

Stormy Weather: Edwin Morgan's Third Scottish International Lenin

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Abstract: This essay reads the poetological engagement of the Scottish poet-translator Edwin Morgan (1920-2010) with the consequences of the phenomenon called 'Lenin'. It posits Morgan as an attuned and dynamic reader, as well as critical and virtuosic practitioner, in poetry, of the Leninisms of language and their Internationale-forming potentialities or immanences, through the Aesopian to the sloganological modes; for Morgan, poetry itself, mediated via the name 'Lenin', is the mode of immanent critique, the site of the still-possible revolution of the word, and the litmus-test of and for the dialectic, and an internationalized Scotland is its crucible.

Keywords: Edwin Morgan, Lenin, Poetology, Concrete Poetry, Slogans, Scotland, Revolution

*For now in the flower and iron of the truth
To you we turn; and turn in vain nae mair*
Hugh MacDiarmid (1930)

*Clyde have a mighty mission to fulfill. We can make Glasgow a
Petrograd, a revolutionary storm-centre second to none.*
John Maclean (1920)

Let the storm wash the plates
Edwin Morgan (1965)

1. Bolsheviks Wha Hae

The equation of 'Scotland' and 'Lenin' may seem a rather obscure one to investigate further, and there is no question that if it conjures anything at all, it brings to mind less than a handful of figures. One such figure would certainly be John Maclean (1879-1923), of whom in 1917 Lenin wrote was, alongside Liebknecht (Germany) and Adler (Austria) one of the 'best known names [...and] isolated heroes who have taken upon themselves the arduous role of forerunners of the world revolution'.¹ As we know, Maclean was appointed in 1918 the Russian consul in Glasgow and honorary president (with Liebknecht) of the first All-Russian Congress of the Soviets, the prime figure of 'Red Clydeside' and often nicknamed the 'Scottish Lenin'. And indeed Maclean's memorial cairn, erected 50 years after his premature death in 1923, indicates in letters chiselled in granite that he 'forged the Scottish link in the golden chain of world socialism'.² Second to MacLean comes the poet Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher Murray Grieve (1892-1978)), who would not only eulogise MacLean as the greatest Scot after Burns, but who would write a suite of three 'Hymns to Lenin' (1923-1955).³ In those 'hymn's and across the *oeuvre*, MacDiarmid

would attempt (in a mode not dissimilar to that of Vladimir Mayakovsky for Lenin) to found a poetics of political expression whose dimensions were of the people to which and for whom it spoke,⁴ as well as effecting a poetic utopian demonstrandum and plea against the present and for a future of an anti-imperial anti-capitalist regime, and – as John Maclean was to speak in Edinburgh in 1918, on trial for sedition, – the poet too would stand as ‘accuser of capitalism, dripping with blood from head to foot’.⁵

Neither Maclean nor MacDiarmid could be accused of a lack of melodramatics in their rhetorical gestures. And neither were to go much further in their interactions with Leninism, practically or poetically, than these paragraphs sketch, viz., in initial passionate convictions or intensities of involvement,⁶ particularities of reception, and national acts. In the lattermost, both swither between what Scott Hames has called ‘Janus faced’ forms of nationalism that invoke both futurist destructions and restitutive traditionalisms.⁷ Clearly, also, unlike MacDiarmid, Maclean’s vast and effective activities were curtailed by premature death, but it was soon after Maclean delivered the notorious speech ‘from the dock’, calling for a worldwide revolution over and above national victory, that his star in Lenin’s and Trotsky’s eyes was to wane, as what was perceived to be his too-nationalist stance, Britain’s generally still naïve and nationalist version of Communism and the inconsistency of (amongst others) Maclean’s internationalism, was deemed inappropriately to the cause.⁸ This judgement was mostly formed through Maclean’s indication (quite possibly quite rightly) that it was *Scotland*, rather than the United Kingdom, that contained the quality and orientation to move the revolution forward – that in fact the imperial United Kingdom (by extension England, as one, with America, of two great Anglo-Imperial powers) was the “biggest menace to the human race” and that in a “Scottish break-away [in the 1920s] would bring the empire crashing to the ground and free the waiting workers of the world”.⁹ Centring not Britain but Scotland, Maclean stated that “a Scottish Communist Republic [would be the] first step towards World Communism, with Glasgow as head and centre.”¹⁰ Of course Maclean was not to live or galvanize long enough to turn the as yet unrealised Scottish National into an International, and the fear of ‘Red Clydeside’ becoming a centre for revolution was so widespread as to be focused upon, made into a slogan of popular threat (the idea of a ‘new Petrograd’ which galvanized a working population was leveraged against worker rebellions as a threat to the English bourgeoisie and rule), and crushed.¹¹

Maclean, in spite of a revival in the 1970s (a conjuncture congruent with the poetic-political galvanizing towards the first Scottish Independence referendum of the end of that decade), was preserved more positively perhaps in Soviet historiography than he was otherwise practically evaluated.¹² And MacDiarmid’s thoughts always turned Scotland-wards. Even his three-poem Lenin cycle ultimately addressed the more ante-bourgeois if not plainly aristocratic elements of the socialist

movements, shown through the tenor of their dedications (with the exception of Henry Carr, who nonetheless after his immortalization by Tom Stoppard in *Travesties* might be seen as something of an accidental aesthete¹³), and demonstrates throughout a reactionary Joyceanism which could not but be a misreading, ultimately, of the Leninist project. MacDiarmid's is a Lenin phantasmatically figured as shadowy second fiddle to the undeadened addressee of a Second Coming: the notorious Lenin of Mayakovsky's *Lenin Cycle*'s Christic over-writing. MacDiarmid's misunderstanding of Lenin, particularly in his casting of the *name* of Lenin (via Macleanian vision) into a *figure* for address (poetic above and beyond revolutionary), is palpable. Indeed, although Edwin Morgan (1920-2010) was to celebrate both figures, he would write of MacDiarmid that, in spite of, like Mayakovsky, sharing an emphasis for "giving voice to the inarticulate in society" (as we see, on reading John Maclean's speeches, that he, too, was hell-bent on doing), MacDiarmid was "an eccentric homespun avant-gardist, and aspects of his poetry have a quasi-futurist quality that owes nothing to the Russians, but is nonetheless interesting in its own right".¹⁴ In this way Morgan reads MacDiarmid as creator of a cottage-industry of knowledge, howsoever much "long-range confrontation or kinship / with all the world" it may set up.¹⁵ Equally, for Morgan, writing poetically 'On John Maclean' for the 50th anniversary of his death, Maclean (as MacDiarmid) is also an interesting failure, for the fact of his nationalism dominating decision-making over and above the Internationale: in the poem there is a rather poignant central verse implying that even as Maclean had missed the boat (as it were), yet the boats of the Internationale were partly wrecked, and all 'maimed' by the times.¹⁶ In both the case of MacDiarmid and Maclean, Morgan's judgement is similar: that the national appropriation of the figure of Lenin and a form of Leninism which is not internationally attuned is to be cabined, cribbed, and confined.¹⁷ It is not, and cannot, be the same as the *translation act* of the Leninist emancipatory task as stated from its beginnings, after the fact (the concrete historical occurrence) of the Paris Commune, which from its creation onwards would be 'immortal' (although not without fault):¹⁸ to attempt the impossible (once more), with different means, in a different time, with a different language – to re-invent this (no longer as) impossible task of emancipation again, for and in the world.¹⁹ There are two forms of *cuius regio*²⁰ – one that allows the translation of and support to an internationalist vision, and one which forecloses it – and (for Morgan) Maclean's and MacDiarmid's decisions allegiances ultimately fall out for the latter.

So let us put Maclean aside for now, as well as MacDiarmid; it is now to this different Scot, of a different generation, that we must look for a better, or we might say 'truer' (Scottish) Lenin; to a 'Lenin', or reading of Lenin, that sits within a more internationalist and less nationalistically partisan model, and to a poetic mode of approach to Lenin that is at once

a celebration and critique of prior poetizations of the figure of Lenin and indeed of the modes of articulation revolution itself. Morgan's Lenin is of course a Lenin after the fact, and after the fact, too, of MacLean and MacDiarmid (but, as Mayakovsky so convincingly writes *in life* and his own poetry of his own (social, poetic) death, what has a life-time to do with it?), but this position allows for the development of an attunement to the valences of a certain form of reading revolutionary Leninism and its legacies with a distinctly Scottish note, born in part perhaps out of previous failures of precisely this note. In turning to Morgan's Lenin, this essay speaks to the current trend of reading Morgan's 'Russian' engagement through his literary translations (rather than political engagements)²¹ hopefully adding to these meticulous tracings of an intense suite of interconnectivities, a poetico-*political*-revolutionary valence.

Morgan's reading of Lenin, I'd argue, is perhaps one of the most successful we have seen so far from a Scottish context, from a Scotland that yet grapples mostly unsuccessfully with many of the issues, on the pivot-point between nationalism and internationalism that a 'devolved' governance structure can make even clearer, but which were earlier identified by Maclean and MacDiarmid. But because Morgan's reading has taken poetic rather than prose form (for the most part), and perhaps, too, because the reception of the oeuvre is dispersed (he is mostly considered either as a popular poetic figure in Scotland, thanks to the joyous humour of some of his concrete verse and the frequent anthologizations of his poems about love and outer space, or (critically) considered to be a 'various' poet, too 'versatile' to be true,²² or alternatively read as a translator (of amongst other languages Russian, Hungarian, German, Italian, Portuguese, French, Old English in verse, concrete works, and plays), or (much more rarely now) read as a cultural critic), there has not yet been a serious consideration of the ways in which he systematically engages with the international force and revolutionary language concepts of Leninism. It is too easy to simply read his poetics as a part of 'the Dream' structure of a Scottish devolutionary political vision which was a part of the debates of the intelligentsia in Scotland around the two referendum periods,²³ and which reading, particularly conditioned by seeing his work alongside that of the other poets collected in the *Homage to John Maclean*, is one into which we might easily be led. But such an easy reading would be by nature a partial one, and eventually proven logically false by the poet's own unrepentant attempts to prove – through variousness, mutabilities – a poetic universal across the *oeuvre*; Morgan time and again refuses through his practice nationalistic navel-gazing, and, as we will shortly see, refuses for any 'dream-vision' structure to be restricted to national genre, language, period, or form. And even by this evidence – if the 'variousness' is considered a method of approach, critique, and poetic revolution demanding courage and resistance in the face of more monogeneric demands rather than a sly inability to commit

to a singular poetics²⁴ – Morgan’s poetry might be seen to operate more akin to the work against the immobilizing *быть* (*byt*), and cognate attempt to reload language with a revolutionary force as resistance to the pull of bourgeois inertias and autonomization, of the group of the *Left Front of the Arts*.²⁵ And in so doing, as does the imperatives of the work of the *LEF*, Morgan’s work would invariably engage the figure of Lenin, calling forth, from Glasgow, for the storm.

