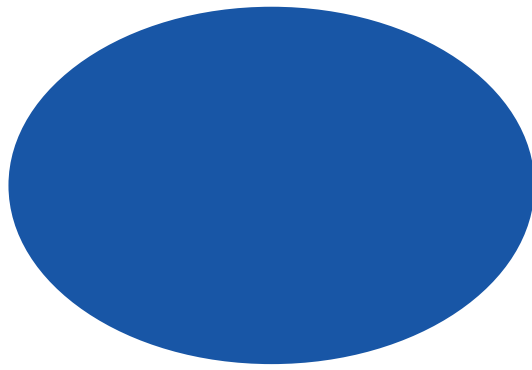


FOUR CENTURIES

Russian Poetry in Translation



10

2015



Four Centuries

Russian Poetry in Translation

fourcenturies@gmx.de

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Letter from the Publisher

Four Centuries Library

Dear Friends,

The following text of the Publisher's Letter was published in *Four Centuries*, Nr. 3:

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for reading our magazine.

I would like to open its third issue by launching a new initiative to create a library of Russian poetry in translations - **Four Centuries Library**.

The ambitious goal of this project is to collect books, periodicals and other papers with Russian poetry, old and new, translated into different languages, and finally to donate collection as a whole to one of the university or public libraries. At the end of this issue you will find the list of more than thirty items - a starting contribution from my personal collection. You can join me in my efforts to implement this idea by sending your donations in the following categories:

A. Monographic poetry collections by separate poets translated into different languages

B. Anthologies of Russian poetry translations

C. Periodicals with translations of Russian poetry

Please, send your donations to:

Dr. Ilya Perelmuter, Erikapfad 7, 45133 Essen, Germany

The list of all the gifts with the names of the donators will be published in *Four Centuries*. Thanks a lot for your support in advance!

Yours,

Publisher

In this issue you will find new donations to the *Four Centuries Library* at page 43.

XX

Innokenty Annensky (1855 - 1909)
ИННОКЕНТИЙ АННЕНСКИЙ (1855 - 1909)

Translated by Ian Probstein*

∞

A mysterious logo is like
An overturned 8:
It is the pleasantest lie
Of all that we bear in mind.

In the round of enamel minutes
Its oaths are being fulfilled,
They blink as the stars in twilight
Or are sung by the wind of midnight.

Yet where the eclipsed face of the suns
Has stopped its torrent,
Infinity is only a moment
Split by the lightning of torment.

Double

Not me and not he and not you,
The same as me yet not quite:
We looked at times so alike
That our features merged tight.

A heated argument boils in doubt,
Yet blended as an unseen one,
We live for the same dream,
The dream of parting since then.

A feverish dream disturbed
With the deceit of a shade upon shade,
Yet the closer I gazed and gazed,
The more I sensed myself inside.

Only the veil of a dumb night
At times, would reflect heaving,
My breath and the other's breathing,
The beating of the other's and my own heart.

In a turbid whirlwind of years
One question still torments me:
When we are finally severed,
Alone who will I be?

Ian Probstein, assistant professor of English in Tour College, New York, a bilingual English-Russian poet and translator of poetry, is writing poetry and on poetry. He published seven books of poetry in Russian, one in English, and more than twenty books and anthologies of poetry in translation. He has translated poetry from English, Spanish, Italian, and Polish into Russian and from Russian into English. A bilingual edition of *Complete Poems and Selected Cantos* of Ezra Pound, which he compiled, edited, commented, and of which he is one of the major translators, was the Best Book of 2003 in Translation and Poetry in Russia. *Collected Poems* of T. S. Eliot in Russian with Dr. Probstein's translations, introduction and commentaries was published by Astrel in 2013 in Moscow's Astrel Publishing. His book on Russian poetry *Spiritualized Soil* was published by Agraph, Moscow, 2014.

Iwan Bunin (1870 - 1953)

ИВАН БУНИН (1870 - 1953)

Przełożył Maciej Froński*

Translated into Polish by Maciej Froński*

Cyprysy

Bezludna naga Jajła kryje się w obłokach,
We mgłę się rozplynęła czarnomorska dal,
Tutaj królują wieczny smutek, sen głęboki,
Gdy w dole szum przyboju słyhać, łoskot fal.

Niechaj tam, w mieście żywych, nad zatoką siną,
Huczy i tańczy życie... Tu swój mają klub
Zamyślane cyprysy - i z ponurą miną
Śmierć wstępuje swój gorzki w rękach niosąc łup.

Nie przeraża ich życie, przelotne, chwilowe...
Słyszą jedynie dzwony znad brzegów, znad plaż,
Wzywające wieczorem w swej płaczliwej mowie
Bielejących nagrobków niestrudzoną straż.

1896

Źródło

W głuszy zielonej i cienistej,
Gdzie rządzą wilgoć, mech i mrok,
Gdzie w parów schodzi górski stok,
Ze skały zimne źródło tryska:

Harcuje, kipi, spada, gna,
To wartko płynie, to się kłębi
Pod gałęziami starych dębów
Roztopionego strumień szkła.

I patrzę w niemym zamyśleniu
Niebiosa, drzewa, stoki gór,
Jak się świetlisty rodzi wzór,
Jak na wilgotnym drży kamieniu.

1900

Dagestan

Bacz i w strzemionach jeszcze mocniej stań,
W wąwozie ciemność, słycać kaskad grzmienie,
I pod niebiosa sięgająca grań
Otacza wąwóz skał krzepkim ramieniem.

W dali nad nimi - diamentowe gwiazdy,
A na ich piersi zło wróżący mrok
Ogarnął aul: to zbudował gniazdo
Tysięcznooki smok.

Między 1903 a 1906

Jaśmin

Kwitną jaśminy. Przez gęstwinę
Idę nad Terek skoro świt.
W dali wyraźnie się wyrzyna
Nagi, błyszczący srebrem szczyt.

Szeleści rzeka w iskrach cała,
Jaśminem pachnie duszny las.
W górze się zima z latem złała:
Śniegi z błękitem nieba wraz.

