

WICHITA VORTEX SUTRA

I

Turn Right Next Corner

*The Biggest Little Town in Kansas*

*Macpherson*

Red sun setting flat plains west streaked  
with gauzy veils, chimney mist spread  
around christmas-tree-bulbed refineries—aluminum  
white tanks squat beneath  
winking signal towers' bright plane-lights,  
orange gas flares  
beneath pillows of smoke, flames in machinery—  
transparent towers at dusk

*In advance of the Cold Wave*

*Snow is spreading eastward to*

*the Great Lakes*

News Broadcast & old clarinets

Watertower dome Lighted on the flat plain  
car radio speeding acrost railroad tracks—

Kansas! Kansas! Shuddering at last!

PERSON appearing in Kansas!

angry telephone calls to the University

Police dumbfounded leaning on

their radiocar hoods

While Poets chant to Allah in the roadhouse Showboat!

Blue eyed children dance and hold thy Hand O aged Walt

who came from Lawrence to Topeka to envision

Iron interlaced upon the city plain—

Telegraph wires strung from city to city O Melville!

Television brightening thy *rills of Kansas lone*

I come,

lone man from the void, riding a bus

hypnotized by red tail lights on the straight

space road ahead—

& the Methodist minister with cracked eyes

leaning over the table

quoting Kierkegaard “death of God”

a million dollars

in the bank owns all West Wichita

come to Nothing!

Prajnaparmita Sutra over coffee – Vortex

of telephone radio aircraft assembly frame ammunition  
petroleum nightclub Newspaper streets illuminated by Bright  
EMPTINESS—

Thy sins are forgiven, Wichita!

Thy lonesomeness annulled, O Kansas dear!  
as the western Twang prophesied  
thru banjo, when lone cowboy walked the railroad track  
past an empty station toward the sun  
sinking giant-bulbed orange down the box canyon—  
Music strung over his back  
and empty handed singing on this planet earth  
I'm a lonely Dog, O Mother!

Come, Nebraska, sing & dance with me—

Come lovers of Lincoln and Omaha,  
hear my soft voice at last  
As Babes need the chemical touch of flesh in pink infancy  
lest they die Idiot returning to Inhuman—  
Nothing—

So, tender lipped adolescent girl, pale youth,

give me back my soft kiss  
Hold me in your innocent arms,  
accept my tears as yours to harvest  
equal in nature to the Wheat  
that made your bodies' muscular bones  
broad shouldered, boy bicept—  
from leaning on cows & drinking Milk  
in Midwest Solitude—

No more fear of tenderness, much delight in weeping, ecstasy  
in singing, laughter rises that confounds  
staring Idiot mayors  
and stony politicians eyeing  
Thy breast,  
O Man of America, be born!

Truth breaks through!

How big is the prick of the President?  
How big is Cardinal Vietnam?  
How little the prince of the FBI, unmarried all these years!  
How big are all the Public Figures?  
What kind of flesh hangs, hidden behind their Images?

Approaching Salina,  
Prehistoric excavation, *Apache Uprising*  
in the drive-in theater  
Shelling Bombing Range mapped in the distance,  
Crime Prevention Show, sponsor Wrigley's Spearmint

Dinosaur Sinclair advertisement, glowing green—  
South 9<sup>th</sup> Street lined with poplar & elm branch  
    spread over evening's tiny headlights—  
Salina Highschool's brick darkens Gothic  
    over a night-lit door—  
What wreaths of naked bodies, thighs and faces,  
    small hairy bun'd vaginas,  
    silver cocks, armpits and breasts  
    moistened by tears  
    for 20 years, for 40 years?  
Peking Radio surveyed by Luden's Coughdrops  
    Attacks on the Russians & Japanese,  
Big Dipper leaning above the Nebraska border,  
    handle down to the blackened plains,  
telephone-pole ghosts crossed  
    by roadside, dim headlights—  
dark night, & giant T-bone steaks,  
    and in *The Village Voice*  
New Frontier Productions present  
    Camp Comedy: *Fairies I Have Met*.  
Blue highway lamps strung along the horizon east at Hebron  
    Homestead National Monument near Beatrice—

