

**Edition Converso – »Mediterranean language worlds«** was founded on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 by Monika Lustig as a one-woman publishing company, nurtured by profound love to literature, grounded in decades of experience in the field of literary translation, energized by several years of implementing cultural events in Karlsruhe, and – last but not least – inspired by half a lifetime spent in Italy, notably on three of its major islands, Sardinia, Sicily and Elba. Not surprisingly, the publishing program focuses on Italian literature, but it also explores other shores of the Mediterranean world. In fact, it is Converso’s declared intention to dive for literary treasures – prose, narrative non-fiction and lyric – from all regions and languages around the Mediterranean. Just like the sea creatures inhabiting its waters, those cultural creations do not know any artificial border. So, every region is represented by one of its endemic species, be it a fish or some marine mollusk, but they all intermingle in our program, which is guided by high standards both in content and form, including an aesthetically pleasing design. Our vision and hope (an aspiration shared by many) is to conjure the Mediterranean as the unique, united and incredibly seminal cultural area it used to be – before it turned into a moat, a mass grave and a site of species extinction.

\*

As our logo – the sea goddess Amphitrite bearing a trident – reveals, Edition Converso is bound to shed its radiant, illuminating light on the reverse side of established »truths«: After all, it was Amphitrite who reigned over the seas, not Poseidon. Mythology and history forcibly deprived her of the scepter and subjected her to male power – so let’s set the record straight!

\*

Right from the start, Edition Converso was determined to include the Arab-Islamic world in its program, and **Stefan Weidner**’s widely acclaimed long seller *1001 Buch: Die Literaturen des Orients* marked a successful beginning of that proposition. Also, *Blaue Blumen zu Allerseelen*, a murder mystery by **Santo**

**Piazzese** set in Palermo, was among the first books that Edition Converso finally made available to German-speaking audiences.

The spring program 2021 offers a five-leaf clover of female authors: **Belinda Cannone** (France), **Maja Gal Štromar** (Slovenia), **Maria Attanasio** (Sicily), **Chaza Charafeddine** (Lebanon) and **Katixa Agirre** (Spain/Basque region), soon to be followed by the Turkish author **Ayşegül Çelik** and her story collection entitled *Papierschiffchen*, as well as the Greek author **Katerina Schiná** (*Die Nadeln des Aufstands: Eine Kulturgeschichte des Strickens*), both scheduled for this year's fall program.

The year 2021 started with the lauded publication of *Ein Sizilianer von festen Prinzipien*, a collection of essays by the Sicilian author and great European **Leonardo Sciascia** on occasion of the first centenary of his birth in January – a success which is likely to be continued in 2022 with the 100-years commemoration of **Pier Paolo Pasolini**. We also plan to launch a publication series called »**Memoria di ferro** (Memory of steel) – Against oblivion, repression and irresponsibility: How the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century continue to haunt us.

By now, the Edition Converso team has been expanded to include Judith Krieg, responsible for Public Relations, as well as various helping hands and heads committed to this »art-work« of publishing. Paying tribute to the variety and richness of cultures, our publishing company ventures off to new shores with a promising outlook: The »we«, humaneness and humanity, will prevail over nationalist tendencies, racism and dull herd instincts.

**March 2021**