

Inventory

N°9

A Journal of Translation
Princeton University

Inventory

NO. 9

SPRING 2019

- Rainer Maria Rilke 4 **Six Poems**
Claude Neuman
- Claude Neuman 11 **On Making Rhymed and Metered Translations**
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 13 **The Sorcerer's Apprentice**
H. Stern
- Suzuki Shizuko 18 **Six Haiku**
Brianna Noll
- Ákos Fodor 22 **Varieties of Modern Hungarian Haiku**
Aliz Horvath
- Sofronis Sofroniou 27 **Pig Iron**
Argyro Nicolaou
- Luciana Jazmín Coronado 34 **Catacombs**
Felix Green

Egill Skallagrímsson William Sayers	39	The Grievous Loss of Sons
Sami Ahmad Azza Hasson	44	<i>Life is a Lousy Job</i>
Juan Francisco Quevedo Gutiérrez Lana Jaffe	52	<i>The Line of Oblivion</i>
Arno Bohlmeijer Arno Bohlmeijer	59	Four Bold Bilingual Poems
Fadi Abou Dib Fadi Abou Dib	68	Six Poems
Turgut Uyar Ayten Tartici	86	<i>The World's Most Beautiful Arabia</i>
Albe Harlow	92	On Sustainable Translation

The World's Most Beautiful Arabia

Turgut Uyar

1959

selections translated from the Turkish by

Ayten Tartici

The two poems presented here appeared in Turgut Uyar's groundbreaking third book of poetry, Dünyanın En Güzel Arabistanı (The World's Most Beautiful Arabia), published in 1959. Uyar was a member of the "Second New," a movement known for revolutionizing Turkish poetry with its use of stream-of-consciousness, unusual word combinations and deconstructed idiomatic language. After spending several years in the provinces due to his military job, Uyar returned to Ankara, the capital of the young Turkish Republic, in the late 1950s and found a rapidly urbanizing city. "Night with Deer" chronicles his frustrations with that urbanization and his desire to escape from the claustrophobia of the city. In an interview, he stated that the neon lights and grand hotels he saw returning to Ankara required a new kind of poetic voice. "Poem Explaining the State / of the Tightrope Walker on Top of the High Wire" shows his more humorous side. None of Uyar's books have been translated into English, except for a few poems anthologized here and there, and no complete translations of either of the poems included exist, perhaps because of the difficulty of translating Uyar's inventive, often polysemous work.

Poem Explaining the State of the Tightrope Walker on Top of the High Wire

Your red is red I believe it
Your purple is purple I believe it
Your God is grand, agreed
Your poem is complete
And what is more it has smoke
But what is your name
Please do not mess up my balance

I blend in with all the trees
Who cares if there is a crowd or not
Lost in the streets I found it in my pocket
The trees are like that
The streets are like this, who cares
But what is your name
Please do not mess up my balance

My love might change as well as my truths
I rest by the shimmering sea
The water up to my knees
I am smiling at all of you with good intentions
Whatever you say
I will not fight with you today

There is something secret I know
Your red is red I believe it
Your purple is purple I believe it
I am perfect for the world
I am perfect for myself
But what is your name
Please do not mess up my balance

Night With Deer

In fact there was nothing to be scared of
Everything was made of plastic
And when we died, we died by the thousands facing the sun.
We were scared, like children are,
But that was before we discovered a night with deer.

You should always know what a night with deer looks like
In distant, untamed forests
It will save us from time
When the sun sets slowly at the ends of the asphalt

On the one hand we tilled the earth
On the other we got lost
By hiding from gladiators and toothed beasts
Or else by fighting
We saved the night with deer

Yes we were orphans but we still had hope
If we saw three houses, we supposed it was a city
If we saw three doves, we thought of Mexico
We liked strolling the streets in the evenings
And seeing the women call after their husbands
Then we were drinking wine, red or white,
Because, whether we knew it or not,
It was a night with deer.