W upalnej drzemce las zamiera,
Co wzmaga tylko kwiatów dur.
Na tle lazuru widać teraz
Cały nieziemski przepych gór.

Czerwiec 1904

Koloseum

Wiał ciepły wietrzyk. Jakby siejąc
Wieczorny półmrok, brzęczał żuk,
A wrak szczerbaty Koloseum
Leżał jak czasza u mych stóp.
Czerniały ściany wokół mnie,
Noc w ich siniała oku. W nim
Snuła się pustka gdzieś po dnie,
Pośród traw suchych i wyblakłych...
Blask księżycowy, stałe światło,
Jak lekki na nich biał dym.

13 lutego 1916

Poetessa

Ogromna mufka, blada twarz
Tak marzycielsko w nią wtulona,
Chude kolana i ramiona...
Nerwy, anemia, poza, fałsz.

Na księcia czeka, wciąż go nie ma.
Błagalne oczy pełne skarg...
"Puczkow, pan czyta swój poemat..." -
Z rozpustnych, zwiędłych płynie warg.
6 stycznia 1916

* * *

Śnieg roniąc, wartko mkną obłoki,
Blask słońca płynne złoto wlał
W umbryjskie góry - w nagie stoki,
Suche zarośla, twardość skał.

W chmurach za nimi, kiedy świeci,
Często zakwita tęczy kwiat -
Tu żyli wszak anachoreci,
To nimb, po którymś świętym ślad.
12 września 1917 roku

* * *

Południowy skwar, trawa, łąn pszeniy czy żyta,
Błękit, trzmielie i kwiaty wśród chat...
Syna marnotrawnego Pan, gdy przyjdzie czas, spyta:
"Byłeś szczęśliw za ziemskich swych lat?"

Nic nie będę pamiętał, w sercu tylko zachowam
Polne dróżki przez łąki czy gdzie złocił się kłos -
Pod kolana Go ujmę i nie rzeknę ni słowa,
Od łez w gardle uwięźnie mi głos.

14 lipca 1918

Maciej Froński, 1973, is a Polish poet and translator living in Katowice. A lawyer by profession he is the author of two books of poetry. He has translated poetry into Polish from different languages. Mr. Froński is married with two daughters.

Leonid Švab

ЛЕОНИД ШВАБ

Tradotto par Massimo Maurizio*

Translated into Italian by Massimo Maurizio*

* * *

La terra gelata è sovrastata da un trattore
da un'astronave di potenza indicibile,
I campi si riempiono di spighe e il vento ti strappa il cappello.
Una renna, impigliata in un cavo di rame,
i bambini più piccoli ha spaventato a morte.
Un soldato con un grembiule nero libera la renna.

Si celebra il matrimonio dopo poco tempo,
I bambini portano una zarina per il soldato,
Che lo osserva come una moglie,
E vanno al soldato anche il pane e la cipolla per curare
il raffreddore.

* * *

Mi è tornato alla mente un terribile pavimento a mosaico,
Figure di tori sconfitti,
L'erba verde,
Che si piega sotto le carcasse dei tori.
Al centro l'unicorno assassino
Con i suoi occhi rossi serrati,
Che pare reggersi a malapena in piedi.
In lontananza ci sono pastori con le pipe turche,
Che indicano l'unicorno con i cannelli.

* * *

E non c'è ragione di nessuno avvertire,
Disporre a proprio piacimento
A volo d'uccello di un'automobile, di una gallinella zoppa,
il clima è imponente. Un oggetto
animato è invulnerabile.

Giungerà insensibile un cambio di giostre,
E la voce interiore dell'ungaro ungherese intonerà un canto,
L'incantevole pietra televisore,
L'incantevole città stadio,
E l'ungaro ungherese timoroso della morte
non abbandonerà l'Ungheria.

* * *

Gli scacchi e le pedine della dama si sono sparpagiate.
Il vento butta giù il vetro.
Dal buio escono Friedrich e Elsa.

Friedrich e Elsa, ballate come zingari
Un ballo d'amore.

No, rispondeva Elsa, sono terribilmente debole,
Ma Friedrich è in ottima forma.

E Friedrich volava come un matto.
Si prendevano per mano,
Ballavano come zingari.

* * *

Krishna non piange.
Gli orsi in giardino tormentano la figlia dell'inglese.
Sta arrivando una tempesta, la bimba si protegge dietro
una pietra.

Dietro la palizzata spuntano le petunie.
Più è piccolo il pianeta, più a lungo balena il lampo.

All'alba l'inglese bussava alla porta di casa co' i soi compari,
La bambina dorme sull'erba, la pioggia è cessata.
Al posto degli orsi vediamo raccoglitori di cotone.

* * *

Gli ospiti si sono riuniti in una dacia
Sotto il fragore della neve che crepitava.
La dacia era sul declinare
Di una collina, in basso c'era un lago.

Il padrone di casa non c'era,
Ma gli oggetti si disponevano come
Se fosse uscito soltanto per un attimo
E dovesse ritornare a breve.

Si separavano ognuno in camera sua.
Tenendo le mani dietro la schiena.
Sui tappeti stavano appese armi
Che il tempo aveva rese opache.

Regnava il silenzio, ma la principessa
Disse, unendo le palme come in preghiera:
"Per favore, andiamo via di qui.
Ho tanta paura. Vi prego."

Gli ospiti tornarono in sé,
Si sentì un rumore inimmaginabile,
E poco tempo dopo
Non vi era rimasto nessuno.

* * *

Mi sembra di vivere in paradiso,
Su un'infinita moltitudine di altopiani reconditi,
Alzo gli occhi come tamburelli,
Indico con la mano l'autostrada ormai inservibile.

Ho presentimenti di prigionia e di guerra,
Sopra di me sta sospeso un beccaccino, e lui è lo storno dai
denti dorati

I pianeti incominciano e muoversi,
Prende vita il volano della centrale elettrica.

