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Vol. 25

25th Anniversary Special Issue:
The Literature of the Journal

2018-2020

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FOREWORD

Dear Reader:

As always, we offer with a mixture of pleasure and pride this new number of *The Grove. Working Papers on English Studies*. As you may have all guessed by the slightly different format, this is a very special issue of our journal. To begin with, it corresponds to the 25th anniversary of the appearance of *The Grove* among Spanish academic journals of English studies. Our first issue, edited by the Universidad de Jaén Research Group in Humanities HUM 271, which was led by Prof. Carmelo Medina, appeared in 1996 and included an address by the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and a preface by the-then editor Dr Luciano García. Then, Michigan State University Prof. Stephen C. Arch contributed a fine article, which was followed by others by lecturers at the University of Leeds and the Universidad de Jaén, ending with an interview to critic and novelist Gene H. Bell-Villada by Prof. Nieves Pascual. But more significantly for this present, special print (and also digital) edition, the journal, already in its first issue, included poetry by American Book Award recipient Prof. Gordon Henry Jr., from Michigan State University.

It is to this original tradition of the journal that this special number, to which we have given the title of *The Literature of The Grove* pays tribute today. Our homage simply consists of devoting one whole issue of the journal to, on the one hand, recovering most of the poetic and narrative contributions of these past 25 years; on the other, adding some new and generous gifts by some first-class writers and translators. In this sense, we cannot but acknowledge our gratitude to them, among whom I would like to underline the unexpected and gratifying contribution of the reputed author Juan Eslava Galán, a colleague, a scholar and translator, multi-awarded novelist, and great friend of this Department and this university.

This special number, therefore, includes original poetry, translations and short stories by such noteworthy academics and/or creative writers as Libby Adams, Jefferey Simmons, Luciano García García, Julio Ángel Olivares Merino, Gerardo Piña Rosales, Frank Sewell, Ali S. Zaidi, Sheri Spaine-Long, Don Bogen, David Swartz, Jüri Talvet, and Juan Eslava Galán (with an introduction to his translation of T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* by Nadia López-Peláez Akalay). To each and every one of them we are grateful, above all for the immediate way in which

they responded, and for their generous gifts of time and talent. To those we could not reach for various reasons, we offer our sincere apologies but remain equally grateful as nobody refused the request of *The Grove*. The volume also includes a compilation of contributions previously published in former issues of *The Grove*—those by John Goodby, Juan Ráez Padilla, James Stewart, Stephanos Stephandes, Peter Figueroa, Chidi Uzoma, Adriana Carolina Bulz, and P. Preethu—which also represent the creative talent that has permeated and enriched our journal throughout these 25 years.

We hope this publication is, to all readers, as interesting, exciting and, at times, moving, as it is to us. In any case, our long-held commitment to the publication of original poetry, translations and short stories is, this way, given a place of honor in our journal's series. The reason for this is obvious: we would be nothing if not for the incessant work of authors and translators, whom we immensely admire and to whom we will always be grateful for their work.

The Editors.

ELIZABETH ADAMS

May Haikus

The Grove 2 (1996)

1.
Silver green aspens
Tremble against my window.
Wild weather in May.

2.
In a child's magic painting book
A broad brush stroke converts the pristine page
Swirls of watery colour.

As in a magic painting book
A broad brush stroke changes the bare earth canvas.
Tapestries of living colour.

Haiku is a Japanese verse form consisting of seventeen syllables in three lines of five, seven, and five syllables respectively. Such a poem expresses a single idea, image or feeling. Translations from Japanese attempt to preserve the idea and the image, although it is not always possible to preserve the strict form in English. The form can, of course, be achieved when writing in English, although writers do not always restrict themselves to the pure form and rather focus on conveying the idea and the image clearly and simply. One of the most famous Japanese writers of haiku was Matsuo Kinsaku (1644-94) who later changed his name to Basho in honour of the tree given to him by a disciple. Here is one example by Basho translated by Lucien Stryk.

From the heart
of the sweet peony,
a drunken bee.

Poems

The Grove 9 (2001)

1.
 Draw the mountains near.
 With the touch
 of an outstretched finger
 smooth the blue blanket folds.

2.
 On icy January nights
 Dark giants slumber
 Under cold star blankets
 Patient, petrified.
 Waiting for daybreak.

In icy seas and sand
 Stone giants seem to sleep
 Their fringed green tonsures seen.
 Their feet, fifty fathoms deep.
 Waiting for tideturn.

It breaks. It turns.
 Day breaks. Tide turns
 Day turns. Tide breaks.
 Night turns into day
 Moon turns the tide
 Night day night day
 Light day dark night
 Earth turns
 And turns,
 And turns again.

3.
 Lemon mountains
 Pink mountains
 Blue mountains
 Green
 Near mountains
 Far mountains
 Mystic mountains
 Dream

Seasonal haikus from the garden

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Seven tall dark pines
stand guard at the day's portal
marking the first light.

Frosted leaves poem
already penned by winter.
Words fled redundant.

Before dawn, bright moon
still high in sky, two blackbirds
vie with silver songs.

Plum tree awakens
hangs from her boughs a curtain
of pale pink blossom

Blackbird alights on
blossom tree gently a few
pink snow petals fall

Cool breeze caresses
plum tree shivers sighs lets fall
palest pink petals

Pink shawl at her feet
transition almost complete.
Now she wears copper.

Crystal clear water
Invites the light to dance on
its shifting surface.

Comes golden autumn
to celebrate our circuit
around the life source.

Elizabeth (Libby) Adams obtained a degree from the University of Nottingham and went on to teach Art & Design in the UK before going to Morocco to teach English as a Foreign Language in the 1980s. From there she went to Spain where she was a lecturer in English as a Foreign Language and language teaching methodology at the University of Jaén. She was also involved in a wide range of teacher training programmes in a variety of different educational institutions. Throughout the years, running parallel to teaching, she has maintained a strong interest in creativity related to teaching and learning and other areas of life. She has worked in a variety of creative media including painting and collage for many years and had exhibitions of her art work in Morocco, Spain and the UK. Her poems have been published in various journals and publications.

JEFFEREY SIMONS

Room Viewing Quadrangle

The Grove 3 (1997)

The feet move alone along
paths worn in the mind.
A tree, a rock, a stone.
In the eye the room is dark.
The room in the mind shone.
A tree, a rock, a stone.
The soul who knew the room
Views through the room
A tree, a rock, a stone.

What is a syllable

A pulse, a pop, a peep.
A beat, a bop, a boom.
A cool spurt of doom.
Fe-fie-foe-fumm,
A lip-loosed humm.
A tongue-sprung drum.
A tap, a tone, a tune.
A cool, pearl moon.
A soft touch of air.

Spinoza and Spermatozoa
 The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Beautiful Jew, he ground glass
 so others could see.

Beautiful Jew, he was reviled
 by Jews and Gentiles

alike. Seeing lucidly the lines,
 angles, and arcs of

thought, Spinoza wrote systems
 in fluent theorems.

Demystifying the Scripture, he
 mystified the mind.

Blessed is to know the mind as
 one with the world.

Hidden from the eye in 1632,
 a sole spermatozoon

wombward zoomed. For all such
 splendid thought,

a single cell swimming toward
 another in the dark.

Heat

I don't breathe smoke,
I breathe words on fire.

Sister of the shadow,
singer of the shade.

Taster of the dewdrop,
knower of the pain.

Hearer of the whisper,
healer of the wound.

Bearer of the blossom,
child of the womb.

Wearer of the wing,
voice of the drum.

Lover of the echo,
tuner of the tongue.

Seeker of the halo,
seer of the soul.

Speaker of the ember,
poet of the glow.

I don't breathe smoke,
I breathe words on fire.

Suite

1. Inner Life

I bend my elbow,
wrap my arm

around my eyes
like a scarf.

Light shone years
ago glides and

flows in the center
of my soul,

glowing near
a blood-red drum.

2. Surprise Visit

Night swept over the rim of
the globe.
Beyond a glowing

doorway—the light within
shone out—
stands the lone

figure I see: a woman awaiting
one of her making.

3. Rude People on the Road

Let the moon beam
through the rude

people on the road,
those honkers and hooters

steaming behind
their smoking steering

wheels. Let the moonlight,
tracing the crests

of groves and the crisp
arc of land,

beam through to stop
them in their tracks.

4. Male Aging

Men folk ought
not to be wholly
dismissed. This is
especially so
now that they
are so easily
deplored.

Take male aging.
This begins
with a thickening
of the eyebrows,
stray wild wires
to be trimmed or
plucked.
Another sign
arises in the wee
hours of the night,
when they sit
to pee. Definitive
proof occurs
in the cool muting
of being.

Take note
of the aging male,
known for what
he has done.

5. Fine Notion

When the body
dies, a mind

dies. There's no
diving in

to scoop up
the knowing

that goes.
This

is an idea
to live by.

6. End of the Line

What awaits us there
is death,

the chrysalis of dawn,
silent like a butterfly's wing.

7. Elide and Glide

Enough minstrelsy and psalmody!
Elide and glide!

Let the silence decide.

Jefferey Simons teaches in the Department of English Philology at the University of Huelva. His essays on the poetry of Emily Dickinson have appeared in *European Journal of American Studies* (2017), *The Emily Dickinson Journal* (2019), and *Amerikastudien / American Studies* (2020). Other essays on the poetry and prose of James Joyce have appeared in *Joyce Studies Annual* (2002, 2013, 2018), *European Journal of English Studies* (2007), *Genetic Joyce Studies* (2010), and *James Joyce Quarterly* (2014).

LUCIANO GARCÍA GARCÍA

The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales (Lines 305-310)

(Traducción de la obra de Geoffrey Chaucer)

The Grove 4 (1997)

Of studye took he most cure and most heede.
Nought oo word spak he more than was neede,
And that was said in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of heigh sentence:
Souning in moral verty was his speech,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

Ponía en su estudio gran celo y gran cuidado.
No había palabra vana en todo su tratado
Y siempre a la sazón, en forma y reverencia,
Y breve y con presteza y llena de sentencia.
Sonaba gran virtud en todo lo que hablaba:
De buen grado aprendía y de buen grado enseñaba.

Sonnet 4

(Traducción de la obra de William Shakespeare)

The Grove 15 (2008)

Unthrifty lovelinesss, why dost thou spend
 Upon thy self thy beauty's legacy?
 Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
 And being frank she lends to those are free:

Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
 The bounteous largess given thee to give?
 Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
 So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?

For having traffic with thy self alone,
 Thou of thy self thy sweet self dost deceive:
 Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
 What acceptable audit canst thou leave?

Thy unused beauty must be tombed with thee,
 Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

¿Pródigo seductor, por qué has de emplear
 Sólo en tu persona tu legado de belleza?
 La herencia de Natura no es dar, sólo es prestar,
 Y a fuer de franca en los francos emplea su largueza.

¿Así pues, mísero hermoso, por qué ofendes
 A la abundancia que Ella te dio para impartir?
 ¿Usurero sin rédito, por qué pretendes
 Tan gran suma de sumas si al fin no has de vivir?

Pues si tienes comercio contigo solamente
 De propio intento a ti mismo vienes a mentir.
 Al fin cuando Natura de su reino te ausente
 ¿Qué justas cuentas luego le podrás rendir?

Tu belleza, si intacta, se enterrará contigo,
 Mas usada, será tu albacea y tu testigo.

Sonnet 7

(Traducción de la obra de William Shakespeare)

Lo! In the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;

And having climbed the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;

But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract and look another way:

So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son

¿Ved como en el Oriente la luz más soberana
Alza su ardiente testa y cada ojo en su bajeza
Rinde homenaje a su aparición temprana
Honrando con miradas su sacra realeza!;

Y habiendo escalado la celestial altura
Semeja a la recia juventud mediada:
Aún mortales miradas veneran su hermosura
Acompañándolo en su progresión dorada.

Mas cuando de su cénit, con carro fatigado,
Cual la edad proveya, declina vacilante.
Los ojos, antes obsequiosos, no han ya cuidado
De su curso más bajo, mirando a otro cuadrante.

Tú así, sobrepasando tu propio meridiano,
Sin hijos, olvidado mueres; viven vano

The Altar

(Traducción de la obra de George Herbert)

(1593-1633)

The Grove 23 (2016)

A broken A L T A R, Lord, thy servant reares,
 Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:
 Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
 No workmans tool hath touch'd the same.
 A H E A R T alone
 Is such a stone,
 As nothing but
 Thy pow'r doth cut.
 Wherefore each part
 Meets in this frame,
 To praise thy Name;
 That, if I chance to hold my peace,
 These stones to praise thee may not cease.
 O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
 And sanctifie this A L T A R to be thine.

Un ALTAR roto, Señor, tu siervo ha levantado,
 Hecho de corazón, con lágrimas cementado,
 Cuyas partes, cual tu mano las formó,
 Ningún peón con útiles las labró.
 Un corazón solamente
 Es esta piedra viviente,
 Que nada salvo tu poder
 Puede tajar o hender.
 Y por él cada porción
 De mi duro corazón
 Se une en este hombre
 Para alabar tu nombre;
 Tal que si por fortuna mi paz durara,
 Esta piedra de alabarte no cesara.
 Haz mío tu bendito SACRIFICIO sin tardar,
 Y santifica, para hacer tuyo, este ALTAR.

Sonnet 135

(Traducción de la obra de Shakespeare)

The Grove 24 (2017)

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will
 And Will to boot, and Will in over-plus;
 More than enough am I that vex thee still,
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.

Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine?

The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
 And in abundance addeth to his store;
 So thou, being rich in Will, add to thy Will
 One will of mine, to make thy large Will more

Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
 Think all but one, and me in that one Will.

Si todas se dan gusto, tú tienes a tu Giusto,
 Giusto para dar y Giusto para repartir
 Más que bastante soy que te incordio y te disgusto
 Dando a tu grato giusto un giusto que añadir.

¿Te avendrás tú cuyo giusto es largo y espacioso,
 Siquiera alguna vez a gustar mi giusto en ti?
 ¿El giusto de otros te ha de parecer gustoso
 Sin aceptar gustosa un giusto más de mí?

El mar, todo agua, recibe lluvia sin cesar
 Y con ella se aumenta sin rehusar jamás;
 Pues tú, en Giusto rica, añade a tu Giusto-mar
 Un giusto más de mí que tu giusto agrande aún más.

No mates cortejantes con incivil disgusto
 A todos piensa en uno y esté yo en ese Giusto.

Luciano García García is a tenure lecturer at the University of Jaén. His main area of research is transtextual relationships between Early Modern Spanish and English literatures. He has published several articles and book chapters in national and international journals and publishers. He has also been interested in translation. In this field he has produced bilingual editions of Shakespeare's *Sonnets and a Lover's Complaint* (2013) and another one of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (2019). He has also contributed with commentaries in Spanish and English to the photography book by Katy Gómez Catalina *Ellas, Elles, They...* (2019). His last work in this respect is the oncoming bilingual edition with comments of *Periplos – Periploi* by the Spanish poet Salvador García Ramírez.

JULIO ÁNGEL OLIVARES MERINO

Pendulum

The Grove 6 (1999)

Tarns in chiaroscuro, sloth and riddles the wind
facing West chanteth.
Aligned aureoles of blissful mortuary
dissonance,
lengthened shroud of forgotten hysteria,
the cry of armless and blind cherubs, for rapture
of senses longing,
Thy chest will behold.
Swamps of a soul's reflection, the dance of a
pendulum.
The masquerader thine own tears wept,
The angel and the siren in a romance, portraying
skies.
Timeless eruption of silhouettes, from the bulk
of dead...sightveilers at dusk...
Nine sighs from the enchanted weeds.
Where all beauty lies, leaning on destiny,
No blemish of sonority in the thicket of
desolation,
A crescent of howlings, a pounding, so distant
for thy tragic immensity...
Thou will find just solitude...
Trace the bracelet, my sweetest murmur, my
Crypt Dancer...
And with a mourning eye at the depth of rhyme,
poetry and ribbons of melancholy, all in the
wasteland of evenfalls,
thou will remain...in perfidity swollen.
To these words no tongue thou will behold,
enameled and embalmed by the calling inside,
a mistress in the shade...
Stoical oaths vanish as I remember the last dusk
in thy shrine...
Wintry waters and one weaken drop of musk,
Is all that now echoes this unscriptured
nowhere.

Forlorn Cerements of a Rebirth

The craved mask in graven odes upon thy shore
 lieth...
 ...Upon thy haunted dreams feedeth,
 Symphonia, my deceased December.
 A crimson veiled thorn, so-called winter, amidst
 the marbled angels danceth...
 ...Over graves of velvet and stigmata, under the
 protruding skies of nemesis...
 A fainting embrace, languid flame of a whisper,
 a remembrance within.
 Auroral macabre chiming, and the wolf
 fadeth...no shade...
 Thou, night, partaking of the plenilunia, chorus
 animae...
 The winged-Faustus-in-me for my wasted
 splendour blameth.
 Wept vigil, for thee a ribboned oppressive wish
 in fathomless serenity.
 Eden purged by the enchantress that ebony
 feareth, thou sense me...
 And waters of sigils, the shroud of timelessness
 webs.
 Tears of lamentia, a ritual of seduced lucidity...
 As thou mourn me...

