27.2727273 Readers

On considering:

> *Once (poetas) para trescientos (lectores): mujeres poetas en el País Vasco*
>
> *[Eleven (Poets) for Three Hundred (Readers): Women Poets in the Basque Country]*
>
> Eli Tolarextxipi Lertxund, editor (La Palma Editorial, 2001)

The title of Eli Tolarextixipi Lertxund's anthology refers to a highly publicized remark by a Spanish literary critic that writing poetry is pointless because there are only 300 people in all of Spain—or perhaps in the world—who will read it.

300 readers ÷ 11 poets = 27.2727273 readers per poet

I. *But let one of you hear this…*
[Korinna/Greece (6th Century B.C.E)]

1.	What she grieved	[in laments]
2.	How she worshipped	[in psalms and assangas]
3.	Whom she mourned	[in elegies]
4.	Whom she praised	[in awdl]
5.	Where she hid her name	[in acrostics]
6.	Why she dared	[in rajaz]
7.	When she sang	[in ge and rondeau]
8.	What she told her lovers	[in epistles]
9.	Which journey she recounted	[in epics]
10.	How she sounded	[in englyn]
11.	How she sounded	[in cao bao]
12.	How she sounded	[in terza rima]
13.	When she teased	[in limericks]
14.	How she mimicked the masters	[in epigrams]
15.	Why she made things up	[in lays]

16. Why she told the truth [in ke]
17. What she desired [in ci yriz]
18. Where she gathered the ragged fragments [in Sapphics]
19. When she broke the world in two [in than-bauk]
20. How she inspired a sister rhyme [in renga]
21. Whom she quoted [in cento]
22. Which rules she defied [in free verse]
23. How she counted the seasons [in haiku]
24. What she concluded [in dán díreach]
25. How she traveled backwards [in lu shih]
26. Where she quadrupled her horizons [in kijo]
27. Why she rhymed [in couplets and stombotto, triolets and shi, qasida, ya-du, ghazals, and badi]

27.2727273. Who she said she was…

II. *A confusion of books…*
Yu Hsuah Chi [China/(875-938)]

1. The Brocade River Collection
2. The Book of the Duke of True Lovers
3. The Flemish Book of the City of Women
4. Pillow Book
5. Sixteenth-Night-Moon Diary
6. Poems on Several Occasions: Together with the Song of the Three Children Paraphrased
7. Poems in the Ghetto
8. The Poetical Works of the Right Honorable Lady M___W___M___
9. Poetry Is Not You
10. Poems by the Most Deservedly Mrs. KP

11. Songs of a Semite: The Dance to Death and Other Poems

12. Song of Resentment

13. Symphony of the Harmony of Heavenly Revelation

14. A False Record of the Ages

15. Defiance to False Gods

16. Waltzes and Other False Confessions

17. Dictation

18. Narrative Poems, Commemorative Writings, Inscriptions, Eulogies, Argumentations, Lamentations, Commentaries, Elegies, Essays, Treatises, Expositions, Memories, and Final Instructions in all to Fill 16 Books

19. A Dictionary of Related Meanings

20. An Unsolicited Tale

21. The Memorandum of MM/Widdowe

22. Interior Presence

23. Secret Window

24. The Heart of a Woman

25. A Girl's Mind

26. Phantasmagoria

27. The Impossible Beyond

27.2727273. Collected, Selected, and the (In) Complete…

III. *My Bookes and Pen will apply…*
[Isabella Whitney[England (circa 1540-1573)]

1. to memory:
   I still write of Parrot Island [Yu Xuanj/China (844-868)]

2. to measurement:
   2,000 kilometers from reality [Magda Portal/Peru (1900-1989)]

3. to music:
   How shall I begin my song, in the blue night that is settling? [Juana Maxwell/Papago (19th century)]

4. to rebellion:
   In the sky, the severe anguish of revolt passes by [Maria M. Margarido/Portugal (1925-2007)]

5. to illusion:
   Oh, to have known the world of dreams one can never turn to [Amelia Neve/Congo (1954-1996)]

6. to confusion:
   With sacred distraction [Fina García-Marroz/Cuba (1922-d. unknown)]

7. to the finite:
   The Palace of a Thousand Pillars [Fakhr O Argoon/Iran (1898-d. unknown)]

8. to the limitless:
   What can't be counted [Ann Stanford/United States (1916-1987)]

9. to slavery:
   Our voice fattened on misery [Moemia de Sousa/Mozambique (1902-d. unknown)]

10. to freedom:
    Covered and veiled but audacious [Margherita Guidacci/Italy (1921-1922)]

11. to the city:
    The hectic stars [Eunice Tiegen/United States (1884-d. unknown)]

