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Catalan Review is the premier international scholarly journal devoted to all aspects of Catalan culture. By Catalan culture is understood all manifestations of intellectual and artistic life produced in the Catalan language or in the geographical areas where Catalan is spoken. Catalan Review has been in publication since 1986.

Catalan Review és la primera revista internacional dedicada a tots els aspectes de la cultura catalana. Per la cultura catalana s'entén totes les manifestacions de la vida intel·lectual i artística produïda en llengua catalana o en les zones geogràfiques on es parla català. Catalan Review es publica des de 1986.

Translations:

Gabriel Ferrater: Poems from Les dones i els dies (J. M. Sobrer);

Vicent Andrés Estellés: Poems (Nathaniel Smith);

Joan-Salvat Papasseit: Dóna'm la mà (N. Smith & Lynette McGrath)

Josep Fontana: Speech in Honor of Pierre Vilar.

Catalan Review, Vol. III, number 1 (1989), p. 171-194

TRANSLATIONS

1918-1919
and the
Edge of the World

POSSEÏT

Sóc més lluny que estimar-te. Quan els cucs
faran un sopar fred amb el meu cos
trobaran un regust de tu. I ets tu
que indecentment t'has estimat per mi
fins al revolt: saciada de tu,
ara t'excites, te me'n vas darrera
d'un altre cos, i em refuses la pau.
No sóc sinó la mà amb què tu palpeges.

Gabriel Ferrater
All poems from *Les dones i els dies*,
Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1968

POSSESSED

I am beyond loving you. When worms
make a cold buffet of my body
they will find an aftertaste of you. You,
who loved yourself indecently in me
up to the turning of the road, sated on yourself,
excited, now you follow
another body, and you deny me peace.
I am but the hand through which you feel.

Translated by J. M. Sobrer

EL PONENT EXCESSIU

Aquest sol que menstrua no es vol pondre.
Mira la folla roja com rebutja
el llençol de muntanya que l'acotxa.
Un altre dia exagerat. Un altre
dia se't mor cregut que el seu color
no tornarà mai més, no tornarà
com la sang que es podreix. Eixuga llum,
llença cotons de núvols, renta't, gira't,
beu el més límpid gin de lluna i mar.

AN EXCESSIVE SUNSET

This menstruating sun won't set.
Look at that red fool as she refuses
to be covered by the sheet of mountains.
One more exaggerated day. One more
day dying in the belief that its color
will be no more, will return no more,
like rotting blood. Wipe up the light,
toss up cottonballs of cloud, wash up, turn around
and drink up that most limpid gin of moon and sea.

Translated by J.M. Sobrer

BOSC

Recorda. Cinc nivells.
Terra i vida obscura.
Una heura profusa.
I ella. Damunt d'ella
l'aranya oscil·lant,
la vespa frement
i tu. L'esbarzer
a frec teu, infecte
rovell. Cinc nivells
d'un solatge espès
d'instints ensonyats.
I tot al voltant,
projecte de llum
cansat o inexpert,
vèieu enfil·lar-se
les soques dels roures.
Res no hi confiava,
però et vas girar
furtiu, ulls beguts.
Un instant d'aguait
i, brusc-excitades
com nervis, les branques
van reinar sofre
de sol hivernal.

WOODS

Remember. Five levels.
Earth and dark life,
thick ivy.
And she. On her
a swaying spider,
a trembling bee
and you. The brambles
next to you, a foul
blight. Five levels
of thick sediment
of dreamy instincts.
And all around,
a tired or clumsy
project of lights.
You saw the climbing
trunks of the oaks.
Nothing should trust them,
but you turned around,
furtively, drunken eyes.
A moment in ambush
and suddenly excited
like nerve ends, the branches
oozed their sulphur:
Winter sunlight.

Translated by J. M. Sobrer

DITS

Lleugera, s'iniciava
la pluja d'una nit.
Lleugers, es confiaven
els teus dits entre els meus dits.
 Un instant menut d'adéu.
Oh, només per dos dies.
Em somreies a través
del llagrimaig que plovia
 damunt el teu abric de cuir.
Tremolor dels bruscos túnels
per on te'm perds: cor confús,
aquesta nit faig engrunes
 amb la traça de record
que tinc als dits. Buits dos dies,
van prémer l'ombra del toc
dels teus dits, quan te'm perdies.

