

THE BEST EUROPEAN SHORT STORIES

of

Y

歐洲二十七國短篇小說選

華文詳註

THE WORLD'S
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EDITED BY H. D. LING

**THE BEST CONTINENTAL
SHORT STORIES OF THE DAY**

VOL. I

WITH CHINESE NOTES

華 文 詳 註

最近歐洲二十七國小說選

上 冊

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序

有人說“文學並無新舊可分，只有中外可辨。”其意以爲各國有各國的文學，與歷史的時代並無關係；簡而言之，文學只有空間的關係，沒有時間的分別。我們看了這本最近歐洲二十七國小說選却得了一個極端相反的結論：“文學只有時代可分，並無中外可辨。”你看這本書收集了從露西亞到意卑里亞半島，從斯堪的那維亞半島到巴爾幹半島，同時代的三十七位文學作家，代表了二十七個國家。所說的同時代，便是現在的資本主義的末期時代。在經濟的鐵蹄下底民衆的喊冤聲，呻吟聲，憤激聲，是二十七國混成一片的。分開來說，二十七國；綜合起來，只是一個民衆：~~只有一個靈魂~~，一肚悶氣，一流眼淚，一股熱血。各國的

藝術家代表各國的民衆，用各種不同的樂器，合奏同一的悲調。

文學只有時代可分，並無中外可辨。帝國主義的軍閥底殘暴，貧苦階級的士兵底悲哀，在保加利亞 Ivan Vazoff 的 “Is He Coming?” 裏，愛沙尼亞 Friedebert Tuglas 的 “Shadows of Men” 裏是如此；在勒鐵 Akuraters 的 “Death” 裏，羅馬尼亞的女皇 Marie 的 “In the Winter of War” 裏也是如此。捷克 Bozena Kuneticka 的 “Geese” 裏貧孩底病死，日耳曼 Joseph Winkler 的 “The Holiday Child” 裏寄食的孤兒，同樣悲嘆無產階級的兒童是不當生活的。意大利 Bruno Corra 的 “Hassan's Career” 描寫六歲的孩童便須拿起鞋刷鞋油在大街中去尋麪包，露西亞 Lydia Seifoulina 的 “The Golden Childhood” 活寫出兒童時代却是鉛鐵時代！作家底國籍不同，時代精神底反映則一。

老姑娘的孤獨，醜郎君的失望，狄奧多的沉痛，斐阿叔的鬱悶，都是極甘甜的哀歌。第一次的懺悔，灰色的驢底作者滑稽的筆桿，變

做了喚醒迷於宗教的愚民底棒喝。旱，形式是散文，其實是歌舞劇，久旱的天空沛然下降甘霖，Minev 的筆端也流不完詩的美。足印及忘了的魂帶着神祕底色彩；磨坊女及沙妃的鞋子蒸散着新浪漫底芬芳。

還生存的三十七位作家，可說是歐洲作者的整體。有些出自無名小國，有些是新作家，要一一敘其傳略真是不可能，且亦非必要。我們雖不能細究誰是何人，却從他們的作品中可窺見誰是何如人了。

林漢達。

一九二九，三，十。

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THE BEST CONTINENTAL SHORT STORIES OF THE DAY

DAPAN MARQUAR

BY HAMASDEGH (ARMENIA)

HAVE you ever seen *scarecrows*—those things in the fields—clumsily stuffed with straw or *fagots*, with the aspect of drunkards? One doubled over with *rheumatism*, another looking as if it were stumbling out of the alehouse, waist bent, no longer able to walk. Still another, with the eagerness of a man just entering the alehouse, its feet astride, its arms *pendulous*, its hat tipped over a stooping shoulder. Dwarfy scarecrows, maimed scarecrows, scarecrows leaning on sticks, with *sunken* or *puffed-out bellies*, impotent feet, looking like the relaxed body of a criminal just taken from the *gallows*.

The best looking of these scarecrows was the one near our vineyard—the gardener's. It was tall, with its wide arms spread out like *Jesus of the desert*, as if alone, praying. Was there a

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famine, or were the waters of the fields dried up? The gardener had made it—had erected, crosslike, a tall pole and had dressed it in blue; a threadbare “*shalvar*” (that is to say, wide pants) with a *wavy sash* around its waist. For its dress he had slipped on it a ragged “*aba*,” or overcoat, made of goat’s hair. For the head he had taken an empty *squash*, had made a nose and carved a mouth, and for teeth he had used a donkey’s, from a skull he had found in the field. The eyes were made by two plums which had fallen from the tree. How fantastic! Just like a Chinese god with the nose gone, and *bulging eyes*.