12. to the ocean:
    The pure domain of the sea [Esfahani Zaleha/Iran (1921-2007)]

13. to the street:
    83A Queen's Street every day [Sonja Akesson/Sweden (1926-1977)]

14. to the seasons:
    From the great April of swift passing years, I've ruled with varied pen a thousand pages
    [Isabella Andreini/Italy (1521-1567)]

15. to the self:
    How to be a prism and not shatter or vanish or reappear as something else
    [Yona Wallach/Israel (1944-1985)]

16. to poverty:
    Now I put down my pen for all the ink has dried up
    [Bibi Pirara Athumani/Tanzania (1920-d. unknown)]

17. to poetry:
    My aim in this poem is to tell you about Sufi women [Nana Astma'us/Nigeria (1793-1864)]

18. to indulgence:
    Like Sima Xiungiu you express your poetic feelings by means of the wine jar
    [Wang Duandu/China (1631-1705)]

19. to intelligence:
    The daughter of debate [Ho Nansorhon/Korea (1563-1589)]

20. to yearning:
    The day of autumn has no longer any longing [Edith Sodergran/Finland (1892-1923)]

21. to science:
    The fragrance of learning [Xi Ruixman/China (16th century)]

22. to loss:
    Only what I have lost is what I possess forever [Rachel Blustein/Russia (1890-1931)]

23. to labor:
    W*ork!* [Louise Colet/France (1810-1876)]

24. to the afterlife:
    Who needs a suitcase in the other world? [Shashinaz A'lami/Iran (1921-2003)]

25. to home:
    I knew I was traveling toward my youth [Anna Greki/Algeria (1931-1966]

26. to homelessness:
    Who remembers the dead when the living are forgotten [Rosalía de Castro/Spain (1837-1885)]

27. to knowledge:
Discovery begins in the single that is singular [Kay Smith/Canada (1941-1987)]

27.27273 to the unknown:
The untold event still happening [Lillian Bowes Lyon/England 1855-1949)]

IV. *We are who we have been…*
[Charlotte de Hybert/Belgium (1622-1644)]

1. the mystics:
wandering in their great aloneness [Rabi'a]

2. the saints:
mad with devotion [Mirabai]

3. the nuns:
lingering with silence [Dieu Nhan]

4. the consorts:
lost in loss: *how can I describe this?* [Darbu]

5. the courtesans:
weeping the red tears of disappointment [Jin Pianpian]

6. the concubines:
verse pliant as pillows [Nigo]

7. the aristocrats:
their burnt epics [Proba]

8. the warriors:
their lyric pledges [Trung Trac]

9. the mothers:
their rhymed epistles [Dhuada]

10. the daughters:
poems un-mothered [Sor Juana]

11. the sisters:
transplanted – palace to paddies [Mai Ann & Hue Pho]

12. the wives:
their puzzle of names [the wife of Dunash Ben Labrat]
13. the widows:
what they loved, alive [Anna Akhmatova]

14. the weavers:
stitching their stories in silk [Wu Weihan]

15. the pioneers:
recording sentimental winters [Sarah Morgan Bryan]

16. the immigrants:
blessed gypsy vision [Isabella Valency Crawford]

17. the scientists:
their figures (atomes)….their figures
(seven maids raised her skirts from the floor) [Margaret Lucas Cavendish]

17. the suicides:
seduced by the sea [Nyguyen Thi Bidn Chau]

19. the suicides:
censored, subdued [Ingrid Jonker]

20. the suicides:
their lethal notebooks [Alejandra Pizarnik]

21. the historians:
Troy in their veins [Annie Winifred Ellerman]

22. the inebriates:
rhythms wobbling on the rim of the glass [Anna Roemers Visscher]

23. the invalids:
the beautiful scorched scripts [Lesbia Veneer Harford]

24. the insomniacs:
dreamless [Rafaela Chacón Mardi]

25. the witnesses:
measuring the graves by the meter [Kadya Moldowsky]

26. the activists:
shrieking, singing, saying, saying [Frances E.W. Harper]

27. the poets:
word after word, then what? [Inger Christiensen]

27.2727273. the readers:
perhaps this page… [Barbara Glenn]

V. *The same to the same…*
[Elisabeth Bekker/The Netherlands (1738-1884)]

1-2.
Keep from me…all forms of certainty: Rachel Korn/Galicia (1898-1982)
You need to loiter a little among the vague Gwendolyn Books/United States (1917-2000)

3-4.
This year I'm at the end of the world: Qing Zhao/China (1084-1151)
The world at the end of the world Jean Garrigue /United States (1912-1972)

5-6.
One dark word is all I am: Farough Farrohzad/Iran (1935-1967)
Dark, dark is all I find for metaphor Edna St. Vincent Millay/United States (1892-1952)

7-8.
By whom can this sorrow be told: Sun Fuyeng/China (1764-1814)
Grief dazes our nation's artists Margaret Tuyet/Vietnam (1914-d. unknown)

9-10.
I wanted to find rest though none exists on earth: Mary MacKellar/Scotland (1836-1890)
No gift of rest Leonie Adamas/United States (1889-1988)

11-12.
And my life was a waking between two dreams: Blaga Dimit/Bulgaria (1922-d. unknown)
Almost more than I can hold, but I hold it,
as in a waking dream Hilda Morley/England (1919-2000)

13-14.