2. The stormy north sends driving forth the blinding sleet and snaw

Lenin is something of a condition of vision for and of Morgan’s work, and we see this emergent from the beginning of the *oeuvre*, provided we read with Lenin in mind, and consider Morgan as a meticulous world- and *Zeitgeist*-builder in his works. In 1952, Morgan put together two poetic collections, one in an endarkened, tragic, literalizing, tone, entitled *Dies Irae*, and the other in the comedic, highly fictionalizing, speculative tone, entitled *The Vision of Cathkin Braes*. Only the latter was to see publication before Morgan’s *Collected Poems*, and would do so with one particularly anti-totalitarian ‘great power’ inditing section excised,²⁶ however, we must, as the poet himself commands, consider both volumes together.²⁷ But let us begin with the end of *The Vision of Cathkin Braes*, which gives us a key to the orientation of the poet’s battle-cry. The final poem of the collection is a full translation of Gorky’s 1901 poem ‘Песня о Буревестнике’ (in Morgan’s translation the title is ‘A Song of the Petrel’, his resistance to the definite article or dispensing with a first article altogether which is usually used in the various translated titles of the poem already makes the gesture to this work’s being unforeclosed, one piece of evidence of such a song to build upon, to hear differently elsewhere). Our Lenin-tinted lenses will know (as did Morgan) that, in a sense, Gorky is in fact a (albeit momentary) condition of vision for Lenin,²⁸ and that this poem had been a half-century previously, the ‘battle cry of the revolution’. The titular noun of the poem became an epithet for Gorky himself (‘the storm petrel of the revolution’), and, for its galvanizing force, the poem was also at least apocryphally a favourite of Vladimir Ilyich. In Gorky’s poem, the final one in a multi-poem cycle, the revolution as well as its detractors and figureheads are coded in ‘Aesopian language’. The revolution is the ‘storm’ – and above the song of all the other birds, the petrel’s cries out unafraid of this storm, indeed it calls out its coming, and even gives as a parthian shot a call for its intensification.

Morgan’s translation is a tour-de-force, and it is worth paying particular attention to what his rendering of the opening lines tells us, through the poetological decisions effected in the translation of the work to a Scottish/British context:

Wind-called clouds crowd up to cover
 The grey wave-waste. Wheeling between
 The pride of the cloud and the press of the sea
 Is the proud petrel, black lightning-bolt.²⁹

As if commenting on the airscapes *sans frontières* of the petrel and its song as something which can and must not be confined only to the poem of Gorky, Morgan's lines out-run those of the original.³⁰ Yet this act of poetic overspill allows the poet to support the lines of this new version of the song comprising a conversation with Gorky's original on the level of the international, or even, the poetic universal. Gorky's lines are easily memorable in Russian in part because of their steady supporting trochaic tetrameter beats (the various substitutions of foot as the poem progresses only make this more incantatory: the flexible line is built to accommodate the speaking voice of the people not the other way around) and Morgan takes up the challenge of the trochaic tetrameter in the first line (this is supported by the alliteration and syntax which makes the line almost impossible to scan otherwise). But after the first line with its perfect rhythmic nod to Gorky's original poem, Morgan moves past this: the second line (also of eight syllables) reverses the feet (it starts off with a strong iambic beat), the subsequent lines expand the number of syllables. Yet Morgan's English poem retains a four beat line throughout, which is just as strong as Gorky's Russian; Morgan 'translates' the forward propulsion of Gorky's Russian trochaic tetrameter into something even more forward-moving than that: the flexible four-beat line which is what Derek Attridge will later call a poetic centuries-transcending "near universality" – the "English Dolnik".³¹ What this also allows is for Morgan's lines to contain not only the metrical nod to Gorky's poetological choice of a galloping line, but also to make the line more capacious, broader, and resonant. With such heavy alliteration structuring it, Morgan's Gorky calls too to the stress-patterns, medial divisions, and consonant clustering of Old and Middle English verse.³² Thus does Morgan make the range of flight of the stormy petrel, and the storm-centre, move West, along northern lines of latitude, to the Northern reaches of western Europe, but he also shifts its temporal reach and resonance further back in time.³³ And Morgan's line, carrying this valence with a (poetic) age this poet was to designate as resonant with a form of heroism that was not imperial,³⁴ moves out further still, simultaneously into the absolute present of the work presented in this translation and the medieval Latin four-beat line (a different trochaic tetrameter) associated with the *Dies Irae*. This is the moment where *The Vision of Cathkin Braes* (1952) opens to *Dies Irae* (1952); it does so through the battle-cry of a revolutionary storm centre to come, and a figure of the revolution (the stormy petrel) which in its bird-form has a full migratory range from the Arctic Circle to the South Atlantic Ocean.

We do not need to rehearse in detail again the timing, or historicity, of Gorky's poetic intervention, and the reasons for the galvanizing force of its allegory, except to note, in this context, how its proleptic pre-revolutionary intimations are allied to the use of allegory to mask the social intent. Language's revolutionary use will in a period before, or necessitating revolution, be in some sense *sub rosa*; as Lenin, reflecting on the period before 1917, was to define "that accursed Aesopian Language – to which tsarism compelled all revolutionaries to have recourse", whose points are "distorted, cramped, compressed in an iron vice on account of the censor". Yet, such language can be a herald, speaking to galvanize under "the period of imperialism [that] is the eve of the socialist revolution".³⁵ In a sense, the Aesopian mode may be seen as the harbinger (the stormy petrel) of a future age where it is no longer needed; from the Aesopian may emerge what Viktor Shklovsky was to diagnose as the hallmark style of Lenin's political mode: "the 'absence of incantation' typical of so much revolutionary rhetoric, a resistance to the blurring of the relations between word and thing".³⁶ Gorky will give way to Ulyanov, the Storm Petrel to Lenin; the question of the Aesopian (its temporary necessity, and the subsequent necessity of its discarding) will be transmuted in Lenin's theories of the slogan and their afterlife.

In taking on Gorky's verse and voice, after Lenin (for the poem's final lines are also the final lines, in quotation, of Lenin's 'Before the Storm' (1906)³⁷) through the poem whose symbol was so variously interpreted since its popular advent,³⁸ Morgan also takes these words with and before Lenin (reading Gorky again with Lenin after Stalin³⁹) by which ventriloquial act he casts himself both as new generation and new harbinger, enacting the hypertemporality of the Leninist idea of the never-dead always possible name of the Commune and its cause: "The cause of the Commune is the cause of the social revolution, the cause of the complete political and economic emancipation of the toilers. It is the cause of the proletariat of the whole world. And in this sense it is immortal."⁴⁰ *Après la commune the storm (again)*. By re-internationalizing and tacitly de-Stalinizing, by renewing, 'A Song of the Stormy Petrel', and, in *The Vision of Cathkin Braes*, by placing this poem at the end of a series of semi-allegorical contemporary globe-spanning vision poems given in multiple voices, Morgan indicates what he is attempting to revive in Gorky's verse for his current times: its defiant, visionary, revolutionary force. It is unquestionable that the *sub rosa*, or Aesopian, aspect of Gorky's verse would have appealed directly to Morgan, along with the fact that the not-yet-realised revolution/storm presaged by the poet/stormy petrel actually did take place (like the Commune, the October Revolution is a realization of an apparent impossibility).⁴¹ And he places this re-newed Gorky directly in a Scottish context as *Cathkin Braes*, whose name the full volume in its title, are the hills at the South East of Glasgow, between where Morgan grew up (in Rutherglen) and where he lived (the city of Glasgow) – implying

Glasgow's status as 'revolutionary storm centre', as a 'new Petrograd' in a post-Macleanian sense, may be renewed, or its range extended.

It is worth dwelling for a moment on the way that Morgan makes versions of the storm-heralding line (5 lines from the end of the poem) and its final line, as these, as the opening lines have demonstrated the internationalism and deep-temporal range of the 'storm', demonstrate that Morgan's Gorky is only possible *after* Lenin. Because if with Lenin, out of Marx and Engels, the idea of the commune is immortalized, it is with the Lenin of 1917 that a new dimension of its practice, a new range of its force, is inaugurated. Morgan translates Gorky's heralding of the storm "Буря! Скоро грянет буря!" (Storm! The storm is coming!), as "The storm is breaking into full being!"⁴² 'The storm', invoked as an incipient future in Gorky, is already present in Morgan's Gorky, cast into a present continuous, implying the continuity of 'the storm' since Gorky and indeed since before then. The next lines, Morgan casts as follows:

There flies the fearless petrel in his pride
Through lightning and over the wave-wrath-roaring
And there like a prophet cries triumphing
'Let the tempest be unloosed to its last tide!'⁴³

In Gorky's prophetic petrel's challenge to the infinite about the oncoming storm, '— Пусть сильнее грянет буря!..', the line that Lenin in 1906, 'Before the Storm', would also ventriloquize, 'Let the storm rage louder!',⁴⁴ the evolution of the storm is the cause. In Morgan's Gorky, the parthian shot is rather a furtherance of storm's already having been, for a long time, unleashed. Morgan's Gorky's challenge is for the infinite success of the immortal tempest-form, beyond 1871, beyond 1917; the petrel's song is, in company, re-sounded from the interior of the storm itself.

