

## Water-buffalo with concrete freeway

Dawn and a dog's howl before silence...

You picture the scene: a fogbound sun,  
a red lake, a red bridge.  
A fisherman walking on a turtle in the river,

And you feel it: a gong hollowing out the air  
a soft parting of fronds in your head,  
a knock-knuckle mumbling from the temples.

A thin river opens its veins  
and there it is: a thin beast stuck in the future  
straddling the wall of a Hanoi roadway,

Neither happy nor unhappy watching  
the sun falling upward to a moon,  
the rainlight pouring down...

Women up their thighs in bicycles,  
men bouncing their melons for the Party,  
the people eating the people from the outlands.

Noon and a red river is awake:  
the voices mouth the news of massacres.  
you can feel again the Noonwitch dancing,

Slow saints losing their heads,  
warlords reaping the property of the dead.

Sound of buffalo being hit by bicycle.  
Nothing new that day  
hereafter;

Good men gather souls and are beautiful  
as are the Just, beautiful, seen reaching  
for twilight in another country

A break in the whirring noise...

Dusk comes knocking for the details:-  
the smell of a beast burning in the alleyway,  
blood boiling in the sacred river,

Light spilling itself over the sandstone.

A brown river rising.  
A stone in the dish prefigures sky-water.

There is movement of the deep along the wire.

The imaginings, dark ghosts, are ready.