Nei fossi baluginano bianchi pezzi di macchine,
mi fanno pena le basi delle scienze naturali.
Sono un re, il mio pranzo non è mai pronto,
sono rancoroso come Giacobbe,
Grazie a Dio, come si dice, sono perduto.

* * *

Sono andato in Mongolia per credere a un sogno allegro,
Accompagnavo una carovana con la scorta,
Il predellino dell'elicottero mi batté su una tempia,
Mi è rimasta una cicatrice viola per tutta la vita.

Dei ragazzini rappezzavano una palla di feltro con la corda,
Dei pastori bevevano, passandosi il bicchiere affusolato.
Io sono rimasto assolutamente lucido per sentire l'ordine,
Al crocicchio delle strade c'era un idolo di pietra.

Verso notte la polvere si posava, io mi sciacquavo la gola,
Mi sfilavo le fibbie dalle spalle,
Percepivo i battiti del cuore come una parola segreta
E andavo fiero della mia inquietudine.

E, avvoltomi in una coperta troppe fine,
come mi aveva insegnatola mia guida,
Sentivo, è vero, i passi di un sogno spensierato,
Ma mi appariva mio fratello maggiore e non intonava canti,
E tossiva costipato e sparvia come una luna.

Lo chiamavo, frugavo nell'aria con la mano disubbidiente,
Scandagliavo i dintorni con l'aiuto del fuoco notturno,
E i compagni, mortalmente stanchi per quel passaggio,
mi minacciavano di liberarsi di me.

* * *

Sono fatto di formaggio, la mia è la testa di un vecchio
Al fischio la vita incomincia da metà
Sto su un precipizio con una renna un grillo o mio fratello
Nella vita di tutti i giorni ci chiamano Aleša

Si alza in vortica come una rudimentale cortina di confine
Nascono funghi dalla carta io sto su un orologio
Una girella con l'uvetta ho in mano come se reggessi
la levetta di una bomba a frammentazione
Per non preoccupare i miei cari

Non amo le cose pungenti
Il fermento degli avvenimenti insignificanti genera
a) un giovane capo
b) l'agricoltura di un'estate infinita
l'amore incomincia con un cucchiaino di composta

Non riesco a piangere Aleša ma vivere è
incommensurabilmente facile
Ti viene incontro la promessa sposa per levarsi dalla strada
Sulla tangente che tocca la strada di casa guizzano
circhi panoramici
E io come un demone sono cieco e sono sordo come un demone

Massimo Maurizio is a researcher of Russian language and literature at Turin University (Italy). He's the author of almost 100 articles, essays, reviews on contemporary Russian literature, post-avant-garde and unofficial poetry of Stalin's era, and as well of two books - "*Bezpredmetnaya yunost*" *Andreya Egunova: tekst i kontekst* (Andrei Egunov's "abstract youthness": text and context, 2008) and "*Prossima fermata: "Cremlino". Percorsi reali e immaginari per la Mosca letteraria* (Next stop: "Kremlin". Real and imaginary tours around literary Moscow, 2011). He has translated Russian authors of the XX century and edited *La massa critica del cuore. Antologia di poesia russa contemporanea* (The critical mass of the heart. An anthology of contemporary Russian poetry, 2013).

Nina Iskrenko (1951 - 1995)

Нина Искренко (1951 - 1995)

Translated by Ian Probststein*

* * *

One could always bum a cigarette in Russia
Ask for a buthtab gin
at the door painted with a prick
Plug dahlias from someone's flower bed
On a Saturday fly
to a merry Black Sea with a childhood friend
Having first met in the street have sex
finishing the affair in the public restroom
Human souls have always had here largesse
to the excess
To butts and tits
There has been desperate love to death
LOVE IS NOT A GAME!
As was written with a chalk in the depths
of the sixth block stairwell
It was always easy in Russia to kill a man
and wipe the hands on earth
on the grass
on a birch tree

In Russia one has always been beaten by an almshouse
consciousness
forcing one to sacrifice all the first fruits to the dear people
All the angels apparently turned their backs on this country
while all chimney sweepers are up to their ears in work
One could always freely and easily
go and bum a cigarette
before going crazy

© Nina Iskrenko, 1995

* © Ian Probststein, translation, 2015

Cemetery

1.

Also a woman As well as a man
TO DEAR FATHER
Someone's private affair
And they have now one body to share
Every third one is baptized

Every fifth is an old woman a child
Each eighteenth is a writer
Savior is somewhere near
putting His plumb line and hand plane

We cautiously taste with our lips
The swinging of the bells
We buy peace of mind with a credit card
and carry warily a paper bag
clasping to our bosom
peace of mind like a drug
at 2 pm it Flashed Stung
looking at an autumn leaf fluttering under a colonnade
It will overwhelm now
The last will of those sharp edges
Does not threat or sound intricately
Just facts disabling like handicap
Also a woman As well as a man

2.

The cemetery at night is not like the cemetery at daytime
In a cemetery at night one loses one's mind at once
At night all deliberation, secret suspicion, articulation
are annihilated by a single sound scratching around
During the day you walk along the cemetery as a passer-by
While at night everyone looks straight in your eye
Poking with a finger in your face or worse

There is no worse entertainment than walking along
Impassable roads in October through the night cemetery
Nothing horrible there just terrible waist-high mud
chill and some preposterous faces absolutely unnecessary
overall either for you or for me

Анна Глазова
Анна Глазова

Переклад на українську Галини Бабак*
Translated into Ukrainian by Galina Babak*

* * *

як іноді опускаються до мізерності
заради самої глибини -

іноді припинення росту
означає не старість а зав'язь:
хоча в цій зав'язі нічого не росте
але росте тепер в тому
що вже не зав'яззю є,
що заради мізерного стало цілим.

* * *

що взяти із себе
окрім голизни?

для кращого пошуку
прищепити свою ж дичку.

(так цурається вовка собака
що би змінити в собі
даність того, що він сам - вовк,

і стає пастирем
людини).