It is in the unpublished companion to *The Vision of Cathkin Braes, Dies Irae*, where the Early- and Middle English antecedents of the storm-clouds of *The Vision* that we have read in Morgan's rendering of Gorky, are made explicit. The volume contains bold versionings of Old English poems 'The Ruin', 'The Seafarer', 'The Wanderer', and the 'Storm' (all of whose alliterative line-propulsion Morgan condenses into his 'English dolnik'⁴⁵ in his version of Gorky's poem), and 'Four Riddles' also from Old English (which indicate a precursor to the Aesopian mode), and the whole volume ending with Early Middle English. However far the world of the Old English Elegies might be from the Russian Revolution, for Morgan, the distance is slight. The Leninian context of the Old and Middle English poetic inheritance is made clear as the threshold poem to this sequence of translations is a poem 'Harrowing Heaven, 1924'. By this act of sequencing, Morgan's Lenin provides the condition of vision for the re-reading of the older works. Drawing on and recasting Mayakovsky's Christic Lenin figure, this poem is Morgan's elegy to, and first explicit

poetological treatment of Lenin. Whereas, in the Christian *Descensus Christi ad Infernos*, to liberate the dead the Christ figure in the period between his death and resurrection, harrowed hell,⁴⁶ Lenin harrows heaven. In this poem, Morgan makes explicit the relation of Lenin (or, Lenin's death – so the figure of Lenin) to a new international 'Second Coming', one which dispels all imperialisms, including the Christian one. Morgan's Lenin stands in the aftermath of Mayakovsky's, whose elegiac versioning (similarly rhyme-heavy and pressing language into new forms of articulation) places Lenin too after Marx. But where Mayakovsky's Lenin is a putting into praxis of Marxian theories, Morgan's Lenin is enabled through his reading of Marx to identify the difference between true and false prophecy (where false prophecy is in fact imperial consular warning), and cannot be bought by money, or (imperial) belief. The poem is addressed (we might wager in the voice of the stormy petrel) as a warning to heaven in all its angelic ranks, and to the world in all its historicity from Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt to the present – "for LENIN is coming".⁴⁷

As does Mayakovsky, Morgan refuses to petrify or monumentalize Lenin – Mayakovsky writes against capitalizing on fame in 'the honeyed incense / of homage' and Lenin's divinization,⁴⁸ and Morgan against 'consuls', 'heavenly consols', and 'emption',⁴⁹ both preferring to configure an active legacy backwards and forwards across time.⁵⁰ Morgan, in this poem, casts the figure of Lenin, between death and resurrection, as the active undoer of all practices and historical legacies of imperialism. The final lines of the poem read:

Cherubs in ziggurats, watch out for Vladimír!
When the world's dreamer is heaven's undreamer,
Saints in their chains may murmur 'redeemer'.⁵¹

And here Morgan takes up the timeline of Gorky: as the storm, the harrowing of heaven by the figure of Lenin is to come. It is also internationalist: the 'storm' neither knows nor respects boundaries. In this vision, Lenin is a great doer, and also a great un-doer; by Lenin we judge (and are judged): Lenin holds us to account, but this is an accounting without imperialism and without capitalism. How does Morgan get there?

Morgan's unorthodox emphasis on 'Vladimír' estranges the name both from the frequent Anglophone mispronunciations ('Vládimir') and the Russian ('Vladimír'). The rhythmic shift, as it ever does in Morgan, denotes through a minimal difference the potential for a maximal change. He draws attention to the name's etymology – the English mis-pronunciation emphasizes the imperial resonance of the first part of the name ('Vlad' meaning ruler), the Russian pronunciation emphasizes an etymological confusion between fame (*měřŭ*) and peace (*mirŭ*) – and opens up another possibility. This is a possibility which is (at this conjuncture) only open to poetic logic, but we must also remember that for Morgan the revolution

can be something that extends from a perspective poetological (the work poetry does), to move through the visionary towards the real. The stormy petrel sings for the future, of “a presence, in society, of a problem whose solution can be imagined only in terms of a work of poetry,”⁵² and, with a world stuck between empire and a swithering between the cults of fame and peace (the two things which may be seen as a legacy of Leninism, in the conjunction of Morgan’s writing tipping problematically towards the former), poetry (still) has its work cut out for it. ‘Vladimir’, though, gives us a taste of Scottish Internationalist Lenin: it is neither the Anglophone mistake nor purely Russian, but a neo-pronunciation, new foreignness, productive ostranenie, a Vladimir estranged from itself, tinged with a world-facing Scots. ‘Vla-Deemer’ in Scots pronunciation would effect a full rhyme with ‘undreamer’ and ‘redeemer’: the only way of fully resolving the final rhymes to conclude the poem. In placing a new emphasis on something neither language nor its common misprising offers, Morgan’s poetic emphasis rather gives us ‘deemer’, bringing the Old English *dœmere* back to life:⁵³ a pre-capitalist ‘judgement’, or accounting, And indeed, since Morgan’s poetic philologies are always expressive, it’s not surprising that ‘deemer’ as word for judge peters out through the early Modern period, becoming obsolete before the seventeenth century.

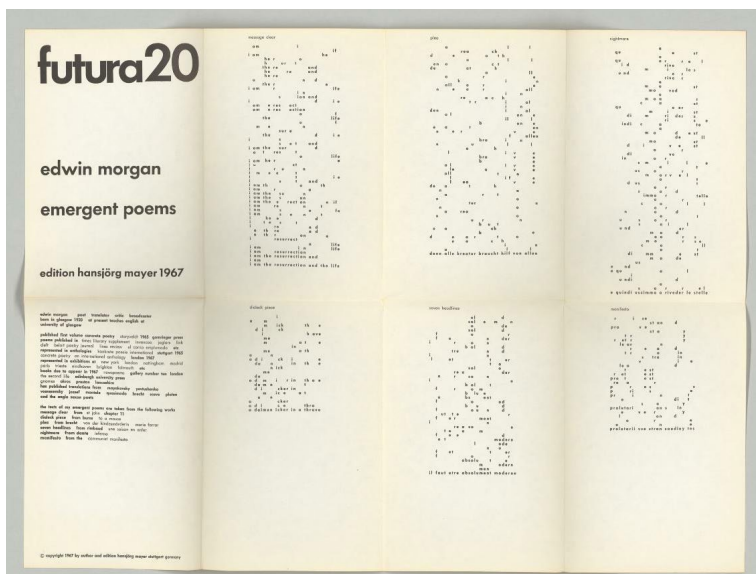
This strange rendering allows Morgan to dispose of imperial rule (‘Vlad’ or *volděti*) entirely, and dissolve the ambiguous choice between greatness/fame (*měřŭ*) and world/peace (*mirŭ*); where ‘fame’ must be read here tinged with the ‘canonization’ of and capitalization on Lenin that the *LEF* manifesto ‘Don’t Merchandize Lenin!’⁵⁴ was to launch an invective against, and ‘peace’ with Lenin himself – as a name under which national imperialisms mask themselves.⁵⁵ In Vla-Deemer, heaven can be harrowed and saints saved from eternal imprisonment and servitude, for the struggle against imperialism is also a struggle against an imperial Christian imaginary from which all true prophets of revolution must be saved. Humanity must be pitted against inhumanity,⁵⁶ but the sources of inhumanity must be fully accounted for. Rodney Edgecombe recognises the Christian framework of the poem, and reading only through the context of the Middle English dream vision, notes that even such “key words of Christianity as redemption and consolation turn by a sort of aphasia into their capitalist understructures, ‘emption’ and ‘consoles’.”⁵⁷ Aphasia only without Lenin, with Lenin, the disorder disappears into a revelation, and a glimmer of the struggle, work done to draw attention and up-turn, revolution, and emancipation (even from pernicious history-makings), to come: in which may exist “bread without theophagy [...] / And wine that makes but is not blood”, and a “handful of salt in the hands of humanity”.⁵⁸ The last of these phrases overwrites Jesus with Lenin, as the “salt of the salt of the earth” (from the novel of Chernyshevsky *What is to be done?*, influence to Lenin’s ‘What is to be Done’⁵⁹) moves us away from

the apostolic (the biblical ‘salt of the earth’) and the imperial (the imperial practice of salting the earth of razed cities), to the holding of salt in the hands of the people. Without Lenin we are stuck in a series of possible mistakes, and with him are given the possibility to make a judgement of bad appropriations and through this, create a vision of a possible world future which works against bad appropriations.

