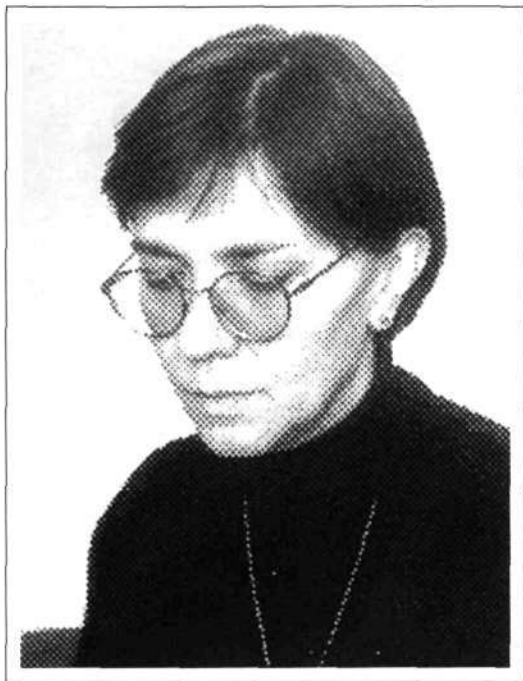


DURAKOVIĆ, Ferida



Ferida Duraković, born in 1957 in Olovo, Bosnia, graduated from Sarajevo University. Worked as an ice-cream seller, book seller, teacher, proof reader, cultural programmes manager, war guide and translator ... Currently she is Secretary of the P.E.N. Centre of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the war she lost relatives, friends, family house and her private library. In 1995, at the invitation of the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, Otis, Oregon, she spent two months in the U.S. as a visiting poet. In 1999, after winning the Vasyl Stus Freedom-to-Write Award for *Heart of Darkness*, she spent two weeks as a visiting poet at universities in New England. She has published many books of poetry and children's prose, among them *A Ball after the Masked Ball*, 1977, *Eyes Looking at Me*, 1982, *A Small Night Lamp*, 1989, *Heart of Darkness*, 1994.

Ferida Duraković, rođena 1957. godine v Olovu, v Bosni, diplomirala na sarajevskom univerzitetu. Radila je kao prodavačica sladoleda i knjiga, učiteljica, korektorka, voditeljica kulturnih programa, poslovođa knjižare, ratni vodič i prevodilac ... Sada je tajnica P.E.N centra Bosne i Hercegovine. U vrijeme rata je izgubila srodnike, prijatelje, obiteljsku kuću i vlastitu biblioteku. 1995. godine je na poziv Sitka centra za umjetnost i ekologiju u Otisu u Oregonu preživjela dva meseca u Americi. Nakon što je za svoju pjesničku zbirku *Srce tame* dobila nagradu Vasyla Stusa "Freedom to Write" je 1999. dva tjedna čitala po univerzitetima u Novoj Engleskoj. Pored knjiga za djecu objavila je više pesničkih zbirki, pored ostalih *Bal po maskama*, 1977, *Oči koje me gledajo*, 1982, *Mala noćna sujetiljka*, 1989 i *Srce tame*, 1994.

FERIDA DURAKOVIĆ

Beauty and the beast

Untruthful Beauty
Slammed the door
Finally
As the Homeland did,
Then vanished
Into history.

Nonetheless, Beauty,
Untruthful one,
And the Homeland
Have something in common –
Both leave behind
The boys
Who will die
For them.

Georg Trakl on the battlefield again in 1993

Our dear Lord dwells above the planes, in the highest Heaven.
His golden eyes settle on the dark, on blackened Sarajevo.
Blossoms and shells are falling outside my window.
Madness and me. We are alone, we are alone, alone.

A war letter

(About the letter from before the war)

The Universe sent darkness to our humble home,
which is gone now. The letter, and every single book,
and dear things: they all burned like Rome.
But it is just an image! Have a look:

We aren't gone! And manuscripts never burn,
they say. It means that I'll read anew
that precious letter, whenever you turn,
whenever only those few syllables

change our agony into an endlessly dull
winter afternoon. In those hours everything's
so simple that I suffer (same old song),
I don't love anyone, and the fear devours

the passion, which could bring back the first day
of love, the re-creation, is finally gone
like the heart grown in a poplar tree! And may
only this flourishing pain stop! May everyone alone

leave for good, to wherever they want: to
water, air, or fire. And us? What fireside
awaits us in the times to come? Here is our home,
where mother can never tire of planting
roses and fruit, and us, her poor ones, on her palm.

Translated by Amela Simić

Ten year old girl perceives her homeland while watching the ocean

For A.

I

This morning I took a long walk through
the forest
which was made by J. R. R. Tolkien
when he was in a real good mood.
Then I sat there
on the sunlit mountain slope
looking at the ocean
waiting for a huge whale to come up
from all the water.
But he did not show
and I ate an apple instead.

II

Those (I think) who know what
I am writing about
will not – nor need to – keep on
reading these lines.
And those who do not know
what I am writing about
will start another war, back there
far far away, in my tiny homeland
which was also made by J. R. R. Tolkien
when he was in a good mood, but
**ALL OF A SUDDEN SOMEBODY KNOCKED
AT HIS STUDY DOOR AND**
the happy ending (which he was really good at)
simply slipped off his mind.
After he died
at the age of two fifty
and never finished the story ...

III

Today I am waiting for him
to come up from all that water:
somebody has to give an end
to my tiny homeland story.
I do not know whether Mr. President
can do something to make him return –
he has, you know, those Striders
and all that stuff –

Anyway

I guess I will just sit here and
wait for a while.

I think I deserve it. I have been
a good girl, after all.

I am just a little bit afraid of the dark
coming from far away across the ocean.

Otis, Oregon February 26, 1995

FERIDA ĐURAKOVIĆ

Ratno pismo

(O pismu od prije rata)

Vratio se mrak iz svemira u našu kuću:
Nje više nema. Knjige i pismo
jedno, i drage stvari, sve u goruću
pretvorilo se sliku. No, nismo

nestali mi! Ni rukopisi ne gore, vele,
što znači da čitaću ponovo
to drago pismo, gdje želiš, gdje žele
slova da dugo stradanje ovo

u dugo dosadno popodne zimsko svedu,
kad ne volim nikog, i patim
što sve je tako obično i sve u redu,
što nema zanosa onog da vrati

prvi dan ljubavi, to ponovno stvaranje svijeta,
to urastanje srca u jablan iznad vode!
No neka samo patnja ova prestane da cvjeta
i neka već jednom ode

svako, kud koji hoće:
u vatru, u vodu, u zrak! A mi? U čiji dom?
Mi ćemo ovdje, gdje Majka uzgaja ruže i voće,
i nas, sirote, na dlanu svom.