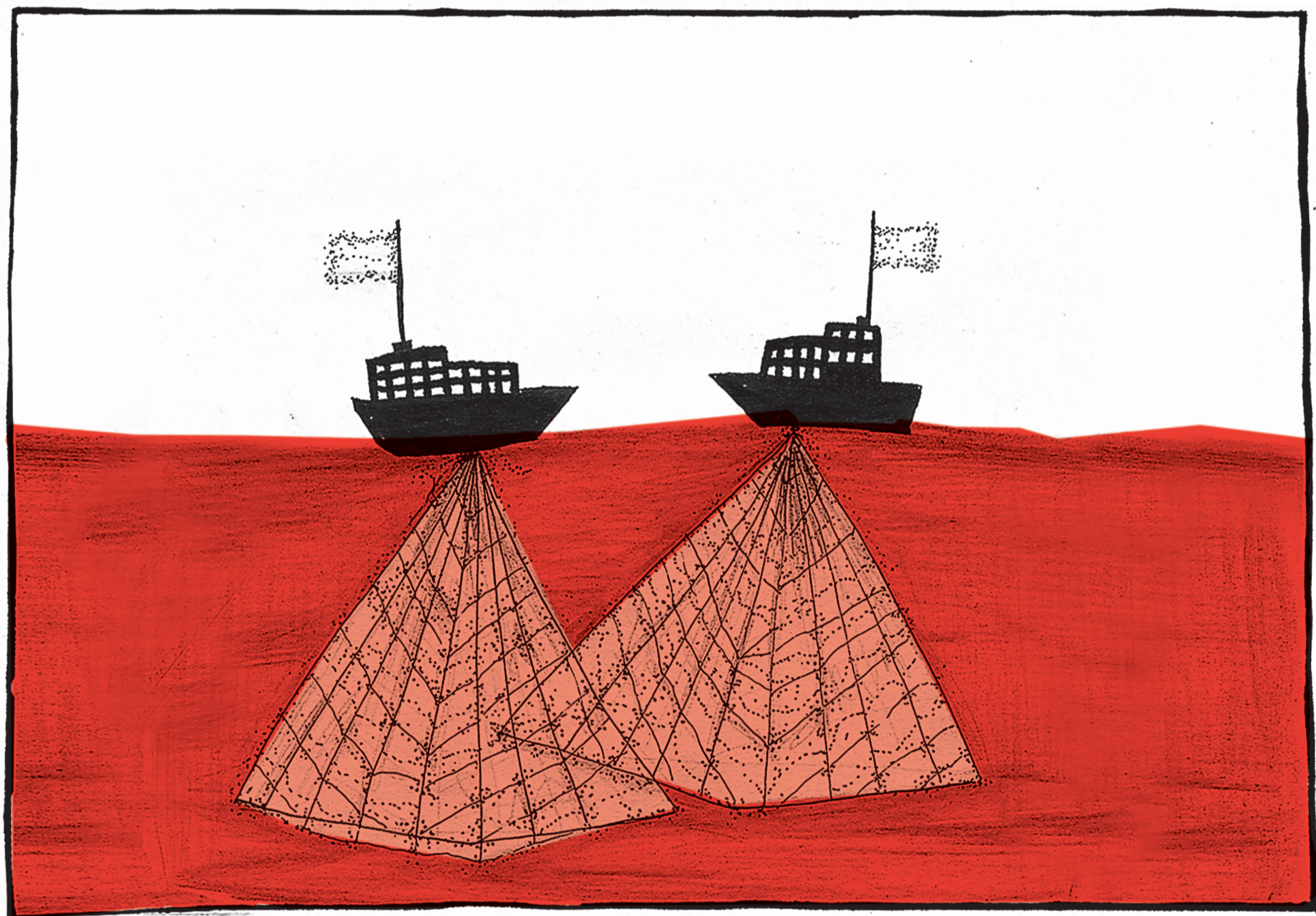


CULTURAL PROPAGANDA PACK. SPECIAL EDITION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE FESTIVAL POLIP, PRISHTINA 10-12 MAY 2013

polip
International
Literature Festival
Pristina

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Literature produced in *happy* countries is alike, but literature written in countries dominated by ongoing crisis has a uniqueness which cannot be compared to anything else.

Separate communities amongst which communication has been interrupted due to war, inter-ethnic conflict, or political tensions that last for decades, with the occasional escalation of violence, cultivate two types of literature. One is nationally aware and used in the mission of building a state to protect national and territorial interests, while the other, the literature of minorities and the marginalized, attempts to understand one side, and also, the other.

As the **polip 2013** festival is organized by two organizations from such environments, they are going to present in this year's edition, authors with experience of such a life and writing, where dealing with literature is not so simple and comfortable. Recently, the world has heard news reports on the government's response in Azerbaijan to the novel of their respected writer Akram Eyllisli, who «*had the courage*» to write a novel about friendship with Armenians and the violence that was committed against them in 1990 in Baku. The writer has been excluded from his community and they have started a "hunting season" towards him.

Things like this are not unknown to writers from Serbia and Kosovo. For this reason, the organizers of **polip 2013** have decided to focus this year's festival in Prishtina on the topic of the courage and personal responsibility of the author.

The festival will gather authors of the region, including authors from Albania, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Palestine etc. During the festival, there will be public readings, discussions on the topics of literary status in separate communities or in terms of the ongoing political crisis. In the framework of the festival, a special edition of the magazine *Beton* will be published in English, which will contain texts of the festival participants.

J.N. & S.I.

LITERATURE OF THE SEPARATED WORLDS

György Dragomán

JUMP

Szabi and i figured out pretty fast that chalk doesn't give you a fever at all, that it's just a legend, because we each ate one and a half pieces of chalk and nothing happened to us, we even tried the colored chalk, Szabi ate a green piece and I ate a red one, but it did us no good waiting under the bridge by the school for an hour and a half, nothing happened to us except we peed in color, my pee was on the reddish side and Szabi's was greenish. And as for the thermometer trick, we didn't dare try that either, because Mother caught me red-handed the other day sticking the end of the thermometer on the cast-iron radiator, and two weeks earlier, before our math exam, Szabi had even worse luck, he held a thermometer up against the bulb of his little lamp and the mercury got so hot so fast that it exploded right out of the end of the thermometer, and his father gave him a whipping with the buckle end of a belt, so the thermometer trick was out of the question, but we had to come up with something all the same.

If we didn't manage to get sick by the next day, we knew that it would be the end of us, the other kids at school would knock our brains out because that's when they would find out that we'd accidentally let those slot machines wolf down all our class money, the cash we were supposed to use to buy materials for a flag and for the placards we had to make to carry in the May Day parade. Yes, it would turn out we'd spent all of that money on those machines in the cellar game room off the side of the Puppet Theater building because Feri lied that every third player wins on those new automatic machines. "That's why they're automatic, after all," he said, and the first time we tried, we really did win, we won a ten, but from there on in we only lost, and in the end we only wanted to win back the money, we broke the third hundred bank note only so we could win back what we'd lost. It almost worked too, but then we couldn't get the proper rhythm, right when we pressed the button, the flash switched from extra super bonus to nothing, and so we lost all the money, and then it didn't do any good telling the cashier it wasn't our money and that he should give it back, he just laughed. "That's a game of chance for you," he said, and if we went on shooting off our traps, then he'd see to shutting them up for us, and if we didn't want to play anymore, why then we should get the hell out of there because we were only taking space away from paying customers.

Anyway, when we got out to the Street of the Martyrs of the Revolution, Szabi and I looked at each other, and both of us knew we were in for it, and then Szabi said it would be best if we went to the station and stowed away on a freight train and rode it to coal country and became miners, because kids could work there too, so he'd heard, you didn't get asked a thing when you went to sign up for work because the coal mines always need workers. And I said he should go if he wanted, but I was staying put because I wasn't in the mood to die of silicosis. "Let's get sick instead," I said, because if we went about it properly then we could get out from under the May Day mess altogether,

and then Szabi said, "All right, eating chalk gives you a fever," and so we tried it right away, but it wasn't worth shit, and even pissing that reddish pee did me no good, it didn't look bloody at all, and even its smell was all wrong, so we knew we had to think up something else. And then Szabi said it would be best if we went to the waterspout and tried to drink as much as we could stand, because if we gulped down that ice-cold spring water fast enough we'd be guaranteed a decent case of pneumonia, and that would mean at least three weeks in the hospital, not to mention that everyone would feel sorry for us, so the money would be the last thing on their minds, that's for sure.

There was hardly anyone at the spout, only four people were standing there, and while they filled up their jugs one after another, Szabi and I took turns climbing the pedestal of the statue that was missing on account

Tal Nitzán

THE POINT OF TENDERNESS

...at the hour when we are
trembling with tenderness
lips that would kiss
form prayers to broken stone.

T.S. Eliot

This is where tenderness resides.
Even if the heart in its silence
sinks within the city like stone –
know that this is the tender point.

Hold my hand in this world.
I saw a mother talking hatred to her child,
exterminating with words,
I saw a building collapse into dust,
slowly, floor by floor –
how we need mercy,
how we need so to soothe.

When the night closes on an unknissed nape
it is beyond healing: each choking
of every throat has but one cure,
see, it's so simple,
it's the point.

Translated by Tal Nitzán & Irit Sela

of its being stolen, pretending we were the Torchbearer of the Revolution, the main thing was to stretch out your right arm in front of you as far as possible like you were really holding a torch, and you weren't supposed to move at all, while the other person was allowed to throw only one speck of gravel at a time at the one playing the statue, but not at the face, and the statue who could take it longer would win, and I happened to be up there being the statue when the last person in line filled up her jug, and Szabi then scraped up a whole handful of gravel and flung it all at me, and he said, "Let's get going, we still have to go catch ourselves a little pneumonia," and I said okay, but he should go first, seeing how it was his idea and because he cheated at playing statue, and he said he knew I was chicken, all right, but he'd show me how to go about it.

The water flowed out of a thick, horizontal iron pipe set in the wall under a memorial plaque to Jánku Zsjánu, the famous outlaw, protector of the poor, who relieved his thirst at this very spot when fleeing from the posse that was out to hang him, and the plaque also said that this was medicinal water and that pregnant women and nursing mothers were not allowed to drink it, so when Szabi bent over toward the pipe to begin drinking, I said, "Stop, slow down, haven't you read on the plaque that pregnant women aren't allowed to drink this water?" But now Szabi didn't laugh at all, though at other times he always did, he even told me not to kid around because this was dead serious business, first you had to stick your mouth on the spout to keep the water from flowing out, and then you had to start counting until you reached at least one hundred, and when the pressure was so great that you could hardly stand it, you had to suddenly open your mouth, which was when the ice-cold water would shoot down your throat and your gullet really fast, it would fill your gut all at once, and your insides would cool down so much that pneumonia was as good as in the bag, and if you did it right you'd faint straight away. But the other person shouldn't go slapping the one who drank the water but only splash cold water in his face, because then he'd come to on his own right away, and I said, "Okay, but don't talk so much, get going already, we should take advantage of no one coming by for water just now," because if anyone saw us, sure as hell they wouldn't be happy about our trying to block off the spout with our mouths.

Szabi said I was right and that he would now begin, and he crouched right down in front of the spout and pressed his mouth against its end so not a drop of water could flow out, and I started counting out loud, so he could hear it too, so he would know how long to keep the pressure up, and Szabi's head turned red nice and slow, at first as if he had blushed from all the kidding around, but then his face got redder and redder, I hadn't even reached fifty yet and his face was beet red, then it started slowly turning blue. He shut his eyes and I saw that he was now holding the spout with both hands and his face was completely blue, and I was only at eightyfive when all of a sudden he let go of the pipe, and the water came gushing out so hard that Szabi reeled back, his clothes got sopping wet but he was still trying to drink all the same, his mouth was wide open and he was gulping down the water, but all that pressure must have sent some of the water up his nose because when he wiped his face with the sleeve of his official school shirt, he said this wasn't worth shit, this was a bunch of crap because he didn't feel anything at all in his lungs, which should be hurting by now, so this method wouldn't do the trick, either. But he said that if I wanted, I should go ahead and give it a try, maybe it would work for me, but that I shouldn't let the pressure build up so much in the pipe, it would be enough if I just pinched my nose shut and drank as much water as I could stand, and I said okay.

