

A Poem Larger than Life Itself!

In tribute to the English translation of the poem "Pride"

Undoubtedly, in the history of the struggles of all the oppressed masses of the world against oppression and repression, revolutionary literature and poetry, as a universal language that transcends all borders, colour or race, is one of the very effective means to bring awareness in the course of advancing these struggles, popularizing them, and consolidating the solidarity among all people. Therefore, one of the attempts of the revolutionaries who fight for the freedom and the emancipation of workers and the oppressed masses from the yoke of capitalism and reaction regardless of their geographical region, is to promote and disseminate militant literature and poetry which, unencumbered with cultural and language

differences, spreads its wings like a high-flying sweet songbird, traversing from country to country, from culture to culture, and from one battlefield to another, chanting the march to freedom and solidarity among all oppressed people with everlasting strength and impact. As a result, throughout their struggles, just as much as they have had an affinity towards their militant writers and national poets, they have been indebted to the voice and the outcry of freedom-loving artists and poets from all over the world, i.e. Turkish, Kurdish, Chilean, British, African, German, and Russian etc. Literary figures whose works have been translated into Farsi thanks to artists and thinkers dedicated to the masses thereby providing the Iranian people and social political activists a chance to be acquainted with the revolutionary struggles and activities of other oppressed people around the globe, and to learn from and be inspired by them in their fight against ignorance and reaction, and to strengthen their solidarity with other nations.

It is within this framework that the translation of revolutionary and enlightening writings and poems produced by the militant daughters and sons of this land, of which there are many, into other languages has also played an important role in informing other oppressed people and their revolutionary intellectuals of the righteous struggles of the Iranian people and of their historic experiences, and to strengthen the spirit of international solidarity.

The following is the English translation of the beautiful revolutionary poem titled "Pride", also known as "I am a woman", written by comrade Pari-dokht (Gazelle) Ayati, a member of the Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas, which is a small step towards the aforementioned great task.

While appreciating this work, we would like to call upon all comrades and friends who are in the field of translation and who fight against darkness to translate this meaningful poem- which reflects the realities of our society, and which is a precious page of the contemporary history of our people's struggles- into other languages, and thus play a part in promoting and enhancing revolutionary art and "a poem larger than life itself".

In hope that the vital and vibrant spirit of this beautiful poem and its message for equality and freedom will inspire those who are fighting for the same goals and against their common enemies throughout the dominated world.

The Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas
June 2015

"March 30th is the anniversary of the martyrdom of the Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrilla Pari-dokht (Gazelle) Ayati; an artistic comrade and a gifted poet. As a young poet in her high school days, she chose the pen name Gazelle which was indeed suitable in light of her beautiful face and gazelle-like eyes. Today in the communist movement, Gazelle is well known as both a member of the IPFG, and a female poet and artist. However, neither her revolutionary activities nor her artistic and literary works in their entirety are known to the public. In fact, even her magnificent and meaningful poem "Pride" also known as "I am a woman" was not printed in the movement in her name. This poem which has eloquently depicted the living and fighting conditions of working women in Iran during the 1960s and 1970s, alone speaks of her vanguard artistic ability and incredible talent in illustrating the realities of life in the form of poetry in an engaging, passionate and memorable style."

"... It must be noted that this poem owes its beauty and magnificence to the development of armed struggle in Iran during the 1970s and to the great sacrifices made by courageous and selfless women and men and their revolutionary sincerity and devotion towards the oppressed masses. Without the sincere and humble fighters, without the brave and fearless champions like Marziyeh¹, Gazelle's artistic talent could never reach the heights to produce as majestic a poem as "Pride"...".

(Excerpts from "Our Crimson Gazelle" written by comrade Ashraf Dehghani in memoriam of Gazelle in April 2015)

¹ Marziyeh A. Oskoee was yet another brilliant and brave IPFG member who fell in a heroic combat with the Shah's mercenaries in the streets of Tehran where ordinary people witnessed her epic fight and became a legend among the legends of the IPFG.



