

HOW TO LIVE UNDER FASCISM

~
Andrei Codrescu

from

HOW TO LIVE
Under Fascism
by
Andrei Codrescu

Neo-Mimeo Editions:2025

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NOTE FOR NEO-MIMEO EDITIONS

It is harder to choose a group of poems than to write them. To write them is a timeless and injurious activity (the pleasure is all mine), to choose them to show a public face in a distinguished forum is agonizing. The collection these poems come from is called "How to Live Under Fascism" (Black Widow Press, 2025). Two months before the election of Trumputinmusk there was a sliver of hope that the storm (troopers) will dissipate, and I called that book "Thank God for the Last Minute!" The hope dissipated instead, and the fascist regime came, as did my first title. These poems in Neo-Mimeo Editions are current post-pandemic post-fascist pre-war works that underlie the historic infrastructure of my youth in a communist Romania to give the present its sinister urgency. Enjoy, as they say, and share with your armory.

stockholm mussea
for eva leonte

at the stockholm museum of modern art
swedish actors stand in front of
romanian art by marcel janco
victor brauner and constantin brancusi

declaiming in actor voices in english
translation from the work of the artists'
poet friends tzara fondane blaga cassian

nobody warned tourists that an alien
music awaited them turkish slavic
german hungarian english free concert

from museum closets that are safe rooms
built behind masterworks
to shield curators from angry masses
masked actors surge like swat teams

the stew of foreign vocables and sighs
has been rehearsed with a robust budget
souffleurs in the chandeliers even hold
first editions to wind up our thespians

it's a surprise afternoon for lifetime
subscribers

indoor shower in cool stockholm breeze

obligatory diversity does include fainting
by harried elders who fought a war or two
and still carry shrapnel in in their flesh

but for the children pupils on vacation
who drank bravely the night before
the genii of art and verse encourage romance

few experiences compare with
swallowing the castor oil of modern art

malfunctioning angels fast-forward
the motor of art in their fresh bodies
athletic urban even in translation

on wheels of modern art
1896 1914 1921 1931 2015 2024
moving into the future before
the once-in-seventeen-years cicadas of war
prepare the materia prima for new art
train new cannon-fodder

take a joyous bath in diversity
children, before your watchers
interrupt the lassitude of your ce-cream
afternoon in this civilised city

the zeitgeist is obscure and angry



fondane

i am fondane fruit of a tree that grew from
mystic mud
of rural yiddish belt of earth between the
mountains
reader of medieval torah and romantic verse
more jewish than rabbi zwi more romanian than
bacovia
more french than de gourmont more shaken than an
american
cocktail in a sheep's skull more existential
than shestov
I lead my long-haired cows with heavy udders
over peaks
of clover to the sea my bulls more golden my
fields more fragrant
my grasses more nutritious than the figs of the
euphrates
these vessels are mine, mariners, i am fondane,
my epics will power your sails for all the
coming times
i am the wandering jew and greek ahaserus
ulysses and fondane



tzara fondane celan

my dear anthologies
of gifts and misfortune
birth dates emigration dates
urgent breaks between wars
what is the plural of hiatus
illusions of freedom within
where the holes of culture used to be
now overgrown by words
tzara's good timing
the radical temperament of youth
your fucking bourgeois hypocrisy must die
fondane's bad timing
longing for summer pastures
i do mistake the pastoral for culture
these are my sheep
celan in the silence
after the apocalypse
translates the murmur
of the murdered mother tongue

a tool

This is the cradle
inside which new york, hong kong, and peking
squeeze with a shriek
to fuse into the
corporate baby. Who has, again,
fooled the jews and is running
upstream. Mao shears sheep
and grins in wait.

