



BORDERS IN
GLOBALIZATION
BOOKS

A WORLD
ANTHOLOGY
OF
BORDER
POETRY
BLURRED AND POLITICAL

edited by
Natasha Sardzoska
and
Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly



BORDERS IN GLOBALIZATION BOOKS

The **Borders in Globalization Books (BIG_Books)** series provides an open-access forum for in-depth scholarly explorations of borders in the 21st century.

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University
of Victoria



**BORDERS IN
GLOBALIZATION**

Published by the University of Victoria

BIG_Books Series, # 2

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BORDERS IN GLOBALIZATION BOOKS

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Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

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CONTENTS

About the Editors	6
--------------------------------	---

Forward

<i>By Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly</i>	7
--	---

Introduction

<i>By Natasha Sardzoska and Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly</i>	9
--	---

Anthology Poems

<i>By Agi Mishol, João Luís Barreto Guimarães, Maram Al Masri, Grażyna Wojcieszko, Fabiano Alborghetti, Gili Haimovich, Daniel Calabrese, Prisca Agustoni, Marilena Renda, Giselle Lucía Navarro, Gjoko Zdraveski, Tatev Chakhian, Yekta, Indrė Valantinaitė, Luca Benassi, Nurduran Duman, Stéphane Chaumet, Ren (Katherine) Powell, Tomica Bajsić, Franca Mancinelli, Tiago Alves Costa, Emna Louzyr, Dragan Jovanović Danilov, Violette Abou Jalad, Tiziano Fratus, Francesca Cricelli, Rafael Soler, Lali Tshipi Michaeli, Tareq al Karmy</i>	16
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About the Editors



Natasha Sardzoska, poet, writer, polyglot translator, holds a PhD in anthropology from the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris and University of Bergamo. Adjunct professor at Schiller International University, she explores borders as an artist and an anthropologist. She has published the novel “Tramontana”, five poetry books, short stories, essays, literary translations, columns, manuscripts and selected poems in distinguished literary reviews worldwide. She attends international poetry festivals, performing at the Academy of Arts in Berlin and at the Yaffa Theatre in Tel Aviv, among others. Learn more about her at [Lyrikline](#) and her [WordPress site](#).



Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly is a professor in the School of Public Administration and in the European Studies Program at the University of Victoria, where he is also the Director of the European Union Centre for Excellence, Director of the Jean Monnet Centre, and holds a Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Border and Region Policy. He leads the Borders in Globalization research program and is Chief Editor of *Borders in Globalization Review*.



Foreword

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

Borders in Globalization is a multi-disciplinary and international research program, funded through a SSHRC Partnership Grant and the European Union's Jean Monnet Program with colleagues across Canada and in 15 different countries. Our core research focus was to challenge well-established conceptions of borders as primarily sovereign territorial boundary lines drawn by international treaties. The research program thus addressed fundamental *how*, *why*, and *what* questions about borders, generating important knowledge at a time when movement is increasingly scrutinized everywhere and goods seem to travel more easily than people. Indeed, the regulation of human mobility across borders is fraught and highly contentious, with thousands dying yearly in transit.

Our team studied borders through the lenses of history, culture, governance, mobility, security, and environmental sustainability. As illustrated by a number of publications with BIG_Books and the University of Ottawa Press series on Borders in Globalization, our research program initially approached those questions from the perspective of territories, regions and states, to collect evidence that there were multiple challenges to the “territorial trap” assumption. We found that more than ever before, state border policies straddled their sovereign boundary lines; that networked policies overlapped many different jurisdictional scales, including but not exclusively that of the sovereign territories of other states. Our second hypothesis, that contemporary borders in globalization were processes that in many instances were fundamentally “a-territorial” was also confirmed when we found that bordering processes were not uniquely territorial, but, rather, fundamentally linked to movements across the world. We discovered that bordering policies increasingly *disregarded* territorial limits of states, sometimes implementing borders thousands of kilometers from their international boundary line.



We showed that the borders of globalization were not always contiguous or territorial. The primary reason for this paradigmatic transformation is that states that had the policy capacity to do so, were implementing border crossings at the source of movement. These new local and global border ‘markers’ appear in regulatory systems and production chains organizing trade flows and human mobility. For instance, states and private sector actors implement data collection policies allowing for the pre-clearance of global trade flows and human migration; individuals and objects are cleared by authorities of their place of destination prior to leaving their place of origin. Contrary to traditional states’ territorial bordering, *a-territorial bordering obeys a fundamentally different logic*. A logic primarily concerned with functional belonging, and driven by the development of mechanisms based on trust. This finding points towards new, yet understudied phenomena, that are continuing to transform borders in the 21st century.

In this invaluable small book, thirty distinguished poets from regions around the world—Agi Mishol, Joao Luis Barreto Guimareas, Maram Al Masri, Grazyna Wojcieszko, Yekta, Gili Haimovich, Daniel Calabrese, Prisca Agustoni, Marilena Renda, Giselle Lucía Navarro, Gjoko Zdraveski, Tatev Chakhian, Fabiano Alborghetti, Indre Valantinaite, Luca Benassi, Nurduran Duman, Stephane Chaumet, Ren (Katherine) Powell, Tomica Bajsic, Franca Mancinelli, Tiago Alves Costa, Emna Louzyr, Dragan Javanovic Danilov, Violette Abou Jalad, Tiziano Fratus, Francesca Cricelli, Rafael Soler, Lali Tsipi Michaeli, Tareq al Karmy—were brought together by Natasha Sardzoska to confront their readers with their own experiences with borders and bordering. Writers in the humanities and social sciences also explore borders, and often with much emotional charge, but rarely with the strength of the poet. Poetic language also challenges and deborders the liminality of meaning. As Natasha and I wrote in the introduction ‘in poetry the borderscape is a place of escape, a metaphor of the boundary, an isolated space’. Each poem is presented both in the original language and script and translated into English. Indeed, each reading brings a new border experience, a new experience of the border-order language imposes on us.

All works by Borders in Globalization are available through our website <https://biglobalization.org>.

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, BIG program lead



Introduction

Natasha Sardzoska

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

This book focuses on poetry and borders.* Contrary to popular assumptions that poetry is limited to the literary world and literary criticism, poets play a vital role in shaping cultures around borders, and in politics, poets have been fundamental to criticism and dissent. For instance, poet without rival, Percy Besshe Shelley's famous verse affirms, 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world' (Shelley 2009). The following pages demonstrate the importance of poetry for borders, borderlands, frontiers, migration, mobility, and the intersectionality of human activities and space. Indeed, over the last 20 years, internationally renowned publications such as *The Paris Review* and *Poetry International* have published poems discussing the crossing of virtual, literary, and hard geographical-territorial borders, and the effects borders have on human beings.

For instance, in 2012, *The Paris Review* published an interview of James Fenton, famed professor of poetry at Oxford. There, Fenton discussed his works on wars and children in exile. Borders are an omnipresent voice in his works; yet as noted by Seamus Heaney, Fenton's verse "re-established the borders of a civil kingdom of letters with history and literature and the intimate affections would be allowed their say". More recently, *The Paris Review* has

* This collection first appeared in the Spring & Summer 2021 issue of *Borders in Globalization Review*, after the journal's Chief Editor, Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, invited the journal's Poetry Editor, Natasha Sardzoska, to curate the collection (available at <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/bigreview/issue/view/1509>).



published 'From Border Districts' by Gerald Murnane (2016) about the gendered crossing of an aisle in a church, Marcelo Hernandez Castillo's (2020) short essay "Going Blind at the Border," and the works of Troy Michie (2020), which illustrate the complexity of growing up multiracial along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Similarly, in 2017, *Poetry International* published a 'Forum: on Poets and Borders'. With texts from Nylsa Martinez, Ming Di, Jorge Ortega, Sandra Alcosser, and a few others, this issue posed the question 'what is border life' and delved into the meaning of living on the border (Poetry 2017). Collectively, they reflect on being a borderlander, a Chicano not a Mexican, living and dying building walls in China, or what a life straddling a boundary does to a person. Sandra Alcosser writes, "The purpose of poetry is to remind us how difficult it is to remain just one person, for our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, and invisible guests come in and out at will" (Poetry 2017).

Poetry, despite pervasive associations with merely romantic ideas, has a long tradition in criticism, much more political than often recognized. Indeed, for instance, in the post-9/11 era, U.S. poet laureate Frank Bidart published "Curse" in the spring 2002 issue of *Threepenny-Review*. He wrote: "May what you have made descend upon you, May the listening ears of your victims their eyes their breath, enter you, and eat like acid, the bubble of rectitude that allowed your breath".

More to the point of international boundary lines, in *Life for Us*, Kurdish poet, Choman Hardi writes almost in prose, picturing a border crossing experience. "At The Border, 1979" reads: "The land under our feet continued / divided by a thick iron chain. / My sister put her leg across it ... Dozens of families waited in the rain. / Comparing both sides of the border." Hardi explores the lives of women in situations of terror and of survival (Hardi 2004).

Similarly, Amanda Gorman, a 22 year-old poet, read "The Wall We Climb" during the inauguration of American President Joe Biden. Like many poets, Gorman is an activist on the front lines of change. At Harvard University she fought for diversity in English Class, and as a United Nations delegate she founded One Pen One Page, a project that strives to elevate the voices of youth through writing and creativity.

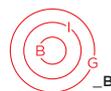
Gorman, in 'This Place, an American Lyric', makes it plain:

How could this not be her city, su nacion, our country, our America, our American lyric to write – a poem by the people, the poor, the Protestant, the Muslim, the Jew, the native, the immigrant, the black, the brown, the blind, the brave, the undocumented and undeterred, the woman, the man, the non-binary, the white, the trans, the ally to all the above and more? Tyrants fear the poet (Gorman 2017).

Clearly, border poetry has a long history of illustrious voices echoing Gorman’s allegory “to all the above and more.” From the Roman Horace (65-8 BC) to contemporary Americas, Jesse Ed Davis (Davis 2018), whose work illustrates a trend of First Nation poets, including Paula Gunn Allen, and Leslie Silko, who wrote lyrics and melodies relating the hardship of their communities (Allen 1986; Silko 1977). Similarly, Salvadoran Poet Mary DeShazer (1994) and American poet Zoe Anglesey (1987) express First Nations’ outrage about racism and colonialism in their work. In Mexico, during the border war with the United States of 1846-08, Poetesses including Guadalupe Calderon, Josefa Letchipia de Gonzalez, Josefa Heraclia Badillo, and Carolina Coronado all published poems about the war, their losses, heroism, and Mexican identity (Conway 2012). Similarly, in the post-Mao era, poetry became a voice of protest in China (Yu 1983).

This means, in Adam Zagajewski’s (2018) words, “poetry is not only about poet’s inner life”. Rather, the poet has to nominate and denominate the world to reflect on the world (Culture.PI 2021). As such, poetry is potentially political in part because of its shifting and blurred nature. A poem may often be interpreted from various standpoints and contexts, hence possible shifts from the emotional to the political. This collection curates these multifaceted meanings.

Poets are important voices on borders, boundaries, frontiers, and border-regions and their crossings by strangers, migrants, and ideas. We need to read them and to listen to them. Indeed, it is important to read, eavesdrop, and reflect on such voices because they continually explore the intersectionality of spaces, borders, boundaries, frontiers and cultural borderlands. They challenge our ontologies, meanings, and understandings. They open possibilities, giving rise to new experiments into new emotions. Indeed, poetry is an experiment of language. In this experiment—often detached from reality or linked to reality through an analogical nexus of awkward liminal meanings, odd abstract details migrating





through a web of significations, crossing boundaries of sense and nonsense—the word becomes the body of motion and the world becomes a space of solitude and alienation: a non-space.

In poetry everything migrates in the space of invisible borders. Every element, every gap, every void, every word migrates. Meanings migrate. Images migrate. In poetry every boundary is crossed, breached, reinvented, reversed, abolished, or established; the boundary of the transcendental sense, the boundary of selfhood. Through often ungraspable abstractions and analogies, the poetic image breaks through with a kind of violence. The semantically dissociated word reveals unprecedented experiences, feelings, and motions and reduces the form to its purity, to its light, to its abstract or hermetical detachment from the conventionally accepted context or meaning. Poetry raises mental maps. Poetry establishes emotional cartographies. Poetry blurs paradigms of borders, raises boundaries and destroys them at the same time revealing their reverse sides. Poetry touches the untouchable zone, tells the unnameable.

