

Memory Rape: A look at Maria Grech Ganado's Latest Booklet

Walid Nabhan (*The Times*)

The poet is not coming merely from the language, also from the history, from the desolations of the past and also from the knowledge. In her most recent booklet *Memory Rape*, Maria Ganado takes the reader through a twisted journey full of linguistic tensions where the "seen" becomes "unseen" and the "unseen" becomes scandalously "seen" through anxious legitimate interactions.

After reading Maria's poems one finds himself desperately needing to answer a persistent question: What makes the poet write? What makes him get up and bring the papers and torture himself without knowing where is he going? The poet is the first one who knows that poetry is a risky and dangerous journey not covered by any type of insurance whatsoever- in poetry there is a lot of collisions and traffic accidents- so again what makes the poet write?

Undoubtedly the poet himself cannot answer this vexing question. The poet may- pitifully - think that he can contain the language but the true thing is that the language which contains him, the language has its memory, its tools, its history and traditions. Most of the times the poet finds himself chased by the same words which may had eluded him in the past. The role of the poet is to give life to these words. To glue them together using that mysterious paste which we, ordinary people, do not have.

In *Memory Rape* the metaphoric and the concrete yolk together bit by bit to illustrate the calamity of giving -perhaps love- unconditionally in a time where one is frightened to trust the trust itself. It is visibly shocking to learn that the poet may had become dangerously addicted to her pain, that pain which comes from a woman's nature and cannot be learned. That type of pain which doesn't necessarily appear in the poem, but felt long before the poem is finally born. The reader sees the newborn but never see the labour pain.

Maria passionately, but fruitlessly tries to heal the so many bruises on the pride of the contemporary woman *who sometimes decide to let herself be hurt* by indefinitely believing in *Father Christmas*. Father Christmas may one day run out of presents and might as well be having his own hell. Maria's disillusionments grow bigger as she realizes that certain chapters in life cannot -by any means- be taught, simply because certain serious realizations arrive almost always late. In this case the poetess is left with no option but to display her own wounds in a candle-light-damaging-but-illuminating pattern.

Maria's book is another beautiful addition to the Maltese feminine still-shy creativity. The booklet is one of series of six booklets which have been recently published by Inizjamed and Midsea Books. Other authors are Adrian Grima, Clare Azzopardi, Norbert Bugeja Stanely Borg, and Simone Inguanez. Much of their work is aggressively beautiful. Covers were cleverly designed by artist Pierre Portelli.

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