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BOSTON UNIVERSITY LECTURE SERIES IN

LITERARY TRANSLATION

SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES & LITERATURES, THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES,
THE GEDDES LECTURE FUND, VOCES HISPÁNICAS AND THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
IN CONJUNCTION WITH XL 540-THEORY & PRACTICE OF LITERARY TRANSLATION
TAUGHT BY ALICIA BORINSKY - PROFESSOR OF ROMANCE STUDIES

APR 10

MARGARET LITVIN

TONGUE-TIED INTERNATIONALISM: ADVENTURES WITH A SOVIET SETTING, AN EGYPTIAN NOVEL, AND AN INDIAN PRESS

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Sonallah Ibrahim (b. 1937)

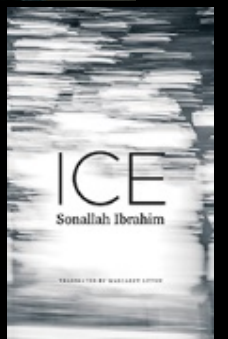
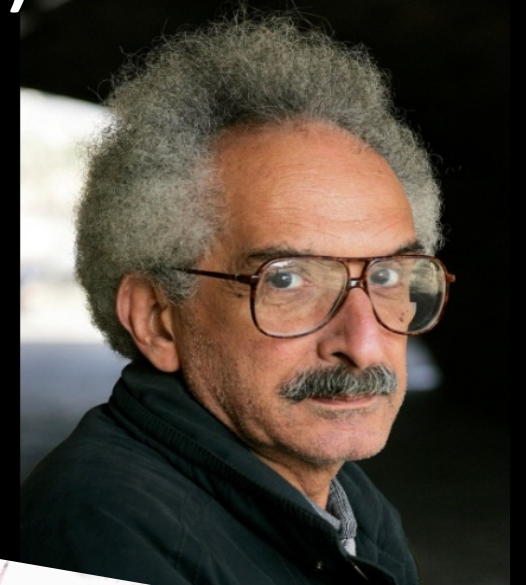
“I went to Moscow thinking, wow, this is the future. Then I lived there for 3 years, arguing with myself all the time: **Why couldn't I find a decent razor blade** when this was a country that had sent rockets to the moon?”

“The Egyptian intellectuals who look to Russia are **the types who love impossible love.**”

- Interview, June 2012



Brezhnev and
Sadat
Moscow, 1971



Ice (2011,
trans.
2019)

ادب *adab* pl. آداب *ādāb* culture, refinement; good breeding, good manners, social graces, decorum, decency, propriety, seemliness; humanity, humane-ness; literature; — pl. آداب morals, decency; rules, rules of conduct; morale; the humanities; belles-lettres; literature (also on a subject) | ادب في بيت politely; بيت الادب toilet, water closet; قليل الادب and ادب عديم ill-mannered, ill-bred, impolite, uncivil; ادب الخواطر aphoristic literature; الادب الشعبي (*šaʿbī*) folk literature; الادب العامي (*ʿāmmī*) popular literature; رجال الادب literati, men of letters; كلية الآداب *kullīyat al-ā.* (= faculté des lettres) college of arts; آداب السلوك rules of decorum, etiquette; آداب المعاشرة *ā. al-muʿāṣara* social etiquette; آداب المائدة table manners, etiquette; آداب الاسلام morality, ethics of Islam; آداب العمل *ā. al-ʿamal* work morale

Adab

Ibrahim's writing style is a kind of corollary to this. It is a style defined by all the things it leaves out: metaphors, adjectives, authorial commentary. His narrator has the impassivity of a trauma victim: he sees and hears and reports, but makes no claim to understand. This minimalism shocked contemporary Arabic readers. Many found Ibrahim's style more disquieting than the story's themes or content. Even now it is not easy to see how he arrived at this way of writing, which breaks so violently with the norms of literary Arabic.

Robyn Creswell, introduction to *That Smell*, 2013

Hans Wehr Dictionary at <http://ejtaal.net/aa>

October 6,
1973
note from
Sonallah
Ibrahim
reproduced in
Mohamad
Malas' film
diary (2003)

عزيزي محمد
انا معك عند
كامل
تمام الحرب اليوم
ظريه اسرائيله
وسوريا
صبراً
١٠/١٠/٧٣

Letter from
"Verochka,"
model for the
character of
Zoya

Судно! /
А вдруг Монах не
уехал? Поцелуйте его
за меня. Ладно? Пусть он
у нас все время хорошо
и кресту еще придет.
До свидания
Верочка

Archives



СОЮЗ СОВЕТСКИХ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ РЕСПУБЛИК

СВИДЕТЕЛЬСТВО

С № 000629

Настоящее свидетельство выдано

Алорфали Соаллаху
(имя, фамилия)

и удостоверяет, что он (она) с **1. IX 1972 г.**

по **1. IX 1974 г.** прошел (прошла) стажировку

во **Всесоюзном государственном ордена Трудового Красного Знамени институте кинематографии**
(научного учреждения)

по **кафедре операторского мастерства**

и режиссуры художественного фильма

(тема стажировки)



Директор (директор)

Заместитель директора (заместитель)

Секретарь

Город **Москва**

13 сентября 1974 г.