The tectonic shifts composed of the multifaceted layers of texture of the poetic body go far beyond the subjective poetry of the isolated lyrical voice, outreaching the nomenclature of an outside world where humanity is more and more tormented and tormenting. Hence, a world where the only visible boundary is the strict and cruel borderline between pain and release, between resilience and failure, between wrongdoing and redemption, between good and bad.

This special section of *BIG_Review* is a unique global border poetry anthology. It brings together poets from around the world who have had close, coercive, intimate, interstitial experiences with borders: political, emotional, geographical, policed, spatial, intercontinental, linguistic, sexual, corporal, religious, symbolic, or geographical/natural boundaries.

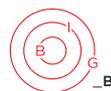
The poetic reinvention of borders and boundaries circulates in spaces which are appealing to many audiences, not only artistic and poetic, but also to scientific and academic communities that examine borders within the context of border studies. This collection of poems invites the reader to explore innovative and inventive approaches to reading and writing borders, those that transcend language within their conventional semiology of borders crossing.

The poets of this collection have had different experiences with borders and have, through their subtle poetic creation of bordering, brought to this collection fertile creative taste. Their backgrounds span diverse bordering zones, including along the contours of the former Soviet world, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Balkans. They have brought together universes of the empirical and strongly metaphorical dialogues and disclosures with spaces. In these poems, borders are depicted as spaces of loss, spaces of fear, spaces of anomia, spaces of nonce, spaces of non-affiliation and non-belonging, and even spaces of dualling poetical dialogue between conflicted contiguous countries.

In this anthology, we present 30 distinguished international poets: Agi Mishol, Joao Luis Barreto Guimareas, Maram Al Masri, Grazyna Wojcieszko, Yekta, Gili Haimovich, Daniel Calabrese, Prisca Agustoni, Marilena Renda, Giselle Lucía Navarro, Gjoko Zdraveski, Tatev Chakhian, Fabiano Alborghetti, Indre Valantinaite, Luca Benassi, Nurduran Duman, Stephane Chaumet, Ren (Katherine) Powell, Tomica Bajsic, Franca Mancinelli, Tiago Alves Costa, Emna Louzyr, Dragan Javanovic Danilov, Violette Abou Jalad, Tiziano Fratus, Francesca Cricelli, Rafael Soler, Lali Tsipi Michaeli, Tareq al Karmy. Each and every one offers a precious voice exploring a great diversity of emotions on the blurred borders of poetry, exploring in turns inner borders, memory, love, love of land, secret love, soul and borders, language and borders, travels, migration, and walls.

The poet, in a nutshell, neither belongs nor is framed within a bordering space or spaces. The poet breaches the boundaries of language to produce newborn meanings. Roberto Juarroz distinguishes poetry as art apart for its illogical nexus to the symbol and its agrammatical nexus to language. A metaphysical art per se, poetry does not belong to a generic framed field of arts because it is a specific and special art that dissolves and experiments with language, meaning, symbols, and rhythm. The reverse order of notions and nuances is another example of what Octavio Paz once said, that is to say that poetry is not actually an art of the truth, but rather a resurrection of presences. Thus, through the resurrection of these fine poetic expressions, we want to invite you to a new bordering poetic experience where the borderscape will be a place of escape, a metaphor of the boundary, an isolated and neutral space, but blurred from within in its radically broken limits.

We invite you therefore to discover with innocent eyes this anthology and to investigate artistically and critically the new poetry border-order which transcends and transports, because we





believe that precisely because of such uniqueness and freedom, poetry can offer a vivid field of border interpretation, border intersection, border dissection, and border (de)colonization—a poetic occupation and liberation of space; a space which is blurred and yet clear because this is what poetry does to borders: abolishes them and then reinvents new spaces, spaces of freedom in endless self-invention.

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Anthology Poems



Photo © Pony Brzezinski

Agi Mishol is one of Israel's most prominent and popular poets and the author of 16 volumes of poetry. Mishol was born in Romania in 1947 to Hungarian-speaking Holocaust survivors. When she was four-years old, her family immigrated to Israel and settled in Gedera. After completing her BA and MA degrees in Hebrew Literature at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mishol launched a literature and creative-writing teaching career at Ben-Gurion University, Tel Aviv University and The Hebrew University (where she was Poet-in-Residence in 2007), among other institutions. In 2006, she served as the artistic director of the Jerusalem International Poetry Festival, and since 2011, she has led the Helicon School of Poetry in Tel Aviv. She lives in Moshav Kfar Mordechai, where she grows peaches, persimmons, and pomegranates.

Mishol's poems have been widely translated and published in books and various anthologies around the world. Some of her poems were composed by various Israeli musicians. Her accolades include the Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award (2019), the Newman Prize for life achievement in literature (2018), the Italian Lericipea Award (2014), and the Israeli Prime Minister and Yehuda Amichai literature prizes (1995 and 2002, respectively). Mishol was awarded three honorary doctorates—from Tel Aviv University (2014), the Weizmann Institute of Science (2016), and Bar-Ilan University (2018). Facebook: [Agi.Mishol](#).

English translations by Joanna Chen.

Row Your Boat

You're not Noah
and maybe it's awkward
but you can always
sail in me
like an ark from Ararat
to Ararat
with five showers on deck
a bed to stretch out on
and shades on the porthole,
even a kickbox cabin
and a dovecote,
because I'm a good ark,
made of field rafters,
durable in a deluge,
fabulous at floating,
rising and falling on sea waves
and all my sailors dream on Ritalin.

דוגית נוסעת

אולי לא נח
אבל תמיד תוכל
כמו בתוך תבה
לשוט בי מאררט
לאררט
עם חמש מקלחות על הדק
מטה לאפרקדן
ושידס על צהר,
אפלו תא לקיקבוקס
ושוכך ליונה,
כי אני תבה טובה,
עשויה מקורות השדה,
עמידה במבול,
מקשרת בציפה,
עולה ירדת בין גלי הים
וכל מלחי על ריטלין כלם.



Distances

There's a tree by the name of Bauhinia
and there are places named Cricklewood
or Connecticut,
where someone is out running now,
steamy in the morning chill,
and someone else rolls over
to the other side of her dream.
I incline to the east,
the end of the west is far for me,
my wings are no longer wings of flight
and if I do venture out,
most certainly the sign
"Road Narrows" will pop up
the one that makes you swing the steering wheel back
to American Comfort,
where the heart is nothing much
and there is no band-aid for sorrow.

מרחקים

יש עץ ששמו בוהיניה
ויש מקומות ששמם קריקלווד
או קונטיקט,
בהם מישהו רץ כעת,
מהביל בצנת הבקר,
ומישהי מתהפכת לצד השני
של חלומה.
אני נוטה למזרח,
סוף מערב רחוק לי,
כנפי אינן עוד כנפי מעוף
וגם אם אצא, יקפץ ודאי
התמרור הזה
'שול צר'
שבגללו מושכים תמיד את ההגה חזרה
לאמריקן קומפורט
ששם הלב הוא לא משהו
ואין איספלניית לצער.

Testimony

Even the wheat weatherglass
shows it's been months,
that now you can pluck
the stalk from the sheath,
pinch it at the edges
and blow the trumpet
all the way to America -

עדות

גם מד החטה מרָאָה
שְׁעָבְרוּ כָּבֵר חֲדָשִׁים,
שְׁאֶפֶשֶׁר כָּבֵר לְשֵׁלֶף
קָנָה מִתּוֹךְ נָדוֹן,
לְמַחֵץ בְּקֶצֶה
וְלִתְקֹעַ בְּחִצּוֹצְרָה
עַד אָמַר 'קָה,



Photo © Teresa Guimarães

João Luís Barreto Guimarães was born in Porto, Portugal, in June 1967. He is a poet and a plastic reconstructive surgeon. His first seven books of poetry were collected in *Poesia Reunida* (Quetzal, 2011), followed by *Você Está Aqui* (Quetzal, 2013) and *Mediterrâneo* (Quetzal, 2016).

Falsa vida

*Não me lembro em que
naufrágio
disseste que vinhas.*
VÍTOR SOUSA

A
areia que trazes da praia não faz de ti
um ladrão –
soube que te vais embora do país que não
te quis
(prometiam-te o passado
querias falar de futuro
separados pelo presente). O vento que
sopra lá fora
dá uma falsa vida às coisas
(difícil manteres-te vivo
num paul de horas mortas) se
a cerveja
aonde à tardinha irás afogar os sentidos
já tem mais medalhas
que tu. Se ao fim do dia perguntas para
onde foi o dia inteiro
é a hora de partir (não ficar preso ao naufrágio
esperando um milagre na praia
chorando os barcos
pelo nome).



False life

*I don't recall in which
shipwreck
you said you were coming.*
VITOR SOUSA

The
sand you track in from the beach doesn't make you
a thief –
I knew you'd fled the country that didn't
want you
(separated by the present
they promised you the past
you wanted to talk about the future). The wind
blowing outside
infuses things with a false life
(it's hard to keep yourself alive
in a marsh of dead hours) if the
beer you'll
be drowning your senses in this afternoon
already has more medals
than you. If by the end of the day you ask
where has the whole day gone
it is time to leave (and not get stuck in the shipwreck
waiting on the beach for a miracle
crying for each boat
by name).



Maram Al Masri, born 1962, is a Syrian writer living in Paris, considered “one of the most renowned and captivating feminine voices of her generation” in Arabic ([Banipal](#)). She has received several prizes, like the “Adonis Prize” of the Lebanese Cultural Forum, the “Premio Citta di Calopezzati”, the “Prix d’Automne, 2007” of the Société des gens de lettres, and the Cyphers Award, 2021. She has taken a firm stand against the Assad regime in Syria and considers that “every decent person is with the Revolution”. Her poetry book *Elle va nue la liberté* (Freedom, she comes naked, 2014) is based on social media images of the civil war.



On the wall of the school's playground
The word freedom was written
in white chalk
By small children's fingertips

على الحيطان الباحة لمدرسة
كتببت كلمة الحرية بالطباشير الابيض
باصابع الطلاب الصغيرة

On the walls of history
Freedom has penned their names
With blood

على جدار التاريخ
كتببت الحرية اسماهم
بالدماء

I am a human being
Not an animal
Shouted citizen
Ahmad Abdul Wahab
He filled television screens
With his broken voice
Like a captive who has escaped his jail
He escapes
Having broken the chains of fear and silence
The veins in his neck bulge
His eyes drown in anger
In his lifetime he never read Balzac or Victor Hugo
He knows not Lenin or Karl Marx

انا انسان ماني حيوان
صرخ المواطن العادي
احمد عبد الوهاب
بصوته المتهدج كسجين هارب من اسره
يصرخ وقد كسر قيد
الصمت والخوف
عروق رقبته منتفخة
وعينه غارتان في الغضب
في حياته كلها احمد عبد الوهاب
لم يقرأ بلزاك ولا فيكتور هوغو
لا يعرف لينين ولا كارل ماركس

In that moment
The ordinary citizen became
Extraordinary.

في تلك اللحظة
مواطن عادي اصبح
مواطن غير عادي

Selmieh *selmieh*
They came out in the street while singing for peace
With open chest and clean hands
They sung peace

سلمية سلمية
خرجوا للشارع وهم يغنون السلام
بصدر مفتوحة و ايادي نظيفة
غنوا السلام

Freedom Freedom
They came out shouting freedom
With nude chest and hand carrying roses
They sung freedom

حرية حرية
تظاهروا و هم يصرخون حرية
بصدر عار و بايد تحمل الورود

Yes, it is the singing that makes
the depth heart of fear
shivers and the crow's mask fell down

نعم انه الغناء الذي جعل فرانس
قلب الخوف الراسخ
ترتعد

The children of Syria are shrouded in their coffin
Like sugar candy in its wrapping
But they are not made of sugar
They are flesh, love and a dream

ويسقط قناع الغراب

أطفال سورية ملفون في كفنهم
مثل السكر في أغلفتها
ولكنهم ليسوا من السكر
إنهم من لحم
وحب

The roads await you
The gardens await you
The schools and the festive Squares
Await you
Children of Syria

الطرق تنتظركم
الحدائق تنتظركم
المدارس وساحات العيد
ينتظروكم أطفال سورية

It is so early for you to become birds of heaven
And to play in the sky

باكرا جدا كي تصبحوا عصافير
لتلعبوا

Where you from?