And so I crouched right down in front of the spout, pinched my nose shut, and used the palm of my other hand to direct the rush of water into my mouth, and I began swallowing the water, it was pretty cold all right, but the less air I had, the warmer the water seemed to get, and by the time I stopped, it seemed burning hot, that's how little air I had left in me, and I too nearly fell back, but Szabi caught me and helped me stand up, and we went over to one of the few benches that still had a back and a seat left on it, and we sat down. I was dizzy and my head was buzzing a little too, Szabi said he felt awful, but he thought this was only because of the water, because we drank so much of it so suddenly, but that this

water wasn't cold enough to cause pneumonia after all, at most we'd just get diarrhea, and that wasn't worth shit, and sure enough my belly then began hurting and I had to press my palm against it, but when I hunched forward the pain slowly went away, and then I said to Szabi that this pneumonia trick was a bunch of bull, nothing would come of it, and if we wanted to get out from under what we had coming to us we'd have to think up something else, something that was sure to pan out.

Szabi said I was right, it would be best if we went and broke our legs, and I told him he was completely bonkers, you couldn't fake a broken leg, and he said, you sure couldn't, but we weren't out to fake pneumonia either, and if we really wanted to get out from under this mess about the money, then faking it wouldn't get us anywhere, not even the chalk was worth shit. Instead we should go up to where the woods began, to that abandoned construction site where they'd not only dug a ditch to put pipes in but had already laid this thick iron pipe, and if we jumped on that pipe, our ankles would break for sure, and it's at least a week until you can walk even with a cast, but I said it was too dangerous to risk breaking your leg, it could lead to serious trouble, at which Szabi started laughing, he said I was chicken, his leg got broken twice already and one time his head was broken, and he'd have me know that it wasn't even so bad, the only thing that's not so good is when they set the cast, it's so hot when they do that it's like you're on fire, but afterward you can get out of all sorts of things, which is not to mention how good it feels to scratch yourself with a needle under the cast, and if it rains you don't have to go to school, and you can get out of running in gym class for six months because it's bad to strain your leg. And if I didn't do it he'd tell everyone what a chicken I was, that I was afraid of breaking my leg, and then I said, "Listen here, I'm no chicken," and then Szabi said, "All right, we'll talk it over after jumping," and we headed off toward the construction site.

We couldn't go too fast, our bellies were still so full of water, mine gurgled with every step I took, and one time we stopped because Szabi had to take a piss, and another time because my belly was so upset I almost puked, but finally we reached the construction site all the same. Szabi knew where we could get across the tall wooden fence because he'd been there once before to get some PVC

Tal Nitzán

IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA

Facing one another
we turn our backs to the world's calamities.
Behind our closed eyes and curtains
both heat and war
erupted at once.
The heat will calm down first,
the faint breeze
won't bring back
the boys who have been shot,
won't cool down
the wrath of the living.
Even if it tarry,
the fire will come,
many waters won't quench etc. *
Our arms as well
can only reach our own bodies:
We are a small crowd
incited to bite,
to cling to each other
to barricade ourselves in bed
while in the ozone above us
a mocking smile
cracks wide open.

Translated by Tal Nitzán & Vivian Eden



AH AHILEJ is a band along the lines of black cabaret. Established in 2000 in Belgrade. So far published six albums: "Great Life", "Music from Home", "Autopsy", "Objectively Worse Edition.", "Songs of evil volsebnika" written by Tom Markovic" and "Opera for the dinar" written by Milos Zivanovic.

DORIS AKRAP studied Religion and Culture Science and Southeast European History. She works since 2009 as a editor at the taz (www.taz.de), currently serves as managing editor for the weekend edition. Previously, she was the editor of the weekly newspaper Jungle World and the newspaper Sport-BZ.

SETH BAUMRIN (PhD, M. Phil, MFA, BA), the Chairman of John Jay College of Criminal Justice's Department of Communication and Theatre Arts is a director, theatre historian, and author. His publications include Ketmanship in Opole: Jerzy Grotowski and the Price of Free Expression as well as Les Kurbas Theatre, Lviv, 2008, Anarcho-Radical Roots – Opole to Oslo to Holstebro 1959-69 and Eugenio Barba's Early Experimental Theatre as Intervention. Baumrin is now at work on The Assassination of Les Kurbas: State Sanctioned Murder of a Generation of Twentieth Century Ukrainian Theatre Artists. Baumrin serves as the literary director for A Laboratory for Actor Training, e.t.c. in Brooklyn. He produces events for the Art of Justice Series at John Jay College, most recently hosting SKRIP Orchestra from Glej Theatre, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Baumrin has also directed over sixty theatre and opera productions.

DRAGOSLAVA BARZUT (1984, Crlenka, Srbija) is a writer, performer and blogger. She won the first award for her short story The last hour is the longest, plus bonus track at the short story festival "Odakle zovem". That story has also been placed in the regional anthology Out of corridor – the best short story 2011. Her essay The reception of Rasko Petrovic's Poetry in the collection the XX era revelation won her the second prize at the competition "Ulaznica 2009". She published a collec-

tion of short stories Zlatni metak (The golden bullet) – "Đuro Đukanov" award for the best manuscript 2011. She writes column on the Labris (organization for lesbian human rights) web portal. Dragoslava is a poetry editor of internet magazine column Affirmator. She writes blogs on the webpage www.odmotavanje.com. This blog deals with the issues of women and the regional literary scene.

ALIDA BREMER was born 1959 in Split. Promotion in Comparative Literature Studies at the University of Saarbrücken. Publications, among others: Jugoslawische (Sch)Erben: Probleme und Perspektiven (Osnabrück 1993); Kriminalistische Dekonstruktion: Zur Poetik der postmodernen Kriminalromane (Würzburg 1999); Literarischer Reiseführer: Istrien (Klagenfurt/Celovec 2008); etc.. Together with the KulturKon-takt Austria she is publisher of the serie "Kroatische Literatur der Gegenwart" in ten volumes. Numerous literary translation, among others: from Edo Popović, Ivana Sajko, Delimir Rešicki, Marko Pogačar. Together with the hungarian author György Dalos she is was the curator of the program "Kroatien als Schwerpunktland zur Leipziger Buchmesse" 2008. "Grenzgänger" fellowship of the Robert Bosch Stiftung for the work on the novel Olivas Garten (published in August 2013 at Eichborn Verlag, Köln). Freelancer of the S. Fischer Foundation and the network Traduki. Member of the Croatian PEN center.

YOLANDA CASTAÑO was born in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, in 1977. BA in Spanish Language and Literature and with Media Studies, apart from being a poet with a 18 years career, editor and a culture manager, Yolanda has been a columnist and has worked in Galician TV during many years (Galician Audiovisual Academy Award as 'Best TV Communicator 2005'). She has published 5 poetry books in Galician and Spanish (Depth of Field is her last title), and a pair of compilations. Some of her poems have been translated into more than fifteen languages. In 2011 she held two international fellowships as a writer-in-residence, in Rhodes (Greece) and Munich (Germany).

pipes for blowguns and carbide for fireworks, so anyway, he told me not to be scared, no one had lived in the guard booth for a long time, and sure enough, finding that ditch with the pipe in it wasn't hard because the earth was thrown up high on one side. Szabi went first, we climbed all the way to the top of the embankment, from there we looked down into the ditch, which contained separate sections of thick iron pipe that hadn't been cemented together yet.

Szabi said he truly regretted how we left our school comrades in the lurch like this, yes, he was really sorry that on account of us the others wouldn't be able to take part in the placard competition, especially because the class that made the nicest placard would win a two-week seaside trip, and I said I was sorry too, because I would have also really liked to get to the sea, but then I looked again at the sections of iron pipe, and it occurred to me that nothing would ever flow through them, neither water nor sewage, because this new complex of apartment blocks would never be built, and I told Szabi he shouldn't worry himself over it, we wouldn't have won the competition anyway, some class from School No. 3 would win it for sure, because School No. 3 wins everything since that's where the children of Party activists go, and as for our own class, there was no reason to be sad because it just couldn't happen that the class wouldn't take part in the placard competition or in the parade if it's been told to do so, our head teacher would no doubt get enough material from somewhere, and they'd make a placard after all because our teacher didn't want to get in trouble either, and then Szabi asked if I was sure about that, and I said, "You bet I'm sure, and let's jump already, because if we stand around here too long we'll get cold feet."

Szabi then said, "Okay, let's count out loud and jump on three," and then we both looked down into the ditch one more time and it looked pretty deep, from where we stood it must have been at least ten feet for sure, and then we both started counting at the same time, but Szabi stopped at two and said, "Let's shut our eyes and start again," and so we shut our eyes and started again, and then it suddenly occurred to me that if we both jumped and really broke our legs, then we wouldn't be able to climb out of the ditch, and I wanted to tell Szabi to wait, but by the time I said it Szabi had already jumped, and I opened my eyes just in time to see that he'd jumped so far forward that he almost cleared the ditch, but his jump still wasn't long enough, no, Szabi's shoulder struck the opposite wall and he fell straight into the ditch and onto a section of pipe.

Szabi let out a piercing cry and reached both hands toward one of his ankles, and he was lying there on his side beside the iron pipe, and he kept on holding his foot, and he was screaming my name really loud, he was wailing and crying, and then I called down to him to wait because I'd climb down right away, and he looked up, his face was wet with tears, and he told me to go fuck my mother, that I was a chickenshit for letting him jump alone. But then I told him to shut his trap because I'd seen full well that he had wanted to clear the ditch and didn't want to jump

BEQË CUFaj was born 1970 in Deçan, Kosovo. He is a Kosovo Albanian writer who lives with his family in Stuttgart. He studied language and literature at the University of Prishtina, today he writes for various newspapers in the Balkans and Western Europe, including the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, NZZ and Courier International, and has published several volumes of essays and prose. His works have been translated into different languages: German, French, English, Italian etc. Some of his published works: Balada Budallaqe, poems, publishing house Rilindja, 1994; 205, Strories, publishing house Dukagjini, 1996; Kosova, essay and reports from the war in Kosovo published in German language by Zsolnay Verlag, Vienna-Munich, 2000; Shkëlqimi i Huaj, novel 2003, publishing house Dukagjini; Der Glanz der Fremde, novel published in German by Zsolnay Verlag, Vienna-Munich, 2005. project @ party is his second novel.

VOLKER DITTRICH was born in 1951 in Fleestedt near Hamburg. Commercial apprenticeship, working as a shipping clerk, studied pedagogy, teacher at a comprehensive school, publisher at the Institute for Education and Culture, Remscheid, journalist and author. Founder of the Dittrich Verlag and publisher of the edition Balkan at the Dittrich Verlag. Publications: novels, radio features, documentary movie The Night of the Georgians, 2002. Last Two sides of Remembrance – The Brothers Manfred and Edgar Hilsenrath, Deutschlandfunk, 2011.

GYÖRGY DRAGOMÁN was born in 1973 in Marosvásárhely (Tirgu Mures), Romania. When he was 15 his family immigrated to Hungary. He studied Philosophy and English, worked as a literary translator, translated works by I. B. Singer, Irvine Welsh and Samuel Beckett. He published two

Tomislav Marković GREAT MASTERS OF THE LITERARY KITCHEN AND THEIR LITTLE SECRETS

they eat poets in china
poets' meat is a feast
for a refined palate
first the poet needs to be soaked
in the clammy air of the casemate
and be left there for 10-15 years
to soften up a bit
meanwhile
in a separate bowl
his songs are chopped
into small verses
with the knife of oblivion
then poet is taken out
of the prison marinade
laid on a board
and beaten with the heavy mallet
of censorship & surveillance
then everything is mixed with a truncheon
to come together in a thick bloody mixture
and then it is fried at the stake
where prohibited books are set on fire
all the while media
fuel is added to the fire
until the poetic mixture
gets the color
of featureless grey obedience
the prepared meal
is a specialty of the literary kitchen
only served on special occasions

on public holidays
in Tiananmen Square

in serbia poets eat themselves
first they grilled themselves with silence for a long time
on a living grill
where fire and nothing
are burning quietly beneath
and then they are partially buried
in a sandy grave
(the head is the tastiest part of the poet
if it's left in the sand long enough)
then they are rolled in the dough of apolitical apathy
and evenly spread onto an oven-dish
gently greased with a lubricant
these self-eaters are baked in a warm
oven of pure art
at the most average of the temperatures
for half an hour or a lifetime
as necessary
then they're taken out into the daylight
sprinkled with powdered cowardice
served at any time of darkness or night
neither hot nor cold
with a saladification made of words and shadows
a garnish of quiet contemplation
and yogurt of the universe

Translation by Svetlana Rakočević,
Jelena Čalić i Edward Aleksander

in at all, and if I didn't have more brains than him there wouldn't be anyone left to go get an ambulance, but Szabi only kept swearing and saying over and over that his foot hurt like hell, and I called down to him again, saying he had it coming for wanting to play me for a sucker and telling him to wait right where he was because I'd go get an ambulance even though he didn't really deserve it. I started running back toward the apartment blocks, and meanwhile I already knew what I would say the next day in school, that the reason we didn't have the money was that I had to give half of it to the ambulance guys so they would take poor Szabi to the hospital and the other half to the doctors so they wouldn't set his fracture without anesthetics.