A Tale of Bliss
The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

I feel alive, born in flames
You wonder why,
I've returned
Read the lights all over the
garden's stage
Sense I am back,
Clouds inside
The universe preserved my
path
Bound to blast out in your
withered time
Come and shine...
I am calling you.

CHORUS:

Faith... you know the
years
Tearing us apart
A thorn of fears
But now here's my love
Draining lakes
Over you...
And I'll stay
"struggling..."

Be the light
So that my blood runs wild
Catch the moon...
Bring back the falling
stars...

Let my heart ...

CHORUS:

Bathe the pale...
It lasts forever.
We're breaking through
The walls of never
Sailing plains
Chasing winds
The lamps are full...

Drain all the lakes
Stand by me and taste
I am growing pure
Within your cure
It's coming true.

A blissful lie...
"I'll rest in peace"

(To listen to the song, click on the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPM-rw9cfo8>)

Julio Ángel Olivares Merino (BA, Granada 1992; PhD, Jaén 1999) teaches English Literature at the University of Jaén, Spain. His research revolves around Gothic fiction and film, semiotics and narratology relating to music, film, literature and popular culture. Managing Director at UniRadio Jaén, the academic radio station at the University of Jaén, his studies also focus on creativity in the classroom, mainly dealing with the use of radio, its registers and didactic resources, in teaching. His books include, among others, *The Ring: una mirada al abismo* (2005), an approach to Nakata's J-Horror masterpiece, as well as a study of Spanish director Jaime Balagueró (*En nombre de la oscuridad*, 2001).

He is also a fiction writer—with more than 15 published novels, *La piel leve* (2020) being his last release—, as well as an actor and artistic director of a theatre Company (*Delirium. Laboratorio de Artes Escénicas*).

Composed and written by Julio Ángel Olivares Merino (vocals and guitars in *Witchshire*) “A Tale of Bliss”, a ballad deconstructing the foundations of love songs, was recorded in 2018, more than two decades after the band had splitted up. It is part of a double album under the title *Phantasmagoria* (2020), including twenty-five previously unreleased tracks which illustrate *Witchshire*'s holistic and open-minded approach to the metal genre, based on literary references and philosophical views, pushing forward the limits and conventions of hard rock, back in the 90's.

JOHN GOODBY

A Life in Films: *Love Story*

The Grove 7 (2000)

1. If you are a female, blonde and pretty, it is possible to be a world authority on nuclear fusion by the age of twenty-one.
2. All beds have special L-shaped cover sheets that reach armpit level on a woman but only to waist level on the man beside her.
3. When you turn out the light and go to bed, everything in your bedroom will still be clearly visible, but slightly bluish.
4. The Eiffel Tower can be seen from any window in Paris.
5. You're likely to survive any battle in any war unless you make the mistake of showing someone a picture of your sweetheart just before it begins.
6. If you decide to start dancing in the street, everyone you meet will know the steps.
7. Should you decide to defuse a bomb, don't worry about which wire to cut; you will always choose the right one.

8. A man will show no pain while taking the most ferocious beating, but will wince in agony when a woman tries to clean his wounds.
9. Even when driving down a perfectly straight road, it is necessary to turn the steering wheel vigorously from left to right every few moments.
10. If a large pane of glass is visible, someone will be thrown through before long.
11. Should you wish to pass yourself off as a German or Russian officer, it will not be necessary to speak the language. A German or Russian accent will do.
12. A detective can only solve a case once he has been suspended from duty.
13. At least one of a pair of identical twins is born evil.
14. Nothing you can ever say to her afterwards won't make the situation worse.

Bowdler's Sister

'No man every did better service to Shakespeare.'
Algernon Charles Swinburn

One day in four he could see the Quantocks
 sit up, eerily clear, across the Channel
 as the glass nudged FAIR. Mud-dazzle
 stretched, blindingly out from Brynmill; over
 which cockle-pickers worked —skirts hised up—
 at a bare-legged business. Gulls yelped and swore
 the tide, daily, wiped their palimpsest.

He bent too, lending his gender to unwork
 that couldn't be Henrietta's (for how,
 being pure, couls she know the smutch of dirt?)
 One hand washes the other. Brother and sister
 took in Doll Tearsheet's dirty washing,
 helped to geld and spay Vienna's youth;
 she missed nothing between a maid's legs

though he did not. His fame would grow
 on reduction, although disarming Gibbon,
 he faltered (was *language* dirt, its very words
 tumescent?) Dawned, anyway, the age
 of piano legs in purdah, poultry with *chests*, 'hay-
 cock' hidden like a needle in 'haystack'.
 Blanky, Browning paired 'cowls and twats'.

Today in Mumbles (fr. O. Fr. 'mammelles').
 he lies hidden behind railings, erased
 by scotch-grass. His mansion, converted
 to flats, is refused planning permission
 and squatted, the windows boarded up.
 And if dereliction is justice, I cast now
 this stone for his garden of forgetfulness.

GERARDO PIÑA ROSALES

Triptych of the Lonely Mountaineer

The Grove 10 (2003)

The entire life is like a game
whose rules are purely arbitrary
and mean next to nothing
Paul Bowles

The Ascent

After a strong cup of coffee and a long drink of cool water, the mountaineer made a mental check of the contents of his backpack: sleeping bag, emergency kit, several maps of the region, compass, binoculars, flashlight, batteries, lighter, sweater, change of clothing and socks, loaf of bread and half a pound of cheese; on his belt, canteen and hunting knife. He would also take his Rolleiflex, should he feel the urge to take some shots in mid hike.

The brown ridges of the Ramapo Mountains were silhouetted like giant humps against the milky light of dawn. Seeing them now, eroded to gentle hills by the effects of wind, rain and the tongue of the ancient glacier, who would think that three million years ago, these same mountains presented a topography similar to the Rockies! A peak or a cliff of a certain height rose naturally here and there. Over the course of many moons and many suns, the Munsee Indians, the Algonquins, the Ramapos were lords and masters of that fertile reserve, abundant in deer, bear and pheasant. With the arrival of pale face, everything changed: nature must be conquered! Luxuriant forests were felled to provide fuel for the iron foundries (abundant in the region), skillfully forged iron which became a key element in the War of Independence against the British. In the sixteen hundreds, Suffern's name started to be heard in the region; and in the seventeenth century, that of Claudius Smith, the famous bandit (whose hideaway, a hidden cavern a few miles away, he had once visited, gripped, or rather, possessed with enthusiasm). In our century, at the urging of philanthropists like Harriman, Perkins and Torrey, the area finally became a National Park.

On this occasion, the mountaineer had decided to begin the hike on a zigzagging path that would take him —according to the map— to the peak of Aramah Mountain. The outing would take only a couple of days. He would spend the night at the summit, and the following day, going deep into the forest, he would descend to Lake Kanawakee, take a dip in the clear waters and then link with the road to Suffern, which leads to Bear Mountain. In total: about twenty five miles of varied terrain.

He drove the old Jeep on Route 17 North, going into Orange County. Behind him were the Versailles-like gardens of Ringwood, New Jersey, with the mysterious Erskine's mansion —iron magnate and eminent cartographer— and the Skyland castle (favorite haunts during his wanderings in the region.) Now surrounded by several highways, the old Presbyterian church and Gates of Praise cemetery had become isolated in time and space. Did the bones of the dead rattle to the rhythm of the bustle of cars, trucks and motorcycles? Did the bell toll at rush hour? In the name of sacrosanct “progress,” more and more roads were being built, more highways, endless tarred tongues, suffocating forever the whispering breath of the forests, choking the throbbing anticipation of the marshes, silencing the lilting sound of the streams. And not only the fauna and flora were disappearing: entire towns, with their churches and cemeteries, lied submerged under the waters of modern reservoirs and dams. And in spite of such ignominy, of such senselessness, apples and pears and peaches and blackberries continued to grow and bear fruit, year after year, in the orchards of abandoned farms.

The Jeep left behind the towns of Hillburn —once smelly from the slaughterhouse, and now, from the chimneys of the Avon laboratories—, Slootsburgh —with its fruit and vegetable stands—, Tuxedo —bastion and fief of the rich, protected by high stone walls, Arden (from whose desolate eighteenth century graveyard he had once stolen, some time ago, a small and nameless marble headstone, which would mark, years later, the garden grave of his dear cat Melibeo), and he stopped under the shade of a majestic sycamore tree, surrounded by extensive laurels.

At the park entrance, nailed to the trunk of a chestnut tree, a small sign—in English and Spanish— warned: ATTENTION! IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS SEVERAL RATTLESNAKES, AS WELL AS RABID RACCOONS AND FOXES, HAVE BEEN SPOTTED. IF YOU ARE BITTEN BY A WILD ANIMAL, GET IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION AT THE NEAREST HOSPITAL.

Bordering the moonscapes and boulders of Echo Mountain, he walked on Arden Road, until he reached the bank of a river. He sat on a rock and took a long drink from the canteen. The river crept along shadowy sand banks, in whose dark mud, infested with mosquitoes, weeping willows and linden trees sank their muscular Laoconian roots. An otter, sniffing the warm morning air with its shiny little snout, stared at him hypnotized, but then it returned, ipso facto,

to its meticulous, conscientious engineering projects, always at the mercy of now gentle, now rough river currents.

He continued hiking.

Parallel to the river, under a green canopy of luxuriant vegetation, the path advanced through a narrow ravine. It was getting hotter. The straps of his backpack were digging into his shoulders. His glasses, misted with sweat and mud, blurred his vision. "If the mountain does not come to you, you must go to the mountain," the mountaineer repeated to himself with each step, in the way of an invigorating and prodding mantra, and he continued the ascent, reaching steep slopes, spying promontories. At some point, the evil bird of listlessness fluttered around him, but he slapped it away, clenching his jaws, and pretending, with illusory simplicity, that neither heat nor humidity had any effect on him, and that invisible wings propelled him upwards. Three hours later, the solitary mountaineer reached the summit of Amarah Mountain.

Samadhi

The mountaineer, gasping, bathed in perspiration, his quadriceps stiff, his stomach upset, lied on the moss, in the shade of an impressive magnolia tree; he drank until he was satiated and then he ate half a loaf of bread with a chunk of cheese. Later, he lit his pipe, inhaled the sweet smoke with deliberate delight and observed the dazzling view. To the North was the Interstate Thruway, going towards Albany and Canada. To the South, at his feet, fragmented by the Palisades, spread the wide and green valley, dappled with pointed church steeples. To the East, the old Hudson flowed, crisscrossed by tugboats with hoarse horns, graceful sailboats, slender frigates, noisy motorboats (and sometimes, the bluish and bloated bodies of suicides) —the mythic Hudson River, sung by Whitman and García Lorca, from its source at Lake Champlain, in the remote Adirondacks, to the spectacular mouth of its estuary, with Ellis Island and the Verrazano Strait, already in the arms of the Atlantic; the venerable Hudson River, whose waters carried the Hispanolusitanian explorer Esteban Gomes, sailing under the Spanish flag, half a century before Henry Hudson. To the West, Sterling Forest (semi-devoured by an insatiable urbanizing drive) shone in its pristine beauty; in the distance, the Appalachian Mountains took shape, from Maine to Georgia. The mountaineer filled his pipe again, and gazed at the turquoise blue sky, swiped with strands of white nimbus; at the ferns' graceful elegance, like pointed green formations, blossoming of arches and spears ready for action (humble vestiges of those Precambrian ferns, colossal like the dinosaurs themselves). Oh new Rockland Buddha, in perfect communion with Nature, with the world, with himself!

Samadhi! Samadhi!! Samadhi!!!

In the stupor of the afternoon, one could hear the incessant chirping of cicadas and crickets, in counterpoint to the isochronal, machine-gun rat-rat-rat of

the woodpeckers. Among the jungle of azaleas, cackled the mockingbirds and blue-jays.

But as the afternoon wore on, the forest filled with shadows and the din of birds and insects gradually turned silent until it was reduced to a muffled rustle.

Kundalini's Awakening

The sun hid behind the hills and a cool wind stirred the leaves of the trees. Feeling stiff, the mountaineer decided to put up his tent and build a fire. He got up and walked a few steps to a rocky place nearby to get some stones for the base of the fire. He bent down to lift a stone, and in doing so, he felt as if he had been stung with an incandescent needle: a rattlesnake had dug its sharp incisors in his left hand. Out of his mind with pain, he withdrew his bloody hand. The snake — a wiggling body of gray-blue corneous rings—, shaking its rattle (like a bugle proclaiming the winner's joy after the battle), quickly hid among the rocks. "Damn you!", uttered the enraged mountaineer, as he unsheathed his hunting knife. Blood and venom oozed from the bite. The pain was unbearable.

He told himself that he must control his fear, the panic that seized him, a remnant reflex of the species' collective atavistic memory. With a couple of cross cuts, he opened up the wound and sucked out the viscous, yellow liquid. The poison burned his tongue; he retched, and sickened, he spit it out. He repeated the operation two more times, and he staggered to get the emergency kit from his backpack. In all his years of hiking, it was the first time that anything like this had ever happened to him. The accident had caught him by surprise. But the kit had everything. Everything, except the antidote which he so urgently needed.

Since he didn't have any flares, he decided to leave the camp and go back to the highway by the same path he had taken. The important thing was not to be overcome by panic.

He bandaged his swollen, festering hand, and he made himself a tourniquet with his belt; he drank from the canteen again (almost one third empty), and, flashlight in hand, he started down the hill, leaving behind his tent, backpack and sleeping bag. He could not waste a minute. He also knew that the faster he ran, the more he would accelerate his metabolism, which in turn would make the venom travel directly to his heart.

In spite of the strong beam of light from the flashlight, he could hardly get his bearings on the path. Overpowered by fever, hounded by thirst, he stumbled forward on the rocky trail. Painful spasms of pain ran up his arm. But the highway wasn't far. It couldn't be.

Suddenly, he tripped and rolled down the side of the hill.

An owl was heard batting its wings. When he opened his eyes, a stab of pain moved through his arm. He tried to get up, but he collapsed: he had sprained his ankle. He had lost his way as well as the flashlight. Short of breath and hobbling, he walked blindly into some reeds. The stems hit his face and his feet sank in the sticky mud. But he had to keep walking: the highway, help, it was so near!

He could not go on. Unable to breathe, he dragged himself through the dead leaves, struggling in vain with the chills that traveled up and down his spine, against the thirst, the awful thirst that was consuming him.

Two days later, another lonely mountaineer found the body. The main highway was less than half a mile away.

(Translated from the Spanish by Carmen Fernández Klohe)

Rayuela desde el Observatorio astronómico de Jaipur

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Para Carlos E. Paldao

*No creas en nada simplemente porque lo hayas escuchado.
 No creas en algo porque simplemente ha sido transmitido por muchas generaciones.
 No creas en nada simplemente porque haya sido dicho y rumoreado por muchos.
 No creas en nada simplemente porque está escrito en las Sagradas Escrituras.
 No creas en nada simplemente porque lo afirmen maestros, mayores u hombres sabios.
 Cree solamente después de cuidadosa observación y análisis,
 cuando encuentres que la enseñanza concuerda con la razón
 y que conduce a lo bueno y al beneficio de uno y todos.
 Entonces acéptalo y vive según ello.
 El dogma iniciático, Kalama-sutra*

Hace unos meses, con motivo de una exposición de fotografías tomadas por María Kodama con imágenes de su vida con Jorge Luis Borges, y que tuvo lugar en la galería de este mismo Instituto Cervantes, conocí a Alberto Manguel, a quien (lo sabía por la prensa) acababan de nombrar director de la Biblioteca Nacional en Buenos Aires. Después de escuchar las palabras de Kodama (tan desvaídas como sus fotografías), tuve ocasión de hablar con Manguel. Lo felicité por su Antología de la Literatura Fantástica Argentina, que acaba yo de leer, y en la que, junto a textos de Borges, Bioy Casares y Mujica Láinez aparecía, cómo no, uno de Cortázar. Aproveché entonces para preguntarle a Manguel si él creía, como otros críticos, que en el cuento ‘El perseguidor’ —ese homenaje a Charlie Parker, ‘Bird’— ya se prefiguraba algo de lo que iba a ser Rayuela. “Sí y no —me contestó Manguel—; es cierto que tanto Johnny Carter como Oliveira buscan lo mismo: una existencia liberada de la cotidianidad. Pero —hizo una larga pausa, y, esbozando una sibilina sonrisa, afirmó: el experimento previo que hizo Cortázar antes de lanzarse a escribir Rayuela nació después de su visita al Observatorio Astronómico Samrat Yantra, en Jaipur, en la India, adonde viajó invitado por Octavio Paz. Es en su Prosa del Observatorio donde hay que rastrear las primeras intuiciones de Cortázar para la novela”. Yo había leído ese texto híbrido, inclasificable, de un intenso poder metafórico y alegórico, un texto digno de Isidore Ducasse, conde de Lautréamont. En mi biblioteca guardaba yo la primera edición, la de Lumen, donde se reproducen las fotos que hizo Cortázar (36, es decir un solo carrete) en su visita al Observatorio de Jaipur.