في السماء

— From Syria.

— من أين أنت

— From which city in Syria?

— من سورية

— I was born in Daraa and I was brought up in Homs

— من أين بلد في سورية

— I spend my youth in Lattakia

ولدت في درعا ترعرعت في حمص

— I blossomed in Baniyas

شبيت في اللاذقية وبنعت في بانياس

— I bloomed in Dier AlZoor and I burned

ازهرت في جسر الشغور

in Hama and flared up in Edlib

ر احترقت في حماة اندلعت لإدلب برقت في دير الزو

— Blazed in Qameshli

ولمعت في القامشلي .

— Slaughtered in Dariya

— من أنت

— Who are you?

أنا من يسجنوها .

— I am who fear it.

من يئودونها

— Who will lock it up

من يخافونها

من يحرقونها



— who will stock it up

أنا التي تصرخ في وجه الظالم

— Who will burn it up

— I am the one who leaves the trees

أنا التي تورق اشجار القلب لمروها

of the heart for its passage

تخر الجبال لعظمتها

Mountains knees to her grandiose

ينقلب التاريخ لأجلها

History turns upside down for her

تبذل الأرواح لنيلها

The earth colors for its sun

تتلون الأرض بشمسها

I am the one

Who yells and outcry

أنا خبز الحياة و حليبيها

in the face of the dictator

أنا

I am the one who will not abide

من لا تسكن إلا في رؤوس النبلاء

except only in the head of the nobles

و لا تعرف إلا قلوب الأبطال

And do not know except only

أنا التي لا تساوم ولا تشتري

the hearts of the heroes

I am the one who never

اسمي

compromise and not for sale

الحرية.

I am the bread of life and its milk

My name is

Freedom.



Grażyna Wojcieszko, born in Poland in 1957, is a poet, translator and active culture manager, graduate of Literary-Artistic Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow (2005). She has published six collections of poetry and is the recipient of several Polish poetry awards. Her poetry has been widely anthologized and translated into several languages. Two collections of her work have been made available to French readers by Editions Caractères. Her recent work lies at the intersection of poetry, music and film.

Translated from Polish by Sarah Luczaj.



Spotkanie I

natrafiłam na ciebie w gęstym lesie
kim jesteś chciałam cię zapytać o imię
nie czuję jaką jesteś rośliną twój okwiat
rozwija się nie tylko na szczycie pędu

kiedy się odezwę czy będziesz musiał
mnie zabić a może masz tylko działanie
halucynogenne nie wiem w jakim języku
zapytać boję się okazać twoim wrogiem

twarz mam uśmiechniętą i mogę udawać
każdego motyla nie mam ci za złe braku
zapachu nie będę analizowała koloru prącia
tylko proszę nie pomył mnie z modliszką

Meeting I

i came across you in the thick forest
who are you i wanted to ask your name
i don't feel what kind of plant you are your perianth
develops not only at the top of the stalk

when i speak will you have to
kill me and maybe you have only
hallucinogenic properties i don't know in which language
to ask i am frightened i will turn out to be your enemy

my face is smiling and i can pretend
to be any kind of butterfly i do not blame you for your lack
of scent i am not going to analyse the colour of your penis
just please do not mistake me for a praying mantis



Spotkanie II

natrafiłam na ciebie w gęstym lesie
zieleń naszych tęczówek zatracą się
zatracą tak samo żółtawą obrączką
a jednak
celujemy do siebie z czeluści źrenic

kiedy się odezwę czy będziesz musiał
mnie zabić tylu tutaj strzela a wszyscy
padają w rytm tępej muzyki a wszyscy
są do siebie podobni jak ich kołnierze

twoja źrenica robi się coraz czarniejsza
czy widzisz jeszcze zieleń w moim oku
kim jesteś chciałam cię tylko zapytać o
imię chciałam cię zapytać o kolor serca

nie mam ci za złe że nie pamiętasz odcieni
lekkości ale kiedy przypomnę ci jej zapach
czy będę mogła udawać motyla którego ty
zasuszysz w swoim niezbędniku żołnierza

Meeting II

i came across you in the thick forest
the green of our pupils loses itself
loses itself in the yellow wedding ring
and yet
let's aim at each other from the depths of our pupils

when i speak are you going to have
to kill me so many shoot here and they all
fall in the rhythm of blunt music and they all
are as similar to each other as their collars

your pupil is getting ever darker
do you still see the green in my eye
who are you i just wanted to ask you
your name i wanted to ask you the colour of your head

i don't blame you for not remembering the shade
of weightlessness but when i remind you of its scent
will i be able to pretend i am a butterfly that you
dry out in your soldier's survival



Photo © Ladina Bischof

Fabiano Alborghetti (1970) is a Swiss poet and writer. He has published a number of poetry books and his poetry has been translated into more than 10 languages. In 2018 he was awarded the Swiss Literature Prize among other awards. He promotes poetry in various venues, including radio, prisons, hospitals, schools, and universities. Currently he's the President of the House of Literature in Lugano. Thanks to the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs he has represented Switzerland at literary festivals and cultural events worldwide.

Zlatibor, 48 anni – Djacovica, Kossovo

Conta i centimetri quadrati rimasti illesi
diceva, le stoviglie intatte pur mancando la parete:
a tutela del privato una tenda hanno tirato, una lamiera

e uguale situazione anche agli altri. Nella privazione
sembra molto il poco
e così rimane, velata nella tregua

la stessa luce dello stesso cielo
l'accadere della cena e del risveglio.
Rifatto l'attorno non cambia il senso.

Là dove tu guardi, cambia la famiglia
tolta la casa? Scompare l'amore o perdura?
L'intero suolo è casa, diceva

e dal suo fuoco il fango risplendeva...



Zlatibor, 48 years, Djacovica, Kosovo

Count now the square centimetres left unharmed
he said, the intact crockery even with the wall missing:
for the sake of privacy they have drawn a curtain, a metal sheet

and similar situations to the others too. In hardship
little seems a lot
and so remains, shrouded in truce,

the same light of the same sky
the event of the evening meal and of the awakening.
The surroundings rebuilt, the meaning doesn't change.

There where you watch, does the family change
taking away the house? Does love disappear or endure?
The whole land is home, he said

and from his fire the mud was shining.



Photo © Gili Haimovich

Gili Haimovich is a bilingual poet and translator in Hebrew and English and winner of the I colori dell'anima poetry contest (Italy, 2020), Ossia di Sepia International Contest (Italy, 2019), an excellency grant from the Israeli Ministry of Culture (2015), and other prizes. She has four poetry books in English, most recently *Lullaby* and *Promised Lands*, six volumes of poetry in Hebrew, a multi-lingual book, *Note*, two books translated into French and Serbian, and poems translated into 30 languages, published and presented worldwide. Facebook: [Gili Haimovich](#).



The Promised Wasteland

I'm pulling you out of the water
as if out of your own sorrow.

We don't trust being saved
is worthwhile,

even before we know,
it will take you away from water
for most of your life.

The second time you encounter it
you'll have to break the water.

The desert is wide, wild, wasted, Moses,
a landscape so widely open that its inaccessible,
no nooks for havens of rest

for hiding,
for intimacy.

The embrace of curvaceous swarthy dunes
is abrasive.

If sand gets in your eyes
you tear.

Their tongues bring the opposite of saturation.

And penetrate determinedly
the land that already had so little to offer.

This is when you realize promises better kept unfulfilled
and you do not enter.

Arrival

Will be hard to fall for this one.

Does gratitude measure up to happiness?

I land in Mexico City.

After a long flight,

a long-life spouse, children, my shortcomings and short-lived travels.

This arrival is long.

And so is my becoming.

Will this one break me

in order to sustain longer in my body?

The ability, or disability, to split into different fractures of life.

I'm on the lookout for a moon within reach.

Compromising on the one of Mexico City

that when I turn my back to

switches from orange to silver.



Photo © Evelyn Flores

Daniel Calabrese is an Argentinian poet born in Dolores city, Buenos Aires province, living in Santiago de Chile since 1991, where he became involved with the poetry and literary life of his adopted nation. Among his collections of poetry, one must mention such titles as *La faz errante*, which won the Alfonsina Prize, and *Oxidario*, Prize from the National Arts Fund in Buenos Aires, as well as his book *Ruta Dos*, winner of the Prize Revista de Libros in Chile. Anthologies of his work were published in Ecuador, Mexico, Uruguay, Colombia and China. His work has been translated partially into English, Italian, Chinese and Japanese. He is the founder and director of *Ærea*, an annual review of poetry. Email: dcalabrese@rileditores.com.

Translated into English by Katherine Hedeem.

Escritura en un ladrillo

Es de día en un día cualquiera
y nos preguntamos:
¿qué hemos escrito que lo cambie todo?

La gente avanza sobre el invierno
y cruza un puente oxidado en la avenida.
Por debajo pasa un río de metales
grises, rojos, blancos.

Dice un graffiti:
“si no tuvieras miedo, ¿qué harías?”.

Vivimos en una tarde azul.
Alguien se queda afuera y la humedad
de las baldosas le disuelve los pies
como a una figura de arena.

Porque hay cuerpos apretados y gruesos
que forman un muro de espaldas, cerrado.
Cuerpos que no dejan salir una gota de sombra.
Cuerpos que pelean y atesoran
la verdad, la maldición.

A mi hija le gustan los graffitis,
una vez rayó en la pared del colegio:
“más amor, por favor”,
y otros hicieron lo mismo después en la calle
y en ese muro de espaldas, cerrado.



Es una frontera en ruinas, construida
alrededor del tiempo.
Adentro quizás qué, sus caras de mármol,
un aire prisionero, los brazos reunidos
sobre el cuello del demonio
y esas venas oscuras que tienen
cuando la carne es de piedra.

Las naves tiemblan sobre el horizonte,
el sol es una piedra con metal.

Apoyado contra el muro
bebe ahora un capitán
la espuma silenciosa de las horas,
y llega tarde al sueño cada noche.

La dársena escondía una sirena
entre los fierros carcomidos por la sal.

Pensamos en el frío,
en la luna desgarrada por las grúas
y soñamos con fantasmas de humedad en la pared.

Es cierto, el cielo ha sido bestial
este año con los ciegos y ambulantes,
pero ¿qué hemos escrito que lo cambie todo?

Writing on a Brick

It's daytime on any old day
and we wonder:
what have we written that can change it all?

People move along winter,
cross a rusty bridge on the avenue.
Below the metal river flows
gray, red, white.

Some graffiti says:
“if you weren't afraid, what would you do?”

We live in a blue afternoon.
Someone stays outside, the tile
dampness dissolves their feet
like a figure made of sand.

There are bodies tight and thick
shaping a wall of backs, closed-off.
Bodies powerless to let out a drop of shadow.
Bodies fighting and amassing
the truth, the curse.

My daughter likes graffiti,
one time she scribbled:
“more love, please” on some high school wall,
others did the same thing, afterwards, on the street
and on that wall of closed-off backs.



It's a border in ruins, raised
around time.
Inside maybe what, those marble faces,
convict air, arms brought together
over the demon neck
and those dark veins they acquire
when flesh is stone.

Ships tremble on the horizon,
sun is a stone plus metal.

Leaning against the wall,
a captain now drinks
the silent foam of hours,
is late to sleep each night.

The dock hid a siren
among the irons salt-eaten.

We think about the cold,
the moon ripped apart by cranes,
we dream of damp ghosts on the wall.

It's true, this year the sky's been
brutal for the blind and the street vendors,
but, what have we written that changes it all.



Photo © Lara Toledo

Prisca Agustoni is a poet and translator of Swiss origin. She currently lives between Switzerland and Brazil, where she teaches comparative literature at Federal University of Juiz de Fora (BR). She writes (and translates herself) in Italian, French and Portuguese. Her poems have also been translated into German, Rumanian, Macedonian, Croatian, English, Spanish, French and Swedish. Some of her recent publications include *Un ciel provisoire* (Geneva, Samizdat, 2015), *Animal extremo* (São Paulo, Patuá, 2017), *Casa dos ossos* (Juiz de Fora, Macondo, 2017), *L'ora zero* (Como, 2020) and *O mundo mutilado* (São Paulo, Quelônio, 2020). Email: prisca.agustoni@yahoo.fr.

Translated into English by Johnny Lorenz.