Translated by Paul Olchváry

novels so far, The Book of Destruction (A pusztítás könyve, 2002) and The White King (A fehér király, 2005). His best-known work, The White King (2005) has been translated to at least 28 languages. He has received various literary awards for his writings, such as the Sándor Bródy Prize (2003). Dragomán lives in Budapest with his wife and two children.

RALPH HAMMERTHALER was born in 1965 in Wasserburg (Bavaria) and lives as a writer in Berlin. Some of the novels he wrote: *Alles besteht* (2002), *Aber das ist ein anderes Kapitel* (2007) and *Der Sturz des Friedrich Voss* (2010). His theater plays and operas were shown in Düsseldorf, Osnabrück, Munich, Berlin, Omsk (Siberia) and Mexico City, and finally in 2013 *ein Gott eine Frau ein Dollar* (one God one Woman one Dollar) in Munich. In 2006/07 he worked as a literary adviser at the Schaubühne Berlin. He is Socio Honorario (member of honour) of the Teatro Sombrero Azul in Mexico City.

ERVINA HALILI was born in 1986 in Gijlan, Kosovo. She studied Albanian Literature at the University of Prishtina. She wrote her first verses in her early childhood, where her first poetry book Trëndafili i Heshitjes was published in 2004 when she was 17. Vindira her second book was published in 2008 in Prishtina. Her work was also published in different national and international literary magazines and anthologies including Lichtungen, Prairie Schooner, Poetry from five continents, Iz Pristine sljubavlju, Exile writers Ink. Has worked as author and moderator in several local radio stations in Prishtina where she also lives. She participated in several poetry festivals including House of Literature, 2011 Graz. Die besten aus dem osten in Vienna, where she was staying as a "writer in residence" for two months.

Translated by Karen Emmerich

Eftychia Panayiotou ALPHABET

your tie, word tied in a knot at my throat
cinched tight by the hold on, the apple will rot
unripe, i'm afraid of my future becoming a forgotten
past, as in dreams, i'll live a blind life
thinking i'm walking forward while in
fact watching the clock i'll think thoughts composed
of dead letters.

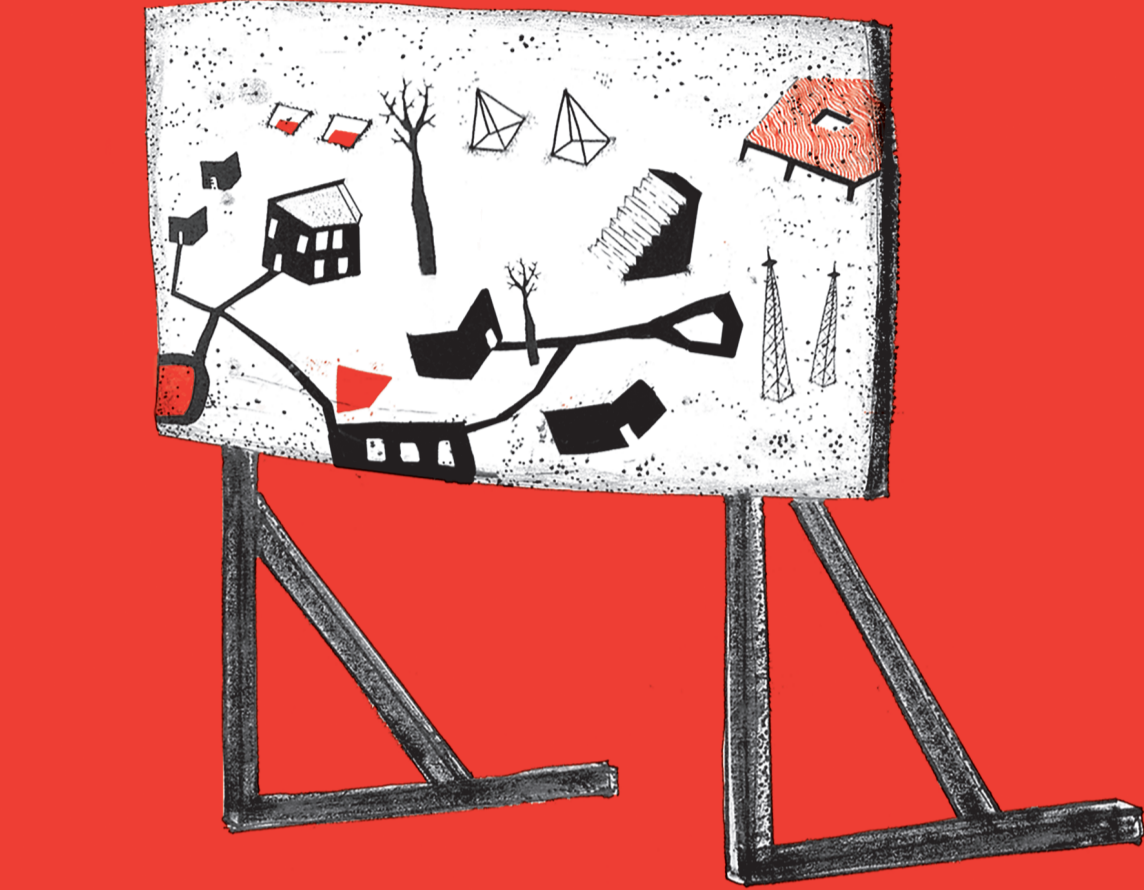
Translated by Karen Emmerich

Blerina Rogova Gaxha AMONG THE MISSING, THERE WAS ALSO A MAN*

Lying among the bodies, was a man considered missing
Among them, he dragged himself to get out of that pit
Among them, he knew they'd split his skull apart
As if the deformed bones he was left weren't enough
Among them, he felt his flesh chopped into pieces
From the gaping wound, where the blood flowed, he felt
no scar would linger
Among so much blood, he knew his blood mattered no more,
He was a man considered missing, lying among the bodies

Translated by Alexandra Channer

* Dylan Thomas, Among Those Killed in the Dawn Raid was a
Man Aged a Hundred



Eftychia Panayiotou THE GREAT GARDENER

for Milton

in the evenings my gardener raves, delirious.

he sows words in the soil

buries words under the soil.

hurt words, which first he hits

then binds without fear

he never feels compassion for them,

they cry they thrash they shout they curse

—they're words, after all—

but he silences them.

he bludgeons the blood.

this man is not my gardener.

he sows death

me sows death

i become death.

Translated by Karen Emmerich

Blerina Rogova Gaxha CANCER OF THE BALKAN SPIRIT

It was in school in 1990 when we learnt about the
cancerous Balkan spirit
We repeated this, year on year, for days and hours
But, we didn't know which spirit filled the Balkan's lungs
Until the nineties passed
And to the lungs of motionless bodies, the fault clung
It was 1990 when the teacher showed us a table of fatal
diseases
And she did this, year on year
Among the thousands of questions
There was always one absent answer— whose is this spirit

It was the nineties. We drew it backwards for fun
We didn't know our answers would be taken away by
motionless bodies
It was the nineties when we declined the name 'cancer'
in Albanian language class
We didn't know what surname would fit it best
And then, we giggled and made fun by turning the
number nine into six
Imagining the year of the devil

Translated by Alexandra Channer

Tal Nitzán THE THIRD CHILD

I'm your unknown child.
I'm the negative
between your two blue-eyed children
who radiate against my darkness.
I'm your forgotten, your vanished, I'm your
kicked away.
I kneel – while they close their eyes
and reach out their hands for the gift –
as if begging for the blow
that will not come.
I feed on the cocoa trail they leave,

on the rustle of wrappings.
I shrink at night into the corner
of their beds, where tiny stuffed animals
encircle them
like shelter against evil,
lurking for the nocturnal ritual,
when you step on my toes unseeing,
and bend to smoothe their plump blankets.
When you close your eyes
(green like mine!)
I'll creep under your eyelids and murmur:
"Mommy".
If you try to banish the nightmare of my face
you'll find out, shamefully,
you don't even know my name.

Translated by Tal Nitzán & Vivian Eden

Faruk Šehić

UNDER PRESSURE

1. They brought us to the frontline. Mud and fog are everywhere. I can barely see the man in front of me. We almost have to hold each other's belts in order not to lose our way. We are moving among torched homes. The column is trudging along rickety fences. The mud is sticking to our boots as dough. Nothing matches the first encounter with the front. Everything is new and hairy like balls. Especially when you take over the line at night and then, come morning, you realize that you are on the tip of a nail. Scorched beams are falling off a roof and sizzling in the mud. We are stumbling down a big hill. The grass is slimy from the thick fog. Those who fall are slowing down the column and, as a rule, they are swearing at the president and state. My piles ache at the thought that we will sleep in the field tonight. A military police guide leads us to a hilltop. Emir and I take over a shallow trench containing a muddy mattress, blanket and several cigarette butts smoked to the hilt and nervously stabbed into the ground.

- Hey boys, cold enough for you? – a voice reaches us from the right.
- Come here and I'll tell you about it. – Emir replies from the mattress.

A figure approaches us from behind,
Jumps into the trench.
- I'm from the 3rd Battalion. – he says as we shake hands.
- Got any fags?
I open my cigarette case full of Gales [Columbian cigarettes made in 1974]
- Aren't they gonna' see us smoking? – Emir asks.
- No way. They are far from here and the fog is thick.
Both of us light up as if we were ordered to do so.
- What's the situation like here? Is it fucked up?
- They plowed the hill with shells today. A soldier from the 2nd Company had his cheek torn off by a piece of shrapnel. They got two big guns on Metla, that's a hill twice the size of ours, and they can see us as if we were in a coffee cup. – The guy from the 3rd Battalion slowly explains.

- So, whoever survives will eat with a golden spoon. – Emir interjects.
- Its not as bad as it looks. – The guy from the 3rd Battalion consoles him. – You gotta die one day anyhow. Fear creeps into me as rising damp. Tomorrow they are going to shave us on the house.

* * *

Your line of life is broken in two places. You'll be wounded twice, once seriously, a Gypsy woman tells me. She throws the beans around, looks at them and concludes: you can expect a trip abroad and some good news from afar.

I have figured out the hierarchy of things:
1. War
2. Alcohol
3. Poetry
4. Love
5. War again

My favourite song: No invention beats a bed
I want to use it before I'm dead
The most stupid quote: War is delightful to those who have had no experience of it [Erasmus].
Favourite colour: Blue, all nuances of blue
Favourite book: Plexus by Henry Miller

Favourite drink: Home-made plum brandy
Favourite weapon: Hungarian-made Kalashnikov, rifle No. SV-3059
Favourite meal: A litre of brandy and a pack of fags
Favourite quote: To become immortal, and then die, Jean-Pierre Melville
Unfulfilled wish: My face scarred by shrapnel so I can look mean when I enter a bar
Then I fell asleep, covered with a muddy duvet

2. – Let's bet five marks that the Iron Man will make it across the field

- Does it count if he has to run across wounded?
- Whatever, he just has to run across to the white house. The Iron Man got his nickname because of his leather wristband with metal spikes. He is lying behind a perforated concrete fence. He has covered his head with his hands. Fine concrete dust is eeping onto his hair. He is exactly halfway to the shelter. Machine-gun bullets are hitting the concrete columns, whizzing through the gaps, biting the ground. The Iron Man gets up and accelerates. A machine-gun burst throws him to the ground. The gambling fraternity are huddling under a quince tree, well hidden and protected.

- Hey Baldy, you alive?
- Alive my ass, don't you see he's not moving or moaning.
- It's all his fault. Did anyone force him to in daylight. He could've waited for the night – the third observer interjects.

The Iron Man gets up again, moves those stocky legs with all his might. It looks as if he is taking off, his hair flying with acceleration. The Iron Man crosses the finish line as Ben Johnson.

- Give me my five marks.
- You can have my dick.
- Did he make it or not?
- Yeah, he did.
- Was it fair and honest?
- I admit it was
- Can I pay in cigarettes?

