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## Between Wars

Sally T. Taylor

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## Between Wars

Incendiary firestorms  
before the half-century,  
left church shells,  
the organs silent.

Ossuaries of a million bones  
satisfied the curious,  
until the fields of flags  
faded in the summer sun.

In another quarter-century  
Through defoliated forests,  
tank-tracked rice fields  
and empty villages,

The scream of the monsoon winds  
could not cover the cries  
of dying cultures.  
But who listened?

Now  
used arms and fighter planes  
are carelessly sold  
half a world away;  
cities bulge above the ashes  
and green shoots  
cover the mass graves.

Peace  
—the time  
called “permanent pre-hostility”  
—the time  
when we ask  
Who is the new enemy?

Poppies and rice grass  
have always made  
a transient floral  
spray.

—Sally T. Taylor