Регистрационный № **2**

Московская типография Гознака. 1974.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

CERTIFICATE

C № 000629

This is to certify that **Alorfali**

Sunn-Allah Ibrahim
(name, surname)

from **1-st of september 1972** to **1-st of september 1974**

has taken an advanced course at **All Union**

State Institute of Cinematography
(name of institute)

awarded the order of the **Red Banner**
(or scientific centre)

in **Camerawork and Filmdirection**



(theme of course)

Director (Chancellor)

Scientific supervisor

Secretary

City **Moscow**

13 september 1974

Registration No. **2**

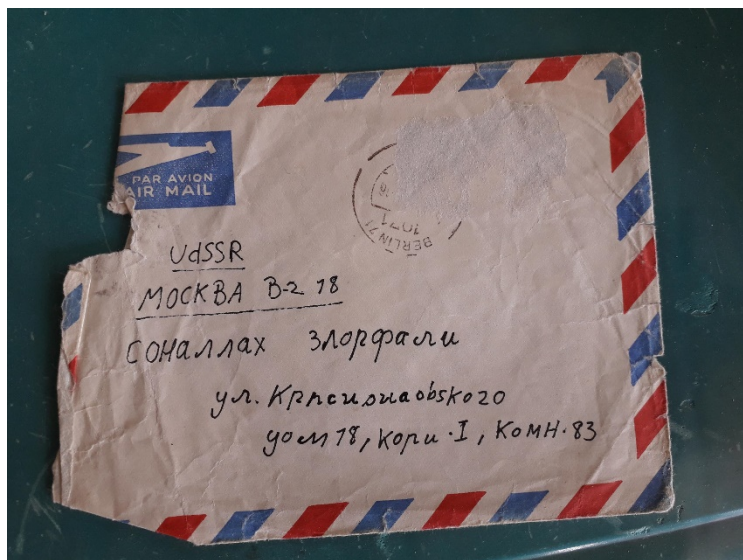


Diploma for 1972-74 studies at VGIK; photos from joint graduation film with Mohamad Malas

Zoya was sitting next to Hans on his bed, and Talia stretched out across the facing bed, leaning her head against the wall. I sat on the only armchair, beside the table. Talia asked me if I had fought in the war. I said I had been a conscript in a military office far from the front; after returning to teach at my university I was awarded a scholarship for a cultural exchange programme with the Soviet Union. Zoya suggested turning out the light. We lit some candles. Hans pulled her up for a dance, and she submitted to his embrace. I did not move from my place. My eyes were glued to their faces and her bare legs. Talia gave me a silent look. Then she asked me about the woman question in Egypt. I said the Egyptian woman's situation had improved greatly since the revolution: she had taken off the face veil and begun to enter many occupations—these days she could even work as a bus conductor. Soon Talia got up: 'I'm going. I need to study.' She asked her friend, 'Aren't you coming with me?' Hans said, 'Let her stay a little.' Talia left, and the two of them kept dancing. After a while, they sat down on the bed. We all sat in silence. Eventually I excused myself, picked up my record player and LPs and went to my room.

Quiet irony

النور وأشعلنا شمعة. جذبها هانز ليرقصا فاستسلمت لأحضانها. لم أتحرك من مكاني. كان بصري معلقا بوجهها وساقها العاريتين. تأملتني تاليا واجمة. سألتني عن وضع المرأة في مصر. قلت إنه تحسن كثيرا بعد الثورة فخلعت البرقع والنقاب وأصبحت تمارس كثيرا من المهن حتى أنها عملت أخيرا محصلة في سيارات الباص. بعد قليل وقفت قائلة: سأذهب لأن عندي دراسة. وخاطبت صديقتها: ألن تأتي معي؟ قال هانز: دعها تبقى قليلا. انصرفت تاليا وواصل الاثنان الرقص. ثم جلسا فوق الفراش. وساد الصمت بيننا. قمت واقفا مستأذنا في الانصراف وحملت البيك أب واسطواناتي ومضيت إلى حجرتي.



Heliopolis, 2014

Opening

The *komendantsha* who ran our *obshchezhitie*, the dorm, appeared around noon. First her round, frowning face in its frame of grey hair. Then her fat body, filling our doorway. She would put another student in with us, a Russian, she said. I told her the room had only three beds, but she pointed to a disassembled frame atop the wardrobe. I said, 'I'm thirty-five years old. I can't stand crowding and noise, and besides, I'm supposed to have a private room like the other graduate students.' She looked at me for a moment, perhaps taking the measure of my slight frame: Did I really deserve a whole room to myself? She said, '*Tovarish Shukri, ladno*. Fine. We'll keep it just the three of you.'

When she was gone, Mario the Brazilian straightened the 1973 calendar on the wall near the door. He was slim, about my height, with narrow, nervous eyes, wearing an embroidered wool shirt and jeans. He said, twisting his earring, 'They want to put a Russian student in with the foreigners so he can report on them.' Our roommate Jalaeddinov, a tall young man with Asian features from the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, spoke up as if to deflect suspicion from himself: 'Well. There's nothing worth reporting.'

ظهرت القومندانة قرب الظهر على باب الحجرة بوجهها للمستدير المتجهم الذي يجله شعر رمادي. ملأت فتحته بجسدها للبدن. قالت إنها ستضم إلينا طالبا روسيا. قلت لها إن هناك ثلاثة أسرة فقط فأشارت إلى واحد مفكوك وملقى فوق للدولاب. قلت: سني 35 ولا أحتمل للتكنس والضجة، ثم إني مفروض أن أقوم في غرفة مفردة كبقية طلاب للدكتوراه. نظرت إلى برهة كأنما تقيس حجمي الضئيل وإذا ما كنت أستحق فعلا غرفة كاملة. قالت: تفاريش (رفيق) شكري، لائنا (حسنا) ستبقون ثلاثة كما أنتم.