© Анна Глазова, 2015

* © Галина Бабак, translation, 2015

* * *

для перетворення деревного у дерев'яне
потрібна людина
так як робота насамперед росла б із землі.

як з літа сама виростає зима
у кожному насінні відразу
лежить зерно майбутньої витрати
щоби життя вичерпало себе -

щоби дерево стало дошкою
для сходинки затертої кроками
щоби незнищенне серце
кожного життя стало
їжею і водою

* * *

якщо ти дерево а не каміння -
є час розкидати щедрість
у світлих барвах або темній смолі
і є час нагромаджувати в собі скупість
для зимового скрипіння.

перше п'янить бджолиний політ
і голову людям;
друге ж -
дятлам і примарам.

* * *

іноді вигнутий - як вигнаний
із прямоти
волі й мети

але коли з вогню
вийняти гнучкий як лозина залізний прут
і його вигнути,

якість заліза
випущена на волю
між засобом і метою.

* * *

голова дерева
схована у ґрунті в прохолоді
розуму
що спадає у холод
ближче до палання ядра.

якщо корені досягнуть
серця землі
і обіймуть його

кожна квітка
(у каштана болять за цим часом свічі)
стане домашнім вогнищем
на всі боки відчиненого будинку.

* * *

відрізнати порожнину від порожнечі
(як солодку воду від прісної)
можна тільки наповнившись
чуттєвими прикметами
коли вони вимагають
відступити й дати місце
іншому наповненню,
живій тисняві.

* * *

винайденню безмежності
передувало
розвінчання:

у голого тіла немає берегів;
винайдення тіла
відбулося
із внутрішнього боку
котрий став -
віднайденим -

хмарою
для обличчя.

Galyna Babak was born in Kharkiv, Ukraine in 1988. She graduated in the Ukrainian linguistics and literature at Vasily Karazin Kharkiv National University. Galina Babak is currently a doctorate student at the Department of East European studies, Charles University in Prague. She is the author of two collections of poetry: "*Zelene ljubju*" (2007) and "*Z hlyny i vody*" (2012). Her poems have been published in a number of anthologies, magazines and online. Her poetry has been translated into English, Russian and Czech.

Irina Mashinski
Ирина Машинская

Translated by Tony Brinkley* and Irina Mashinski*

Pan Chuklinski

For O.

When ice melts on the Volkhov and ground
sheds its shroud - bared
naked -
swamp and moss - the prince embarks
on the river, collecting honey, fur and taxes.

His oarsmen stretch the oars, torture the oarlocks;
from the right bank
fires lash -
the Varyages have returned
from the Greeks.

From the left, gentle shore, bowed - as if by wind -
to render tribute,
Trostnik the Reed Grass and Osoka the Sedge Grass set sail
to meet him,
as the stillwater's eye
falls back
from the oar's shadow.

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* © Tony Brinkley, translation, 2015

Dobryna the Kind's face is like water, his eye like a sawyer's in
backwaters where they hide the first born in rushes -
whatever is not given freely,
the smiling knight
plunders.

But tell me what are these heroes to me,
all these dark chronicles -
if it is not *the Terrible*, then it is *the Hangman*,
and *God's Fool* is fair and direct
in the land lurking in fairy-tale
bushes.

When I was conceived, gray, celestial rocks
in a tight circle
hovered above the field - I'm still in it
but you, Pan Chuklinski,
are free.

On milky streams, along the sky's flint tracks, you come -
with no cunning treasures, fox's fur,
no Byzantine resins - only the coarse,
hard-grained salt of your scattered
nobility.

Translated by Tony Binkley and the author

Homeland

For instance, it is hard to utter "Jew",
although other ways to say it exist, a few of them.
Heavy doors close. Before I know it, I'm out.

And if anyone waits for me -
that would only be trees as
the drizzling city sticks out street corners like sharp elbows.

As for the countryside, a jelly of mud, no, a river of clay flows,
grows like a 100 watt bulb. In the yards,
glazed pockets of snow shine - starch on freshly washed linen.

They harness for days back at home, and despite the proverb
ride nowhere at all. The direful *prorub* stands for an ice-hole.
The rivers in April look pretty much like they did in March.

There, the past stays with one for long
and is good to swallows. *Then, let's go now*, -
you'd say in your sleep, and I follow

you to the land where no one unlocks the gate
till dawn. It is 5, it is 6...

Sky is low over the hollow run. Sleep.

Down the railroad tracks, down the river beds,
fog - milk from the Russian folk tale - flows. Platform lights,
like beads
or rosaries, count themselves till dozen, and then start again.

The forest hasn't yet opened its eyes. Stand before it
or fall to your knees - so the forest it's all the same.

Light a candle or burn yourself down - like *ogón*¹,

it's there, neither friend, nor fortress.

Translated by Irina Mashinski

¹ *ogón* - flame, fire (Rus)

Double Exposure. The City and the City

It's time to go back to the beginning,
like in a tightly knit elaborate novel,
it's time to go back to the beginning,
to get in, to stop at the car's far end,
to drop the bag against the scary door,
and, keeping balance, hover
over the Map of Our City Subway.

And I will also tell you, having grabbed
the silver handle covered by a dozen
glittering fingerprints, and leaning over
(for I am near-sighted)
the Mighty Subway Map,
as if it were a star map - I will tell you:
an idle rider remembers nothing,
saves only losses.

I like the clear names of passing stations:
now it's Seventy Seventh, and now -
already Forty Second, look.
How sweet the things that rest unnamed!
- like fingers running down the spine,
like rain that runs around but never names,
and washes off the dust of false resemblance.

In places, where rhymes don't stay for long
- how sweet, how fresh these repetitions!
And if you see a ghost of message or,
God forbid, some hidden meaning - sweep
it away, like an annoying rhyme. Repeating
myself, I'll say that as for repetitions,
for senseless similes, returns
and going-back -

there's nothing to them.
They're but a warm light,
but precious stitching mutter.

