

## Nadezhda Widow

Hiding in nooks where shadows  
lay dark as smoke,  
little woman  
where would you be without history?

Scampering away  
from the male furies of the system,  
(male, always worse than the real ones)  
memorizing his poems  
lest they get lost,  
where would you be  
without the muse-baiters  
and the witch-hunters  
and the ones who turn  
the free word over the spit?

Some people need to be framed  
by war and the revolution,  
by the war again  
and the Cheka;  
the face as sorrow,  
history as funerary raiment.

Now you are the widow of a generation  
the widow of the shadow  
of the revolution.  
And since you lived  
half a century after he disappeared,  
surely we could call you  
the widow of time, as we know it,  
of the black taper-end of the embering millennium.