Não sabem que são anjos
os anjos que vivem conosco no campo:
acostumados a remexer no lixo
sabem do estômago a fome,
do músculo as câimbras.

Reviram as línguas
como frutos caídos
cariados no chão, na torre
dessa babel horizontal

aqui, onde o latim eslavo
estala suas sementes
que florescem tardias

e no fígado do dia
destilamos
nosso álcool

*

Os anjos vagam esquivos
nos arredores de Idomeni:

carregam consigo outros espectros,
o rosto dos caídos
deitados na memória

juntos dão voltas
no limbo, no campo

onde prófugos perpétuos
rondam em terra de pêndulos

They don't know they're angels,
those angels living with us in the camp:
used to digging through garbage,
in their stomachs they know hunger;
in their muscles, a cramping pain.

They scan tongues
like fallen fruit
rotting on the ground,
in a tower of babel
made horizontal

here, where Slavic Latin
snaps open its seeds
slow to flower

and in the day's liver
we distill
our alcohol

*

The angels, elusive, wander
the outskirts of Idomeni:

they carry with them other specters,
faces of the fallen
lying in their memory

together they go round and round
in limbo, in the camp

where perpetual fugitives
occupy the land of pendulums

enquanto esperam
enfileirados
a volta do tempo dos humanos.

waiting in single file
for the return
of the human age.

A língua não
tem arame farpado nem
renúncia possível:

The tongue has
no barbed wire,
no denial of entry:

o refúgio
somos nós,

our refuge is nothing
but ourselves

e as fronteiras perenes
entre as palavras,

and the enduring borders
between words,

portas onde batemos
esperando os vivos

doors on which
we knock waiting
for the living,

balsa que nos leva
de uma orla a outra

barges taking us
from one shore
to the other



Photo © Vito Panico

Marilena Renda was born in Erice, Italy, in 1976 and lives in Bologna, where she currently teaches English. She has published the following books: *Bassani, Giorgio. An Italian Jew* (Gaffi, 2010), *Rust* (dot.com press, 2012), *Surrender Dorothy* (L'orma, 2015), *The subtraction* (Transeuropa, 2015) and *Gifts to ghosts* (Mesogea, 2017). With the poem *Rust* she was a finalist for the Delfini 2009 and the 2013 Carducci awards, while *The subtraction* won the Bologna in Lettere 2019 award. Visit her [Ac2 profile](#).

Translated by Johnny Lorenz.

Sui ponti delle navi, i bambini salvati dal mare
hanno coperte d'argento per il freddo e assomigliano
a piccole uova di Pasqua, pronte per essere aperte.
“Possiamo aprirle, è ora?”, chiedono altri bambini,
che non sanno che lo statuto dei bambini,
in Occidente, è cambiato. Dei morti in mare
– centocinquanta, oggi – scrivono in molti,
tra cui Annarita, che dichiara di sé un discreto
umanitarismo, e dice: Buon appetito ai pesci.
Il mare oggi è limpido, non sembra che intenda ribellarsi
né che voglia ristabilire una giustizia qualsiasi.
Mia figlia gioca in acqua con altri bambini,
uno di loro potrebbe essere morto oggi,
mi stupisco, mentre esco dall'acqua,
di non vedere cadaveri in mezzo all'acqua limpida.
Di chi sono questi bambini, quanti sono
i figli del mare, tutti infine torneranno al mare.



On the decks of ships, the children saved from the sea
have silver blankets for the cold and they look
like little Easter eggs, ready to be opened.
“Can we open them, it is time?”, other children ask,
who do not know that the statute of the child,
in the West, has changed. Of the dead in the sea,
—one-hundred-fifty, today— many write,
among them Annarita, who declares for herself a discreet
humanitarianism, and says: Buon appetito to you, fish.
The sea today is clear, it doesn't seem like it plans to rebel
nor that it wishes to set straight any kind of justice.
My daughter plays in the water with other children,
one of them could be dead today,
I am amazed, while I get out of the water,
not to see cadavers in the middle of the clear water.
Whose children are these, how many
sons and daughters of the sea, in the end everyone will return to the sea.



Photo © Javier Perez

Giselle Lucía Navarro (born in Cuba, 1995) is a poet, writer, designer and cultural manager. She holds a Bachelor in Industrial Design from Havana University and is a Professor in the Ethnographic Academy of the Canary Association of Cuba. She has also obtained diverse literary awards: Jose Viera y Clavijo, Benito Pérez Galdos, Edad de Oro, Pinos Nuevos and David 2019, such as some Mentions in the international awards: Angel Gavinet (Finland), Poemas al Mar (Puerto Rico) and Nosside (Italia). She has published the books *Contrapeso*, *El circo de los asombros* and *¿Qué nombre tiene tu casa?* Her texts have been translated into English, French, Italian and Turkish, and published in anthologies in various countries. Visit <http://www.gisellelucia.com/>.

Translated into English by Osmany Echevarría and Noel Alonso respectively.



CONTRAPESO

Congelar el cuerpo de un hombre es una tarea difícil.

Congelar el cuerpo de una mujer, una tarea imposible.

Congelar el cuerpo de un país es tener miedo a todo lo que crece.

COUNTERWEIGHT

Freezing the body of a man is a hard task.

Freezing the body of a woman is an impossible task.

Freezing the body of a country is being afraid of everything that grows up.

OTRA VEZ EN EL PRINCIPIO

En el Malecón

Alguien supo que las aguas no serían mansas
y el muro difícil de olvidar.
Ningún golpe de suerte lo desterraría.
Las piedras de las otras orillas son inciertas
como los rostros de las barcas que se asoman a la costa,
como los planes de los ojos que se van sin mirar atrás.

Alguien supo que la noche estaría fría
debajo de las estrellas de esta incertidumbre,
la maldita incertidumbre que no avanza ni retrocede,
solo permanece,
permanece como las rocas del muro,
el aire que sostiene a los aviones
o la distancia embalsamada
en los ojos de aquellos que nunca la han visto.
Cualquier espacio sería necesario,
cualquier orilla la adecuada.

Sobre los muros breves nunca hay espacio libre.
Todos saben que la noche es fría
y deben cuidarse de las aguas indóciles,
por eso están esparcidos sobre la piedra.

Hay música
ojos
bocas
idiomas
y preguntas.

El muro es lo suficientemente grande
para cubrir la orilla y protegernos de todo,
pero aquel que se sienta en el muro
solo ve la distancia.



AGAIN IN THE BEGINNING

In the Sea Wall

Somebody knew that the waters would not be meek
and the wall difficult to forget.
No stroke of luck would banish it.
The stones of the other shore are uncertain
as the faces of the boats that lean out to the coast
as the plans of the eyes that leave without looking back.

Somebody knew that the night would be cold
under the stars of this uncertainty
the damned uncertainty that doesn't advance neither go back
just it remains
it remains as the rocks of the wall
the air that sustains to the airplanes
or the distance embalmed in the eyes of those that have never seen it.
Any space would be necessary
any shore the appropriate one.

On the low walls there is never free space.
Everybody knows that the night is cold
and they should take care of the indocile waters
for that reason they are spread on the wall.

There is music
eyes
mouths
languages
and questions.
The wall is sufficiently large
to cover the shore and to protect us of everything
but for anybody that sits down in the wall
only sees the distance.



Photo © Nikola Kukunesh

Gjoko Zdraveski (born in 1985 in Skopje, Macedonia) writes poetry, short prose and essays. He has published four books of poetry: *Palindrome with Double 'N'* (2010), *House for migratory birds* (2013), *belleove* (2016), *daedicarus icaral* (2017), and one book of short-short stories: *Reality cut-outs* (2019). His poetry has been translated into several European languages, and he has taken part in poetry festivals in Europe. Since 2015 he is part of the *Versopolis* project.

Translated into English by Lazar Popov.



слобода

1.

дедо ми со тараби си го омеѓи дворот
и така доби парче земја,
ама го загуби светот.

а потоа почна и тоа свое парче земја
да го преградува и
да им дава имиња на бавчите.
а јас бев дете и најмногу ги сакав
вратничките што ги спојуваа.

2.

забодуваме колци-меѓници,
цртаме карти со некакви граници
и ставаме таму луѓе
што ни буричкаат по торбите
и нè прашуваат каде патуваме
како да им е тоа стварно важно.

gdje se putuje, gojko?
ме прашува меѓничарот во пет часот
наутро, а јас, уште неразбуден,
му велам: дома.
а си мислам:
по земјава
или угоре-удолу? во просторот
или во времето? сега
или секогаш и во вјеки вјеков?

freedom

1.

my grandad enclosed his courtyard with a fence
and thus won a plot of land,
though he lost the world.

and then he started to partition
that plot of land and
name the gardens.

I was a child and I loved most
the little connecting doors.

2.

we stake in poles - bounds,
we draw maps with some boundaries
and place people there
that scan through our bags
asking us where we are going
as though it really mattered to them.

where are you heading, gojko?
the border guard asks me at five o'clock
in the morning, and I,
not fully awake, say to him: home.
while thinking to myself:
back and forth the earth
or up and down? in space
or in time? now
or always and for eternity?

3.

векови сме далеку од слободата.
затоа што сè уште од туѓите синцири
се ослободуваме. и не го чувствуваме
во утробата клучот од ќелијата
во која сме заробени.

забораваме дека кафето што го пиеме
за да се разбудиме е содржано во
талогот на дното од шољата.

секој ден за неа зборуваме. дури и
да запееме се дрзнуваме. само,
тоа го правиме болни. со страв
полни, наместо со љубов.

3.

we are centuries away from freedom.
for we still set ourselves free from
other people's chains. and we do not feel
in the guts the key from the cell
in which we are locked.

we forget that the coffee we drink
to wake up is contained
in the residue at the bottom of the cup.

every day we talk about it. we even dare
sing about it. it's just that,
we do so ill. full with
fear, instead of love.



Photo © Marek Jurkow

Tatev Chakhian is a Poland-based Armenian poet, translator and visual artist, born in 1992. She graduated from the faculty of Cultural Anthropology at Yerevan State University, then earned a degree in International Relations at Adam Mickiewicz University. Selections of her poetry have been translated into German, Polish, Czech, Persian, Greek, Macedonian, Dutch, Spanish, Bengali, and Turkish, and have been published worldwide. The poet collaborates with urban artists and musicians, and translates and promotes Polish contemporary poetry among Armenian readers.

Translated into English by Tatev Chakhian and Ruzan Amiraghyan respectively.

MIGRANTS' POINT

Եվրոպա –

Որպեսզի իրար ճիշտ հասկանանք՝

ես սովորեցի մի քանիսը քո լեզուներից,

իսկ դու անգամ չջանացիր ճիշտ արտասանել ազգանունս:

Մեր առաջին հանդիպմանը

երջանկությունից կրկնացի բարձրաձայն –

իմ երկրի մարդկանց պես,

հետո գոռացի ցավից – սովորույթի ուժով,

իսկ դու զգուշացրիր, որ 22: 00-ից

ցանկացած ձայն աղմուկ է համարվում:

Եվրոպա –

դու զարմացրիր ինձ, ու ես ինձ զարմացրի՝

թե ոնց դարձա քեզնից ավելի սպիտակ ու շիկահեր,

թե ինչ հրճվանքով ձայնակցեցի ցույցերիդ՝

ընդդեմ նրանց, ում չէի ընտրել . . .

Կապույտ աչքերով, կապույտ արյունով, կարմիր անձնագրով

տղաներիդ զիջերներում ես քո երազը տեսա,

բայց առավոտների երբեք իմը չեղան, Եվրոպա . . .

Դու սիրեցիր ինձ, բայց կնություն չառար . . .



Եվրոպա –

Դու ինձնից հազար ու մի գիշերվա հեքիաթներ ուզեցիր,
բայց հեքիաթային ոչինչ չեկավ մտքիս
պայթյուններով ու պատերազմի ճիշերով լի իմ
մանկությունից:

Իմ ներսի բոլոր երեխեքը մեծացել են . . .

Իմ ներսի բոլոր զինվորները հոգնել են, Եվրոպա . . .

Իմ ներսի թափառականները կորել են անդարձ . . .

Եկել եմ գիրկդ, որ մի պահ ոչմիախիսն լինեմ, որ խաղաղվեմ .

. .

Եվրոպա, սիրտս ավելի ծանր է, քան այս 56 կգ-ն ծնկներիդ –

Բայց թե սիրտդ սրտիս համար չի ցավում,

գոնե անտեսիր, մարմինս էլ չտեսնելու դիր . . .