Language, language  
    black Earth-circle in the rear window,  
    no cars for miles along highway  
    beacon lights on ceramic plain  
language, language  
    over Big Blue River  
    chanting *La illaha el (ill) Allah hu*  
    revolving my head to my heart like my mother  
    chin abreast at Allah  
    Eyes closed, blackness  
vaster than midnight prairies,  
    Nebraskas of solitary Allah,  
    Joy, I am I  
    the lone One singing to myself  
    God come true—  
    Thrills of fear.  
    nearer than the vein in my neck—?  
What if I opened my soul to sing to my absolute self  
    Singing as the car crash chomped thru blood & muscle  
    tendon skull?  
What if I sang, and loosed the chords of fear brow?  
    What exquisite noise wd  
    Shiver my car companions?

I am the Universe tonite  
riding in all my Power riding  
chauffeured thru my self by a long haired saint with eyeglasses  
What if I sang till Students knew I was free  
of Vietnam, trousers, free of my own meat,  
free to die in my thoughtful shivering Throne?  
freer than Nebraska, freer than America—  
May I disappear  
in magic Joy-smoke! Pouf! reddish Vapor,  
Faustus vanishes weeping & laughing  
under stars on Highway 77 between Beatrice & Lincoln—  
“Better not to move but let things be” Reverend Preacher?  
We’ve all already disappeared!

Space highway open, entering Lincoln’s ear  
ground to a stop Tracks Warning  
Pioneer Boulevard—  
William Jennings Bryan sang  
*Thou shalt not crucify mankind upon a cross of Gold!*  
O Baby Doe! Gold’s  
Department Store hulk o’er 10<sup>th</sup> Street now  
--an unregenerate old fop who didn’t want to be a monkey  
now’s the Highest Perfect Wisdom dust  
and Lindsay’s cry  
Survives compassionate in the Highschool Anthology—  
a giant dormitory brilliant on the evening plain  
drifts with his memories—  
There’s a nice white door over there  
for me O dear! on Zero Street.

*February 15, 1966*

II  
Face the Nation  
Thru Hickman’s rolling earth hills  
icy winter  
gray sky bare trees lining the road  
South to Wichita  
you’re in the Pepsi Generation Signum enroute  
Aiken Republican on the radio 60,000  
Northvietnamese troops now infiltrated but over 250,000  
South Vietnamese armed men  
our Enemy—  
Not Hanoi our enemy  
Not China our enemy  
The Viet Cong!  
McNamara made a “bad guess”  
“Bad Guess?” chorused the Reporters.

Yes, no more than a Bad Guess, in 1962  
“8000 American Troops handle the  
Situation”

Bad Guess

in 1954, 80% of the  
Vietnamese people would've voted for Ho Chi Minh  
wrote Ike years later *Mandate for Change*

A bad guess in the Pentagon  
And the Hawks were guessing all along

Bomb China's 200,000,000  
cried Stennis from Mississippi

I guess it was 3 weeks ago

Holmes Alexander in Albuquerque Journal

Provincial newsman

said I guess we better begin to do that now  
his typewriter clacking in his aged office  
on a side street under Sandia Mountain?

Half the world away from China

Johnson got some bad advice Republican Aiken sang  
to the Newsman over the radio

The General guessed they'd stop infiltrating the South  
if they bombed the North—

So I guess they bombed!

Pale Indochinese boys came thronging thro the jungle  
in increased numbers  
to the scene of TERROR!

While the triangle-roofed Farmer's Grain Elevator  
sat quietly by the side of the road

along the railroad track

American Eagle beating its wings over Asia  
million dollar helicopters  
a billion dollars worth of Marines

who loved *Aunt Betty*

Drawn from the shores and farms shaking  
from the high schools to the landing barge  
blowing the air thru their cheeks with fear

in *Life* on Television

Put it this way on the radio

Put it this way in television language

Use the words

language, language:

“A bad guess”

Put it this way in headlines

Omaha World Herald— *Rusk Says Toughness*  
*Essential for Peace*

Put it this way

Lincoln Nebraska morning Star—

*Vietnam War Brings Prosperity*

Put it *this* way

Declared McNamara speaking language  
Asserted Maxwell Taylor  
General, Consultant to White House  
Viet Cong losses leveling up three five zero zero per month  
Front page testimony February '66  
Here in Nebraska same as Kansas same known in Saigon  
in Peking, in Moscow, same known  
by the youths of Liverpool three five zero zero  
the latest quotation in the human meat market—  
Father I cannot tell a lie!