FINGERS

Lightly, a night's rain
began.

Lightly, your fingers
found rest on mine.

 A tiny moment of farewell.

Oh, just for two days.

You were smiling through the tears
of rain

falling on your leather coat.

In a trembling of sudden tunnels
you are lost to me.

With confusion in my heart,
tonight, I crumble

 the traces of your memory
on my fingers. Two empty days
pressed on the shadow
of your fingers' touch, as you
were being lost to me.

Translated by J. M. Sobrer

FE

La tens als teus braços.
Dorms, i la somnies,
i saps que és un somni
tot el que veus d'ella.
I el cor se t'arrenca,
tremola de fe.
Només una cosa
que tu li proposes
et dóna penyora
que et voldrà despert.
Coneix que és un somni
el que li dius d'ella,
però que per sota
del somni, és ella
que tens als teus braços.

FAITH

She is in your arms.
You sleep, dreaming of her,
and you know everything
you see in her is a dream.
And your heart is rent,
trembling with faith.
Only one thing
you propose to her
gives you assurance
that she wants you awake.
She knows it's a dream,
what you say of her
but she knows that,
under the dream, it is she
who is in your arms.

Translated by J. M. Sobrer

ÍDOLS

Aleshores, quan jèiem
abraçats davant la finestra
oberta al pendís d'oliveres (dues
llavors nues dins un fruit que l'estiu
ha badat violent, i que s'omple
d'aire) no teníem records. Érem
el record que tenim ara. Érem
aquesta imatge. Els ídols de nosaltres,
per la submissa fe de després.

IDOLS

Then, as we lay
in an embrace in front of the window
open to the slope of olive trees — two
naked seeds from a fruit that summertime
opened violently and filled
with breeze — we had no memory. We were
the memory we now have. We were
this image. Idols of ourselves
for a submissive faith to come.

Translated by J. M. Sobrer

HORACIANES, LXX

molt més que un temple, bastiria
amb les meues paraules, aspres i
humils, una marjada com aquelles

que vaig veure un dia a mallorca.
es pedres, sàviament organitzades,
amb una organització ben sòlida,
contribueixen a salvar de l'erosió
la terra batuda pels vents marins.

m'agradaria, amb una semblant assemblea
de pedres, preservar amb els meus mots
un idioma, un país, una forma de vida,
i que ningú no sapigués mai quin és el meu nom,

com tampoc hom no sap el nom de l'autor d'una marjada.

Vicent Andrés Estellés
From *Obra completa*, II: *Les pedre de l'àmfora*
València: Llibreria 3 i 4, 1974

HORATIANS, LXX

much more than a temple, i would build
with my words, humble and rough,
a terraced garden plot like those

i saw one day in majorca.
the stones, cunningly arranged,
organically solid,
help hold back the earth
winnowed by sea-winds.

with such a gathering of stones.
i would like my wors to preserve
a language, a country, a way of living,
and for no one ever to know what my name is,

any more than the name of the author of one of those terraces.

Translated by Nathaniel Smith

Per les oliveres
brunzia el secà
com crosta de pa.

Oh aquest cel sense voreres!
Oh cigales del migdia!
Un migdia de paneres.
I de sobte, la masia.

Per on aniria
sempre et trobaria,
oh secret dolor.

From *Obra completa*, IV: *Balanç de mar*
València: Llibreria 3 i 4, 1978

Through the olive groves
the dry land buzzed
like a crust of bread.

Oh, sky without curbs!
Oh, crickets at noon!
The bread-basket hour.
And suddenly, the farmhouse.

Wherever I went
I'd always find you,
oh secret pain.

Translated by Nathaniel Smith

Ah com t'estime!
Enyoraré altre dia
la teua esvelta
serenitat de nacres:
ara, humil, la vivia.

From *Obra completa, IV: Balanç de mar*
València: Llibreria 3 i 4, 1978

Ah, how I love you!
Another day I'll long
for your svelt
mother-of-pearl serenity:
now, humbly, I've lived it.