أصلح ماريو البرازيلي بعد انصرافها من وضع تقويم العام 1973 المثبت على الحائط قرب الباب. كان نحيفا في طولي ذا عينين ضيقتين عصبيتين ويرتدي قميصا صوفيا مخططا وبنطلونا من الجينز. قال وهو يعبث بالحلقة المدلى من إحدى أذنيه: إنهم يحرصون على وضع طالب روسي مع الأجانب لينقل أخبارهم. قال جلال الدينوف، الطويل ذو الملامح الآسيوية، ابن جمهورية قرغيزيا، إحدى جمهوريات الاتحاد السوفييتي، كأنما يحاول درء الشبهة عنه: ليس هناك ما يستحق النقل.

تفاريش (رفيق) شكري، لادنا (حسنا) ستيقون ثلاثة كما أنتم.

أصلح ماريو البرازيلي بعد أنصرافها من وضع تقويم العام

1973 المثبت على الحائط قرب الباب. كان نحيفا في طولي ذا

عينين ضيقتين عصبيتين ويرتدي قميصا صوفيا مخططا وبنطلونا

من الجينز. قال وهو يعبث بالحلق المدلى من إحدى أذنيه: إنهم

يحرصون على وضع طالب روسي مع الأجانب لينقل أخبارهم.

قال جلال الدينوف، الطويل ذو الملامح الآسيوية، ابن جمهورية

قرغيزيا، إحدى جمهوريات الاتحاد السوفييتي، كأنما يحاول درء

الشبهة عنه: ليس هناك ما يستحق النقل.

ارتديت معطفي ووضعت الشابكا (القبعة الصوفية) فوق

Into the cold world

I put on my overcoat, put a wool *shapka* on my head, wrapped a scarf around my neck and pulled on my fur-lined boots, the ones with thick soles for walking on ice. I checked for my gloves in my pocket, walked down the clean stairs to the ground floor, waved to the *dezhurnaya* minding the door and left the *obshchezhitie*. The sun had disappeared, and I was assailed by the new-fallen snow and the cold air. My nose began to run; I pulled the flaps of my *shapka* over my ears and put on my gloves. I walked carefully on the snow. The glass front of the *magazin* was piled, like in all the stores, with pyramids of evaporated milk cans and nothing else. Over its top was stretched a cloth banner: 'We Are Fulfilling the Plan. Forward Towards Communism.' At the entrance was a small group of drunks. One of them held two fingers together on his jacket sleeve, signalling he needed two more takers to split a half-litre bottle of vodka.

ارتديت معطفي ووضعت الشابكا (القبعة الصوفية) فوق رأسي، ولففت الكوفية حول عنقي، وارتديت الحذاء المبطن بالفراء ذا النعل المناسب للمشي فوق الجليد. تأكدت من وجود القفاز في جيبتي، هبطت الدرج النظيف إلى الطابق الأرضي ووجهت التحية إلى الدجورنايا (حارسة الباب) ثم غادرت الأبخشجيتي (بيت الطلاب). كانت الشمس قد اختفت وهاجمني الثلج المتساقط والهواء البارد. سألت إفرازات أنفي وأنزلت زائدتي الشابكا اللتين تغطيان الأنين وارتديت القفاز. مشيت فوق الجليد بحذر. كانت للولجة الزجاجية للمجازين (الحانوت) مكسة - مثل كل الحوانيت - بأهرامات من العلب المعدنية للبن المركز، ولا شيء غيرها. وتمتد في أعلاها لافتة من القماش تحمل هذه العبارة: نحن ننفذ الخطة. إلى الأمام نحو الشيوعية. وتجمع عند المدخل عدد من السكاري ضم أحدهم إصبعين فوق ياقة سترته. دعوة للاشتراك مع اثنين آخرين في زجاجة فودكا.

Group sex? Toilet paper?

did likewise with Larissa who was quite cross because I had not called her since the last time we met. We returned to the living room and I suggested, laughing, that we try group sex. We all laughed, but Madeleine got upset and disappeared in the bathroom. Then the two women left.

I spent the night on the living-room couch with Madeleine. I could smell a stink just from lying down next to her. She admitted that she hadn't cleaned herself after using the toilet because she couldn't find any paper.

'Wasn't there any water?'

'Of course. There was a bottle there, but I don't know how to use it like you guys do.'

I turned my back to her and slept.

الماضي. عندما سكرنا اقترح لعبة تختار فيها كل فتاة رقما يرمز لأحدنا وتنتهي بأن تتفرد بالفائز. فزت مرتين. أخضت إيماء إلى المطبخ وقبلتها. بادلتني قبلات للفم بحماس وضغطت عليها بساقي. ثم فعلت المثل مع لاريسا التي عاتبتي لأنني لم أتصل بها منذ للتقينا آخر مرة. عدنا إلى الصلاة واقترحت ضاحكا أن نمارس الجنس الجماعي. ضحكنا جميعا لكن ماعلين انزعجت واختفت في الحمام. ثم انصرفنا للفتاتان.

