

WORLD POETRY

2. POETRY EUROPE

EDITOR - IN - CHIEF :

Dr. KRISHNA SRINIVAS

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INTRODUCTION

I stood rooted to earth when I was ushered into the library of Goethe in Frankfurt, Germany. Thrills, mysterious and strange, filled every fibre of my being when I fondled his pen. From that moment I pined for creating an epic and my FIVE ELEMENTS was born, a decade after.

When I was in London, River Thames enchanted me. I stood by Westminster Bridge, breathless in adoration on seeing the sun sinking into tranquillity.

In Moscow, I stood spellbound before the statue of Mayakovsky, awed by his sense of fantasy and dynamic approaches to imagery.

Paris I always admire—Paris that gave us Baudelaire and Rimbaud with his violence, his revolt, his acceptance of evil and vice as instruments for self-liberation and transcendence. Spanish poets today are looked to for leadership in World Poetry.

World War I spelt new movements in Spanish arts, new isms—futurism, dadism, cubism, Surrealism and Spanish versions in Huidobro's creationism and the related ultraism. Many poets were under the calls of Gongorism, popularism and later Marxism. But poets of eminence like Lorca and Alberti tamed the beast of the unconscious and gave it order and meaning, thus stealing a march over their French counterparts. They are giving a new direction.

Federico Garcia Lorca blazed as a master figure and Nobel Laureate Neruda hailed Lorca thus: "He was a physical flash of lightning, a force in perpetual motion, a jubilation, a splendor, a wholly superhuman charm. His being was magical and golden. What a fiery temperament, spontaneous and even savage. What a way to talk and talk till dawn. Each sentence was an idea, each word a verse."

In one of his lectures on Gongora, Lorca had declared: "The Poet should carry a map of the places that he is going to visit, and he should be calm when faced with the thousand beauties and the thousand ugliness disguised as beauties which must pass before his eyes. He should blindfold himself as Ulysses before the sirens and he should shoot his arrows at the living metaphors and not at the contrived and false ones that surround him. The poet must never surrender himself because if he does it just once, he will never rescue his work again".

Poet descends into the depths of his own heart. He interprets his experiences in rare moments of clairvoyance. His perfections in utterance possess eternity. He chooses words to act as missiles that explode in the reader's mind. He experiments with words, sounds and disjointed syllables.

"Once we were people.
Now, we are epochs"....

These words of Pasternak are dazzling, profound.

We are aghast when Octavio Paz says "light penetrates the sleeping body of water". In time all is dark, out of time lies the moment of communion, the sudden striking of the sun's light on the waters, Eliot's "still point of the turning world". European, poets throb to convey to the reader "the magic fire, invisible beneath the ash of words".

In this Anthology top poets in twenty-four European countries, have given us their best poems. Cecil Day Lewis is mighty|fine in his "Those Himalayas of the Mind." The greatest poet of great Britain Stephen Spender is sparkling in his "Middle East":

"And the sun, pompous as God,
Sat enthroned in his central sky: to prove
He still melts unhygienic passions
In his furnace of hygienic love."

Bella Cameron is superb in "The Razor Cut of War"—

"We pluck the thorns from hearts
but our heads
are avalanches,
But we live."

Ted Hughes is scintillating in his "Snowdrop",

"Now is the globe shrunk tight
Round the mouse's, dulled wintering heart
Weasel and crow, as if moulded in brass,
Move through an outer darkness
Not in their right minds,
With the other deaths. She, too pursues her ends
Brutal as the stars of this month,
Her pale head heavy as metal."

From Greece comes the electrifying voice of
Vassilis Vitsaxis:

"But I have conquered you tonight
Dark mountains of the mind!....
I trod upon the secret path, within me...
It led me all the way across
To the unseen slope
And then, in a deep dream,
I felt the heavy walls collapse
And saw—behind the eyelids—
That I was One with All".
...shadowy forms that blend
Beneath a single Light..."

Spain today is rising to new highs. And Justo
Jorge Padron is memorable in his "The Rooster"...

"A fountain of starling height exalts,
Summons the morning to touch and fragrance,
And just like a powerful ship
That carries in its sails all the sea and the dreams

Bursts into my eyes with the sun's song."
Jorge Guillen is compelling in his "Still Life"—

".....the walnut
confiding in its knots
And veins, in its long
Time of strength
Congealed in this
Still force, become
Substance of board
Always, forever forest."

