

## The Middle Country

by Felix Jung

Like every tribe before us, we assumed  
ourselves the focus of the sun, divine  
inheritors of wind and mountain peaks.  
*Tsung Gwo*, the Chinese name for China means  
the middle country, center of the earth  
and universe. To keep ourselves alone,  
we built a wall more lasting than the land

it separated. Day by day, it spanned  
two thousand years of lifting heavy stone  
on stone, with countless dead – each body worth  
its weight in brick, our corpses tucked between  
the mortaring. Today, when raindrops leak  
beneath the cracks, they trickle down to find  
brown leaves, dry grass, old seeds that never bloomed.



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