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#### EUROPEAN STUDIES GENTER FOR SOVIET EAST

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**SUMMER 1971** 

No. 7

#### **SOVIET NATIONAL POETS**

#### **Byelorussian**

I. Yanka Kupala (1882-1942) the most talented and prominent writer of poetry and prose in modern Byelorussian literature. His first works were published as early as 1905, and his first poetry collection "Ahaleika" (The Flute) appeared in 1908. In his very first poem "Muzhik" (The Peasant) Kupala raised his voice to defend the human dignity of the Byelorussian peasant who for centuries had suffered social injustice. Kupala's poetic horizons soon began to expand beyond peasant social conditions, and the idea of national liberation became the dominant theme of his works. His next poetic works were "Guslar" (The Bard, 1910), "Shliakham Zhytia" (Along the Road of Life, 1913), "Spadchyna" (Heritage, 1922), and "Beznazoynaye" (Nameless, 1925). Kupala was not only a poet but also a writer of prose and plays. After the establishment of Communist rule in Byelorussia Yanka Kupala wrote very little. In 1930 Kupala was arrested, and on his way to prison he attempted suicide. He was saved and cured, but his poetic spirit and his health were broken. Kupala died in 1942 in Moscow, and there are reasons to believe that this was a second attempt at suicide which proved successful.

The main sources of Kupala's writings are Byelorussian oral folk literature and his own knowledge of his people's way of life. Technically Kupala's poetry has unusually vigorous and musical rhythms, rich and varied forms, and vivid imagery pervaded by spiritual feeling. Kupala's influence on the Byelorussian people was immense. The patriotic poetry of Kupala has not lost its national revolutionary influence even today.

#### "I'M NO POET"

by Yanka Kupala—National Poet of Belorussia (1882-1942)

> Translated by Herbert Marshall from the Byelo-Russian Original.

#### Original я не паэта

Я не паэта, о, крый мяне Божа! Ня рвуся я к славе гэткай німала, Хоць песеньку-думку і высную можа, Завуся я толькі — Янка Купала.

Славу паэтаў разносяць па сьвеце, Вянкі ўскладаюць і звоняць пахвалай, Bulgar Я-ж ціха йграю, хто-ж ціхіх прымеце? Ат! ведама зь вёскі — Янка Купала!

Кожны край мае тых, што апяваюць, Чым ёсьць для народу ўпадак і хвала, А Беларусы нікога-ж ня маюць. Няхай-жа хоць будзе Янка Купала.

Доляй убогі, ён ціхі, нясьмелы, Бяда, яго маці, узгадавала, Сьлёзы пагарды п'е толькі век цэлы, Ат, ведама, просты Янка Купала.

Песьні пачаў пець тэй мовай убогай, Якой пагарджаюць горка, нядбала, Пэўна і песьняў шчураюцца многа, Ат, ведама, здумаў Янка Купала.

Шчасьце так рэдка над сьветам усходзе; Усё-ж досыць бывае меці хоць мала. Долю каб бачыў у родным народзе, А быў-бы шчасьлівы Янка Купала.

Эт, з часам людзі ўпадаюць на сіле, Сьмерць скосе, глядзі і больш крыжам стала: Нехта спытае: хто ў гэтай магіле? А напіс пакажа: Янка Купала.

#### Transliteration

IA NE PAETA. Yanka Kupala I AM NOT A POET. Yanka Kupala

la ne paeta, o kryi miane bozha! I (am) not a poet, o save me God!

Ne rvusia ia k slave getkai nimala. (Do) not seek I fame such not-a-little.

Khots' pesen'ku-dumku i Vysnuiu mozha, Although (a) song-thought (I) weave maybe

Zavusia ia tol'ki-Ianka Kupala. Named I only-Yanka Kupala.

Slavu paetau razhosiats' pa s'vetse, Glory (of the) poets (is) spread around (the) world,

Vianki uskladaiuts' i zvoniats' pakhvalai, Laurels (are) given and ringing praise

Ia-zh tsikha igraiu,khto-zh tsikhikh prymetse? (But) I then softly play, who then would (the) quiet (one) notice?

At! vedama z veski—Ianka Kupala! O! is-known (one) from (the) village-Yanka Kupala!

Kozhny krai mae tykh, shto apiavaiuts', Every country has those who sings-about Chym ests' dlia naroda upadak i khvala, What is for (the) people downfall and glory,

A Belarusy nikoga-zh ne maiuts', But Byelorussians have no one,

Niakhai-zha khots' ybudze Ianka Kupala. Let-have at-least Yanka Kupala.

