⁵



Du bist die Ruh
Du bist die Ruh,
Der Friede mild,
Die Sehnsucht du,
Und was sie stillt.
Ich weihe dir
Voll Lust und Schmerz

Zur Wohnung hier
Mein Aug' und Herz.
Kehr' ein bei mir,
Und schliesse du
Still hinter dir
Die Pforten zu.
Treib andern Schmerz
Aus dieser Brust.
Voll sei dies Herz
Von deiner Lust.
Dies Augenzelt
Von deinem Glanz
Allein erhellt,
O füll' es ganz.

*(You are repose
and gentle peace.
You are longing
and what stills it.
Full of joy and grief
I consecrate to you
my eyes and my heart
as a dwelling place.
Come in to me
and softly close
the gate
behind you.
Drive all other grief
from my breast.
Let my heart
be full of your joy.*

²¹⁵ 'Set by Mahler as the fifth 'Rückert Lieder', 1901

*The temple of my eyes
is lit
by your radiance alone:
O, fill it wholly!*²¹⁶

FRANZ VON SCHOBER

1798-1882: Austrian poet and lyricist

Du holde Kunst, in wieviel grauen Stunden,
Wo mich des Lebens wilder Kreis umstrickt,
Hast du mein Herz zu warmer Leib
entzünden,
Hast mich [in eine bessre Welt entrückt!]

Oft hat ein Seufzer, deines Harf entflossen,
Ein süsser, heiliger Akkord von dir
Den Himmel bessrer Zeiten mir erschlossen,
[Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir] dafür!

*(You sacred art, in so many grey hours
when life has bound me in its cruel net,
you have warmed my heart with love,
you have carried me away to a better world.*

*Often, a sigh breathed from your harp,
a sweet, holy harmony of yours,
has opened up that heaven of far better times,
you sacred art, I thank you for that!*²¹⁷

²¹⁶ "Du bist die Ruh", set by Franz Schubert, D.776

²¹⁷ "An die Musik", set by Franz Schubert, D.547

STEVIE SMITH

1903-1971: English poet

Nobody heard him, the dead man,
But still he lay moaning:
I was much farther out than you thought
And not waving but drowning.
Poor chap, he always loved larking
And now he's dead
It must have been too cold for him his heart
gave way,
They said.
Oh, no, it was too cold always
(Still the dead one lay moaning)
I was much too far out all my life
And not waving but drowning.²¹⁸

TEMISTOCLE SOLERA

1815-1878: Italian opera composer and librettist

Va', pensiero, sull'ali dorate;
Va, ti posa sui clivi, sui colli,
ove olezzano tepide e molli
l'aure dolci del suolo natal!
Del Giordano le rive saluta,
di Sionne le torri atterrate...
Oh mia Patria sì bella e perduta!
O membranza sì cara e fatal!
Arpa d'or dei fatidici vati,
perché muta dal salice pendi?

²¹⁸ "Not Waving But Drowning" (1957)

Le memorie nel petto raccendi,
ci favella del tempo che fu!
O simile di Solima ai fati,
traggi un suono di crudo lamento;
o t'ispiri il Signore un concerto
che ne infonda al patire virtù!

*(Hasten thoughts on golden wings.
Hasten and rest on the densely wooded hills,
where warm and fragrant and soft
are the gentle breezes of our native land!
The banks of the Jordan we greet
and the towers of Zion.
O, my homeland, so beautiful and lost!
O memories, so dear and yet so deadly!
Golden harp of our prophets,
why do you hang silently on the willow?
Rekindle the memories of our hearts,
and speak of the times gone by!
Or, like the fateful Solomon,
draw a lament of raw sound;
or permit the Lord to inspire us
to endure our suffering!)*²¹⁹

GALAKTION TABIDZE

1892-1959: Georgian poet

My eyes have never seen the moon so lovely
as tonight;
In silence wrapt it is the breathless music of
the night.

²¹⁹ Libretto for 'Nabucco' (1842)

Moonbeams embroider shadows with fine
thread of silver light;
O, eyes have never seen the sky so lovely as
tonight!

