



FALUDY, GYÖRGY

FALUDY, György (George Faludy, b. Budapest, 22 September 1910; d. Budapest 1 September 2006), Hungarian poet, translator, and publicist. His father was a chemist and worked as a teacher in a higher technical school. He finished secondary school in 1928 and studied at the Universities of Vienna (1928-30), Paris (1931-32), and Graz (1932-33). In 1933-34 he did his military service and was promoted to ensign (his military rank was later withdrawn).

In 1937 he translated Francois Villon's ballads into Hungarian. His free translation became extremely popular but created much controversy. His critics found fault with his venture to express his own political views in Villon's poems. In 1939 he emigrated to France. In the next year he moved on to Africa and in 1941 to the United States. After the World War II, in 1946 he returned to Hungary. In 1947 he published the poems he had written in exile. On 14 June 1950 he was arrested and under false charges sentenced to forced labor. He spent three years in the notorious prison camp of Recsk and was released in 1953. After the revolution of 1956 he defected and went to London, where he became editor of *Irodalmi Újság* ('Literary Journal') a Hungarian periodical published in exile. He lectured in different universities: Columbia in New York, Montclair in New Jersey, the University of Toronto, and the Bishop University in Quebec. His writings, deeply concerned with problems of contemporary Hungary, appeared in a number of Hungarian organs in exile. In March 1989 he returned to Hungary and settled down in Budapest.

As a translator of lyrical poets from around the world, Faludy took interest in Persian literature as well and published translations of 26 *robā'is* of 'Omar



Ḳayyām. During the revival of interest towards Persian in the 20th-century Hungary, he was one of the fourteen poets who made efforts in interpreting Ḳayyām's quatrains for the Hungarian audience. Close to the end of the 20th century, historian of literature Ágota Steinert published one hundred Ḳayyām's *robā'is* translated by more than two dozens of Hungarian poets. The collection reflects different tastes, styles, and principles on various levels of skill and erudition. Faludy's venture was a success. He did not show much concern for prosodic features of the genre but stayed very close to the meaning and the mood of the original. His personal interpretation, reminiscent of his treatment of Villon's poems, did not fail to convey Ḳayyām's message to his Hungarian readers.

During his long career Faludy translated works of more than two dozens of Persian classical poets, such as Anwari, Ḥāfez, Daqīqi, Ḳāqāni, and Rumi (qq.v.), to name but a few. He was the most active Hungarian translator of Persian poetry.

Faludy is one of the most rewarded Hungarian poets. He was the recipient of the Ruby Decorated Flag Order of the Hungarian Republic, the Soros Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Ferenc Nagy Commemorative Tablet, the Pulitzer Commemorative Prize, the Golden Pen Prize, the Don Quixote Prize, the Obersovszky Commemorative Tablet, the Gundel Prize of Arts, and the Medium Cross of Merit of the Hungarian Republic. In 1993 he became honorary freeman of Budapest. In 1997 he was elected permanent member of the Hungarian Association of Journalists.

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