



The Collected Poems of Odysseus Elytis

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In awarding Odysseus Elytis the 1979 Nobel Prize in literature, the Swedish Academy praised him "for his poetry, which, against the background of Greek tradition, depicts with sensuous strength and intellectual clear-sightedness modern man's struggle for freedom and creativeness." Throughout his long career as a poet, Elytis (1911–1996) remained true to his vision of a poetry that addresses the power of language and connects the history and mythology of Greece to the physical world and to the realities of the modern age. Renowned for their astonishing lyricism and profound optimism, Elytis's poems capture the natural wonders of Greece and give voice to the contemporary Greek—and to a more universally human—consciousness.

Originally published in 1997, *The Collected Poems of Odysseus Elytis*, translated into English by Jeffrey Carson and Nikos Sarris, was the first complete collection of Elytis's poems in any language. Included in this landmark volume were Elytis's early poems, influenced in equal parts by surrealism and the natural world; *Song Heroic and Mourning for the Lost Second Lieutenant of the Albanian Campaign*, his epic poem connecting Greece's—and his own—Second World War experience to the myth of the eternal Greek hero; his most ambitious work, *The Axion Esti*; and his mature poetry, from *Maria Nephele* to *West of Sorrow*.

For this expanded new edition, Carson and Sarris have added sixty free verse and prose poems first published in Greek in the posthumous 1998 volume *From Close By*, as well as a set of song lyrics, *The Rhos of Eros*, and a cantata, *The Sovereign Sun*, previously omitted. All have been translated with the same care and elegance as the rest of Elytis's oeuvre, brilliantly rendering into English the Greek poet's lyrical voice and the richness of his diction.

The Collected Poems of Odysseus Elytis Details

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Joanna Eleftheriou says

It's really exciting to have all of Elytis in one volume. Now I can quote him in English without translating him myself every time.

Nnikkoss says

Όλο το σπουδαίο ποιητικό έργο του μεγάλου μας νομπελίστα σε μια κομψή καλά σθητή έκδοση εγχειρίδιο... Ό,τι κι αν ποίμε για τον Οδυσσέα Ελύτη είναι πολύ λίγο... Μια σπουδαία έκδοση που δεν πρέπει να λείπει από καμιά Ελληνική βιβλιοθήκη!!! Αναζητήστε επίσης τα πεζά και, τι άλλο ακριβώς έχει αφήσει ως παρακαταθήκη ο ποιητής (κόλτζ, κα).

Eadweard says

Beautifully sun-drenched
Pagan and Byzantine
Erotic and Religious

I will go to Greece some day...

Veroniki says

All poems by Elytis in a compact, easy-to-carry edition. Permanently in a prominent position on my desk!

Vera says

Ποίηση εφηβική, νεανική γεμάτη αγάπο, θάλασσα, έρωτα και συνειρμούς για το μεγάλο νομπελίστα ποιητή μας...

Nevena Kotarac says

"...A ako tvoja ruka nije u našoj ruci / I ako nema naše krvi u venama tvojih snova / Ni svetlosti na neoskrnavljenom nebu / Ni nevidljive muzike u nama o! tužna / Prolaznice kroza sve ono što nas još uvek drži na svetu / Onda je to vlažni vetar zas jeseni rastanak / Gorko naslanjanje lakta na sežanje / Koje se javlja

kada no? ho?e da nas rastavi sa svetloš?u / Iza ?etvrtastog prozora koji gleda na tugu / Koji ne vidi ništa / Jer je ve? postala nevidljiva muzika plamen na ognjištu /otkucaj velikog zidnog sata / Jer je ve? postala / Pesma stih uz drugi stih sazvu?je kiše suza i re?i / Re?i ne kao druge ve? onih kojima si samo Ti bila jedini cilj!..." Eliti je jedan od najve?ih gr?kih pjesnika. Njegove pjesme snažne su kao poljupci, kao more i hridine, sunce i njegovi odrazi, mit i istorija... ?ega sve tu nema! Tajanstvena ljepota erotskog. Neponovljiva nježnost poljupca. Neobjašnjiva radost ljubavi. Povjerenje jednog zagrljaja. ?ove?no u mitskom. "Svetost ?ula". Priroda... Evo kako Eliti pjeva u jednoj od divnih zbirki, u "Monogramima": "U raj u sam odobravao ostrvo / Sasvim kao ti sa ku?om na moru // Sa velikom posteljom i sa malim vratima / Odjek sam bacio u vode bez dna / Da sebe gledam ujutru kad se probudim // Pola tebe da gledam dok prelaziš u vodu / A pola da te u raj u oplakujem." Priroda, darežljiva i blago hirovita, obasjava ove pjesme. Svijet se rasipa i mrvli od sopstvene ljepote i u svemu skrivene svjetlosti. Živimo. I zahvalni smo zbog toga.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The Collected Poems of Odysseus Elytis, Odysseus Elytis

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William Lozano-Rivas says

Es sin duda, "una de las voces más puras de la poesía neohelénica". En sus versos se manifiesta de manera evidente el apego amoroso por su país. De otro lado, el simbolismo mitológico, la admiración por la naturaleza y la idea de una realidad más madura y luminosa que la que apenas se percibe, son elementos que se mantienen constantes a lo largo de su obra. Elitys es un Nóbel poco conocido que merece la pena admirarse y disfrutarse.

Κ?στας Ρο says

Εκπληκτικ? ?κδοση σε καλ? τιμ?, ιλλουστρασι?ν χαρτ? και διατηρο?νται και ?λοι οι ζωγραφικο? π?νακες των πρωτ?τυπων συλλογ?ν.