MIGRANTS' POINT

Europe -

To understand each other better

I've learnt a couple of your languages,

but you haven't even tried to pronounce my surname correctly.

On our first date

I guffawed - as my people used to do,

then howled of pain - as I used to,

but you warned

that after 10 PM any sound is considered to be a noise.

Europe -

You've surprised me as I did myself

by becoming much paler and blonder than you,

by feeling in my waters screaming at your protests

against those not chosen by me.

In the nights of your blue-eyed, blue-blooded, red-passport men

I've seen your dream,

but your mornings have never belonged to me, Europe.

You've made love with me, but never asked for my hand.



Europe –

You've expected the tales of thousand and one nights,
but I couldn't recall any from my childhood darkness
full of bombings and screams of war . . .

All the children inside me have grown up . . .

All the soldiers inside me are tired . . .

All the wanderers inside are wholly lost . . .

I've come to sit on your laps and to be nothinglike, to calm
down for a while . . .

Europe –

My heart is heavier than this 56 kilos you see –

But if you don't care of my hearts,

then also connive my body . . .

ԱՅԴ ՁՄԵՌ . . .

Այդ ձմեռ ես չունեի անձնագիր:
Ասել է թե՛ ես գոյություն չունեի
հարկայինի համար,
նստիկանության,
տեղական ինքնակառավարման մարմինների,
ու մյուս բոլոր մարմինների, բացի մեկից, որի սրտում
դեռ ապրում էի:
Այդ ձմեռ Նրան սրտի կաթվածով
հիվանդանոց տեղափոխեցին:
Այդ ձմեռ անունս հղովվեց հազար օտարալեզու բերանում՝
Տաթի, Տատյանա, Տանյա, Թինա,
իսկ ազգանունս ճովողեցին միայն ամենահամարձակները:
Բոլոր այլընտրանքներին համաձայնեցի լուռ
ինչպես անծանոթի հասակին ու քաշին ես համաձայնում՝
առաջին հանդիպմանը:
Այդ ձմեռ ես սկսեցի մարզվել, որ չկորցնեմ վերջին կապս նրա հետ,
ով բառեր է ասում իմ բերանով . . .
Իսկ երբ մարզչին հարցրի. «Ո՛ւր են գնում կորցրածս կիլոմետրը»,
խնդրեց իր նման պարզ տղուն բարդ հարցեր չտալ ու
հռհռալով ասաց. «Ուրախ չե՞ս, որ վերանում ես»:



THAT WINTER . . .

I had no passport that winter.

Meaning I existed

neither for the tax service,

nor the police,

nor the local bodies,

just like any other body, except for the one

whose heart I still lived in.

That winter that one was rushed to hospital

with a heart attack.

That winter my name was inflected in a thousand unfamiliar ways-

Tatie, Tatyana, Tanya, Tinah...

I silently succumbed to all,

like one accepts the height and the weight of a stranger

at the first meeting.

I hit the gym that winter not to lose the last connection with the one,

who articulates words through my mouth...

And when I asked my trainer: Where do my lost kilos go?

he pleaded to save a simple guy like him from tough questions

and joked to the best of his humour: Aren't you happy to disappear?



Photo © Matej Pusnik

Yekta (born 1979) in La Vallée aux Loups, near Paris, is a French poet, performer and musician. He has been published in many poetry reviews, in several anthologies and he has released four poetry books (latest release: *Broken branches for the stranger*, Petra Editions, 2018). He participated in numerous international festivals and his poems have been translated into Bengali, Croatian, English, Flemish, Italian, Macedonian, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish. As a musician, performer, narrator and singer, Yekta collaborates to several projects linked to poetry and works with different musicians. He has composed soundtracks and released his a piano E.P. with one of his books. Web: <https://yektapoesie.tumblr.com/>

Translated into English by Iris Colomb.



Punctuation dans l'interstice

Nulle accalmie dans le monologue
des machines sur mon désir

pas même le crochet d'une virgule
pour me suspendre à l'infini

mais sur les murs
en bord d'obscurité
les tapotements d'un sourcier du vide
d'un infirmier fébrile
qui chercherait longtemps
une dernière veine à piquer
dans un corps brûlé par les paradis

Punctuation in the rift

I find no respite in the machine
monologues tracing my desires

not even the hook of a comma
to suspend me to infinity

yet upon the walls
on the fringes of darkness
a void dowser taps
feverish nurse
restlessly searching
for a final vein to puncture
in a body burnt by delights



Photo © Vaiva Abromaityte

Indrė Valantinaitė (born in 1984, in Kaunas) is a Lithuanian poet. After graduating from the Kaunas Jesuit Gymnasium, she studied arts management at Vilnius University and at the Vilnius Academy of Arts. Her first book, *Of Fish and Lilies*, earned her the first prize in the poetry category of the 2006 First Book Contest of the Lithuanian Union of Writers. Her second book *Tales about Love and Other Animals* (2011) has won the Young Yotvingian Prize in 2012. In addition to writing poems, Indrė is a singer, a winner of several singing festivals and also she is a TV journalist and producer.

Translated into English by Rimas Uzgis.



Laisvės alėja

Senamiestyje, name,
kuriame tarpukariu gyveno
mano močiutė ir gimė tėvas,

po palėpe, kurioje jie badavo,
įrengtas madingas restoranas,

kurio atidaryme aš,
su įmantriausiu maistu burnoje
ir keistos kaltės jausmu pilve,

tik lubomis teatskirta nuo erdvės,
kurioje ji paliko raštelį,

žieduota ranka keliu taurę prie lūpų
ir švenčiu gyvenimą
už mus abi.

Freedom Boulevard

In the Old Town house where
my grandmother lived between the wars
and my father was born –

under the loft in which they starved,
a trendy restaurant has set up.

I attend the opening, standing with
pretentiously prepared food in my mouth
and a strange feeling of guilt in my belly.

For only the ceiling separates this space
from the one in which she left her note.

Lifting a glass with a ringed hand,
I celebrate life
for both of us.

Viešbučio kambarys

Jis daug keliauja.

Kiekvienąkart jam rodos,
kad išnuomotas kambarys
primygtinai siūlo
visus septynis kelius.

Nors jame tėra
mini baras ir Biblija.

Du būdai
įsitverti rytojais.

Hotel Room

He travels a lot.

Every night it seems
that the rented room
urges him to take
all seven roads.

There is, though,
a Bible and a mini bar:

Two ways
to grasp at tomorrow.



Photo © Spartaco Coletta

Luca Benassi was born in 1976 in Rome. He is poet, writer, essayist, journalist and translator. He has published five poetry collections, including anthologies of his poetry in Japan (with the poet Maki Starfield, 2016), in Serbia and Macedonia in 2019, and he translated and published *The Path* (2002) by the Dutch poet Germain Droogenbroodt. As journalist and critic, Luca has published a book of essays *Throttled Streams - Italian poets in the third millennium* (2010).

Translated by the author.

(varcando il confine della foce)

Bisogna aspettarli al varco i salmoni
al collo di bottiglia della foce
spauriti, mentre accalcano l'acqua
bisogna tendere la rete dove
la superficie si increspa di pinne
le branchie annaspano quel desiderio
che riproduce il transito di nuove
generazioni. Allora è il momento
di calare la rete, di tendere
alla gola il laccio, l'arpione aguzzo.
All'uscita della metro noi siamo
salmoni ignari verso la mattanza.

(crossing the boundary of the river mouth)

Salmon are to be waylaid
at the bottleneck of the river mouth,
when they are scared, cramming the water;
you have to let the net down where
the surface ripples with fins,
gills fumbling the desire
that doubles the passage of new
generations. That is the moment
to shoot the net, to stretch tight
the noose to the throat, the sharp spear.
At the metro exit we are
oblivious salmon to the slaughter



(costruire confini)

Non chiedete a noi
solo questo sappiamo: chi siamo e cosa vogliamo
per il resto ci sarà una ragione
un perché fondato su una norma
una legge certa da non interpretare.

Se le cose stanno così
è perché si saranno incontrati
avranno portato carte, grafici obiettivi
intorno a un tavolo, fino a sera
avranno chiuso l'accordo e firmato la tregua.

Ci saranno state tazze di the
certezze da dare, un aereo da prendere.

Se le cose sono andate così
ci sarà un motivo
vedrete: salterà fuori un libro
carta intestata che galleggia su un fiume giallo
una sentenza di tribunale, bibliografie.

E qualcuno avrà preso una decisione.

(building borders)

Do not ask us
we know just this: who we are and what we want
for the rest there must be a reason
a way based on a norm
a firm law not to be interpreted.
If things are like this,
it is because they had met,
brought in papers, charts, objectives
around a table late at night
made a deal and signed the truce.
There must have been tea cups
assurance to be given, flights to catch.
If things were like that,
there must be a reason
you will see: a book will pop out
stationery floating on a yellow river
a Court sentence, bibliographies.
Someone will have made a decision.



Photo © Sena Ertam Ünsal

Nurduran Duman is a Turkish poet, playwright, and editor based in Istanbul. Her books include *Yenilgi Oyunu* (2005 Cemal Sureya Poetry Award), *Istanbul'la Bakışmak* and *Mi Bemol*. Other works: *Semi Circle* (2016, US), *Selected Poems* (2017, Macedonia), *Selected Poems* (2019, Belgium), and *Steps of Istanbul* (2019, China, Poetry Collection of the Year, 2nd Boao International Poetry Award). Her poems have been translated into Finnish, Spanish, Azerbaijan Turkish, Bulgarian, Romanian, Slovak, French, German, Occitan, and Italian. She is featured in the [#internationalwomensday2018](#) ([#IWD18](#)) Modern Poetry in Translation (MPT) list of ten international female poets in translation in 2018. She is a member of Turkish PEN.

Translated into English by Grace Wessels.

güvercin kuğurtusu

—göç göğünde uçuşan çocuklara bakamayan kuşçulara—

silkele dur boşluğu nasılsa kanatların çıkacak

meleksin sen üç vakit var üç dilek sonra
şimdi ne gelir elden ki zaten ve ama oysa
bağlaçlar ne güzel yürüyor bak podyum ne geniş
yürüyor can simitleri biberli hava görür mü ayaklar
ya da da bir bağlaç sepetimizde bisiklet üç teker
komşu ülke sınırında yan daire kara suyunda
dönüp devirecek bu çağı da dönecek bu topal çember

sen hep beyazına konmuş kanmış ya da
da bir bağlaç kanmış konmuş
sen bembeyaz beyazdan yana hem görmedin duymadın
olur da düşerse iş başa ya da da bir bağlaç
sıkarsa boğazını insansın ya
kırmızı çocuk ayakkabısı gömmeyi de umma
renk ne gezer şarkı ne gezer ninni umma

silkele dur boşluğu sen çıkacak kanatların
nasılsa ne zamansa



Doves' Coo

—for bird-watchers who cannot look at the children flying through the immigration sky—

go on beating emptiness your wings will happen somehow

you'll be an angel after three wishes after three stages
what can your hands do now But Because And After Yet
look how beautiful these conjunctions walk on their wide runway
young life rings walk through peppery air do your feet see them
Or is also a conjunction, in our basket a tricycle
for our neighbour country border in connecting lands and seas
this lame circle will also turn this age overturn and turn

you're always with white perched quenched either or
Or is a conjunction quenched and perched
you're snow white standing by white besides you didn't see didn't hear
if it befalls you have in mind Or is also a conjunction
if it constricts your throat you're human after all
don't expect to bury children's red shoes
no colour no song, don't expect a lullaby

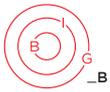
go on beating emptiness your wings will happen
somehow sometime



Photo © Astrid di Crollanza

Stéphane Chaumet (born 1971 in Dunkerque) has lived in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and the United States. He is the author of the novels: *Même pour ne pas vaincre* (*Even for not winning*), *Au bonheur des voiles* (*The veils' Paradise, chronicles of Syria*), *Les Marionnettes* (*The Puppets*), *L'île impasse* (*Dead-end island*); of the books of poetry: *Dans la nudité du temps* (*In the nudity of time*), *Urbaines miniatures* (*Urban miniatures*), *La traversée de l'errance* (*The crossing of the wandering*), *Les cimetières engloutis* (*The sunken cemeteries*), *Fentes* (*Cracks*), *Le hasard et la perte* (*Chance and loss*), *Insomnia* (*Insomnia*), *Cellules* (*Cells*); and a book of photographs: *L'hôte, l'autre* (*The host, the other*), photos of Syria before the war. He has translated many contemporary Latin American and Spanish poets, as well as the German poet Hilde Domin and the Iranian Forough Farrokhzad.

