

AN ITALO-HEBRAIC BILINGUAL HOMOPHONOUS POEM

GHIL'AD ZUCKERMANN

Cambridge, England

gz208@cam.ac.uk

The following is constrained literature, a logological piece, in which the Israeli part sounds identical to the Italian. From the English translations provided below, one can see that the poem(s) make sense, although it has a surreal, evocative flavour, and modernist style. Poetic license is fully employed. As Thomas Paine once said, "The sublime and the ridiculous are often so nearly related, that it is difficult to class them separately. One step above the sublime makes the ridiculous; and one step above the ridiculous makes the sublime again" [*The Age of Reason, Part 2: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology*, London: Daniel Isaac Eaton, 1796, p.20].

שָׂדֵל (שִׁיר דו-לְשׁוֹנִי) עֵבְרִי-אִיטָלְקִי מִס' 31

גלעד צוקרמן

Libido, Eva,	ליבִי דואב,
esce da	האש עֵדה.
Nicolet,	אני קולט
che tale dá:	קטע לידה
animelle,	אני מילא
animali,	אני מה לי?
pedali,	פֶה דל לי,
regali. Matteotti	רגע לי מטֵה אותי.
pone gabinetto da Roma.	פֹנה גבִי נטו דרומה;
Mó tira la carrozzella da galeotto	מותיר הלה כר או צלע דג. גלה אותו!
Domani, Anna, vai a scuola!	דומני: ענווה היא אסכולה,
Scemo villano maresciallo	שמובילה, נאמר, רשע. לא
stamani me lo diceva	סתם אני מלודי. שבע!
a colpo sicuro.	הכל פה סיקור או
C'è marinaio a bordo, e allora?	שמא רינה רואה בור דואָה על אורה?

Alla nave, ballerina
 (i tacchi belli armoniosi funesti)
 lascia borsa nera,
 bozza locale, sambe, ossa...
 Ero in culo alla
 balena!
 Gabbia di matti!
 Miracolo:
 alti crani.
 Amor di miele
 annulla pere.
 Amarti coll'anemone
 alpina e
 col cuore a pezzi... Vattene,
 primipara primitiva
 da mozzarella,
 col cane!
 Sacchi, no! Ho capito
 apologo reale d'oro.
 Calda attenzion
 ha cambiato la reazion!!!

English Translation of the Italian Part

Libido, Eva,
 comes out of Nicolette,
 who gives the following:
 sweet-bread,
 animals,
 pedals,
 gifts. Matteotti
 puts down a toilet from Rome.
 Now he pulls the convict's pram.
 Tomorrow, Anna, you go to school!

אללא נע ון-בא לרינה,
 איתה קיבל לי ארמון, יוסיפון. אַסְתִּי
 לשה בור שנא רע;
 בוצה לא כלה סם בעושה
 הרואין - כולו "אללא".
 בלה נא!
 גבי... עדי... מתו!
 מי רע קולו?
 אל תקראני
 המורדים, מי אלה?
 ענו לפרא!
 אמרתי: קול, ענה! מונה
 על פי נאה.
 קול קורע-פה ציוה טנא
 פרי מפרה, פרי מטבעה:
 דם אוצר אלה.
 קול קנא:
 "סכיננו או כפיתו,
 אפו לא גורע לדורו".
 קל דעת, אין ציון;
 הקם - ביאתו לרע, ציון!

English Translation of the Israeli Part

My heart is languishing,
 the fire is a witness.
 I am absorbing
 one of the stages of labour.
 Never mind me,
 What is there for me?
 This moment is repulsing me.
 My back turns due south;
 It leaves a pillow or a fish rib. Discover it!
 It seems to me that humility is a school,

An idiotic, rude marshal
 told me that this morning,
 without fail.
 There is a seafarer on board, what now?
 On the ship, a ballerina
 (the beautiful, harmonious, sad heels)
 leaves a black bag,
 a local draft, sambas, bones...
 I was in a whale's
 arse! [i.e. I was lucky!]
 A cage of madmen!
 A miracle:
 long skulls.
 Love of honey
 overrides pears.
 Loving you with Alpine
 anemone and
 with a broken heart... Go away,
 a primitive primipara [a first-time mother]
 of mozzarella,
 with the dog!
 Sacks, no! I understood
 a golden royal fable.
 Ardent attention
 changed the reaction!!!

which leads, say, to wickedness. Not
 without reason am I melodious. It's 7 o'clock!
 Everything here is coverage or
 is it that Rina sees a pit gliding over Ora?
 Allah is moving and coming to Rina,
 with whom Yosifun was granted a palace. Esti
 kneaded a pit which hates evil;
 her mud does not use up the drug while making
 heroin which is all 'Allah'.
 Please enjoy yourself!
 Gabby...Adi...Matty!
 Whose voice is bad?
 Do not call me.
 The rebels—who are they?
 Answer the savage!
 I said 'voice, answer!', counting
 according to a handsome man.
 A mouth-tearing voice ordered a basket
 of fruit from a cow, fruit from its nature:
 blood, treasure of a goddess.
 A jealous voice:
 'his knife or his spoon,
 his nose does not detract from his generation'.
 Light-minded, there is no Zion;
 The comer—his arrival at his friend's is Zion!

CDC?

This is a reprint of a 1984 book by William Steig, exploiting the fact that a small number of English words can be phonetically represented by letters (CDC = see the sea). The theory underlying such wordplay, along with a dictionary of some 600 letter-words, is presented by William Brandt elsewhere in this issue. This book contains 56 short phrases, each amusingly illustrated with a colored illustration. Published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux in hardcover for \$16 (ISBN 0-374-31233-8), this book is highly recommended to all wordplay aficionados.