La recepción había terminado, y la gente comenzaba a marcharse, pero nosotros, ya en el jardín, seguimos pegando la hebra un poco más. Manguel viajaba a Buenos Aires al día siguiente. “Mirá –me dijo, mientras cebaba la pipa-, yo había conocido a Cortázar en París. No es que nos uniera una gran amistad, pero cuando la editorial Ryerson Press, de Canadá, decidió publicar una edición de Rayuela en inglés me contactaron por si me interesaba ser el traductor. ¡Pero cómo iba yo a mejorar la traducción que hizo Gregory Rabassa!, les dije, pero me convencieron aduciendo que mi traducción estaría más cerca del inglés canadiense, con sus modismos y giros del habla popular, con los que yo, sin duda, tras mi larga estancia en Toronto estaría familiarizado. Quién sabe si lo que me decían sería verdad o no. Quizá no habían podido conseguir, por razones económicas, los derechos de Pantheon Books, y asumieron que yo les iba a salir más barato.

Desde Toronto le escribí inmediatamente a Cortázar. Aceptó encantado. Su única condición (por llamarla así) era que en esa edición canadiense de Rayuela apareciera, a modo de nota explicatoria, un texto que había escrito hacía tiempo tras su visita a la India y que quizá podría aclarar al lector algunos aspectos de la novela.

A los pocos días me llegaron a mi casa de Toronto las notas de Cortázar. Estaban en inglés. En un inglés excelente. No debía extrañarme, pues ¿no había traducido Cortázar la obra completa de Allan Poe? Pero ya sabés, el hombre propone y Dios dispone: en aquellos días la Ryerson Press –como tantas venerables editoriales canadienses– desaparecieron engullidas, fagocitadas, por grandes empresas extranjeras, y todo quedó, como decís los españoles, en agua de borrajas. “¿Y esas páginas nunca se publicaron?, le pregunté a Manguel, sin poder ocultar mi curiosidad. “No, que yo sepa, nunca; por ahí deben andar en mi archivo. Si tanto te interesan esas notas, te mandaré copia”. ¡Vaya que si me interesaban! ¡Un manuscrito de Cortázar, aunque estuviese en inglés, no se lo encuentra uno todos los días!

Pasaron un par de semanas, y un día me llegó un sobre de Canadá. Dentro venía una carpeta con una breve nota de Manguel y los folios a máquina que Cortázar había escrito. En otras palabras, que lo que sigue no es más que mi modesta traducción a mi español peninsular de aquel texto perdido y encontrado de Julio Cortázar, y que, por cierto, se titulaba: “Rayuela desde el Observatorio Astronómico de Jaipur”.

«Cuando fui a la India, ya había yo escrito ‘Las babas del diablo’, ‘La noche boca arriba’, y ‘Axolotl’. No se me oculta que mucho de lo que escribí en aquella época lo hice bajo el influjo de la cultura de Oriente. Desde muy joven me sentí atraído por el budismo zen, y de la mano de D.T. Suzuki (que no es una

motocicleta) y de Alan Watts llegué a estudiar (si se me permite ese verbo tan ampuloso) a los grandes maestros del zen como Eno, Baso, Nansen y otros. Yo sentía que a mí, hombre de pocas ideas y muchas intuiciones, aquel método o antimétodo me venía como anillo al dedo para intentar liberarme de los corsets y anteojeras del pensamiento occidental, en el que me había educado o maleducado, esclavo de la razón y siempre suspicaz ante los cantos sirénidos de los sentidos.

Pero también me habían fascinado la literatura y el pensamiento de la India. Y fue gracias a aquel gran historiador de las religiones Mircea Eliade, que leí, unos en francés y otros en inglés, los Vedas, la Bhagavad-Gitá, y los grandes poemas épicos como el Ramayana y el Mahabharata.

Pocos años después descubrí en un libro de Partha Mitter sobre arquitectura Rajput la existencia del Jantar Mantar, Observatorio astronómico de Jaipur, en el Rajastán, construido por sultán mogol Jay Singh. Ante aquellas fotos del Observatorio, donde aparecían enormes monumentos hemisféricos, rampas, arcos, triángulos isósceles, cilindros y formas cúbicas, presentí que muchas de mis obsesiones, de mis dudas, de mis angustias y de mis miedos podrían resolverse allí, en aquel museo donde el tiempo parecía haberse detenido y el espacio parecía contener múltiples dimensiones. Y sin pensarlo más, escribí a amigo Octavio Paz, a la sazón embajador de México en Delhi, para preguntarle por Jaipur.

Su respuesta no se hizo esperar: “La única forma de conocer lo que ese Observatorio significa es visitándolo —me escribía el autor de Blanco—. ¿Por qué tú y Aurora no viajan a Delhi, y, nos vamos a Jaipur, que está a pocas horas de aquí?”. Y así fue como a los pocos días Aurora y yo hicimos las maletas y salimos para la India.

Después de un viaje de más de doce horas de vuelo (y media botella de Johnny Walker) aterrizamos en el aeropuerto de Nueva Delhi. Allí nos esperaban Octavio Paz y Marie Jo. De allí, en coche, nos dirigimos a la embajada, que era un hermoso edificio de arquitectura colonial inglesa, rodeado de maravillosos jardines sombreados por las ramas de centenarios árboles de nim.

A primeras horas de la mañana siguiente el calor era ya agobiante. Me levanté, y salí a pasear por los jardines. De la espesura me llegaban los gorjeos de los agapornis o pájaros del amor mezclados con los chillidos de los monos, como un madrigal de Gesualdo interpretado por John Coltrane.

Al rato apareció Paz. “Julio, me dijo cariacontecido, me temo que no podré acompañarlos a Jaipur, como les había prometido. Se me ha presentado un compromiso en la embajada, y no puedo dejar de asistir. Podemos ir pasado mañana.” Le respondí que no se preocupara, que iríamos solos, y que volveríamos

en un par de días. La verdad es que me sentí como un Arjuna privado de su mentor y guía, el dios Khrisna.

Como Aurora prefirió quedarse con María José, que le había prometido llevarla al Museo Nacional de Delhi (y de seguro para irse después de compras a los bazares), decidí irme solo a Jaipur. Con la cámara Contax al hombro y una pequeña bolsa de viaje, salí de Delhi en tren hacia Jaipur.

Durante el viaje, mientras contemplaba por la ventanilla un paisaje de arrozales y aldeas polvorientas, pensaba en mi próxima novela, cuyos derroteros me eran aun desconocidos. Al principio la había titulado ‘Mandala’, pero me pareció un voquible un tanto petulante; después pensé en llamarla ‘Juegos’, y por último, me decidí por Rayuela. ¿Por qué Rayuela? Porque ese juego infantil, en que los jugadores, con una piedrecita y unos cuadraditos de tiza en el piso, intentan, a la pata la coja, sin salirse de la raya, alcanzar la última casilla, la que representa el cielo, me parecía un símbolo propicio para la composición de mi novela. La única, aunque esencial, diferencia, sería que en mi novela, también un juego, armable y desarmable, el personaje principal aspiraría no solo a alcanzar el cielo sino lo que hay más allá del cielo y las estrellas: lo inefable.

Llamé a un rickshaws o bicitaxis y le pedí que me llevara al Jantar Mantar. En las calles jugaban niños desnudos, los mendigos pedían limosna apostados en las esquinas, había tenderetes de especias con sacos de clavo, cardamomo, jengibre o canela, mujeres de vistosos cholis y saris de sorprendentes colores, algún gurú con cara de mandril y vacas, vacas por todos lados.

Era ya cerca de mediodía cuando Era ya cerca de mediodía cuando llegué al Observatorio. Había muy poca gente: un viejo en cucullas a la sombra de uno de los monumentos, un grupo de niños, guiados, como buenos borreguitos, por la pastora, una mujer vestida a la europea y de aire marcial, y monos por todas partes. Jai Singh había sido el fundador y artífice de aquella ciudad de Jaipur (que tanto había impresionado a Mircea Eliade), y que, movido por su fascinación por la astronomía, de la que era un verdadero sabio, había mandado erigir aquellos ciclópeos instrumentos para auscultar el sol y las estrellas. Y no es que Jai Singh ignorara la existencia del telescopio, descubierto hacía cien años, sino que estaba convencido de que solo a través de esos enormes monumentos de mármol era posible observar con total precisión los movimientos febriles de los cuerpos celestes. Su objetivo era sin duda científico, pero yo presentía que Jai Singh buscaba algo más que mediciones y cronometrías: el sultán aspiraba a descifrar el sentido último de la vida y de la muerte. Con mi novela no pretendía yo tanto; bastaba con que el lector entrara en el juego que le proponía. Podía aceptarlo o rechazarlo. O podía sacarse de la chistera un juego de su invención.

Caminé un rato entre aquellas construcciones que en su tiempo habrían tenido el color del azafrán, hice unas fotos, y por último decidí ascender (recordé entonces las pirámides mayas) por una estrecha escalera de peldaños gastados por el tiempo y las pisadas de los hombres a una terraza desde la que Jay Singh observaba los astros. Desde la pequeña terraza podía divisar toda la ciudad de Jaipur, con sus suntuosos palacetes como el del viento, especie de serrallo colmenero donde Jai Singh guardaba celosamente a sus concubinas y sus eunucos. Pero un poco más lejos del casco urbano, más allá de los restos de murallas almenadas, surgían ya nuevas urbanizaciones sin carácter, y más lejos aun, hacinadas en heteróclita balumba, se veían chabolas, favelas o como se quiera llamar a esas vergüenzas urbanas.

Descendí los 36 peldaños (los había contado) del observatorio y tomé algunas fotografías más de aquellos instrumentos de medición y cálculo. No sé por qué, pero me acordé de Gaudí. Me fascinaban aquellos juegos de luz y sombra que se formaban en las superficies de los monumentos, y la sensación de lo fugaz y de lo inaprehensible del tiempo: Jai Singh me hablaba desde el pasado, mientras yo escribía en Jaipur muchos años después en un tiempo que ingenuamente llamaba presente y donde había comenzado a gestarse mi novela. Como Jai Singh, también yo buscaba develar el misterio de la vida y de la experiencia humana, enfrentarme a la infinita divisibilidad de lo finito: arriba, en la última casilla de la rayuela: las estrellas; y a la vez, las simas del yo. *Rayuela* sería una especie de Bardo Thodol, el libro de los muertos tibetano, una guía para mí mismo y para el lector cómplice en un viaje de búsqueda, de encuentros y desencuentros; sería una exploración de la memoria a la manera junguiana, una desmitificación implacable de todo cuanto amenaza y paraliza al ser humano.

Aquella noche, en el hotel, llamé por teléfono a Aurora (en efecto se habían ido de compras) y traté de dormir. Al rato, sin poder pegar ojo, me levanté y me puse a escribir. Salió de un tirón, como en trance: lo llamaría *Prosa del Observatorio*. A medida que escribía aquellas páginas sobre angulas y sultanes, seguía pensando en *Rayuela*, una novela que fuera a su vez exploración personal y rescate de una juventud no muy lejana. El yo y el otro, los otros. Pero sabía que una novela es una construcción verbal, y la escritura era solo un medio, un medio muy limitado, con su férrea armadura gramatical y semántica, para expresar lo inexpresable; pero en el fondo tampoco me importaba mucho, porque lo que yo quería era que el lector experimentara la angustia de un narrador/autor empeñado en auscultar el otro lado de lo que comúnmente llamamos la realidad. Pero para ello no podría seguir las pautas de la novela tradicional, con su lenguaje fosilizado, putrefacto, con sus personajes demasiado humanos, con

su trama, con su previsible clímax y desenlace a gusto del consumidor. No. Debía crear una nueva lengua, porque ¿de qué sirve juzgar la realidad con viejas palabras, desgastadas por el uso? Claro que la lengua es instrumento de comunicación (quizá no el mejor), y por tanto mis intentos de socavarla siempre serían limitados o en cualquier caso incomprensidos. Pero quería que la historia trascendiera el lenguaje mismo en la que está contada. Y esa historia, esas historias, con un fondo de París –el de Atget– y otro de Buenos Aires –el de Borges–, formarían un mosaico que el lector habría de recomponer, tesela a tesela. El *Ulysses* de Joyce, pero no su *Finnegan's Wake*, camino sin salida.

Por eso en *Prosa del Observatorio* hablo de las angulas y de los monumentos astronómicos de Jai Singh. Ambas historias, como las de *Rayuela*, se irían entrelazando, aleatoriamente, para perderse en un final sin final, abierto, cuestionable. Por eso, siguiendo la saga de la vida de las angulas me burlo de ese lenguaje científico que trata de describir con palabras muertas la realidad de la vida misma, de sus afanes por perpetuarse, de su trayectoria hacia la muerte, y por eso Jai Singh, como el narrador autor de la novela recién concebida, busca la unidad y la totalidad, en la inmensidad de los astros y los planetas, intentando descifrar el alfabeto sideral».

Hasta ahí las palabras de Cortázar.

Rayuela se publicó en 1963 y *Prosa del observatorio* en 1972, es decir nueve años después de la famosa novela. En otras palabras, que cuanto les he contado es pura invención mía. ¡Pero no me digan que no podría haber sucedido así! Se lo advertí al principio: *No creas en nada simplemente porque lo hayas escuchado*.

Gerardo Piña Rosales was born in La Línea de la Concepción (Cádiz). Between 1956 and 1973 he lived in Tangier (Morocco), and emigrated to the United States in 1973. Since then he has been living in New York. Professor Piña studied at the Spanish universities of Granada and Salamanca, and received a PhD from the City University of New York (CUNY). He has taught, since then, at CUNY, Columbia and Saint John's Universities. Prof Piña has been President of the *North American Academy of Spanish Language* (ANLE, New York), a corresponding academy to RAE, between 2008 and 2018, and he currently is the Honorary President of ANLE. Prof. Piña Rosales is the author of various dozens of academic publications (articles and monographies) on literary matters (Manuel Andújar) and linguistic issues (the *Hablando bien se entiende la gente* series), and he is also a reputed photographer and creative writer.

JUAN RÁEZ PADILLA

La Patera de Caronte

The Grove 11 (2004)

Eterna laguna...
Amnios de nueva vida
para el que vida ya no tiene.

I

Ánimas en busca de ensueños boreales.
Dedos encallecidos palpan bajo la lengua
el óbolo con el que pagar al viejo y barbudo barquero.
Mil soles para forjarlo,
una luna brumosa para empeñarlo
por una sola esperanza.

Caronte aguarda sobre la proa de su negra barca.
Un inusitado ímpetu embriaga sus sentidos
en el candor de aquel anhelo, viejas canciones
resuenan en el pecho y reverberan
en eco de fuente...

La madera rechina
y chirría
en clave de clavo oxidado
mientras el tosco barbudo
mueve sus remos sobre el turbio espejo
de la laguna.

II (Maremágnum)

Y oír el pié-

lago rugir y
bramar en

vórtices de bara-
húnda, el estridente albo-
roto de voces ateridas,
el zumbido del viento
en los oídos cual

enfurecida cohorte de

zánganos en zozobra.
El helor del oleaje,

la álgida bata-
hola de remolinos
y ciclones de agua,

vorágines cerebrales
transidas por el frío

ponto. Y sentir la quilla cru-

jir bajo los pies, bor-
bollando esputos salados,

la quimera de madera
inundada por gor-
goteos y espumarajos.

Caronte huye a tiempo
barrena en mano,

plata en lugar seguro.

La espuma sofoca tumultos
en espiral. Labios que

borbotean aire,
músculos que se
entumecen,

y una tré-
mula luz

que desa-
pare-
ce...

III

El agrietado rumor de un arrecife
cobra vida en el despertar
de una lejana
y confusa cantinela.

Las costas de Iberia acurrucan en su regazo
sueños empapados de ola,
amargo ostracismo embadurnado
por fina arena de playa.

La tierra por féretro,
la mortaja una sábana espúmea
que lame la orilla.

Un *déjà vu*
que se pierde en los confines
de la indolencia y el olvido.