Seeking Poetry in the Moonlit Pavilion: — Zong Wan/China (19th century)
Praised be the moon of books — Louise Guiney/United States (1861-1920)

15-16.

Bit by bit the splintered day has ended,
the night is all in shreds: — Meena Kumari Naz/India (1932-1972)
Where twilight crumbles into dust — Cecile Perin/France (1877-1959)

17-18.

And night falls, settling over night: — Tada Chimako/China (1930-2003)
Well, if night is night — Angelina Weld Grimke/United States (1890-1958)

19-20.

I say that no word can stop moments in time: — Marguerite de Navarre/France (1492-1549)
Not one moment does time cease — Susana Thenon/Argentina (1937-1990)

21-22.

Through things we arrive at things: — Inger Christensen/Denmark (1935-2009)
Everything is one thing or another — Josephine Miles/United States (1911-1985)

23-24.

Bewildered disorganization: — Kadya Moldodwsky/Poland (1894-1975)
Patterns hurt across the stranger city — June Jordan/United States (1936-2002)

25 -26.

This useless word: — María Mendes Carranza/Colombia (1945-2005)

What use for words at all — Mahadeviyakka/India (12th century)

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When I'm writing poetry I'm good and happy: — Lesbia Harford/Australia (1891-1927)
The best years of our life with paper and… — Charlotte de Hybert/Belgium (1622-1644)

VI. *The Dictionary of Pseudonyms*
[Karolina Puliny (b. unknown-1888/Hungary]

Ma

Mah

Maan

Mam

Mamm

Mom

Mama

Mamá

Mama

Mamma

Maman

Ama

Amba
Amma

Anim

Innaga

Nimaa Maa

Mãe

Me

Mor

Máte

Maala

Matka

Mare

Mouir

Mutter

Motira and Màthair

VII. *There is a word trapped in my throat…*
[Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957)/Argentina]

1. Seized between my thighs
2. Idling in my palm
3. Lingering along my spine
4. Stumbling from cell to cell
5. Hovering, a wounded bird between my eyebrows
6. Dangling from a fraying cuticle
7. Collapsed at the elbow
8. Suspended, a frozen river under the eyelid
9. Twisted into a coil inside the pocket of my cheek
10. Sliding behind my earlobe
11. Embedded in the small of my back
12. Lodged between my bottom teeth
13. Eclipsed by the bridge between thumb and forefinger

14. Strained against the tender arch of foot

15. Gripping the slender circle of my neck

16. Halted in my doubting chest

17. Split between my breasts and the memory of my breasts

18. Cradled in the hollow between pelvis and thigh

19. Swallowed inside the rhythm of my blood

20. Crushed beneath the clavicle

21. Interrupted by the purple tributary dividing hand from wrist

22. Penned against the heart's silken wall

23. Severed in slivers between aging fingers

24. Captured on my forehead in ash and shadow

25. Grafted to the sac of a shallow lung

26. Gathered under a rebel tongue

27. Un-spoken and 27.2727273. un-surrendered

VIII. ***There will come some, someday a reader…***
[Kamala Das/India (1934-2009)]

Head covered	or	bare
Fists closed	or	palm skyward
Lips pursed	or	loosened in praise
Shoulders hunched	or	unrestrained
Ankles crossed	or	tucked under innocent knees
Arms empty	or	bent around volumes of adverbs
Eyes lowered	or	lifted to heavenly ceilings
Cheeks pale	or	flush with prepositions
Fingers scarred	or	worn to velvet
Elbows pressed to ribs	or	resting on stacks the secret stacks
Feet at the ready	at	the ready

at…

1. … the Archives of Ebla
2. … Pech Marle
3. … Ets Haim
4. … Quang Tri
5. … LexisNexis
6. … Pendejo Cave
7. … Ashurbanipu
8. … The Bodleian
9. … Khadrija Tul Kubra
10. … www.blogspot.com
11. … Our Lady of the Convent
12. …The Convent of Ocopa
13. …The Temple of Liberty
14. …The House of Wisdom
15. …The Villa of the Papayti
16. …The Donkey Mobile, Awassa
17. …The Reading Gardens, Kail
18. …Belfast Central
19. …Fort Liberté
20. …La Biblioteca Palatina
21. …L'Institute de L'Egypte
22. …www.nistalkingbooks.org
23. …M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin
24. …Pitaka Talk, Myannmar
25. …La Chispa, Matagalpa
26. …The Convent of San Marco
27. …The Cairo Geniza 27.2727273. …@...