Pride

A poem by Gazelle Ayati

(November 1951-April 1977)

Pride

I am a woman

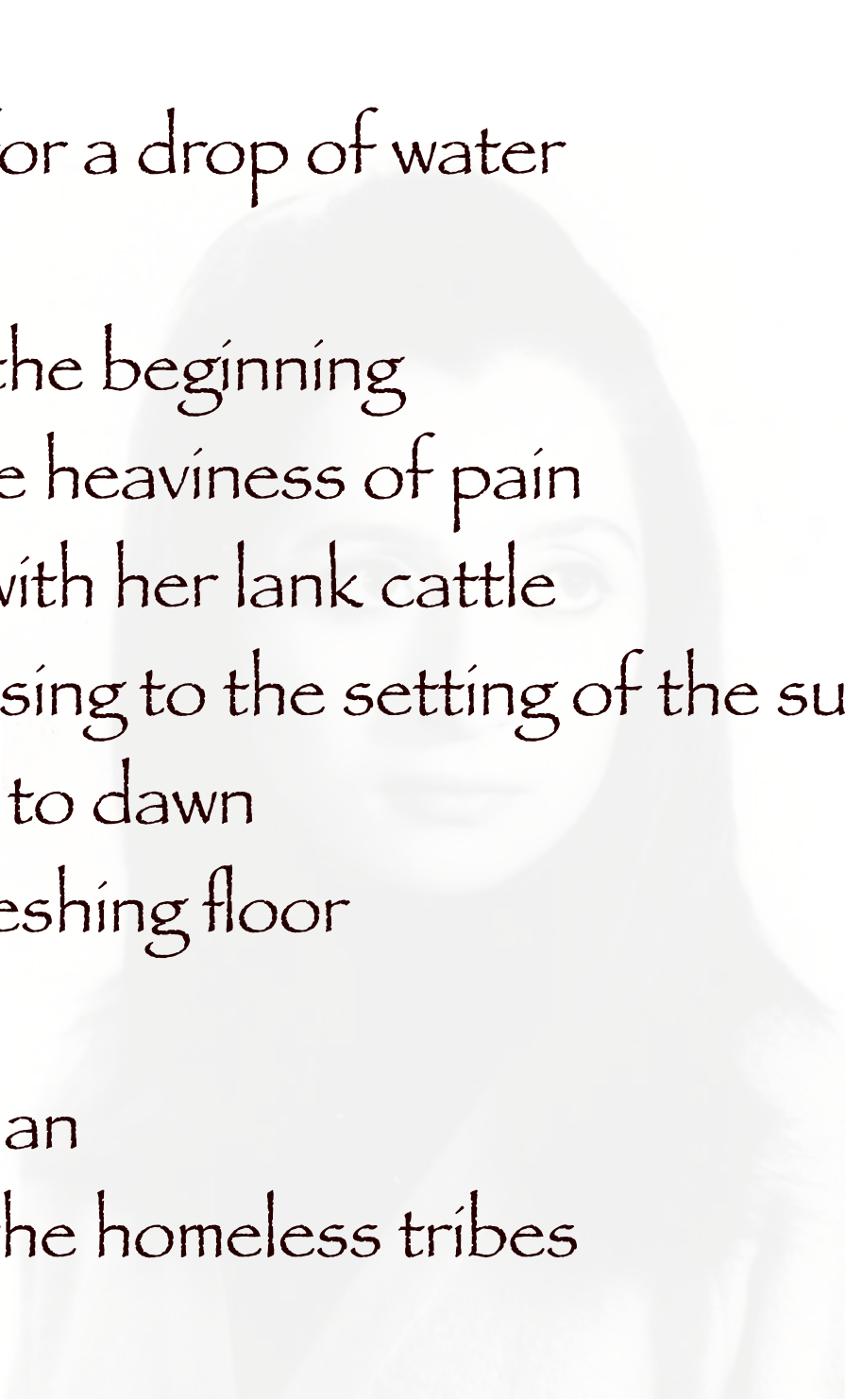
I am from the remote ruins of the East

a woman

who from the beginning

