

POETRY

Corn Eclogue

disguised as one of those 1940s Sister acts
close harmony slinky cocktail gowns
Corn would sing lead, Bean & Squash do
the doo-wahs & scat

tortillas
hushpuppies
grits
succotash

corn liquor — white
lightening silage/seepage
& a chorus line of dead
drunk cows.

Any

echt—

American eclogue would be inescapably involved
tinged with corn — let's call it High Corn —
like Harry Smith's collection of old 78s —
thin eerie corniness of the Carter Family
like angels with pellagra
or North Mexican radio polkas
with Bavarian tubes & Charro guitars
musical offerings
to a sacred katchina cornmeal painting by
Norman Rockwell
or Spoonbread American Eleusinian Hoe-Down
pastoral corn
blue grass
Celto-Appalachian
bluets for
white people
grand guignol border minstrelsy
a child ballad gothic crossed with West African
syncopated banjo
no morbid sentimentality or baptist angst
can wither the throbbing orgone
of this cornpone.

Aunt J. from Jessup used to say
apropos Willy Nelson: country music is the true
American poetry

ghost husks of
post-modern corn
toxic blandness —
you can hear it in the mu#&~
like suffocating in a plastic bag —
neo-con corn
corn on steroids
cornball imperialism
let them eat corn.

Demeter weeps for her daughter in Hell
keeps the seed power hidden
causes a most terrible
& dog-like year to occur
again & again
robs the gods of the greasy smoke of sacrifices
that symbolize b e reciprocity with nature
& resolves the dialectic in a Perselean
trialectic
that hinges on a single pomegranate seed's
secret psychotropic identity — which according to
my old pen-pal the late
Dr Mahdihassan of Pakistan whose work
is cited in Needham's
Sci. & Civ. in China
in the ruby chalice of the lapis philosophorum
hazelnut of the Salmon of Wisdom at the
Source of the Boyne
Hesperidean apple
poisoned apple
blood drop deep
sacrifice
gift
magic be—
the blight on the corn
that kills you
is also Gilgamesh's lost herb of immortality
thunderbolt child born in hell
like a flash of light from
underground
Iacchos the esoteric Bacchus
the Pastoral Redeemer
the Mead of Poetry;
Triple Goddess—Persephone
Demeter

Hecate
beans
corn
squash

Flux
morphology
Linnaeus dressed as a
Lappish shaman

three crows on a dead branch
the Andrew Sisters,

L. Frank Baum was the Midwestern Swedenborg
Emerald City of Hermes Trismegistus
hobo utopia
Zephyrs of Cockaigne
a tramp's view of heaven
an Irish Oz
hasty pudding houses thatched in bacon
bogs of whipped schlag
trees fruiting w/ blackpuddings
etc. ad nauseum

or tobacco
Offer tobacco

to the Three Sisters—the blue smoke
of visible prayer,

— *Peter Lamborn Wilson*

(Notes: See The Homeric Hymn to Demeter, trans. by Chuck Stein; the recipe for Zephyrs of Cockaigne is from the Joy of Cooking; Tip-o-The fez to M. Pollan.)