The moon adorned in beams of pearls seems
like a queen divine;
The stars like fire-flies tangled in a web
about her shine.
The Mtkvari flows a silver stream of
lambent beauty bright;
O, eyes have never seen the sky so lovely as
tonight!

Here in immortal calm and peace the great
and noble sleep
Beneath the soft and dewy turf in many a
mouldering heap.
Here Baratashvili came with wild desires to
madness wrought,
Oppressed by raging fires of passion, and
perplexing thought.

O, could I like the swan pour forth my soul
in melody
That melts the mortal heart and breathes of
immortality!
Let my free song fly far beyond this world
to regions high
Where on the wings of poesy it will glorify
the sky.

If death approaching makes the fragrance of
the roses sweeter,
Attunes the soul to melodies that make all
sadness dearer,
And if that swan's song thus becomes a
denizen of heaven,
If in that song she feels that death will be
but ecstasy, then, -
Let me like her sing one last song, and in
death find delight.
So breathless still and lovely I have never
seen the night!

O, mighty dead, let me die here beside you
as I sing.

I am a poet, and to eternity my song I fling,
And let it be the fire that warms and lights
the spirit's flight.

O, eyes have never seen the sky so lovely as
tonight!²²⁰

ALFRED TENNYSON
1809-1892: *English poet*

I
Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!

Charge for the guns!' he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II
'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismayed?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blundered:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III
Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV
Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered:

²²⁰ "The Moon over Mtatsminda"

Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon behind them,
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!²²¹

²²¹ "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854)

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

1865-1939: *Irish poet*

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and
wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for
the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace
comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to
where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a
purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night
and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds
by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the
pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.²²²

²²² "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (1892)

POLITICS

ALCUIN OF YORK

c.735-804: *English scholar, clergyman, poet and teacher*

Nec audiendi qui solent dicere, Vox populi, vox Dei, quum tumultuositas vulgi semper insaniae proxima sit.

*And do not listen to those who keep saying, 'The voice of the people is the voice of God.' because the tumult of the crowd is always close to madness.*²²³

JAMES BALDWIN

1924-1987: *American writer*

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.²²⁴

LEWIS CARROLL (CHARLES DODGSON)

1832-1898: *English writer*

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.'

²²³ Works, Epistle 127

²²⁴ "As Much Truth As One Can Bear", New York Times Book Review (14.01.1962)

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master — that's all.'²²⁵

J. K. GALBRAITH

1908-2006: *Canadian-American economist*

The modern conservative is engaged in one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy; that is, the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness.²²⁶

FRANÇOIS GIACALONE

?-?: *French Communist Party local councillor*

When the house is on fire, you don't care too much if the water you put it out with is dirty.²²⁷

JOSEPH GOEBBELS

1897-1945: *German Nazi politician*

A lie told once remains a lie, but a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth.²²⁸



²²⁵ "Through the Looking Glass" (1872), Ch.6

²²⁶ "The Affluent Society" (1958)

²²⁷ On voting for conservative presidential candidate Jacques Chirac over the far-right Jean-Marie Le Pen", 2002

²²⁸ Attributed in many variations but in this form by Yuval Noah Harari in "21 Lessons for the 21st Century", 2018

There was no point in seeking to convert the intellectuals. For intellectuals would never be converted and would anyway always yield to the stronger, and this will always be "the man in the street." Arguments must therefore be crude, clear and forcible, and appeal to emotions and instincts, not the intellect. Truth was unimportant and entirely subordinate to tactics and psychology.

ANTONIO GRAMSCI

1891-1937: Italian writer, politician and political theorist

The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.²²⁹

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

1949-2011: British journalist and thinker

I have one consistency, which is being against totalitarianism – on the left and on the right. The totalitarian, to me, is the enemy – the one that's absolute, the one that wants control over the inside of your head, not just your actions and your taxes. And the origins of that are theocratic, obviously. The beginning of that is the idea that there is

²²⁹ Prison Notebooks Volume II, Notebook 3, 1930, (2011 edition) SS-34, Past and Present 32-33

a supreme leader, or infallible pope, or a chief rabbi, or whatever, who can ventriloquise the divine and tell us what to do. That has secular forms with gurus and dictators, of course, but it's essentially the same.²³⁰