...One day go down Fifth Avenue and find
a greenish goddess
(a hornless wreck, a bench, a shade)
with arms half-open, in a semi-circle.
Into the middle of this solemn gesture
a joker stuck a paper
- don't you know the joke?
The headlines look Soviet.

How foggy this fall is! How badly
we're bothered by the billboards on the road!
Nightmare can be magnificent, and more so,
if watched from an iron bridge with peeling paint,
and a maroon and huge and dusty sign
of the hotel looks like a board
"AHEAD TO COMMUNISM!"

Look, neither wandering, nor a sad attraction...,
like raindrops to a bird, like fingers to the spine -
quick, look here: feels funny, tickish...
And I will also tell you that no one,
or so it seems - no one
is watching us from
above

Translated by Irina Mashinski in collaboration with A. Sumerkin

Before a Thunderstorm

*The second campaign started at sunset.
History textbook, 2084*

Gentle Ptolemies
and hard winged Selevkides
freeze in sharp grass,
clutch at the feather reed.
Up there: crawling like infantry -
lilac storm-clouds, over slate, past chimneys.

Those who've glanced at the sun -
fall off the soft stems.
Sedge smells loud,
bindweed silent.
Crowding over the roofs
- upset, surges: demos.

The pails threaten
Rallying riots of branches
by the fence, by the barrel
(the first rusty leaf
floats in what used to be rain,
a dead bee on board).
The wind!

It irons
the tiny Taurida¹
of our sun-burnt lawn.
Siesta lasts
in the gutter,
the battle starts
by the tall fence.

Translated by Irina Mashinski

¹ Taurida (Tauric Peninsula) - the ancient Greek name of Crimea

The end of the world. For Ray Bradbury

Time. It belongs to us,
not more than, say, the moon.

Time, oblivious to whatever
a wife hears in the evening
from some misanthrope on the couch with a newspaper.

She listens patiently to the appalling details
of the latest news,
and she sneaks out to bury them in the recycling bin
with an iron weight on top

Nobody sees her but the moon.

So, it's tomorrow - the last day of the world, at least
until the evening when it is once again
second to last.

Translated by Irina Mashinski

Irina Mashinski is the author of nine books of poetry in Russian. Her first English-language collection is forthcoming from Spuyten Duyvil in 2015. Irina Mashinski's work has been translated into several languages and has appeared in many major literary journals and anthologies. She is Co-Founder (with the late Oleg Woolf) and Editor-in-Chief of the *StoSvet/Cardinal Point* literary project (www.stosvet.net) and Co-Editor (with R. Chandler and B. Dralyuk) of *The Penguin Book of Russian Poetry* (Penguin Classics, 2015). She received Russian America (2001) and Maximilian Voloshin (2003) Awards, and, with Boris Dralyuk, First Prize in the 2012 Joseph Brodsky/Stephen Spender Translation Prize competition.

Tony Brinkley, born 1948, is a Professor of English at the University of Maine. His poetry has appeared in *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *New Review of Literature*, *Cerise Press*, *Drunken Boat*, *Otoliths*, *Hungarian Review*, *Poetry Salzburg Review* etc. His translations from Russian, German, French, and Hungarian have appeared in *Shofar*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *New Review of Literature*, *Cerise Press*, *MayDay*, *World Literature Today*, *Hungarian Review*. He is the author of *Stalin's Eyes* (Puckerbrush Press) and the coeditor with Keith Hanley of *Romantic Revisions* (Cambridge University Press).

Jan Probststein
Ян Пробштейн

Traduzione di Anna Soudakova Roccia*
Translated into Italian by Anna Soudakova Roccia*

Nodo gordiano

Mi sono avvinto a questa terra
con infiniti lacci parentali,
ho intrecciato trame d'amore,
reso legittima la mia unione,
annodato nella memoria i vincoli dell'amicizia,
nascosto le brame nella gabbia carnale,
celato i desideri sotto le travi del pozzo,
imbrigliato le tentazioni,
imposto a me stesso di non anelare
strade battute:
sullo stretto sentiero
l'anima si ritrova perduta,
serrata nel groviglio dei debiti;
la vita-somara sotto il giogo si sbatte:
più facile che il cammello passi per la cruna dell'ago
che l'anima sciolga
il doppio nodo dell'essere e del quotidiano.

Troverò mai
una spada?

1988

L'artefice

erige case, viadotti, ponti,
traccia la strada verso il paradiso sognato.

Il distruttore
lastrica una strada diversa
diretta alla stessa meta,
cancellando dal volto della terra
ciò che l'artefice aveva eretto.

Ma il tempo
conduce entrambi
verso altri lidi.

1988

La scelta

a A. Rjazanov

Come uno scultore primevo,
sfinito, con le mani straziate,
sbalzo nei massicci blocchi
ritratti concisi degli anni vissuti.
Statue petrose,
fedeli compagne,
rendono più bello il mio cammino.

Talvolta mi pare
di aver raggiunto il limite e
abbandono la via certa.

Oltre il confine dell'impossibile - un'altra via
o un'altra vita.

1988

Viandante

Confida al saggio
il tuo cammino
Perchè tu possa capire
la tua follia.
Il saggio tuttavia
Non ti ostacolerà -
Egli solo sa:
In luoghi mai sognati giungerai
E lì, di nuovo, forse
lo potrai incontrare.

1988

Il passato

Il verme
reciso dalla lama dell'alba,
si ritrae nell'ombra della memoria,
E ci consegna
la metà rimasta.
Solo il sonno rischiarava
la cupa cripta,
con un bagliore
insopportabile per il cuore.

1988

Negli abissi della coscienza

abitano alghe arcane,
coralli verbali,
costellazioni di pensieri taciuti,
intrecci di istanti non vissuti:
il non vissuto si trasmuta in vissuto,
i giorni si rincorrono e
ogni nuovo attimo,
cristallo magico della coscienza,
si illumina di un nuovo bagliore.

Com'è fragile questo mondo:
mi spaventa il non incontrarti o
il non riconoscerti
nell'intrico delle mie visioni.

