



# *A History of Too Much*

POEMS BY

Adrienne Kalfopoulou

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“These poems perform a necessary recognition of how the past is everywhere present, of how presence is ever imminent in what passes, and—most importantly—of how our every choice matters.” —Scott Cairns, author of *Slow Pilgrim: The Collected Poems*

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These are poems born of facets and interrogations of citizenship and national dissolution in the Greek cultural landscape of economic austerity, of the self in love, too, with *topoi* imbued with history, eros, and loss. The terrains are multiple and transient, the subjects both quotidian and extraordinary in their lyric consciousness of time.

### ADVANCE PRAISE

“Adrienne Kalfopoulou’s luminous chronicle of love and debt in the time of the Greek Euro crisis, *A History of Too Much*, is powerful lyric testimony to the courage, humor, and brave resistance with which ordinary people faced augurs of loss in Greece, where the beauty of ‘the oregano’s thick perfume, the sapphire sea’ remind them of a heritage of beauty and sacrifice, as the title poem puts it. ‘It felt so much bigger than me,’ says the speaker of the magnificent hybrid poem that caps the collection, an assemblage of the voices and visions of historic change, which is, like *History* itself, a tour de force.”

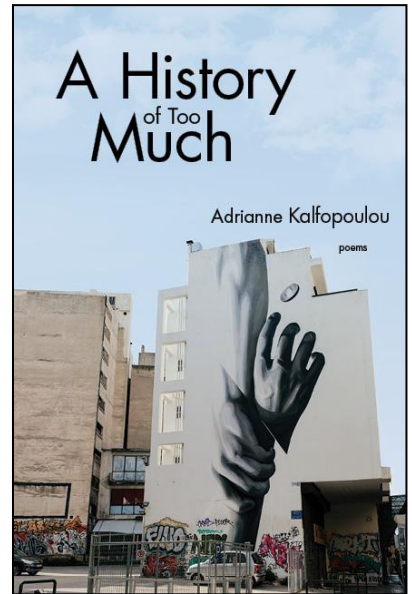
—**Cynthia Hogue**, author of *In June the Labyrinth*

“*Eat Less Water* is as clever as its title. It’s a thoughtful book complete with recipes that are as good for your taste buds as they are for the planet. Read it and learn. Read it and eat. Read it as a reminder that our world’s most precious resource is in jeopardy—and yet we can do something about it. Read it to find out how.”

—**Rhina P. Espailat**, author of *Playing at Stillness* and *Her Place in These Designs*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Adrienne Kalfopoulou** is the author of two collections of poetry, several chapbooks, and a book of essays, *Ruin: Essays in Exilic Living*, all from Red Hen Press. Her work has appeared in journals and anthologies including *American Poets in Greece*, *Borderlands and Crossroads: Writing the Motherland*, *Duende*, *Futures: Poetry of the Greek Crisis*, *The Harvard Review Online*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Kindled Terraces*, and *Superstition Review*. She chairs the English program at Deree College in Athens, Greece.



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**FROM A HISTORY OF TOO MUCH**

**In a Pomegranate Time**

We found each other unexpectedly, unplanned, we kissed extravagantly.  
I had not known this language, the continents it crossed extravagantly.

Tell me of your old loves, Phoebe who wooed you, Niki who wanted you  
to speak of how you made love, and that you left them so extravagantly.

It is again the pomegranate season, the ripened fruit skins open red seams  
like mouths gorgeous with plump seeds ready to be eaten extravagantly.

You liked our rifts in conversation, not the gap in time zones—or me  
asleep and you about to sleep but awake and looking for me extravagantly.

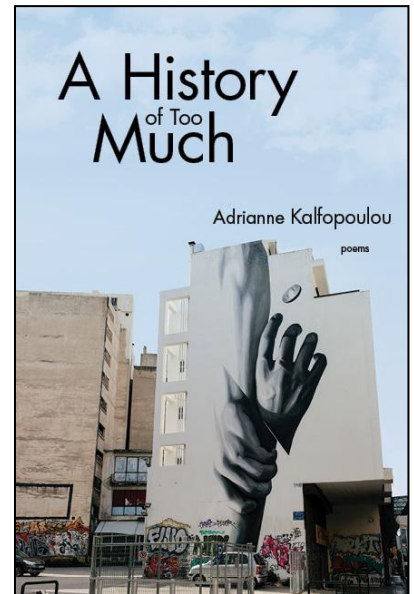
The charged hemispheres left us with hour differences, and rioting synapses.  
Talk was an aphrodisiac, like the funny smile you withheld extravagantly.

I didn't want the complications, but your world had a largesse I thought  
rare like democracy and romance, a betrayal that developed extravagantly.

Let me describe the ravage, the ways a bitten thing might live its grief,  
a Demeter in sudden winter, or me in a country falling apart extravagantly.

And you? Will you go back to the coves and short notes, the fruit seasons?  
Ask another Phoebe or Niki how deeply they loved and lost extravagantly?

Let yourself be whispered to, and conjure goddesses, call out my name as it  
grows foreign, the fig or *Figette* lost in the Aegean we swam extravagantly.



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