3. A сеп и молот in a thrave⁶⁰

We will have to wait for a half century to see how Morgan’s brilliant and specific attention to the figure of the revolutionary Lenin will develop in its fullness, but this does not mean that the interim years are not spent in further investigation in how to combat the political ‘mutation’ of revolutionary truth, of “the 1917 Russian spirit as opposed to Stalinist monolithic gradualism”,⁶¹ the investigation of what the symptoms and effects might be of the truth’s “fleeting visionary revelatory aspect[s]”,⁶² or, what I’d like to call a reading and writing with what Morgan has set up as an internationalist vision and condition held in the promise of the name Lenin. Across these 50 years, Morgan’s Lenin is partly hidden, partly a part of a personal practical world vision, and partly a suite of poetological experiments. With relation to the first part, the ‘Lenin’ we have set up here resurges across works as diverse as the dialogue between Marilyn Monroe and Galina Ulanova (in ‘The Whittrick’, 1961),⁶³ a post-nuclear Glasgow cast as Petrograd in the *Sonnets from Scotland* (1984), the alternative world-history *Planet Wave*’s ‘Siege of Leningrad’ (1997/2007, to which we will later briefly return), and his linking of his translations of Beowulf (1952) and Mayakovsky (1972).⁶⁴ For the second part, 1955 is a significant year: Morgan spends six weeks in the USSR as a part of a VOKS (Society of Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union) and British Council organised tour: “we arrived here today”, he writes to his friend Alan Shearer in April, “and our hotel almost overlooks the Red Square (and Lenin’s mausoleum which you can see on the other side)”.⁶⁵ Perspective conditioned indeed,⁶⁶ which re-conditioning into a broader contemporary allows Morgan to approach ‘his’ Lenin with more precision and fuller force; as James Rann writes, “Once the violent excesses of Stalinism were publicly admitted, Morgan literally revisited his earlier impressions, adding context [...] he felt compelled by the spectre of state violence to re-open the archive and bring it into conversation with the present.”⁶⁷ There is no move to censor, only to give fuller context, to complicate, and never to excuse, rather to provide a Lenin re-loaded through the “spirit of 1917”⁶⁸ (again). But it is to the third part we will now attend, as it is here we see Morgan continue his consideration of the relations between language and revolution. To do this we will turn to another eve and anniversary of revolution, 1967, and a suite of 6 poems the poet called ‘emergent poems’, published by editions hansjörg mayer as the twentieth in a series of

foldable to pocket-size broadsides called *'futura'* which ran between 1965-1968. So once more for Morgan poetry emerges under the sign (and in the typography) of the future.⁶⁹



In this sequence Morgan uses concrete poetic techniques to give (poetic) commentaries, at the level of the letter, on a series of phrases which have been variously extracted and used as slogans, from multiple languages and cultural traditions, and all have pertinent historical revolutionary potential. The mode of 'concrete' poeticizing in 'emergent poems' works by taking a phrase and then allowing letters to emerge out of the phrase, subtracting from it, to say something related but new. These 'subtractions', appearing to float under the title of each poem, eventually solidify into the phrase itself, which provides the ground or horizon for the emergences out of which it is formed. In 'emergent poems', this subtractivist-condensatory 'concrete' poetic method is used as a way of demonstrating the various powers of a phrase, but equally gives a clear indication of ways in which the poet is thinking, along, one might hazard, Leninist lines, about the relation of the slogan (positively conceived), to the phrase (from which it stems), the maxim or cliché (which it might become), and to the hollow gestural or gnomic modes which indicate the opportunistic capitalization on a slogan's group-identity-forming force (how the slogan emerges out of language); to how prior useful exactitudes, or clear messages, can become, through conjunctural and cultural shifts and appropriations, obscuring and appropriated, and how to diagnose these shifts through estrangement-effects and other forms of forcing.⁷⁰

Clearly also although for Morgan, 'concrete' is one method of poetic expression and poetological experiment which has multiple possible applications,⁷¹ it also presents a very direct way of moving poetry out of

a pre-revolutionary Aesopian mode and away from a post-revolutionary inexactitude of expression,⁷² to somewhere else, where the maintained pressure on the actions of the letter and the word is essential. But for all concrete poetry may push towards a punch-line this is no Wittgensteinian language play. For ‘concrete’ in Morgan has clearly Marxian tendencies (although we will later see that this Marx emerges only out of the possibilities offered by Lenin). The naming of this genre of poetic expression is felicitous, as it allows the poet, thence, to metapoetically engage the Marxian ‘concrete’ concept,⁷³ and stage a series of (poetic) investigations under that name. What is also demonstrated here, more than in Morgan’s other sustained concrete experiments of this time⁷⁴ is that, since ‘emergent poems’s ‘extractions’ (of what one might call the ‘spirit’ of the phrase) are all in English yet occur out of phrases taken from languages other than English,⁷⁵ this is also a poetological creation of concrete proof of and for an international by Morgan: the “message” can and indeed must be “clear”, must be in all significant ways *sans frontières*.

The titles of each of the ‘emergent poems’ bar one (in Scots) are in English which is *lingua franca* rather than target language of these experiments,⁷⁶ and give us a clear sense of the critiques that each poem is proffering. ‘message clear’ and ‘manifesto’ book-end the series, the first giving a reading of the possibility of something to be clear and distinct, and the second a reprisal of this reading in terms of public intent. Between these two, the readings move through what an appropriate language might be (‘dialek piece’), a way of asking (‘plea’), a way of disseminating (‘seven headlines’), and the work of this on the unconscious or imaginary (‘nightmare’). Each ‘emergent poem’ worries away at the great question of how to make clear as possible to all people the pressing problems of the age, and puts its finger on some interesting points of success and failure. We can find further resonance through looking quite simply at the provenance of each phrase, and from the (authorial) point of provenance where we will see that there is a similar critique at play in this progress as we have seen in ‘Harrowing Heaven, 1924’:

1. ‘message clear’ from the King James Bible, John Chapter 11 Verse 25 (from English)
2. ‘dialek piece’ from Robert Burns’s ‘To a mouse’ (from Scots)
3. ‘plea’ from Bertold Brecht’s *Von der Kindesmörderin Marie Farrar* (from German)
4. ‘seven headlines’ from Arthur Rimbaud’s *Une saison en enfer* (from French)
5. ‘nightmare’ from Dante Alighieri’s *Inferno* (from Italian)
6. ‘manifesto’ from the *Communist Manifesto* (from Russian)

The sequence, which can be read in multiple ways due to the way the poems are positioned on the folded broadside page,⁷⁷ disrupts any expected chronology, and, always beginning with a version of Jesus via John via (King) James (I/VI), always ends in the option of Marx and Engels, via ‘proletarians in every land’, who can only emerge via Lenin. Lenin is spectral here: significantly, no names are given in the paratextual attribution (not even to Marx and Engels). And unlike all other of the ‘emergent poems’, with the exception of ‘message clear’, ‘manifesto’ is not drawn from the language of its original expression (German). Rather the way that we engage what ‘emergent poems’ calls the Communist Manifesto is through a romanized Russian, and through a phrase taken from this which has already been so sloganized, voiced by so many, that it floats free of the name of its author(s), and indeed as capitulative phrase of the Communist Manifesto is designed to do so – ‘Proletarii vsekh stran, soedinya[i]tes’ (‘proletarians in every land are one’).⁷⁸ And it is here that we see that Morgan’s ‘Manifesto’ is only possible after Engels and Marx, after Lenin, after 1917, after Trotsky, and after the death of Lenin, as the slogan had to be taken up an Russianised and made the state slogan of the USSR, all of its potential held, and re-voiced. We must also not forget that Marx used the line more than once, nor that the genesis of the Communist Manifesto itself supports the ‘harrowing’ logic that Morgan applies, it seems, throughout the poetic work written under the sign of Lenin.⁷⁹ And we also begin to witness the way that the ‘emergent poems’ move towards an exposition of Leninist sloganological thought of which ‘Manifesto’ is the apotheosis.

For Lenin, slogans (he uses a loan-word from German, лозунг (Losung))⁸⁰ “are the business of *intelligent* political leaders” and they should comprise “action” in the resolutions that they galvanise;⁸¹ a slogan is neither a brand nor an identity-political ideological signifier – its use-value cannot be translated into capital (so its value and its use cannot but be not capitalistic), or, if this ends up being the case, it is a symptom of a ‘vile opportunism’, and the prostitution of the slogan for the means of “the social-chauvinist humbugging of the people”⁸² (this, we see after the death of Lenin progressively as Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь! becomes visual-symbolic across the years of design- and re-design competitions for the state symbol of the USSR, and in its other translations a hollowed out or dilution of state Communism’s international action across the world into identitarian language-forms). For Lenin, the work and mode of the slogan is a salient feature of a return to Marx (and Engels) through the treatment of “insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art”; the force of its condensation-action is “for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing”,⁸³ sharp to revolutions turningpoints in their use (when possessed of active meaning) and discarding (when “meaning is lost”, when the slogan “obscures or weakens”).⁸⁴ A salient aspect of the art of insurrection is to have an operative sloganologics.

The slogan, in its best operational mode, works with the personal and acquisitional estranged to it, is a collectivizing force, a battle-cry.

This applies just as much to our making the ‘slogan’ itself an operation *sans frontières*, and Morgan’s ‘emergent poems’ imply that the most successful of these thus far is emergent from the communist manifesto with a post-revolutionary Russian versioning. To take sloganological thinking to Scotland, and more particularly to Clydeside (with not only its strong Ulster connections but also its Gaelic heritage) is to return ‘Slogan’ to the crucible from which arises a certain version of its etymological (and indeed its political) force. The Russian Lenin uses for his slogan-related explorations sits estranged within Russian (in which there are other words that are alternatively used to denote a slogan), as we know, this is a loan-word from German; cast back into German it bears a phonoaesthetic but not etymological connection to *Lösung*, thus yoking together at the level of the ear, the motto or (military) pass-phrase (die *Losung*, out of *Los*, a lot or ticket), and the resolution or dissolution of a problem (die *Lösung*, out of *Lose*, a loose thing).⁸⁵ ‘*Losung*’, which becomes *лозунг* (‘*lozung*’), relates to, in effect, the way that an Aesopian language, a password or motto, might allow entry into an inner circle.⁸⁶ And although this is anagrammatically close to ‘Slogan’, here, via the Scottish context of this (new) International we hear something less privative, and more cognate with Lenin’s writing on the slogan we have sketched above. ‘Slogan’, too, is a loan-word, coming into English from Scots Gaelic (*slúagh-ghairm*). What is the resonance of this carrying-over? Firstly, it denotes a de-imperialized English and Scots. Secondly, its meaning stems from a rallying- or battle-cry which is not unconnected with the ‘revivification’ or ‘resurrection’ processes of both ‘The Harrowing of Heaven’ and the sequence of ‘emergent poems’, which has begun by conjuring the figures of Jesus and Lazarus, and ends with the grand slogan of the manifesto: *slúagh*, a host or gathering, army or assembly + *ghairm*, (their) call, cry, proclamation, or declaration. ‘Slogan’ is the name of a bringing together of multitudes into a collective act which is far beyond the sum of its individual parts. Thirdly, the poetic and folkloric context of the *slúagh-ghairm* plays into our reading of Morgan’s Lenin’s ‘harrowing’, as it is the cry of the *Slúagh na marbh*, or the unChristianized unforgiven dead (made into a host of fairy warriors; this would be cognate to the ‘saints in their chains’ of the ‘Harrowing of Heaven’) in Celtic belief structures. *Slúagh*, can also be brought back etymologically across both Celtic and Balto-Slavic languages, carrying within it a proletarian sense (across these cognates it can mean any form of working in servitude to a master); *slúagh-ghairm* becomes the rallying-cry of the proletariat across all lands. And so it is in the move from ‘*Losung*’, to ‘Slogan’ that also might cast an interesting light on the internationalist potentiality inherent in the Leninist theory of the slogan, its weaponization, and its efficacy, and not only what it means for ‘Manifesto’ (which we know Lenin, apocryphally,

translated), but also, more broadly, what it means for Morgan's (Scottish) International, and his reading of what is perhaps the most used phrase, the Parthian shot, of the Communist Manifesto, cast into a romanized Russian (the letters estranged from themselves allowing for more to sound them)⁸⁷:

Manifesto

r i se st an d
 pro v e st a y
 t r y
 r et r y
 le ar n
 r e a d
 t r a in
 s tra in
 v i e
 le a d
 t e st
 r et e st
 pro t e st
 ro a r
 p r e s s
 p ri s e
 pr i n t
 e di t
 s a y
 proletari an s in
 e v e r y
 l an d
 a r e
 o n e
 proletarii vsekh stran soedinyaites

Morgan's 'Manifesto' shows us that action derives from an (operative) slogan, and the slogan condenses from the cumulation of action; and, cognate with a Leninism of language,⁸⁸ the (operative) slogan can only derive action, not corruption,⁸⁹ and as such it cannot be 'bought', for the stages of the revolution must additionally work to persistently undo the buyability, and to diagnose points of overuse. The poetics and the politics of the slogan must work resonant with the 10th of the April Theses – the call for the new revolutionary International – and reading in this way (as I hope we have just done) shows us how the valences of the phrase, from poetic to sloganic, might operate in the field of the political, how they are 'live' matters, but also matters that are not bound by language borders (in fact such unbinding is necessary to the poetological in their force, and the unbinding from nationalisms in language aid this process). Just as the poetological approach can teach us something about slogan-identification; the sloganological approach (after Lenin) can teach us

something about poetry. To take on at this point a different slogan, derived from the unrepentant refrain of Mayakovsky's 1924 'Komsomol Song', 'Lenin Lived, Lenin Lives, Lenin will live',⁹⁰ or, will allow us to hold things to account, from the very level of the letter, to the fullness of the wor(l)d.

4. Sic famous twa should disagree't

It is ninety years after 1917 and forty years after 'Manifesto' first sees circulation that Morgan will, in *A Book of Lives*, re-engage these many dimensions of 'Lenin'. He prepares the ground through the sort of allusive revival that has peppered the *oeuvre* from the beginning. Here, this is in the republication of the text from 1997's 'Planet Wave',⁹¹ which chooses a series of historical traversals in deep and future time, one of which, after 'Rimbaud (1891 AD)' and before 'The Sputnik's Tale (1957 AD)', is 'The Siege of Leningrad (1941-1944 AD)'; the sequencing here gives us a typically Morganish story of revolutions: poetic, political, scientific... But we must note that after Rimbaud and before 2001 (the poem after Sputnik is 'The Twin Towers'), world-culture definitions for Morgan are direct consequences of the Russian revolutions and resistances. 'The Siege of Leningrad' attempts to unpack the grotesquery of the situation, when art and politics meet – during the siege the half-dead drag the dead, rats are eaten, nevertheless "Crashes of Shostakovich" are still heard – and struggles against any form of triumphalism except the wariest. For the brutality of a siege and its memory is not the same as the commune. And here again Morgan questions death, as the besieged, cast as children of Lenin ("say what you will"), "held the line. They live / in the memory of poets and of those far ones / like myself".⁹² Morgan's 'I' watches from a distance of space and time, and it is seen that the idea of 'the people' is what survives, balanced between the potentiality of something beyond the pain of the present, beyond the siege's "print[ing] of the north in blood", "until the pain should be melted and the people / sing in the harmless moon of their white nights".⁹³ The wounded bloodbath of the frozen north becomes rubricate (a different red on white, a newsprint overwriting of the real); the 'white nights' too divide into a harmlessness of aesthetic self-interiorization or melancholy traumatic stasis (after Dostoevsky's story), and the indifference of the perpetual twilight of the night in the arctic circle. The moon, indeed, is harmless (it illuminates the night, it neither metes harm over this and other events, nor does it respond, act, record), but we must also read this in two ways, for the force is to be found in the internal contradiction and our grappling with this against any return to a metaphysical 'heavens' in which the moon would be cast as an engaged actor.

It is with an imagined return to 1955, that Morgan, in 2007, indicates clearly a return, via Lenin, to a poetological interaction with what Lenin calls the 'kernel of dialectics' – the variant interpretations of Marxian law of the unity of opposites – born out of Lenin's audacious act of reading

Hegel with Marx, in specific engagement with *The Science of Logic*.⁹⁴ Here we also begin to see how Morgan's Lenin's poetological approach to the slogan allows him to see, or intuit, something concrete beyond his own capacities to read. The poem, '1955 – A recollection' comprises two (or possibly three) sections: a central description, in short lines and lyric narrative, about a trip to Lenin's and Stalin's mausoleum, which is bookended with two indented quatrains, which are also questions, and which are also exactly the same (so, serve a function of a repetition or refrain). Before we address the refrain, we will first read through the central section. Here, Morgan reprises what we now know is an old theme – a 'harrowing' – but this is a *descensus avernus*, into a *cold* depth, into which through the gesture of command we too are invited and made complicit:

Step down slowly,
down into the cold,
old cold, eternal cold,
refrigerated cold⁹⁵

Different dimensions of cold have a chilling effect, and this short lined long sentence of descent has its speaker as part of a "shuffling queue" of "believers and unbelievers", glacially "circling a shrine / curious, peering". Metaphysics has been abandoned by this speaker, but its effects, or the effects of the instantiation of a new metaphysics, are everywhere in this descent, as the speaker reaches "the strangest tableau / you are likely to see / this side of the grave":

Lenin yellowing,
showing his years,
Stalin still rosy
as if lightly sleeping –⁹⁶

This is of course a decent enough description of the visual effects of embalming over time. But more than this, the speaker is written as slow witnesses to enshrinement – thus the radical mis-reading, and misappropriation – of Lenin (and Leninism), which its transmogrification into Stalinism has made visible.⁹⁷ The speaker, "pour[s] the amber / of a poem" over the situation: an (poetic) act which at once gestures towards the descent into this reliquary, but also indicates the revolutionary past (to act as a fly in amber, is to act against the prevailing tide) and potential for future revivification (it is possible to extract DNA from flies trapped in amber). We might posit that the options of (revolutionary) DNA are held in the double-edged nature of the slogan – the potential for its rallying, and the potential for its capitalization; it is for the poet to preserve, or reserve, these (dangerous) resources. Morgan thus explicitly addresses the

problems of apparent contradiction held in the names ‘Lenin’, and ‘Stalin’: the aging of an internationalist future, and the terror subsequent.

But quietly, even in this central section of the poem, which we might argue stands in for ‘history’, Morgan allows a third option of a reading of Lenin which is perhaps less “undead”. ‘Lenin’ is “yellowing” at the east-facing side of the red Kremlin wall, the visit here is a part of Morgan’s trip of 1955, on the eve of the effects of a different reading of Lenin: we are on the eve of the great leap forward (大躍進); across China on radios at salient points during the day would be played two anthems: ‘The Internationale’ and ‘The East is Red’ (東方紅). A new accounting, and a new metamorphosis of the slogan, and indeed, of the dialectic. Lenin’s ‘yellowing’ divides into two (which resonance a poetic context unproblematically affords): the legacy ages; the legacy is translated into a Chinese (‘yellow’) context.⁹⁸ We can concretely observe Morgan’s move to (re)internationalize the problem of the name of Lenin from the poetic context that he gives this central section of the poem. With indented lines (moved right, or ‘east’ on the printed page), the refrain reads:

First there was one,
then there were two,
now there is one,
when will there be none?⁹⁹

Without the context of Morgan-esque Leninist sloganologics we can read this simply contextualized by the central section of the poem: first there was Lenin, then there was Lenin and Stalin, this resulted in a single party totalitarianism, or the dogma of ‘Marxist-Leninism’ (remember Morgan is *reflecting* on 1955 – the eve of Nikita Khrushchev’s ‘Secret Speech’), when will the effects of empire, or of metaphysics, be no more? The question, desperate in 1955, translates to an analogous desperation in a 2007 which is the centre-point of the Iraq war. But sloganologics allow us to get closer to the valences of this refrain, which indeed takes up another slogan.

The slogan here is drawn from Lenin’s reading of Hegel with Marx, on the question of dialectics and development of the theory of contradiction, which provides the full framework of his writings on the slogan. To recapitulate, this involves, “[t]he splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts [...] is the *essence* (one of the “essentials,” one of the principal, if not the principal, characteristics or features) of dialectics,” the transformative process held in the “struggle of mutually exclusive opposites”, which in the very transformations then shift the locations of the problem (or opposition), and create a system of knowledge which cannot but be ‘live’. To treat it reducibly (to, as it were, draw the conclusion “...now there is one”), as “an independent, complete, straight line, which then (if one does not see the wood for the trees) leads into the quagmire, into clerical obscurantism (where it is *anchored* by

the class interests of the ruling classes).”¹⁰⁰ What is drawn out of this is the line ‘one divides into two’, and what is developed out of this maxim is a double-phrase, ‘one divides into two, but two doesn’t merge into one’.¹⁰¹ This gives us an interesting suite of combinatorics, which, as Mladen Dolar writes, allow a sense of irreducibility to comprise “an ontological statement, a mathematical theorem, and a political battle-cry”.¹⁰² And this – philosophical upturning to accounting to the raised voices of the multitude – is indeed a distilled sense of the politics and poetics of the slogan itself. And if we follow this slogan, we can find held within it a new dimension of the (internationalist) operation of sloganological reason.