1988

Il Verbo

L'arma
che ho forgiato e affilato
non ha mai salvato nessuno:
più diviene precisa e acuminata,
più il boomerang
morde spietato,
falcia l'aria fallace,
sconfigge le chimere
sotto il cielo dei maligni presagi.

Gli sarà uno scudo
per proteggermi da me stesso?

1988

Anna Roccia-Sudakova (born in St. Petersburg, lives in Milan) teaches Russian language and literature at the University of Milan. She has translated stories by Zoshchenko and Bulgakov, Rozovsky's play *The Story of a Horse*, poems by Ian Probst into Italian and Valentino Zaichen's poems into Russian, and co-authored with Paolo Ricci the documentary about the Milan artist Paolo Schiavocampo.

Four Centuries, Nr. 1 - 10

XVIII

Barkov, Ivan: Dionysius Cato's Distich To a Son, on Right Conduct/
A Choice

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 8

Kapnist, Wasilii: Epigrams

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 6

Karamzin, Nikolai: Epigrams

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 5

Lomonosov, Mikhail: On the Opponents of Copernican System

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 6

Sumarokov, Alexandr: Ambassador Ass/Dancer, you are rich!

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 7

Sumarokov, Pankratii: Inscription on my Portrait/ Klav is our Borzoi-
hound-of-a-poet.../ Answer to Question: What Kind of People are Dentists?

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 7-8

XIX

Fedorov, Aleksandr M.: Der Flieder blüht...

Language: German, Translator: Christoph Ferber, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 5-6

Fet, Afanaszj: A nyelvünk mily szegény! Akarnám s nem tudom...

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Árpád Galgóczy, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 8

Goleniščev-Kutuzov: Du hast mich neulich nicht gesehen...

Language: German, Translator: Christoph Ferber, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 5

Kolcov, Alekszej: A Gyűrű

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Maya Tsesarskaya, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 10-11

Михаил Юрьевич Лермонтов (1814-1841)

Cossack Lullaby

Language: English, Translator: Robert Chandler

Sie wird es sich nicht abgewöhnen...

Language: German, Translator: Christoph Ferber

Cântec rusec/ Adio, tu, Rusie nespălată...

Language: Romanian, Translator: Leo Butnaru

Rabok s urak mosdatlan hona...

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Maya Tsesarskaya

Démon, Második rész, részlet

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Arpad Galgoczy

Nr. 9 (2014), p. 6-16

Nadszon, Szemjon: Próféta! Ébredj s jer'!

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Maya Tsesarskaya, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 12

Ogarjov, Nyikolaj: Éjjel

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Árpád Galgoczy, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 7

Polonski, Iakov: Le soir/ La falaise chenue soulève vers le ciel

Language: French, Translator: Christine Zeytounian-Belous, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 9-10

Puškin, Aleksandr: Lettera di Tat'jana a Onegin/ Lettera di Onegin a Tat'jana

Language: Italian, Translator: Giuseppe Ghini, Nr. 1 (2012), p. 4-8

Puschkin, Alexander: Erklärung/ Georgien ruht - und dunkel liegt die Welt...

Language: German, Translator: Christoph Ferber, Nr. 9 (2014), p. 17-18

Ratgauz, Daniil M.: Ein leichter Wind bewegt den Fensterladen...

Language: German, Translator: Christoph Ferber, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 6

Shenin, Alexander: A Cadet's Escapades, extracts from a long poem in two parts

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 6-12

Turgenev, Ivan: Canine/ We Will Slug It Out Yet!/ Quail/ The Russian Language

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 6-8

Tyutsev, Fjodor: Nem sejt'ni, miként egyetlen...

Language: Hungarian, Translator: Maya Tsesarskaya, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 6

XX

Adamovich, Georgy: Speak to no one...

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 8

Annensky, Innokenty: I don't know, I can't explain.../Petersburg/ Whether a star dims...

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 13-15

Annensky, Innokenty: ∞/Double

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 6-7

- Арсениев, Павел:** Бележка на преводача/ Краят на август
Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 42-44
- Balmont, Konstantin:** The Devil's Voice/The Accursed Foolishness/Above all, necessary to love and kill.../Filled with horror, these days I read fables...
Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 11-13
- Барскова, Полина:** FISH/В очакване да стана на 30
Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 38-40
- Blazhennyi, Veniamin:** Sandglass/ Yet I managed to tell them before I left.../ I ask you to forget me completely in this world.../ They did not need the simple confessions of an angel.../ They spoke apathetically and lightly.../ Poem of Departure
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 28-34
- Blok, Alexander:** Gamayun, the Bird of Prophecy. From a Picture by V. Vasnyetsov
Language: English, Translator: Alistair Noon, Nr. 5 (2013), p.7
- Bunin, Iwan:** Zniewalający i uroczy.../ Pieśń/ Kwiecień/ Górski las/ Północ, a widno. Cienie się kładą.../ Widok z tawerny na zatoki ogrom.../ Księżyc, Language: Polish, Translator: Maciej Froński, Nr. 9 (2014), p. 29-32
- Bunin, Iwan:** Cyprysy/Źródło/Dagestan/Jaśmin/ Koloseum/Poetessa/ Śnieg roniąc, wartko mkną obłoki.../ Południowy skwar, trawa, łan pszenicy czy żyta...
Language: Polish, Translator: Maciej Froński, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 8-12
- Cvetajeva, Marina:** Mi legyen velem, vakkal és árvával...
Language: Hungarian, Translator: Maya Tsesarskaya, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 14
- Драгомошченко, Аркадије:** Велико једноличје љубави
Language: Serbian, Translator: Mirjana Petrovic, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 34-41
- Gandlewsky, Sergej:** Es quietscht? Dann nimm ein Zeitungsstückchen.../ Als ich in jetzt und hier lebte...
Language: German, Translator: Anna Davidian, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 16-17
- Głazowa, Anna:** tak powyгиналиśmy ścianę.../twoja jesień/ gdy znajdziesz w lesie śpiącego...
Language: Polish, Translator: Tomasz Pierzchała, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 50-52
- Глазова, Анна:** Явен опит за сън.../ така живороденото...
Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 9 (2014), p. 35-36

Глазова, Анна: як іноді опускаються до мізерності.../ що взяти із себе.../ для перетворення деревного у дерев'яне.../якщо ти дерево а не каміння.../іноді вигнутий - як вигнаний.../ голова дерева.../ відрізняти порожнину від порожнечі.../ винайденню безмежності...