IV

Aquellos que sobrevivieron
son hoy almas errantes
que huyen del látigo de las tres furias.
Algunos afortunados
trabajan los pedregosos campos gamonales.

Minos, Radamantis y Eaco
les prohibieron la entrada al Elíseo
—huerto de luz y dicha—,
y rara vez beben de la fuente
de la memoria,
garante de la palabra,
pues necesitan una contraseña secreta
que tan sólo el poeta Orfeo
puede proporcionarles.

V

Tañe así, pues, tu lira,
Orfeo, y adormece con tu canto
a la furia y la ira,
al ruido de este llanto,
y no mires hacia atrás mientras tanto...

Juan Ráez Padilla holds a European PhD in English Studies and is Associate Lecturer at the Department of English Philology of University of Jaén (Spain), where he is also Director of International Mobility Programmes. Among his critical works are *Los cuatro elementos y Seamus Heaney: De la cosmogonía helénica a la cosmopoética de The Spirit Level (1996)* [*The Four Elements and Seamus Heaney: From Hellenic Cosmogony to the Cosmopoetics of The Spirit Level (1996)*] (Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Jaén, 2007) y *Tierra, agua, aire y fuego: Manual de simbología* [*Earth, Water, Air and Fire: A Handbook on Symbology*] (Septem, 2015). *Touché*, his first book of poems, is to be published in 2021.

FRANK SEWELL

Pen-Names
The Grove 12 (2005)

My heart stopped in my chest tonight.
There, written in black and white

On the back page of an old jotter,
the history of us in crossed-out letters.

First, her name wedded to mine,
The 'Mr' and surname with a line

through them as an afterthought.
Next, in her own sweet hand, she wrote

my name coupled to hers, the 'Mr'
and surname like a scored-out mistake.

After that, nothing, a gap
till somewhere near the bottom, she scraped

the word 'Seule'. A nom-de-plume.
A sign of everything to come.

Wedding-hands bought but never worn.
On her finger, a skull and cross of bone.

Fashion Victim

Once it was booties, baby-grows, all-in-ones,
 in size-ranges from naught-to-nine months,
 then shorts to parallels to long ‘strides’,
 and that was you until your mid-30’s;
 your waistband grew as wide as you were old
 and you took after your dad or his own
 who bloated out like pasta in a pan,
 then turned a stick drawing of the man
 he was before he looked just like a boy
 draped in his father’s jacket. Your auntie Joy –
 you saw her go down to skin and bone,
 the weight of an infant or a bag of clothes
 to Age Concern, Action Cancer, Oxfam....
 What’ll you wear when your own time has come?
 Forget the shroud, best pyjamas or suit,
 and go for your all-time favourite outfit:
 the cowboy shirt glued to your back, aged 7,
 the red DM’s your first love had you wearing,
 the black jeans that went with everything else,
 clean jocks and socks, box jacket, a few shekels,
 and dander on out all groomed and ready
 for a last hot date – with Bella Muerte.

Write-off
The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

My heart stopped in my chest tonight.
There, written in black and white

on the back page of an old jotter,
the history of us in crossed-out letters.

First, your name wedded to mine,
the ‘Mrs’ and surname with a line

through them as an afterthought.
Next, in your own sweet hand, you wrote

my name coupled to yours, the ‘Mr’
and surname like a scored-out mistake.

After that, a dizzying gap,
miles of margin and years of foolscap

until, waiting at the foot of the page,
unseen, unheard for over a decade,

the word ‘Seule’. *A nom de plume*.
A sign of all that was to come.

Two gold bands never worn.
On your finger a skull and cross of bone.

Safe House

I'm haunted by the man who got away,
 who pretended he was dead or unconscious.
 After all the punching, kicking and stabbing,
 his attackers must have tired and stopped
 for a smoke, a drink, or maybe a comfort break.
 Whatever it was, yer man leapt to his feet
 and fled the mid-terrace house before
 his captors could say God save the Queen.

It was dark outside, so he ducked down an alley,
 turned a corner into a neighbouring street
 and, seeing a light glowing in someone's window,
 he ran over, tapped softly on the glass
 and asked the woman who opened the door for help.
 She took him in, sat him down and listened.
 'Oh my God,' she said. 'I'll ring a taxi
 for you.' In the hall, she dialled the UDA.

Frank Sewell is Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and Irish Literature at Ulster University in Ireland. Among his critical works is *Modern Irish Poetry: A New Alhambra* (OUP, 2001), and he has translated the poetry of Gearóid Mac Lochlainn, Máirtín Ó Direáin, Seán Ó Ríordáin, Cathal Ó Searcaigh, Mutsuo Takahashi, and the short stories of Micheál Ó Conghaile. His own poems have been published in many journals, including *Books Ireland*, *Cyphers*, *Dandelion* (Canada), *The Grove* (Spain), *H.U./The Honest Ulsterman*, *Irish Pages*, *Orbis*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Staple*, *Stand*; and in the anthologies *New Soundings: New Writing from the North of Ireland*, ed. by Daragh Carville (Blackstaff, 2003), *Magnetic North: The Emerging Poets*, ed. by John Brown (Lagan Press, 2006), and *The New North: Contemporary Poetry from Northern Ireland*, ed. by Chris Agee (Wake Forest University Press, 2008, 2011).

ALI SHEHZAD ZAIDI

A selection of Poems by Faiz Ahmed Faiz

(Translated from the Urdu by Daud Kamal)

The Grove 13 (2006)

Dedication

Abacus of suffering —
frost-edged fields
of withered flowers —
a wilderness of yellow leaves.
This is my land —
offal in narrow lanes.
I write
for the miserable —
clerks, postmen, coolies,
labourers with bent knees,
peasants in the blistering sun.
It is for the widows
I write —
for the orphans
and the unwed —
for the condemned
in their separate cells
and the stars
that will not last
through the night.

A Prison Evening

Night — enchanting princess — descends
 the sky's jewelled staircase
 one step at a time.
 A cool breeze whispers words of love.
 Gnarled and hunchbacked
 trees in the prison compound
 are embroidering exquisite designs
 on the sky's blue silk shawl.
 Moonlight penetrates my soul.
 Green undulating shadows —
 star-moisture — the poignancy of desire.
 How precious is life!
 But the tyrants
 have injected their venom
 into the veins of humanity.
 They have slaughtered our joy.
 Centuries of oppression, brutality, plunder.
 And, yet, the moon shines
 in all her splendour.
 The lotus blooms.
 Life is eternal.

Captivity

What does it matter
 if pen and paper have been snatched
 from my hands?
 I have dipped
 my fingers
 in the blood of my heart.
 What does it matter
 if my lips
 have been sealed?
 I have put
 a tongue
 in every mouth of my chain.

Disillusionment

Endeavour
has now been squeezed bone-dry
of possibility —
even the most intrepid eagle
cannot pierce
the sky's ultimate barrier.
All the stars have been lassoed
one by one
and the moon-goddess
strangled to death
by an unrepentant Othello.
No dewdrop of grace
trembles on the eye's periphery —
no diaphanous dream
soothes the heart.
Those ravishing lips are gone —
free hearts and illumined minds
have atrophied.
Love
you will moulder in your grave
and I in mine.
There is no antidote
to death's scorpion-sting.

A Selection of Poems by Daud Kamal**The Rebel**

They
stood him up
against an orchard wall
and shot him
at dawn.

Pandemonium of crows
and then
the empty horizon.

Hundreds of miles away
his mother
kneels in prayer –
in ignorance –
the ignorance of prayer.

Wheat ear on the stubble –
the blind earth
must be fed.

Anniversary

Cascading back
to the source
over a difficult terrain
but the heart remembers.
Wet stones
conscious of their lineage –
the chopped-up moon
in paddy-fields.
A fierce love has blurred my sight
and burnt the lines off
the palms of my hands.
I have drunk acrid milk.
I have heard the sound of clogs
in an ancient ruin.
How can the mind contend
with all this chaos –
this endless repetition
of thwarted lives?
Shelley asserts
that the deep truth
is imageless.
An invisible bird
perches on my shoulder
and speaks to me
in a language
I do not understand.
Ashes and dust.
I am only a word-smith.

Kingfisher

April
is the kingfisher's beak
which pierces
the river's glad torment.
Is this an image
of our love?
Carnage
in the rose-valleys
under the first light
of our wounds.

Clouds
detach themselves
from disconsolate trees.
The future
curves on another shore.
Tongues of water
cradle our startled dreams.
Moss-grown stepping-stones.
The stars burn fiercely.
They tell us what we are.

Winter Rain

Mist
suspended over a deep void:
translucent bridge
sculpted in fire –
in rock-crystal.
Memory,
someone says,
is a forest of mirrors.
Is this true?
Stone parapets
eroded by time.

Is death
the only exit?
The moon thaws
before your loveliness:
you are the breath of violets –
the vivacity
of a snow-fed stream.
Nightbound travelers –
you and me –
and this winter rain.

A Selection of Poems by Daud Kamal

The Grove 17 (2010)

Floods

How does one forgive
the treachery
of blind rivers
and water-buffaloes
dissolving in the mind?

Their hut was
forty years old.
They had
three wooden boxes of dowry
and a sackful of expensive rice.

At the army relief-camp,
the bride-to-be
covers her head
while her parents
look the other way.

A Narrow Valley

Flash-flood
in a narrow valley.
A bowl of milk
Falls
From the hands
Of a trembling child.
Mud houses collapse.
Prayers
Do not work
At time
Such as these.

Widow

Every evening
 she would go down to the river
 wet pebbles and hird-shadows
 but the boat
 never came.

Mist like a shroud
 and the smoke of cowdung
 over which
 she cooks for her children –
 the river, the river.

The youngest asks:
 how much bigger than a scorpion
 is death? You should be out
 with the others – she scolds –
 catching fish.

Mouth stained
 by an old dream – glass bangles
 and the sounds of a village festival
 in her eyes, in her blood –
 the river, the river.

Exile, Prisoner, Poet: A Brief History of Faiz Ahmed Faiz

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

The artistic sensibility of Faiz Ahmed Faiz (1911-1984), Pakistan's most acclaimed and translated Urdu poet, was a rare synthesis of modernity and tradition. After completing master's degrees in Arabic and English in the early nineteen thirties, Faiz taught English as a lecturer at colleges in Amritsar and Lahore. He served as the editor of an Urdu literary journal for two years and joined the Progressive Writers Association of India at its inception in 1936. As he recalls in an autobiographical essay, the Great Depression ushered in a period of intellectual ferment in the Indian subcontinent:

It was a time of great creativity and the opening of new perspectives. I think the first lesson I learnt was that it was impossible to detach oneself from what was happening externally. An individual, no matter how rich and fulfilled emotionally and in intellectual terms, is, after all, only an individual, a small, humble entity of little consequence. What matters is the world outside and the people in it and what happens to them. What is important is the larger human equation of pain and pleasure. As such, internal and external experiences are two sides of the same coin. ("Faiz on Faiz" 4-5)

Faiz became a literary celebrity in 1941 when *Naqsh-i-Faryadi*, his first volume of Urdu poetry, was published. However, World War Two intervened, and in 1942, Faiz joined the British Army War Publicity Department in Delhi. Upon leaving military service in 1947, the year of Pakistan's independence, Faiz became the editor of *The Pakistan Times*. Amidst a government crackdown on leftists, Faiz was imprisoned in solitary confinement from 1951 until 1955.

In the coming years, many other worthy endeavors of Faiz would be interrupted by imprisonment, exile, or calamity. Faiz's poems express the anguish of separation – be it of India from Pakistan, East Pakistan from West Pakistan, husband from wife, poet from country – as in "Legend of a Tall Tree":

It seems there is nothing now –
 Neither sun nor moon –
 Neither darkness nor dawn.
 There's no Aphrodite in the sea-foam –
 No ship in the harbour of pain.
 Perhaps this was all an illusion –
 Legend of a tall tree –
 The last swirl of desolation
 In the butchered lane.
 No one will come now to this oasis –
 No one will drink from this stream.
 All attachments are snapped –
 All friendships buried.
 This is the worst that could have been.
 But courage – my heart –
 This too will pass.
 Do not despair.
 There's a life to live.
 (*Four Contemporary Poets* 11)

Faiz co-founded the Afro-Asian Writers Movement at a time when Third World writers were de-colonizing the imagination as can be seen in Faiz's "Come Back Africa":

Come back Africa.
 I've heard the thunder
 of your drums.
 Your maddening rhythms
 have entered my blood.
 Come back Africa.
 I've raised my forehead
 from the dust.
 I've peeled off
 the scales of suffering
 from my eyes.
 Come back Africa.
 I've smashed
 the shackles of pain.
 I've torn
 the web of helplessness.
 (*Four Contemporary Poets* 27)

Upon his return to Pakistan from its first conference, held in Tashkent in 1958, Faiz was imprisoned for six months by the newly-installed military regime of General Ayub Khan. In 1978, in the wake of the military coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Faiz moved to Beirut to serve as the editor of *Lotus*, the flagship literary journal of the Afro-Asian

Writers Movement. He had to leave Beirut because of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Faiz died shortly after his return to Pakistan in 1984.

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Daud Kamal's Legacy of Mercy

"A poet's autobiography," according to Yevgeny Yevtushenko, "is his poetry. Anything else is just a footnote" (1). Even so, a brief introduction to the Pakistani English-language poet Daud Kamal is in order. Born in Abbottabad in 1935 to a Hindko-speaking family, Kamal was educated at the Burn Hall School in Srinagar and completed a bachelor's degree in English at Islamia College in Peshawar. In 1956, he left for Cambridge University, where he completed a tripos (three-part examination) in English literature for his master's degree. Two years later, Kamal returned to Pakistan. He began teaching in the Department of English and Modern European Languages at the University of Peshawar which would soon thrive under its Vice Chancellor, Chaudhry Mohammad Ali (Kamal's father) who promoted women's education at the university, establishing the Jinnah College for Women in 1964. Kamal taught for nearly three decades in the English Department, serving as department chair during the nineteen eighties. The department chairs who preceded him, such as Herbert Michael Close, Mazhar Ali Khan, and Margaret Harbottle, were all gifted teachers and revered by their students. Near the end of his life, Kamal recalled, only half in jest, having gone into teaching out of "an exaggerated sense of idealism coupled with a total lack of a world-sense."¹

Kamal's first volume of original poetry was a self-published chapbook titled *The Compass of Love* (1973). During Kamal's lifetime, Peter Dent, the head of the Interim Press, a small poetry press in the United Kingdom, published Kamal's *Recognitions* (1979) and *A remote beginning* (1985), and also included several of Kamal's poems in an anthology of Pakistani English-language poetry titled *The Blue Wind* (1984). Kamal was an accomplished translator of classical and modern Urdu poetry. He died of a heart attack in December 1987 while on a visit to the United States that was sponsored by the United States Information Agency. His posthumous volumes include *Rivermist* (1992), *Before the Carnations Wither* (1995) and *A Selection of Verse* (1997).

Kamal's "Old Woman" resurrects the merciful ethos of the Sufi mystical tradition. While I was his student at the University of Peshawar in the early eighties, Kamal would, on his way to photocopy his poems at a shop, pause to converse with an old woman and give alms to her. In this poem, she lives on, together with the poet persona who is an oasis in a desert of indifference. "The need to lend a voice to suffering," according to Theodore W. Adorno, "is the

¹ Unpublished July 25, 1985 letter to the journalist Khalid Hasan.

condition of all truth" (17-18); and in "Old Woman," Kamal indicts a social system that creates suffering:

Two
 old jute sacks
 (generosity of
 a God-fearing grocer) –
 one for her
 skin-and-bone legs
 and the other
 (suitably perforated
 for breathing)
 to hide and keep warm
 the ruin above.
 Winter can be
 deadly
 if you have
 no home.

Partially
 sheltered by the awning
 of a jeweller's shop
 she has become
 a part
 of the scene
 on the pavement.
 The late-night
 cinema crowds
 pay no heed to her.
 I am no better
 but how I wish
 I could bend down
 and whisper:
 "I am writing this
 for you."
 (*Rivermist* 110-111)

The poem's opening word has a line to itself. "Two" modifies more than the two jute sacks, connoting at once the unity and the separation between the poet and the old woman. They meet under the awning of the shop of a jeweler, perhaps the one who created the jewels of caring and love. The poem's final word rhymes with the first one. At first glance the "you" appears to be the old woman, but on further consideration "you" might well address the reader, the indifferent cinema crowds, or the divinity that erases distinctions.

Kamal condenses Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* in the two lines about the cinema crowds who ignore the old woman. Debord shows how society diverts our gaze away from human need and suffering and towards a spectacle that is "a visible negation of life" [whose] "function in society is the concrete manufacture of alienation" (14, 23). The lachrymose spectacles in our cinema and public life are, in the words of Debord, "a specious form of the sacred" and the "the locus of illusion and false consciousness" (12).