Translated into English by Natasha Sardzoska and Hugh Hazelton respectively.



tu as pris la route

ta famille ignore si tu es mort ou vivant

peut-être préfèrent-t-ils croire à ton abandon

ou que tu te caches dans la honte et le silence

personne ici ne sait qui tu es d'où tu viens

personne ne s'y intéresse

ils ont donné à ton cadavre sa dernière trace d'humanité

et gravé avec un bout de bois

deux lettres dans une couche de ciment

N.N.

peut-être au cœur de la nuit une mère ou une sœur t'appelle

peut-être es-tu de ceux qu'après leur mort

personne ne nommera

you have hit the road
your family does not know if you are alive or dead
perhaps they prefer to believe in your abandonment
or that you are hidden in shame and silence
nobody here knows who you are and where you come from
nobody does not even care
they have given to your cadaver the last trace of humanity
and engraved with a piece of wood
two letters in a layer of cement

N.N.

maybe in the middle of the night a mother or a sister would be calling you
maybe you are one of those that after their death
nobody will name



Hay caminos que no tienen regreso

ai-je lu au service d'immigration mexicain.

Chemins

combien en ai-je pris, abandonnés

combien m'ont enchanté, déçu

combien où je me suis perdu

perdu et ouvert, perdu et rencontré

où j'ai trouvé l'autre.

Qu'ont tracé mes semelles ? Qu'ai-je emporté ?

Ces chemins toujours le même ? Le mien ?

Il y a des chemins qui n'ont pas de retour

d'autres qui ne mènent nulle part.

Mais le retour est un leurre

et nulle part s'appelle la quête.

Ton chemin n'est que le réseau

que tisse et qui tisse ta vie.

Hay caminos que no tienen regreso

I read at the Mexican immigration office.

Roads

how many have I taken, abandoned

how many delighted, deceived me

how many where I've gotten lost

lost and open, lost and found

where I've found another.

What have my soles mapped out? What have I brought back?

Roads that are always the same? Mine?

There are roads that have no return

others that don't lead anywhere.

But the return is a lure

and nowhere is called the quest.

Your road is only the web

woven by and weaving your life.



Photo credit: private

Ren (Katherine) Powell is a poet and teaching artist/mentor. She is a native Californian, now a Norwegian citizen settled on the west coast of Norway. Her poetry collections have been purchased by the Norwegian Arts Council for national library distribution, and her poems have been translated and published in eight languages in chapbooks and anthologies.

Colonizing

One body of water – but every shore
names its sea:
A sea of graveled fog at midnight's North Cape
can scrape your throat bloody as a child's knees
and drive you to drink
A sea of wilted cardboard prayers
6 a.m. in the Canaries along the resort fronts
pushes a melancholy history into your lounge
A sea of watermelon taunts you in Stavanger's harbor
when the algae melt in spring
though no watermelons grow
– or have ever grown there –
but because a story stormed through immigration
speaking its own language
dropping consonants in the tide pools
and in the landlocked waters
like fish eggs
And another story will slip between porous membranes
during a deep kiss between strangers at an airport somewhere
and they will stake a new claim.



Photo credit: private

Tomica Bajsić was born in 1968 in Zagreb, Croatia. A poet, artist, and literary travel writer, he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb and has published five poetry books, two prose books, and two picture books. He has been the recipient of numerous national awards for poetry and recently showed two photography exhibitions in Zagreb: *Amazon Breathes* and *Brazilian Rainforest*. His most recent poetry collection with drawings, *Nevidljivo more / Invisible Sea*, was awarded the Croatian Ministry of Culture's highest literary merit in 2019. He serves as president of the Croatian PEN Center and coordinator of Lyrikline, a multilingual poetry platform in Croatia.

Translated into English by Damir Šodan.

LEPTIR LUTALICA

Iza koraljnih grebena
pustog mora i prštećih svjetala
gdje povjetarac i ptica u zraku
navještaju željeno kopno
gdje vlada scuba
diving harmonija
gdje splavi od bambusa iz Vijetnama
prelaze ocean u potrazi za kruhom
i kada vide leptira pamte
zauvijek svaku njegovu poru
koja diše u navirućim bojama
jer to je znak da je blizu kopno
i da se neće utopiti ili
umrijeti od žeđi.

Tamo iza podmorja
okamenjene lave
leži Australija.

THE WANDERER BUTTERFLY

Beyond coral reefs
a deserted sea where a light
breeze and a bird in the sky
announce the longed-for land
of scuba diving harmony.

It is where Vietnamese bamboo rafts
cross the ocean in search of bread
and when they see a butterfly
they remember for ever
each of its pores
breathing in spouting colours
because that means the land is near
and they are not going to drown
or die of thirst.

There beyond the seabed
of petrified lava
lies Australia.

POSTKOLONIJALNA PJESMA

Lavovi na trgu Trafalgar u Londonu,
u četvrti Montparnasse i svuda po Parizu,
na grobu kralja Richarda u katedrali u Rouenu,
u parku Tiergarten i otoku muzeja u Berlinu,
na Lančanom mostu Budimpešte; čuvaju ulaz
u kraljevsku palaču u Brusselsu, drijemaju
u podnožju spomenika Kolumbu u Barceloni,
žongliraju na trgu markiza Pombala u Lisabonu.
Još davno su kamenim pogledima ispraćivali brodove
Istočno – indijske kompanije iz Amsterdama.
Ovdje ih ima više nego u Africi i Indiji.
Prijestolnice bivših europskih imperija
ne krasi ni dupini ni ptice, nego lavovi,
čija je snaga njihova samoća.

Kao dvanaestogodišnjak, klizao sam
jedne oštre zime zaleđenim jezerom
maksimirskog parka pokraj ZOO vrta.
Na jezeru nije bilo nikoga osim mene.
Ispod jednog od mostova osjetio sam
kod ulaza u nastambu prisutnost lava,
čija me rika zaustavila u mjestu.
I kada ti se čini da te vide, nisi u pravu,
lavovi zapravo gledaju ravno kroz tvoje kosti,
kroz zidove, rešetke i drveće, preko jezera
gdje sam klizao, pa do rimskog koloseuma i dalje,
prostranstvima urezanim duboko u njihovu memoriju,
pogled im počiva u savanama Afrike prije kolonija.

POSTCOLONIAL POEM

The lions at Trafalgar Square in London,
in quartier Montparnasse and all over Paris, lions
at the tomb of King Richard in the Rouen Cathedral,
the Tiergarten park and the Museum Island in Berlin.
They guard the Chain Bridge in Budapest, the entrance
to the Royal Palace of Brussels; slumber
at the foot of the Columbus monument in Barcelona,
daydream at the Marquise Pombala square in Lisbon.
Long ago their gaze of stone escorted the grand ships
of East – India Company out of Port of Amsterdam.
We have more of them here than in Africa and India.
The capitals of the former European Empires
are not adorned with dolphins or birds, but lions,
whose strength is in their loneliness.

One harsh winter as a twelve year old
I went ice skating in park near our ZOO.
On the frozen lake no one but me.
Sliding under one of the bridges
I felt the presence of a lion.
Through the snow frosted trees
I could barely see the winter's den
but the lion's roar frightened me
and made me return to where I started.

But when it seems that they see you, you're wrong,
lions are actually looking straight through your bones,
through the walls, bars and trees, across the lake
where I skated and all the way over the Roman Colosseum
towards the wilderness carved deeply into their memory,
their gaze steadfastly rooted to the grasslands of Africa
before the colonies.



Photo © Claudio Mammucari

Franca Mancinelli (born in Fano, 1981) is the author of four books of poetry, which have won several prizes in Italy, where she is considered to be one of the most compelling new poetic voices. In John Taylor's translations, The Bitter Oleander Press has published *At an Hour's Sleep from Here: Poems (2007-2019)* and *The Little Book of Passage*—a translation of her book of prose poems, *Libretto di transito* (2018). Her most recent book is *Tutti gli occhi che ho aperto* [*All the Eyes that I have Opened*], issued by Marcos y Marcos in 2020. Her work has been published in several foreign magazines and anthologies.

Translated into English by John Taylor.

con passi che vorrebbero piantare
sassi e semi in cadenza
vado a rendere alle foglie
l'albero che hanno perso,
alle piume cadute l'animale.
Poi incrocio le braccia
e il cuore torna in gabbia.

with footsteps that would like to plant
stone and seeds in a cadence
I'm going to give back to the leaves
the tree they have lost,
to the fallen feathers the bird.
Then I cross my arms
and my heart returns to its cage.

penzola a vuoto a un lato del letto
i piedi bruciati;
il pavimento trattiene il suo volto
in vene di marmo. La luce si allarga
come una macchia. Qualcuno
urtando ha versato un altro giorno.
Torneranno a tracciarsi le strade
alle scarpe che vanno
confermando i confini
di cose tra cose.

dangling from one side of the bed,
her burned-up feet;
the floor holds her face
in its marble veins. The light spreads
like a stain. Someone,
with a thud, has spilled another day.
The streets will again be traced
by shoes walking on
confirming the boundaries
of things among things



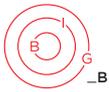
Photo © Alberte Sánchez Regueiro

Tiago Alves Costa (born in Vila Nova Famalicão, 1980) is a Portuguese poet, essayist and translator. He published *Zizek Vai ao Ginásio* (2019), *Mecanismo de Emergência* (2016) and *Wc.Constrangido* (2012), with editions in Portugal, Galicia and Brazil. Collaboratively, he participated in the “Current Ibero-American Poetry Anthology” (2018). He received Honorable Mentions in the Glória de Sant’Anna International Poetry Award 2020 and 2018, and the Manuel Murguía for Short Stories Prize 2019. He is the editor-in-chief of the digital cultural magazine *Palavra Comum*. He is a member of the Association of Writers in Galician Language (AELG). He holds a Degree in Advertising (ISCET, PT) and a postgraduate in Creativity and Innovation (TC3, USA).

Translated into English by Joanna Magalhães.

IT'S THE NIGHT DOCTOR, THAT HURTS

It's the night doctor, it's the night that hurts
Yes, you can examine the distance
that goes from my existence to the doubts that lie within me
You can examine as I have nothing else to hide,
I don't even carry a wallet anymore, neither my instinct,
permanently carried over my shoulder in timeless days,
neither my other wretched self
who ran away,
as soon as he realized that the X-ray proved he was also guilty.
If it hurts when I breathe?
It hurts when my inside feels inhabited, doctor
when my dreams feel like those airports on a Monday night
where we arrive and leave but never hold ourselves
to contemplate the airplanes
So many airplanes, doctor... so many airplanes
Ah, doctor, of course it hurts!
Yes, there! Next to that spot, where one day someone will ask whom
it was from,
Right after the place only accessed by my mother
during my childhood
Please don't insist, doctor,
You need to understand once and for all
that one thing, is the pain hurting from the inside, and another, to
the outside
You need to understand ... that one thing is the scientific method
and another, to get here with a It won't be anything serious
and leave with a that's the way Life is
I will calm down, I will calm down, doctor



But please, don't press The Night that way
as if you were searching for a heart in the garbage,
as if we've known each other forever
as if I was already dead!

Am I dead, doctor?

I'm not dead

my body is still in charge look! (he moved the image)

my body was the one dragging me here today

it is the one that continues paying the bills from a premature sleepwalking

it is the one that restores the order,

when I want to go beyond the orbits of the dawn

Look doctor, brooding augments everything the body respects

don't say now it is my imagination

when I well know what is written there:

THIS LIFE AND SIX MONTHS LEFT

But I take notes of all meanings ... here, in the palm of my hand,

just in case I get home alive,

and forget my consciousness outside

in the rain, scheduled for the end of this year.

Ah, Doctor, please hear me at once

It's the night, doctor, it's the night that hurts.