قضيت الليلة مع ماعلين فوق أريكة الصلاة. شمت رائحة كريمة بمجرد أن رقدت إلى جوارها. اعترفت بأنها لم تغتسل بعد التواليت لأنها لم تعثر على ورق. قلت: ألم تكن هناك مياه؟ قالت: أجل. هناك زجاجة ولكني لا أعرف كيف استخدمها كما تفعلون. أعطيتها ظهري ونمت.

Turning up the exoticism

I bought *morozhenoye*, ice cream, and knocked on Hans' door. He answered wearing an open bathrobe that bulged below the waist. I thought he might have an erection. He approached and bent down to kiss my neck; I backed away. He went back in and got dressed behind the wardrobe that stood the width of the room. He made coffee. I decided that if I saw Zoya, I would ignore her. A few minutes later she knocked on the door and came in covering her mouth with her hand, saying playfully, 'I have a cold.' I found myself smiling and saying to her, 'I bought *morozhenoye*.' She clapped her hands rapturously and sat down in the armchair. I put my hand on her hair and pulled her head to my chest. We had *café glacé*, coffee with *morozhenoye*. She left her chair and sat on Hans' lap. He started explaining to her the meaning of the word *frigid*.

'Like her,' I said.

'How would you know?' he asked. 'On the contrary!'

'How would *you* know?'

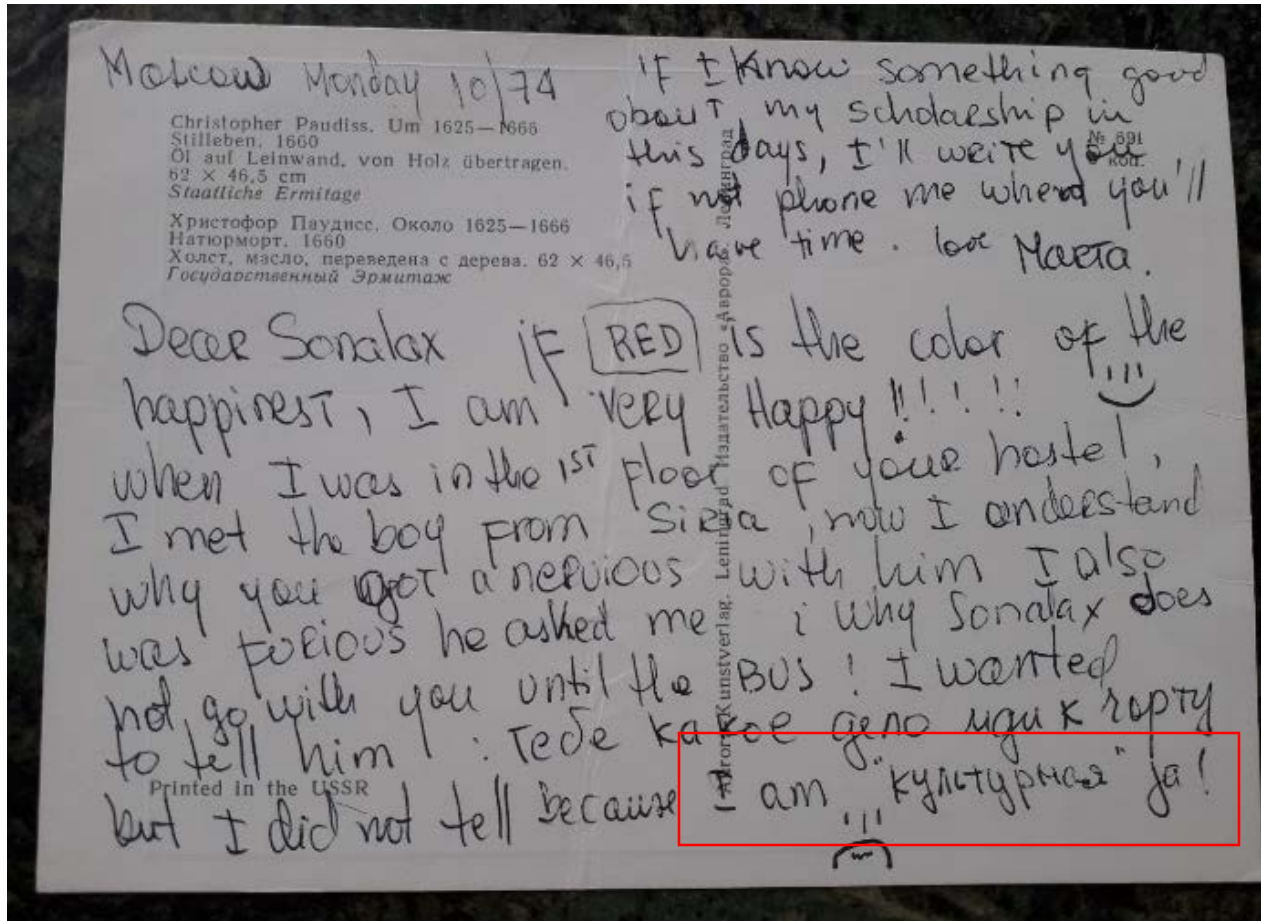
'Really, how would you know?' Zoya joined in.

'Her husband told me,' Hans replied.

We laughed. I went back to my room and left them together.