As a messenger of mercy, Kamal bore witness to barbarism that recurs throughout the ages. In his poems, an object or artifact opens a wondrous portal that leads us to a wistful sense of what might have been. In "A Rotting Pomegranate," pomegranate seeds that resemble fragments of shattered pottery evoke the sackings of Baghdad, then a great center of learning:

Baghdad
is again on fire
and the leather bags
of merchant-princes
trampled and torn
under the hooves
of Mongol horses.

Look
at these fragments
of sun-baked pottery –
each piece dripping
with jewels –
miniature suns
of untasted sweetness.
(*Recognitions* 16)

The ruby-red pomegranate color denotes the bloodshed during the massacres by the Mongol hordes of Helagu in 1258 and of Tamerlane in 1401, those avatars of "shock and awe." However, the image of the pomegranate also promises regeneration, fecundity, and immortality (Cooper 134).

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Ali Shehzad Zaidi teaches Spanish language at the State University of New York at Canton. He co-founded the Transformative Studies Institute in 2007 and is the editor of its quarterly journal, *Theory in Action*.

JAMES STEWART

Bale

The Grove 14 (2007)

What the bales govern
concentrated, still,
each to itself but gathered
isn't obvious.

They're just leavings
a brisk machine
compacts to look
roundly natural.

I'm all for curves,
the inward
solace they give;
their long September shadows.

I'm chastened
by the distance and the space
around their group.
But how?

Picked on the stubble flats,
they counter
mind to grant
a formal education.

One is alone.
Others cohere.
All are round.
None rolls.

Empty of evil, they save.
Why would I jump
their free constraint
for more than this?

The curves are silvered,
the flats in shade.
They trail that token darkness
like a cloak.

More olderly than trees,
they hide in the dark,
moons to which
I respond.

The bales that govern
distil this concentrate,
amassed, alone, their subject
neither here nor there.

Buzzard

A hazard for any rat
caught in the open

is being noted
by eyes cold and close

on their vizard of horn,
gripped, and mashed

to mince in that gizzard,
A moment too late

and over the motorway
is the languid lift-off

with deliberate downstrokes,
the tenderly taloned

twitching corpse
a scissored thread.

Hawk Kill

Among the confetti of petals
for a wedding of wind and cherry,
unstirring breast down, plucked
and separated.

Breeze twirls the cherry fall
over the grass; and it's hard to tell
the petals you see
from that pale snow.

The pigeon under the trees
is wrecked and its heart
picked out of many and eaten.
Its loss apart,

There's no more to it than this.
Down stirs and will drift
among the petals,
the wind's gift.

SHERI SPAINE LONG

Poor Bea

(Traducción de la obra de Francisco Zamora Loboeh)

The Grove 15 (2008)

Poor Bea. I no longer even remember the contours of her face. There was a time when I could not take my eyes off the soft magical pout that perfected her lower lip, slightly prominent, and the tiny tongue peering through it, profoundly red.

This morning, when I heard the news at the Rubio, the weather outside was exactly like the day we met. By then, Madrid had already begun its unforgiveable road toward chaos. The birds, with their contaminated lungs, damaged by the lethal suffocation of exhaust fumes, evicted from the parks and the neighborhoods by an irrational army of ferocious bulldozers, cranes and backhoes, were beginning to undergo the same slow agony brought on by every onslaught of winter.

—Madrid is not a city for birds.

That phrase of hers, which I never understood in its entirety, now acquires its true meaning. I heard it for the first time on our third walk through Ventillas, when some children armed with slingshots and BB guns shot down a sparrow that ended up falling right at Bea's feet. I felt the chill run through that fragile body. It was a kind of warning, a premonition.

By that time, Bea was living only two metro stops up from me. She had just lost that mulatto child that cried only in the early morning and scarcely, if at all, did she remember his father—Barbas. Everything happened quickly between us, hastened by a minor struggle in which neither of us lost anything more than a little modesty. And because it had been a while since we had both been feverishly looking for an attachment that could rid us of the loneliness of Africans lost in the big city, we signed a sort of pact that would insure coexisting in the kindest manner possible, since we intuited from the beginning that for us, normal cohabitation would be impossible. I left my boarding house, and she left the apartment that she shared with Mabel and Virtudes, and we took a room in a communal living space on Betanzos.

Now I see that Bea was no different than the birds. Born to enjoy the immensity of the forests and the bounty of the elements, she routinely began a sort of accelerated shrinking every time winter poked its ears through the gap around the door. And it was of no use smothering her in our only blankets, giving her rough massages with melodic hands, and forcing her to drink bucketfuls of tea with cognac. The thing had nothing to do with the cold that forcibly snuck its way in through the corners of that humid shamble of a flat. One time she trembled so violently underneath the bedclothes that there was no choice but to call a doctor, who, in spite of the tremendous zeal and interest that he invested in the case, was unable to explain Bea's illness and prescribed pills that didn't help her one bit. When I discovered that with the arrival of the first warmth all her ills evaporated as if by magic, I stopped worrying myself over that mysterious illness that kept her chained to the bed throughout the entire winter.

—In any case, were it to snow some day, not anyone nor anything would be able to stop me from running down to the street to play with the snow—, she was accustomed to saying resolutely. And many times, I would catch her with her nose stuck to the windowpane overlooking the avenue staring at the clouds in wait of that imaginary snowfall.

Right now I would be incapable of remembering precisely how much time we spent together. I do, however, remember that on one fine day all understanding beyond the light tussle of the organs became impossible, my notes and books ended up in the garbage bin and the people who frequented the Rubio became inured to our bitter disputes. It was precisely at that moment that destiny chose to bring things to a boil: Bea was pregnant.

After a few days of circling the issue, I decided to convince Bea that we should reinvent our lives, begin again, restructure our coexistence and prepare a home fit for the needs of a child. But she refused to even hear mention of the idea.

—This city wasn't built for children or for birds—she said with finality, putting an end to the discussion.

What happened next, I can also not remember with precision. I think she called Mari, the model, and it was she who put her in touch with that quasi gypsy witch who in between ridicule and obscenities introduced a pin into the apex of her groin. Her heartrending wail and the diabolic laughter of that demonic matron stayed with me for a long time afterward. Not only that, to finance all that butchery, we had to sell the record player, all the things from Rochereau, Francó and what had up until then been my only indispensable luggage, my album of all of Bessie Smith's blues. It was like breaking with an entire era, or like saying goodbye to an old suit that had been a faithful companion

during moments and scenes of transcendence. Yes, Bessie said goodbye and the farewell could not have been more in tune with that rainy day that seemed like it wanted to gather all the waters of the Mississippi and dump them on Betanzos Avenue, whose drains seemed powerless to absorb so much matted fluid, so much bile, so much black blood.

A long night, full of almost continual hemorrhaging and labored sobbing, put the final touches on the last day that, thanks to fear and uncertainty, we spent together. Bea, when she felt recovered, took her things and left.

—It always ends on the day when one must choose between birds or disaster— was the last thing she said to me as she closed the door.

It didn't take long for me to forget her since everything had ended long before we separated. But when my eyes caught sight of her paper butterflies, the philosophy books that she had deliberately left behind, or her careful arrangement of the furniture so that we could move comfortably throughout the room, I couldn't avoid thinking of her, remembering with every heartbeat how my memory was beginning to record gaps when I tried to sort certain details of our life together.

Once in a while news of her arrived through some friend that we had in common. That's how I learned that she had definitely dropped her studies, that she had met a tall, slim Andalusian named Pepe who made his living off of her. The Andalusian made her cruise the streets of the Fleming district; later she moved on to the lavish parties of fickle young men and when her body asked it of her, she found time to titillate the Americans that frequented the S'tones.

Today is like the day we first met. Madrid continues its unforgiveable path toward disaster and each time fewer birds remain. I think within ten or twenty years not one single bird will remain on the branches of the sad trees of Madrid. It was Nona who told me the terrible news: a black American who Bea had met at the Brother Wolf, and with whom she had made a date to go to Torrejón, had severed — on a stop that he made on the road to Barajas— her lower lip with a knife, cut off her eyebrows, her ears and her nostrils and then tossed her in a ditch. Bea hadn't wanted to explain to anyone what had happened to make the American commit such savagery. She has had no other recourse but to pack her bags and return to Senegal. She prefers to be stoned as a prostitute, in keeping with the custom of her tribe, than to endure the wintry cold besieging her impossible face.

Now, that favorite phrase of hers that I never understood to its full extent, has kept me company all day, on the bus, on the metro, through the main thoroughfares, as I chatted with my friends, drank tea or watched

a dog urinate against a streetlight, that is to say, while I participated in the ceremony of vertigo and vortex that the big city imprints on all of our movements, all of our gestures. Now I know why Madrid is not a city for birds.

Poems by Luis Alberto Ambroggio

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Here are two poems by American-Argentine writer and scholar Luis Alberto Ambroggio. Originally from Córdoba, Argentina, Ambroggio has lived in the Washington, DC area since 1967. His work explores the cross-cultural experience, social justice, the writer's craft and responsibility, among other topics.

Ambroggio is a Full Member of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (ANLE). "Paisajes de Estados Unidos" (trans. View of the United States) and "Nómada del Silencio" (trans. Nomad of Silence) appear appropriately in the anthology titled *Al pie de la Casa Blanca: Poetas hispanos de Washington, DC*, edited by Luis Alberto Ambroggio and Carlos Parada Ayala (ANLE, New York, 2010).

Initially, these poems captured my attention when I taught heritage language students of Spanish at the United States Air Force Academy (Colorado). By teaching these verses, I aimed to honor the Spanish-speaking parents of my students. Another goal was my desire to highlight the Spanish language as a legitimate heir to the American experience.

The first poem embraces language and social justice. The second poem pivots from social protest to the meta-literary and self-reflexive. The dedication to Hawad, representative of Tuareg literature of the Berber, illuminates the title and the searching life of the poet. The reader experiences the poet wrestling with writing and placing himself and his work within literary, cultural and intellectual traditions.

Today I find these poems as relevant as I did when I first encountered them due to the current cultural and linguistic tensions in the United States. Also, the waning respect for the literary tradition by the American people amplifies the value of Ambroggio's poems in 2020.

View of the United States

If every brick could speak;
If every bridge could speak;
If the parks, plants, and flowers had a voice;
If every block of pavement could speak,
They would speak in Spanish.

If the towers, the roofs,
The air conditioners could speak;
If the churches, airports, and factories had a voice,
They would speak in Spanish.

If every drop of sweat flourished with a name,
They would not be stale names, rather Sánchez,
González, García, Rodríguez or Peña.

But they cannot speak.
They are mere hands, labor, scars,
That for now remain silent.

Nomad of Silence

To Hawad, voice of the Tuareg

Soon the bridges will collapse.
 The rivers, the seas will swallow the earth.
 We will beg for, if we can,
 air for the eyes
 winds for the mute sands.

And what can I do with the tides
 with these islands made of black rocks
 with the thin clouds that glide by
 carrying their loads of gray sadness.

And if everything were to become a desert
 before marching to the dunes,
 nomad of silence,
 if Keats were to hear me,
 if even the wise Jefferson could listen,
 I would shout at them
 with the obstinate rumor of the wind
 "I would rather write wandering
 than to write in desperation."

Washington, DC, 2003.

Sheri Spaine-Long has been Professor of Spanish studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and Chair of its Spanish department. Prof. Spaine-Long has specialized in language teaching and learning, with a stress on the Spanish language, and she is an award-winning teacher who has been appointed to various positions in several academic institutions in the US. She is currently the Executive Director at *The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese* (AATSP). Prof. Spaine-Long is the author of several publications and conference papers focusing on Madrid in Spanish prose as well as the development of content-based instructional materials for the language classroom, such as the world-renown *Nexos* series of manuals for teaching Spanish.

STEPHANOS STEPHANIDES

Karpassia

The Grove 16 (2009)

For equus asinus, careta careta, and the other rare species who accompanied me
on the journey or who I met along the way

Do you remember
when the sun moved into Virgo
and we were pulled against gravity

To a thin place
careful not to tread the rhizomes
of the calamint by the rock

Where the Holy Friend found his sacred spot
and where there is too much sky
as sea swallows the sun

And in the purple hue
turtle midwives come from far away
to bring the science of nature

To the nature of departure protected
as the whorl of shell in liquid turquoise
embraces a flesh of fragile green

And when night fell with a torrent of rain
and the lightning struck
the defi drum

while the candle flame
danced the leilalim
And in response

Our bodies swayed
as the island's hull was turning
till day cleaned the fields fresh

For the wild and wide-eyed donkeys
bashful as they sing to us their kin
Olmaz Olmaz να με πεθαίνεις πολεμάς

And with gravity we turn to ask
is this the homeward way
toward a fertile Mesaoria lying fallow

The air, so thick you cut it with a knife
and houses waste like time itself
or space ships that have lost the ground

not sure if in this place
their time is long or short
this plain was once

the old sea
between two islands
was once

my dwelling
till the horizon lifted
to let us through

so I still wonder
how to write thick poetry?
How to chant for a thin place

Expecting Nightingales

At the smallest hour
I awake and wait
In expectation
The nightingale will sing.
The roar of the sea
Absorbing whistles
Of the passing trains
Hoodwinks me into slumber.

So I do not even sense
The rooster's crowing.
The pink light eludes me
Stealing silently through slats
To soften Kathy's sleep
And I hear a warm smell of fresh focaccia
In Raffaella's buzzing at the door

PETER FIGUEROA (†)

Between Bikini and Burka

The Grove 18 (2011)

Between bikini and burka
What is there?
Millions of women and men
Soldiers in uniforms
Women at work in trousers and jacket
Flowing evening gowns
And colourful
Shoes and gloves
Scarves hugging necks
Focus on the face
Workmen in overalls
And the white uniform of nurses
Of doctors
Of cricketers on the green
Of bawdy sailors
Of beauty therapists
Of elegant sheikhs
Focus on the aesthetics
Focus on the face
Clothed in pink
Sallow or beige
Clothed in brown
Clothed in black
Black of widows
Black of dinner parties
Black of Black Shirts
Black of black souls
Black of undertakers
On the radio or phone
Clothed in the voice alone

Don't wear the bikini in the classroom
Don't wear the bikini in the supermarket
Don't wear the bikini in the boardroom
People might think you are psychotic
Don't wear the burka on the beach
Don't wear the burka in a beauty contest
Don't wear the burka in the swimming pool
People might think you are psychotic
With the bikini
Cool black bikini
Don't forget the razor
Pubic hairs are supererotic
With the burka
Hot black burka
—with black hijab and black niqab—
Don't forget the dark glasses
Eyes are supererotic.

Evening Light

From the road
Into the bridle path
Through the thicket
Into the opening
Behind me the womb of the valley
Further on a bustling city
Ahead the featureless sky
The path is petering out
Not far the brow of the hill
Evening light
Surprisingly soft evening light.

Headstone

No silent and sightless helmsman
Floating in a fog-enshrouded boat
No heavenly host of angels singing
No welcoming tunnel light
Only a staring owl calling
-A ghoulisn enigmatic note-
In the unsounded emptiness of the night.

Looking Forward

The moon was full over the Alpujarras
The breeze refreshed our spirits
For the New Year
In Negril the maroon sunset
Promised a vibrant sunrise
The beach virgin-white again
Baptized again by pure healing waters
My grandmother and her crony
Creaked back and forth
In rocking chairs
Waiting to welcome the freshening breeze of
New Year
On this terrace now, a late staging post
I sit quietly, resting, savouring
The freshening breeze
And for now
Say amen.

CHIDI UZOMA

O Poet O Captain

The Grove 19 (2012)

for Leopold Sedar Senghor

O Poet
O captain of the mighty ships
great sailor of the Tenebrae
in the mighty art
of sailing
of words
of the mind

A mention
enough would not do
to caress the warmth of your blithe
pose.
A mention
enough would not do
to music upon the music, upon rhythms

and to remember
letting memory live—
these flutes
rekindles evergreen
rekindles youth.
This khalam rekindles passion

passion of intellect
passion of life
passion in eating a melon soup
for the melon (or)for the pounded yam

“No hate your heart without hate
no guile your heart without guile.”
Great Sage, O undying species
pray, hear to let me say—
words in-depth of heart

Bear to hear me say
words indebt of words
to say —
a prayer to the masks.

Path of Oforula

Walking a tightrope
 a m'ama non m'ama
 Walking a tightrope
 you have to find the path
 The way to your garri
 the way to a roof over your head
 Walking in a new land
 in a never-never land
 May you find
 the path of Oforula in you
 So traveler you would do better to get going
 and so traveler, my own homeboy
 You better set out early
 early before the sun rises.

29 October 1995

A Free Man

While I'm in need of food
 I am not free

While I'm in need of water
 I am not free

While I'm poor
 I am not a free man

Wherever hunger persists
 there's no freedom.

