

THROUGH A MOUNTAIN PASS

The crack of the whip
on a thousand backs:
The thud of the hammer
on a thousand heads:
The moan of the orphan
in a thousand homes:
The billows of smoke

from a thousand huts:
The slump of the heads
in the firing squads:
The power of the gun
of a thousand muzzles:
The belch of the crocodile
through a thousand ribs.

Yet you must go on,
Knowing only conquest,
Living only by conquest,
Breathing only by conquest,
Loving only by conquest,
Thriving only by conquest
Dealing only in conquest.

Yet you will go on,
haunted not by your lies,
daunted not by your treacheries,
ashamed not of your avarice,
abashed not of your greed.
knowing only the way of the sword,
knowing only the ways of death:
for only you, are born right:
only you, are always right.

But not anymore,
for the backs of my children are sore,
their voices are hoarse,
their knees are thick from prostrating,
their eardrums, deafened by the ceaseless cracks
of your gunfire,
Their arms, crippled by your ropes of death,
tied to kill.

And now I know, that one day soon,
one day very, very soon:
they shall rise.
and when they do,
and the points of their swords of justice
are at your heart,
and your eyes are bleary with fright
and your knees have collapsed beneath the bulk of your body
and the weight of your power,
and your thick throat is rammed full of the faeces,
and the stink of your conquest,
then there shall be a way,
the safe middle way,
through the mountain pass.

