

Valentina Gosetti, *Transferre*:
Poetry in Translation for the Preservation of Minority Languages

Valentina Gosetti is a Junior Research Fellow in French and Comparative Literature at St Anne's College in the University of Oxford. Her book, entitled *Aloysius Bertrand's Gaspard de la Nuit: Beyond the Prose Poem* (Oxford, Legenda Main Series), will be published in November 2015. (<http://www.legendabooks.com/titles/isbn/9781909662834.html>)

Transferre (<https://valentinagosetti.wordpress.com>) is a blog about translation of poetry in verse or prose, and of short texts, from any language into any language, standard or not, with a particular focus on endangered local languages. Its creator is Valentina Gosetti, originally from Collio di Vobarno, a small town of the province of Brescia in Italy, who is now a Junior Research Fellow in French and Comparative Literature at St Anne's College, in the University of Oxford.

Valentina grew up with her grandmother, her parents, her aunt, and many other relatives in Collio, where, in the 80s and 90s, the everyday language was still *el Dialèt Bresà* (the dialect of the province of Brescia), a non-standard variety of Italo-romance. For this reason, Valentina considers herself to be bilingual from birth, mastering Italian and Bresà, but perhaps, Bresà might even be her real mother tongue, since it was the language that her family was more comfortable speaking at home. Standard Italian was learnt largely at school.

Today, Valentina's everyday languages are mainly English, French, and Italian. In a contemporary world, where dialects and local languages are under threat and increasingly forgotten, she decided to revive her mother tongue by combining two of her passions: poetry and local languages. Thanks to a funny Facebook comment of her friend Manuel Guerra, she took up the challenge of translating one of Baudelaire's best-known 'Spleen' poems, ('Quand le ciel bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle'), from *Les Fleurs du Mal* into Bresà. (<https://valentinagosetti.wordpress.com/2014/02/09/ baudelaires-spleen-lxxvii-in-dialet-bresa/>). On the same day, she decided to spread this translation – to which she added an audio file because her dialect is not a written language – by launching her blog *Transferre*, a platform for the promotion of poetry in translation, especially from and into endangered minority languages.

This first translation was very well received by the Bresciano-speaking community, who were excited by the idea that their language, often considered harsh and far from poetic within Italy, was, instead, a suitable means to convey even Baudelaire's poetry! This first attempt was followed by other translations from Baudelaire's collection. Her ambition is to publish a selection of Baudelaire's poems translated into Bresà in an anthology entitled *I Fiùr del Mal*, in the near future.

The most exciting aspect of *Transferre* is that other minority-language speakers and translators answered to this blog's call. *Transferre* now hosts a series of texts by '[guest translators](#)', including translations not only from French into Dialèt Bresà, but also from French into Béarnais (a local language spoken in the south-west of France), from English into Guarani (an indigenous language of

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South America), from Welsh into Galician. Also thanks to these contributions, *Transferre*, despite being a relatively young blog, was mentioned by the National Press in Paraguay and the local press in Italy.

Reading these newspaper articles, some high school teachers were so enthused by this project that they encouraged their students to contribute to *Transferre*, thus spreading the use of some endangered local languages within the younger generations. These young people responded enthusiastically, and even sought the help of their grandparents and older relatives to complete the task.

Transferre welcomes comments and feedback and is always looking for new contributors. If you would like to propose a translation from or into an endangered language, please contact us via Twitter: @GosettiV or via email valentina.gosetti@gmail.com