We find in Mao’s famous text ‘On Contradiction’ the codification of his contribution to the *international* understanding of dialectics– that the site of primary contradiction *must* operate with conjunctural and situational specificity and at the same time a universalist logical framework; this allows us to better diagnose from surface effects (or secondary contradictions), to better historicize as well as universalize (thence internationalize): “The old unity with its constituent opposites yields to a new unity with its constituent opposites, whereupon a new process emerges to replace the old. The old process ends and the new one begins. The new process contains new contradictions and begins its own history of the development of contradictions.”¹⁰³ We see this in the history of Maoism in the debates of the 1960s over ‘one divides into two’ (一分為二), and the reactionary or counterevolutionary ‘two synthesizes into one’ (合二而一), which in their very essence are a sort of metaphysical sophistry against which the negative dialectical ‘two doesn’t merge into one’ is the resolution of the revolutionary battle-cry, which is then made portable through translation in the global 1960s.¹⁰⁴ There is warning here, and potential, which leads Alain Badiou in the 1970s to read Mao’s Lenin’s Engels’s Hegel (or, the Maoist development of dialectics) at this point, avoiding the “vulgar Stalinist interpretation”,¹⁰⁵ and drawing attention to how ‘phrases’ of cultural revolutionary periods have “omnipresence” that obviates the possibility of all but the most philological citation.¹⁰⁶ Badiou grounds this in the force of the ‘Marxist utterance’, emphasising the immanence as well as the “destruction/construction”¹⁰⁷ complexes of the acta slogana we have been following: “every Marxist utterance is, in a single, self-dividing, movement, both statement and directive. A concentrate of real praxis, it equals its movement to return to it. Because that which is, has no being except in its becoming, that which is theory – the knowledge of what is – equally has no being except in its movement towards that of which it is the theory. All knowledge is orientation, all description is prescription”.¹⁰⁸ The utterance (the ‘one’) divides into two, thus imminently clarifies its purpose, also holding within this the potential for its radical misreading and subsumption into metaphysics.¹⁰⁹

But let’s look the condensation of Lenin by Mao’s which gives us the first two lines of Morgan’s poem’s refrain or appeal: ‘First there was one, / then there were two’: one divides into two: and we find that the translation

of dialectics into Chinese revolutionary thinking took on a sloganological form. The force of Mao's phase is from its interaction with another long history of sloganologics: the *chengyu* (成語, literally 'language-becoming' or 'language-speaking' – it is interesting how close this (etymological) formulation is to the operations of Badiou's 'Marxist utterance'). These usually vernacular set phrases, words of wisdom, sayings, or idioms traditionally had a series of different modes – sometimes as short juxtapositions or collocations, sometimes as proverbs, and sometimes as short allegories or riddles. They are heavily in circulation to this day, even in perverted forms (think of the 'fortune cookie' phrase), and have regional variations (all saying the same thing – rather like how jokes might also circulate), whose usual aim is to profess regarding a situation and give reflective advice as to action; they are collected in different manuscripts, rather like folk-tales. Here we can see the start of the relation of the *chengyu* to the *slúagh-ghairm*, *Losung*, лозунг, but carrying also the resonance of the aphorism (or knowledge-formation), and bordering strongly on the poetic.

Chengyu are often four characters long (like: 一分为二 (one divides into two)). But exceptions prove the rule, and when they take allegorical form *chengyu* usually comprise the statement of a novel situation or riddle and a response (usually punning or otherwise parallelizing) which is also a summary or reflection. Thus their form is longer: this sort of *chengyu*, called *xiehouyu* (歇後語) takes a traditional form as couplet or distich (two four-character lines), and bears morphological similarity to the domestic or decorative poem (對聯, *duilian*) in its appearance (these are poetic works we often see on posters one line either side of a doorway). The *xiehouyu* form of *chengyu*, though, significantly takes on the very action of splitting it calls out through a reliance on the threshold or Ur-form of splitting in language: it relies in its structure on the pun, the homophone, and its repetition across the two lines which are a 'call and response' of novel situation and answer. This punning repetition thus shows us the very fundamental nature of the split (the primary contradiction, as it were, of the word), but also its anti-synthetic force (we can't un-see the split once we've seen it). The dialectic of the word itself becomes threshold.

Mao takes up the *chengyu* saying 'one divides into two' from the Book of the Yellow Emperor (黃帝內經), which is the first instance of the authorless and popular phrases's recording, and in the act of his own 'harrowing' of the heavens, overwrites the imperial record, and grafts it onto the Marxist-Leninist dialectical formula whose expression is ultimately the same but whose root is radically different; the operative ostranenie of the internationalist slogan-form resurges here. The second part of this phrase, either in positive synthesis ('two synthesizes into one') or negatively chiasmatic response ('two doesn't merge into one') (where, ironically, the negative chiasmus is the positive revolutionary response) give us the beginning of the second part of this count or accounting. Both

second lines rely on how the one and the two pun themselves, also dividing or synthesizing into each other; the options are a revolutionary dialectics or counterrevolutionary ossification. The *cri de coeur* of the accidental *chengyu* of Morgan's '1955 – A Recollection' points to a current situation which is the positive synthesis (or antirevolutionary antidialectical form): "First there was one, / then there were two, / now there is one..." – the great un-doing has been neatly knotted back into one again. Through a Leninist principle of sloganological dialectics, or perhaps simply through poetic logic, Morgan he is able to intuit or give a rendering of the Maoist refrain (which he would have heard in the multiple languages he did have access to – English, French, and so on – when it gathered again its revolutionary currency in 1968) and indicate its (by 2007) current failure and the various bad infinities of this failure. Let us reprise:

First there was one,
then there were two,
now there is one,
when will there be none?¹¹⁰

Morgan extends the original slogan/*chengyu*, which he breaks over two lines. This extension calls the *xiehouyu chengyu* further into a question (the move to the two-phrase slogan occupies three of Morgan's lines). And then there is a final extension, which expresses a negation (the immanence of none) and resolves the (poeticological and numerological) problem (the answer is 4 (lines) – a Hegelian quadruplicity, if you will), but in turn poses a question (undoing the resolution – unknitting the re-knotting of the two). We comprehend Morgan's question if we read this poetic refrain as an outworking of the mathematics of primary contradiction after Mao: 'when will there be none?' thence gathers its full force – it asks about primary contradiction, about the very (gappy) ground of all emancipatory politics, and asks the harrowing thought of a masterless design (the lines hold no 'I', no 'you', nor 'we' in their utterance). The apotheosis then of Morgan's sloganologics is the universalising question (without 'heavens'): what is it to pun on the one which is the creation and great undoing of the storm-cloud itself? To pun on one and its undoing is precisely to work towards none, through one (the proletarians of every land), the two (the storm, the petrel), through the gaps in the wor(l)d. To pun one (to *p-UN*, to *p'one*) is to split the idea of primary contradiction into two, which allows Morgan to pose – with the promise held in the name 'Lenin' as its starting point – the question of the dissolution of primary contradiction itself, which allows to pose the undead question of life, of the nothing that is now (seen), of the undoing to come, and à venirs that are to go.¹¹¹ It is an undoing of a different sort, then, that frames the recollection that the second part of the poem presents. The storm clouds gather, intensify, and both threshold and exit to the *decensus avernus* is the same space. In this, Morgan repeats himself.

Note on Section Titles

On his visit to the then-USSR in 1955, Morgan read at an open-air concert in Zaporizhzhia (Ukraine). His set-list included Burns and Mayakovsky. I've given the titles of each section one of the (many) oft-quoted lines from Burns, but sometimes with a Morgan-ish twist.

Section 1, "Bolsheviks Wha Hae", a twist on the anti-imperial battlesong 'Scots Wha Hae' the conclusion to which phrase is "wi' Wallace {Lenin} bled".

Section 2, "The stormy north sends driving forth the blinding sleet and snaw" from 'Winter: A Dirge'.

Section 3, "А серп и молот in a thrave", from "a daimen-icker in a thrave" [an occasional grain from an ear of corn, in a sheaf] in 'To A Mouse' (this is the line Morgan uses in *emergent poems*) and серп и молот [*serp i molot*; hammer and sickle]; rather satisfyingly, the Russian substitution does not change the scansion.

Section 4, "Sic famous twa should disagree't," from the French revolutionary sympathetic 'The Twa Herds'.

Each of these Burns poems are freely available online; the authoritative edition of Burns's work is currently in progress with OUP, with the two volumes of poetry yet to come.

Thanks

To the Scottish Poetry Library for the allowance of time to roam free in the stacks of the Edwin Morgan Archive without which roaming so much of thinking with Edwin Morgan's less-widely-circulated concrete and visual works would not have been possible; for their care of EM's archive and my own.

1 Lenin (1917b). All citations which lack page numbers are taken from non-paginated freely available versions of works; full citations including the links are given in the works cited list.

2 The cairn is in Pollockshaws, Glasgow. On must read this with a weather-eye on Lenin's own practical-material-figurative inditement that a chain is really only as strong as its weakest link (Lenin, (1917a)).

3 The 'hymns' have a spotty publication history typical of MacDiarmid's large *oeuvre*, which is in part at least outlined in the Foreword of their single volume publication by Castle Wynd publishers (Edinburgh) in 1957: the First Hymn (dedicated to Prince Mirsky), written on commission for a Victor Gollancz publication of *New English Poems* in 1930; the Second Hymn (dedicated to Naomi Mitchison and Henry Carr), published in the *Criterion* magazine in 1932; the Third Hymn, also given a title 'Glasgow Invokes the Spirit of Lenin' (dedicated to Muriel Rukeyser), and the only Hymn not written in part in Scots, was published in parts in 1944 and 1955.