Doliai ubogi, en tsikhi, niasmely, By-fate wretched, he (is) quiet, shy,

Biada iago matsi, uzgadavala, Misfortune his mother nurtured (him)

Slezy pagardy p'e tol'ki vek tsely, Tears (of) disdain drinks only (his) life whole,

Ot, vedama, prosty Yanka Kupala. O, (it is) known, (a) simple-one Yanka Kupala

Pesni Pachau pets' tei movai ubogai, (The) songs started (to) sing (in) that language poor,

Iakoi pagardzhaiuts' gorka, hiadbala, Which (is) disrespected bitterly, neglectedly,

Peuna i pesniau shchuraiutstsa mnoga, (It is) possible that (his) songs (are) repudiated by-many,

Ot, vedama, zdumau Ianka Kupala. O, (it is) known, (its) imagined (by) Yanka Kupala.

Shchastse tak redka nad cvetaum uskhodze; Happiness so seldom over (this) world rises;

Use-zh dosyts' byvae metsi khots' mala,— But enough sometime to-have just (a) little,—

Doliu kab bachyu u rodnym narodze, Happiness if (he) would-see with (his) people,

A byu-by shchaslivy Ianka Kupala. Would be then happier Yanka Kupala.

Et, z chasam liudzi upadaiuts' na sile, O, with time people lose (their) strength,

Smerts' skose, gliadzi—i bol'sh khyzham stala; Death will-claim, look—and (one) more cross appeared;

Nekhta spytae:khto u getai magile? Somebody may-ask: who (lies) in this grave?

A nadpis pakazha: Ianka Kupala. And (the) inscription will-show: Yanka Kupala.

#### **Final Translation**

I'm no poet, God save me from that, and I seek not glory or fame. Though, maybe, I can weave a few songs, And Yanka Kupala's my name.

### CENTER FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

Herbert Marshall, FRSA, Director

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Glory adulates poets on earth, Gives them laurels and dedicates fame. I sing softly—who'll notice my songs? But the village knows Yanka's my name.

To sing of their rise and their fall Each people a poet can claim. To Belorussia no poet belongs, Let them at least have Yanka's poor name.

He's unlucky and quiet and shy, Educated by bitterest shame. Nothing but insults and sorrow and tears goes with Yank Kupala's sad name.

All his songs have made friends with that tongue which for long was derided, defamed. Let those songs then be judged, stern and proud, for Kupala stays true to his name.

Rarely happiness shines in this world, Yet at times we have known that it came. If his people had happiness known happier would be Kupala's name.

The strength of men won't blossom for long. Look: one more cross—death has his claim. Passers-by may ask: Who lies in this grave? And read: Yanka Kupala's own name.

#### **MONOGRAPHS**

Proposed series of MONOGRAPHS to be issued under the auspices of the Center for Soviet & East European Studies.

Over a considerable period a large amount of material accumulated in the archives of Herbert Marshall and is now to be found housed in the Center. The bulk of this work does not fit into either book form or as articles in journals. But much of it is of interest to many teachers, sudents, and from time to time xerox copies are commissioned for researchers and readers. With our modern technology's ability to produce more with less, it is now possible to duplicate them at a more reasonable rate than for xeroxing and in a readable format. After consultation with the Graduate School, Office of Research & Projects, the Dean of the College of Communications and Fine Arts, the Chairman of the Department of Theater and our Advisory Committee, we have decided to start publishing these Monographs as a series.

They fall into the following categories:

- Such material as is pertinent to the researches and studies of the Center dealing with the Soviet Union and its East European Associates. These will be SPE-CIAL MONOGRAPHS.
- 2) Such material relating to other activities in theatre, cinema, music and poetry. These will be GENERAL MONOGRAPHS.

The cost of each monograph will vary according to the number of pages, that is the actual cost of reproduction plus a percentage for overheads and authors and translators. The number of pages will vary from about 30 to 150. Orders can be sent in (but no money) and the monograph will be dispatched when ready.

#### SPECIAL MONOGRAPHS

#### THEATRE STUDIES

1. The Art of Acting. A condensed adaptation of the Stanislavsky Method from the Russian of I Rappoport of the Moscow Vakhtangov Theatre, by Herbert Marshall. This is available for \$1.75.

2. The Art and Roles of Ira Aldridge—The Black Tragedian. By Herbert Marshall with a special introduction

by Mr. Fred O'Neill, Chairman of American Actors Equity. This is the result of further research since the original publication of the book by Marshall and Stock and its paperback now issued by The Southern Illinois University Press. The bulk of the serious criticism of Ira Aldridge's acting and productions is culled from the contemporary Russian and German press. Added also is a new discovery of a Swedish colleague, Dr. Gunnar Sjogren, as to the actual origin of Aldridge's second wife, who was Swedish and claimed to be a Baroness. Here is a fascinating documentation of who she really was. Finally, a compilation of every town in England and Europe in which Aldridge performed from 1825 to 1867. This is available for \$2.50.