É A NOITE QUE DÓI DOUTOR

É a noite doutor é a noite que dói
sim, pode revistar a distância que vai do meu interior ao benefício da dúvida
pode revistar que já nada tenho a esconder,
já nem a carteira levo
nem o instinto, que sempre carreguei ao ombro
em dias sem tempo
nem o taful do meu outro eu
que fugiu,
assim que viu a radiografia a provar
que ele também era culpado
Se dói quando inspiro?
Dói quando isto está desabitado por dentro, doutor
quando o sonho se parece aqueles aeroportos a uma segunda à noite
onde chegamos e partimos mas nunca ficamos
para contemplar os aviões
tanto avião doutor tanto avião
Ai ai doutor, claro que dói!

Aí: mesmo ao lado de onde um dia alguém irá perguntar: de quem era?
logo acima de onde em pequeno
só a minha Mãe chegava
Por favor não insista doutor,
entenda de uma vez por todas
que uma coisa é a dor doer para dentro
e outra é doer para fora
entenda... que uma é o método científico
e outra é chegar aqui com um Isso Não Deve Ser Nada
e sair com um É Assim a Vida



Eu acalmo-me eu acalmo-me doutor
mas não me pressione assim na noite dessa forma
como se estivesse à procura de um coração no caixote do lixo,
como se nos conhecêssemos desde pequeninos
como se eu já estivesse morto!
Eu estou morto, doutor? Ah?
Eu não estou morto
aqui quem manda ainda é o meu corpo veja! (mexeu na imagem)
foi ele quem hoje me arrastou até aqui
é ele quem continua a pagar as contas do sonambulismo precoce
é ele quem repõe a ordem,
quando eu quero ir para lá das órbitas da madrugada
Olhe que a cisma doutor
faz aumentar tudo ao que o corpo respeita
não venha agora dizer que é impressão minha
quando eu sei bem o que aí está escrito:
ESTA VIDA E MAIS SEIS MESES
Mas eu aponto... aqui, na mão de todos os significados
não vá eu chegar a casa ainda vivo
e esquecer a razão do lado de fora da chuva
que está prevista para o final do ano
Ai doutor dê-me ouvidos de uma vez
é a noite é a noite que dói



Photo © Emna Louzyr

Emna Louzyr is a Tunisian poet and journalist. She is a producer of cultural programs for Tunis International Radio. She was also laureate of the Zubeida Bchir Poetry prize in 2009 and attended several international poetry festivals in Lodève (France), Bari (Italy) and Skopje (Macedonia). Her poetry has been translated into Italian, French and English and was scheduled in the modern Arabic literature program at Brighton University (UK). She has published five poetry collections: *Raneen* (2003); *Volcanos silence* (2006); *Sabra* (2009) and *The wind talked home* (2017). One translated collection has been published in France « *Le silence des volcans* » (2015).

Translated into English by Ghassan Al Khuneizi.



على قيد وهم

Illusioned

سخب غاضبة
تهدد أحلامنا
نحن على قيد وهم
تنازلنا عن الحياة
منذ أمد

Angry clouds
Threaten our dreams
We are illusioned
We gave up on life
Long ago

نتنفس مر غمون

We breathe against our will

سحب غاضبة
تلاحقنا
فلا تجد غير ضلال شاردة

Angry clouds
Are chasing after us
Finding nothing but stray shadows

لم يبق في الغدير
إلا سحبية ماء

Nothing is left in the stream
Except for a minute cloud of water

فرار

Escape

تركت خيمتي
على هذا الشاطئ

I left my tent
On this seaside

وضعت فيها ما أملك
قصائد لم تكتب
أحلامي المنسية
شيء من ذاتي
أو ما تبقى
قطرات الندى
لحظات الشجن
و زهرة الصبار الأبدية
التي أهداني إياها جدي

I entrusted it with what I own
Unwritten poems
My forgotten dreams
A bit of myself
Or what's left on it
Drops of dew
Moments of melancholy
And the eternal cactus flower
That my grandfather presented me
The curtain has come down
On a smile of a woman
Whose sent almost brought me back to life

أسدلت الستار
على ابتسامة امرأة
كاد عطرها أن يعيدني إلى الحياة

I left my tent
On the sand dune
And retired my memory in it
Summer will certainly come back
Yet I will not find my tent

تركت خيمتي على كتيب الرمل
و أويت فيها ذاكرتي
سيعود الصيف حتما
و لن أجد خيمتي



Photo © Tatjana Rakić

Dragan Jovanović Danilov, Serbian author, art critic and essayist, was born in Požega in 1960. He studied at the Faculty of Law and at the Department of History of Art at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Danilov's poetry has been described by Italian, French, English, Bulgarian, Romanian and Slovak-speaking critics. He has appeared at numerous international poetry festivals and has hosted several one-man literary evenings and poetry readings in France. His poetry books have been translated into English, French, German, Italian, Greek, Bulgarian, Slovak, Romanian and Macedonian. His essays on visual art have been translated into English and French.

Translated into English by Charles Simic.

СОБА НОШЕНА КРИЛИМА

Ето, путовао сам и ја!
Синоћ сам читао у фотелји у углу, а данас
сам испод паукове мреже, на супротној
страни собе - мачка ми је уснула на крилу
јер зна да нема разлога у било шта
се уплитати.

Ова соба из које нема излаза
учионица је слободе.

О осами зборећи, од осаме се и ограђујем.
Не преиспитујем границе празнине
ни могућности песничког језика;
не занима ме искричава замршеност епова,
ни подвизи козачких атамана; немам
на интернету свој сајт, сама је у страшној,
подивљалој одаји моја сенка.

Нежан као табан детета, оставио сам себе
у некаквом граалу на обали, да ноћ сиђе
на моје тело и покрије га неизмерношћу
неког ко је смирен и ко је свуда.

Топла тампон-држава са нејасно одређеном
спољњом политиком - тако видим своју
чедну собу, у којој је потопљена Атлантида.

Домовино, ја сам твој сиромашни дечак;
ја сам папир на коме куца срце.
Море неко давно сањано шири мирис
у моје расуло, гледа ме очима слепца,
каже да сам највећи путник тамо где се
не померам с места.

Ето, путовао сам и ја.



ROOM CARRIED ON WINGS

I, too, had my travels.

Last night I read in the armchair in the corner,
and today I'm under the spider web
on the other side of the room – a cat asleep in my lap
since she knows there's no reason to get involved.

Speaking of solitude, I distance myself from it.
I'm not reexamining the frontiers of the void
nor the possibilities of the poetic language;
I've no interest in the shrill intricacies of the epic,
the feats of Kazakh chieftain; I don't have
my own website on the internet; my wild shadow
is alone in a room gone wild and terrifying.

Tender like a foot sole of a child, I left myself
in some seaside town for the night
to descend and cover my body with the immensity
of someone who is calm and who is everywhere.

Motherland, I'm your poor child,
I'm a piece of paper on which a heart beats.
The smell of the sea dreamed of long ago
wafts into my chaos, it watches me with eyes of a blind man,
tells me that I'm the great traveler
who doesn't budge from his home.

There, too, I had my travels.



Photo © Violette Abou Jalad

Violette Abou Jalad is Lebanese poet. She studied philosophy and theology and participated in several cultural meetings and conventions in Arab countries, including Amman, Baghdad, Tunis, Algeria and European countries such as France and Spain. She has published several collections of poems: *Sayyad El Naoum*, *Banafsaj Akhir*, *Awan El Nass*, *Awan El Jasa*, *Ourafek El Majanin Ila oukoulihem* (Ed. Fadaat, Amman), *La ahia 'ala haza el kaoukab siway* (Ed. Elka). A new collection in French will soon be published by the publishing house Lanskine: *Alone on this Planet*.



كيف سنكتب عن الحب
نحن الذين فقدنا أطرافنا في حروب صغيرة!
نحن الذين تركنا الأشباح تلهو في غرفنا المعتمة
وجعلنا من النوم ملتقى لندامى الغياب!
كيف سنذهب الى الحب بأقدامنا القصيرة
نحن الذين جلسنا طويلا خلف النوافذ
ثم ارتبكنا كطَرَقات على أبواب مخلعة.
كيف سنندوق بكل هدوء
عسل كل هؤلاء الشعراء!
نحن أبناء اللغة المُرّة ،
اصحاب الندوب الغائرة
حتى آخر الموت!

How shall we write about love
We who lost our members in trivial wars?
We who let the ghosts caper in our dark rooms?
And made of sleep a meeting for tepsters of absence,
How shall we go to love on our little feet?
We Who sat long behind the windows,
Then we got confused like the the roads on closed doors.
How shall we taste steadily the honey of all those poets?
We, son's of the bitter language,
With the deep scars
Until the very end of death.

عادت الأشباح الى طوافها،
الناس الى منازلهم.
الوحشة المعلقة في الفراغ
أرجوحة بين الحياة والموت.
رمى الله نرداً في الهواء
وكان هذا المجاز الحيّ.
رمى الشاعر نرداً في الماء
فغرقنا جميعاً في وهم الرحيل.
نحن الكائنات المتواطئة
نددّق في مواكب الصلاة كي نتوب عن أفراحنا.
ونصطفّ خلف البنادق كي ندافع عن صلاتنا.
في أسطورة قديمة ،
رميتُ نردا في اللغة
وكتبتُ كثيرا عن الأشباح
لكنها عادت الى طوافها ،
وها أنا في منزل مسكون بالإنس
لا تلهو به الرياح ،
لا يتسكّع به الضياع ، لا الضلال.
مشهد يتعثر بالألفة والضجر
في طقس يحتاج لقفازين وقبعة ،
لقبلة طويلة في الحديقة الخلفية
لجنة الله الموعودة
أو لجحيمه الافتراضي .

Ghosts are back to their wanderings
People to their homes
The gloom suspended in the void,
A swing between life and death.
God has thrown a dice in the air,
And it was this living metaphor
The poet has thrown a dice in the water,
And we all drowned in the illusions of the leave .
We, the complicit beings,
flow in the prayer's processions to repent our Joys.
Then, we align behind our guns to defend our prayers
In an old myth, I was thrown as a dice into language
So, I wrote so much about ghosts
Yet,they returned back to their wanderings
And, here I am, in a house haunted by humans
Where winds don't caper
Nor do loss and delusion wander in a scene
that stumbles on affinity and boredom,
In a weather that needs a pair of gloves and a hat,
A long kiss in the backyard,
God's promised paradise,
Or his virtual Hell



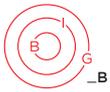
Photo © Tiziano Fratus

Tiziano Fratus (born in Bergamo, 1975) grew up in north Italian landscapes, the great plain at the foot of the mountains. When his natural family was dissolved he began to travel, crossing and touching conifer woods in California, Japan and around the Alps where he coined the concepts of Rootman (*Homo Radix*), Wandering Forest (*Bosco itinerante*) and Primordial Root (*Radice primordiale*). He practices an everyday zen meditation in nature and the discipline of Dendrosophy (*Dendrosophia*). Along twenty years of writing he has published a wide forest of words—travelogues, meditation books, novels, collections of poems—some by leading Italian publishing houses, some by independent ones. His poems have been translated into ten languages and published in many countries while his photography has shown in solo exhibitions. Visit Studiohomoradix.com.

Translated into English by Eleonora Matarrese.

BOSCO ITINERANTE

C'è
un bosco
che mi abita dentro,
un silenzio cantato e interminabile,
ruscelli che sgorgano e animali che corrono.
Io non so chi sono, ripete la voce, non so chi sono.
Ma sento che c'è questo mondo di fine trama
che abita un luogo senza confini, qui,
nel petto, nel cuore, nella mente.
Popola le ore del sonno e
nutre le ore di pensiero.
Ecco perché quando
faccio ritorno nel
bosco reale mi
viene voglia
di urlare,
di amare
come ama
una madre che
non distingue un
figlio da un altro figlio.
Sono un bosco che cammina,
un bosco che radica
e si sradica



WANDERING FOREST

There
is a forest
living inside me,
a song and endless silence,
streams flowing and animals that run.
I don't know who I am, the voice is repeating,
I don't know who I am. Yet I feel there is this world of
fine weaving living in a place without any border,
here, in my chest, in my heart, in my mind.
It settles in my hours of sleep and feeds
my hours of thought. This is why
when I go back to a real forest
I feel like I want to scream,
to love as a mother who
doesn't discern a son
from another son
would do.
I am a forest
who walks, a forest who
roots in and roots
out



Photo © J. Gadotti

Francesca Cricelli is a poet and literary translator. She holds a PhD in Literary Translations (University of São Paulo), is the author of *Repátria* (Selo Demônio Negro 2015), *16 poemas + 1* (Sagarana 2017) and *Errância* (Macondo Edições 2019). She has translated into Portuguese Elena Ferrante, Igjaba Scego, Jhumpa Lahiri and other authors. Francesca currently lives in Reykjavík, where she studies Icelandic Language and Literature.