A black horse bends its head to the stubble  
beside the silver stream winding thru the woods  
by an antique red barn on the outskirts of Beatrice—  
Quietness, quietness  
over this countryside  
except for unmistakable signals on radio  
followed by the honkytonk tinkle  
of a city piano  
to calm the nerves of taxpaying housewives of a Sunday morn.  
Has anyone looked in the eyes of the dead?

U.S. Army recruiting service sign *Careers with a Future*  
is anyone living to look for future forgiveness?

Water Hoses frozen on the street, the  
Crowd gathered to see a strange happening garage—  
Red flames on Sunday morning  
in a quiet town!

Has anyone looked in the eyes of the wounded?  
Have we seen but paper faces, Life Magazine?  
Are screaming faces made of dots,  
electric dots on Television—  
fuzzy decibels registering  
the mammal voiced howl  
from the outskirts of Saigon to console model picture tubes  
in Beatrice, in Hutchinson, in El Dorado  
in historic Abilene  
O inconsolable!

Stop, and eat more flesh.

“We will negotiate anywhere anytime”

said the giant President

Kansas City Times 2 / 14 / 66: “Word reached U.S. authorities that  
Thailand’s leaders feared that in Honolulu Johnson might have tried to

persuade South Vietnam's rulers to ease their stand against negotiating with the Viet Cong.

American officials said these fears were groundless and Humphrey was telling the Thais so."

AP dispatch

The last week's paper is Amnesia.

Three five zero zero is numerals

Headline language poetry, nine decades after Democratic Vistas

and the Prophecy of the Good Gray Poet

Our nation "of the fabled dammed"

or else...

Language, language

Ezra Pound the Chinese Written Character for truth

defined as man standing by his word

Word picture:        forked creature

Man

standing by a box, birds flying out

representing mouth speech

Ham Steak please waitress, in the warm café.

Different from a bad guess.

The war is language,

language abused

for Advertisement,

language used

like magic for power on the planet:

Black Magic language,

formulas for reality—

Communism is a 9 letter word

used by inferior magicians with

the wrong alchemical formula for transforming earth into gold

--funky warlocks operating on guesswork,

handmedown mandrake terminology

that never worked in 1956

for gray-domed Dulles,

brooding over at State,

that never worked for Ike who knelt to take

the magic wafer in his mouth

from Dulles' hand

inside the church in Washington:

Communion of bum magicians

congress of failures from Kansas & Missouri

working with the wrong equations

Sorcerer's Apprentices who lost control

of the simplest broomstick in the world:

Language





While this American nation argues war:  
    conflicting language, language  
        proliferating in airwaves  
filling the farmhouse ear, filling  
    the City Manager's head in his oaken office  
    the professor's head in his bed at midnight  
    the pupil's head at the movies  
        blond haired, his heart throbbing with desire  
        for the girlish image bodied on the screen:  
        or smoking cigarettes  
        and watching Captain Kangaroo  
        that fabled damned of nations  
        prophecy come true—

Though the highway's straight,  
    dipping downward through low hills,  
    rising narrow on the far horizon  
        black cows browse in caked fields  
        ponds in the hollows lie frozen,  
            quietness.

Is this the land that started war on China?  
    This be the soil that thought Cold War for decades?  
    Are these nervous naked trees & farmhouses  
        the vortex  
            of oriental anxiety molecules  
that've imagined      American Foreign Policy  
    and magick'd up paranoia in Peking  
        and curtains of living blood  
            surrounding far Saigon?

Are these the towns where the language emerged  
    from the mouths here  
        that makes a Hell of riots in Dominica  
    sustains the aging tyranny of Chiang in silent Taipeh city  
    Paid for the lost French war in Algeria  
        overthrew the Guatemalan polis in '54  
    maintaining United Fruit's banana greed  
        another thirteen years  
    for the secret prestige of the Dulles family lawfirm?

