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BOOK REVIEW
ELIZA CLAUDIA FILIMON, JOHN ELIOT (EDS): CROSS-CURRENTS / CURENTE LA RĂSCRUCE

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The editors' choice of opening the volume with the words of José Saramago, recipient of the 1998 Nobel Prize for Literature, "Writers make national literature, translators make universal literature", perfectly mirrors the bilingual approach to the poetic perspectives that the 131-page book lists. Intertwining poetry from the English-speaking world with its translations into Romanian by students at the West University of Timisoara, the anthology offers a double promise. On the one hand, the readers immerse themselves into the literary project that brings together the promised worlds which have been given contour and substance by the creative mind; on the other hand, the collection becomes a translation project through which cultural and linguistic identities are met and shared.

This collection of poems edited by John Eliot and Eliza Claudia Filimon hosts the contributions of 20 prolific poets, some of them winners of major awards in the field: Camille Barr ("Lost world", Memory"), Karen Gemma Brewer ("Village Fool", "Blind dogs for the Guides"), Miriam Calleja ("Understanding poetry", "Moa Egg", "Burying the dark"), Rachel Carney ("The Blather", "The ghost of hard work will be there always"), Gillian Clarke ("For the poet R S Thomas, 1913-2000", "Miracle on St David's Day"), Menna Elfyn ("The Pear Tree, Manse, Pontardawe", "The Players", "The Ukrainian mother"), John Eliot ("St Malo Rendezvous", "Another Story"), Nissim Ezekiel ("Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher", "Urban"), Carmine Giordano ("Blue Jay and Found Objects", "Roses Violets and Blue"), Manuel Iris ("Witness", "I am from here"), Donald Krieger ("Not My Nightmare", "Our Shared Humanities"), Kavita Ezekiel Mendonca ("The Many Things My Father Loved", "A bucket of Hot Water and Salt"), Laurence McPartlin ("Spring", "Sylvette and the Sculptor"), Kate Rose ("Below the mountains", "Propagating"), Chrys Salt ("Socks", "Daffodils at Christmas"), Andreea Iulia Scridon ("Cantata", "Gloss"), George T Sipos ("hunger struck the clouds unexpectedly", "american ballad"), Christina Thatcher ("Detox Passage", "How to Build a Boat"), RS Thomas ("At the End", "Rich"), and Sholeh Wolpé ("Man Without Fear", "The World Grows Blackthorn Walls").

Rather than following one rigid thematic path, the poems frame an eclectic cross-current discourse, where the journey along the fanned-out literary paths is to be taken both horizontally and vertically, while the poetic landscape abounds with colour and rhythm changes, ludic or solemn readings of ontological subjectivities, allowing nuanced decoding/understandings of the text and subtext. The Poet travels the world within and without and builds on the very nature of poetry and its apparent inaccessibility, or on the past which hermetically seals out its promise of a never-to-be-brought-to-life beginning, or on the cyclicity of life and the labyrinthine coping with loss/death/end, on (fading/absent/blooming) love; freedom versus confinement; the in-depth understanding of the dichotomy rich – poor; understanding/witnessing/diving into the miracle(s) of life; home/roots and exile and belonging; the flight or, on the contrary, the illusion of a jump

that dreams of a higher status; time and the act of creation; pain and regret and longing; striving, striving, striving; epiphanies; memory and the controversial stand on the truth of memories; the self and the other – and many other paths for the reader to follow…

In making these levels of understanding accessible to the Romanian audiences, a team of students, coordinated by Eliza Claudia Filimon, wittily approached the intricacies of translating the poetic discourse. "The relationship between poet and translator is one of great trust on the poet's side and a lot of responsibility on the translator's" writes John Eliot in the introductory part of the anthology, "The poet releases the poem to the translator as one might release a homing pigeon, trusting it will return but not knowing the path it will take." For the present volume, this space between trust and responsibility was filled by the contribution of 12 students specializing in Languages and Literatures / Applied Modern Languages / Translation Theory and Practice / Philology: Patricia Anton, Ana Maria Roxana Atănăsoaiei-Balaci, Laura Lorelai Maria Balazs, Adelina Cristina Botyan, Roberto Alexandru Bușoi, Sebastian Ștefan Coman, Oana Denisa Dragomir, Alexandra Oxana Drăgoi, Gabriela Raluca Duță, Paula Andreea Ghercă, Cristiana Ștefana Giurcă, Roxana Cristiana Neagoie.

This way, the anthology has become a multifaceted act of creation which brings the Poet and the Translator together, a dialogue that weaves lyrical tales, a journey awaiting its traveller – the Reader.

Notes on the author

Cristina NICOLAE is a lecturer at G. E. Palade UMPhST of Targu Mures, Romania, where she teaches British and American literature (special emphasis on the architecture of identity), translation studies (with a focus on AVT/audiovisual translation). She holds a BA in English and Romanian Language and Literature, an MA in Anglo-American Studies, and a PhD in Philology. She has co-edited several volumes, has authored a book, and has published articles, reviews, book chapters on her areas of interest and research, to which she adds two translated novels. She is a member of national and international professional associations and has been a team member in several national and international projects. She is a TED language supervisor/manager for the Romanian language, the institutional coordinator for an academic terminology collaboration with DG TRAD-TermCoord of the European Parliament (having supervised several terminological projects), organizer of a translation contest for university students and over 50 academic workshops.