Jose Hierro feels shadow and music as "Honeycomb
of flame on the faraway peaks."

Sweden has given us most outstanding poets.
Karl H. Bolay is sublime when he says:

"to craate a poem is
to explode space
and build the dwelling of love
in the luminous expanse of the void."

Johannes Edfelt is magnificent in his "The Painter".

"Behind the slowly unrolling web of
dreams there is nothing but emptiness,
the void that finally swallows us all."

Artur Lundkvist has given us an everlasting poem
"The First"...

"Their first love was violence,
their first kiss a bite.
The first human being came into existence
when he understood he had killed a
human being."

Czechoslovakia has Ondra Lyschorsky who in
his "Bundle" laments:

"I have not understood all other lives either—
characters written in this most bloody of
centuries,
characters written in my own blood
And sealed within the burnt offering of
my heart
The only seal that never looses authority".

From France, we have a perfuming bunch and
Juliane Chakravorty is pensive:

"The roses on the contrary
bloom in spite of all,
The roses are
the red revolts of sadness."

Germany is offering phenomenal verses. Tilly
Boesche—Zacharow feels:

"Earth made for sun and light
Sinks now in darkness".

From Norway comes the consoling words of
Jan Anker Froydarlund in his remarkable poem:
"Victory Speaking"...

"When the nuclear fission occurred
I was hope within a hope
of peaceful competition.
Within me was a dream of victory
for all human beings
that they might become like gods
and their world a paradise".

Evgueny Yevtushenko's poem: "Say, do the
Russians want a war" breathes many excellences.
Dolmatovsky assails us with his question in "Saint"—

"The poor ones will donate you their last
Oh holy man, reply my simple question
Who is the holy one
Are you, or they?"

Turkey has given us her best. And Osman
Turkay in "Sleepwaker" is monumental.

"On the panes I see forzen shapes, blurred eyes,
Sphinxes and mummies and hieroglyphics...
The entire continent of Europe drifts in my eyes...
Who is calling me at this hour?...
He resembles a column of fire, moves from one
end of the horizon to the other, encase Universe.
I am a cloud floating in the endless Space...
We walk towards dawn, I look at his shadow:
Part of it poppies, part of it fields of corn.
I look at my own shadow: it's war and Asia."

✓ Yugoslavia is well represented in this anthology,
thanks to Marjia Kukubajska Deneva. Her poem will
ever ring in our ears.

The modern poet is in search of lost ecstasies
and in his delirium to outgrow the dark night of
senses, he walks through storms and treacherous
slopes and when the first light of dawn strikes his
eyes, he grows giddy and pours rapturous verses,
perfuming time, everlasting to everlasting.

Krishna Prival

3rd June 1982

MARIJA KURUBAJSKA DONEVA

MONOLOGUE OF THE SEA

If sweet waters
flow under my bitter dignity
I wouldn't be me.
And if river arrows
cross their surface blood
with the arches of my deepest waves
I will find protection
by the endless coast of peaceful rescue.
I have no boundaries, not even in heights.
Preflood of cosmical fall I am
and a growth rooted into land.
The freedom branched from only a drop
through unpoured flow I spray and unknot.
The universe is my blood—
it has infused me from atoms
into life-bestowing liquid;
spherically to exchange the nature
With the light, still bright and still unspoiled.
Among earths and fires
on an undissolving rock
between Scylla and Charibdis
my restlessness reigns.
If you give your eyes, my letter,
with a new creation to receive them back,
then sink into me,
gone toward the alls
but most yours in the wave.

Translated by Marija Kukubajska
From: Carbon & Diamond

Born in Stip, Macedonia, Yugoslavia on April 27, 1950. She studied at the Faculty of Philosophy in in Skopje. She was Assistant of the Creative Writing Workshop in the English Department at California State University, Chico, semesters. From 1977-78, she was the English and German languages translator and Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper ZIK "Crvena Zvezda" in Stip. For the next two years ('78-'79), she worked in Libya, Africa. From April 1978 until the end of 1979, she was translator for the Yugoslav Experts' Team at the Clinical Hospital of Benghazi and from January until May 1980, she was assistant lecturer in English in the Faculty of Arts Education at Garyounis University.

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