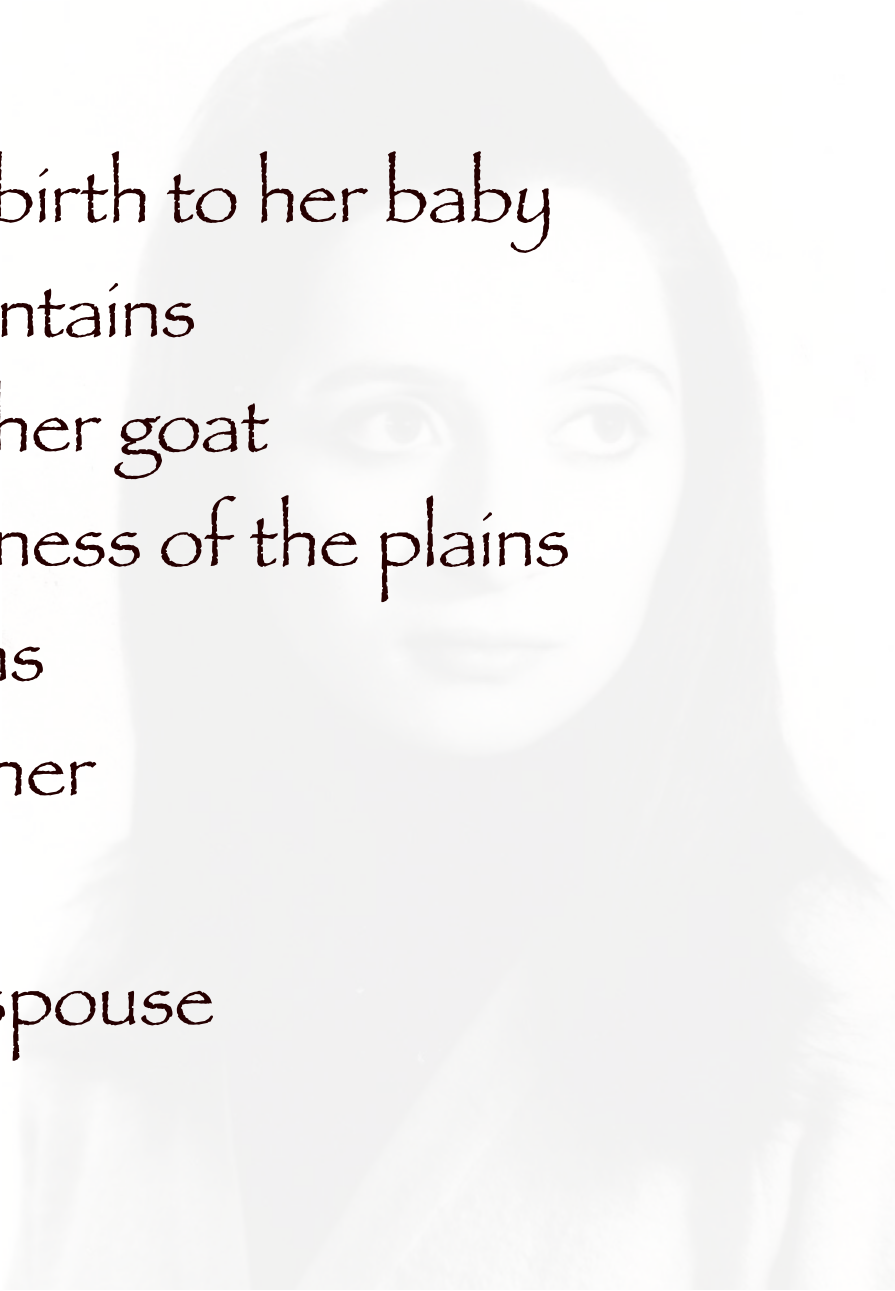
has travelled barefoot

across the thirst-stricken earth

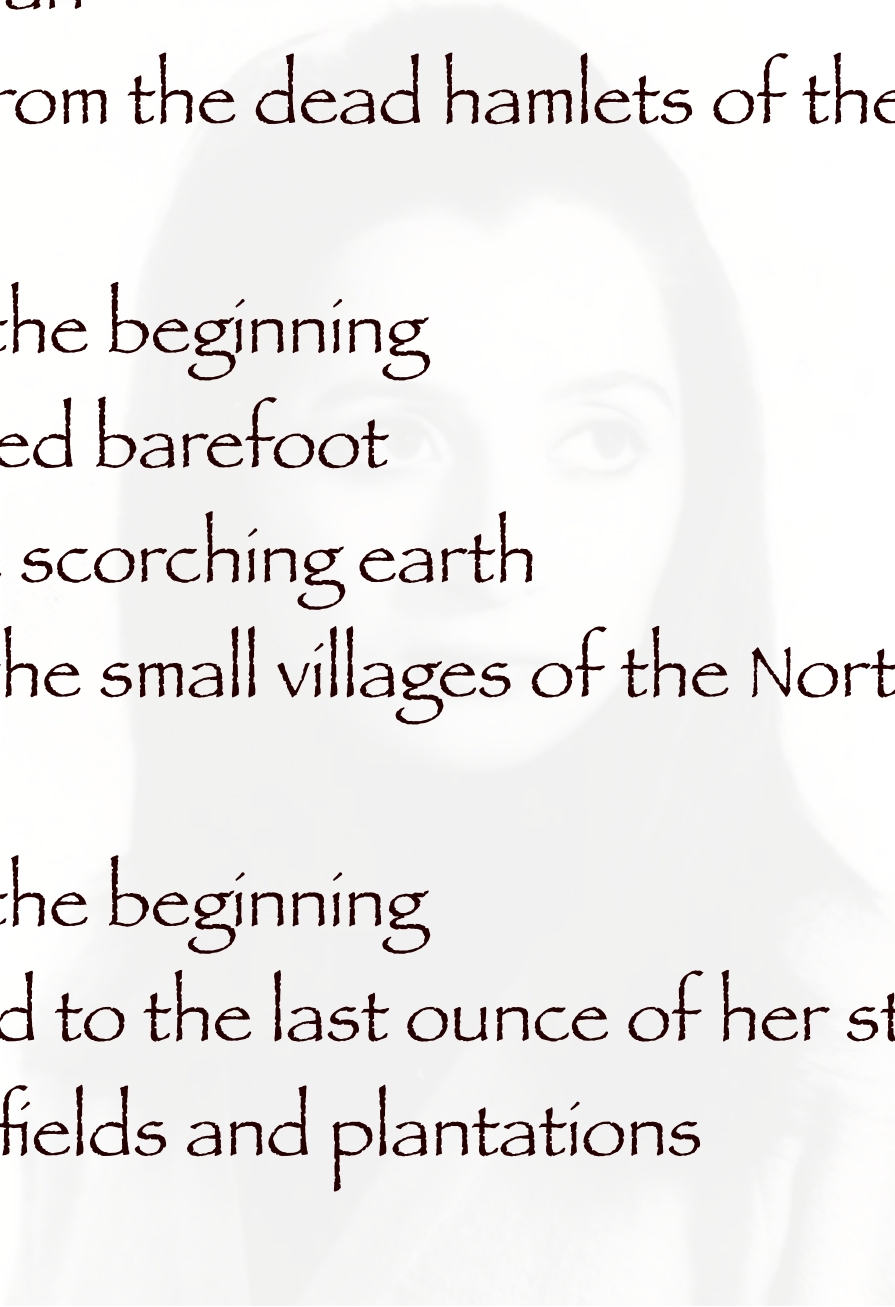


in search for a drop of water
a woman
who from the beginning
has felt the heaviness of pain
