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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Three poems on the landscapes of identity

Maurice Amiel · Wednesday, October 9th, 2019

*“Does not everything depend on our interpretation of the silence around us?”* — Lawrence Durrell

### The sea was one...

The sea was one,  
its places were many in the  
occasions they provided...

Lesson one.

It was here and now  
and it was simply there,  
front and center or  
just behind the curtains  
of our mind...

Lesson two.

It carried the same chemical  
compounds as our blood,

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but that was knowledge

acquired later,

explaining

why

lessons one and two

still endure...

Lesson three.

*The sea*

*always asks for fresh*

*attention*

*because the sea,*

*as life,*

*Is sacred.*

\*

### **Rocks have no imagination...**

Rocks have no imagination encapsulated

in them;

born as they are

of the tectonic necessity to accommodate

movement of the earth's crust.

Stones, on the other hand

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come out of rocks  
as an act of imagination  
brought forth  
by ingenuity.

Nature may do as she likes,  
man is the only one,  
as Ben Shahn wrote,  
to add surprise ...  
may I add:  
for our pleasure!

Saying so  
is akin to saying:  
we see our nature  
inscribed in the stones  
shaped by our  
imagination ...

*Much to our  
surprise,  
and borrowed pleasure.*

\*

**We did not come from Ur...**

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We did not come from Ur.

We just drifted in like the  
sand on the patriarch's soles.

We were a different kind of sand.

Closer to the beach  
than to the desert,  
we took to the water's edge  
better than to the wind crossed  
dunes.

Like so much  
social mulch  
we traded and  
prayed for the  
desert soil to bloom;

but the sap was running low  
and the seeds were  
spilled like so many  
grains of sand  
in wounded souls.

*"What kind of bird*

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*would now be born*

*to the wounded*

*one?”*

— H. Dorion

### **Bibliographic note**

Dorion, H. *Ravir: les lieux*, La Différence, 2005

Durrell, L. *Justine*, Faber and Faber, London, 1960

*Credit feature image to Maurice Amiel*

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