

Asaf Durakoviæ, MD, PhD

Great Lakes in Winter

The snow was falling all night
And still is falling
Lifting my soul in flight
The north is calling.
Gray talons of clouds are grabbing
The ice in a frozen river
The snow queen my heart is stabbing
With icy sliver.
In every flake upon the lake
I fall on hills and plains
O wounded heart, don't break apart
No breeze will ease your pains.

Caribbean Sunset

It's not the golden path of setting sun
Calling a boat to set its distant sail
It is a road of light upon the sea
Set for a fleet of knights in a golden mail.
The river of time upon the road of gold
Gold crimson light between the banks of blue
One yellow sail escapes the magic trap
And vanishes. The story is not true
of a golden land at the end of the road.
O sun, do not disclose the magic truth
Of love and hope beyond the shiny road
Let heart alone be the captain of my boat
To the land of life and everlasting youth.
Am I not here beyond the golden gate
Taken by a little boat upon the stormy sea
Far from the blood and death and cruel fate
In Caribbean sunset. Child again. And free.

North Pole

The everlasting winter
The pit of the murky skies
Above the sandy dunes
A lone seagull cries.
A narrow space of a cloud
A single hope of glee
The silence most profound
Thunder of the roaring sea.

Asaf Durakoviæ was born on May 16, 1940, in the ancient town of Stolac in Bosnia and Herzegovina. His father was a descendent from knights of Granèarevo and his mother came from two noble families, the Festiæ and the Omanbegoviæ. As a child, he lost his father in Bleiburg (Austria) in 1945. Finishing grammar school, he earned both master's and doctoral degrees in science at the Zagreb University. With a scholarship from the British Council, he continued his post-doctoral studies in Oxford, England.

In 1972 he started studying medicine at the University of McMaster in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and got his MD degree in 1975. Dr Durakoviæ specialized in radiology, internal and nuclear medicine at the University of Toronto, and later at the Universities of Washington and Rochester, USA. He headed the Institute for Nuclear Medicine at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., and later became the head of the Institute for Nuclear Medicine at the Scientific Institute for Radiology in Bethesda, MD, USA. He did research on the impact of nuclear energy on organisms. In 1987, he went to southern Siberia and Kazakhstan in the Soviet Union where he observed atomic bomb testings. At present he is the head of the Department of Nuclear Medicine at the Federal Medical Center in Wilmington, Delaware, USA. He is the author of many scientific studies, member of prominent international scientific associations, and member of the Editorial Board of the Croatian Medical Journal.

He spent his early youth in the company of prominent poets, writers, and other artists. The beauty of poetry inspired him to write poems since childhood. His literary works were dedicated to Croatia's freedom, a dream of many generations of Croats. During the communist regime in his home country, he spoke about Croatia's need for freedom throughout the world. During the war in Croatia, he put all of his efforts in helping defend his homeland.

His father's homeland is reflected in most of his verses. He has been an associate of the Croatian Literary Journal before and after the Croatian Spring Movement in 1971. Some of his works have been published in Barcelona in the anthology of Croatian young poets, edited by Vinko Nikoliæ and some in the Croatian Literary Journal (Barcelona) and in many other journals. He wrote several essays and books on Croatia's freedom: *From Bleiburg to Moslem Nation* (Vedrina, Toronto, 1972), and *Status of Moslem People in Croatian National Community* (Vedrina, Toronto, 1973). He is the author of three collections of poems: *Dark Sea-Weeds, Smoke and Mist, Paths of Ahasver*. He is one of the editors of two anthologies of poetry of the physicians in Croatia: *Notes on the Land of Croatia* (Birooprema, Zagreb 1994); and *Vukovar Bell* (SIPAR, Zagreb, 1995). He also published several collection of poems in Croatian: *The Paths of Sarmat* (Birooprema, Zagreb, 1993); *Big Waters* (SIPAR, Zagreb, 1995), *Detritus of Sand* (SIPAR, Zagreb, 1996), and *Dark Mirror*, (SIPAR, Zagreb, in press).