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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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Everything is connected to everything . . .

So runs the executive saw,
cutting both ways
on the theme of all improvement:
Your string is my string
when I pull it my way.

In my detachment is your dependency.

In your small and backward nation
some minor wealth still gestures –
was it wood, gas, or only sugar?
Consequently by its imperial logic,
with carefully aimed negotiation,
my increase is your poverty.

When the mortgage payments falter,
then in fair market exchange
your account is my account,
your savings become my bonus,
your home my house to sell.

In my approval is your dispossession.

Often in distress all social bonds
are broken. Your wife may then
be my wife, your children
my dependents – if I want them.

So, too, our intellectual custom:
Your ideas are my ideas
when I choose to take them.
Your book is my book,
your title is mine to steal,
your poem mine to publish.

In my commendation is your remaindering.

Suppose I sit in an oval office:
the public polls are sliding,
and to prove I am still in command
I begin a distant war. Then,
in obedience to give-and-take fate,
by which everything is connected,
my war is your war,
my adventure your misfortune.

As when the dead come home,
and we are still connected,
my peace is your surrender,
my
success your despair.