

Two poems

Pavlo Tychyna

Lament of Iaroslavna

(I)

Snow. Light flurries falling
on the Prince's palace.
Around it day and night
walks a tiny voice crying:
—Prince, my dearest Prince,
are you beyond the Danube?
Or on the Don River?
Send me some news of you
or I'll die.

The Princess listens—only snow.
Only snow, and still more snow,
and beyond the field, beyond the forest
a tiny starving voice:
My father—war took him!
My mother—gone, too!
Who will plow, who will sow?
—*Oh!*

What a desert.

Again the Princess:
—Your services are needed,
black-browed Wind.
Somewhere the Prince is retreating
with a handful of his men,
—Turn the arrows from him,
send them whence they came.
The Princess listens—but there's no wind,
only snow and cold,
and beyond the field, beyond the forest
voices can be heard:
It's you we'll turn!

It's you we'll send!
You'll lie, like your Prince,
turned to stone.

What a desert.

—Dear Dnipro, dozing dreamer,
you are father to us all.
You at least must rise, since the Prince is gone—
let's resurrect the kingdom!
A kingdom peaceful, just,
wise in its laws:
where some tend the land,
and others, the crown.
The Princess listens—only laughter,
only laughter rattling
and a noise, rumbling, rumbling
from the huts, from under the eaves
Maybe the Prince has returned from his campaign?
Maybe his men have come back?
The Princess listens—the clang of swords and clamor
and voices approaching:
It's you we'll resurrect!

What a desert.

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Pavlo Tychyna. "Plach Iaroslavny"

The Feeling of a Single Family

Deep and resilient,
strange and foreign to native fords
I possess an iridescent span
arching toward the peoples.

It is so powerful in me
and on so many posts it stands!
With lightning-and-thunder you hit the essence
and you hear: another thunder in the mountains...

And this second thunder—roars further, to others
it roars, it wants and rejoices,
that there is a steel bridge between nations,
that international friendship is working.

And here you are, having resounded,
you become clear in your unfolding
as if you had gulped the good health
from a well in the steppe.

So having drunk, and drunk, and wiped your mouth
—without any warning or conditions
—you see the first in the last
as you approach a foreign language.

You touch the language—and it seems
to you softer than soft.
Even when a word is pronounced differently
—its essence remains ours.

At the beginning, like this: as if a woeful horseshoe
is being bent in your hands
and then suddenly—language! language!
A foreign one—sounds to me like my own.

Because it isn't just a language, not just sounds
not just the coldness of a dictionary
—in these, work, sweat, and sufferings are heard
—that sense of a single family.

In these, a forest murmurs and a flower blossoms,
the joys of the people ripple.

One can hear one common thread that runs through them,
from antiquity through today.

And so you borrow this language,
this beautiful and rich one—into yours
And all this finds its basis
in the power of the proletariat.

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Pavlo Tychyna. “Chuttia iedynoi rodyny”

Translated by Taras Koznarsky with Marta Baziuk

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