

POLITICAL POEM

If it looks like a poppy, it *is* a poppy.
Nikos Tselepides

Prices are up
twenty per cent for the week
and the Greeks are
singing together for Easter.

A band of the blind
is playing "Roll Out the Barrels"
and moving like bats by radar
around Syntagma Square
while friends with locked cannisters
are collecting coins
to pay for the coming
season of the Attic sun.

Babis who went last week
with a Greek doctor
"and we didn't sleep all the night"
is now going with a German
tourist for money.
I am irregular he says
like Cavafy but I don't know why
I can't do it except for money.

From a sidewalk cafe
a Greek, watching a Greek
woman pass, tells her critically
You walk like the political situation.

On all the busy
corners of Athens, police
whistles are shrilling
like the first cicadas.
Now in spite of censorship
Greeks by the sea
or sitting on stones
are flexing their muscles
and dreaming of a new Marathon.