



## Poems 1913-1956

*Bertolt Brecht, Kathleen Raine (Translator), R.M. Nadal (Translator)*

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..".this impressive selection of Bertolt Brecht's poetry...roughly 500 poems...shows convincingly that his oeuvre is one of the major poetic achievements of the present century. The editing, with excellent notes, excerpts from Brecht's own views about poetry and Mr. Willett's concise introduction is exemplary. Most important, the translations by 35 poets, among them H.R. Hayes, Peter Levi, Christopher Middleton, and Naomi Replansky, maintain a high standard of accuracy and often convey a very clear idea of the texture and feeling of the German." --Stephen Spender, "The New York Times Book Review"

## Poems 1913-1956 Details

Date : Published October 7th 1997 by Routledge (first published January 1st 1969)

ISBN : 9780878300723

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Format : Paperback 564 pages

Genre : Poetry, European Literature, German Literature, Cultural, Germany

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From Reader Review Poems 1913-1956 for online ebook

Andy says

THE Brecht poetry collection. Don't bother with anything else until you've spent a decade with it.

The clarity of thought here is magnificent, especially since that clarity doesn't come at the expense of radical doubt and formal experiment. What a writer--from teenage surreal prose poems that are better than the poems they imitate, to harsh and cynical satires of urban life, to political and philosophical meditations (some of the best dialectical thinking anywhere), to compact elegies and haiku-like crystals. Nothing to compare it to anywhere.

**Debra says**

Stephen King recommended author as noted in Chapter 9 of Berkley's 1983 paperback edition of *Danse Macabre*.

**Ali Alavi says**

## Ruhat alp says

I want to go with the one I love.  
I do not want to calculate the cost.  
I do not want to think about whether it's good.  
I do not want to know whether he loves me.  
I want to go with whom I love...

## **Joana Costa says**

Fantástico, embora confesse que fiquei desiludida com a ausência de um dos meus poemas preferidos de Bertolt Brecht, "Sobre a violência", onde se pode ler, numa das traduções mais bem conseguidas, "Do rio que tudo arrasta / se diz que é violento / mas ninguém diz violentas / as margens que o comprimem".

Gostei muito de encontrar Chico Buarque nos poemas "A jenny-dos-piratas" e "A canção do não e do sim".

Aconselho vivamente.

## **Karlo Mikhail says**

Epic! Simply brilliant.

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## **Mochizuki says**

Brecht approaches the reader without the arrogance of a theorist interested in instructing the audience how to think. He is more candid, both personally and politically, willing to condemn his own weaknesses and, in his later years, those of the movement that he had defended at any cost. And, most importantly, his poetry is fresh, direct, cutting and beautiful, even in translation. This is a volume that those who are interested in writing poetry should have.

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## **Dave Riley says**

This is a very comprehensive collection of Brecht poetry and a standard reference work. As one reviewer said -- it's fire cracker exploding in German literature. I agree despite my limitation to English translation. These are powerful poems...

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## **Christopher Howard says**

As potent as Whitman.

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## **Adriana Scarpin says**

Espécie de resumão poético do que aconteceu sociopoliticamente na primeira metade do século XX, é um livro pra se carregar debaixo do braço enquanto clamas por teus direitos. Livrão.

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## **Valéria Ota says**

Sem palavras. Como ler esses poemas e não se comover?

### **PERGUNTAS DE UM TRABALHADOR QUE LÊ**

Quem construiu a Tebas de sete portas?  
Nos livros estão nomes de reis:  
Arrastaram eles os blocos de pedra?  
E a Babilônia várias vezes destruída  
Quem a reconstruiu tantas vezes?  
Em que casas da Lima dourada moravam os construtores?

Para onde foram os pedreiros, na noite em que a Muralha da China ficou pronta?  
A grande Roma está cheia de arcos do triunfo:  
Quem os ergueu?  
Sobre quem triunfaram os Césares?  
A decantada Bizâncio  
Tinha somente palácios para os seus habitantes?  
Mesmo na lendária Atlântida  
Os que se afogavam  
gritaram por seus escravos  
Na noite em que o mar a tragou?

O jovem Alexandre conquistou a Índia.  
Sozinho?  
César bateu os gauleses.  
Não levava sequer um cozinheiro?  
Filipe da Espanha chorou,  
quando sua Armada naufragou.  
Ninguém mais chorou?  
Frederico II venceu a Guerra dos Sete Anos.  
Quem venceu além dele?

Cada página uma vitória.  
Quem cozinhava o banquete?  
A cada dez anos um grande Homem.  
Quem pagava a conta?

Tantas histórias.  
Tantas questões

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### **Jonfaith says**

**As a way of living together we merely thought of capitalism.  
Thinking of physics, we thought up rather more:  
A way of dying together.**

This is an epic collection of verse, one which haunts, beguiles and reveals the horror of 20C darkness. No saint, Brecht certainly bled, confounded by the turns of history and sought poetic reflection when able. Too often, he wasn't able. Consider his hymns to Stalin.

His vision is concerned with justice, his voice appears shaken with empathy. Images of hunger and despair abound.

There are also reflections on theater, his more famed milieu. These stir with a minimum of action.

He devoted a poem to a postwar encounter with WH Auden.

### **Lunching me, a kindly act**

**In an alehouse, still intact  
He sat looming like a cloud  
Over the beer-sodden crowd  
And kept harping with persistence  
On the bare fact of existence  
I.e. a theory built around it  
Recently in France propounded.**

Auden apparently had no recollection of this meeting, which is just as well.

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**Tasniem Sami says**

????? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? .. ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ...

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**Eadweard says**

Very socially aware and political and also pretty funny at times. The chronology also makes it an interesting read, as you turn the pages, the years keep adding up, poems about the german revolution and the 1920's give way to poems about the rise of fascism, his exile, WWII and finally his return to Germany.

She saw that I was wicked, and she loved me.

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**BORN LATER**

I admit it: I  
Have no hope.  
The blind talk of a way out.  
I See

When the errors have been used up  
As our last companion, facing us  
Sits nothingness.

----

What of the skyscrapers?  
We observe them more coolly.  
What contemptible hovels skyscrapers are  
when they no longer yield rents!  
Rising so high, full of poverty?  
Touching the clouds, full of debt?

----

The engineers who thought up mass production  
To milk the workers of their energy  
I praise them for their technical perfection.  
It's such sheer mastery it makes me cry

----

Rich man and his poorer brother  
Stood and looked at one another  
Till the poor one softly swore:  
You'd not be rich if I weren't poor

----

The headlong stream is termed violent  
But the river bed hemming it in is  
Termed violent by no one.

The storm that bends the birch trees  
Is held to be violent  
But how about the storm  
That bends the backs of the roadworker?

----

It is night  
The married couples  
Lie in their beds.  
The young women  
Will bear orphans

----

General, your tank is a powerful vehicle  
It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men. But it has one defect: It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.  
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.  
But it has one defect: It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.  
He can fly and he can kill.  
But he has one defect: He can think.

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In the dark times  
Will there also be singing?  
Yes, there will also be singing  
About the dark times.

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**R.K. Cowles says**

3 1/4 poems

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