

# Occupations

## Occupations

by Robert Bové (June 2006)

You are here

Maps reassure by corresponding,  
lines from those who have survived,  
for a time, to write that travel,  
along these routes, is possible.

What does it mean to come from afar?  
Distance must be overcome, but  
what occurs, as road becomes path,  
and path disappears, births  
true measure.

What occurs marks traveler  
and destination both  
in memory and in fact.  
Intentions may be discrete,  
must be discrete to make a start,  
but, again, are of little use, even distract,  
when path, with memory of it,  
evaporates. Where you stand.

The early-retired

Things as they are  
are still pretty good.  
House is paid for,  
commute not too long.

Kids are long gone  
to good schools  
and we have co-signed  
not a single one of their debts.

Tonight, we celebrate  
ourselves, again. We honor  
each other. And though our ranks  
grow thin, we do not, and venues  
wax more opulent.

Frustrating, that, to be served  
at bigger table each day,  
when our commission is  
to lick the skin  
off the world.

#### La Belle Magdalena

In café across from cathedral  
the wine cellar is padlocked,  
seats once taken by neighbors seeking comfort,  
conversation, have been taken away.  
In shop near café, postcards for sale  
go unsold, their scenes obscured by  
merciful dust.

A bishop appears far away  
and only on TV. He proclaims,  
calms no one, not even himself:  
"The mosque is temporary."

He is known, this bishop, and he is not.  
He approves new Madonna, shrouded,  
approves a new incense, *eau de urine*,

approves big plans for Christmas,  
Palm Sunday, and Easter—  
just not including J sus.

Sch nes Berlin

Berlin is great.  
NYC meets Munich.  
Of course, German girls  
are whores.

But soon enough, we have them  
in chadors.

One long way up

In her day she sat by the loch  
that bears her name—  
at her feet ducks, geese, and mute swan  
feeding on crumbs she brought—  
and gazed uphill, past  
ancient columnar lava, to  
chapel made with ash stone and basalt,  
freestone and limestone from quarry,  
gulls from the firth circling, on hunt.

And if the mist weren't too thick  
above the high bog, she'd see  
Arthur's Seat, imagine its vantage.  
So one supposes, as far as one can,  
musings of a tourist, easy guesses.

She contemplated building churches,  
feeding the poor at her royal table,  
before she fed herself, her family,

teaching her children to love God  
as faithfully as she.

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