Language: Ukranian, Translator: Galina Babak, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 21-24

Gritsenko, Oleg: Orioles by day and nightingales by night...

Language: English, Translator: Aleksey Porvin, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 27

Hodassevitš, Vladislav: Mis rätsep õmbleb, läheb katki/Las loor, see maya-nimeline

Language: Estonian, Translator: Jaan Kaplinski, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 9-10

Khodasevich, Vladislav: Der Weg des Kornes/Such mich/ Das Haus/Strophen

Language: German, Translator: Adrian Wanner, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 10-14

Khodasevich, Vladislav: Sterne

Language: German, Translator: Adrian Wanner, Nr. 1 (2012), p. 16-17

Khodasevich, Vladislav: The Way of All Grass

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 7

Khodasevich, Vladislav: Music/ The lady washed her hands so long.../ From a Window/ A Cork/Step over, jump over.../ I look out from a window and despise.../ Elegy

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 6 (2013), p.12-16

Iskrenko, Nina: One could always bum a cigarette in Russia.../ Cemetery

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 18-19

Ivaniv, Viktor: Pesem za Mariji Kuzanski/ Vidum samo samo samo samo honey moon.../ Kristalna ladja je razbita.../Dolgo pada v sen tovornjak...

Language: Slovene, Translator: Jelka Ciglenceki, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 60-63

Ivanov, Georgy: From the Book *Portrait Without a Likeness*

Language: English, Translator: Alex Cigale, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 8-9

Ivanov, Vjaceslav: Aus "Das Königreich der Transparenz" (Diamant/ Rubin/ Smaragd/ Saphir/ Amethyst)

Language: German, Translator: Adrian Wanner, Nr. 1 (2012), p. 13-15

Kabanov, Alexander: We've been waiting for each other.../ Someone's rightness is boring.../ We do not sleep, though buried in snow.../ If I loved my body.../ Between noughts and crosses.../ Accidental arson/ The clouds in the pools of the Podol...

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 45-49

Korčagin, Kiril: sneg v vdrtinah v motnem.../putra/ začela so me zanimati dejstva.../ trkajo v neredu se dotikajo krožijo.../ agora/ *glej tako se združita na dvorišču noč in pod vodo glas... / nečah*

Language: Slovene, Translator: Jelke Ciglencecki, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 18-23

Kudryavitsky, Anatoly: Four Prose Poems

Language: English, Translator: Siobhán McNamara, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 35-37

Kuzmin, le Dmitry: Bha mòran rudan a dhìth orm...

Language: Gaelic, Translator: Christopher Whyte, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 35

Legyenyov, Valerij: álmainkban madárszemek vagyunk vágyak palettája.../ narancslé.../ a hiányodra vágyom.../ Fernando Pessoa az ámaimban

Language: Hungarian, Translator: András Gerevich, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 29-30

Лвовски, Станислав: сутрин е страшно вечер е невъзможно.../ цялата ни надежда е.../ есен.../ ще избягам от вас на небето каза момченцето.../ гледа снимката...

Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 26-27

Mandelstam, Ossip: No, not the moon, but the bright clock face.../The Greeks gathered for war/Meganom/Century

Language: English, Translator: Alistair Noon, Nr. 1 (2012), p. 9-12

Mandelstam, Ossip: To the Memory of Andrei Bely/ 10 January 1934/ When a soul, shy and fast.../ He conducted the Orchestra of the Caucasian peaks.../ Amidst the crowd, bearded and deep in thought...

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 11-14

Mandelstam, Ossip: Verses on the Unknown Soldier/ I beg like compassion and grace.../ I will say it in draft, in a whisper.../ It might be the point of insanity.../ To help a friend of wind and rain.../ I'm under fire of a bird cherry and a pear tree...

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 14-20

Mandelstam, Ossip: Tristia/ Lines on the Unknown Soldier

Language: English, Translators: Tony Brinkley, Raina Kostova, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 8-13

Mandelstam, Ossip: I am given a body.../...Not a single blade.../ The fire destroys.../ A Decembrist/ When a feverish Forum of Moscow.../ The Twilight of Freedom/ Because I could not hold your hands in mine...

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 15-19

Мандельщам, Осип: О небе, небе, ти ще ми се присънваш!/Във Петербург прозрачен ще умрем.../На Касандра

Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 9-10

Мандељштам, Осип: Несаница. Хомер. Затегнута једра
Language: Serbian, Translator: Mirjana Petrovic, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 11

Mandelstam, Osip: I hate the light.../ A Wand/ No, I've never been anyone's contemporary.../ No, I won't be able to hide from a great mess.../ An apartment is quiet as paper.../ A living man's unique: do not compare.../ Pure gold bars of Roman nights.../ We are still full of life sentence.../ Having deprived me of seas, flight, and space.../ Let go, Voronezh, raven-town.../ The day was five-headed: five unbreakable days.../ Armed with the vision of narrow wasps.../ What should we do with murdered plains.../ I must live though I died twice.../ A Poem for N<atalia> Shtempel
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 9 (2014), p.19-28

Mandelstam, Roald: Notturmo/ White Night/ Notturmo I/ White Night/ The Bells/ Atlantis/ Once there was Hellas on Earth.../ The Bridge with Griffons. Benvenuto Chellini/ Swinging of Street Lamps/ For Arefiev/ A Junkman/ The flags are the color of blood clots.../ A moon crescent rolls down the sky.../ The night exploded like a cloudy cocoon.../ A Silver Corvette/ I've gone a long way...
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 3 (2012), p.15-24