Here's Marysville—  
    a black railroad engine in the children's park,  
        at rest—  
and the Track Crossing  
    with Cotton Belt flatcars  
        carrying autos west from Dallas  
    Delaware & Hudson gondolas filled with power stuff—  
    a line of boxcars far east as the eye can see

carrying battle goods to cross the Rockies  
into the hands of rich longshoremen loading  
ships on the Pacific—  
Oakland Army Terminal lights  
blue illumined all night now—  
Crash of couplings and the great American train  
moves on carrying its cushioned load of metal doom  
Union Pacific linked together with your Hoosier Line  
followed by passive Wabash  
rolling behind  
all Erie carrying cargo in the rear,  
Central Georgia's rust colored truck proclaiming  
*The Right Way*, concluding  
the awesome poem writ by the train  
across northern Kansas,  
land which gave right of way  
to the massing of metal meant for explosion  
in Indochina—  
Passing thru Waterville,  
Electronic machinery in the bus humming prophecy—  
paper signs blowing in cold wind,  
mid-Sunday afternoon's silence in town  
under frost-gray sky  
that covers the horizon—  
That the rest of earth is unseen,  
Unknown except thru  
language  
airprint  
magic images  
or prophecy of the secret  
heart the same  
in Waterville as Saigon one human form:  
When a woman's heart bursts in Waterville  
a woman screams equal in Hanoi—  
On to Wichita to prophesy! O frightful Bard!  
into the heart of the Vortex  
where anxiety rings  
the University with millionaire pressure,  
lonely crank telephone voices sighing in dread  
and students waken trembling in their beds  
with dreams of a new truth warm as meat,  
little girls suspecting their elders of murder  
committed by remote control machinery,  
boys with sexual bellies aroused  
chilled in the heart by the mailman  
with a letter from an aging white haired General

Director of selection for service in Deathwar  
all this black language  
writ by machine!  
O hopeless Fathers and Teachers  
the same woe too?

I'm an old man now, and a lonesome man in Kansas  
but not afraid  
to speak my lonesomeness in a car,  
because not only my lonesomeness  
it's Ours, all over America,  
O tender fellows—  
& spoken lonesomeness is Prophecy  
in the moon 100 years ago or in  
the middle of Kansas now.

It's not the vast plains mute our mouths  
that fill at midnite with ecstatic language  
when our trembling bodies hold each other  
breast to breast on a mattress—  
Not the empty sky that hides  
the feeling from our faces  
nor our skirts and trousers that conceal  
the bodylove emanating in a glow of beloved skin,  
white smooth abdomen down to the hair  
between our legs,

It's not a God that bore us that forbid  
our Being, like a sunny rose  
all red with naked joy  
between our eyes & bellies, yes

All we do is for this frightened thing  
we call Love, want and lack—  
fear that we aren't the one whose body could be  
beloved of all the brides of Kansas City,  
kissed all over by every boy of Wichita—  
O but how many in their solitude weep aloud like me—  
On the bridge over Republican River  
almost in tears to know  
how to speak the right language—  
on the frosty broad road  
uphill between highway embankments  
I search for the language  
that is also yours—  
almost all our language has been taxed by war.

Radio antennae high tension  
wires ranging from Junction City across the plains—

highway cloverleaf sunk in a vast meadow  
lanes curving past Abilene  
to Denver filled with old  
heroes of love—  
to Wichita where McClure's mind  
burst into animal beauty  
drunk, getting laid in a car  
in a neon misted street  
15 years ago—  
to Independence where the old man's still alive  
who loosed the bomb that's slaved all human consciousness  
and made the body universe a place of fear—  
Now, speeding along the empty plain,  
no giant demon machine  
visible on the horizon  
but tiny human trees and wooden houses at the sky's edge  
I claim my birthright!  
reborn forever as long as Man  
in Kansas or other universe—Joy  
reborn after the vast sadness of War Gods!  
A lone man talking to myself, no house in the brown vastness to hear  
imaging the throng of Selves  
that make this nation one body of Prophecy  
languaged by Declaration as Pursuit of  
Happiness!  
I call all Powers of imagination  
to my side in this auto to make Prophecy,  
all Lords  
of human kingdoms to come  
Shambu Bharti Baba naked covered with ash  
Khaki Baba fat-bellied mad with the dogs  
Dehorahava Baba who moans Oh how wounded, How wounded  
Sitaram Onkar Das Thakur who commands  
give up your desire  
Satyananda who raises two thumbs in tranquility  
Kali Pada Guha Roy whose yoga drops before the void  
Shivananda who touches the breast and says OM  
Srimata Krishnaji of Brindaban who says take for your guru  
William Blake the invisible father of English visions  
Sri Ramakrishna master of ecstasy eyes  
half closed who only cries for his mother  
Chitanya arms upraised singing & dancing his own praise  
merciful Chango judging our bodies  
Durga-Ma covered with blood  
destroyer of battlefield illusions  
million faced Tathagata gone past suffering