Each *fall* when he had finished his work in the fields, the gardener as a last duty would throw the scarecrow over his shoulder and enter his house. Each spring when the broadbrowed lambs leaped out to stamp the earth’s belly with their tiny feet, the gardener would again shoulder his scarecrow and descend into the garden.

Like the immortal hermit of the story, in whose hair birds were said to have built their nests, the scarecrow was always there. One day, however, I saw it walking, as I *scampered* noisily along the road to our vineyard, throwing stones at the birds and destroying the *cobwebs* under the bridge. I was scarcely eight and loved to run

DAPAN MARQUAR

away from my mother as a *zephyr* from the woods, to waken my echo far off in a distant place.

It was at this time that I saw the scarecrow walking. My wonder was immense. I clapped my hands and cried, "Mother, mother, where is the scarecrow going?" I thought it might be going to visit the neighbors or going over to drink from the brook. My eyes did not deceive me. It was the very same scarecrow that had stood near our vineyard, but now its giant form was advancing, its broad shoulders bent and full of straw, waving like wheat, with the same "shalvar," the same *felt hat*, the "ada," the *plaited "baldrie"* around it. Also, it had a spade on its shoulder.

"That is no scarecrow, it's Dapan Marquar from the village," my mother said, with an amused smile. I looked and saw that she was right. The scarecrow was standing as before, near our vineyard, and as the gardener worked I could see his head *glisten* among the glistening melons. A cautious *crane* just come to the ground was folding its wings among the vegetables. Near the shadow of the scarecrow the gardener's donkey stood rubbing his neck continually against a tree. The scarecrow was there. Beyond on the blue background was the gigantic portrait of Dapan Marquar with a piece of cloud under his arm.

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At twilight we came back to the village like the other workers in the fields. The *lowing* of the cattle, the buzzing of insects, and the dust of the road mingled, as the cows hurried home with *teeming udders* while *plough-points* glittered and clinked on their shoulders. In this medley of the twilight on the Hill Road I saw *lone* Dapan Marquar, his back broad as a field, spade on shoulder, descending to the village. Twilight dulled the *flamelike* beauty which *glowed on the canvas of the clouds*. Dapan Marquar was still descending. The tints in the sky were fainter. Beyond the hill his back could be seen gradually sinking; his shoulders, then the end of his spade, disappeared, and with the twilight he was at last indistinguishable from the village.

After that I saw him often. Once toward evening he had entered the village with his team of buffaloes and was thumping his heavy boots against a tree to knock the dirt off—*tuk-tk-tuk*. What boots! so big that a rabbit could have made its nest in one of them. Another time I saw him going into the church with *tassels* of field grass still clinging to his “shalvar.”

The years were passing. Dapan Marquar was the same; always behind his span of buffaloes, spade on shoulder. One would think he had

DAPAN MARQUAR

been born in those clothes; with just that aspect. I often wondered why birds did not sit on his spade.

Dapan Marquar's sunburned nose and cheeks were like brass—full of *dents*. His forehead was furrowed like a ploughed field. His arms were as planks. Usually silent, he spoke briefly when necessary. The villagers, old and young, respected him and asked him—showing their seed-grain—whether to put wheat in this field or cotton. Above all, when they were to *break in a wild steer*, they called on Dapan Marquar, for he knew where to scratch the animal's neck to make it docile as a lamb.

Tamar, his wife, nearly forty, with rosy cheeks and of a comely height, was reserved before him as a new bride in the presence of her father-in-law. Never once did he laugh. Tamar saw neither day nor sunlight in her home.

"It is not my fault, sister," Tamar would complain. "It is *searing me*. Would that their fire go out—the fires of whoever brought us together. He is a statue, sister, a statue; one could hope to hear something from a stone, but not from him. My white hands are like those of a *scrubwoman*. Ach, Lord, have mercy on me! There is my sister-in-law, the size of a pitcher, yet

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she is the very breath of her husband; you should see them. Their whispering to each other never ends day or night. What luck, sister, what luck!"

It was not a secret to the village women that Dapan Marquar did not love his wife and that he would not sleep on the same pillow with her. It had been so for years. Tamar, that she might turn her husband's heart to her, had gone to many saints and had tried many things.

"But what shall I do for you, my darling?" one of these *fortune-tellers* said to her, looking at a cup of water. "It is thrice I am looking, but I fail to see another woman between you. It is not a woman who has taken your husband's heart away from you, my dear one, it is not a woman. *Here*, I see wings . . . something wide is spread out there, but my eyes cannot perceive whether it is a field or buffalo *hide*. I cannot see well. . . . There is one thing to do, my innocent one; catch a bat from the churchyard, and kill it at dusk. Then take the bone of its right hind leg; break it into three parts; bury one piece in the running water of a brook; burn one, if you can, in the church *censer*; and the last piece you should burn at midnight and when the cock has *crowed three mouths* have your husband

DAPAN MARQUAR

inhale the smoke while asleep. If this does not succeed, then nothing can help you, my dear one."

