

Mana



CAESURAE: POETICS OF CULTURAL TRANSLATION

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Three poets from Europe curated and edited by Cecile Oumhani

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Translated from the Italian by **Betty Gilmore**

So

So che spesso
in compagnia dell'amore
colmiamo la gravità.
So che la nostra voce
sparirà nel suo doppio.
So che la tua bocca
è il rifugio preferito
dell'alfabeto silenzioso.
Dentro e fuori di noi
la vita non è male
non una galera ch'io sappia.
Allora parlami come alla nube smarrita
scrivimi una lettera immaginaria.
Lascia stare il sesso.
Spezza la catena
siamo noi il fuoco.

What I know

I know that often
in love's company
we fill gravity.

I know that our voice
will disappear into its double.
I know that your mouth
is the favorite hiding place
for an alphabet of silence.
Inside and outside of us
life is not so bad
not a prison
as far as I know.
So speak to me as if I were a lost cloud
write me an imaginary letter.
Forget about sex.
Break the chain
We ourselves are the fire.

Qualcosa

Qualcosa migra in noi.
Istanti di una pioggia irregolare
arrivata dai millenni
a lavare i nostri vicoli
ad arrotolare lingue dalle gole imploranti
contro i cani del non detto.
Qualcosa sempre è migrato
sulle strade del presente
strade d'alti venti e folli desideri.
Boschi di voci piegano stagioni.
Solchi notturni scavano l'acqua dell'alba
laddove le parole si scontrano
dove s'abbeverano gli alfabeti.
Ovunque profumo di rinascita.

Something

Something migrates within us.
Flashes of an unsteady rain
arriving from millenniums
to wash our tiny streets
to roll up the tongues from throats
imploring against the dogs of the unspoken.

Something has always been migrating
through the streets of the present
streets with strong winds and crazy desires.
Forests of voices bending the seasons.
Nocturnal ditches dig up the water of the dawn
where words clash
where the alphabets drink.
Everywhere the scent of renewal.

Seme di parola

ombra di parola
semina profonda
seme di parole
non è più ombra
valgano parole in ombra
per seminare nel profondo
profonda semina la parola
misere semine non contano per niente
parola semina parola
semina parola di parola
valga sempre la parola
valga sempre la parola in quanto parola
valga parola dopo parola
seminala tu
seminala tu se vale
seminala tu la parola
seminala tu la parola-semenza
seminala tu seminatore se mi senti
seminala profonda
seminala profonda in profonda profondità
se no il silenzio
è più desiderabile

Semis de mots

ombre de mots
profonde semence
semis de mots
n'est plus ombre

que vaillent les mots en ombre
pour semer au plus profond
profonde semence le mot
misérables semences ne comptent aucunement
mot sème mot
sème mots de mots
que toujours vaille le mot
que toujours vaille le mot en tant que mot
mot après mot
sème-le toi-même
sème-le toi-même s'il vaut
sème-le toi-même le mot
sème-le toi-même le mot-semence
sème-le toi-même semeur si tu m'entends
sème mot profond
sème-le profond en profonde profondeur
sinon le silence
est plus désirable

Wordseeds

the shadow of a word
planted deep down
the seed of words
no longer a shadow
words have worth in the shade
to be planted deep deep down
the word seeds are profound
a mediocre seed is worthless
one word begets another
word begets word
begets word from word
the word always has worth
the word always has worth as a word
word after word has worth
plant it yourself
plant it yourself if it has worth
plant the word yourself
plant the wordseed yourself
plant it yourself you planters if you hear me

plant it deep deep deep down
if you do not silence
is more desirable

Per coloro che dormono

Anime spente svegliatevi
accendete le vostre lampade
lasciate correre le fiamme tutte quante
cucite gli strappi della pelle terrestre
smontate i ponti della stupidità
riempite le pance vuote dei fratelli lontani
digerite l'altro dal nome impronunciabile
tornatevene all'uva e al trattore
all'olio dolce di colline
bevete le parole di quei libri
di cui conoscete la grandezza
per sentito dire.

For those who lie sleeping

Lifeless souls, awaken
light your lamps
let your flames flare freely
sew up the gashes in your earthly skin
dismantle the bridges of stupidity
fill the empty bellies of your brothers faraway
digest the unpronounceable name of the other
return to the tractor and the grape
the sweet oil from hillsides
drink in the words of the books
whose greatness you have only heard
about from a distance.



Viviane Ciampi, born French in France, becomes (for love) Italian in Italy and a citizen of the world everywhere. Her work as a poet and translator focuses on poetry in the book and outside the book. She participates to national and international festivals, she's part of the teams the festivals "Parole Spalancate" (Genoa, Italy) and "Voix Vives de Méditerranée en Méditerranée" (Sète, France).

