

## ❧ *Oppositional Poetics* ❧

*“wozu Dichter in dürftiger Zeit?”*  
*(what is the use of poets in a bereft time?)*

—HÖLDERLIN FROM “BREAD & WINE”

HOW DO WE NOW NAVIGATE a new chaos of possibility? Our languages and investigations of utopias, prehistoric caves, history's revision from a peoples' point of view, i.e. the invasion of Turtle Island (“These were the violent beginnings of an intricate system of technology, business, politics, and culture that would dominate the world for the next five centuries”). How to navigate the “horbins” or holocausts in memory, out of memory, and to come? Is it conceivable? Dare we say oppositional is a spiritual poetics? How to navigate mythological poetic wars, planetary finitude, unfathomable sickness, starvation, and death. How to navigate the new savage state? As writers what's the task? More letters to immured powermongers? New hope in a fresh, less cynical “administration”? Putting our energy into a “candidate”? Total candor? Total renunciation? The Crips and Bloods, the newspapers say, orchestrate a kind of truce after the L.A. Insurrection—people-to-people we are made. My best friend and I argue about that word: insurrection. Want to get the facts straight. Is it simply a “frustration”? A looting? You think “riot” is a better nomer? Some of us think since January 17, 1990, everything's markedly different. My niece had “communist” smeared across her high school locker for refusing to salute the flag during Desert Storm. No, never sleep. You must go against the grain for the benefit of others.

As the Muse said to Hilda Doolittle, “Write, write or die.”