Tamar had followed every instruction, but *averred* as before, "He is an *obelisk*, sister, an obelisk. A stone might speak, but not he."

Depan Marquar's heart was not for women, but for his buffaloes, the fields, the ploughing, the irrigating. He had become a sort of moving scarecrow, a spirit of the fields. He loved his buffaloes, lived with them, spoke to them from his heart; *his span of great buffaloes*, each with its pair of white marks—two little pieces of the moon—on a forehead wide as its master's breast; his buffaloes, with necks strong enough to pull a mountain after them.

Every spring, Dapan Marquar took his team to the field. The buffaloes *dilated* their nostrils, drew in the vagrant breeze horning the edge of the field, or ran with head high, snorting like a stream just released from the mill wheel. What a delight, this, to Dapan Marquar! He was always there, gathering stones, breaking up the *clods* with his hands even, as if caressing the field while the willful winds, like sportive children, made fun of him and ran whistling and chuckling to hide in the wheat. The birds dropped their *ordure* upon him. When, after a rain, he

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would go to kill rats, the familiar white *storks* never stirred from around his feet.

Every evening by the time he had come from the fields, the other workers of the family had returned long before and were waiting for him around the prepared table; he only was belated. After supper Dapan Marquar would roll a cigarette and leaning on his pillow would rest awhile. But was it rest? In him was all the restlessness of the fields: of a swelling brook about to leap from its borders in the silence of midnight, of a wind about to ruffle the calm of the wheat field, of a yoked team of buffaloes ready to pull. He was thinking of the thousand duties of the *morrow*; of the waterways that were to be opened since it would be his turn to-morrow to irrigate his lands; the waterway of Khraj was to be deepened; *the two home-raised heifers were to be taken to a bull*; it was necessary, too, that he should go to town. As he was thinking of all these things a brilliant little insect on his felt hat was *preening* its slim legs. Then, before he had finished his cigarette he would rise laboriously from his place, assign each worker in the family the morrow's duty, and would go to his buffaloes.

One brilliant spring morning after a few moments of prayer in the churchyard, Dapan

DAPAN MARQUAR

Marquar started to the field with his span of buffaloes. What a surprise! Some one had got there ahead of him. The larks winging higher and higher, were coming down again, rivaling one another as to which should greet the sun's rays first. Stirring from a shrub was a rabbit. A *hoopoe* ran along the row of mulberry trees by the road. Above its deep blue shadow on the earth a single dark cloud moved along. The sun threw its *spangles* on Dapan Marquar's felt hat, then on the backs of the buffaloes. The colors of the sunrise glittered brighter and brighter on the *two ebony coats*—lemon-color, copper, orange, gold. The East gradually became silver white and at a distance on the hill were *etched*, immensely tall, the shadows of Dapan Marquar and his buffaloes.

It was not long, however, before twice as many clouds appeared, marshaling themselves into a huge herd of elephants. The sky rang like brass under the blows of a hammer. Big drops of rain began to fall. Workers hastened home from the fields. *Caterpillars* came out on the road and worms issued from the soft ground. A torrent fell, and continued to pour steadily. The clouds rang in tumultuous *clangor*. The lightning was like a dagger gashing the *firmament*.

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There were *consternation* and tumult in the fields. Animals ran hither and thither with foreign and deplorable bellowings. Outlined against the sky, the terrified populace was running towards home. Trees were split in two and birds which had hid themselves among the leaves fell down. After half an hour the torrent came to a quick stop. The clouds were quiet and the sun came out. *Again spring.*

The villagers appeared from their hiding places and called to one another. Word spread that, on the Mulberry Road, Dapan Marquar had been struck by lightning. On the Mulberry Road, his two buffaloes, overawing as the black mouth of a cave, had fallen lifeless. The horn of one had been torn away; a horn of the other was sunk deep in the ground; and just back of them lay Dapan Marquar like a *capsized* oak. The *bolt* had struck the buffaloes squarely. Dapan Marquar, though badly hurt, was still breathing and was carried home on an *oxcart*. ☹

“He won’t live,” was the general opinion.

Gathering around him the neighbors saw him stir on the bed, straighten his back, and turn his scorched, disfigured face as if looking for some one. Was he looking for his wife—for Tamar, they wondered? But she was there, close