3. Personal Reminiscences of Soviet Theatre Personalities, by Herbert Marshall, a paper delivered at the Kansas conference of the Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies 1970. They include: The Directors: Vsevelod Meyerhold and Sergei Eisenstein; The Directors and Actors: Solomon Mikhoels and Nikolai Okhlopkov; The Actors: Nikolai Cherkassov and Boris Livanov. An intimate insight from personal experience.

#### PLAYS IN TRANSLATION

4. The Shadow, by Eugene Schwartz. Translated from the Russian by Herbert Marhall. The famous dramatist of adult

fairytales-banned during Stalin's day.

5. Mozart and Salieri, by Alexander Pushkin. A little tragedy set to music by Rimsky-Korsakov, translated from the original text and set to the score of the opera, with an introduction on some research into the subject matter of the play and some new revelations regarding the mysterious death of Mozart and his alleged murder by Salieri, by Herbert Marshall.

6. The Highway of Pasternak, by Alexis Parnis, translated by Herbert Marshall. Entitled "A Contemporary Tragedy" it treats of events during the Stalin era by a Greek dramatist who was an eye-witness and participant in Soviet life during this era, and by virtue of his origin was able to view more

objectively the nature of this tragedy.

7. Four One-Act Yugoslav Plays by Alexander Obrenovic, translated from the original Serbo-Croat by Dasha Drndic while a Research Student at the Center. An introduction to modern Yugoslav drama which shows how open to European and world influence is Yugoslav culture compared to the other so-called Communist countries.

8. A contemporary full-length Yugoslav Play, "Footsteps in the Next Room" by Miodrag Pavlovitch. Translated from

the Serbo-Croat by Dasha Drndic.

#### POETRY IN TRANSLATION

This series will consist of a number of poetic works of special significance which will be explained in each case by a preface, either by the translator or by some eminent specialist in that sphere. Furthermore, for the first time, it will be a series that will have

(a) the original language version,(b) phonetic transcription of the text

(c) a literal translation, word for word of the text, and

(d) the final finished translation.

This arises from the fact that more and more publishers are now asking for translations of poetry, to be published in bilingual editions, whereby the possible sales area increases; for there are those who would like to have the translations in themselves, not knowing the original language, there are those who might like to have the originals, and there are those who would like to check both the originals and the translations.

However, I propose that this be extended, so that even those who do *not* know the original language will be able to read, phonetically, what it is like in the original; see where the alliteration is, the rhyme, the meter, etc.; and then to

see a literal word-for-word translation which give them an

(a) of the actual subject matter of the original

(b) of the order of the subject matter, and

(c) the poetic style of the original, i.e. in strict metre and rhyme, or not, free verse or not, etc.

Many people who do not know a foreign language, do not realize how inverted material can be in another language, and in what different ways the same ideas are put in different languages. I have already initiated this in our Bulletins.

This I think will introduce a much larger or potential

audience for this kind of specialized work.

8. Requiem by Anna Akmatova (1888–1969). This is an authorized translation; in other words, the authoress herself personally asked me to translate this work, because she was dissatisfied with the translations that hitherto appeared. However, as we go to press news came that this translation of the poem Requiem by Anna Akmatova will be published.

in "The Russian Literature Tri-quarterly" No. 2, February 1972, issued by ARDIS, Publishers of Russian Literature, 615

Watersedge Drive, Ann Arbour, Michigan.

9. The Story of Ginger Motele, Mr. Inspector, Rabbi Isaac and Commissar Bloch, by Joseph Utkin (1903–1944). This is also an authorized translation. I knew the poet himself, who was Russian Jew, a very talented youngster, a lyricist, and who was at one time satirized by Mayakovsky, but still kept to his own, so to speak, lyrical sphere. Though Jewish, his work was written in Russian, although his family came from a Jewish settlement and spoke Yiddish. This poem was written in 1921, and was first published in 1931. It is a unique work, dealing with the effect of the Russian revolution on a Jewish settlement in Kishinev in the Ukraine.

The strange thing about it is, the events depicted in it are of a nature that could not possibly happen today. For example, when the Red Squad comes marching, it represents, of course, the real armed force of the revolution, it is headed by Commissar Bloch, who is a Jew, and he carries, alongside the Red flag, the Star of David! It has many Yiddish phrases in it, and Yiddish words, which I have kept as they are in

the original.

10. The Siberian Cycle, by Victor Bokov (1914—). This is a translation authorized personally by the poet, who during the Kruschev thaw period participated with Professor Marshall on public platforms in the Soviet Union, reading his poems alongside the translations. This epic poem is considered to be the poetic equivalent of Solzhenitsyn's classic novel, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisitch, and is the story of the author's own experiences as an innocent victim of Stalinist oppression. He was, for several years, in a Siberian prison camp and this poem is a result of his experiences. But only part of this epic poem has been published in Russia, part of it has never been published. Here it is given complete and unexpurgated.