اشتريت ماروجنا (آيس كريم). طرقت باب غرفة هانز. فتح لي في جلاباب النوم. كان الجلاباب منتفخا وبارزا تحت وسطه. شككت أنه كان منتصباً. انحنى على وقبلني في عنقي فابتعدت عنه. ارتدى ملابسه خلف الخزانة التي وضعت بعرض الغرفة. أعد قهوة. فكرت أنني لو رأيت زويا سأتجاهلها. بعد دقائق سمعتها تقرع الباب. دخلت واضعة يدها علي فمها قائلة في دلال: عندي برد. وجددتني أبتسم لها وأقول: اشتريت ماروجنا. صفقت بيديها مهلة وجلست على مقعد. وضعت يدي على شعرها وضممت رأسها إلى صدري. أكلنا ماروجنا بالقهوة. غادرت مقعدها وجلست في حجر هانز. أخذ يشرح لها معنى كلمة امرأة باردة. قلت: مثلها. قال: كيف عرفت؟ على العكس. قلت: كيف عرفت؟ سألته هي: كيف عرفت؟ قال: زوجها قال لي. ضحكنا. غادرت إلى غرفتي وتركتها سوياً.

جاءتني منها في اليوم التالي بطاقة بريدية قالت فيها بالإنجليزية: "عند خروجي من الأبرشجيتي أمس التقيت بـ عدنان وسألني لماذا لم ترافقني حتى الباص؟ أردت أن أقول له وما شأنك أنت؟ لكني لم أفعل لأنني مؤدبة." صح! الآن فهمت لماذا أثار غضبك."



The next day I received a postcard from her that said, in English: 'As I was leaving the *obshchezhitie* I met Adnan and he wanted to know why you hadn't walked me to the bus. I wanted to tell him to mind his own business, but I didn't, because I'm polite. That's right! Now I understand why he made you angry.'

)—which can mean *and*, *so*, *then*, *therefore* or even *but*—with him’s paragraphs are very long, spanning several locations and chapter. While I have occasionally inserted a break to highlight an otherwise clear to the English reader, most of the long paragraphs have been set off directly quoted speech with quotation marks and new lines to keep the claustrophobic stream-of-consciousness effect of the

characters in a strange land, *Ice* contains two sets of cultural references, one for Arabic and one for Russian. For Arabic terms relating to matters like clothing, food, music, I have tried to domesticate the text, conveying the meaning without italics (for example, ‘stuffed cabbage’ instead of ‘*makdous*’) except when the characters are non-Arabs in the scene. For Russian and Soviet terms, by contrast, I have maintained the same level of conspicuous transliteration, italics and explanation. The translation strategies aim to replicate the experience of the novel’s original Arabic and the Russian cultural references exotic but the Egyptian ones in a notebook style to Ibrahim’s narrative; the Russian words are not exoticized but also exoticizes some dialect terms used by the narrator’s Syrian friends. The glossing I have followed. Where Anglophone readers are likely to know the terms (like Kirgizia or KGB), I have reduced the glossing. I have kept the original gives in English.

characters on the same alienation devices he had pioneered “at home” in the novel *III*. The narration presents a sequence of events without logical

Sayoni Ghosh

In “That Smell” this strategy might have worked because the narrator had been struggling with communicating with the known and unknown. While in “Ice” the protagonist appears to have a distinct self-conscious narrative voice. I’d request you, urge you, to please kindly retain quote marks in keeping with characterization of Dr Shukri.

Sayoni Ghosh

We should be able to standardize the use of italics and explanations of Russian terms as much as possible.

Litvin, Margaret

Please do not remove the foreignizing italics! They are the whole reason I undertook this translation, and without them the book loses its texture.



ЛЕТОМ этого года и пробыл в качестве спонсора в Перу, Эквадоре, Боливии, Чили. Мне довелось встретиться с рабочими, крестьянами, студентами, интеллигенцией, политическими деятелями. Я читал стихи перед группой рыцарской аристократии. Я убедился, что в Латинской Америке можно «защелкнуть» социализм». Давно хотел вернуться в Латинскую Америку, поработать дипломатом или журналистом, но в последние годы не было возможности. Я решил вернуться к тому, что является моим делом — Латинской Америке, провозглашающей единую и солидарную борьбу, представляющей новую роль в социализме.

Победа Фронта народного освобождения в Чили, вытеснение нефти из колоний и аграрная реформа в Перу, во всем Латинской Америке борьба за социализм — вот те явления, которые прежде всего определяют будущее латиноамериканцев.

Они отражаются и на поэзии и на литературе. Прошлым летом Пабло Неруда, Оскар Хулиа, Карлос Фуадес, Хосе Мариа Аргентас, Мария Бенедикта и другие писатели в качестве интеллигенции, но в то же время и в качестве политического деятеля, участвовали в борьбе за свободу и социализм. Писатели Латинской Америки, участвующие в борьбе за свободу и социализм, участвуют в борьбе за свободу и социализм.

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Евг. ЕВТУШЕНКО, специальный корреспондент «Литературной газеты»



Иванито

Там, где горно Сьерра Негра,
там, где дымы плыли из родников,
называли в селах: «Клоды с небом» —
идеи, улавливающие облака.

Там, где протекает Рио Санта
и на горном куте «гуай»,
названный а часть русского десанта,
Иванито учится ходить.

Крепкий потомок древних инков —
Сьерра Негра, кровь твоя и плоть —
он идет, и куте горит иды,
чтобы невинная не ужалась.