ADOLF HITLER

1889-1945: German Nazi politician

The most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly and with unflagging attention. It must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over. Here, as so often in this world, persistence is the first and most important requirement for success.²³¹

ANDREW LAHDE

1971-: US hedge fund manager

I was in this game for the money. The low hanging fruit, ie idiots whose parents paid for prep school, Yale and then the Harvard MBA, were there for the taking. These people who were (often) truly not worthy of the education they received (or supposedly received), rose to the top of companies such

²³⁰ Interview with Professor Richard Dawkins (7.10.2011), The Observer (18.12.2011)

²³¹ "War Propaganda", Vol 1, Ch 6, "Mein Kampf", 1925

as AIG, Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers and all levels of our government. All of this behaviour supporting the aristocracy only made it easier for me to find people stupid enough to take the other side of my trades. God Bless America.²³²

MARTIN NIEMOLLER

1892-1984: German theologian

In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no-one was left to speak up.

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

1799-1837: Russian poet and author

The concept of a golden age is natural to all nations and proves only that people are never satisfied with the present and, having from experience little hope in the future,

they embellish the irrecoverable past with all the colours of their imagination.²³³

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792-1822: English poet

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of
stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose
frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold
command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions
read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless
things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart
that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.²³⁴

²³² Letter announcing closure of fund (17.10.2007)

²³³ "The History of the Village of Goryukhino" (1837)

²³⁴ "Ozymandias" (1818)

**CHARLES-MAURICE DE TALLEYRAND-
PERIGORD**

1754-1838: *French statesman*

It is worse than a crime – it is a blunder.²³⁵

GIUSEPPE TOMASI DI LAMPEDUSA

1896-1957: *Italian/Sicilian writer*

Se vogliamo che tutto rimanga com'è
bisogna che tutto cambi. (*For everything to
stay the same, everything must change.*)²³⁶

YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

1884-1937: *Russian writer*

There is no final one; revolutions are
infinite.²³⁷

²³⁵ Attributed, but more likely by Joseph Fouche (1759-1820)
as 'It is more than a crime, it is a political fault'

²³⁶ "The Leopard" (1958)

²³⁷ "We" (1921)

RELIGION & FAITH

DENIS DIDEROT

1713-1784: *French philosopher and writer*

Man will never be free until the last king is
strangled with the entrails of the last
priest.²³⁸

ALBERT EINSTEIN

1879-1955: *German physicist and humanitarian*

I see only with deep regret that God
punishes so many of His children for their
numerous stupidities, for which only He
Himself can be held responsible, only His
nonexistence could excuse Him.²³⁹



It seems to me that the idea of a personal
God is an anthropological concept which I
cannot take seriously. I feel also not able to
imagine some will or goal outside the
human sphere. My views are near those of
Spinoza: admiration for the beauty of and
belief in the logical simplicity of the order
and harmony which we can grasp humbly

²³⁸ Et des boyaux du dernier prêtre/Serrons le cou du dernier
roi. [And with the bowels of the last priest, /Let us strangle
the last king.] "Dithyrambe sur la Fête des Rois"

²³⁹ Letter to Edgar Meyer (2.1.1915)

and only imperfectly. I believe that we have to content ourselves with our imperfect knowledge and understanding and treat values and moral obligations as a purely human problem - the most important of all human problems.²⁴⁰



A man's ethical behaviour should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties and needs. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death.²⁴¹



I cannot conceive of a God who rewards and punishes his creatures, or has a will of the kind that we experience in ourselves. Neither can I nor would I want to conceive of an individual who survives his physical death; let feeble souls, from fear or absurd egoism, cherish such thoughts.²⁴²



To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which

²⁴⁰ Reply when asked for views on a Supreme Being (1947)

²⁴¹ "Religion and Science", New York Times (9.11.1930)

²⁴² "What I Believe" (1930)

our dull facilities can comprehend only in the most primitive forms - this knowledge, this feeling, is at the centre of true religiousness. In this sense, and in this sense only, I belong to the ranks of the devoutly religious men.²⁴³

IMMANUEL KANT

1724-1804: *German philosopher*

Two things fill the mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe, the more often and the more intensely the mind of thought is drawn to them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.²⁴⁴