max blecher

max blecher exiled by TB from his flesh
exults in a discus thrower's body
lit by the well-being of athletic youth
ecstatic magnet to his incomplete reality
in max's world nothing is trivial or weary
we the unsick in our mindless health
will never know the force of such body swap
we die unaware of the force of self at war
with its sinew even as the faces of world war
press against the hospital windows
max dies at twenty-eight years of age
not older than us healthy prodigies headed
for the gas chambers
a lucky Jew who died in 1938
before his ill body lost his light body

everything turns into a museum

the more heinous the history the more popular
the museum

take europe for example

that stuff is all shrunken heads

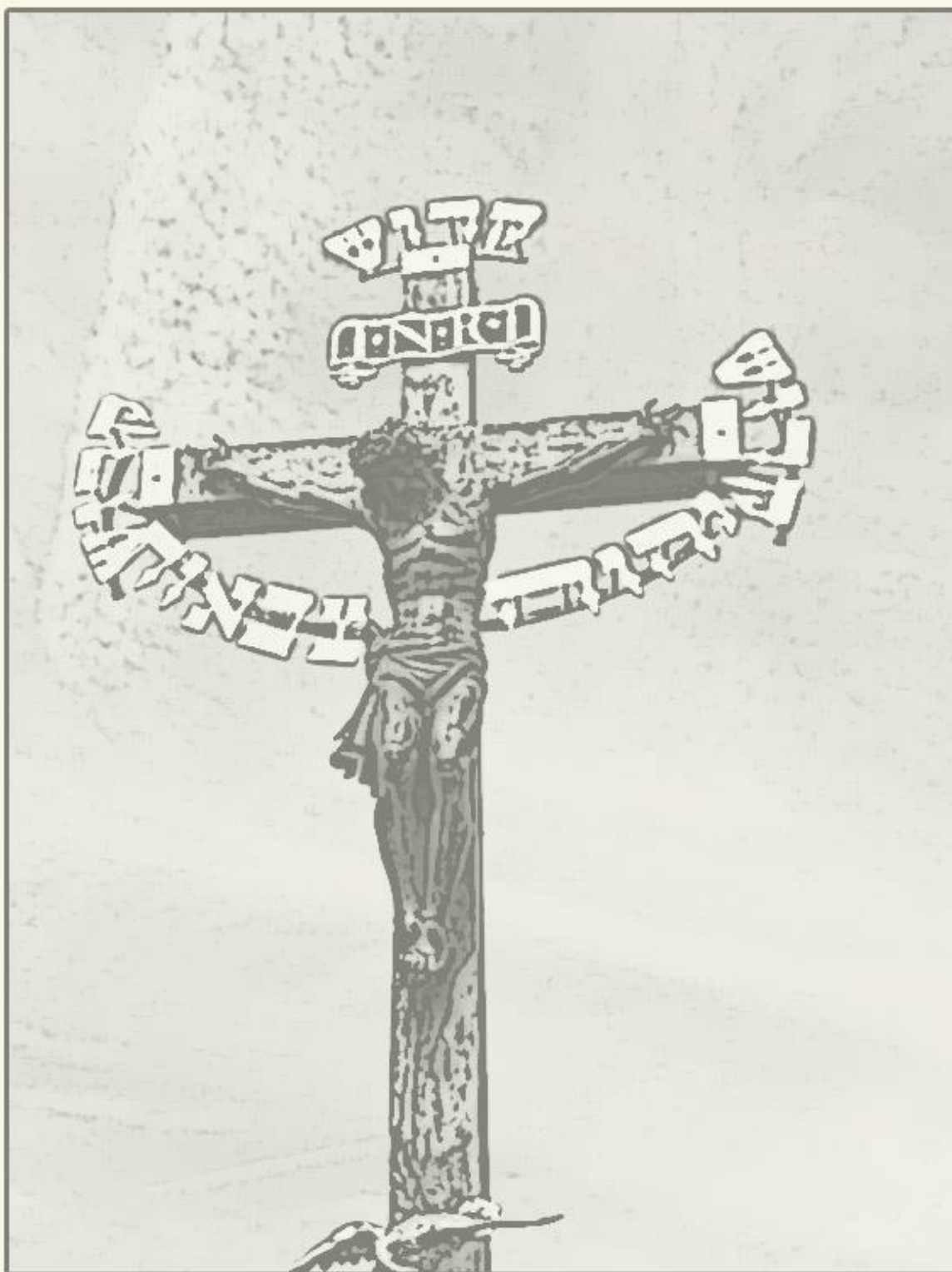
curated to read like the newspaper

the smoked ham of ethnic cuisine

next visit we must take our country cousins

to the city and leave them in the vitrines

the next generation must learn fine dying



Andrei Codrescu's (codrescu.com) latest poetry books are "No Time like Now," "It was Today," "So Recently Rent a World" and "An Epic of Care" (with Vincent Katz). He is currently building andreicodrescu.substack.com in Brooklyn