Scott Cox says

This collection of poems by Cretan poet Odysseus Elytis, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1979, is an excellent representation of the varied talent of this writer. My personal favorite is the three-part "Axion Esti" which includes "The Genesis," "The Passion," and "The Gloria." With regards to "The Genesis," each of the seven free-verse hymns describe a new stage of the Creation. The refrains: "And he who I truly was He many aeons ago He still green in the fire He uncut from the sky (He not created by Hand, He uncut from the sky)" and "This the world the small the great!" The ending: "THIS then am I and the world the small the great!"

Dustyn Hesse says

An immersion of rhythm and song guides this (unfortunately, not too well known) poetry into a waning abyss of poetic semi-complexity, of Greece, and finalizes itself in the abstruse (mis)fortune of existence...

Or, in old folk's slang: "They don't make'em like this anymore."

What Elytis brings to the fore of poetry is what one should always look for in enduring artworks: The Unique! Finally, a poetry that isn't armored in politics, deflowered in mundaneness, or sundered in it's qualitative dimensions due to the mounting pressure of career interests and group capitulations.

I see in Elytis the elastic shimmering of an atemporality personified in visions, epics, new forms of poetic meaning mastered within well-determined self-made arithmetics of form.

Elytis has an obscure poet's-logic very much geared towards the grammatical denseness of something that the reading world may not be prepared to grasp in all it's cosmic glory. I think it's fair to say that I sometimes trammled through his work in a sort of conspicuous-befuddlement, all the more encapsulated in the language of such a well-sung, marginalized poet, despite a fair number of inadvertent declinations of meaning.

I've read thousands of poems. This is the second best poetry book I've ever encountered.

Constantine Alexander says

A Poet Without Borders.

Odysseus Elytis (1911 -1996) was a very gifted Greek poet who dedicated his life to a love of hope, beauty, freedom and Greek tradition conveyed in words and imagery that leave the reader thirsting for more. It is this insatiable thirst for droplets of human comfort during life's anguished moments and visionary beauty which together give rise to rainbows of hope that is shared by people of all cultures that has made Elytis a "poete sans frontiers", or a poet without borders. This poem recounts the world of Eros, including his battle against the darkness created by misunderstanding and hatred, his victory, and the ultimate justification and praise.

Elytis possessed an historical as well as a moral awareness that became a pivotal part of his poems and served as a counterweight to his deep and abiding love of the Aegean with all of its spectacular beauty. Elytis faced the prospect of his own human mortality as well as the manifestation of tragic human evil when he served with distinction at the Albanian front during the Second World War when the Greeks defeated the Mussolini's army in the first allied forces victory against the Axis. The horrors of that military campaign, followed by his brutal experiences with the Nazi occupation of Greece, a civil war and a military dictatorship, provided a significant catalyst for this gifted poet to continue to carry the literary torch in the tradition of Greece's best poetry which identified ideal beauty with moral good and truth.

The art, literature, philosophy and religion of pre-Classical Greece also greatly influenced the lifetime work of Elytis. In many of his poems, Elytis wrote about heroism in the context of the ancient hero upon whom risks, danger and even terror are thrust by Fate, after which the hero bravely confronts the challenge and is transformed by the experience. The hero, to whom the reader can relate from his own life's experiences, is

given this opportunity for growth and development through the inevitable wounds, wisdom and willfulness that result from his encounter with Fate's challenge ... wounds that will heal and sculpt scars of remembrance; wisdom that is born of reflection, generosity of spirit and adherence to life's values; and willfulness of the inner strength of our spirit. A reader of his poetry cannot help seeing himself in many of these poems that at the same time serve to inspire and throw down the gauntlet.

I will always remember Elytis as the Poet of the Aegean Sea. He was born in 1911 and began writing poetry in 1929 in the Aegean islands. He later established himself as one of the leading voices of a generation of literary giants, including his fellow Nobel Laureate George Seferis and Yannis Ritsos. Unlike Seferis who spent a lifetime struggling against melancholy, Elytis is widely appreciated by his readers because he finds hope even in tragedy. His poetry clearly reflects his relentless search for the paradise that lives deeply within all of us and his conviction that the discovery of paradise is within our capability as well as our grasp. Elytis' poems celebrate the vitality and vibrancy of the Aegean landscape, the energies of man and his soul and the spirit of nature. He uses the power of language to link myth with history and to confront good and evil. His poetry clearly reflects his love of hope, freedom and the beauty that is in all.

This first collection of all the works of the great master is a must for anyone who endeavors to explore the Modern Greek culture and discover its representation of the universal human experience. This book has become a source of constant inspiration and discovery in our home.

Vladimir Boškovi? says

While Elytis' poetry stands at the very top of literary achievements in twentieth-century Europe, this particular translation sadly removes much of its aesthetic and philosophical value through a number of blatant material errors and often misleading commentary. Translations by David Connolly (who in my opinion is one of the most perceptive Elytis scholars so far), and also older ones by Keeley/Savvidis, Kimon Friar, Athan Anagnostopoulos, and Olga Broumas, do much more justice to Elytis' poetry.

Eulie Aeglie says

Αυτ? το βιβλ?ο θα με?νει π?ντα στο currently reading. Το ?χω αγοράσει ?δη μερικ?ς φορ?ς – κι ?λο το χαρ?ζω κ?που, αφο? το διαβ?ζω πρ?τα. Το αντ?τυπο που ?χω τ?ρα στα χ?ρια μου θα το κρατ?σω για μ?να - οριστικ?. Το ?χω αρκετ? καιρ? κι ?χει τα σημ?δια μου φανερ? στις σελ?δες του. Η συνηθισμ?νη του θ?ση δεν ε?ναι στη βιβλιοθ?κη αλλ? στο προσκεφ?λι μου.

Negar Khalili says

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