ADRIANA CAROLINA BULZ

Running Water*

***Has No Memory**

The Grove 20 (2012)

I am no longer trickling up the wall!
Sleeping in the dark, bubbling in the sun,
I am still striving to fill up my course,
So I keep running
With no solid memory on my shores
Except for a faint foreignizing whistlebow.

Within immemorable distance from my source
I am confined to leaking through the pipelines
Where I unravel my feelings up to bursting point.
Letting these loose,
I solidify into hopes, and rage, and remorse
But never regret my aching ripples.
(Having no body I cherish the traces of pain
Inflicted upon my reflection at which I smile so often.)

I wish now I were a drop in this quivering turbid pond!
At least its borders recall how grassy roots used to tickle
[its insole
While my waves travel constantly to their underneath
[repose.
How can I grow old when I have no regrets?

Still there is memory in the great outside
(I believe in my heart that roots may still breath
From underneath a concrete layer). Here I am:
My face a blank stare colored with clouds and creased
[by sparrows,
Blushing at sunset and turning purple with the stars,
Floating ever so stealthily and filled with resilience
In my watery bed.

Fishermen love me for the silvery cues I provide
 And sing to me daily whirring their rods with knotty
 [fingers]

While I undo my wishbones.

As the noon sinks its rays vertically into my chest
 I feel like leaping towards the riverbanks to unfurl
 Mermaid-like tresses for the occasional pedestrian.

I am most resigned by early morning, when ink-blue
 [shades]

Dip their mysteries into my foam. Then I receive any
 [stranger coily,

With a smug assent. I could spell the names of all those
 [whose image I embraced]

Were I not sworn to silence by my own
 Monolithic passage.

I don't overindulge in personal thoughts
 (these here express a mere fad once upon an afternoon)

So I wish you well, my enemy's children, and may you
 [delight]

in my restlessness forevermore!

Your sweet-watered foe

P. PREETHU

Twilight

The Grove 21 (2014)

On moonlit nights,
I travel in dreams, climb
Up the juniper, seeking
The tip where She is.

*Adi Shakti, Adi Shakti,
Adi Shakti, Namo Namo!*

On scorching days,
I travel awake, dig
Down to the roots,
Where she is.

She, who wasn't born,
Guillotined before oleander
And castor -sap and oil-
Could take her away.
Safe from prying hands
Which pamper and hurt,
Denuding eyes, thorns of
Love, splash of acid devouring
Raw flesh, being weighed
Against gold, pricked by vultures,
Bruised, beaten, put in flames,
Slogged, isolated, orphaned-

I seek myself, at both ends,
The truth of what I call 'I',
Stranded at twilight, I know not
Whom to trust- to bygone sun,
Or the approaching shadows.

‘Twilight’ is a poem about the identity crisis faced by an average Indian woman. Religious tradition speaks of her as Shakti (goddess) who is the primordial cosmic energy representing the divine feminine. At the same time, she has to suffer a lot of atrocities in the patriarchal society, ranging from female infanticide to death. Juniper symbolizes the journey in which selfhood is not compromised. In dreams of a glorious past, she chants the *Sakti mantra* (hymn) and invokes the goddess in the highest tip of the tree of selfhood while the cruel reality binds her to the roots.

DON BOGEN

Only Music

The Grove 22 (2015)

I am become like a man standing alone,
one free among the dead.

Gesualdo on CD:
every surprising half-dissonance clear
in mathematical air.

A slim black computer is singing to me,
a laser is reading notes.

This impossible voice
reduced to perfection and reproduced,
a woman taking an angel's part written for a boy.

And the instruments
silent: no viol or harpsichord,
not even Gesualdo's supple lute which is now dust.

Doublet and hose disembodied.

The lady at last only a wraith of beauty,
flagrante delecto caught
in a liner note.

A hollowness cutting off time in the living room.

Passion breathes in odd corners:
five voices in a braid,
the sweet one singing off-key.

This pleasure in the ache of loss.
The small parts that don't fit shine.

Digital—it's there or it's not.

I have retreated to the castle which carries my name.
Only music will console me.

Immediate Song

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Words on a sheet,
screen in a window,
air moving in

where he doesn't move.
Still, in the quick world
he catches the light

as it slices across
the eucalyptus,
spirals of dry green

inscribing the sky.
Morning splits open.
He is taking it in:

smell of spiced dust
sharp in the old smog,
river of traffic

constant and varied,
cool hiss of sprinklers
spurting to life

just now, springs--a back door--
jay's shriek that clears out
all space around it

a moment, a moment.

Don Bogen was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. His upbringing took place there and in Pasadena, California. Academically he obtained his A.B., M.A. and Ph.D. in English at the University of California, Berkeley. He began teaching at the University of Cincinnati in 1976 and is the author of five books of poetry. His first book, *After the Splendid Display*, was published by Wesleyan University Press in 1986. It was followed by four others: *The Known World* (Wesleyan, 1997); *Luster* (Wesleyan, 2003); *An Algebra* (University of Chicago, 2009); and *Immediate Song* (Milkweed Editions, 2019). In 2016 his translations from the work of the contemporary Spanish poet Julio Martínez Mesanza, *Europa: Selected Poems of Julio Martínez*, was published by Dialogos / Lavender Ink. A critical book based on Bogen's work with the Roethke Papers at the University of Washington, *A Necessary Order: Theodore Roethke and the Writing Process*, came out from Ohio University Press in 1991.

Bogen received a *Discovery Award* in 1980 and *Grand Prize in the Associated Writing Programs Anniversary Awards competition* in 1982. Other awards for Bogen's work include *The Writer / Emily Dickinson Award* of the Poetry Society of America, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and residencies at Yaddo, the Camargo Foundation, and the Santa Fe Arts Institute. His poems and translations have appeared in journals in the U.S. and abroad, including *The American Poetry Review*, *The New Republic*, *The Paris Review*, *Pleiades*, *Poetry*, *Slate*, *Stand*, and *The Yale Review*.

In addition to his work in poetry, Don Bogen is active as a translator and has collaborated with composers in the U.S. and abroad. In his career at the University of Cincinnati he taught literature and creative writing, working extensively with doctoral students in the creative-dissertation program and serving as poetry editor for *The Cincinnati Review* from 2005 to 2018. Don Bogen is currently Nathaniel Ropes Professor Emeritus of English and Comparative Literature and serves as editor-at-large for *The Cincinnati Review*.

(From Don Bogen. "Biography" at <http://www.donbogen.com/bio.htm>)

DAVID SWARTZ

Journey to Nowhere

The Grove 26 (2019)

An old man
with a small voice
and a long trail of journeys
into the history
of hopes
dragging behind
shaved off his wrinkles
and walked into the future bakery
where he saw your sparkling eyes.

To himself:
I was search wild
for the present time
where the long spent past
finds the door-way
to the future
open'd wide;
and I found it
right here, right now
in a waking vision
of a lifesaving smile,
from out the portals
of your gracious soul
that filled my heart
with the momentary joy
of present bliss:
perpetual and eternal
is a moment like this!

Nowhere is a word which normally describes being lost. But *nowhere* can also be thought of as a kind of homeland or promised land, an authorial utopia of presence and immediacy, a non-place in which infinite conjunctive possibilities hang from the tree of the impossible. *Nowhere* gives hope to the lost postulates, has no determined body, no termination. Nowhere eschews then and there and affirms now and here, generates the future and the past yet remains forever present.

David Swartz is a young scholar, Masters Degrees in Comparative Literature (The University of Toronto) and Painting (The University of Lisbon). He is currently writing a PhD Thesis on Shakespeare's Sonnets at the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa. His recent translations include *The Religious Mantle* (New Meridian Arts, 2020), and *And Painting: Questioning Contemporary Painting* (CIEBA-FBAUL, 2016). His unpublished poems are of taut and inquisitive quality which bear witness to the existential uncertainty of human life in a credible metaphysical dimension as can be seen in his contribution to the 26 issue and the present one as well.

JÜRI TALVET

(Translation from the Estonian by the author and H. L. Hix, from the book
Yet, Love, Illumine Us. W. Somerville, MA: Červená Barva Press, 2018

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

THIS DANCING SANTA ON 42ND STREET
maybe in front of Mazzotti's shoe shop and
Maria means business on a Hudson riverbank
Maria Bartiramo to whom have you sold
your soul? – answer! And
a living Santa who wound you up
to foot a Greek or Catalan *sardana*
and to mutter occasionally into your beard
something about the special shine of Mazzotti's shoes
Maria d'Aquino the whiteness of your knees
escapes for ever from the eyes of Giovanni
He is just an old man even without
his Santa's beard and bushy eyebrows
or maybe it's you Walt who looked on Broadway
for the thick necks of big young white men
and when you couldn't find them any more
then the warm eyes of small Puerto Ricans
and when you couldn't find them either you sat down
in your own yard under a lilac and wept
and mumbled like Francesco *pace*
pace pace and T. S. later and the ancient bards
long time before them and before you
śānti śānti śānti peace to my heart peace
to your heart too Maria Macolata

IT'S FUNNY TODAY ANNE SEXTON

a representative of Microsoft sent me by e-mail
 a purchase offer As if her namesake
 whose poems I translate had been resurrected
 You Anne who in The Fury of Overshoes
 long for your tiny kindergarten winter boots
 and Man and Woman whom you compare
 to a pair of doves who live together but
 don't speak That precipice between
 the genders that you couldn't leap
 even though you said you were a witch who knew
 to fly on a broomstick Now in your second or in
 who knows what life you are simply a woman
 a tame mute mistress of a man named Microsoft

SNOWFLAKES DANCE AGAIN BEYOND THE WINDOW

As a precaution its lower half has been grated though it's
 the fifth floor Fort Washington alley 245 In any event
 for a hundred years no one has cleaned the windows
 Surely fearing the FBI which today sent me an e-mail
 alleging I had visited forbidden web-pages
 The gypsy Melquíades knows them or anyway has taken note
 of them mr Jefferson mr Negroponte messrs snowflakes
 In fact the question is more complicated Brown
 or green eyes A beautiful even glimmer of spring –
 because the artist not only has blown apart clouds
 above the boulevard of the old world or above
 the intersection of Lepiku and Lai but even has
 lavishly planted young women's legs in boots
 The earth itself looks blue beneath them! (Only now
 I notice it) You are nowhere else *Father come home*
at once! And they leave behind no muddy footprints

AN UNKNOWN ARTIST whose signature
on the boulevard corner that need not
necessarily be in Paris if magnified
might perhaps read C Camot
has made of six persons who walk past
lavishly striped awnings over café
or shop windows who knows why
four slender-legged young women
whose legs are like nice flowers
evenly planted in boots of an early spring
or an early autumn The Sun that even in the
dense row houses on Fort Washington Street
has discovered a slit peeps in
to find the legs of the young women
plays piano on them Maybe one of them
is Joanna who has never been
to Europe and will never get the chance
to travel there This key disobeys
these two legs cannot be uprooted
for a dance as long as there drums
in the earth mother's head
this obsession:
how to find a job to keep
her American children fed

Jüri Talvet was born in 1945 in Pärnu (Estonia). A graduate of the University of Tartu (1972) and a PhD by Leningrad (St. Petersburg) University (1981), he has chaired since 1992 World / Comparative Literature at Tartu University, where he also founded Spanish Studies. In 2016 he was elected member of Academia Europaea. He has published a number of books of poetry and essay, of which selections in translation have appeared in English, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Japanese and Catalan. Since 1996 he has been the main editor of *Interlitteraria*, international journal for comparative literary research. He was awarded Estonian Annual Prize of Literature for essay (1986), Juhan Liiv Prize of Poetry (1997), Ivar Ivask Memorial Prize (2002) and Naji Naaman International Literature Honor Prize (2020).

SALVADOR GARCÍA RAMÍREZ

La cronista de los vientos

With a commentary by Luciano García García
The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Me asomo, como cada amanecer,
a esta plazoleta diminuta
a la sombra rayada de la pérgola.
Adoro esta planicie, antesala
de una casa de puertas al poniente.
Aprecio este rellano, paralelo
al plano de las aguas que deslumbran
especialmente aquí, en esta tierra
estrecha donde todo se derrama
por los acantilados de los días.
Puestas están las sillas y la mesa.
¡Tantas generaciones se reunieron
junto a su ofrenda de vendimias! Quema
la luz las flores de los tiestos. Metros
más abajo se borra la emoción
de los retratos en las cruces. Mudo
permanece el teléfono. Aguarda
mientras cuido las eras de un recinto
que es tan solo horizonte, lejanía
y letargo y un rastro de equipaje
gastándose en las piedras. He quedado
para ser la cronista de los vientos,
ahora que se hundieron los molinos.
Traen escasa la lluvia los céfiros.
Bóreas fue benevolente. Nunca
me asomo a la bahía cuando vienen
los barcos. Mi velero es esta borda
de llana soledad donde persisto
sin más correspondencia que el recuerdo
que riego entre las rejas,
al resguardo del flash de los turistas.

(Salvador García Ramírez, *Periplos-Periploi*. Edición bilingüe español-inglés. Traducción Luciano García García y Elizabeth Adama. Editorial Universitaria, Universidad de Jaén. De próxima aparición)

Periplos, como su propio nombre sugiere, es el viaje sentimental con escalas de un turista con sensibilidad a flor de piel que, como tantos otros y tan distintamente de tantos otros, se adentra en la experiencia del mundo griego en un viaje iniciático y sensitivo donde las distintas presencias de las islas y la península griega se superponen de una forma orgánica y singular.

The chronicler of winds

With every dawn I look out
 onto this tiny square
 under the striped shade of pergolas.
 I love this plain, this antechamber
 of a house with doors facing east.
 I love this landing, parallel
 to the plane of the shining waters,
 chiefly here, in this narrow
 land where everything spills itself
 over the cliffs of days.
 The chairs and tables are settled
 So many generations gathered
 beside their vintage offering! The light
 burns the flowers in the pots. Metres
 below the emotion of the portraits
 on the crosses blur to nothing. Mute
 remains the telephone. It waits
 while I look after the threshing floor
 of a precinct which is only horizon
 far-off distance and lethargy, and a trail of luggage,
 wearing out on the stones. I have been left
 only to be the chronicler of winds,
 now that the windmills have collapsed.
 Scant rain brings the zephyr.
 Boreas was benevolent. I never
 look onto the bay when the ships
 return. My sailboat is this gunwail
 of flat solitude where I persist
 with only the correspondence of memories
 which I water from behind the railings
 sheltered from the tourists' flashes.

(Salvador García Ramírez, *Periplos-Periploi*. Bilingual edition Spanish-English.
 Translated Luciano García García and Elizabeth Adams. Editorial Universitaria,
 Universidad de Jaén. Forthcoming)

Periploi, as its name suggests, is the sentimental journey with stopovers of a tourist
 with acute sensitivity that, like so many others and so different from others, delves
 into the experience of the Greek world in an initiatory and sensitive journey where
 the different presences of the islands and the Greek peninsula overlap in an organic
 and unique way.

La cronista de los vientos: Un comentario

Se trata de la única pieza del libro que cuenta una historia. En ella el yo poético cede la palabra a un personaje femenino que hablará en primera persona. El destino la ha condenado a pasar el final de sus días asomada al otero de una isla, habitando una casa en la que ya no queda nadie, en un lugar al que llegan y del que parte la gente en multitudes. Toda una ironía. Lo único que le queda es mantener el espacio, el volumen de su casa, en perfecto estado, dispuesto para cualquier posible visita. Mientras tanto, su única distracción es observar qué tipo de viento sopla cada día.

1-10. El poema comienza situando el escenario en que vive. El sitio es escaso en el lugar de privilegio que ocupa su casa asomada a un amplio horizonte. También los árboles y un pequeño jardín son un lujo en estas islas donde el agua escasea. Tener una pequeña plazoleta ante su casa, un pequeño regalo, es algo de lo que casi nadie dispone en un lugar tan estratégico. Su casa está orientada al atardecer, esos hermosos atardeceres del Egeo.