- Absolutely, definitely
The Iron Man is leaning on a cold wall, fishing for broken fags in his pocket. He is lighting up half a cig with trembling fingers, re-arranging his hair. He is shaking off the the dust and soil from his uniform. Blood is coming back to his face. The night arrives like a lottery win.

3. Zgembo is using his nail to remove a piece of human brain from his pie. He is breaking off bits of the pie, dipping them into salt and putting them into his mouth. More meze can be found in a white nylon bag sprayed with a mixture of blood and brains. Zgembo is using his other hand to search for pieces of soft cheese in the bag.
A 7.62 mm macine-gun is resting on his lap. Five minutes ago, pro-autonomy soldiers were sitting in this trench. A corps, still warm, is lying over the rampart. A burst of machine-gun fore had cut his skull in half. I turn him on his back. I take the wallet from the inside pocket of his camouflage jacket. I look at his photo. He had a wide forehead and a receding hairline. Big, melancholic eyes. I am using the edge of his photo to pick at bits of apple stuck between my teeth.

* * *

Fatty had built a fire behind a house, in the middle of the battle, to dry his socks. He left his automatic rifle leaning against the wall at the other end of the house. The pro-autonomy guys launched a counter-attack. They captured Fatty alive. They tied his hands behind his back with a piece of wire and executed him behind a barn.

Translated by Mladen Bilić

Tomislav Marković

THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

according to Predrag Čudić

Killed, no more than
Out of that, civilians, roughly
Several thousands give or take
Let's not quibble
Men, somewhere around...
Women, that many, more or less
Children, a few here and there
Who counts children anyway?

Soldiers somewhat less,
but not less than
Or at least that's how it seems to me
Mercenaries, only very few, almost
Plus three for the ethnic factor

Number executed, exactly
(even a sloppy mind like ours makes some sort of neat list)
Slaughtered, precisely and irrevocably
(it's easy to calculate, slaughter requires personal contact, and our boys are generally unsociable)
Killed by a shell, by numbers and letters
(a frag more, a shrapnel less)
Hit by a sniper, if I'm not mistaken

Raped, half less than
But still more than
Mainly women
Men, far fewer
roughly, give or take
Well, just about that amount

Refugees and displaced
- nobody knows their number,

That evening after a new shift arrived to the frontline, we went drinking to the local joint. We drank on the 5th Corps account, that is for nothing! Zgembo popped blue valium pills into a pitcher of brandy. We drank raki from small glasses. The owner brought meze, cured beef and hard cheese, on the house. He had a good-natured face and looked like an experienced caterer. A Romanian waitress was complaining to him because we were drinking for free. Her teeth were protruding under her lips, spaced out like a rake. She says how she used to be with a gut from our brigade, Baker was his nickname. After several litres of raki we began to mess up the place. We fired above the bar, at the mirrors and rows of bottles. Drowned out by the shooting, a folk singer was screeching from a tape-player speaker. I was trying to shoot down a plastic fly swat hanging from a nail on a wooden wall panel. We knocked over the plastic tables and chairs on the terrace. We used our rifle butts to deal with several villagers who complained about our behaviour. We disarmed three policemen and lined them up outside a hair saloon. The owner of the joint used his Lada to take us to a school 10 kilometres down the road where we were staying. Rain began falling outside.

The wipers were sliding on the front window like the needle of a blood pressure monitor. There was nothing left to talk about that evening.

*Translated by
Svetlana Rakočević, Jelena Čalić
i Edward Aleksander*

Eftychia Panayiotou

SYLVIA

i break our promises, mother.
but today i'm writing to you, the day is different.

this morning i did well with the taxis.
the driver seemed to prefer women.
and i got a small raise, for my ideas, they said,
before pointing out how young i am.
this afternoon on the bus, "you've got a long road ahead of you," an old woman whispered nostalgically.
in her youth she was a writer, now she heads for the airport with a trash bag dressed in old, formal clothes.
it seems we've exchanged years, mother; i've matured.
my friends recognize me just fine as i age, but you will always remember my former glory.

because i didn't keep my promise to tell you everything i hide half of it — i want someone to still love me.

the other day some bum called me an innocent little girl and i went home and rummaged for some pill, from all that irony, mother, to help me sleep.
i don't eat much; ghosts roam through my sleep.
i did buy a raincoat, though, for the coming storms.

i've become a well of mistakes, mother.
an empty heart, a coin in my pocket
and my mind spins, unfinished business.
A. told me my dreams are big,
B. told me i don't have grown-up dreams,
bitter words, i count memories; history.
i keep watch with a flashlight, mother,
i look at a world that doesn't look back.

i've made two drawings for you to remember me by.
i broke my promises, mother.
i would like you simply to know that i'm scared.

Translated by Karen Emmerich

ARDIAN HAXHAJ was born in 1976 in Gllareva. He graduated in Faculty of Philology in University of Prishtina and finished his master studies in World Literature with the theme The novel "The Joke" of Milan Kundera. He is one of the best consolidated writers in new generation in Kosovo literature. He has published three novels and the fourth is going to be published: The last of a mission, 2006 published by Buzuku, Prishtina; The head chronicle of Kosovo's Battle, 2008, published by Faik Konica, Prishtina; The memories of a Jew, 2010, published by Faik Konica, Prishtina (it is on publishing procedure in England). The fourth novel in manuscript is in procedure of publishing in Prishtina. Ardian Haxhaj writes screenplay for short feature film and long feature film too. Some short feature films are directed from Ardian's screenplays and some documentary films too.

ARBEN IDRIZI was born 1974 in Vushtrri, Kosovo. Published in 2003, the poetic collection *Hegakeq* (publishing house MM); in 2010 the collection *Libri i të qenit*. At the same time he has published the collection with translated poems by Valerio Magrellit, with the title *Hiqi qe është nen*. He has worked for five years at the weekly journal *Zëri* and since 2005 he has been working for the daily newspaper *Express*. He is a co-worker of the literary magazine *MM*. He translates from Italian language, mainly poems of these poets: S. Quasimodo, E. Montale, Cesare Pavese, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Mario Luzi, Alda Merini, F. Santì, poems of whom he has published at various literary magazines in Kosovo and Albania. In 2013 his collection with poems *Kafshët e duan atdheun* was published in Serbian language enabled by the last years polip festival edition.

SAŠA ILIĆ (Serbia) was born in 1972 in Jagodina. He graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade. He has published as a co-author the project *Odisěj* (1998, together with D. Bošković), the stories *Predosećanje građanskog rata* (The prevision of the civil war, 2000) and the novels *Berlinsko okno* (Berlin Window, 2005/2006) and *Pad Kolumbije* (Fall of Columbia, 2010). Saša Ilić has prepared *Pseći vek* (The century of the dog, 2000), a collection of narrators born after 1970. He is one of the founders and editors of the annex *Beton* (www.elektrobeton.net). With the editorial board of the annex (*Beton*) he has prepared two books with essays and satirical articles: *Srbija kao sprava* (Serbia as a device, 2007) and *Antimemorandum-dum* (2009).

INTERNATIONAL
LITERATURE FESTIVAL

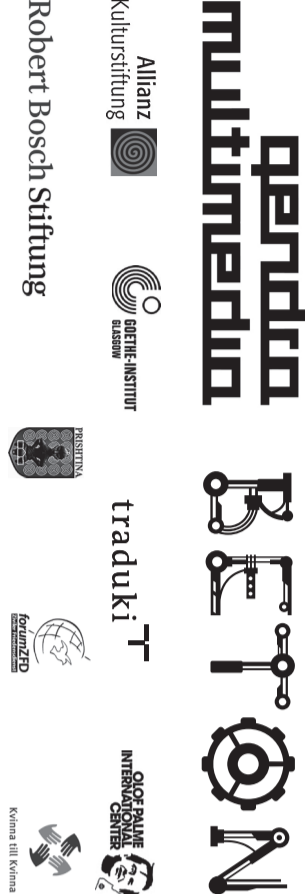
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LITERATURE
OF THE
SEPARATED
WORLDS

3rd Edition
10-12 May 2013,
Prishtina

All activities will happen at:
Qendra Multimedia
Rr. Idriz Gjlani 7/9 – 1
Lajla Dardania
(Përballe Shkollës Fillore “Xhemal Mustafa”)
10000 Prishtina, Kosovo

Organized by Qendra Multimedia, Prishtina
in cooperation with BETON, Belgrade



PRO
GRAM

Panels:

THE LITERATURE
MARKET IN GERMANY
AND THE LITERARY
OF THE BALKANS

The literature market in Germany is defini-
tely one of the most vibrant and dynamic
markets in Europe. In addition to local
authors, the literary market in Germany is
also very accessible to other authors from
around the world. But the focus of inter-
est is changing fast and it is determined by
different factors. What makes the literature
market of Germany turn it's attention to-
wards a "small" literature, lets say like that
of Kosovo, Montenegro or Macedonia?
After the end of the wars in the Balkans,
what still remains "sexy" about the Balkans,
that encourages the translation of its li-
terature in Germany? Good literature? How
does the German publisher identify good
literature from the Balkans? How do the
countries from the Balkans promote their
literature in Germany? Is Croatia a good
example in this case?

LITERATURE AND
THE UNKNOWN OTHER

The focus of this year's edition of the
festival is the literature of separated
worlds, and more concretely, of neighboring
countries that haven't been in contact po-

litically and culturally for decades, or cities
that have been separated and function as
two different worlds that persistently refuse
to know anything about the other, on the
other side. Does your literature include such
a phenomenon and who or what is the un-
known other in the literary sense and in
the political? How is literature developed in
such environments in the proximity of the
unknown other? Does this nearness of the
unknown other and the denial affect the
creating of contacts and the literal – cultural
and political creation? How does this af-
fect the creation of a literary canon and the
forming of national remembrance? Is it pos-
sible to establish contact with the unknown
other? How do you name it in your texts and
how in the political and cultural narratives?

DOES A POST YU
LITERATURE EXIST?

14 years have passed since the last war on
the ex-Yugoslavian territory. In the region,
a fragile structure of intercultural connec-
tions have been built that are mainly non
institutional. There are some critics who
follow the literary scene outside their own.
Some post YU projects for writers and cri-
tics have been organized, like the *Meša
Selimović* prize in Tuzla, which integrates
the literature of the mentioned areas, and
a competition for drama from the region
by *Hartefelt*. Residency programs for writ-
ers from the region (Split, Rijeka, Sarajevo,
Prishtina, Belgrade) have been arranged
more regularly. Writers have started mov-
ing. Is there still something in common in

the literature that remains in the pieces of
what once used to be Yugoslavia, or is even
the Yugoslav literature studied institution-
al? What do you think of the concept of a
post YU literature?

SUBPOETRICS:
INNER POETRY IN
PERFORMANCE

Subpoetics is a process of elaboration
whereby actors create physical actions as-
sociated with particular texts. These physical
actions are shown away from that text and
perfected with precision. They are then at-
tached to a different text even though the
actions and the new text are unrelated. The
actions are then justified to function as ap-
propriate physical actions for the new text.
The process of justification and adaptation
of actions to different texts requires reduc-
ing, magnifying, or changing the rhythm
of the original physical actions. In order
to reduce or magnify a physical action, its
original impulse in the torso must be lo-
cated and retained. Subpoetics embodies
a training/performance regimen enabling
participants to learn how to learn, to learn
how to teach, auto-dialectic methodologies
for self-realization, group dynamics that en-
gender cultural awareness. Weaning young
people away from stereotypes promoted by
electronic and popular media – virtual real-
ity replaced by truth – by constructing their
own identity. This kind of work is crucial
during a period of potential cultural erasure
as borders both real and artificial obscure
the struggles of the individual.