Preserver Harekrishna returning in the age of pain  
Sacred Heart my Christ acceptable  
Allah the compassionate one  
Jaweh Righteous One  
all Knowledge-Princes of Earth-man, all  
ancient Seraphim of heavenly Desire, Devas, yogis  
& holymen I chant to—  
Come to my lone presence  
into this Vortex named Kansas,  
I lift my voice aloud,  
make Mantra of American language now,  
I here declare the end of the War!  
Ancient days' Illusion!—  
and pronounce words beginning my own millennium.  
Let the States tremble,  
let the nation weep,  
let the President execute his own desire—  
this Act done by my own voice,  
nameless Mystery—  
published to my own senses,  
blissfully received by my own form  
approved with pleasure by my sensations  
manifestation of my very thought  
accomplished in my own imagination  
all realms within my consciousness fulfilled  
60 miles from Wichita  
near El Dorado,  
The Golden One,  
in chill earthly mist  
houseless brown farmland plains rolling heavenward  
in every direction  
one midwinter afternoon Sunday called the day of the Lord—  
Pure Spring Water gathered in one tower  
where Florence is  
set on a hill,  
stop for tea & gas  
Cars passing their messages along country crossroads  
to populaces cement-networked on flatness,  
giant white mist on earth  
and a Wichita Eagle-Beacon headlines  
*"Kennedy Urges Cong Get Chair in Negotiations"*  
The War is gone,  
Language emerging on the motel news stand,  
the right magic  
Formula, the language known

in the back of the mind before, now in black print  
daily consciousness

Eagle News Services Saigon—  
Headline Surrounded Vietcong Charge Into Fire Fight  
the suffering not yet ended  
for others  
The last spasms of the dragon of pain  
shoot thru the muscles  
a crackling around the eyeballs  
of a sensitive yellow boy by a muddy wall

Continued from page one area  
after the Marines killed 256 Vietcong captured 31  
ten day operation Harvest Moon last December  
Language language  
U.S. Military Spokesmen  
Language language  
Cong death toll  
has soared to 100 in First Air Cavalry  
Division's Sector of  
Language language  
Operation White Wing near Bong Son

Some of the  
Language language  
Communist  
Language language soldiers  
charged so desperately  
they were struck with six or seven bullets before they fell  
Language Language M 60 Machine Guns  
Language language in La Drang Valley  
the terrain is rougher infested with leeches and scorpions  
The war was over several hours ago!

Oh at last again the radio opens  
blue Invitations!  
Angelic Dylan singing across the nation  
“When all your children start to resent you  
Won't you come see me, Queen Jane?”  
His youthful voice making glad  
the brown endless meadows  
His tenderness penetrating aether,  
soft prayer on the airwaves,  
Language language, and sweet music too  
even unto thee,  
hairy flatness!  
even unto thee  
despairing Burns!



with an angry smashing ax  
attacking Wine—  
Here fifty years ago, by her violence  
began a vortex of hatred that defoliated the Mekong Delta—  
Proud Wichita! vain Wichita  
cast the first stone!—  
That murdered my mother  
who died of the communist anticommunist psychosis  
in the madhouse one decade long ago  
complaining about wires of masscommunication in her head  
and phantom political voices in the air  
besmirching her girlish character.  
Many another has suffered death and madness  
in the Vortex from Hydraulic  
to the end of 17<sup>th</sup> —enough!  
The war is over now—  
Except for the souls  
held prisoner in Niggertown  
still pining for love of your tender white bodies O children of Wichita!

*February 14, 1966*