

Daniel King

FLAGGING ENTHUSIASM

As I regard the diplomatic flags
Their hard red stripes,
Their Moslem crescents
(Like toenails pared
Before obeisance to the Prophet),
Dark thoughts flutter in my mind:
*No nation ever will admit to colour prejudice,
Yet none of these bold flags has brown or purple.*
Jostled by tattered passers-by,
I move towards the poles,
Suddenly fascinated by the semiotics of the shallow banners,
Gaudy like trashy music.
*The Vatican considers itself the authority on all rules,
Yet breaks
Heraldic rules by placing yellow next to white.
And why is Indonesia's flag
Identical to Monaco's?
Must we conclude that life in Indonesia is a gamble?*
I know that as a writer rules must often be bent,
But nations really ought to be aware of flags' implications:
Canadians deserve more than a maple leaf rag,
And the enchained Malaysians
Aren't worthy of their star and stripes.