Mandelstam, Roald: Walks in the Museum/ A clot of houses and a ball of sunset.../ Variation/ A Scarlet Streetcar/ Improvisations/ Heavens are turned upside down.../ Meeting Spring/ The entire block is swept and chilled.../ Alba/ Alba (Variation)/ Morning/ Morning
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 21-28

Mandelstam, Roald: I did not know why I woke up.../ Why do you sleep, Margarita?.. / It's a joy to long for you.../ With a hopeless dream of happiness.../ A Visit to the Beloved on the Autumn Night/ Born by an autumn gutter.../ The War of Red and White Rose goes on in the skies.../ A Mask-Seller
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 21-25

Mandelstam, Roald: Catilina/ If the day is done.../ A Runic Ballad/ The Minstrel/ Sirventes/ In a dusty passage of the palace/Triumph/ Nika/ Anachronismos/ The Lute and the Sword/ Today the evening is dreadfully hot.../ The ages cannot flow back.../ Fragile glassy sheaf of straw.../ Variant/ A gust of wind rushes in circles.../ Maestro/FFF (Three Forte)/ Gostinyi Dvor Department Store
Language: English, Translator: Ian Probststein, Nr. 7 (2014), p.18- 33

Mashinski, Irina: Pan Chuklinski/ Homeland/ Double Exposure. The City and the City/ Before a Thunderstorm/ The end of the world. For Ray Bradbury

Language: English, Translators: Irina Mashinski, Tony Brinkley, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 25-31

Poplavski, Boris: Versuri automate

Language: Romanian, Translator: Leo Butnaru, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 13-17

Probstein, Ian: Nodo gordiano/ L'artefice/ La scelta/ Viandante/
Il passato/ Negli abissi della coscienza/ Il Verbo

Language: Italian, Translator: Anna Soudakova Roccia, Nr. 10 (2015), p. 32-35

Selvinsky, Ilya: Two Shoah Poems: I Saw It/Kerch

Language: English, Translator: Maxim D. Shrayer, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 29-37

Shrayer-Petrov, David: Fall at the Seashore/ Still Life/ Winter Morning/
My Slavic Soul/ Chagall's Self-Portrait with Wife/Early Morning in Mos-
cow/ Birch Fogs (from *Flying Saucers*)/ I can't Take This Torment Any
Longer/ Anna Akhmatova in Komarovo/ To Shostakovich at His Summer
House in Komarovo/ Lot's Monologue to His Wife/ Villa Borghese/ Peters-
burg Doge

Language: English, Translators: Maxim D. Shrayer, Edwin Honig, Dolores
Stewart Riccio, Nr. 2 (2012), p. 15-26

Shrayer-Petrov, David: Runner Begoon

Language: English, Translator: Maxim D. Shrayer, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 54-59

Шулпяков, Глеб: в моя ъгъл глух и от греди/ моят стих/ поезията
расте от нищото

Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 3 (2012), p. 25-26

Шулпяков, Глеб: прозрачен като напечатан лист.../ отвътре моята
стена мълчи.../ в мен живее сляп и мрачен скарабей...

Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 43-44

Shvarts, Elena: Elegies on the Cardinal Points

Language: English, Translator: Ian Probstein, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 17-21

Sien-Sieńkow, Andriej: AFRYKA JAK TRZY POSIŁKI DZIENNIE/
PÓŁ PACZKI GITANES

Language: Polish, Translator: Tomasz Pierzchała, Nr. 5 (2013), p. 31-33

Sen-Senkov, Andrei: Eléctricos portugueses - percursos/ ÁFRICA EM
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Language: Portuguese, Translator: Ana Hudson, Nr. 8 (2014), p. 24-27

Skidan, Aleksander: SCHOLIA/ wypisz wymaluj amerykański ojciec.../
hieroglif oddechu...

Language: Polish, Translator: Tomasz Pierzchała, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 26-29

Švab, Leonid: La terra gelata è sovrastata da un trattore.../ Mi è tornato alla mente un terribile pavimento a mosaico.../ E non c'è ragione di nessuno avvertire.../ Gli scacchi e le pedine della dama si sono sparpagiate.../ Krishna non piange.../ Gli ospiti si sono riuniti in una dacia.../ Mi sembra di vivere in paradiso.../ Sono andato in Mongolia per credere a un sogno allegro.../ Sono fatto di formaggio...

Language: Italian, Translator: Massimo Maurizio, Nr. 10 (2015), p.

Тарковски, Арсениј: Ето лятото мина...

Language: Bulgarian, Translator: Maria Lipiskova, Nr. 9 (2014), p. 33-34

Turenko, Evgeny: An Anonymous Manuscript (a half-poem)

Language: English, Translators: Dana Colin, Alex Cigale, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 22-25

Волохонски, Анри: Делфин

Language: Serbian, Translator: Mirjana Petrovic, Nr. 7 (2014), p. 53

Волошин, Максимилијан: Два демона

Language: Serbian, Translator: Mirjana Petrovic, Nr. 6 (2013), p. 7-8

Yuriev, Oleg: Let's leave this place - the house is bad.../ *Mechanica Aetheris Nova*

Language: English, Translator: Aleksey Porvin, Nr. 4 (2013), p. 41-42

Four Centuries Library

Here are the books donated to the Library:

In English

80. Tsvetaeva, Marina: *Poem of the End. Selected Narrative and Lyrical Poems.* Translated by Nina Kossman. Woodstock & N.Y., 1998

81. Tsvetaeva, Marina: *In the Inmost Hour of the Soul. Selected Poems.* Translated by Nina Kosman. Clifton, NJ: Humana Press, 1989

Many thanks to Ms Nina Kosman for her generous donation!

In German

82. Wladimir Majakowski. Übers.: Hugo Huppert. *Poesialbum.* Berlin: Verlag Neues Leben, 1967

83. Welemir Chlebnikow. *Poesiealbum.* Berlin: Verlag Neues Leben, 1976

84. Phönix. *Junge Lyrik aus dem anderen Russland.* Hrsg. und übertragen von Elimar Schubbe. München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1964