barefoot with her lank cattle
from the rising to the setting of the sun
from dusk to dawn
on the threshing floor

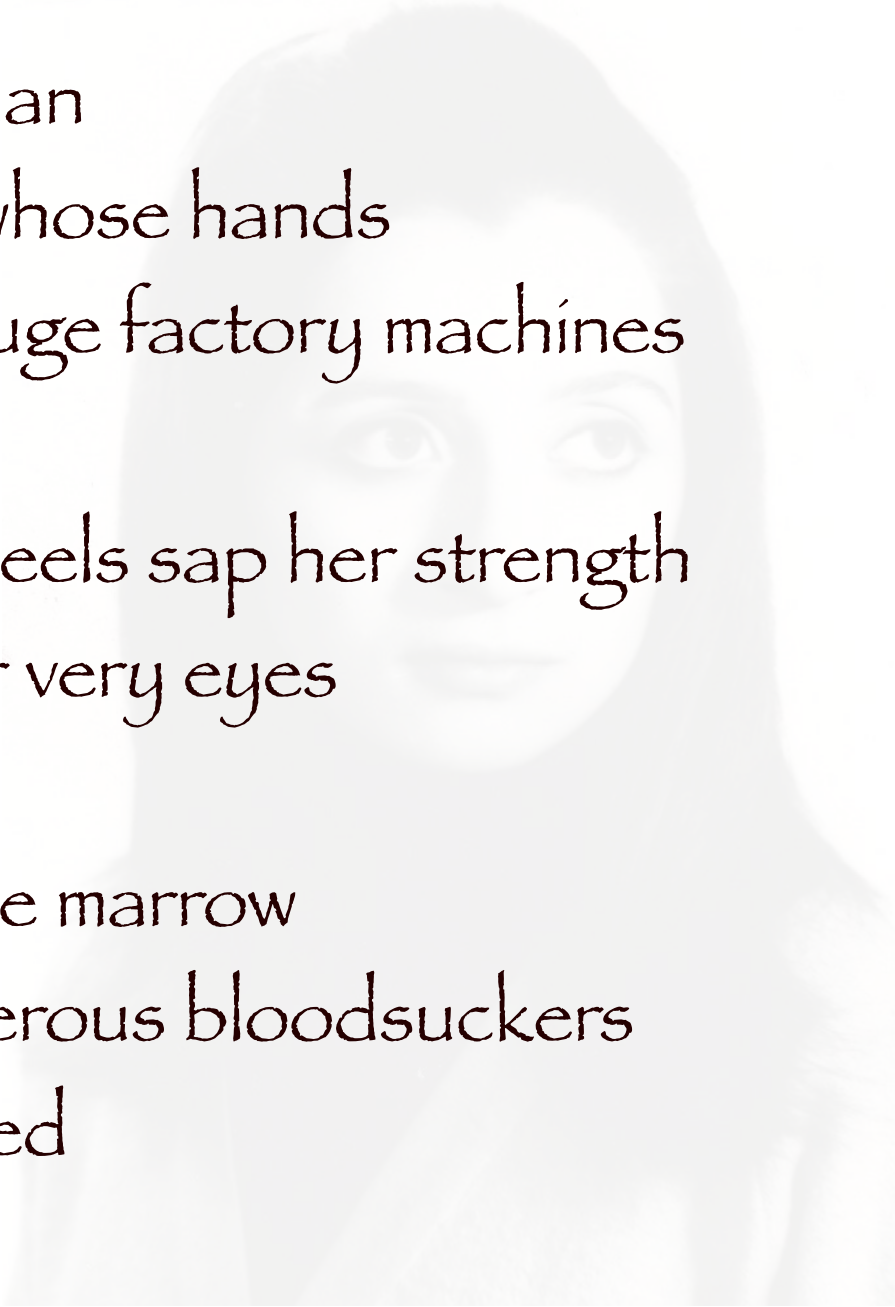
I am a woman
I am from the homeless tribes