“A tree beyond the night with deer
A sky where your foot touches the water
Cold moonlight on your forked antlers”
Like it or not, it reminds you of old loves
There were beautiful women and lovers once
I know they must exist now too
If you knew how happy it makes me to think of it
The most beautiful nights with deer in the mountains

I am telling you, I don't care about anything
Except love and hope
Three glasses of wine and three new songs and all of a sudden
In my memory the fuzziness of a night with deer

I know the ships cannot take it away
The neon lights or grand theories cannot illuminate its corners
For example, we used to hang out in Manastir and drink the two of us
Or make love in bed one woman one man
Our kisses would become warmer
Our armpits sweeter
In the darkness of a night with deer

If we did not remember what everyone forgot
It would not have been important that we got cheated on
We did not love the silver samovars or the old things
Just to discard them
You will ask whether we were evil
We were neither good nor evil
If at the beginning and at the end we were apart
It was because we were apart
At the beginning and at the end

But all there was was in a night with deer
If you lived it your palms would sweat with excitement

And just like that it was evening on the pavements
On the crystal chandeliers and the naked shoulders of women
We felt out of place in front of the grand hotels
Our desperation was that easy
And if you thought our sadness came from big things you'd be wrong
For example, if we drank three glasses of wine
Or stabbed a man
Or spat on the streets
It would dispel our sadness right away
But better would be to go away
And sleep in a night with deer

“In the night the eyes of the deer glisten
Like flares, timid, anxious
Like a Sultan's daggers in the moonlight
On one side, rocks piled on one another
On the other side, I”
But you are miserable just like I am
We cannot console ourselves with old things
Dominoes and cold late afternoons
Unfamiliar crowds with their floral dresses
Our shadows rolled up into a ball at our feet
Even if we rejoice we know the end of things
I forget about the debts, the guarantors and bills
The lotto is chosen without me
Even in the first hearing I leave the courtroom blameless
I tear down a brunette for my own sake
I do not dry her hair well enough
I drink a glass of wine for my own sake
“But a night with deer in the forest
Sharp, blue and rustling
I pass into that night with deer”

I lean in to kiss my own cheeks.

Authors and Contributors

Fadi Abou Dib is a Syrian writer and poet, born in France and living in Jordan. He has a BS in Telecommunication Engineering and a Masters of Theology. He currently works as an Arabic instructor at Dalarna University, Sweden.

Sami Ahmad is a contemporary Syrian poet. He owns Al-Takween publishing house in Damascus. He has published six collections of poems: *Prayer of the Rain*, 1999; *Smoke*, 2002; *The Client of Fatigue*, 2003; *The Stars Let Me Down*, 2005; *What Seemed to Me*, 2011; and *Life is a Lousy Job* (2017), which includes the poem "Damascus 2013".

Arno Bohlmeijer is a bilingual novelist, poet and translator in English & Dutch. He was originally trained as a dancer, but his shyness gave him stage-fright. At 17 he chose to study languages. "All my life as a very human being and writer, I've been called "different". Alright then, let's take that as a good thing?"

Ákos Fodor (1945–2015) is one of the most renowned representatives of contemporary Hungarian haiku. For him, "Haiku turns two people poets, just like love makes two people lovers. (...) It is an ascetic form, a protean genre, vivid mentality that creates rather than consumes time and space. Those who can rejoin and touch each other even for a single haiku moment are blissful."

Juan Francisco Quevedo Gutiérrez, born in Mexico, is a contemporary Spanish poet and novelist. He is the author of two novels, *Ana en el mes de Julio* and *Querida princesa*. *El sedal del olvido* is his first collection of poetry.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) was a German writer, scientist and statesman. The extraordinary variety of his works reveals his fascination for the ever-changing display of forms, from a botanical study on *The Metamorphosis of Plants* or the role-playing and disguise in *Wilhelm Meister*, to the incantatory ballad "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" printed in this volume.

Felix Green is a German-Australian poet and translator from Hahndorf, South Australia. He is currently completing a PhD in Comparative Literature at Brown University in the US. He has published poems in France, the UK, the US, and Australia.

Albe Harlow, is a writer and MFA candidate at Columbia University in New York City. He writes essays and fictions, and is currently completing a novel.

