

Rakhshan Rizwan

Buffet

We dine as if this meal
is our last, fat *lugmas*
of hot *naan*, newscasters
with husky voices,
stimulate our Pavlovian salivation,
we eat tragedy, morality, teenage
suicides, pillage, rape, the maddening
countryside of the mind
is overrun by this saccharine glaze,
of Pashtuns, Shias
Hazaras, Balochis,
lower castes, Syrians,
Filipinos, cream-topped
piping-hot, steaming-fresh,
from the brazier, the red breaking news,
the familiar blurb which whets the appetite,
and hits the spot each time,
but this gaping hole,
this will not fill, this canker sore,
we sit stirring the brew,
vapours of warm melted sugar rising,
we stir in the evening news,
and drown ourselves,
in the tiny,
teacups of our,
collective conscience.