of the plains and the mountains
a woman
who gives birth to her baby
in the mountains
and loses her goat
in the vastness of the plains
and mourns
I am a mother
a sister
a faithful spouse

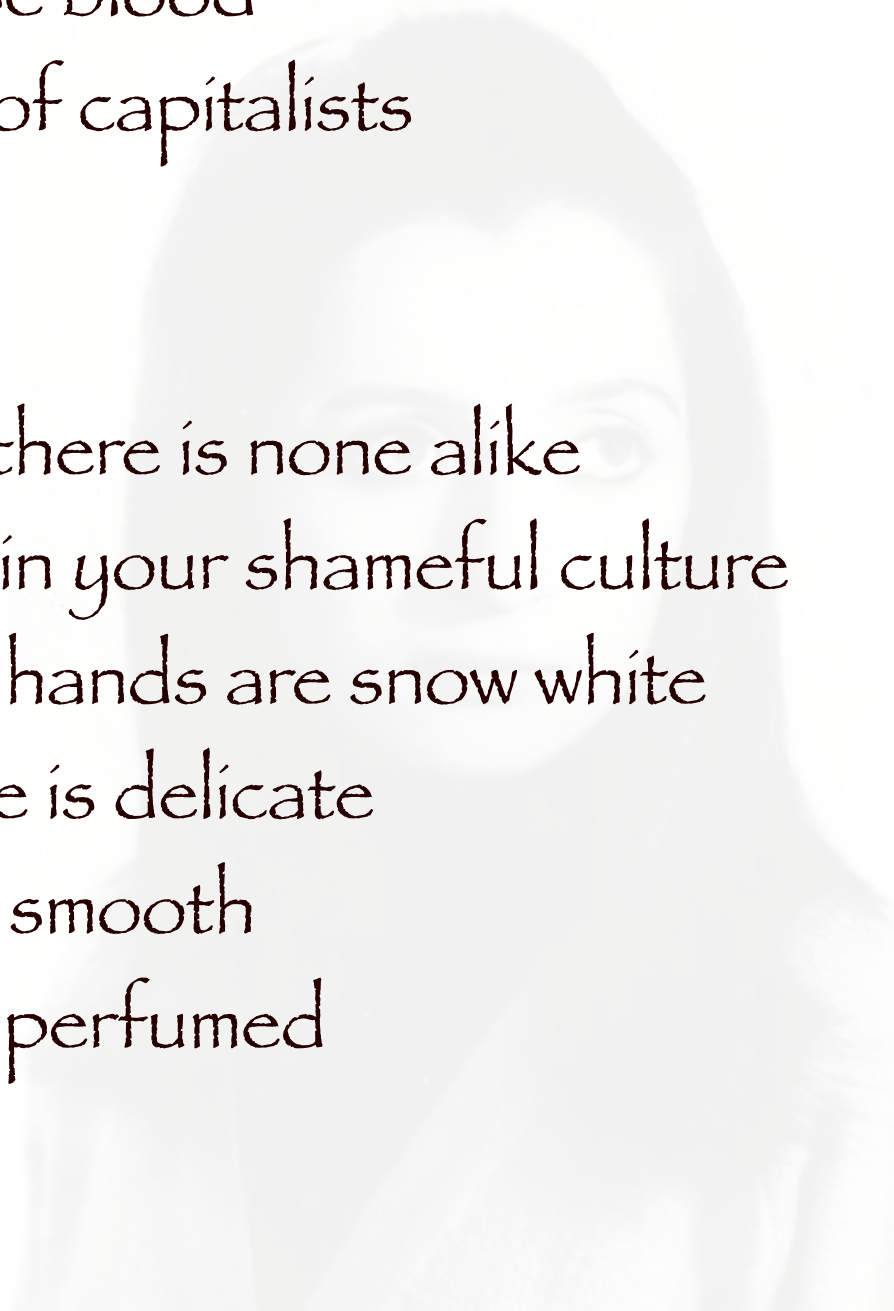


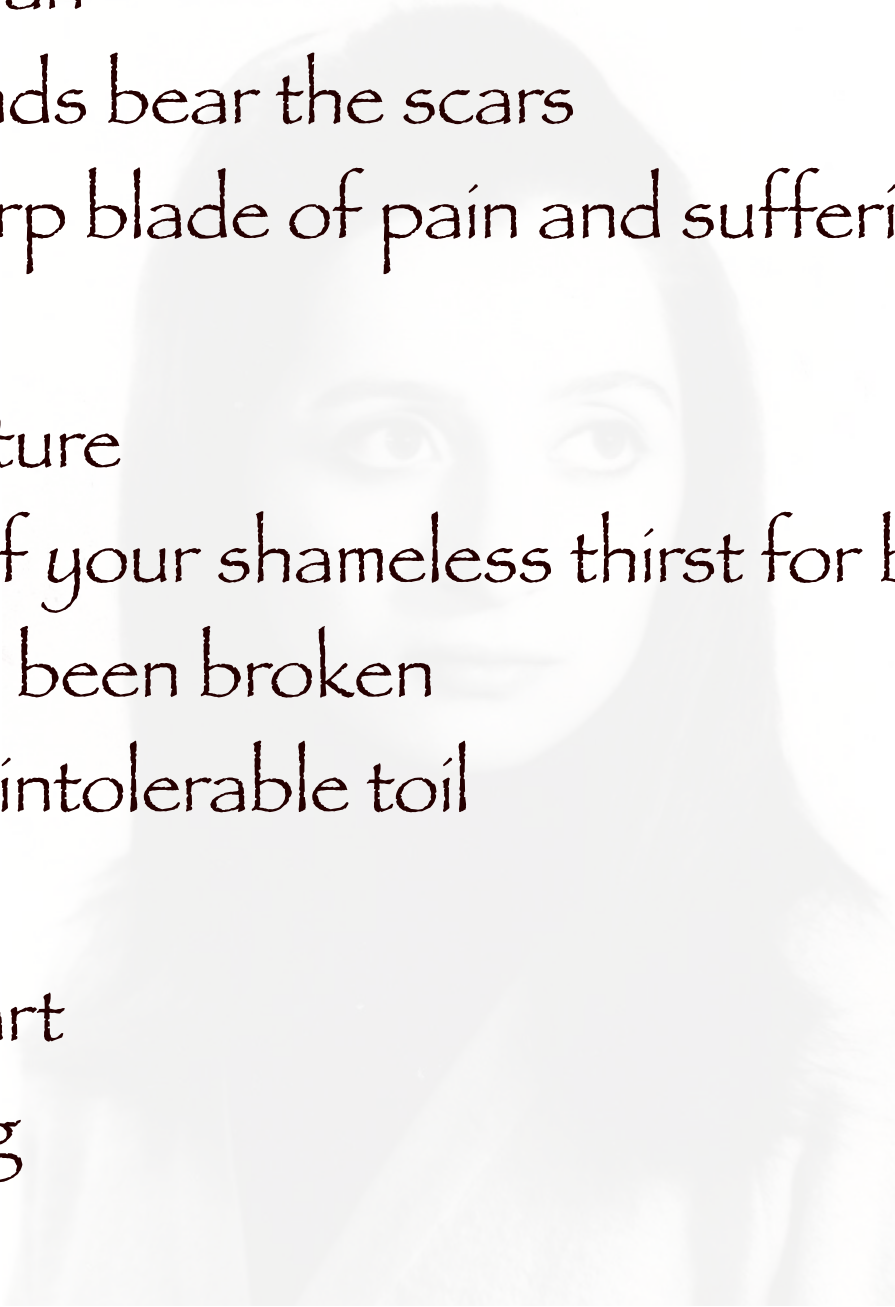
I am a woman
a woman from the dead hamlets of the South
a woman
who from the beginning
has travelled barefoot
across the scorching earth
I am from the small villages of the North
a woman
who from the beginning
has worked to the last ounce of her strength
in the rice fields and plantations