4 The 'Second Hymn to Lenin' spells this out early on: "Are my poems spoken in the factories and fields / In the streets o' the toon? / Gin they're no' I'm failin' to daie / What I ocht to hae' dune" (MacDiarmid (2017): 304).

5 Maclean (1918).

6 Here I echo both Hobsbawm (on the style of the *Communist Manifesto* in Hobsbawm (1998): 15) and W.B. Yeats's poem 'The Second Coming'.

7 Hames (2019): 245.

8 Lenin (1920)

9 Maclean (1922)

10 Maclean (1920)

11 The Red Clydeside years effectively saw their most effective span within MacLean's lifetime only; see Foster (1990) and also Bell (2018).

12 Here I rely on Thatcher (1992): 421-429, which attempt to 'fill [the] particular *lacuna*' of 'why and how MacLean has always been treated as a positive figure in Soviet historiography' has influenced all Anglophone biography-making since the 1990s. The 50-year anniversary of MacLean's death saw not one but two biographies: Milton (1973), and Broom (1973).

13 For the dedications see n.3 above. Stoppard's fictionalized Carr, linked to Joyce, Lenin, and

Tzara, was to conclude the play by comfortably forgetting, in reminiscence of Switzerland, the possibility of a third option, or indeed, of any form of action or change: "Zurich during the war. Refugees, spies, exiles, painters, poets, writers, radicals of all kinds. I knew them all. Used to argue far into the night – at the Odeon, the Terrasse – I learned three things in Zurich during the war. I wrote them down. Firstly, you're either a revolutionary or you're not, and if you're not you might as well be an artist as anything else. Secondly, if you can't be an artist, you might as well be a revolutionary ... I forget the third thing." Stoppard, (1974/1993): 71.

14 Morgan (2004): 99-100.

15 The latter quotation here is from Morgan's poem 'To Hugh MacDiarmid' whose final lines make clear how Morgan sees the poet's national vision foreclose all other possibilities: '...That's what you know, / where it comes from, turning a page or writing one / in your clear hand still, sitting by a cottage / in a small country.' (Morgan (1990a): 154).

16 In Morgan's poem MacLean is cast as the lonely lighthouse keeper, avoiding dictate from Moscow, and watching the ships 'Workingclass Solidarity', 'International Brotherhood', and 'Great-Power Chauvinism' break up (in the case of the first two) and steam past (in the case of the third). The poem quotes from MacLean's 1922 speech where he definitively breaks with 'Moscow', accuses MacLean of 'trimming the wick' of Scotland's light shorter and shorter. Morgan's compliment to MacLean in the poem is that he never lost sight of life. The poem was first published as a part of *Homage to John MacLean* for the 50th anniversary of MacLean's death, and then collected in Morgan's *New Divan* (Morgan (1977)), and the later *Collected Poems* (Morgan (1990)). The former publication also contained poems by anonymous poet, Hugh MacDiarmid, Sorley MacLean, Hamish Henderson, Dora Montefiore, Matt McGinn, Andrew Tannahill, Sydney Goodsir Smith, Matthew Bird, T.S. Law, Thurso Berwick, John Kincaid, Alastair Mackie, Alan Bold, George Handie, Ian Davison, David Morrison, Farquar McLay, Donald Campbell, Uilleam Neill, John S. Clark, Ruaidh MacThomas. The poems vary generically (from folk song, to election broadside poem, to poetic lyric), and are present in the three primary languages of Scotland. It is prefaced with a paeon to 'radical Scottish identity', and states each poet stands in MacLean's shadow.

17 I echo Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 3.4.25 'But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in / To saucy doubts and fear' from (Macbeth has just become king and articulates here a

claustrophobic fear of the gaps and chance nature of how what is under his rule may fail to concomitantly totalize and enforce that power).

18 'Immortal' from Lenin (1911).

19 I am grateful here to Ruda (2021) which condensations of Marx/Engels/Lenin on the emblem the commune provides, I rather audaciously condense further here.

20 'cuius regio' from Morgan's 'On John MacLean' (Morgan (1990a): 351).

21 For example, France (2020), Rann (2024).

22 The publisher Cape turn Morgan down for being 'too varied' (Morgan (2015):143), and even his eventual mainstream publisher, Michael Schmidt at Carcanet, considers Morgan "too versatile. The real Edwin Morgan never stands up" (quoted in Riach (2015): 11)).

23 For the 'Dream' (which Hames opposes to the 'Grind') – the cultural imaginarium ('vernacular cultural empowerment') and exigent practicalities ('state-nationalist identitarian strategy') of Scottish politics – see Hames (2019): xii, 13, and *passim*.

24 Indeed Morgan writes, echoing Montaigne, of his approach as needing to be and remain 'ondoyant et divers', in spite of nay-sayers. See Morgan (2015): 433.

25 See in particular here Boynik (2018). I'm grateful to Ozren Pupovic for drawing attention to these new translations.

26 This is from the titular poem 'The Vision of Cathkin Braes', and is a particularly desolating section about the Battle of Korea. It is reprinted in Morgan (1990a): 570-571, still excised from the poem proper. The poem was written in 1951, after the third Battle of Seoul, in the middle of the Korean War, and doggedly does not take sides except for every person against how 'man has hardened man' against hearing death cries. Morgan's description of the desolation of the land as a no-man's land eerily precedes the creation of the DMZ.

27 Morgan (1990b): 46.

28 The traversal of the threshold called Gorky to get to Lenin is interestingly enacted, in a rather different way but nevertheless, in the opening paragraphs of Althusser (1972): 7.

29 Morgan (1990a): 57.

30 Gorky's lines are three not four: Над седой равниной моря ветер тучи собирает. / Между тучами и морем гордо реет Буревестник, / черной молнии подобный. Morgan has Gorky's first line run over to 1.5 lines in his version.

31 See Attridge, (2019): 158. It is interesting that Attridge's observations of the 'universality' of the four beat line structure should also stem from a Russian source. The poeology of the 'English Dolnik' is extended in Attridge (2012) and Attridge (2013). Morgan's ear, too, is attuned to the Dolnik and the innovations that it provides for the Anglophone line, as he makes clear in his introduction to his translations of Mayakovsky which praise that poet's habit of the 'stepped line' (see Morgan (1992): 109).

32 Indeed, Morgan's Gorky follows the original in being unrhymed, but this is also a salient feature of Old English verse; departing from Gorky's neat stanzaic units, Morgan pushes the Old English resonance further as stanzaic division is very rare in this poetry.

33 Morgan is in this period also translating the Beowulf saga, and various of the so-called 'Old English Elegies'; the Beowulf poet's compass is Scandinavian, and each of the poems of the OE Elegies, as we will later see, are set in Northern seas.

34 Jones (2006) writes extensively of the importance of Morgan's Anglo-Saxon translations to his then closeted homosexuality – the homosociality of *Beowulf* for example providing an alternative imagination of a community-form.

35 Lenin (1917d).

36 This is Renfrew (2015): 161. Renfrew reads Shklovsky's 'Lenin as Decanonizer' (1924), a new translation of which is collected in Boynik (2018): 149-154.

37 In the widely available English translation: 'Let the storm rage louder!'. Lenin (1906).

38 A 'symbol for Russians of all backgrounds' but of variant meanings. See Avrich (1971): 9.

39 That this is the Gorky that Morgan picks is clear from the meticulous dating of the epitext to the poem: '(translated from the Russian of Maxim Gorky, 1868-1936)', which in a sense represents the conjunctural energy that Morgan wishes the poem to bear, with (some) and against (other) interim historical events (1936-1952). Morgan's Gorky is the Gorky of the *New Life* (*Novaya Zhizh*), a concept that Morgan take on and will transmute into *The Second Life* of 1968, as well

as playing with the way his own surname was a herald of a 'new day' (in, for example, *Guten Morgan* (Morgan (2000a)). We will later in this essay address Morgan's re-loading of Lenin in his present: how he does so in the wake of Stalin and Khrushchev. It's significant the two volumes we're currently addressing of Morgan are dated for the year before the death of Stalin, when the world knew that Stalin was in dire ill health.

40 Lenin (1911)

41 I've written elsewhere on Morgan's anti-imperialist interaction with sub rosa modes 1950-1980, in particular with relation to queer revolutions, in Yeung (2024).

42 Morgan (1990a): 59.

43 Ibid.

44 Lenin (1906).

45 I follow Derek Attridge's 'dolnik' here in my scansion of this poem (on the 'dolnik' in its Englished variants, see n.31 above).

46 It is clear from the context of this poem in Morgan's *oeuvre* that his version of this story is taken from the Middle English tellings, in which we see the first use of the word 'harrowing' to the story.

47 Morgan (1990a): 30.

48 Mayakovsky (1972): 176, 179.

49 Morgan (1990a): 30.

50 Cf Mayakovsky's 'Far, /far back, /two hundred years or so // the earliest beginnings / of Lenin go.' (Mayakovsky (1972): 183) to Morgan's temporal scope in 'Harrowing'.

51 Morgan, (1990a): 30.

52 Morgan, (2000b), 13. This is Morgan's translation of a phrase of Mayakovsky's.

53 *O.E.D.*, s.v. "deemer (*n.*)"

54 Authored principally by Vladimir Mayakovsky. In Boynik (2018):147-148.

55 Lenin (1916). Also see Lenin (1915a).

56 Morgan is consistently drawn back to the figure of Jesus as man, the apotheosis of which is in his work for the millennial year, *A.D.: A Trilogy of Plays* (Morgan (2000c)).