IX. *Something must be said, something must be said…*
Farough Farrokhzud/[Iran (1935-1967)]

1. about the tents she fled from
2. and the tents she fled to

3. the children she buried
4. and the mothers who outlived her

5. the shackled wrists
6. and bound feet

7. the abdomen split wide
8. and the smallest emblem of herself severed

9. about the crimson sky
10. and the blackened earth

11. the lovers she abandoned
12. and the lovers who chose the sea

13. wine goblets emptied
14. and empty nights drained of the moon
15. hand to mouth — harvest to harvest:
16. cassava
17. and broad beans
18. sorghum
19. and wheat

20. about learning censored
21. and uncensored dreams

22. scraps of paper in pockets
23. and pocketfuls of verse

24. books spread open on weary laps
25. laps folded against blows

26. about the un-fed
27. and un-cradled

27.2727273. the perversely unknown…

X. *We are becoming mutually metaphors…*
Pat Lowther/[Canada (1935-1975)]

All my gone life (1) I am a woman who was born alone (2). I who wait for myself (3) and am myself traveling with my loneliness (4). But was I even here? (5) How can I still allow mundane things to enter the mind? (6) What is inside me, I don't let out; what is outside me, I don't let in. (7) The ultimate refuge of the self (8) in the desert fleeing the self (9) me,

broken (10). The self's continuum (11) just as I am (12). I too am a rare pattern. (13) This wild I (14). My own science gives me vertigo (15) and I look for myself in the absence of a sky (16). Self no more in the flooding dark. (17) I searched for myself until I grew weary (18), the one uncomforted (19). Who am I? A river? A forest? or both? (20) I am not here. I am not here. I am not here (21). I don't know my own voice (22) — I am myself inside the NOT-world (23). What have I done that I should find myself here? (24) I don't know how I endure (25). It would take so small a fire to burn me (26). Soon there will be nothing left (27) with which to compare myself (27.2727273).

(1) Muriel Rukeyser/US – 1913-1980. (2) María Sabina/Mexico – 1894-1985. (3) Tada Chimako/Japan – 1930-2003. (4) Ingrid Jonker/South Africa – 1933-1965. (5) Ingeborg Bachmann/Austria – 1926-1973. (6) Chen Deyi/China – 1476-1500. (7) Rabi'a/Persia – 717-801. (8) Ana Enriqueta Teran/Venezuela – 1918-d.unknown. (9) Mechtild of Magdeburg/German – 1207-1292. (10) Lea Goldberg/Lithuania – 1911-1970. (11) Kathleen Ravie/England – 1908-d. unknown. (12) Esther Raato/Palestine – 1894-1981. (13) Amy Lowell/US – 1874-1925. (14) Rachel A Taylor/England – 1876-1960 (15) Rose Drachler/US – 1911-1982 (16) Rafaela C. Nardi/Cuba – 1926-2001. (17) Blaga Dimit/Bulgaria – 1922-d. unknown. (18) Laila Ded/Kashmir – 14th century (19) Dorothy Livesay/Canada – 1909-1996. (20) Zhalea/Iran – 1921-2007. (21) Dahlia Ravikovitch/Israel – 1930-2005. (22) Anna Margolin/Canada – 1887-1952. (23) Susana Thenon/Argentina – 1937-1990. (24) Hilda Morley/England – 1919-2006. (25) Christine de Pisan/France – 1363-1430. (26) Bernice Lesbia Kenyon/United States – 1898-1982. (27) Lady Ise/Japan – 875-938.

XI. *Only our context moment to moment is a whole…* **[Edith Tiempo/The Philippines (1919-2011)]**

Our seasons

— *to late November, the north, nightfall, all the deprived* (1)
Babette Deutsch [United States/(1895-1982)]

— *mid-November, a season when all human dreams are the same* (2)
Inger Christensen [Denmark/(1935-2009)]

— *it is summer-gone* (3)
Marianne Bluger [Canada/(1945-2005)]

Our senses

— *a sudden seeing* (4)
P.K. Page [Canada/ (1916-2010)]

— *we smell the cool pain of autumn in the green chemical light* (5)
Ann Stanford [United States/(1916-1997)]