

# Joshu & Miriam by Miklós Radnóti

Translated from the Hungarian & edited by

Thomas Ország-Land (February 2018)



The author of these poems, Miklós Radnóti (1907-1944), was perhaps the greatest poet of the Holocaust, a Catholic convert who fell victim to a mass murder of Jews perpetrated

by the regular Hungarian Army under standard orders. The poems below, published in 1930 while he was still a student, were condemned by the courts for blasphemy and the poet barely escaped exclusion from all his country's universities.

### Joshu

I am twenty-two years old. Thus  
Christ too might have appeared in the autumn  
at the same age when he  
still had no beard, he was blond and maidens  
dreamt of him nightly!

### Miriam

Just look at her hands! like dying  
flowers in frost. Her hair cascading.  
She's resting, a graceful dove  
on a pillow. She's Mary!  
. . . but you have known and loved  
girls with such faces!

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Thomas Ország-Land is a poet and award-winning foreign correspondent who writes for *New English Review* on Europe and the Middle East. His last book was [\*Reading for Rush Hour: A Pamphlet in Praise of Passion\*](#) (Snakeskin, 2016), both in England. His work appears also in current issues of *Acumen*, *Standpoint* and *The Transnational*.

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