Cristina Hermeziu

translated from the Romanian by **Jozefina Komporaly**

**

înainte de a se cimenta totul
corpul se salvează singur știe să pună
uitare material de umplutură un pumn doi pumni trei cum bagi bile de polistiren între conținutul
fragil și pereți

(îmobilizezi
inima
în cea mai frumoasă călătorie)

(nu te mai uita în soare e periculos) uită-te în soare
vălul de lumină neagră
când te uiți în soare apare
ca să te poți uita
în soare

urzicile cu flori albe ploaia
subțire botul unui mic
șobolan de apă
adulmecand de foarte aproape

boabe de polistiren.

**

before it all hardens and petrifies
the body redeems itself it knows how to induce
oblivion a fistful two fistfuls three fistfuls of fillers the way you insert polystyrene balls between
fragile items and the walls

(you bring
the heart to a standstill
along the nicest possible journey)

(don't look into the sun it's dangerous) do look into the sun
a veil of black light appears
when you look into the sun
so you can actually look
into the sun

white dead-nettle the thin
rain the muzzle of a small
water rat
taking a close-up whiff
of the polystyrene balls.

**

nu avem decât timp
nu avem decât carne

bagă-ți mâinile până la cot
în rezerva de carne și timp

materia asta primă

(eternă ca un deșeu radioactiv)

**

all we have is time
all we have is flesh

shove your arms elbow-high
down our supplies of flesh and time

this raw material
(everlasting like radioactive debris)

**

de-con-stru-ieș-te-ți frica

(dacă-ți intră un ac în picior
mi-a spus băiatul acela
acul urcă râurile de artere
vadul venelor

până se înfige
cu un tremur
în-dră-gos-tit
în inimă)

**

de-con-struct-your-fear

(if a needle gets stuck in your foot
this boy said to me
the needle travels upstream on the rivers of your arteries
the fords of your veins

until it pierces
like a tremor
in-love
your heart)

**

târziu de tot
trupul plesnește

ca o păstaie
îndeajuns de coaptă

rămâne inima

fibroasă și tare
cu pieleță lucioasă și văi calde

**

really late
the body bursts open

like some string beans
ripe enough

all that is left is the heart

fibrous and hard
with a shiny skin and warm valleys

**

ce fac oamenii
împreună
când nimeni
nu vede
cu ochiul celuilalt

când nimeni
nu vorbește
cu gura altuia

ce fac oamenii
împreună
când nimeni
nu tremură
cu pielea altuia

când nimeni
nu sângerează
cu sângele celuilalt

ce fac oamenii
împreună
când nimeni
nu urlă
cu urletul altuia

când nimeni
nu-și amintește
amintirile altuia

ce fac oamenii
împreună
când nimeni
nu îmbătrânește
în carnea altuia

**

what can we do
with one another
when nobody
is watching
with somebody else's eyes

when nobody
is talking
with somebody else's mouth

what can we do
with one another
when nobody
is trembling
with someone else's skin

when nobody
is bleeding
with someone else's blood

what can we do
together
when nobody
is howling
with someone else's howl

when nobody
remembers
somebody else's life

what can we do
with one another
when nobody
grows older
in someone else's flesh



***Cristina Hermeziu** (1971) is a poet, journalist and writer, currently associated lecturer at the Department of Communication Sciences at the Faculty of Philosophy and Social and Political Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania.*

She is the author of two volumes of poetry: Parisul nu crede în lacrimi [Paris Doesn't Believe in Tears], Junimea, 2017 – recipient of the Opera Prima award, Tudor Arghezi Festival, Romania; and între timp îți vezi de viața ta, [meanwhile, you mind your own business], Junimea, 2020.

She edited two communication studies: Viața pe Facebook. Dau like deci exist [Life on Facebook. I like so I exist], Polirom, 2020, and Revoluția din depărtare [The Revolution from Afar], Curtea Veche, 2011. She published a compilation of her articles as a foreign journalist in France, entitled Vedere din Turnul Eiffel. Portrete civile, crochiuri politice [View from the Eiffel Tower. Portraits of Civilian Life and Political Sketches], Junimea, 2017.

