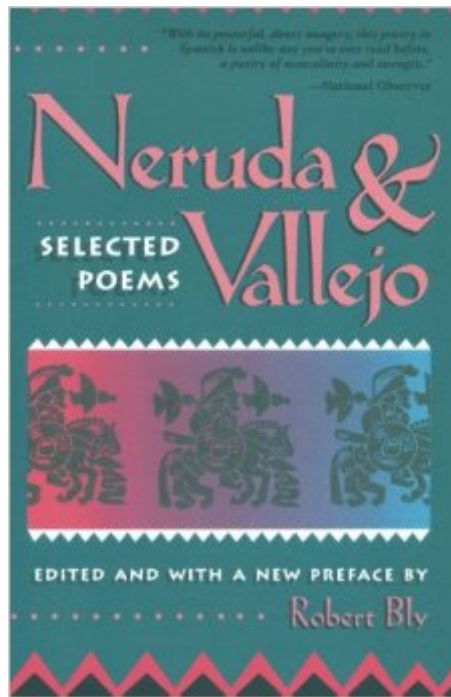


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Neruda And Vallejo: Selected Poems



Synopsis

"Chilean Pablo Neruda is Latin America's greatest poet and one of the finest ever to have written in the Spanish language. The Peruvian poet, Cesar Vallejo, part Indian and born in a mining village, ranks not far below Neruda. Robert Bly is one of America's foremost poets, and a translator of uncommon brilliance. The combination makes for a priceless volume." —Long Beach Press Telegram

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book contains selections from the work of two of the great Spanish language poets of the twentieth century, Pablo Neruda and Cesar Vallejo. The poems are translated by Robert Bly, John Knoepfle, and James Wright. Bly the editor writes introductory pieces on both of the poets, and Knoepfle adds a short introductory essay on Vallejo. The work is dual-language and the English translation faces the Spanish original. This is the way it should be done. Bly in his introduction to the work of Neruda points out how deeply he is indebted to Whitman. Bly champions Neruda as one who goes to the root of things, who sees in his surrealistic collages much of the reality of the external world. I do not know Spanish and cannot judge the sound and feeling of the original. I found on the whole Neruda an explosive, original, strong poet, but one difficult for me anyway to feel and love the rhythm and music of. Whitman's great catalogues have a logic and clarity and are often inspired by a tone of celebration and singing. They are the great soul adventuring as it takes in a new world, a great continent of meaning. Neruda is passionate about the natural world and also does have strong expression of feelings, of sadness of loneliness and perhaps at times even love.

But the 'logic' of the connections in the Poems often escapes me, and they feel to me unreal and arbitrary. Again I do not know Spanish and cannot make the connections in sound. Here is the opening of a well-known Neruda poem. "It so happens I am sick of being a man And it happens that I walk into tailorshops and movie houses dried up, waterproof, like a swan made of felt steering my way in a water of wombs and ashes.

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