



POETRY

A Gesture of Salt: Three Social Poems

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Book cover, *Ossidiana*, 2018



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The three poems presented here meditate in verse on the concept of migration as a consequence of war, poverty, neo-colonialism, and exploitation of the environment. “**In Absence**”, with its simple and composed structure, is a silent cry of hope. The poet describes one night on a refugees boat in the Mediterranean: one of many journeys of hope tainted by the shadows of future hardships and the sorrow of the memories left behind. Under it all there is the sea, the big mother and never sated monster.

Today our cities are a melting pot of races and languages. Among the tangles of the urban landscape, the most fragile are often lost, forgotten. “**Beyond the Gaze**” offers a symbolic portrait of a neglected humanity, the migrants living too often at the borders of society with their crosses of wars and horrors on their shoulders (there is a hint to Jesus and mother Mary, for those who understand). Over this forgotten humanity, our distracted eyes barely notice anymore the TV news recounting other existential tragedies.

From the first steps of mankind, people migrated, scattering around the world, mixing and differentiating themselves in different cultures and customs. “**Transhumance**” is a sort of laic prayer and a quiet reflection on migrations, crowds, loneliness, nature, and human landscape. The poems come from the Italian book *Ossidiana*, published by Volturnia Edizioni in 2018 (translations into English by the poet).

Lucilla Trapazzo is a Swiss-Italian poet, translator, artist, and performer. After years abroad for studies and work in the DDR, Brussels, Washington DC, and New York City, she now lives in Zurich, Switzerland. Her activities range from poetry, theater (workshops in Italy and abroad, directing, acting), installations, translations, and literary criticism. Editor of the poetry section of *MockUp Magazine*, Italy, and of *Innsaei Literary Journal*, India, co-editor of several international anthologies, she is a juror in international poetry competitions and has co-organized and moderated poetry events, international festivals and art exhibitions for international associations. Many of her poems have been translated into other languages, and she has won numerous prizes and awards, including first prize poetry, La Nicchia, Rome, 2018; first prize poetry, Isolimpia, Napoli, 2019; first prize best poetry book “I Murazzi” Torino, Italy, 2019; Best Poem, Cape Comorin Club Awards, India, 2020; first prize Civil and Philosophical Poems, XI Checkhov’s Autumn International Festival, Crimea, 2021; Gold medal for Outstanding Poet, Yan’an Award, Peoples Republic of China, 2021. Avid supporter of human rights and the planet, her social and feminine point of view is reflected in many of her writings.



In Absence—a Boat named Hope

No moon tonight. The voracious belly
of the sea nurses on dreams
and flesh. A boat forgiven
is tainted by shadows
while furrowing the waters.
The promised destiny is distant.
A woman's face is suspended
in absence. Yesterday
the taste of home and native land.
Disdainful beaches
tomorrow.

In assenza—una barca di nome speranza

Niente luna stanotte. Il ventre
vorace del mare si nutre di sogni
e di carne. Una barca graziata
si tinge di ombra solcando le acque.
Distante è il destino promesso.
Un volto di donna sospeso
in assenza. Alle spalle sapore di casa
e terra natale. Spiagge sprezzanti
domani.

Beyond the gaze

Shattering is the misery of an injury
bound to libations of silence.
Mournful sum of time and space,
returns the migrant mother of the son
crucified to the disdain of crows
and torn apart between night and day
without ending nor beginning. Inhabiting
streets and houses abandoned to the memories,
in the magazines appear only photograms
or distracted words of news bulletins
in the evening on TV - just hollow noises
and frills of conscience in dissonance.
Sweet denial follows compassion.

*Ego absolvo te a peccatis mundi. **

* Latin Catholic formula to absolve sinners

Oltre lo sguardo

Urlante è la miseria di uno squarcio
avvinto a libagioni di silenzio.
Somma dolente d'ogni tempo e luogo
torna migrante la madre del figlio
al ludibrio dei corvi crocifisso
dilaniato tra notte e giorno senza
fine e inizio. Abitando le strade
e case abbandonate alla memoria
nei rotocalchi solo fotogrammi
parole di distratti notiziari
la sera alla TV, vacuo frastuono
e orpelli di coscienza in dissonanza.
Dolce il diniego segue compassione.

Ego absolvo te a peccatis mundi.

Transhumance

At the crossing of rivers intertwining
scarves, people migrate and birds
camels, elephants and jute sacks.
Under harsh shadows of torn skies
women carry in baskets
the cries of the fathers and knives
in the eyes of the children. Replicating
traces of love in a different horizon
on the route of far away delusions.
History is a meandering vein, digging
craters on the face. An offering
of lotus flowers to extinguish the mark
of angular horror, and we harvest dreams
poured on sand. A wrinkle in the wind
leaves no trace.

Transumanza

All'incrocio dei fiumi intrecciando
le sciarpe, genti trasmigrano e uccelli
cammelli, elefanti e sacche di iuta.
All'ombra dura di cieli strappati
portano le donne nelle ceste
il lamento dei padri e coltelli
negli occhi dei figli. Replicando
orme d'amore in un altro orizzonte
sulla rotta di abbagli lontani.
La storia è vena vagante solcante
crateri sul viso. Offrire foglie
di loto per estinguere il marchio
di orrori angolari. Poi cogliere
sogni versati su sabbia. Un solco
nel vento traccia non lascia.