Azza Hasson is a Syrian translator. She has a diploma in Translation and an MA in Linguistics from Tishreen University. She translated a number of books and novels from English into Arabic such as *Save Me the Waltz* by *Zelda Fitzgerald*, *The Dialect of Sex* by *Shulamith Firestone*, *Imagining Diana* by *Diane Clehane* and *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* by *Carson McCullers*.

Aliz Horvath is an advanced PhD candidate specializing in early modern and modern transnational East Asian studies with an additional background in ancient history. She is interested in the mechanisms of transnational flows in Japan, China, and Korea, as well as the dynamics of intellectual history, cultural exchange, history writing, international relations, and network analysis.

Lana Jaffe is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at Harvard. Her research focuses on trauma and memory studies in Russian, South Korean, Latin American and Jewish literatures.

Luciana Jazmín Coronado is an Argentinian poet and translator. She has published two collections of poetry—*La insolación* and *Catacumbas*—and has been awarded grants from the Antonio Gala Foundation and Alfara Studio in Spain. She teaches language and literature.

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926) was an Austrian poet and novelist. He wrote both metered and rhymed poetry as well as free verse. He was also a prolific translator of poetry (Michelangelo's *Sonnets*, Louise Labé, Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, Paul Valéry). Toward the end of his life he wrote several volumes of poems in French.

Claude Neuman is 65 and now lives in France. He has translated from German into both English and French Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus*, a selection of fifty other Rilke poems and Hölderlin's late contemplative poems, and into French Shakespeare's *Sonnets* and a selection of Robert Frost's poems. He is currently working on English and French translations of Hölderlin's *Odes and Elegies*.v

Argyro Nicolaou is a Cypriot writer and filmmaker based in New York City. She received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Harvard University in November 2018.

Brianna Noll is the author of *The Price of Scarlet*, selected by Lisa Williams as the inaugural poetry collection in the University Press of Kentucky's *New Poetry and Prose Series*. She is Poetry Editor of *The Account*, which she helped found, and her poems have appeared widely in journals including the *Kenyon Review Online*, *The Georgia Review*, *32 Poems*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Crazyhorse*. She lives in Los Angeles.

William Sayers is a full adjunct professor affiliated with the Graduate Program of Medieval Studies at Cornell University. He writes on medieval Western European languages and literatures, with side-lines in James Joyce and English etymology.

Egill Skallagrímsson (910–990) was an Icelandic poet and viking warrior. According to *Egil's saga*, Egill composed his first poem at the age of three and split the skull of a boy who had cheated him at the age of seven. He mourns the loss of his son Böðvarr in the elegy *The Grievous Loss of Sons*.

Suzuki Shizuko (1919-?) was born in Tokyo in 1919. Her first haiku collection, *Shunrai* (Spring Thunder), was published in 1946. After the publication of her second collection, *Yubiwa* (The Ring), in 1952, Shizuko disappeared and her whereabouts have remained a mystery.

Sofronis Sofroniou is a contemporary Greek Cypriot novelist. His first novel, *Protoplastoi* (2015) was awarded the National Fiction Prize in Cyprus and the Best Newcomer prize of the Greek Society of Authors in 2016. *Pig Iron* (2017) is his second novel.

H. Stern is Senior Lecturer Emeritus of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Yale University. He has published critical essays on literature in German, French and Yiddish and music theory, as well as original poetry and translations of German poetry from Goethe and Schiller to Morgenstern.

Turgut Uyar (1927-1985) was a prominent Turkish poet, who authored over eight books of poetry, including *Arzihal* (Submission) and *Türkiyem* (My Turkey). He worked as a personnel officer for the Turkish military, eventually giving up his post to join a paper manufacturing company. He is known for breaking new ground in Turkish poetry as a member of the "Second New" movement through his use of colloquial, playful and political language to his poems.

Ayten Tartici is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at Yale University, where she was awarded the Gordon Barber Memorial Prize for Poetry. Her writing has previously appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books* and *Slate*, among other venues. Raised in Turkey, she currently resides in New York City.