Иванито так важно ходит
и шаг башки ускорять.
Для него важна идыл жонгли
вместе, чем гора Уаскарэн.

Перед ним то яма, то канавы,
свиньи у корня своего,
и шипит влево или вправо,
главно-рою Андрику, его.

Падает, спотыкнувшись о лапату,
или просто о тебе, земля.

Иванито, мне постыдно, право,
связать «Клоды культуроведы»,
кто и землетрясения кровавые
видит выход в рай из тупика.

Главное: считают — пусть изжит,
а потом посмотрим, как там быть...
Не трясите больше землю! Хватит!
Иванито учится ходить.

Перуанские коммунисты

Этот зал — две тысячи мест —
был полон в тот день на сцене
ты, кто так сел в твой быт,
перуанский Мозабит,
ты, кто был почти убит,
слоганом в землю бить,
и казалось, что бьют.

Этот зал — две тысячи мест —
из крутых торчинок тост —
вдруг поднялся и залел.
Я не знала твоих кавалов,
где любой левый успел
лет не менее пяти
на пыльной лавочке.

РЕПОРТАЖ С КОНТИНЕНТА НАДЕЖДЫ

спотыкающийся о камни
на смертельной тропе-серпантинной.
Но плохо повода — неров,
Я не то что особенно трушу,
но бессмертия трупный запад
ощущаю неравно всем.
Вспоминать о тебе, команданте,
переворачивает всю душу,
и внутри тишина такая,
что похоже — землетрясение.
Команданте,
тобой торжуют, забывая цену победы,
на твоем дорожке ния
продакт задешного спичкином,
Не чужими — своими глазами,
команданте,
я видел в Париже
твой портрет, твой берет со звездой
на модные «горячие штанишки».
Борода твоя, команданте,
на бровках, на бровках, на бровках.
Ты был пламенем чистым при жизни,
а дым тебя превращают, и только.
Но ты пал, команданте, во имя
справедливости, революции —
не затем, чтобы стать роковой
для коммерции «левого толка».

Che in Verse

RUSSIA

YEVGENY YEVTUSHENKO

1971

Keys of the Comandante

Our horses pad their way to the village

where they killed you,

Comandante.

Near the precipice go, as in politics,

neither too far to the left,

nor too wide to the right.

Let go the reins, muchachos,

give the horses lead

to direct our destinations,

otherwise we'll vanish in vain.

There is in the sullen cheekbones of the rock face

a partisan look

the wind

has sculpted with longing and pain.

The clouds are heavy, unmoving

above the forests and swamps,

like exhausted thoughts

of the scowling Bolivian mountains.

We struggle upward,

as though evading pursuit.

Better to confront phantoms in the mountains

than adjust to the marsh's slime

The clip-clop of horseshoes dictates

the rhythm of these lines,

stumbling on the stones

of this deadly serpentine trail.

But fear makes bad reins.

And while not particularly fearful,

I detect with every nerve

the putrid smell of immortality.

Remembering you, Comandante —

overwinds the soul,

End of Vysotsky's *Ballad for Serezha Fomin*

بينما كنت أريق دمي من أجل البلد والوطن،
كان يشتعل شيء بداخلي،
كنت أنزف من أجل سيروشكا فومين،
الذي ظل جالسا في الخلف ولم يخاطر من مخبئه.
أخيرا انتهت الحرب،
و انتهى العبء الثقيل الذي حملناه على أكتافنا،
وقابلت سيروشكا فومين،
وفوق صدره شارة بطل الاتحاد السوفيتي.

Кровь лью я за тебя, моя страна,
И все же мое сердце негодует:
Кровь лью я за Сerezжку Фомина –
А он сидит и в ус себе не дуёт!

Теперь небось он ходит по кинам –
Там хроника про нас перед сеансом, –
Сюда б сейчас Сerezжку Фомина –
Чтоб побыл он на фронте на германском!

...Но наконец закончилась война –
С плеч сбросили мы словно тонны груза, –
Встречаю я Сerezжку Фомина –
А он Герой Советского Союза...

1964

My motherland, my blood pours out for you.
And yet my heart is hot with indignation:
My blood's spilt for Serezhka Fomin, too
While he sits there like someone on vacation.

I bet he's at the movie house right now,
And us—we're in the newsreel that they're
showing.

I'd love to get Serezhka here somehow,
To taste just how the German front is going.

But finally the war is at an end
We heaved it off our shoulders like a burden.
I meet Fomin one time, and on his chest
A medal: 'Hero of the Soviet Union.'*

and, then, therefore, so, but = ف

that works in this country.' A girl walked by wearing a light coat over multicoloured trousers, a yellow shawl over her braided hair. From her features and hairstyle I could tell she was Tajik. There were Uzbek families sitting on big suitcases, and Gypsy women selling beauty supplies. They had brightly coloured skirts and gold earrings that clashed with their dirty faces. One of the drinkers asked me, 'Where from?' I replied, 'An Arab, from Egypt.' One of the Uzbeks heard me and approached, followed by his group. They wore embroidered skullcaps and galabeyas over wide colourful trousers. They looked lost and confused, and one of them was holding an Arabic Quran. I walked towards the exit; they followed me. I stopped; they stopped. I kept walking; so did they. Had they chosen me for their imam?

