

Polyglot

“A Bridge of Verses” in four languages

I allow myself to use English for my comment on an absolutely inspiring publication, because this language was the “lingua franca” among a team: two poets, “Marieke Maerevoet van België” and “Salvador Riera de Catalunya”, and Rosa Tirado and Laia Fàbregas who supported with their translations. The result of this joint venture was an extraordinary book of poetry: *Un pont de versos/Een brug van verzen/Un puente de versos/A bridge of verses* – and these are the four languages in which the book has been published. Polyglot, transnational and multicultural. The primary bridge between Marieke and Salvador is not the language itself, since they do not understand each other’s native language; it is Parkinson’s disease which affects them both. “A bridge of verses” is a joint project, knitting together four languages, two cultural backgrounds and common experiences. The poetry of the two writers can hence be read in four languages, and while it may suffice to speak one of these, it is a tremendous pleasure to read the poems in two, three or even in all the four languages! One of the poems states it so well: “There are words of passage calling in his head,/They travel to distant countries,/(...)” (p. 87). Initially, I was attracted by the rather seldom combination of Dutch and Catalan, and then, as I held the book in my hands, I discovered a beautiful firework of literature. The author of each poem, and thus the original language of the latter, Dutch or Catalan, is always clearly stated, and the entire book reads like statements of one poet, answered by the other, and vice versa. It is thoroughly “A bridge from language to language.” (p. 141). The success of the book is used to fund projects of investigation on Parkinson’s disease. To be frank, I am thrilled by the marvelous project that was brought to us by this fine team of poets and translators.

Salvador Riera/Marieke Maerevoet/Rosa Tirado/Laia Fàbregas:

Un pont de versos/Un puente de versos/A bridge of verses/Een brug van verzen

Voliana Edicions 2017

ISBN 978-84-94634710