FRIDAY, 10.05.2013

19:30 – 20:00

Official opening of the po lip festival

20:00 – 00:00

Readings

Iai Nitzan (LU), Tomislav Marković
(SRB), György Dragomán (HU), Eftychia
Panayiotou (CY), Beqë Cufaj (D/RKS),
Ralph Hammerthaler (D)
Moderator: Sasa Ilić (SRB), Sunia Kurti (RKS)

Music: tba

SATURDAY, 11.05.2013

17:00 – 18:30

Panel I:

*The literature market in Germany and the
literature of the Balkans*
Panelist: Volker Dittich (D), Jörg
Sundermeier (D), Verena Nolte (D), Beqë
Cufaj (D/RKS)
Moderator: Dois Akrap (D)

17:00 – 18:30

Panel II:

Literature and the unknown Others
Panelists: Iai Nitzan (LU), Yolanda Castaño
(ES), Eftychia Panayiotou (CY), György
Dragomán (HU), Miliš Živanović (SRB)
Moderator: Mirela Kumbaro (AL)

20:00 – 00:00

Readings

Faruk Šehić (BIH), Vana Simić Bodrožić
(HR), Yolanda Castaño (ES), Dragoslava
Barzut (SRB), Blerina Rogova Gaxha (RKS),
Alida Brenner (HR/D)
Moderator: Sasa Ilić (SRB), Qerim Ondozi (RKS)

Music: Ahlajleji (SRB)

SUNDAY, 12.05.2013

15:00 – 16:30

Public presentation and performances:
Subpoetics: Inner poetry in Performance
with Dr. Seth Baumann

*Transforming Trauma Through Art:
War Ropes and the Re-Collection of Self
and Community*
Workshop with Elisabeth Hess

Panel discussion:

Transforming trauma through art
Panelists: Seth Baumann, tba
Moderator: tba

17:00 – 18:30

Panel III:

Does a post YU literature exist?
Panelists: Faruk Šehić (BIH), Vana Simić
Bodrožić (HR), Jovica Ivanovski (MK), Alida
Brenner (HR/D), Blerina Rogova Gaxha (RKS)
Moderator: Sasa Ilić (SRB)

20:00 – 00:00

Readings

Jovica Ivanovski (MK), Ervina Halili
(RKS), Gent Kadriu (RKS), Adnan Haxhaji
(RKS), Miliš Živanović (SRB), Arben Idriži
(RKS), Doruntina Vinca (RKS)
Moderator: tba

Music: tba

Ivana Simić Bodrožić

KIND OF BLUE

The last class on Friday was catechism. If we could have, we would all have taken a double math class instead, but there was no way to avoid it, and at the time we didn't know how to play hooky. At the time we all had to take the class because if you loved Croatia, you loved God; and only Aida from the neighboring class went home earlier. Reverend Juranić came to class before the bell went off, and as soon as it did, he'd start praying – not just Our Lord, like other religious teachers would, but also Hail Mary, all of the Creeds, and sometimes – if he was inspired – a round of the Rosary. He'd glare at us, one by one, he'd circle around the class, lean over to hear, and if he caught someone mumbling, he'd silence

everyone else and the pupil would have to continue on his own. If he didn't know the prayer, the pupil would usually get an F and a slap on the back of the head. Reverend would then return to his desk and there'd be silence. He'd sit there and from his black bag he'd take out a juice box with a straw and a couple of chocolate bars, Mars, Snickers or something of the sort. We watched him eat and drink, and we drooled down to the floor. If he heard someone talk in the back, he'd throw a piece of chalk at them, or something else that was around. He called us dimwits, idiots, slob. It seemed that the hardest mission in life was to collect the stamps for confirmation. None of us thought we'd fail catechism, but the fear and the un-

certainty which Juranić spread around him with the help of God was so great that some literally trembled before him. Sometimes he'd take groups of pupils on the pilgrimage to Marija Bistrica and then, in unusually good spirits, he'd place one of the girls with waist-long braids onto his lap. Her cheeks would flush and throughout the trip she wouldn't say a word, she'd just stare at the floor. We felt that he hated Vukovar people, although he treated us no differently, but we'd already gotten used to enemies, so we were constantly looking for the signs. He was as equally disdainful to us as he was to others; he just had a different set of questions: "So, Vukovarians... Do you know how to clean the stables?" and then he'd provide the answer himself: "You're too classy for it, but these little peasants are closer to God because Jesus slept in the stables, not in a hotel," he chortled. Once he asked Dragan, an eighth-grader, something about the Holy Trinity, and when Dragan replied, "I've got no idea," the reverend gave him an F. Then Dragan asked him: "D'ya know what the Pope says when he goes to the john?" The reverend's face boiled and he grabbed the gradebook to throw it at him, but Dragan got up from his desk and threw himself at the reverend shouting: "Holy shit! Holy shit!" The reverend roared and Dragan ran out of the classroom. He ended up at the pedagogue's office but nothing serious happened to him. The reverend grew more morose, but he stopped throwing things at us.

As Christmas neared, for catechism homework we had to write a composition entitled "My Christmas". The best ones would be read at the school celebration. I fervently believed in God and composition writing was my favorite of all school assignments. I wasn't facing a very tough competition in the class, except for one Piggy, Željka, who was good at grammar and whose sentences were filled with epithets. I put all of my effort into write the best composition I could because I was dying to read at the school celebration, I knew it would get mom out of the room, and perhaps for this occasion she'd wear something dark blue. The reverend and the Croatian teacher selected Željka and me. I was out of my mind with happiness because before the reading I'd also perform a dance number with my friend Ivana to the choreography that I made up to the song 'Paloma nera'. I hadn't let mom read the composition because I wanted to surprise her, I was hoping that way she'd get more than she'd expected. She knew I was good at writing, but I thought this time I'd outdone myself. I got on stage the second time that evening. I changed from a navy pattern shirt and ripped hot pants into a white shirt and a checkered pleated skirt. I was serious and stood upright as I waited for everyone to quiet down for my composition so that it would get the silence that it deserved. I started reading. I invested all the air from my lungs into each sentence so very soon my breath went shallow and I was left without air. I hoped no one would notice if I read louder, so soon I was shouting out words and the parts of sentences which I believed were the most important. Mainly, it was about a sad twig hanging from a Christmas tree, a missing dad, mom's black garments, a brother who has no money to buy a soda, and just one wish, to go home... When I finished reading, people started clapping, some clapped hard, some not so much. Some women from the Political

JOVICA IVANOVSKI was born 1961 in Skopje. Author of poetry collections *Way Such Liver For Me* (1995), *The City is Full of You* (1997), *A Strange Kind of a Sunny Day* (1999), *Three Forward, Three backwards* (2004), *Double Album* (In the Shadow of the Billboard and Ice cream as far as the eye can see) – two books within one cover (2005), *Siesta Thirst* (2007), *Whistling in the Wind* (2009), *With a Straw in a Mouth* (2011), as well as selected poems: *Open the Window and Let the City Breathe a Little*, selection of poetry in English (2002), *Selected poems, selection of poetry in English and Macedonian* (2002) and *One of These Days if Not Tomorrow*, selection of poetry in English and Macedonian (2009). Member of Independent Writers of Macedonia. He still lives and works in Skopje.

GENC KADRIU is a poet who writes a good poem out of X. He went to an art school in London quite some time ago and got a honours degree there. Although, not much has come out of it: a lay about libertine roaming the beach forests of Devon, smoking hashish and conversing with the skin-speckled fishermen, in whom he would find incarnations of the Old Man and the Sea. His poems vary by virtue of disposition of places he is found in – much like the weather. For instance, in Kosovo they are less about love and more about despair. In love, less about love and more about scorn. He also runs an independent publishing house that is as independent as its financial predicament of obtaining funds

School were dabbing their eyes with handkerchiefs. Željka climbed on stage immediately, she stood next to me and started reading. I thought people must have wanted to clap some more, but they couldn't because she was reading and they wouldn't hear her. Confused, I kept standing next to her. I felt a little dizzy, my head was ringing with words: turkey with *mlinci*, a midnight Mass, fresh air that tickles the nostrils, little Jesus, sleighs... When she finished reading she bowed to the audience so deep that her long hair fell over her flushed cheeks. She was very beautiful. People stood up and clapped like crazy. It was in fact the closing of the ceremony and the applause was for all of us. The music started playing; it was time for dance. Pupils and parents scattered across the hall and the stage and I couldn't see my mom anywhere. I pushed hard through the crowd of faces lit up with happiness, small and big, presuming she'd already left. When I finally reached the door, I saw her through the glass pane standing in front of the school, smoking. She had on a black coat with white shoulders, and her locks were covered with large snowflakes. I nearly knocked her down as I ran to hug her around her waist, yelling: "How was I, huh? How was I?!" "Where's your jacket? Do you want to catch cold?" she said, hugging me. "It's in the changing room... Come on, tell me!" I persisted. Her chin trembled, like a child's who's about to cry and I felt sorry. I realized I should have written about something else. I was stupid not to see this would make her sad. Just like when I gave a birthday card two weeks before with an engraving of a king and a queen, and her eyes filled with tears because she must have remembered dad. From then on I was going to write for the grade only. I swung my arms around her neck and said, "Don't cry, mom. You know that our dear God whips the most those he loves best." She let out a strange sigh and wiping her face she said, "And you got a bag full of sweets from Uncle Grgo." I was happy. I left the dance floor behind and returned with my mom to our warm room. It was a nice Christmas Eve, we lay holding each other, watching good movies about Jesus, with the bag next to the bed. The only bad thing was that I threw up and my stomach hurt a little the next day.

Translated by Mima Simić

Genc Kadriu

LIKE ANY OTHER DAY

The universe is an exploded view of matter with the text under for explanation.

One's shadow cast on the grave of a loved one needs no explanation.

We return to the living precariously, like any other day.

allow for. Inversely, it is dependent on his motivation to push things on, a motivation that most of the times is as scarce as a Palos Verdes Blue. He is a fan of Pope Francis, but no catholic. Or superstitious for that matter. He believes world peace is a human invention, like Evil, and that we're all fucked anyway. He currently resides in the down-trodden town of Prishtina.

MIRELA KUMBARO was born 1966 in Tirana. She is a associated professor and doctor in translation studies. Mirela Kumbaro was the founder of the department of translation studies at the University of Tirana in Albania. She works as a professor and expert of translation at the University of Tirana and Prishtina. She translated into Albanian language books of these Authors: Milan Kundera, Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet, Fernand Braudel, Amin Zaoni, Marjane Satrapi, Slavenka Drakulić etc..

TOMISLAV MARKOVIĆ was born in 1976. He is a poet, satirist, journalist and anti-fascist. He lives in Belgrade. In collaboration with the editor board of Beton, he has edited the books *Srbija kao sprava* (Serbia as a device, 2007) and *Antimemorandum-dum* (V.B.Z., 2009). He has published two books with poetry, two with aphorisms and a book with satirical texts *Vreme smrti i razonode* (Time of death and joy, V.B.Z., 2009). He is on of the editors of the cultural propaganda set Beton and the deputy of Petar Lukovic in the portal <http://www.e-novine.com>.

Miloš Živanović

TO FADIL THE TRANSLATOR

In '99 I left Belgrade and went to hell but you might know that already I've already written about it and sent you the book. I crossed the Sava and the Danube escaping to the north by north west. Then I stumbled upon the Danube again every now and then I cross the Danube wherever you go there's a Danube there I've had enough of it. I wish I could cross the Mississippi, for a change. I don't know where you were while I was crossing the Danube running away from them and from myself. I don't know if they were after you with their helicopters, air craft bullets, eyes knives, boots if they kicked you in the head and if you shot if you've done time if you were lucky enough to find shelter somewhere far away.

But you're alive, I hear, guru translator transporting across the napalm rivers to freedom. I don't know your language (which is normal and expected and desirable). I've never seen you. People tell me that you look like a beatnik. I do not know if it's because of the translation or because of Ginsberg or the alcohol or just like that, because of life. I imagine you in a bar moderately drunk, as one should be reciting in the infernal multitude of languages, dialects, territories. Are you thinking about revolution at least when you're drunk. About solidarity, about republic. About the future? The future of all those translations that you keep in the closet?

I know some good bars in Prishtina (Qerim took me there) just do not remember their names, of course. I'd like to get to know bars in Orahovac and in New Orleans houses of the darkened sun. I barely resist the urge to sit in the car and speed South. Freedom lives on the highway. When the asphalt heals from tank treads. What's a man without a car? At the heart of every man there's a motel a crossing point and a chance for a cup of coffee and a Zen moment.

The wheel and music and the logic of white lines that keeps an echo of railway sleepers. And death as a constant possibility of choice – it is good while it stays like that. I no longer drive drunk

since they adopted the EU regulations. I was meant to appear in public tonight and promote a book (Albanian, imagine) in promotional mood myself. I hate public and the names of people who appear in public because the salon libertines don't know that the names are redundant and solidarity and anonymity are necessary and that the book has its own sad life where we should not interfere. That's why I'm sitting at home imagining I'm driving to Prishtina. I mowed the lawn in the yard. That seems like a healthy activity. My son likes it when I mow the lawn He runs in circles like a wild elf. It smells nice outside now. I'm content, resting with a beer and in my mind I'm driving to the South, to Prishtina, to Mexico, to the South, to freedom. For self-made self-propelled howitzer-killers from the hills continue to shell the city relentlessly with curses and mud the city is something that should be raped then burned to the ground the howitzers are persuading us that we're suicidal. Something so good is oozing from the speakers that it must be the devil himself and that musician must have been in contact with something truly big and scary – those who don't suffer do not make verse. In my mind I have enough money for 10 tanks of unleaded petrol one change of oil a carton of cigarettes and some fine shades.