البلاد. مرت فتاة ترتدي معطفا خفيفا فوق سروال متعدد الألوان وتغطي شعرها المضفر بشال أصفر اللون. قدرت من ملامحها وطريقة تصفيفها لشعرها أنها طاجيكية. وكانت هناك عائلات أوزبكية فوق جوالات تضم ممتلكاتها، وعجريات يبعن أدوات تجميل. كن بجوبات منتفخة في ألوان زاهية وحلى ذهبية تتعارض مع وجوههم المتسخة. سألني أحد الشاربين: من أين؟ قلت: عربي من مصر. سمعني أحد الأوزبكيين فاتجه نحوي وتبعه زملاؤه. كانوا يرتدون الطواقي المزركشة والجلاليب فوق سراويل ملونة وتبدو عليهم الحيرة والارتباك ويحمل أحدهم مصحفا عربيا في يده. خطوت في اتجاه النزول فتبعوني. توقفت فتوقفوا. استأنفت السير فاستأنفوه. هل اختاروني إماما لهم؟



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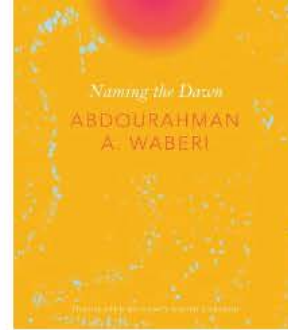
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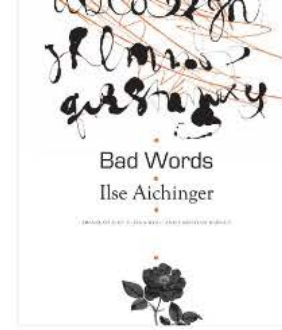
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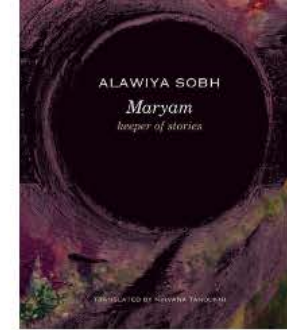
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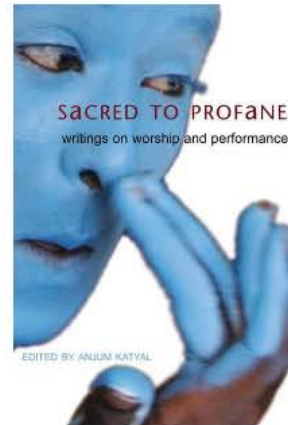
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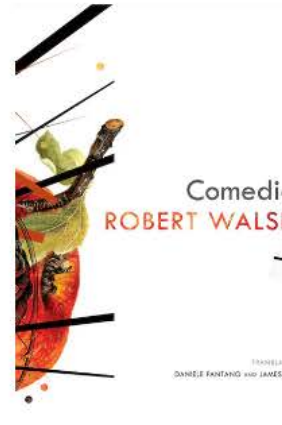
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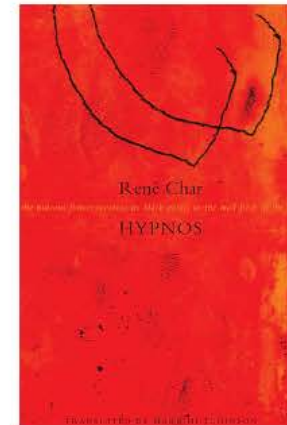
Sacred to Profane
Edited by ANJUM KATYAL



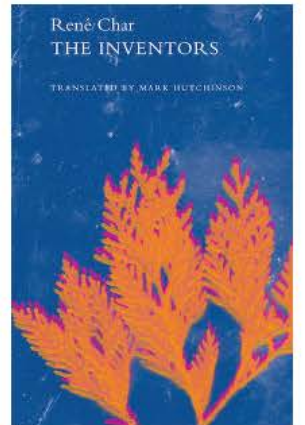
Blue Jewellery
KATHARINA WINKLER



Comedies
ROBERT WALSER



Hypnos
RENÉ CHAR



The Inventors
RENÉ CHAR

l

The *komendantsha* who ran our *obshchezhitie*, the dorm, appeared around noon. First her round, frowning face in its frame of grey hair. Then her fat body, filling our doorway. She would put another student in with us, a Russian, she said. ~~‘I told her I told her the room had only three beds,’ I said,~~ but she pointed to a disassembled frame atop the wardrobe. ~~I said,~~ ‘I’m thirty-five years old. I can’t stand crowding and noise, and besides, I’m supposed to have a private room like the other graduate students.’ She looked at me for a moment, perhaps taking the measure of my slight frame: Did I really deserve a whole room to myself? She said, *Tovarish Shukri, ladno*. Fine. We’ll keep it just the three of you.’

When she was gone, Mario the Brazilian straightened the 1973 calendar on the wall near the door. He was slim, about my height, with narrow, nervous eyes, wearing an embroidered wool shirt and jeans. He said, twisting his earring, ‘They want to put a Russian student in with the foreigners so he can report on them.’ Our roommate Jalaeddinov, a tall young man with Asian features from the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, spoke up as if to deflect suspicion from himself: ‘Well. There’s nothing worth reporting.’