ALBERT MELTZER

1920-1996: *British anarcho-communist activist and writer*

If I have miscalculated ... and there really is a God, I'd like to feel if he's got any sense of humour or feeling for humanity, there's nobody he would sooner have in heaven than people like me, and if he hasn't, who wants in?²⁴⁵

²⁴³ *ibid*

²⁴⁴ "Critique of Practical Reason" (1788)

²⁴⁵ "I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels" (1996)

BERTRAND RUSSELL

1872-1970: *British philosopher and mathematician*

A good world needs knowledge, kindness and courage: it does not need a regretful hankering after the past or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men.²⁴⁶

BARUCH SPINOZA

1632-1677: *Dutch philosopher*

Faith has become a mere compound of credulity and prejudices – aye, prejudices, too, which degrade man from rational being to beast, which completely stifle the power of judgement between the true and the false, which seem, in fact, carefully fostered for the purpose of extinguishing the last spark of reason!²⁴⁷

COLM TÓIBÍN

1955- *Irish writer*

The book I couldn't finish: The Old Testament: too long; too boring; too many characters; no real plot; not fully credible; a bad influence on the young.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ "Why I Am Not a Christian", Lecture to National Secular Society (6.3.1927)

²⁴⁷ "A Theologico-Political Treatise" (1670), Preface

²⁴⁸ The Guardian Review, 26.5.2018

SHAKESPEARE

ANTONY & CLEOPATRA

My salad days,
When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
To say as I said then!²⁴⁹

HAMLET

It goes so heavily against my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a vile and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form, in moving, how express and admirable! In action how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me; no, nor woman either, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.²⁵⁰



²⁴⁹ Cleopatra, I.v

²⁵⁰ Hamlet, II.ii

The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.²⁵¹



To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous
fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to
sleep:
No more: and, by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural
shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die: to sleep:
Perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may
come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of
time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's
contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,

²⁵¹ Hamlet, II.ii

The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels
bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose
bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And make us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience doth make cowards of us
all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And loose the name of action.²⁵²



O! what a noble mind is here o'erthrown
... O! woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I
see!²⁵³



²⁵² Hamlet, III.i

²⁵³ Ophelia, III.i

O Hamlet! thou has cleft my heart in twain.²⁵⁴



Hamlet: The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit...

The rest is silence...

Horatio: Now cracks a noble heart. Good-night sweet prince,

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!²⁵⁵

HENRY V

This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispian's day.'
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,

²⁵⁴ Gertrude, III.iv

²⁵⁵ V.ii

What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,

Familiar in his mouth as household words-
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester-

Be in their flowing cups freshly rememb'ed.

This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,

This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were
not here,

And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any
speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's
day.²⁵⁶

JULIUS CAESAR

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow
world
Like a colossus; and we petty men

²⁵⁶ Henry, IV.iii

Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.²⁵⁷



Cowards die many times before their
deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should
fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.²⁵⁸



Your wisdom is consum'd in confidence.²⁵⁹



Oh! pardon me, thou bleeding piece of
earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these
butchers;
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,

²⁵⁷ Cassius, I.ii

²⁵⁸ Caesar, II.ii

²⁵⁹ Calpurnia, II.ii

Which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby
lips,
To beg the voice and utterance of my
tongue,
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
And dreadful objects so familiar,
That mothers shall but smile when they
behold
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of
war;
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds:
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Ate by his side, come hot from hell,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's
voice
Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war;
That this foul deed shall smell above the
earth
With carrion men, groaning for burial.²⁶⁰



Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your
ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones;

²⁶⁰ Mark Antony, III.i

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men;
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to
Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath
wept;
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this
ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without
cause:

What cause withholds you then to mourn
for him?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with
me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me...

But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he
there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters! if I were dispos'd to stir
Your minds and hearts to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong and Cassius
wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men.
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and
you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of
Caesar;
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will.
Let but the commons hear this testament,
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's
wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,

Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue...

Have patience, gentle friends; I must not
read it:

It is not meet you know how Caesar lov'd
you.

