

SHARED PAINS

by

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This is this land  
Where children look like  
shrunken bags  
like old men with no bellies  
their souls hanging  
on a string of skeleton  
with no life force

Where is this land  
my country  
the foot print of time  
museum land  
the story of the earth  
cradle of mankind

How can the nightmare of famine  
The agony of starvation  
The death of the nation and its future  
unfold under supervision  
of U.N. and relief agencies

I run here and there  
to tell the story of my people  
their plight and desperation  
I prayed and pleaded  
for food and medicine

Where was World Vision  
CARE and AFRICARE  
BARAC and Oxfam  
FAO and UNICEF  
newsreporters and cameramen  
politicians and clergymen  
gobbling up all the donations  
giving out little  
here  
there  
to keep everyone on the borderline  
of starvation

Let me ask  
My friends ... observers  
people of this world  
had this pestilence hit Europe and America  
the English or French  
what could have been the response

Death among the people of color  
those of Africa, Asia and Latin America  
the victims of slavery and colonialism  
thought to be "normal" or "natural"  
in captivity  
or in feeding camps.

Who is responsible to this holocaust  
governments or nature  
U.N. or relief agencies

Oh...Oh...Yes  
There is plenty of blame for everyone  
Enough to go around many times

I woman in the diaspora  
an individual  
I share the tears and agony  
the pain and despair  
the hopelessness and helplessness  
crippled by anger and rage  
choking  
a part of me dying  
everyday

I must ... I must ... do something  
To curb the course of history  
from starvation and poverty

I must ... I will ... do something