11-21. En el verso 5 se ha mencionado que la casa está orientada al poniente, posiblemente con unas magníficas vistas de la bahía de Santorini, pero también orientada, metafóricamente, al ocaso, el ocaso de una familia de la que, muertos o emigrados sus miembros, ya no queda nadie. El verso 11 ya sugiere unos preparativos mecánicos (la mesa siempre puesta) para una rutina diaria (el almuerzo familiar) que no se materializará ya más. El verso siguiente claramente nos presenta la lamentación por las generaciones perdidas y la nostalgia por las celebraciones familiares (la fiesta de la vendimia) (12-13). La soledad del patio se nos presenta, por medio de una imagen admirable: las flores deslumbrantes por el mismo cielo desesperanzado de quien inútilmente prepara todos los días la mesa (13-14). Más abajo en la pendiente está el cementerio; allí los retratos de los familiares fallecidos insertos en las cruces o en las lápidas van desvaneciéndose. La emigración en estas islas ha sido un drama secular que, lejos de perderse, se ha ido acrecentando. La mujer espera en vano una llamada de teléfono de los parientes, quizá hijos o nietos de un país lejano (16-17). El aparato permanece silencioso mientras su casa, expuesta sobre el otero, no es más que una era, que ella sigue cuidando, un espacio vacío y desolado de tanto mirar el horizonte, que es sinónimo aquí de dispersión, lejanía y diáspora (17-21)

21-23. Se remarca aquí la idea del título. Solo le queda el oficio en la vida de ser la cronista de los vientos, esos vientos que, paradójicamente, ahora ya no tienen ninguna función por el declive de los molinos (21-23). Se enumeran esos vientos

del Egeo de procedencia y naturaleza tan distintas. Cumpliendo con su oficio de cronista, nuestro personaje pasa a enumerar en un supuesto anuario los varios tipos de viento y su comportamiento, en un intento de simbolizar las estaciones, el paso del tiempo en la rueda imparabla de los años (24-25).

25-31 Para finalizar, se resalta la renuncia, el toque trágico, tan griego. A nuestra cronista ni siquiera le queda la esperanza del regreso de alguien querido. Al contrario de la mujer del pescador, ella ha renunciado a ver venir los barcos (25-27). Su único velero es esta borda sólida en la que se asoma su casa, esta atalaya anclada a un eterno lugar pero con el contraste de disponer de una enorme distancia a sus pies para viajar con la mirada. La única correspondencia que recibe son sus propios recuerdos que intenta mantener vivos. Por ellos persiste y se aísla detrás de sus plantas y su reja, ajena a la curiosidad de los turistas (27-31).

Según confiesa el propio autor, este hermoso poema era necesario. Para completar el poliedro de una visión de Grecia había que dedicar una cara al drama de la emigración, a la esencia, o maldición, del nomadismo. Condenados estamos —nos dice Salvador García Ramírez— al periplo desde el mismo momento en que nacemos y el tiempo nace con nosotros para recalcar nuestra mudanza.

The Chronicler of Winds: A Commentary

This is the only piece of the book that tells a story. The poetic self gives the word to a female character who will speak in the first person. Destiny has condemned her to spend the end of her days looking out from the hillock of an island, inhabiting a house where no one remains, located in a place, paradoxically, where people arrive and leave in crowds. Quite ironic. The only thing left for her is to keep the space, the volume of her home, in perfect condition, ready for any possible visit. Meanwhile, her only distraction is watching what kind of wind blows each day.

1-10. The poem begins by setting the stage in which she lives. The site is too narrow in the place of privilege where her house lies, overlooking a wide horizon. Trees and a small garden are also a luxury on these islands where water is scarce. Having a small square in front of your house is a little gift, something almost nobody has in such a strategic place. Her house is oriented towards sunset, towards those beautiful Aegean sunsets.

11-21. As has just been mentioned, the house is oriented to the west, possibly with magnificent views of the bay of Santorini. Metaphorically its orientation towards the sunset stands for the sunset of a family whose members have died or emigrated so that there is no one left. Line 11 already suggests some menial preparations (the

table always set) for a daily routine (family lunch) that will no longer materialize. The following line explicitly presents the lamentation for lost generations and the nostalgia for the family or communal celebrations (the harvest festival) (12-13). The solitude of the yard is presented to us through an admirable image: the dazzling flowers looked after by the same hopeless zeal of those who uselessly prepare the table every day (13-14). Further down the slope lies the cemetery. There the portraits of the deceased relatives inserted into the crosses or on the tombstones are fading. Emigration on these islands has been a secular drama that, far from waning, has been increasing. The woman waits in vain for a phone call from relatives, perhaps children or grandchildren from a distant country (16-17). The device remains silent while her house, exposed to the elements on the hillock, is nothing more than a threshing floor, which she continues to care for, an empty and desolate space after so much looking at the horizon, which is synonymous here with dispersion, remoteness and diaspora (17-21).

21-23. The idea of the title is highlighted here. She only has the task in life to be the chronicler of the winds, those winds that, paradoxically, now no longer have any function due to the decline of the mills (21-23). The Aegean winds of such different origin and nature are listed. Fulfilling her job as a chronicler, our character goes on to enumerate in a supposed yearbook the various types of wind and their behaviour, in an attempt to symbolize the seasons, the passage of time in the unstoppable wheel of the years (24-25).

25-31 Finally, the resignation, a tragic touch so typically Greek is evoked. Our chronicler does not even have the hope of the return of someone dear. Unlike the fisherman's wife, she has given up seeing the ships coming back (25-27). Her only sailboat is this solid board on which her house lies and from which it looks out, this watchtower anchored to an eternal place, but with the contrast of having a vast distance at her feet to travel with her eyes. The only postal correspondence she receives is her own memories that she tries to keep alive. That is why she persists and keeps herself isolated, behind her plants and her iron fence, oblivious to the curiosity of tourists (27-31).

According to the author, this is a poem that was needed to round off the book. To complete a polyhedral vision of Greece it was highly necessary to dedicate one facet to the drama of emigration, to the essence or curse of nomadism. We are condemned — Salvador García Ramírez tells us — to our personal periplos from the moment we are born and time is born with us with the effect of emphasizing our mutability.

Luciano García García

Salvador García Ramírez (Rus, Jaén, 1958) ha sido profesor de física y director del Instituto Stma. Trinidad de Baeza (Jaén), ciudad donde reside. En la actualidad colabora con el Centro Andaluz de las Letras. Ha publicado los libros de poemas *La hora del vigía* (2000), Premio “El olivo” del ayuntamiento de Jaén; *Ruradia: remota república* (2002), ayuntamiento de Rus; *Ríos de arena* (2005), Premio Denia; *Nudos* (2006), Premio Alcalá de Henares; *Tiempo de tranvías / O tempo dos eléctricos* (2016), editado en Lisboa en español y portugués; *Arca del agua* (2018), Diputación de Jaén; *La casa* (2019), Premio “Carmen Merchán”; *Rayas y puentes / Raias e pontes* (2020), libro bilingüe premiado en Cáceres; y *Entretiempos* (2020), Premio Noches Poéticas de Bilbao. Ha recibido también el Premio de las Justas Literarias de Reinosa (2018), el Premio “Facultad” de la Universidad de Jaén (2019) y el premio “Juan Bernier” del Ateneo de Córdoba por su poemario *Punto y aparte* (2020). Como profesor de física ha participado en la publicación *La luz, un incesante flujo de fotones* (1995) y como divulgador ha colaborado en el catálogo *Los caracoles de Rus* (2018).

JUAN ESLAVA GALÁN

El Yermo

(Traducción de la obra de T. S. Eliot, 1974)

With an Introduction by Nadia López-Peláez Akalay

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El Yermo: The Writer at Another Writer's Poem.

An Introduction to Juan Eslava's Translation of *The Waste Land* by

T. S. Eliot

“¿Qué raíces se aferran, qué tallos brotan/ de este escombros?” This question might probably represent one of the highest peaks in the renowned writer Prof. Juan Eslava's translation of Eliot's masterpiece. Here, I believe Juan Eslava shows his deep commitment to the poem through his full understanding of Eliot's text, whilst preserving the originality, creativity and intellect that fits a writer like himself. Concerning the main question, it is too true that no life can grow from a barren soil —from a broken culture— and Juan Eslava grasps this notion all throughout his outstanding translation. The entrapment of society within unworthy living conditions, the suffocating waves where the people's hopes and expectations drown are all brilliantly depicted in the literary translation by Eslava: “No encuentro al Ahorcado. Guárdese de la muerte por agua. Veo multitudes de gente caminando en círculo”, where Madame Sosostis sees nothing but disaster and despair.

Baudelaire's Paris as “Ciudad de ensueño” is an interesting approach to Eliot's “unreal city”, where what is depicted next are in fact nightmarish visions of crippled crowds, fallen aspirations, and death. This choice of words goes beyond the first perception readers might get from the excerpt, further emphasising the striking contrast of what is, what ought to be, and what will never be: the magnificence of Paris. Opposing a word that includes the meaning of “dream” to a nightmare is part of the essence of the poem, and it goes beyond that: these are the roots of Eliot's poetic persona, and what drives them to find a way out, to blend with nature and to comprehend their atrocious existence —for there is, buried deeply in the genius of the speaker in the poem, an almost imperceptible

yearning and hoping —something which Juan Eslava seems to grasp magnificently.

This extract gives evidence of the capability of the writer when it comes to his talent and proficiency concerning translation:

Cual trono bruñido, la Sede que ocupaba
resplandecía sobre el mármol. Sobre forjados estandartes
gravitaban los sazonados pámpanos del espejo

Here, Juan Eslava displays a mastery over the internal rhyme and rhythm of the original poem, mainly through alliteration and a precise use of the stress in words, which endows the translated poem with a flow that makes it easier to read and to listen to. The alliterated /s/ in these lines is utilised in the poem to emphasise the nobleness in the description of Eliot's Queen as a Shakespearean Cleopatra. It is in this instance, and many others, that the reader becomes aware of the authorial hand of the writer as a translator, who demonstrates sensitivity not only towards a generalised meaning, but towards the artistic form, too. Both authors manage to reveal, through the musicality in their lines and the, paradoxically, freely drifting streams of verse, the poetic persona's depiction of a desolate land and intense yearnings for the wheel to turn.

In the following “A mi espalda, con una fría ráfaga, percibo/ el chasqueo de los huesos y la carcajada estentórea”, it is “chasqueo” that stands out the most, as within Eliot's lines the reader is able to perceive the poetic persona's echo of Andrew Marvell's “But at my back I always hear/ Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near”, from *To His Coy Mistress*. Juan Eslava, in his translation, seems determined to keep the reverberating notion of the clatter of the horse-drawn carriage, that demonstrates his willingness to help the aware reader seize the allusion made in the original poem. Another manifestation of Juan Eslava's high regard for the text as a work of literature, and not as merely a text to translate, is shown in his lines “él lloró. Me prometió recomenzar. / Yo ni despegué los labios. ¿De qué me iba a quejar?”, where he identifies Eliot's canonical rhyme in “after the event [...] what should I resent?”, and internal rhyme, in “comment”, “event”, “resent”, and endeavours to maintain it. In addition, Eslava's lines “Tú que giras el timón oteando a barlovento”, illustrate how the Spanish writer preserves the double connotation in Eliot's line of the symbolic Wheel, in “giras” and “oteando” —and certainly in “timón”, which is the “wheel”. These words harmonise with the many references to the swirling “whirlpool” where humanity has fallen in the poem — or rather, the whirlpool that *is* the poem. This extract depicts, in a similar manner to the original work, the enticing, and yet pernicious descent into hell:

Una mujer tensó su endrina cabellera
 y pulsó suave música en tan sutiles cuerdas
 y murciélagos con rostros infantiles en el fulgor violeta chillaban y
 aleteaban
 y se colgaban cabeza abajo por los oscuros antros

The Spanish author embraces the perception of Eliot's poetic persona as the effortless, and almost soothing, downward spiral into self-ruination that had been constantly foregrounded and forewarned along the poem.

The translation concludes with “Me senté en la orilla/ a pescar, con la árida llanura a mi espalda/ ¿Pondré en orden mis tierras finalmente?” which prevails as the culminating gist that had been traced in the translation by Juan Eslava. These lines reverberate with the fundamental concepts of the poem as it deals with the remnants of a disintegrated society, and with what endures of its own self. A figurative writer (referred to as the quester, or the Fisher King in the poem) sits cultivating his mind, with fragmented pieces of scribbles piled heedlessly behind them, as they venture to infer the truth that lies at the root of it all. Juan Eslava in his translation entitled *El Yermo* —an unsurprisingly original title which again shows the inventive mind of the writer at work— is able to fathom and convey a deep meaning within the seemingly shattered fragments of the literary work in Eliot's *The Waste Land*. All of this reveals his skill, not only in his attempt to provide the accuracy in meaning of a literary work, but in his determination to convey the magnitude of the art of writing, too.

Nadia López-Peláez Akalay

I. EL SEPELIO DE LOS MUERTOS

Abril, el mes más cruel, engendra
 lilas en el erial, confunde
 memoria y deseo, revive
 las torpes raíces con lluvias de primavera.
 El invierno nos mantuvo abrigados, olvidó
 a la tierra en la nieve, alentó
 un hálito de vida en los secos tubérculos.
 Cayó el verano por sorpresa sobre el Starnbergsee
 con un chaparrón. Nos demoramos bajo los pórticos
 y cuando escampó, proseguimos al sol hacia el Hofgarten, y tomamos café y
 estuvimos una hora charlando.
Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.
 Y, de niños, estando en casa de mi primo el archiduque,
 él me sacó en trineo
 y me asusté. ¡Marie,
 Marie, agárrate fuerte! Y allá que íbamos cuesta abajo. En las montañas una se
 siente libre.
 Me tiro casi toda la noche leyendo y en invierno voy al sur

¿Qué raíces se aferran, qué tallos brotan
 de este escombros? Hijo del hombre,
 no lo puedes decir, ni adivinar, porque sólo conoces
 un montón de rotas imágenes en las que el sol se estrella, y el árbol muerto no da
 cobijo, ni el grillo alivio
 ni se percibe el agua rumorosa en la piedra seca. Sólo
 hay sombra bajo esta roca roja,
 (cobíjate en la sombra de esta roca roja),
 y te mostraré algo diferente
 de tu sombra matinal persiguiéndote
 o de tu sombra que sale a tu encuentro al atardecer;
 te mostraré el miedo en un puñado de polvo.

*Frisch weht der Wind
 Der Heimat zu.
 Mein Irisch Kind,
 Wo weilest du?*

"Me ofreciste jacintos por primera vez hace un año;
 me llamaban la chica de los jacintos".
 Sin embargo, cuando regresamos, ya tarde, del jardín de
 los jacintos,
 florecidos tus brazos y húmedo tu cabello, no podía

articular palabra y me fallaban los ojos, no estaba ni vivo ni muerto, ni sabía nada, mirando en el luminoso corazón, el silencio.
Oed'und leer das Meer.

Madame Sososttris, la famosa adivina,
 pilló un catarro tremendo, sin embargo
 pasa por ser la mujer más sapiente de Europa,
 con una sobada baraja de cartas. Aquí, dijo,
 está su carta, el Marinero Fenicio ahogado,
 (¡Contemplad las perlas que sus ojos fueron!)
 Aquí está Belladona, la Dama de las Rocas,
 la señora de las situaciones.
 Aquí el Hombre de los Tres Bastos y aquí la Rueda,
 y aquí el mercader tuerto, y esta carta,
 que está en blanco, es algo que lleva a la espalda,
 y que me está vedado contemplar. No encuentro
 al Ahorcado. Guárdese de la muerte por agua.
 Veo multitudes de gente caminando en círculo.
 Gracias. Si ve a mi querida señora Equitone
 díglele que le llevaré el horóscopo personalmente:
 ¡Hay que precaverse en los tiempos que corren!

Ciudad de ensueño.
 Bajo la niebla turbia de un amanecer invernal,
 una multitud fluía por el puente de Londres, tantos
 que nunca hubiera imaginado que la muerte hubiese
 deshecho a tantos.

Exhalaban suspiros breves y espaciados,
 y cada cual iba con la mirada fija en los pies.
 Ascendían cuesta arriba y bajaban por la calle King
 William,
 hacia donde Santa Mary Woolnoth daba las horas
 con un sonido lóbrego en la última campanada de las
 nueve.