I'm just driving in the parking lot behind the petrol station I jerk off like a chimpanzee I keep driving further and further I don't know a thing about the place where I'll stop I don't know a thing about Kosovo nor Mexico I do not know where the border is where our Rio Grande is I know that life here is still cheap. In my mind I am stable and strong I have enough strength and reason to think soberly about my brother. A Predator ate him. I talk to him and write to him, but the dead are dead. I'm thinking about you too and about Vlajsa and your brother. I love that you are alive. That I can read your stuff. Fadil Bajraj – Master Jedi May the force of language be with you.

Translated by Svetlana Rakočević, Jelena Čalić i Edward Aleksander

Arben Idrizi

ETERNAL RETURN

Everyone is frightened they might do something bad.
Something so bad that only
Those who do it can foresee it.
But no one wants to believe they'll do it,
No one will admit as true before
That which after will be true.

They call themselves elected.
They call for holy war.
They claim all wit and all means.

The others are asleep.
The others are lost.
The others are rotten.

If they do not lead, all will be disaster,
History's call is urgent and fatal.

The day will come when action is inevitable.
They'll start with some symbolic action
By distributing propaganda material
With meetings to raise awareness and mobilize the people
By beating and lynching someone who thinks differently
By persecuting opponents
By executing someone who falsifies their truth
By exploding a bomb in a public place
By massacring a particular minority
Or a particular majority, or who knows.

Then,
Then, they'll take power with a military coup
Or with the taxpayers' money, they'll steal and buy votes.

And that's how it goes
And that's how History starts from the beginning again
With new heroes, new principles and new values

They'll flatten the hills that waste this land
They'll destroy old bridges
They'll open education concentration camps
They'll prohibit what was allowed
They'll impose that which was prohibited
They'll envelop settlements,

With instructions about respect and good behaviour
They'll invent new hymns and songs
They'll burn the books that don't contain their book
And the books that do contain their book
They'll plant trees and forests of fear and deception.
They'll open tunnels of trust without exit
They'll make children obedient citizens
They'll transform citizens into spies of truth
They'll hang the people's enemies in the squares
They'll replace old monuments with new ones
They'll hang on every wall the leader's portrait
They'll give his name to towns, institutions and roads.

Paradise will come to earth,
Salvation will be tangible.

The sleeping will wake,
The lost will be found,
The rotten will be cleansed.

Meanwhile
Meanwhile, the next generation will come
And they'll start from scratch again.

Translated by Alexandra Channer

Yolanda Castaño

FAIRY TALES

Once upon a time
... and at the end of the story
Miss Little Red Riding Hood was a wolf,
the grandmother a woodcutter,
the ravener an ascetic,
the libertarian a complete compendium of dependencies,
the mystic a fear-tinged frivoller,
the homme incompris an angel,
the princess a monster,
the frivoller a fear-tinged mystic,
the monster a princess,
the other homme incompris a demon,
the supposed wolf a real Little Red Riding Hood
and the path through the wood
a woodcutter.

[Depth of Field] (2007, bilingual ed. 2009)
Translation by Jonathan Dunne

Genc Kadriu

NO QUESTIONS
ASKED

BBC presenter breastfeeds a panda cub as she reports on
the latest malware.
The most popular ways to steal data.

My neighbour's spleen has become a Lego brick in the
humanitarian toxicology of NATO.
No questions asked.

Then there's a different warning: the birds.
Because when they leave, it's going to strike.

Even the battery at the back of the clock has become a
blood-sucking leech.

I remove it and drift off to sleep.

Dragoslava Barzut

THE RIGHT TIMING

I can never find a free parking space in our court-
yard. My stupid habit of turning off the radio as soon
as I turn in the courtyard. I quieten the car, as if there is
a garage with sensors waiting for me behind the corner
and not narrow, muddy crevices between the buildings.
The fun, actually, begins now. I dart, stare, turn, step on
the gas and step on the brakes. Three in the morning is
not the happiest timing for looking for a parking space.
The old insomniac from the first floor could come out on
the balcony any second now and see the headlights of
my dad's Škoda. We breathe by turns, the car engine and
me, the twitches of our lungs could wake up the entire
block. One can breathe more easily in the neighbouring
courtyard, but three in the morning is certainly not the
happiest timing for looking for a parking space in any
courtyard.

We live on the fifth floor in a building with an el-
evator, my parents, my sister, my five-year-old daughter
and me. I take a step on the first step and the clang of
the keys in my bag reverberates, I stop and clasp the bag
as I do in public transport while I'm suspending from
the bar. I hold back every step, luckily our building is a
Methuselah, the echo is louder in new buildings. One
construction worker said how not a single building in the
neighbourhood has a wider staircase, with wide and thin
steps: It's almost as the ones for the invalids, the con-
struction worker was clear. I stop on the last step to calm
my breathing. As if I have just robbed a bank and lost
the money on the way. I listen. You can hear the clock
from the hallway, its strikes last nearly a hundred years
in our house. Tick-tock-tick. I carefully put the key in the
lock like I'm doing it for the first time. Tick-tock-click! I
close my eyes. I turn the doorknob and stop one more
time before I make the decisive move. Three more steps
to go. Tick-stomp-tock. Tick-stomp-tock. Tick-stomp-
tock. The Will E Coyote in the episode "Over dynamite".
I succeed. I open my eyes. Ana is sleeping. Her little suit
for tomorrow is over the chair. Ana is going to have an
eye surgery tomorrow, a routine intervention. My ex-
husband is free, but still, I will stay with Ana because
the hospital told us that they didn't allow dads to come:

It has to be a female with the child, the nurse from the
call centre was clear.

My ex-husband says that this is discrimination, but he
won't do anything about it: Now is not the right time to
react. The right time doesn't exist, what exists is dynam-
ic. Almost nothing is worth of his while, that is why he
doesn't dare and *doesn't indulge in*. That used to bother
me, more than when he didn't wipe the water from the
dishwasher's rim, with a Truleks rag. Sometimes we meet
in a club. Now, each of us has their own little pills, you
don't need love when you have little pills. That is the big-
gest absurd of love – one can get the thing which is the
ultimate goal of months of seduction, quarrels, making
ups, throwing glasses, babbling and crying in one single
pill which costs as two beers.

I put the bag on the table, take out my wipes and
disinfect my hands. I take out a pack of condoms and lay
it behind the books on the shelf, right behind the Alfred
Hitchcock's "Stories to Be Read with the Door Locked",
the only book on my shelf with no foreword and after-
word, and with no explanation on its cover. I would light a
cigarette, but we've never smoked in our house.

I miss cigarettes especially after lunch. My folks usually
have a rest after lunch, and they always complain when I
leave Ana with them. Ana is little and she doesn't get it when
she needs to be quiet when the news is on. It would have
been a lot different if I'd known to keep still in turbulent situ-
ations, but I was told to scream while I was being raped. I will
teach Ana differently. I take off my clothes and look at my
shadow on the floor. My belly got fatter. All the advertising
experts are lying, the truth is that for good looks you need to
have enough money and not enough worries.

I look at Ana, she is quiet only when she sleeps. Ana
yells when she talks, it is because she wants to speak to us,
and she wants us to listen to her. Before I go to bed, I go to
the CD player and look for the *Rage against the Machine*
CD. I don't hesitate, I quickly go to the sixth song and press
play: *Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me!*
People are waking up.

Translation by Ana Jovanoski

Jovica Ivanovski

WOMAN CODRIVER

The woman codriver
owns half of the windshield
and the mirror on the lowered sun blind

The woman codriver
would not stop speaking – but then she also does
at home – as the codriver in my life

The woman codriver
often doesn't even know to drive – but
it doesn't deprive her of the right to be my instructor

The woman codriver
(actually) should respect the man driver just
like the flight attendant respects the main pilot

The woman codriver
can wear a mini skirt
that shows her nice bare knees next to the emergency brake

The woman codriver
can also be handy – if you have a flat tire
or your car dies and there's nobody to push

The woman codriver
can have a perfect profile
with garbage dumps on the fields framed in the window

The woman codriver
is most beautiful when she sleeps – then you start to enjoy
the driving and you do all that takes

not to wake her up

Translatd by Elizabeta Bakovska

TAL NITZÁN (Israel) is an award winning poet, editor and a major translator of Hispanic literature. Recipient of the Women Writers' Prize, the Culture Minister's Prize for Beginning Poets, and the Prime Minister's Prize for writers, Nitzán has published five poetry collections: Domes-tica, An Ordinary Evening, Café Soleil Bleu, The First to Forget and Look at the same cloud twice. Her poems have been translated to many languages, and anthologies of her work have been published in Italian, French, Spanish and Lithuanian. An ardent peace activist, Nitzán has ed-ited the ground-breaking anthology With an Iron pen: Hebrew Protest Poetry (2005), a collection of poems that protest against the Israeli oc-cupation (English version: SUNY Press, USA, 2009). She has translated over 70 books into Hebrew, including poetry works by Cervantes, Macha-do, García Lorca, Neruda, Paz, Borges, Vallejo, Pavese and others.

VERENA NOLTE studied languages in Paris and London and Modern German Literature and French Literature at the Freie University Berlin. She worked as a translator, author and editor for literary magazines and radio. For the cultural department of the city of Munich, she worked in international cultural exchange and directed 1997-2003 the Villa Wald-bertha, the artists' and writers' residence of Munich at Lake Starnberg. In June 1999 she here organized the symposium "Thinking, philosophiz-ing, writing in the shadow of war" with writers and intellectuals from the ex- Yugoslav countries. From 2006 – 2010 she was executive director of the network of German literature houses literaturhaus.net and founded in 2011 in Munich the non-profit culture company Kulturallmende – www.kulturallmende.org, with which she realizes international literature and art projects, including writers exchange programs with Croatia and Poland.

EFTYCHIA PANAYIOTOU was born in Cyprus in 1980. She is a poet, copy editor, poetry translator and literary reviewer. She studied Philosophy in Athens and Modern Greek in London and is currently completing her PhD in Modern Greek female poetry. Her first poetry book, megas kipouros, was published in 2007. Her second one, Mavri Moralina, published in 2010, was shortlisted for the Cyprus State Prize and the "Diavazo" Poetry Prize and won the third prize for Best Book by a Young Poet. Her poetry has appeared in English, German, Italian, Spanish and Croatian. Panayi-otou has translated into Greek Anne Sexton's Love Poems (Melani Pub-lishers, 2010) as well as works of other American poets, such as Anne Carson, Robert Duncan, Jack Spicer and Ravi Shankar.

BLERINA ROGOVA GAXHA was born in Gjakova in 1982. She obtained her MA in the field of modern forms and literary theories at the University of Prishtina. With her poetry book "Gorgone" (2009), won the price of Mitingu i Poezie for the book of the year. She worked as a journalist at Radio BBC. Since 2009, she wrote columns for the daily newspaper Zëri, where she is currently editor for arts and culture. Her work was published in different national and international literary magazines and antologies including Lichtungen and Wespenest. She participated at book fairs in Ger-many and won the scholar for writers in Split, Croatia 2013. In 2013 her latest work with poetry Kate was published by the publishing house PA.

