

*This work is an attempt at a critical discourse cut-up/rework/integration. I used The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book as a source text. One sentence from each individual work in the second section of the book (appropriately titled Writing and Politics) was used to create this amalgam essay. The order of sentences in this work directly corresponds to the order of the essays as printed in the book. Where essays did not use a sentence structure I attempted to use a piece of writing that would roughly correspond to whatever element of delineation seemed pertinent (i.e. line break etcetera).*

*The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book is a compilation of pieces from the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Journal.*

## Writing and Politics

Recognition of a capitalist mode of reality passed through the language and imposed on its speakers finally will require a thorough reevaluation of the history, form and function of the poem.<sup>i</sup>

Yet only a dramatic change in the structure of capitalist society is likely to disorganize the fetish, the narrowness of readership (& therefore the capabilities of writing), the dominance of ideological restrictive notions of what poetry and language can be.<sup>ii</sup>

Which of the following communicates it's meaning most directly and exactly?

a) a musical composition    b) a traffic light    c) a group of words    d) weather<sup>iii</sup>

It is in this sense that we speak of poetry as being untranslatable and unparaphrasable, for what is untranslatable is the sum of all the specific conditions of the experience (place, time, order, light, mood, position, to infinity) made available by reading.<sup>iv</sup>

Poetry then can refuse to be in the service of capitalism by being “untranslatable,” “unparaphrasable.”<sup>v</sup>

Of course capitalism has made and continues to make use of writing; not only is writing adapted to money as the general equivalent, but the specific functions of money went by way of writing and printing, and in some measure continue to do so...<sup>vi</sup>

But this dualism can be useful, at least in one respect, in that it contains the boundary terms within which an interrogative (authentic) writing may occur—a writing that works in the interstices between expressivist and objectivist modes.<sup>vii</sup>

Politics = Politics      Art = Art<sup>viii</sup>  
Art                              Politics

Let's realize what there is.<sup>ix</sup>

Most of contemporary capitalism (or just state control because it has more to do with industrial organization than anything) draws its power from destroying our abilities to understand our environment & the consequences of social/political activities, or at least to restrict it to those areas sympathetic to the retention of the present forms of control.<sup>x</sup>

If only as a language that is other, a language outside the pervasive ideolanguage of advanced capitalist society (which once having classified and defined, seeks to box in, contain) free language exists in a critical relation viz. capitalist superstructures.<sup>xi</sup>

One "quality" that comes to mind is—to isolate and describe and record exact observations about "experience" and "objects" that otherwise are never shared beyond intimate relationships because they offer an alternative perspective to "reality" than the one the "capitalist" system (and maybe any "generally" applied "system") imposes through its control of the distribution of "goods" including "art" and "language" and other supposedly less "essential" "goods."<sup>xii</sup>

These counter-writings put forward at the level of writing, of representation, Capital's substitutions, its concealed attempts at neutralization, its dependency on phallogocentric/logocentric (are these distinguishable *in* Capital?) *organ-izing* energies, which are the dismembering mutations of the scopic/writing/reading drive into living estrangement.<sup>xiii</sup>

writers teachers employers employees readers talkers learners friends might examine their roles in perpetuation of this linguistically based hierarchy.<sup>xiv</sup>

Reference, its placement both in and outside the triangularity of the sign, territorializes the flows of code as a constant movement into absence in designations outside of itself.<sup>xv</sup>

The call to language in a poem does not begin or end with its discursive flow and does not give way to qualified priorities.<sup>xvi</sup>

The point is not only *how* the elements of the social structure are revealed in language, but the attitude we ourselves take toward that socio-economic structure as writers.<sup>xvii</sup>

Unlike most programs, wch are self-limiting, that of writing in the framework of capitalism carries within itself the admonition, typical of an economy predicated on technical innovation & the concentration of capital, to "make it new."<sup>xviii</sup>

All all all all over this land.<sup>xix</sup>

Form is identical to content.<sup>xx</sup>

just add up the money<sup>xxi</sup>

The 'social contract' is not some kind of binding obligation, *obviously*.<sup>xxii</sup>

To the writers, therefore, the social relations between their private writing appear as what they are, *i.e.*, they do not appear as direct social relations between persons in their work, but rather as material relations between persons and social relations between texts.<sup>xxiii</sup>

The parasite finds most powerful manifestation within quotation and allusion *i.e.* in the precise manner (the site of the cite) that creates in any text a biological device for drawing off signification by means of echo, index, association, interruption, and supplementarity (pp. i-xii +13-164 Glasgow 1751 printed by Robert Urie 8vo.)<sup>xxiv</sup>

The totalitarian nature of official criticism's inclusiveness is as vampiric as the state system it imitates.<sup>xxv</sup>

Language, however, is not confined to the utterance of single words.<sup>xxvi</sup>

IT (LANGUAGE) SEEMS TO BE THE LEAST IMPOSITIONAL MEANS OF TRANSFERING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIPS OF HUMAN BEINGS WITH MATERIALS FROM ONE TO ANOTHER (SOURCE)<sup>xxvii</sup>

What could be better?<sup>xxviii</sup>

It's necessity which makes the form, which then inheres; not just any "constructs" but the ones we live by, the ones we live in & so the ones we come upon—<sup>xxix</sup>

Reference in language is a strategy of promise and postponement; it's the thing that language never is, never can be, but to which language is always moving.<sup>xxx</sup>

The police are even in our mouths.<sup>xxxi</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Ron Silliman, *Disappearance of the Word, Appearance of the World*

<sup>ii</sup> Bruce Andrews, *Writing Social Work & Political Practice*

<sup>iii</sup> Barbara Barg, *20 Questions*

<sup>iv</sup> Charles Bernstein, *The Dollar Value of Poetry*

<sup>v</sup> Bruce Boone, *Writing, Power and Activity*

<sup>vi</sup> Cris Cheek, Kirby Malone, and Marshall Reese, *TV Trio Present Career Wrist*

<sup>vii</sup> Michael Davidson

<sup>viii</sup> Alan Davies

<sup>ix</sup> Larry Eigner

<sup>x</sup> Brian Fawcett, *Agent of Language*

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- xi P. Inman  
xii Michael Lally  
xiii John Leo, */Capital/ /Writing/*  
xiv Chris Mason, *Learning Reading as a Second Language*  
xv Steve McCaffery, *From the Notebooks*  
xvi Michael Palmer, *The Flower of Capital*  
xvii James Sherry, *A,B,\$.*  
xviii Steve McCaffery, *If by "Writing" We Mean Literature*  
xix Lorenzo Thomas, *Is it Xerox or Memorex?*  
xx Barrett Watten, *Writing and Capitalism*  
xxi Hannah Weiner  
xxii Steve Benson, *From a Letter to an Editor*  
xxiii Ron Silliman, *Re Writing:Marx*  
xxiv Steve McCaffery, *Blood. Rust. Capital. Bloodstream.*  
xxv Eric Mottram, *Official Poetry and Conformist Entertainment*  
xxvi Susan B. Laufer and Charles Bernstein, *Style*  
xxvii Lawrence Weiner, *Regarding the (A) Use of Language Within the Context of Art*  
xxviii Peter Schjeldahl, *Poetry: A Job Description*  
xxix Charles Bernstein, *The Conspiracy of "Us"*  
xxx Steve McCaffery, *Intraview*  
xxxi Bernard Noël, *The Outrage Against Words*

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Writing is a hybrid. And what of it?

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