Allí vi a uno que conocía y lo paré, gritándole: "¡Stetson!
 Tú, que estabas conmigo en las naves de Milas!
 Oye: aquel cadáver que plantaste en tu jardín el año pasado, ¿Ha empezado ya a retoñar? ¿Florece este año?
 ¿O lo habrá malogrado una helada imprevista?
 ¡Ah, llévate de aquí al Perro, ese amigo del hombre,
 volverá a desenterrarlo con las uñas!
 ¡Tú! *Hypocrite lecteur! -mon semblable,- mon frère!*"

II. UNA PARTIDA DE AJEDREZ

Cual trono bruñido, la Sede que ocupaba
 resplandecía sobre el mármol. Sobre forjados estandartes
 gravitaban los sazonados pámpanos del espejo,
 (Desde los que oteaba un dorado Cupido
 y otro recataba los ojos bajo el ala)
 que geminaba las siete llamas de la ménora
 reflejando sus resplandores sobre el mármol como si
 el destello de las joyas fuera a su encuentro
 desde los guarnecidos cofres fastuosamente revestidos.
 En no cerrados pomos de marfil y veteados cristales
 se remansaban los extractos de exóticos perfumes,
 bálsamos, polvos y esencias embriagaban, confundían
 y condensaban un ámbito de olores mecidos por la brisa refrescante de la galería
 y ascendían
 inflamando los agudos pábilos de las velas.
 El humo que esparcían hacia el artesonado
 inspiraba las tallas del repujado techo.
 Enormes sándalos marinos de cobre incrustados
 destellaban verdes y naranjas, enmarcados por veteados
 mármoles
 y en esta ambigua luz ondulaba un modelado delfín.
 Sobre la antigua ménsula del hogar se abría,
 como ventana asomada a una escena silvestre,
 la metamorfosis de Filomela, tan brutalmente forzada
 por el bárbaro rey; el ámbito todo del desierto
 latía con los inviolables trinos del ruiseñor
 y ella seguía gritando -y aun gira el mundo-
 "Tchiu, Tchiu" a los salaces oídos.
 Y otros marchitos muñones del tiempo
 se relataban en los lienzos, formas atónitas
 se inclinaban asomándose, silenciando el ámbito
 encerrado.
 Pasos se deslizaban por la escalera.
 A la luz de la lumbre, bajo el cepillo, su cabello
 era una cegadora cascada
 hervía de palabras y luego cruelmente enmudecía.

"Esta noche estoy fatal de los nervios. Fatal, sí. Quédate conmigo Háblame. ¿Por
 qué no hablas nunca? Habla.
 ¿En qué estás pensando? ¿Qué piensas? ¿Eh?
 Nunca sé lo que estás pensando. Piensa"

Pienso que estamos en el callejón de las ratas
donde los muertos perdieron sus huesos.

"¿Qué es ese ruido?"

El viento bajo la puerta.

"¿Y ese ruido de ahora? ¿Qué hace el viento?"

Nada. Sigue sin hacer nada

¿No

sabes nada? ¿No ves nada? ¿No recuerdas
nada?"

Recuerdo

las perlas que sus ojos fueron.

"¿Estás vivo o muerto? ¿Es que no tienes nada en la
cabeza?"

Pero

Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh esa musiquilla shakesperiana

Es tan elegante,

Tan inteligente.

"¿Qué hago ahora? ¿Qué haré?"

Me echaré a la calle tal como estoy,

con estos pelos, así y daré una vuelta. ¿Qué vamos a hacer
mañana?

¿Qué vamos a hacer nunca?"

El agua caliente a las diez

y, caso de que llueva, un coche cerrado a las cuatro.

Y nos echaremos una partida de ajedrez.

Apretando los ojos sin párpados en espera de que alguien

llame a la puerta.

Cuando licenciaron al marido de Lil, le dije,

no me anduve con rodeos, me fui a ella y le dije,

POR FAVOR, DENSE PRISA QUE ES HORA

ahora que Albert está de vuelta arréglate un poco.

Querrá saber qué has hecho de aquel dinero que te dio

para que te arreglaras la dentadura. Te lo dio, estaba yo delante

Sácatelos todos, Lil, y ponte una dentadura flamante,

puedo jurar que te lo dijo, que no aguantaba verte así.

Ni yo tampoco lo aguanto, añadí. Y piensa en el pobre

Albert,

se ha tirado cuatro años en el ejército, querrá pasárselo

bien,

y si no se lo das tú ya habrá otras dispuestas, le dije.

¡Ah!, Así que hay otras, dijo ella. Algo de eso hay,

respondí.

Entonces ya sé a quién agradeceré, dijo echándome una mirada furiosa.

POR FAVOR, DENSE PRISA QUE ES HORA.

Si no te gusta lo que te digo, sigue así, le dije.

Otras pueden escoger si tú no puedes.
 Pero si Albert te deja plantada no será porque no te avisé.
 Debería darte vergüenza, le dije, parecer tan rancia.
 (Sólo cumplía treinta y uno).
 No lo puedo remediar, me dijo compungida,
 la culpa la tienen aquellas píldoras para abortar, dijo.
 (Ya ha tenido cinco hijos y por poco no lo cuenta cuando
 tuvo a George).
 El boticario dijo que todo iría bien pero la verdad es que
 nunca he vuelto a ser la misma.
 Qué tonta eres, dije.
 Bueno, si Albert no se contiene aguántate, le dije,
 ¿Para qué vas a casarte si no quieres hijos?
 POR FAVOR, DENSE PRISA QUE ES HORA.
 Bueno pues aquel domingo Albert estaba en casa por fin y
 comieron jamón hervido,
 y me invitaron a cenar para que lo saborease calentito.
 POR FAVOR, DENSE PRISA QUE ES HORA
 POR FAVOR, DENSE PRISA QUE ES HORA
 Buenas noches, Bill. Buenas noches, Lou. Buenas noches,
 May. Buenas noches.
 Ea, Buenas noches. Buenas noches.
 Buenas noches, señoras, buenas noches, dulces señoras, buenas noches,
 buenas noches.
 minervilla

III. EL SERMÓN DEL FUEGO

La pérgola del río está deshecha: mil dedos vegetales
 se aferran a la blanda ribera y la penetran. El viento
 atraviesa la parda tierra, ignorado. Las ninfas se han
 marchado.
 ¡Oh, dulce Támesis, atempera tu marcha hasta que acabe
 mi canto!
 El río ya no lleva cascos de botellas ni papeles de liar
 bocadillos,
 ni pañuelos de seda, ni cajas de cartón, ni colillas
 ni algún otro testigo de noches veraniegas. Las ninfas se
 han marchado.
 Y sus amigos, los alegres vástagos de papás
 preeminentes,
 se fueron sin dejar señas.

A orillas del Lemon me senté a llorar ...
Dulce Támesis, atempera tu marcha hasta que acabe mi
canto.
Dulce Támesis, atempera tu marcha, no hablaré alto ni
mucho.
A mi espalda, con una fría ráfaga, percibo
el chasqueo de los huesos y la carcajada estentórea.

Una rata se deslizó suavemente entre los matorrales
arrastrando su viscosa tripa hasta la orilla
mientras yo pescaba en el canal mortecino
en un atardecer invernal, por detrás de los depósitos del
gas
meditando sobre lo del naufragio de mi hermano, el rey
y sobre la muerte de mi padre, rey antes que él.
Blancos cuerpos desnudos sobre el barro de la orilla
y huesos apilados en el polvo de un angosto sótano
perturbados tan sólo por el trasiego de las ratas, año tras
año.
Pero a mi espalda alcanzo a percibir de vez en cuando
un clamor de bocinas y motores que llevarán
a Sweeney hasta la señora Porter en primavera.
Ah, la brillante luna resplandecía por encima de la señora
Porter
y por encima de su hija
estaban lavándose los pies con sifón
Et O ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!

Chiu chiu chiu
tchiu tchiu tchiu tchiu tchiu tchiu
tan brutalmente forzada.
Tereo

Ciudad de ensueño
bajo la niebla turbia de un mediodía invernal
el señor Eugénides, mercader en Esmirna,
sin afeitarse, con un bolsillo lleno de pasas
fletadas para Londres: albaranes en regla,
me propuso en detestable francés
que almorzáramos en el hotel de la calle Cannon
y pasáramos un fin de semana en el Metropole.

A la hora violeta cuando los ojos y la espalda
se alzan del escritorio, cuando el motor humano aguarda
ronroneando como el de un taxi,

Yo, Tiresias, aunque ciego, latiendo entre dos vidas,
viejo con ajados pechos de hembra, veo
a la hora violeta, la hora de la tarde que empuja
hacia el hogar y atrae al marinero a tierra desde la mar.
La mecanógrafa está de vuelta a la hora del té, recoge lo
del desayuno, enciende

la estufa y abre unas latas.
Tras los cristales, comprometedoramente desplegadas,
sus combinaciones tendidas perciben los rayos de un
último sol.

Sobre el diván se confunden (que será cama nocturna),
medias, pantuflas, blusas y sostenes.

Yo, Tiresias, un viejo de exhaustas ubres
me percaté de la escena y adiviné el desenlace;
también yo esperé al invitado.

Él, el joven furunculoso, llega
un chupatintas de oficina de poca monta, con expresión
insolente

un don nadie que luce su descaro
como un millonario de Bradford su chistera.

Ahora es el momento propicio, y él lo advierte,
han rematado la cena, ella está cansada y aburrida,
procura calentarla con caricias
si no deseadas, consentidas.

Encendido y resuelto se va al grano
sin defensa que estorbe sus manos impacientes;
su vanidad no exige que la otra participe
se conforma de sobre con que se deje hacer.

(Y yo, Tiresias, he padecido antes todo
lo acaecido en este mismo diván o lecho;
yo que me he sentado a la sombra de las murallas tebanas,
yo que he caminado entre los más humildes muertos).
Concede un último beso condescendiente,
sale a tientas y encuentra la escalera a oscuras ...

Ella se vuelve y se contempla un momento en el espejo
apenas advirtiéndole que su amante se ha ido
y su cerebro filtra trabajosa una idea:

"Bueno, asunto concluido, menos mal que ha pasado".

Cuando una mujer hermosa ha tocado la locura y
recorre nuevamente la soledad del cuarto,
se alisa el cabello con un gesto automático,
y pone un disco en el gramófono.

"Esta música se deslizó hasta donde yo estaba por las
 aguas"
 y por el Strand, calle Victoria arriba.
 Ah, ciudad de la City, a veces oigo
 junto a una taberna de la calle Lower Thames,
 el deleitoso acorde de una mandolina
 y la barbulla y el parloteo del interior
 donde los pescaderos ociosos se juntan a mediodía, donde
 los muros
 del Santo Mártir sostienen
 un esplendor inefable de mármoles jónicos y oro.

El río transpira
 petróleo y alquitrán
 las gabarras se mecen
 con la marea creciente
 velas rojas
 desplegadas
 a sotavento, se mecen en la pesada verga.
 Las gabarras arrastran
 troncos a la deriva
 Greenwich abajo
 más allá de la isla de los Perros.

Ueialala leia
 Uallala leialala

Elizabeth y Leicester
 le daban a los remos
 toda la popa era
 una concha dorada
 gules y oro
 la cóncava marola
 ondulaba en las riberas
 el viento suroeste
 empujaba río abajo
 los bronzialados ecos
 de blancos campanarios
 Ueialala leia
 Uallala leialala

"Tranvías y polvorientos árboles.
 Highbury me hizo. Richmond y Kew

me deshicieron. Por Richmond me abrí de piernas
boca arriba en el fondo de una barca mezquina".

"Los pies tengo en Moorgate y el corazón
bajo los pies. Después de aquello
él lloró. Me prometió recomenzar.
Yo ni despegué los labios. ¿De qué me iba a quejar?"

"Allá por las dunas de Margate.
No consigo relacionar
nada con nada.
Las uñas rotas de unas manos sucias.
Mi gente, gente humilde que no espera
nada."

la la
A Cartago fui entonces

ardiendo ardiendo ardiendo ardiendo
Ay, Señor tú me arrancas
Ay, Señor tú me arrancas

ardiendo

IV. MUERTE POR AGUA

Flebas el Fenicio, que lleva dos semanas muerto,
se olvidó del chillido de las gaviotas y de las olas del
insondable mar
y de las ganancias y de las pérdidas.

Una corriente submarina
acogió su osamenta rumorosa. Con los vaivenes
hizo el camino de su edad y juventud
para entrar en el vórtice.

Gentil o judío
Tú que giras el timón oteando a barlovento,
acuérdate de Flebas que fuera alto y apuesto como tú.

V. LO QUE DIJO EL TRUENO

Detrás de las antorchas que enrojecen los rostros
sudorosos
detrás del helado silencio en los jardines
detrás de la agonía en los pedregales
del grito y del llanto
prisión y palacio y del retumbar
del trueno en primavera sobre remotas montañas
el que vivía está ahora muerto
nosotros que vivíamos nos morimos ahora
con un poco de paciencia

Aquí no hay agua sino sólo roca
roca y no agua y el camino polvoriento
el camino que serpea ascendiente entre montañas
pedregosas montañas sin agua
si hubiera agua nos detendríamos a beber
en la roca uno no puede pararse ni pensar
se suda sal y los pies se cuecen en la arena;
si al menos hubiera agua en esa roca
muerta montaña cuya boca de cariaos dientes no puede ni
escupir
aquí uno no puede pararse, echarse ni sentarse
ni siquiera hay silencio en las montañas
sino el seco y estéril trueno sin lluvia
ni siquiera hay soledad en las montañas
sino hoscros rostros enrojecidos, desdén y gruñidos
desde los umbrales de cuarteadas chozas de barro
Si hubiera agua

y no roca
si hubiera roca
y agua además
y agua
un manantial
un remanso entre las rocas
aunque sólo fuera el rumor del agua
y no el de la chicharra
y el murmullo de la agostada hierba
sino el barboteo del agua sobre la piedra
donde el tordo canta en los pinares
glu glu glu glu glu glu glu
pero no hay agua

¿Quién es ese tercero que siempre camina a tu lado?

Cuando cuento sólo vamos tú y yo
pero cuando elevo la mirada al horizonte de este blanco
sendero
siempre hay otro que camina a tu lado
sigilosamente, envuelto en una capa parda, embozado
no sé si hombre o mujer
Pero ¿quién es ese que va a tu otro lado?

¿Qué es ese rumor alto en el aire?
Murmullos de lamentos maternos.
¿Qué turbas son esas de encapuchados que hormiguean torpemente sobre la
tierra agrietada cubriendo llanuras
infinitas
sólo limitadas por el horizonte de mi mirada?
¿Qué ciudad es aquella tras las montañas
grietas, remiendos y súbitas ruinas en el aire violeta
torres desmoronándose?
Jerusalem Atenas Alejandría
Viena Londres
ensueño.

Una mujer tensó su endrina cabellera
y pulsó suave música en tan sutiles cuerdas
y murciélagos con rostros infantiles en el fulgor violeta chillaban y aleteaban
y se colgaban cabeza abajo por los oscuros antros
y el aire se llenaba de torres invertidas
campanas repicando reminiscentes horas
coros de voces salen de los secos aljibes y los exhaustos
pozos.

En este putrefacto agujero entre montañas
a la débil luz de la luna, la hierba entona voces
sobre ruinosas tumbas, cerca del santuario
El santuario vacío, morada sólo de los vientos.
Sin ventanas, con la puerta batiendo,
los desecados huesos no harán a nadie mal.
Sólo un gallo se erguía en la viga cumbrera
kikirikiiiiii
al destello de un relámpago. Después una húmeda ráfaga
trajo la lluvia.

El Ganges se hundió y las hojas caídas
aguardaban la lluvia mientras las nubes negras
se remansaban a lo lejos más allá del Himavant.
La jungla se agazapaba, tensa en el silencio.
Entonces habló el trueno

DA

Datta: ¿qué hemos dado?

Amigo mío, la sangre me batanea el corazón
el infame atrevimiento de una fugaz entrega
que toda una eternidad de prudencia no podrá borrar
por eso y sólo por eso hemos existido
aunque no lo recogerán nuestras necrológicas
ni nuestros epitafios adornados por la benéfica araña
ni bajo sellos rotos por un macilento notario
en nuestros cuartos vacíos.

DA

Dayadhvam: He oído la llave
girar en la cerradura una vez y solamente una
pensamos en la llave cada cual en su cárcel
y pensando en la llave cada cual se encarcela
sólo al caer la noche rumores etéreos
evocan un momento un roto Coriolano

DA

Damyata: La barca respondió
alegremente a la mano experta en vela y remos
la mar estaba en calma, tu corazón habría respondido alegremente, de haberlo
invitado, palpitando sumiso
a las hábiles manos

Me senté en la orilla

a pescar, con la árida llanura a mi espalda
¿Pondré en orden mis tierras finalmente?

El Puente de Londres se hunde se hunde se hunde

Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina

Quando fiam uti chelidon -ah, golondrina golondrina

Le Prince d'Aquitanie a la tour abolie

He apuntalado mis ruinas con estos fragmentos

¡Cómo, entonces os conviene. Hieronymo se ha vuelto
otra vez loco.

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih

FIN

Juan Eslava Galán (born in Arjona, Jaén, 3-7- 1948) studied Modern Philology at the University of Granada. He studied translation at Aston University (Birmingham, England), and got a PhD thesis in Medieval History (*Poliorcética y fortificación bajomedieval en el reino de Jaén*). Having spent his career as a teacher of English, he returned to his earlier interests as a writer of historic genre, both fiction and non-fiction. He has authored more than ninety essays and novels (some under the pen names Nicholas Wilcox, Ramón J. Uribe, Carmela Ribó y Jaume Pi i Bofarull) and has translated texts of T.S. Eliot, William Jacob, Washington Irving, Alexander, Slidell, Richard Ford, George Borrow and Augustus.J.C. Hare. Now is a full-time writer and adds cooking to his pursuits

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