57 Edgecombe (2001): 22.

58 Morgan, (1990a): 30.

59 See Lenin (1901/2).

60 With thanks to the *Leninist Days/ Jornadas Leninistas* for their hospitality, which allowed me to first elaborate the sloganological approach under the sign of the Art of Insurrection, that I develop further in this section. Particular thanks for generous conversation and pointed questions to: Rebecca Comay, Andrew Cole, Frank Ruda, Peter Hallward, and Rolando Prats-Paez.

61 Morgan (2015): 39.

62 Ibid: 38.

63 *The Whittrick* only sees publication in 1973, but Morgan's *Collected Poems* is quite meticulous in dating works, conscious of the importance of date of composition to resonance.

64 Morgan extends the Scottish – Old English – Lenin/Russia arc that we have already seen established: he gives *Beowulf* an epigraph from Mayakovsky, and Mayakovsky's 'With the full voice' rendered into Scots. The preface of the *Beowulf* works through a poethics of translation and the preface of the Mayakovsky gives the revolutionary context of that poet's work. There is insufficient space to expand on the interesting comparative matrices these paralleled translations offer here, but the wager that Morgan places, for the former, 'what does it mean to read *Beowulf* in a Leninist context?', for the latter 'what does it mean to read Mayakovsky after *Beowulf*', and for both, 'what are the revolutionary weapons poetries which have been pre-, simultaneous to, and post-revolutionary experience might offer?', where all are yoked together through the idea of poetry's torqued relation to futurity; cf. the way Morgan casts Mayakovsky into *Beowulf*-ese as epigraph to his essay on translation in that edition (the lines are from Mayakovsky's 'At the Top of My Lungs', which Morgan later also translates into Scots): 'Rifling by chance some old book-tumulus / And bringing into light those iron-tempered / Lines of its buried verse – never be careless / With ancient but still formidable weapons!' (Morgan (1952-1967): v.)

65 Morgan (2015): 29.

66 'Red Square' is a part of Morgan's *Internationale of 1952's 'Stanzas of the Jeopardy'* (Morgan (1990a): 24), and 'Lenin's Tomb' recurs, and is significantly part of a list of world wonders Morgan writes in 1972 to Michael Schmidt (Morgan (2015): 266).

67 Rann (2023).

68 Morgan (2015): 39.

69 The series *futura* is set in the 1927 font of the same name, the latter of which was designed as part of the 'New Frankfurt' social housing project and carried with its design the slogan 'die Schrift unserer Zeit'. The use of the *futura* font in the studio's work of the 1960s and 1970s was a part of hansjorg mayer's project for concrete work to communicate visually across borders. The *futura* series are all broadsides which are folded to pocket-size: portable by all. Thus for Morgan's sloganological work, even the material conditions of the work carries the message of the international. For *futura* (font) and its history I've relied in part on Burke (1988); for a reference to the internationalism of hansjorg mayer's project see Ferran and Mayer (2019).

70 Morgan does link concrete practice explicitly to ostranenie, experimenting on precisely this at the level of the letter – OSTRANEИIE, titled 'Russian Formalism' (see Morgan (2015): 185).

71 He writes to Augusto de Campos in 1963 about the importance to preserve these applications, which range from commentary-form to critique: "effects of pure place, relation, and movement to effects of satire, irony, and direct comment". Morgan (2015): 100.

72 Morgan links this sense of expressive inexactitude explicitly to Russia post-Lenin: 'Kremlinological inexactitude' is a certain reliance on 'a stale sort of cliché', which serves to obscure history as well as language. Morgan (2015): 92.

73 Cf. 'Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy': "The concrete concept is concrete because it is a synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unity of diverse aspects. It appears therefore in reasoning as a summing-up, a result, and not as the starting point, although it is the real point of origin, and thus also the point of origin of perception and imagination" Marx (1859).

74 *Gnomes* – an exploration of the gnomonic mode, *News poems* – an exploration of the regime-repressed unconscious of newspapers, and *proverb folder* – a 'designed' hyperaestheticized rendering (and critique) of the proverbial statement.

75 Note that the only English phrase is one out of two translations (the other being 'manifesto'), and is from the KJV of the Bible (commissioned 1604, published 1611): a Scottish Imperial English, but a work of translation which nonetheless excised the previously standard translation of 'tyrant' for 'king', replacing this with a series of words

signifying critique of tyranny and oppression (of course as a method of distancing from James's own 'divine right' endowed monarchic position).

76 The *futura* series spanned multiple languages, the full series edition explicitly claiming 'English, German, French, and Japanese', but also including non-linguistic sound-, number-, and sign- works, and Scots, Russian, Brazilian Portuguese, and Czech.

77 Once the broadside is unfolded, the poems are in two horizontal and three vertical columns. The first option of reading (down then across) renders the poems in the order given above. The second option of reading (across then down) renders them as follows: 'message clear', 'plea', 'nightmare' then 'dialek piece', 'seven headlines' and 'manifesto'. Both options lead to 'manifesto'.

78 Here I give Morgan's romanization and translation from 'Manifesto' in the *Collected Poems*: Morgan was constantly aggravated by language and spacing inaccuracies in the production of his concrete and visual works, and often silently corrects the versions from the original concrete publication in later book editions (let's add to this that *futura* font does not contain any appropriate diacritics for the transliteration, and all *futura* publications avoided punctuation and capitalization unless it had concrete value, and no diacritics were carried across to the *Collected Poems*). The more up-to-date romanization of 'Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь!' would be 'Proletarii vseh stran, soedinjajtes!'; the more prevalent English translation is 'Workers of the world, unite!'. All from the German, 'Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt Euch!'. But in the above text I will as much as possible stay close to Morgan's version, as the small differences often show us some rather larger arguments than we might expect.

79 The title, 'Manifesto', was proposed by Engels, to replace/overwrite 'credo'; the manifesto at the time was an emergent form. Puchner (2006) neatly gives this history.

80 EG К лозунгам ('K lozungam': On Slogans); О лозунге Соединенные Штаты Европы ('O lozunge Soedinennye Štaty Evropy': On the Slogan for a United States of Europe). I'm very grateful to Rebecca Comay for bringing up in the *Leninist Days* discussions this interesting suite of translation issues (from Losung [misprised or elided with Lösung] to лозунг to Slogan) which *sound* almost like a suite of anagrammatical transliterations, but rather bear a suite of different roots (the only etymological connections are Losung and лозунг) and a proliferation of intimations.

- 81 Lenin (1915).
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Lenin (1917/1921).
- 84 Lenin (1917c) and (1915b).
- 85 Digitale Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache, 'Lösung' s.v. and 'Losung' s.v.
- 86 Significantly, the dominant French translation of Lenin's 'Slogan' is *mot(s) d'ordre* (NB 'slogan' exists in French, too, as a loan-word), which translation allows for a specific interpretative focus on *Losung* which divests it of part of the resonance (the wager) bringing it much closer to groupspeak, motto, or the American 'watchword'.
- 87 The implication here is also a little that it doesn't really matter who 'makes' the slogan (after all "Before 1917, around 60 editions of the manifesto [official and unofficial alike] were published in Russia alone." Rogatchevskaia (2017)), it matters how it brings people together into action.
- 88 Lecercle (2024), where the thread of reading Lenin's language moves interestingly through the different operations of the slogan (but NB n.86 on 'mots d'ordre'), as 'tactical' text, in difference to 'strategic' texts (of which the April Theses are exemplary) and 'theoretical' (e.g. 'State and Revolution'). Lecercle (2024): 77 ('textes stratégiques'), 79 ('textes tactiques'), 82 ('textes théoriques'); the morphology maps onto the 'three levels of the communist programme' (principle, strategy, tactics), and the combinatory valences map onto the relation of language and truth (ibid 87-8, 93). All translations here my own.
- 89 See Renfrew (2015).
- 90 Demonstrating quite how galvanizing an untethered slogan can be, Robert C. Tucker introduces his subject by telling of a visit to Russia in the centenary year of Lenin's birth: "one could see signs in many places saying: 'Lenin Lived, Lenin Lives, Lenin will live'", yet omits to mention or does not notice the poetic resonance. See Lenin (1975): xxv.
- 91 This is another of Morgan's re-historicizings, beginning in 20 Billion BC, and ending 2300 AD.
- 92 Morgan (2007): 44.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 See Lenin (1915c).
- 95 Morgan (2007): 55.
- 96 Ibid.
- 97 Morgan most clearly addresses this latter phenomenon via his translation of Yevgeny Yevtushenko's 'Stalin's Heirs', (Morgan (1992): 201-204), which poem – published at the behest of Khrushchev in *Pravda* – bears strong comparison with Morgan's *decensus avernus* in the poem at hand, with its question 'but are we to fetch / the Stalin out of Stalin's successors?' (203), and provides some element of the Stalinesque 'rosiness' motif in Morgan's poem, there is however insufficient space for expansion here.
- 98 There is no space to elaborate here on whether Morgan is conjuring spectres of the 'yellow peril', or whether he is rather espousing the (older) Chinese self-determining attribution 黄种人 (yellow type of person), but this only provides another double-edge within the use of the signifier here.
- 99 Morgan, (2007): 55, 56.
- 100 V. I. Lenin, (1915c).
- 101 I'm following Mladen Dolar's rendering of this phrase here, a phrase so overused in its various translated versions so as to be (as with, one might argue all good slogans) un-authored. See Dolar (2012).
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 Mao (1937). I follow Dolar's English rendering of this slogan here.
- 104 Again I follow Dolar's rendering of this slogan here.
- 105 Badiou et al (2011): 90
- 106 Badiou (1975): 2 n.1. My translation.
- 107 Ibid: 4 n.2. My translation.
- 108 Ibid: 2. My translation.
- 109 In a sense the entirety of Badiou (1975) as well as Mao (1937) is a work against metaphysics' abandonment of the dialectical principles through failing to move out of structuralism (see Badiou (1975): 37).
- 110 Morgan, (2007): 55, 56.
- 111 I partly condense here Ruda (2016): 112.

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