You are not wood, you are not stones, but
men;

And, being men, hearing the will of Caesar

It will inflame you, it will make you mad.

'Tis good you know not that you are his
heirs;

For if you should, O! what would come of
it...

Will you be patient? will you stay awhile?

I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.

I fear I wrong the honourable men

Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar; I do
fear it...

You will compel me then to read the will?

Then make a ring around the corpse of
Caesar,

And let me show you him that made the
will.

Shall I descend? and will you give me
leave?...

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

You all do know this mantle; I remember

The first time ever Caesar put it on;

'T was on a summer's evening, in his tent,
The day he overcame the Nervii.

Look! in this place ran Cassius' dagger
through:

See what a rent the envious Casca made;

Through this the well-beloved Brutus
stabb'd;

And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away

Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it,

As rushing out of doors, to be resolv'd

If Brutus so unkindly knock'd or no;

For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's
angel;

Judge, O you gods! how dearly Caesar lov'd
him.

This was the most unkindest cut of all;

For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,

Ingratitude more strong than traitor's arms,

Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty
heart;

And in his mantle muffling up his face,

Even at the base of Pompey's statua,

Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar
fell.

O! what a fall was there my countrymen;

Then I, and you, and all of us, fell down,

Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.

O! now you weep, and I perceive you feel

The dint of pity; these are gracious drops.

Kind souls, what! weep you when you but
behold

Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
Here is himself, marr'd as you see with traitors...

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up

To such a sudden flood of mutiny.

They that have done this deed are honourable:

What private griefs they have, alas! I know not,

That made them do it; they are wise and honourable,

And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.

I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:

I am no orator, as Brutus is:

But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That loved my friend; and that they know full well

That gave me public leave to speak of him.

For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,

Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech

To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;

I tell you that which you yourselves do know,

Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor dumb mouths,

And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,

And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue

In every wound of Caesar, that would move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.²⁶¹



Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
For Cassius is awearied of the world;
Hated by one he loves, brav'd by his brother,

Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observ'd,

Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,

To cast into my teeth. O! I could weep
My spirit from mine eyes. There is my dagger,

And here my naked breast...

Strike, as thou didst at Caesar; for, I know,
When thou didst hate him worst, thou lov'dst him better

Than ever thou lov'dst Cassius.²⁶²

²⁶¹ Mark Antony, III.ii

²⁶² Cassius, IV.iii



There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to
fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it
serves,
Or lose our ventures.²⁶³



Brutus: And whether we shall meet again I
know not.

Therefore our everlasting farewell take:
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then, this parting was well
made.

Cassius: For ever, and for ever, farewell,
Brutus!

If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;
If not, 't is true, this parting was well
made.²⁶⁴



This was the noblest Roman of them all:

²⁶³ Brutus, IV.iii

²⁶⁴ V.i

All the conspirators save only he
Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;
He, only in a general honest thought
And common good to all, made one of
them.

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world 'This was a man!²⁶⁵

KING LEAR

When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools.²⁶⁶

MACBETH

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a
word.

– To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-
morrow,

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief
candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury

²⁶⁵ Mark Antony, V.v

²⁶⁶ Lear, 1V.v

Signifying nothing..²⁶⁷

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

But man, proud man
Dress'd in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high
heaven
As makes the angels weep.²⁶⁸

OTHELLO

Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have
lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal
part of myself, and what remains is
bestial.²⁶⁹



Soft you; a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they
know't;
No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must
you speak

²⁶⁷ Macbeth, V.v

²⁶⁸ Isabella, II.ii

²⁶⁹ Cassio, II.iii

Of one that lov'd not wisely but too well..²⁷⁰

RICHARD II

Bagot: Farewell, if heart's presages be not
vain,

We three here part that ne'er shall
meet again...

Green: Farewell at once; for once, for all, and
ever.

Bushy: Well, we may meet again.

Bagot: I fear me, never.²⁷¹

THE TEMPEST

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on.²⁷²

TWELFTH NIGHT

Be not afraid of greatness: some are born
great, some achieve greatness, and some
have greatness thrust upon them.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Othello, V.ii

²⁷¹ II.ii

²⁷² Prospero, IV.i

²⁷³ Malvolio, II.v