Stève Wilifrid MOUNGUENGUI

En amont de l'oubli
S'écroule sur nos vies
La fragilité du temps
Et dans le songe des jours
Je regarde errer le crépuscule
En attendant l'oubli
Sur les rives du fleuve qui monte
Je me hâte d'écrire des mots
Monuments éternels pour
Te sauver de l'orage
Qui vient
Quand je ne serai plus
Et qu'enfin je serai avec toi
Sur l'autre rive de la nuit

Upstream of oblivion

Collapses on our lives
The fragility of time
And in the dream of days
I watch the twilight wander
Waiting for oblivion
On the banks of the rising river
I hasten to write words
Eternal monuments to
Save you from the storm
That is coming
When I am no more
And I will finally be with you
On the other side of the night

Il nous fallait vivre
Malgré la crue qui vient
Persévérer encore après le désert
Nos rêves sont oasis
Soigner nos ailes brûlées
Et repartir encore vers ces horizons
Tout repos est mort
Et c'est pour vivre que je marche
Malgré la soif de mes pieds
Il nous fallait vivre
Aller où tombe la pluie
Laver les yeux de nos âmes

We had to live
In spite of the coming flood
To persevere after the desert
Our dreams are oasis
To heal our burned wings
And leave again towards these horizons
All rest is dead
And it is to live that I walk
Despite the thirst of my feet
We had to live
To go where the rain falls
To wash the eyes of our souls

Poèmes extraits du recueil *En attendant l'orage et l'oubli*, 2018

Nous apprenons à accepter nos joies, les plus petites. À reconnaître en elles la grandeur des soleils. Partons, le silence est une longue route. Marcher tant que dure la soif, marcher tant que dure la faim.

Une luciole éclaire l'univers, ne l'oublie pas.

Seules nos défaites ont fait de nous des hommes et des femmes.

La plus petite lumière est un soleil

We learn to accept our smallest joys. To recognise in them the greatness of the suns. Let us go, silence is a long road. Walk while thirst lasts, walk while hunger lasts.

A firefly lights up the universe, don't forget it.

Only our defeats have made us men and women.

The smallest light is a sun

Émerveille-toi de l'étincelle, mon amour.

Elle est l'enfance de la flamme qui éclaire une vie. Émerveille-toi de l'éternité brève des instants.

Ce qu'il reste de lumière, derrière le silence, derrière les silhouettes de l'aube

Va, commence, ton premier pas est un miracle

Puisque la nuit se rassemble, il nous faudra scintiller ensemble. Avec les fleurs de nos chemins, composer nos bouquets de lumière.

Ne jamais s'arrêter de chercher, pousser la porte. Il te faut oser l'enfance et renaître.

Marvel at the spark, my love.

It is the infancy of the flame that lights up a life. Marvel at the brief eternity of moments.

What remains of light, behind the silence, behind the silhouettes of dawn

Go, begin, your first step is a miracle

Since the night is gathering, we must sparkle together. With the flowers of our paths, compose our bouquets of light.

Never stop looking, push the door. You must dare to be a child and be reborn.

Poèmes extraits du recueil *Cahier d'adieu à la mélancolie*, 2021

Crois-tu que les vents ont une tanière ?

Ils ne demeurent pas

Ils passent à coup d'ailes de ciels en ciels

N'oublie pas de détacher le vagabond en toi

Et ne tourne pas les pas à la mélancolie

Il t'appartient de veiller sur la luciole en toi

Souviens-toi au large des orages

L'éclaircie n'est précédée d'aucun présage

Une entaille brève sillonne la mémoire de ta nuit

Toujours devant toi tu trouveras

La margelle du puits et les jeux d'enfants sous la pluie

Pour les jours d'obscurité tu répandras les cendres de lumière que tu tiens dans le creux de ta main

Do you think the winds have a den?

They do not stay

They flit from sky to sky

Don't forget to untie the wanderer in you

And do not turn your steps to melancholy

It's up to you to watch over the firefly inside you

Remember the storms offshore

The lightning is not preceded by any omen

A brief gash cuts through the memory of your night

Always before you

You will find

The curbstone of the well and the children's games in the rain

For the days of darkness you will spread the ashes of light that you hold in the palm of your hand

Poème extrait du re

cueil *L'Enigme des ruines*, La Kainfristanaise, 2021



Stève-Wilifrid Mounguengui

I was born on December 21st, 1976, in the city of Mouila in Gabon. On the shores of the river where I first saw the light of day, people say that a newborn's first cry is a cry (Ngongu) sent to God to express his abandonment. When you are abandoned by the godly father, anxiety surges. Only this cry enables the newborn to cling to life without dying in a mouth overcome by loneliness. It is the same for the exile I am on French soil, where I have spent twenty winters, estranged from the landscapes of my childhood, the thickness of colors and the fabric of perfumes of a primordial morning. It is so when faces are erased, when the voices of dear ones ring in dull, subdued tones. The poem has become my voice, the scream of my vagrancy in exile to keep the world inside me alive. I write not to forget. Forgetting would be dying. I write not to die because I inhabit exile poetically.

Books of poems:

-Et au-delà nos songes d'hiver et le parfum de la terre, L'Harmattan, 2017

-L'Énigme des ruines, La Kainfristanaise, march 2021

Journals :

- *in the on-line journals Lichen et Le Capital des mots*

- *in the first issue of the journal Débridé "L'Écriture et l'énigme du monde" june 2021*