

# Unfinished: 500 years of History

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## Sympathy

### Sympathy for my immigrant Father ~

driven mad by the heat and wind  
weeping on the television couch  
eyes red to melodrama news of the screen

### Sympathy for my step mother ~ housekeeper

trying to imitate her pale, insipid, unsugared  
Cleanliness~next-to-Godliness actress  
from the Golden Age of Hollywood

### Sympathy for my half brother ~ now and then

arising like a flower, but feeding on electrical circuits  
mocking his baby grandmother  
and Salvador stains in sky light  
growing into the cracked mirror  
of his up-nosed, puppet mother

### Sympathy for the uncle

who drinks himself to bottom of bottles  
with Gin and Tonics ~ Vodka, lemon and lime  
because his family can't deal with el Chisme  
that at night hot Carl grabs him from behind  
in silk tropical rage ~ pressing  
rubbing hard against dark hairy belly  
humming Chorus Line in the dark

### Sympathy for the movement

whose bread and wine I can't receive ~  
break down, swallow slowly ~ drink it, zip it:  
pounding tears and sweat  
drumming blood in the stomach and head

### Sympathy for the raging Chicano L.A. hipster Ranchero night

ignoring Central American Immigrant Poet  
reciting death chants on the dark leaves of his country night  
raving ~ ranting because these two busted bronze bullets  
came from the same rusty gun  
but landed on different sides of the border

### Sympathy for the Green Berets in El Salvado,

the Marines in Nicaragua, C.I.A. instructors in Guatemala  
US military bases in Panama, D.E. A. agents in Colombia

Sympathy for military men

thinking with their bloated stomachs  
dressed like soldiers ~ smelling like thieves

Sympathy for La Ziguana, friend of the river night,

walking endlessly the streets of Los Angeles  
with dead daylight dreams of her own skies and earth

Sympathy for the Mission boys

who sit and hang in the slow afternoon corner  
rapping pump rhymes and Billy blue bop  
as cops patrol this "dog-fight district"  
keeping this rapping racket from the golden tree

Sympathy for the city bird

with dark spots on its brown wings  
flying into green broken bottles and pavement floors  
no sunflower cloud or river song

Sympathy for the Earth-darker-than-night housekeeper

who traded Death Squads in San Salvador  
for the crazy bullet buzzing her ears  
on her new streets and broken steps

Sympathy for the mid west dreamer in South Central

who fled one broken down isolated Memphis, Tennessee,  
crumpled like paper in the dim diesel night,  
to raise children in the ashtray city of Los Angeles

Sympathy for sugar-coated American reader

who see L.A. as Hollywood or Beverly Hills  
and not Latino barrios of Echo Park, Boyle Heights, San Fernando

Sympathy for Joan Didion, L.A. writer d

ominated by her own institutional Altar of Hollywood ~ L.A. Times,  
whose wasted, seduced, prostituted talent  
used Salvadorean death in the 80's  
to release a thin 100 pages black book  
on her disgust against thin light volcano mountain skys  
el puppet politic who drools over Mr. Reagan's rocket  
only to replay a Vietnam nostalgia dream  
of a reporter gone pavement dried

Sympathy for David ~ his screaming silence

and big boy bark in the Asian-Latino L.A. classroom w  
 aiting for angels to rain, bless his scattered dreams  
 Sympathy for that one long hair Chicano actor,  
 son of poet, who claimed the cause and movement  
 as his own coat for winter nights  
 but left it behind to rot  
 when he entered the golden gates of Hollywood  
 too sunbathed and artificially tanned  
 Sympathy for the nude dancer  
 sucking dollars through her red lip mouth  
 Sympathy for the highly erotic sophisticated Plato  
 pretending to be the raw and cooked actor  
 looking for wine cork pops in the night light  
 Sympathy for the greedy, high stone, pillar statue of a politician y  
 ou punk you death stupid brute cock idiot father fucker  
 Sympathy for Mr. Ronald Reagan  
 who orders the White House Home Made Special:  
 Wonder Bread, Amencan cheese, strips of bacon  
 Sympathy for Napalm cancer  
 and the US pilot who prays  
 before he bombs Vietnam  
 Sympathy for father Martinez  
 who barks his Sunday sermon on the tortured Christ  
 eyes like dead fish - cold clear Christian Church  
 Sympathy for the praying and decaying lord of pain  
 the song of the virgin mother of sex  
 pouring serpents and thorns like sinfill rain  
 Syrmopathy for the English teacher  
 who chawks across the blackboard: Columbus discovers America  
 And Sympathy for Cristobal Colon  
 who sailed the ocean blue in 1492  
 set foot on virgin lands: unmapped  
 unimagined  
 unnamed-untamed,  
 unexplored, undeveloped  
 undocumented

But the west always remains a virgin  
 since this race of natural heroes,  
     diseased with aching bones  
     censored for tongues of fire  
     wasted down to pestilence,  
 don't wear clothes, read or write  
 use silver ware nor say grace  
 They don't mind sweat or blood smells  
     They don't even speak English  
     They get pregnant  
     They talk back to cops  
         disagree with foreign policy  
         stay on welfare  
         overcrowd the schools  
         for a miserable taco-pizza lunch  
 They don't understand what is like to be invaded  
 Sympathy - for Christopher Columbus  
     in the name of God, Glory, Gold and the Empire  
 Sympathy for the American prayer  
     arising like a lizard under radiant skies  
     eciting dead poetry of the snake in Aztec Nights  
 Sympathy for the silence of Maria y Jose standing  
     with their heads down - handcuffed  
     thrown, shoved, pushed into wide metal doors of a green truck  
     driven by green uniformed - dark sun glasses border patrol guards  
 Syrnpathy - A fucking mind remains a horrible thing  
 Sympathy to those who adopt to everything - Amen!  
 Sympathy to those who misread my direct voice for anger  
     Am I unamerican to you?  
 Sympathy - Sympathy for all of them  
     for they're all sacrificial lambs, living crucifixes  
     of 500 years of history and its conquest  
 Sympathy - for I hurt, too