I put on my overcoat, ~~put~~ placed my wool *shapka* on my head, wrapped my a scarf around my neck, and pulled on my fur-lined boots, the ones with thick soles for walking on ice. I checked for my gloves in my ~~the-my~~ pocket, walked down the clean stairs to the ground floor, waved to the *dezhurnaya* minding the door and ~~and~~ ~~then~~ left the *obshchezhitie*. The sun had disappeared, ~~and~~ ~~;~~ ~~and~~ I was assailed by the new-fallen snow and the cold air—. My nose began to run; I pulled the flaps of my *shapka* down over my ears and put on my gloves. I walked carefully on the snow. The glass front of the *magazin* was piled, like in all

Sayoni Ghosh May 31, 2019
Kindly note that I have used quote marks for dialogues. While I do understand that the style was adapted from an earlier translation, I would however suggest that we retain quote marks to set off direct from indirect speech and the shift in tenses—which in English is quite tedious and often jarring.

Kindly note that I have standardized the use of quote marks for clarity and consistency. I request you to please double-check these, just to be absolutely sure.

Litvin, Margaret
OK. I have checked these throughout and moved a few as needed.
The first one here marks indirect speech, so I have removed the quotation marks here.
Now that you’ve added quotation marks: We can eliminate the constant repetition of “said” by reformatting the dialogue, each quotation starting on a new line. What we should avoid, please, is varying the introducing words besides “said.”

Litvin, Margaret In a very few cases where the writer

Sayoni Ghosh Shop?

Litvin, Margaret Please leave all transliterated

I passed an old woman in a white overcoat and black boots with a box of stuffed pancakes called *piroshki*. She opened the box to sell one and recoiled from the scorching steam. I walked to the cigarette kiosk run by a white-haired old man. When I got there, I was surprised to see the window closed and the man engrossed in studying some cigarette boxes laid out in his hand. He did this extremely slowly, his hand trembling. He looked over the contents again, counted the money he had accumulated, then searched for something. Meanwhile a queue formed behind me. I began hopping on my feet to warm them. I heard someone say the temperature was ten below zero.

'The old guy's looking for his dick,' someone else said.

'Did he find it?' a third person asked.

'Of course not.'

The white-haired man began arranging new brands of cigarettes behind the glass and labelling the prices. When one of the labels slipped, he adjusted it slowly. Finally he opened the window. I bought a box of TU-144 cigarettes and returned to the *obshchezhitie*.

ت عجوزا في معطف أبيض وبوط أسود خلف صندوق
روشكي. فتحتة لتبيع واحدة فلفحها البخار المتصاعد
إلى كشك السجائر الذي يتولاه عجوز أشيب الشعر.
حت أمام نافذة الكشك فوجئت بالبائع يغلقها وينهمك في
ة صناديق من السجائر طبقا لكشف في يده. كان يفعل
شديد ويده ترتجف. راجع محتويات للكشف مرة أخرى
المتحصلة لديه ثم بحث عن شيء ما. خلال ذلك تكون
وأخذت أتقافز فوق قلمي لأبث فيهما اللدفء. سمعت
ن الحرارة تحت للصفر بعشر درجات. وقال آخر:
ت عن قضيبه. وسأل ثالث: هل وجدته؟ أجاب الأول:
ذ البائع يصف أصنافا جديدة من السجائر خلف الزجاج
أ علامات بأسعارها. وانفلتت إحدى العلامات فأعاد
له. وأخيرا فتح النافذة. اشتريت علبة سجائر تيو 144
لأبشجيتي.

Her father *drank? had drunk? used to drink?*

'I'll teach you how to stay sober. First, smell the vodka, then take a sip and leave it in your mouth for a second, ~~then~~ then swallow it and shoot the rest of it all at once and ~~then right away~~ eat something *right away*.'²

I ~~drained~~ ~~drained~~ ~~emptied~~ my glass according to her instructions, then took a slice of bread. She said her father ~~had drunk~~ *used to drink* ~~drunk~~ nothing but concentrated alcohol and refused to mix it with water or anything; *and*, to make sure it was pure, he would fill a glass and light it on fire, *and only* ~~and~~ if it ignited *would* ~~then he would put it out~~ *snuff out the flames* and drink ~~it~~. Talia ~~said~~ *changed the subject* ~~added~~:
'There are only a few places where you can get fresh soft white bread. Kutuzovsky Prospekt close to Brezhnev's house, and the shop in Gorky Street, and the Arts Cinema in Arbat.' *When* I declined a second glass, ~~and~~, Hans ~~said~~ *urged* ~~said~~: 'We have to finish the bottle; ~~T~~there's no way to close it once it's open.' Zoya moved a lock of hair that had fallen across her eyes and tucked it behind her ear. She asked me what would become of the Arab lands that Israel had occupied. ~~I said~~ *I said* ~~they~~ would only be liberated if the Arab governments changed, ~~I answered~~. She ~~said~~:

'But don't some of them believe in socialism?'

~~I said~~: 'That's what they claim...'

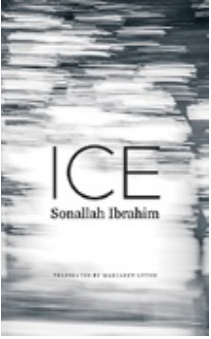
I ~~then told~~ *explained* ~~her~~ *told her about* ~~about~~ the War of Attrition we had been waging against the occupation for years.

Litvin, Margaret

these are steps in an instruction guide

Litvin, Margaret

he is dead now



Discussion: <https://bostonu.zoom.us/j/831118959>

Questions later: mlitvin@bu.edu

Working group “Arab-Russian and Arab-Soviet Literary Ties”:

www.facebook.com/groups/244572505674949