Translations by the author.



É UMA LONGA ESTRADA REPATRIAR A ALMA

Há que se fazer o silêncio
para ouvir os dedos
sobre o velho piano da ferrovia
é uma longa estrada repatriar a alma
a rota é na medula
descida íngreme
ou subida sem estanque —

demolir para construir
e não fugir do terror sem nome
de não ser contido
apanhado, compreendido
é preciso seguir adiante
no fogo e sem ar
e se a dor perdurar
é preciso ser destemido
para espelhar o rosto
em outros olhos
distantes como num espelho.

IT'S A LONG ROAD TO REPATRIATE THE SOUL

Silence is needed
for to read the fingers
in the old railway piano
it's a long road to repatriate the soul
the route's in the marrow
a steep descent
or stall-less climb –
demolishing to erect
never running from the nameless terror
of not being contained
held, understood

got to carry on forward
breathless, on fire
and if pain persists
got to be fearless
to reflect your face
in other eyes
distant like in a mirror.



Minha língua aqui
é muda
ou quase

só existe no silêncio
diálogo íntimo assoprado
desenlace da tradução.

Minha língua, flor inversa,
palavra que é corpo e é linguagem
e não posso transpor.

*

Adentrar o figo
sua polpa-essência
é adentrar um jardim de vespas mortas

a língua a saborear a planta
o bojo doce um dia à espera da fecundação.

*

Que gesto é esse que se repete há 34 milhões de anos?

*

Adentrar essa língua
sua milenar essência
é adentrar minha memória de pedra

a língua antes dos dentes
o bojo sem contornos da existência primordial.

*

Não só na queda se perdem as asas
(há de se deixá-las do lado de fora)
também ao percorrer o corredor afunilado
à procura de alimento e perpetuação.

Ao penetrar o figo, abandonamos o voo.

*

Para cavar uma saída da urna silente
servem mandíbulas fortes
dentes ferozes e olhos minúsculos
- saber se orientar na escuridão.

*

A muda de hortelã não morreu ao ser arrancada do solo
- sobrevive num vaso -
inventou raízes e uma nova folhagem.

*

Na minha cidade aguardamos o degelo do solo
como a língua espera pela dentição -
roçar as coroas que apontam das gengivas
preparar a mordida -
o que sobrevive sob o manto branco?

Nossos corpos estranhos se preparam
(como a vespa-mãe depõe seus ovos no figo)
raízes de hortelã
em busca do chão.



My tongue here
is mute
or almost

it is only in silence
an intimate whisper
the outcome of translation.

My tongue is an inverted flower
a word that means body but also language
and I can't bridge it.

*

When you bite a fig
its flesh and essence
it's like entering a garden of dead wasps

the tongue tasting the plant
its sweet bulge, once waiting to be fertilized.

*

What is this gesture that repeats itself even after 34 million years?

*

When I enter into this language
its ancient essence
I bite into the stone memory inside me

of language before the teeth
the borderless bulge of my primitive existence.

*

It's not just when falling that we lose wings
(one must leave them on the outside)
it happens as we slither in through the funnelled corridor
searching for food and perpetuation.

As we penetrate the fig, we give up on flying.

*

In order to dig an exit from the silent vessel
one must have strong jaws
fierce teeth and minute eyes
– one must know how to get around in the darkness.

*

The mint sprout didn't die from being removed from the ground
– it has been living in a vase –
it has invented roots and new leaves.

*

In my city we wait for the frost to undo itself
as tongues wait for teething –
to rub the crowns as they stick out from the gum
be ready to bite –
what lives through under the white cloak?

Our foreign bodies get ready
(as the wasp mother lays her eggs in the fig)
mint roots
searching for soil.



Photo © Lucía Comba

Rafael Soler was born in 1947 in Spain, is a poet, an award-winning novelist, university professor, and Spanish Writers Association (ACE) Vice President. He has published five books of poetry, and he has been invited to read his poems in more than fifteen countries. Some of his books have been translated into English, French, Italian, Japanese, Hungarian, Chinese, Macedonian and Romanian.

Translated into English by Gwen Osterwald.

De todos los recuentos

valuación biográfica de las fronteras interiores del poeta

Yo escribía entonces versos falsos y rotundos
y en las horas peores del licor espeso
la ciudad era otra piel donde envolverme

fueron años de apenas unos meses
que iban de paladar en paladar y boca en boca
susurrando el misterio

un palo y un sombrero
bastaban para transitar el día

y el polvo de mis botas rezumaba
el jugo prohibido de algún lugar de África
tan cerca de los naipes
que mi lengua de trébol no dormía

y atentos al capricho
de un corazón desabrochado
en mi cuaderno caían los olores robados y las citas

un cuenco de sal era mi hogar
y una paloma mi única vecina

después llegaron otras
con un hacha en el pico tatuada

vestían de gris eran adultas
y pronto me ofrecieron
un empleo estable y una deuda letal con avalista.



Of all recounts

A biographical evaluation of inner poet's borders

Back then I was writing false and emphatic verses
and in the darkest hours of thick liquor
the city was another skin to wrap myself in

there were years that were barely a few months
that went from palate to palate and mouth to mouth
whispering the mystery

a stick and sombrero
were enough to travel all day

and the dust from my boots oozed
the forbidden juice of some place in Africa
so close to the cards
that my clover tongue did not sleep

and attentive to the capriciousness
of an undone heart
in my notebook fell stolen scents and dates

a bowl of salt was my home
and a pigeon my only neighbor

later others arrived
with an axe tattooed on their beak

dressed in grey they were adults
and soon offered me
a stable job and a lethal debt with a guarantor.

No se detiene la memoria

De la ambigua relación entre el poeta y sus fronteras

De ocasiones perdidas los bolsillos llenos
a componer tu hacienda vienes
con la calma suicida del que tiene
un pacto de honor con su verdugo

las manos por el tiempo de escarcha tatuadas
en blanco tu cuaderno donde anotabas todo
curtido el corazón en la intemperie

y sabes
que la vuelta a cuanto fue es imposible
que ahora la lluvia se viste de ceniza

y que el bastón de mando antaño bienvenido
es hoy el palo con que ahuyentas
a los gatos que tus entrañas crían

monarca de lo poco
y señor de lo que queda en nada.



Memory does not stop

The ambiguous relationship between the poet and his borders.

Pockets full of lost opportunities
you come to fix your estate
with the suicidal calm of one who has
a pact of honor with their executioner

hands tattooed by the frost of time
your blank notebook where you wrote everything down
hardened heart from the outdoors

and you know
that the return to how it was is impossible
that now rain is dressed in ash

and that the baton welcomed long ago
is today the stick with which you drive away
the cats your womb nurtured

monarch of the few
and lord of what is left of nothing.



Photo © Zvi Pfeffer

Lali Tsipi Michaeli is an Israeli independent universal poet. Born in Georgia in 1964, she immigrated to Israel at the age of seven. She has published six poetry books so far, attended international poetry festivals, and was part of a residency program for talented writers in New York in 2018. Her books have been translated into foreign languages in New York, India, France, Italy, Georgia, Ukrain, Russia, Romania and Iran. Lali was defined by Professor Gabriel Moked in his book as “Erotico-Urban Poet” and was highly regarded by critics, who describe her as innovative and combative. In 2011 Lali conducted an anthology for protest *Resistance*, in which she presents her personal poetic manifesto, claiming that “poetry as a whole is a revolt...The poem is not purely individual. It is common ground and should be heard in a great voice”. Lali teaches Hebrew at Ben Gurion University. She has one son and lives in Tel Aviv by the sea.

Translated into English by Michael Simkin.

בלוז הלילה

הלילה
החומה מפרידה
בינינו
כל היום ריפאנו את הפצעים שִׁיִצְרְנו
בליל אמש
זיכרון תאבתן עם ניבים
לועס אותנו ופולט
את פרקי ההיסטוריה שלי בלילות
ללא אהבה
אני רוצה לתלוש מהספר
די לי מלילות החושך
ימי האפלה
אנחנו תאומי חוסר סבלנות
אויבי השלונה
השׂיִיכות שלנו זועקת זה לזו על
קו החוף
התשווקה קורסת לאשליה
הקמטים מתמלאים בדמעות
הידיים!
הידיים כמו תמיד מאוכזבות
מוסקות רוב הזמן את הדרך
הזרה.

Blues of the night

Tonight
The wall separates
between us
All day long we healed the wounds we had created
Last night
Memory will wilt with fangs
Chews us and emits
The Chapters of My History at Nights
Without love
I want to get rid of the book
The words of darkness are enough for me
Days of Darkness
We are impatient twins
The enemies of peace
Our belonging cries out to each other about
shore line
Passion collapses into an illusion
The wrinkles are filled with tears
And the hands
The hands as always are disappointed
Most of the time, the road is erased
return.



אַהֲבֵי הַסּוּדִי, אַתָּה
אַנְרַכִּיסְט שֶׁמְתַקֵּן לִי
אֶת שִׁפְתוֹ בְּשִׁפְתֵי
זֶה שֶׁלֹּא יִרְאֶה אוֹתִי בְּאֶדְמָתוֹ
זֶה שֶׁלֹּא אֶרְאֶה אוֹתוֹ בְּאֶדְמָתִי
אָבֵל הַקּוֹלוֹת שֶׁלְנוּ מְרַחֲפִים
כְּמוֹ מַטְחִים בְּעוֹלָם
הַהִיסְטוֹרְיָה שֶׁלְךָ נִכְתְּבַת
בְּדִיוֹ שִׁיוֹצֵר בְּמַפְעֵל הָאֵהָבָה שְׁלִי.

My secret lover, you

An anarchist who corrects me
His language into my language
The one who will not see me on his land
The one that I will not see on my land
But our voices are floating
Like bombardments in the world
Your history is written
In ink that was produced
In the factory of my love.



Photo © Atman Amin

Tareq al Karmy, born in 1975, is a Palestinian poet from the city of Tulkarm who plays a Nay flute. He has published 11 poetry collections so far. His poems have been translated into various languages and he has participated in local and international poetry festivals. Al Karmy's poems attempt to write poems without ending, in a way that creates a deliberate interruption in the poem, leaving space for the reader to engage in writing the ending of the poem and leaving space for imagination. This is a unique and unusual act in the landscape of Palestinian poetry that makes al Karmy one of the most interesting young voices in contemporary Palestinian poetry.

طارق الكرمي قلبي جرسٌ لحبك السري

ها انتِ تحت جلدي رعدةً تنامينَ
تحليبينَ الفجرَ في قنينةِ عطركِ
ها أنا احلبُ لكِ قلبي
حيثُ اصابعي تتغلغلُ عمياءَ عبرِ سياجِ
صديءٍ لأقطفكِ
اصابعكِ تغمسينها في جدارِ برلينِ الجديدِ
لتقطفيني زهرةَ الفحمِ
هل غيرُكِ النايُ بينِ أصابعي التي تتوهجُ
اصابعكِ المناقيرُ كلها
وانا تحت هذي الاصابعِ
البيانو المُتعبُ ابدأ
ومن اشتباكِ اصابعنا نولدُ..
انتِ جرسٌ وانا جرسٌ
نقرعُ بعضنا بكلِّ صمتٍ..

My heart is a bell of your secret love

Here you are, under my skin, a sleeping tremor

You milked the dawn in your perfume bottle

Behold, I love you my heart

My fingers blindly penetrate through a fence

To pick you up

Your fingers dip it in the new Berlin Wall

To pick me the coal flower

Did I change the flute between my glowing fingers?

Your fingers are all beaks

Under these fingers I'm

Never tired piano

And from the clash of our fingers we are born ...

You are a bell and I am a bell

We knock on each other in all silence...

* Evening / Tulkarem

This multilingual anthology presents the works of poets from around the world, showcasing the state of the art and revealing the contributions of poetry to literary criticism and dissent. Beyond the social sciences and humanities, the book points to the importance of poetry for the fields of inquiry into the intersectional and cosmopolitan domains of borderlands and frontiers. The poems invite the reader to explore innovative approaches to reading and writing borders, those that transcend language within their conventional semiology of boundary transgression.

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