Jovica Ivanovski

AFTER SEX

We descend the crater
and look for our underwear
our tongues still entangled
and unable to say a single stupid word
we either wipe the sword or polish the shield
four lips smoke one cigarette
four legs (one over another beneath the linen)
like cutlery wrapped in a napkin
then a shower (being naked, why not)

Translated by Zoran Anchevski

Yolanda Castaño

A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION

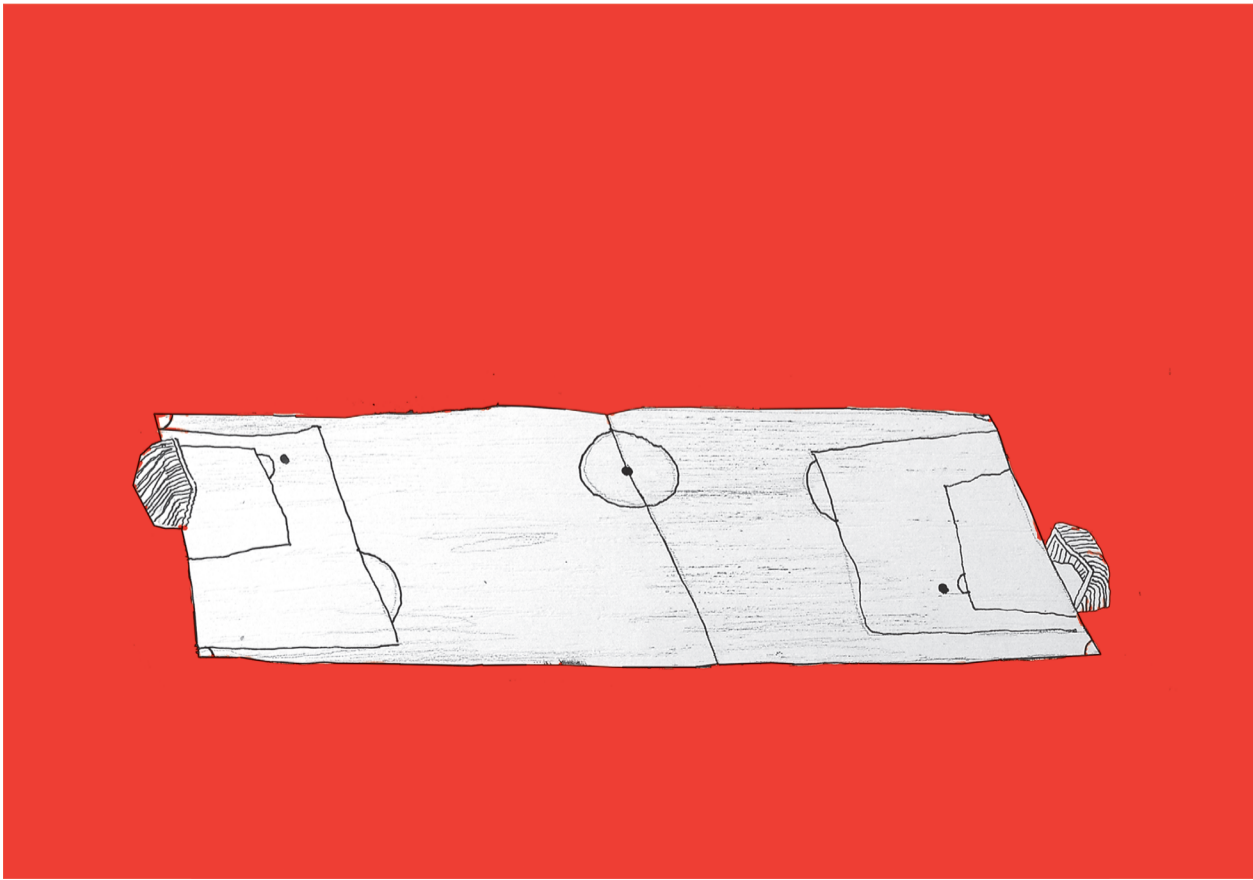
First it was a disorder
a girl's harmful abstinence we were poor I had nothing
except rickets poverty before I bitterness lacking a
parabola of complexes a syndrome a ghost
(Equally ill-fated to miss or lament it)
Shadowy reef which breaks my necklaces.
First of all it was an evasive gill which
wouldn't make me happy touching me with its breath
I'm the plainest face in the school playground
insipid expression which sows nothing anywhere
have it or not give up get used to swallow it
crows covering clouds sentenced to eternal cold
a patient gale a private deprivation
(I was a convent girl they all end up
anorexic Lesbian spare
the rod spoil the elbows heads
cunts and consciences).
I closed my eyes and violently wished
once and for all to become what I was.

But beauty corrupts. Beauty corrupts.
Shadowy reef which wears out my necklaces.
Morning conquers and the throat contains a portent.
Silly little thing! you were obsessed with covering with crosses
instead of content.
It was a slow dizzy blossoming of flowers in winter
The rivers jumped back turned into waterfalls roses
butterflies and snails appeared in my hair
The smile of my breasts added fuel to airplanes

Beauty corrupts
Beauty corrupts
The tightness of my stomach escorted spring
conch shells overflowed in my miniature hands
my highest compliment pinched my ventricle
I no longer knew what to do with so much light in so
much shade.

They said your weapon will be your own punishment
they threw my virtues in my face this
club does not admit girls with red painted lips
a dirty seaqueake perverted usury which
can have nothing to do with my mask of lashes
mice went up to my room fouled the drawers of underwear
litres of scrap tar secret spying litres
of control litres of slanderers kilos of suspicions raised
with only the tense arch of my eyebrows you should be
tied up
given a grey appearance your features erased with acid
to stop being me in order to become a writer?
they demonized my long thin neck the way
I have hair at the base of my nape this
club does not admit such well turned out girls
We distrust the summer
Beauty corrupts.
Think hard if this is all worth it.

[Depth of Field] (2007, bilingual ed. 2009)
Translation by Jonathan Dunne



Beqë Cufaj

PROJEKT@PARTY

[Extract]

*They were shooting from the windows.
We forced the doors.
The master's bedroom was wide open. The master's
bedroom was brilliantly lit, and the master was there, very
calm... and all of us stopped... he was the master... I en-
tered. It's you, he said, very calmly.... It was me, it was in-
deed me, I told him, the good slave, the faithful slave, the
slave slave, and suddenly my eyes were two cockroaches
frightened on a rainy day.... I struck, the blood spurted: it
is the only baptism that today I remember.
Aimé Césaire
"And the dogs were silent" – trans. by Clayton Eschle-
man and Annette Smith
Quoted in Frantz Fanon: The Wretched of the Earth*

I

The loud rumble with which the *Germanwings* ma-
chine extended its landing gear, the advertising campaign
Mhhh, Baden-Württemberg emblazoned in red above its
fuselage, signaling to us that touchdown was approach-
ing. After a quiet flight, partly over white clouds, partly
with clear, blue skies, in whose course we had been of-
fered a grand view of the winter landscapes, we now only
had to pierce the dark gray blanket of clouds to finally
touch down in this foreign land. Only a few, a slight few
spots of turbulence disturbed the landing. Without any-
thing else occurring, the wheels touched the concrete with
a squeak, the airplane continued rolling till the end of
the runway, executed a graceful turn and stopped. A faint
echo of children bawling pitifully could still be heard. In
contrast, the adult passengers, who had expressed a posi-
tively frightening calmness with their glances and tone of
conversation, abruptly changed their behavior and started
to argue loudly about who could take their coat, bag, or
other things from the bins above the seats. Some of them
carried a smile on their lips while they energetically pushed
ahead to be first at the exit. Only one woman had remained
seated and offered the infant on her lap her large, white
breast. It was only in this moment that I realized that for
me there was no turning back. No. I had to irrevocably ad-
just to this country, which in that moment, as I prepared to
touch its ground, appeared to be the Promised Land, even
if I was irritated as I took the first steps, looked around,
breathed in the cold air and encountered something in-
scrutable hanging in the air... I didn't understand what was
happening to me. In a completely normal country. A hectic
back and forth inside me, the border controls hectic as well.
Rows of people and noise in the low-hanging hall of the
shabby airport building that called itself a terminal. Every-
one seemed somehow relieved. Moved. They had arrived in
their homeland. In contrast, we, there were probably also a
few others I hadn't yet caught sight of, felt a little helpless.
We still had to get to know this foreign land, about which
we had only heard and read about up till now. We had to
assess where we were and how we felt. I was *down there*
now. And I had to think of there, that distant *above*. But
there was no other misgivings. There was no turning back.
One step after another. Everything had to go quickly. Every
backward thought prevented me from moving forward. Al-
though I didn't know how and where to go. But that wasn't
so important now. As in a fleeting dream, I passed over the
border between here and there.

The bus was waiting outside. I noticed that I actu-
ally hadn't been the only *other*, the only foreigner in the
airplane. There were at least eight of my kind. We were

awaited by a person holding up a sign with the inscrip-
tion *UN*. We approached him. It seemed to me as if we
were a couple beggars who were entreating these appar-
ently native people for charity. At least he acted as if he
just dealing numbers without any meaning, any value. Or
with a herd of sheep that had finally found its Sheppard.
Now the irreverent young man held the sign with the *UN*
inscription in his left hand while pulling a note out of
his back pants pocket with his right, which he read our
names aloud with a raspy and strained voice. Someone
was missing. Someone named Lars. Lars Swartz. A Swede.
The young man, our Sheppard, pointed to our bus, which
we had already discovered on our own. He had to wait for
the Swede, in case he came at all. We took our seats and
waited in the vehicle that ought to be called a minivan
rather than an omnibus. While we waited we observed the
throng in front of the airport. Relatives were received
with hugs, sobs, and cries of joy. I didn't understand what
was happening there. Even if I didn't comprehend it, I
still sensed that a painful yearning passed beneath the

Miloš Živanović

LET'S DANCE

do you feel like dancing tonight
you've got your red shoes on, I see
so...

do you maybe feel like dancing

let's dance
the mud is up to our knees
we'll twirl around the gravestone
as gracious as we possibly can
the mud is clean, a bit bloody though

the devil is sneaking around
here he comes, carrying faces
trying to do the step with his hunched back
up to his knees in the mud
do you feel like dancing tonight

the devil is sneaking about here
this round is on me
let's dance tonight
until the mud turns into piles of shit

excuse me for what I was going on about
we could still dance
may I hold you, please
that would mean the world to me

do you feel like dancing tonight
you're wearing your red shoes, I see
well, life is good
do you maybe feel like dancing

*Translated by Svetlana Rakočević,
Jelena Čalić and Edward Aleksander*

laughter and weeping during the encounters between
those arriving and those waiting. It was understandable.
A terrible war had taken place in this country *down here*,
thousands of people had died within the course of a few
months. Now those who had been able to get themselves
to safety were returning to their homeland to continue
their lives amidst the destruction and deep wounds, or at
least visit and support their relatives. Through the dirty
window in the back of the van I saw how the mother
who had nursed her baby in the airplane was received by
an old woman with a head scarf and an old man with a
traditional felt hat who quickly took the infant to cud-
dle it. Almost simultaneously I glimpsed how our young
man shook someone's hand. It was probably the missing
Swede. The driver stowed the newcomer's baggage under
my seat. Then the last two passengers squeezed in next
to us. The Swede made a beeline for me. He was probably
drawn by concern for his luggage. With a slightly stilted
"hello" he sat next to me on the bench. The driver started
our transport's motor while I experienced yet another of
those great disappointments, tearing at my dignity. I had
in fact expected one of those big white cars could come
just for me, like the ones shown on TV and in the papers,
to take me into the city center. Instead I now sat in a
shabby van with eight dolts from all over the world, and
that's not all, the others were even more nimble than me
because practically all of them had conquered a bench
for themselves while I had to share one with this guy. This
strange Swede. I didn't know if the look that he gave me
should make me start a conversation or if he just wanted
to discover my nationality. It's also possible he just want-
ed me to lean back so that he could take in more of the
landscape *down here*. Without a word, we agreed to not
bother each other any further.

The potholes on the narrow country road tossed us
back and forth, which didn't prevent me – and probably
the other passengers as well – from looking out onto the
few bleak hills. Several of my fellow travelers swapped
comments. What a gloomy landscape! That strange shade
of gray! The snowcaps on the brownish humps didn't
make the view any more bearable. The airport, where
there were also a few Apache helicopters standing around
in addition to the machine that had brought us here,
remained behind us. I asked myself why hadn't noticed
the cows, sheep, and horses that grazed between the air-
planes earlier. What in the world did the animals find here
in the middle of winter? Maybe they had only been let
out into the open so they could get some fresh winter
air. In the meantime I had been overcome by a feeling of
well-being – though vague – because I had been able to
close the book on a thoroughly difficult chapter of my
life. I smiled. Along the road there were houses, some still
destroyed, some already rebuilt. Children ran after each
other in the yards, sticks in hand that were supposed to
represent medieval swords or submachine guns, sluggish
cattle stood on the bleak stretches to the right and left of
the road... oppressive and to a certain extent threatening
images flew by, but they could not affect the euphoria
which had seized me. I had left my previous life behind,
was completely at peace with myself for the first time.
An ex- Ex-husband and ex-father. Ex-friend and ex-col-
league. Ex-professor at various universities. All my life I
had dreamed of doing something for humanity, but only
now did I have the chance to do something concrete. [...]

