

40 Years Too Late

—Dick Hattan

Inside the hootch, Western warriors rape a foreign culture,
Desecrating the daughters during respite from battle,
Foreign intrusion triggers moans of hatred
While elders seethe at the violent disrespect.
Silence screams out from the loveless penetration,
Eyes closed to the faceless horror,
Innocence lost by repeated violation
Gives birth to a lifetime of rage.

Combat boots trample a proud people,
Igniting thatched roofs, stomping ancient graves,
A rich culture set aflame,
Poisoned by indifference and disgust.

Fed by the cadence of time,
Memories haunt my aging soul,
I revisit the timeless conflict,
Tainted with the stench of godless actions.
A powerless, proud people outraged at the bloody siege,
Staring with hatred at the blue-eyed intruders,
Helpless to protect its uncertain future,
Powerless in the wake of war's madness.

The back-drop of war reopens forgotten wounds
Recreated in search of meaning and purpose,
Guilt and shame devour the long peace
Stalking forgiveness 40 years too late.