

Amélia Veiga

156 THE HEINEMANN BOOK OF AFRICAN WOMEN'S POETRY

Wind of Liberty

From the heart of the earth
a hallucinated wind erupts
sweeping up . . . up . . . up
the dry leaves of the world . . .

Wind which moans and howls deeply
and wounds like daggers
the hearts of people . . .

Horrible and cruel wind
which despises and twists
and makes war without quarters . . .

And now crawls lamenting
then grows in fury
and howls like a thunder,
but it is in every sense
the WIND OF LIBERTY
that the astonished poor world
aspires to retain in its hands . . .

Translated from the Portuguese by Julia Kirst

Gwendoline C. Konie

We are Equals

Brother, I will not howl challenges
from a lofty mountaintop
like a female Goliath drunk on anger;
But like a noble hen eagle,
snapping the chains that bind me,
I will spread my wings wide
and gracefully soar to the sky.
I will shower you with dazzling light
bursting from the ball of my mind,
from my body and my blazing intellect
and burn the scales that blind your eyes,
as you bask in my warmth below me,
that you may see me as a human, whole,
not a body to quench your appetites.
On earth once again, I will nurture you
with the ripe fruits of my brain.
Fixed by my eyeballs, your eyes will soften
and slowly melt with understanding
and flow into mine as mine flow into yours,
our shoulders touching, merging in parity.
Then you will know that you need me
as I need you to complete my circle of being.
Your last chain link will fall from me
while your selfless respect embraces me,
and in your heart I will plant
the rare gift of my love and loyalty.

Kenya (1986), *The Present Moment* (1987) and *Street Life* (novella, 1987). She won third prize in the 1981 BBC Arts and Africa Poetry Competition. She has four grown-up children, and currently lives in Nairobi.

Amelia Blossom Pegram (South Africa) born in Cape Town. She was trained as a teacher at Hewat Training College, and later studied at the University of Cape Town, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, and the University of Louisville, Kentucky. She is widely published and translated. Her books are *Deliverance: Poems for South Africa* (a self-published chapbook) and *Our Sun Will Rise* (Three Continents Press, Washington, DC, 1989).

Kristina Rungano (Zimbabwe) b. 28 February 1963. After obtaining a Diploma in Computer Science in Britain, she returned to work for the Science Computing Centre in Harare. She has published a volume of her poems, *A Storm is Brewing* (Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1984).

* **Amina Saïd** (Tunisia) b. 1953 in Tunis. Her books of poetry include *Paysages, nuit friable* (1980) and *Métamorphose et la vague* (1985).

* **Amélia Veiga (Amélia Maria Ramos Veiga Silva)** (Angola) b. 1 December 1931 at Silves, Portugal. In 1951 she emigrated to Angola where she taught in the commercial institutes of Sá da Bandeira. In 1962, the city's Camara Municipality awarded her the Fernando Pessoa Prize for her book, *Poemas* and the first Jogos Florais Prize. She contributed to Angolan, Portuguese and Brazilian journals. Her poems appear in *Mákua 1 - antologia poética* (Sá da Bandeira, 1962), *Mákua 3 - antologia poética* (Sá da Bandeira, 1963), and *O corpo da Pátria (antologia poética da guerra no ultramar 1961/1971)*, (Braga, 1971). Her published books are *Destinos* (Sá da Bandeira, 1961), *Poemas* (Sá da Bandeira, 1963) and *Libertação* (Sá da Bandeira, 1974).

Phumzile Zulu (South Africa). In 1978 she went into exile in the USA, where she enrolled in New York University as the first recipient of the Bishop Tutu Scholarship. Her poetry has appeared in Sono Molefe's *Malibongwe ANC Women: Poetry is also their Weapon* (ANC, Stockholm, 1981) and in *IKON: Art Against Apartheid* (second series 5/6, Winter/Summer 1986).