

Two Poems

Maxim Tank

Тебе дали обычное имя,
Не зная, что ты станешь
Необыкновенной,
Что ты будешь красивее всех,
Кому это имя принадлежало
Во все времена.
И поэтому всякий раз
Я называю тебя по-новому.

Можно ли обойтись
Одним именем
Зимою и летом,
Днем и ночью,
При расставаньях и встречах
С тобой?

* * *

На вопрос,
Отчего мои руки всегда тянутся
К бороне,
Молотку,
Лопате,
Я отвечаю:
— Оттого, что все еще верю
В былые приметы.
Верю в то, что, когда завершается
Жизнь человека,
На чаши весов непременно кладут
Не только дела, плохие и добрые,
Но и рабочие инструменты,
С которыми ты дружил.
И я не завидую тем,
Кто положит на чуткие чаши
Только ложку большую,
Только длинный язык.

(These two poems, which were originally written in Byelorussian, were translated from that language into Russian by Yakov Khelem-sky, and from Russian into English by Ruth Kisch.)

They gave you an ordinary name,
Not knowing you would become
Someone out of the ordinary,
That you would be more lovely than all
Who had borne that name
Through all ages past.
That is why I call you
Something different each time I meet you.

How can one make do
With just one name
For winter and summer,
For day and night,
For meeting you, and then
Parting from you?

* * *

When they ask
Why do my hands still stretch out to
The harrow,
Or hammer,
or spade,
Then I answer –
Because I still hold to
Some old beliefs.
I believe that when at the last
A man's life is over,
On the scales will be laid without fail
Not only his deeds, bad and good,
But the tools, too,
That served him as friends.
And I do not envy those
With nothing to lay on the finely-hung
balance
But a big spoon

The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic

Rauza Shamzhanova

(Chairman of the Presidium of the Kazakh Society of Friendship
and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries)

The President of Kazakhstan, Sabir Niyazbekov, described his Republic as a country re-created by the October Revolution when he was addressing the World Fair EXPO-67 in Montreal. He was not using a figure of speech because the Kazakh nation, which had been deprived even of its own name under tsarism, achieved sovereign statehood for the first time in history with the establishment of Soviet power. Today Kazakhstan occupies a worthy place in the fraternal community of the 15 Soviet Republics that make up the Soviet Union, the fiftieth anniversary of which will be celebrated in December of this year.

The Republic occupies a vast territory into which could be fitted eleven times the territory of Great Britain. Its northern borders lie on the same parallel as Copenhagen and London, while its southernmost towns are on the same latitude as Madrid and Rome. It has a markedly continental climate as all of its territory is located far from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and more than half of it consists of desert or semi-desert. The volume of fresh water supplies available in Kazakhstan puts it in fourteenth place among the 15 republics and only the Turkmen Republic, adjoining it in the Kara-Kum desert, is more deficient. The lakes in Kazakhstan contain mainly salt water.

The mineral wealth, in contrast, is as abundant in Kazakhstan as the vegetation is scarce. Geologists have already found present on its territory deposits of every known mineral in the world and estimate that these deposits make up in total one fifteenth of the known world mineral resources. No serious geological surveys had been made in Kazakhstan before the October Revolution although nomadic herdsmen often found outcrops of mineral deposits when moving with their herds across the deserts. Appak Baizhanov, a nomad, discovered the incalculable coal deposits of Karaganda and legend ascribes the discovery of the richest deposits of copper ore in the world in Djezkazgan to a group of herdsmen. This occurred so long ago that it is difficult to find any reliable evidence about it. It lies in a semi-desert territory, where even today inhabited centres are separated by hundreds of kilometres, although it was once quite