Translated by Julie Carl

Tomislav Marković

THE MIDDLE OF A POLAR NIGHT

stop pestering me with that story
your mouths are full of corpses
a freezer-lorry is peeping through your eyes
creating a deafening noise
about genocide
you've bored both God
and his chosen people

*(there wasn't anything here
nothing had happened
nothing is what happened
our conscience is clean)*

every comma is a thigh bone
every full stop – a skull
every sentence – a mass grave
it's really hard talking to you
discussing decomposed bodies at the
dinner table
it's simply distasteful

*(drinking from a beer spout
the brain is checked out
for all the world troubles
my cock barely trembles)*

human flesh chops float in a veal broth
a roasted pig has the eyes of a child
radishes are severed pink fingers
your corpored words
make churn my buried guts

*(the ticket's been paid for
the fan's been beaten
I calmly watch tennis
with my care-free penis)*

stop telling me things
that I cannot hear

my ears don't process screams and cries
simply, we're not on the same wavelength
the hammer is beating the anvil relentlessly
creating a deafening noise
not even Eustachian's trumpet from Kosovo can be
heard
this is the middle of the polar night

*(the state is in a crisis
sliding into an abyss
our drinking holes are packed
our cocks are cracked)*

only good should be spoken of the dead
but, do we have to do it daily?
there are so many topics
like, sunsets, going out, clubbing
interior design, art, branding
male-female relationships, styling, sport
it doesn't have to all be dark
let the dead bury their dead
let living sip their espresso without milk
for the RIP of the deceased

*(while I sip my coffee
chilling in the Snuffee
in the twilight zone
we can sense the drone)*

anyway, it has nothing to do with me
at the time

- a) I only just started school
- b) I wasn't even born
- c) I was revising for my exams
- d) I was falling in love at first sight
- e) I emigrated into myself
- f) I was falling head first into puberty
- g) I was leaving behind my midlife crises
- h) I wasn't particularly aware

lieutenant. After the war he studied literature and since 1998 has pub-
lished his own literary works. The literary critics regard him as one of the
most gifted young writers in the former Yugoslavia, as a shining light of
the so-called "knocked-over generation". Some of his published work:
Pjesme u nastajanju (2000; tr: Acquired Poems), *Pod pritiskom* (2004;
tr: Under Pressure), *Knjiga o Uni* (2011; tr: The Book of Una) etc..

DORUNTINA VINCA was born 1982 in Prishtina. She spent her for-
mative years writing in the margins of New York City coffee shops, in
between classes at Hunter College, CUNY (where she studied Anthro-
pology) and long hours of working behind bars. Currently, Doruntina
works as a researcher, analyzing freedom (or rather, lack of freedom)
of movement of people in the Western Balkans. She is also translat-
ing a book on Kosovo education during the 1990s. She writes mostly
short stories.

MILOŠ ŽIVANOVIĆ (1976, Belgrad) – poet, journalist and one of the
four editors of the cultural propaganda set *Beton*. He has published two
collections of poems: *Ignore The Nightmare In The Bathroom*, *Linka*
pasa (Dogs lyrics, 2009) and the collection of stories *Kubernetes – priče*
o pilotu (Kubernetes – stories about the pilot). He was the text book
editor of *Beton*: *Srbija kao sprava* (Serbia as a device) and *Antimemo-*
randum-dum. For this work the editorial board of *Beton* was awarded
by NUNS (Association of Independent Journalists of Serbia) with the
Dušan Bogovac prize for ethics and courage in journalism (2007). He is
the editor of the publishing house Alogaritam in Belgrade.

- i) I was working on my muscles
- j) I had to take some medicine to my aunt
- k) I was unwell, I've got a doctor's note
- l) I was oiling the hinges on the door of perception
- m) I was discovering my true self
- n) I worked full time, three shifts, on myself
- o) I was grappling with eternal issues in the self-
questioning form
- p) I was writing poetry on urban melancholy
- q) I never fancied minding other people business
(delete as necessary)

*(cocks burst constantly
singularly, plurally
sting and pierce
the thing is fierce)*

let's wrap that war-crimes story up
the past had past, the word speaks for itself
why pulling the dead from the mothballs?
let's face the future
which sorted the date with us
under the corpulent carpet
let turn the pedals on the indoor cycle
with the 7-mile long hoofs
galloping towards the finish line
riding on the dead horses
a long journey lies ahead of us
to the peak of an iceberg
in the sunken freezer-lorry

*(there is no greater ache
than our dick-ache
there is no greater ache
than our dick-ache)*

*Translated by
Svetlana Rakočević, Jelena Čalić
i Edward Aleksander*

Tal Nitzán

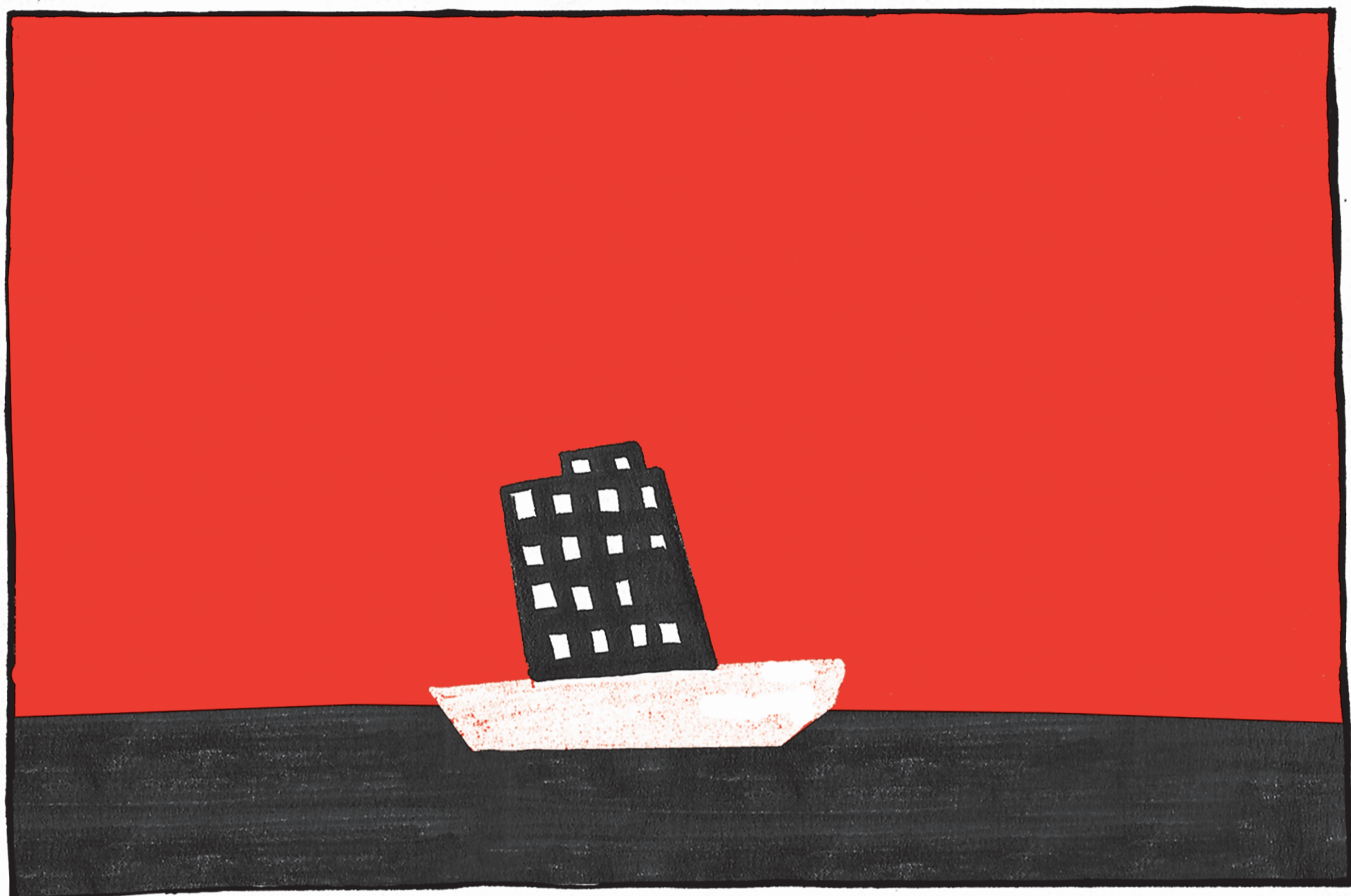
(LULLABY)

Imagine, every time
you close your eyes
you are forgotten.

Imagine, everytime
you fall asleep as ignorant as a child
you are forgotten by some heart.

Imagine, everytime
you fall asleep with no doubt no fear
no guard, you are forgotten by the one heart
of which you wanted to part.

Translated by Tal Nitzán & Irit Sela



POLIP

The International Literature Festival **polip** is organized every year in Prishtina. It was started and is run by Qendra Multimedia (Multimedia Center), a cultural production company based in Prishtina. Recent **polip** festivals have been jointly organized with **Beton**, a cultural organization based in Belgrade.

polip is an international literature festival bringing together young writers from the region as well as from Europe, in Prishtina. **polip** goes far beyond the frame of a literature festival and of a mere literary connection. It is about a wider understanding of the concepts of *peace building* and trust in a particularly traumatized region and among societies that have agreed to live separately and heal their own traumas without an attempt to elaborate the traumatic past and without empathy for the Other. In this case, the field of literature should be understood as a basic *zone of mutual communication* which will enable the process of conflict transformation in the region. Within its very concept, the **polip** festival contains elements of action towards conflict transformation and trust building. Authors gather in this festival with mutual consent that it is not only a literary event, but also a responsible participation in a project that is being realized *despite* the radical tightness of communities from which the authors come – Serbia/Kosovo. The presence of other authors from the region contextualizes the whole process and puts it in a wider social framework.

polip presents young voices in different languages, revealing their specific melody, musicality and rhythm. **polip** organizes not only readings, but also a special program of concerts, street poetry, workshops on translation and poetry-writing, discussions and debates about literary networks and translation practice.

BETON

Beton was initiated by the Cultural propaganda community **Beton** (association of citizens, non-governmental organization). Main idea behind this initiative is a critical approach towards the most important phenomenon in our recent and current culture and politics, one which directly influences the intent to sustain a retrograde nationalistic cultural model with all of its products and consequences. **Beton** utilizes media to convey new and provocative communication style that will target the response of a large number of various social groups, in addition suggesting new tendencies of social, political and cultural development. Central part of the project is editing a feuilleton in a daily *Danas*, in the form of an independent supplement, that is published since June 2006, under the name *Cultural propaganda pack Beton*. Supplement was also published in *Feral Tribune* (weekly from Split) and later in *Zarez*, magazine from Zagreb.

Based on texts in feuilleton, two books were published: *Srbija kao sprava* (Dangraf, 2007) and *Antimemorandum-dum* (VBZ, 2009) and a number of round-tables, debates, promotions and talks resulting from a critical and journalistic praxis developed by **Beton** editorial, were organized in different cities of the region and Europe (in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Austria and Germany).

Since 2007, **Beton** has its electronic version www.elektrobeton.net, where an entire archive of texts as well as non-printed material is available.

In 2010, **Beton** was introduced to German audience at Leipzig book-fair, with a special issue in German language. In 2011, **Beton** and Qendra Multimedia was present in Leipzig, with the project of crossover anthologies from Belgrade and Prishtina. Anthology *From Belgrade, with love* was translated into Albanian and published in Prishtina, and anthology *From Prishtina, with love* was translated into Serbian and published in Belgrade. Parts

from both books were translated into German and published in a special issue of **Beton**. In 2012, special issue for Leipzig book-fair was done in cooperation with authors from Slovenia.

In 2012, **Beton** and Qendra Multimedia organized 3-day International literature festival POLIP in Prishtina, with the headline "Borders of Politics, The Beginning of Po-Ethics". Special issue of **Beton** in Albanian was prepared for this occasion. In January 2013, in cooperation with Qendra Multimedia, **Beton** published book *Zveri vole otadžbinu* (Beasts Love Fatherland), by Arben Idrizi, author from Prishtina (translation from Albanian by Shkelzen Maliqi). It is 7th title in TonB edition.

In Mart 2013, **Beton** was at Leipzig book-fair, with special issue in German, with fiction, poetry, essays, analytic and critic texts under the general headline *Subversive*.

All activities related to Leipzig book-fair are supported by Traduki network.

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qendra multimedia BETON