

Chicken Feet Apocalypse

A holy monk
older than time
so frail he can't walk
without support
prophesied
only the few would survive
like chicken feet
yellow
the greater spaces in between would
die, a melancholy
pie.

And so it has come to pass
first mere hunger, poverty and disease
epidemics first heard of
in 1930.
Dengue haemorrhagic fever
Meningitis
Typhoid
Smallpox at the edges
Hepatitis.

A whole city
Mandalay
drinking water
from the palace moat
how the evils gloat
malaria
now cerebral
mortal
antibiotic resistant
that carries off
a boy at the beach
one summer
that was supposed to be
a vacation – a son firstborn – of VIPs
Disease, the great equalizer.

A whole river of mud
blood and
bloated corpses
a river
with such a lovely name –
Irrawaddy.