I am a woman
a worker whose hands
operate huge factory machines
every day
the cogwheels sap her strength
before her very eyes
a woman
from whose marrow
the cadaverous bloodsuckers
are fattened

from whose blood
the profit of capitalists
multiplies
a woman
for whom there is none alike
anywhere in your shameful culture
where her hands are snow white
her stature is delicate
her skin is smooth
her hair is perfumed

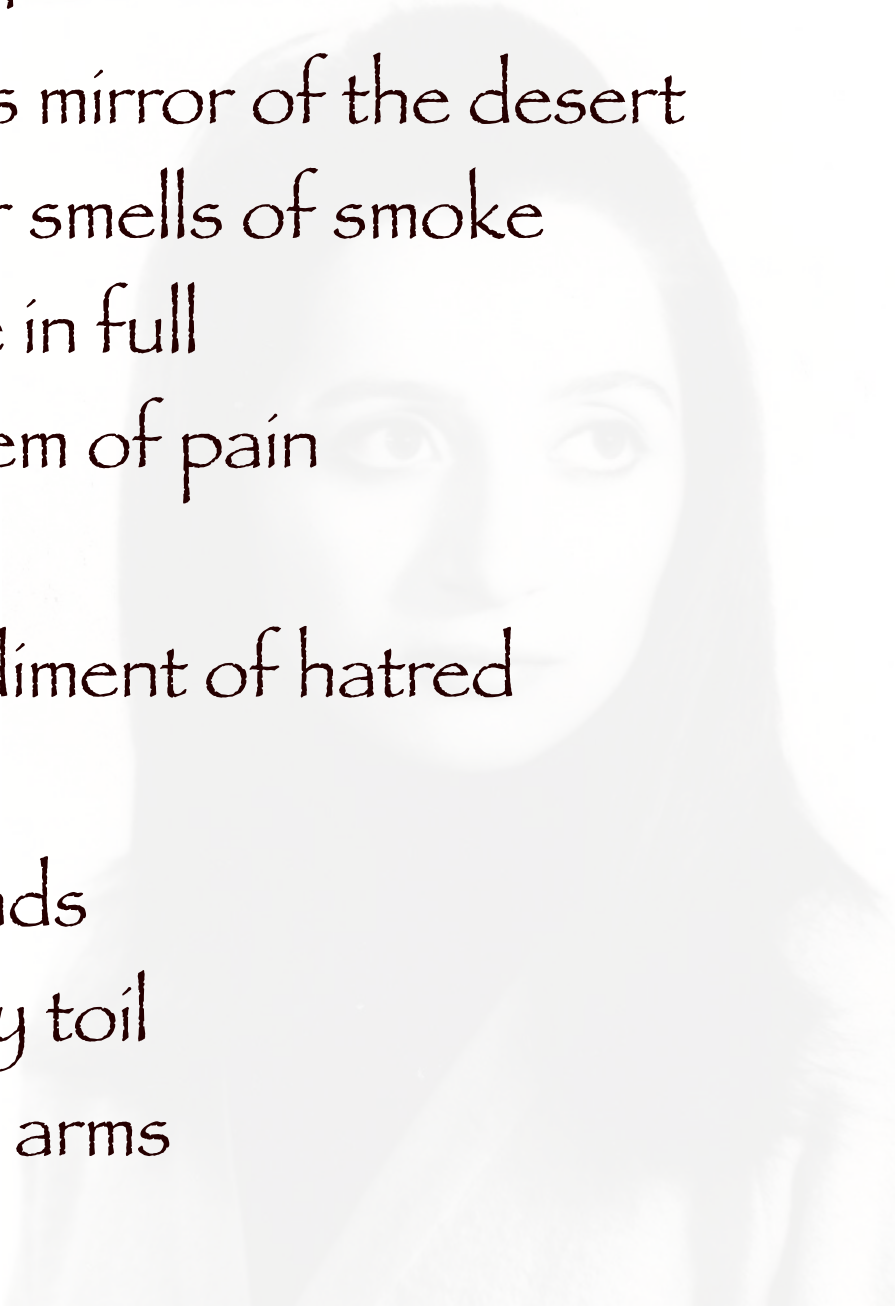




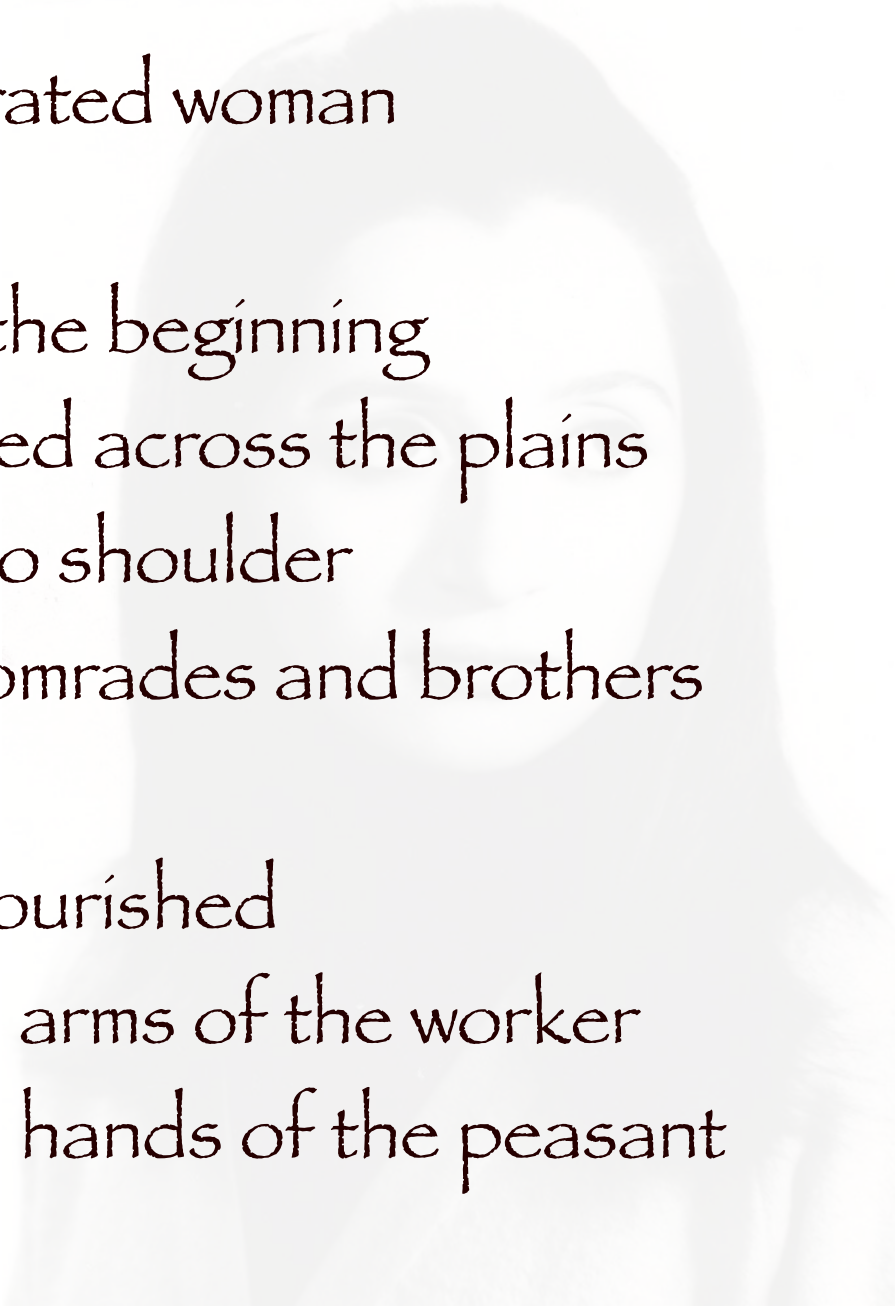
I am a woman
whose hands bear the scars
of the sharp blade of pain and suffering
a woman
whose stature
because of your shameless thirst for bounty
has simply been broken
under the intolerable toil
a woman
whose heart
is brimming

with the festering wounds of anger
a woman
who has the crimson reflection
of freedom's bullets
swelling in her eyes

I am a woman
a woman
for whom there is none alike
anywhere in your shameful culture
a woman



whose skin
is the sun's mirror of the desert
whose hair smells of smoke
my stature in full
is an emblem of pain
my body
the embodiment of hatred
a woman
whose hands
are built by toil
to take up arms



I am a liberated woman
a woman
who from the beginning
has travelled across the plains
shoulder to shoulder
with her comrades and brothers
a woman
who has nourished
the mighty arms of the worker
the mighty hands of the peasant

I am a worker myself!
I am a peasant myself!

English translation by: A. Behrang