The author is still a passionate Russian poet and one of its greatest experts in the field of folk art and folk song. He has a collection of nearly ten thousand *Chastushkis*, the

most prolific folk song in Russia.

11. Beyond the Beyond, by Alexander Tvardovsky. (1910-

). The author of this poem is known, of course, as one of the most liberal of the intelligentsia in the Soviet Union, and up till recently, the editor of the liberal magazine Novy Mir, from which he recently resigned. Tvardovsky is famous in the Soviet Union for being the author of a series of poems on a character he created called Vasily Tyerkin, a Russian prototype of G. I. Joe or Tommy Atkins, and this was the most beloved character of Red Armymen during the terrible struggle against Hitler, and Tyerkin went through everything that the rank and file soldier went through.

During the Kruschev period and de-Stalinization, Tvardovsky wrote a sequel, called *Tyerkin in the Other World*, which was one of the most satirical indictments of the Stalin period that has ever been penned by any Soviet writer. Already in his great epic poem called Beyond the Beyond there is a chapter dealing with Stalinist Russia. Here is given an extract from that section of the poem, and at the same time, another section is translated showing the lyrical side of Tvardovsky and in particular his own early childhood in a blacksmith's shop.

12. A Selection from "Kobzar" by Taras Schevchenko. (1814–1861). These translations were commissioned for the special UNESCO Centennial celebrations of Taras Shevchenko, the great Ukrainian bard and artist, but not all published. His work is little known in our western world, and at the special request of Mikola Bazhan, a leading Ukrainian poet and statesman, Herbert Marshall translated the outstanding poems of Taras Shevchenko; for the existing ones, Ukrainians found, were far from satisfactory, and more often than not were translated by patriots rather than poets!

# AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THEATRE RESEARCH CONFERENCE AT LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY, LINCOLN CENTER NEW YORK 27 NOVEMBER 1971

Professor Herbert Marshall will present an original paper on "The Roles and Art of Ira Aldridge: The Negro Tragedian," further research on this unique black actor of the 19th century, following the book by Herbert Marshall and Mildred Stock, published in paperback by Southern Illinois University Press.

#### ADDITIONAL ARCHIVES YIDDISH THEATRE

IN ENGLISH:

Books:

- "The Yiddish Theatre in America: by David S. Lifson. Th. Yoseloff, NY & London, 1965.
- "My Father and I" by Joseph Schildkraut, Viking Press. N.Y. 1959.
- "There and Back: Memories and Thoughts of a Jewish Actor." By Abraham Morevski. Transl. from Yiddish by Joseph Leftwich. Warren H. Green Inc. St. Louis, USA 1967.
- "The Dybbuk" a play in Four Acts by S. Ansky, transl. from the Yiddish into English by Henry G. Alsberg & Winifred Katzin. Ernest Benn Ltd. London 1927.
- 5. "Kafka and the Yiddish Theatre" by Evelyn Torton Beck. Univ. of Wisconsin Press, USA 1971.

6. Magazine programs: Kingsway Theatre, M. Susman's Production in Yiddish, The Jewish Arts Theatre (Vilna Troupe)
New Scala Theatre, The Yiddish Art Theatre of America, In Repertoire; Director, Maurice Swartz.
London Pavilion, Le Miroir Juif, A Mirror of Jewish Life; words and lyrics by Salomon Poliakoff and Pierre

## Potemkine. M/ss-Photo-Copies

- "A History of the Yiddish Theatre in New York City to 1892" a Ph.D. Dissertation by Marvin L. Seiger, Indiana University, 1960.
- 8. "The History of the Yiddish Art Theatre Movement in New York from 1918–1940" a Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University by David S. Lifson.

#### IN YIDDISH:

Pamphlet: "Dos Yidishe Kamer—Theatr tsu zain erefnung in iuli 1919 yor"
 Oisgabe fin der Yidisher Teatraler Gezelshaft in Petrograd. Drukherei "Tagblatt"
 (The Jewish Chamber Theatre on the occasion of its opening in July 1919. Publication of the Jewish Theatrical Society of Petrograd. Publishers "Tagblatt." With an emblem of E.K.T. designed by the Artist, M. Dobzhinsky.)

#### THE AAASS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1972

The next annual conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies will be held in Dallas, Texas, March 16/18th, 1972, in conjunction with the Southern Western AAASS and Prof. G. Richards of University of Texas, Arlington. Herbert Marshall will present a paper on "Translating Russian Poetry."

#### SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

The cost of producing and distributing this Bulletin has risen like everything else, and the University's funds have been curtailed. So far, we have distributed the Bulletin gratis. Now we are asking subscribers to pay \$5 per annum for the four quarter-numbers from the next winter (1971) issue. Please make checks payable to the Center for Soviet and East European Studies, SIU.

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