Translated by Nathaniel Smith

SPEECH IN HONOR OF PIERRE VILAR

GIVEN BY JOSEP FONTANA, READ AT THE PRESENTATION
OF THE SECOND ANNUAL RAMON LLULL INTERNATIONAL PRIZE
(APRIL 1, 1987)

The reasons why we honor Pierre Vilar today are well known; therefore, I need only mention them here briefly. Above all, we have the merits of an entire life dedicated to researching the past of Catalonia, and, specifically, to discovering the roots of the national conscience of our people. To that we must add the great significance that work has had for us.

Catalunya dins l'Espanya moderna («Catalonia within Modern Spain») is a fundamental part in the renovation of our historical studies. Everything that has been written since its publication about the modern and contemporary history of Catalonia owes its orientation and focus to it. At times I have commented to some friends from Valencia on the state of our respective knowledge about history. At a time when in Valencia there is a large and quite talented group of researches that has the advantage of greater public support than that which we have in Catalonia, the conversation almost always ends with the Valencians stating that the main difference between us is that they did not have a Vilar. They have not been able to base their research on such a solid and extensive foundation. It is hardly coincidental that this difference in the knowledge of the past corresponds directly to a difference in national conscience. *Catalunya dins l'Espanya moderna*, by enriching our understanding of our own history, has helped us to form a more mature and complete vision of ourselves as a people today.

Vilar, however, has been for us, two generations of Catalan historians, much more than an admirable example or a lesson in a book. Above all, he has been a teacher and a friend. During the Franco period, the door to the Vilar house in Paris, near the Seine, was always open to receive those of us who simply appeared

without any other identificacion or invitation besides being Catalan. For those of us who went to France in those dark times to breathe a bit of freedom's air, as well as to work towards — within our very modest limits — the same goal in our own country, Pierre and Gabrielle Vilar meant so much. I cannot let this night go by without mentioning Gabrielle's name, as she also deserves to be a part of this homage. They were friends with whom we could share not only intellectual interests, but also political anxieties, worries and hopes for the future that they felt as if they were their own. You see, this frenchman from near Montpellier, birthplace of king James I, has always lived our problems passionately, and he deserves to be considered one of us for the tremendous service he has rendered to Catalonia. After all, this type of citizenship is much more legitimate than that which is an accident of birth.

Vilar has visited us often since the fall of Franco's regime. We have had him here on so many occasions that we perhaps forget what a luxury it is to have him at our side, and how much he continues to help us in the task of improving the knowledge of our collective personality.

Although it is true that we have survived the worst, it is also true that we have not achieved everything we would have liked. The dangers of confusion which we fought against are still present. Confusion by those who mistakenly identify true nationalism with a narrow-mindedness and a closing of doors and windows to the outside world; they do not realize they are only helping those who would reduce our culture to a slight local difference in some supposedly universal scheme. Confusion, on the other hand, by those who at the same time want to take us back to the ideological labyrinth of Franco, from which it was so hard to escape.

One can only achieve universality when one's own specificity has been understood and accepted — we need only thing of the man bears the name of this prize, Ramon Llull. Amongst all these

opposing and complementary feelings by those who forget that we can only truly be Catalans if we are recognized as such in the world, Pierre Vilar has shown and continues to exemplify for us the role of the historian. An historian cannot lock himself up in the archives to dedicate himself to erudite research, nor can he appear in public squares to tell stories and glorify myths – this, after all, is the job of poets. Rather, he must help everyone – those in the archives and those in the squares – to see things more clearly. I have said before that the first lesson in methodology I learned from Pierre Vilar, more than thirty years ago, came in a letter. He wrote: «No és pas ciència freda el que volem, però és una ciència» («What we want isn't cold, objective science, but it is a science nevertheless»).

What we have to say to you this evening is quite simple, because we owe to you the knowledge of what we had to do and how to do it. Thank you for what you have taught us, and we hope and expect you will continue to help us with your teachings in the future. We still have a long way to go, and we need to keep in mind your lessons of science and conscience, of critical judgment, and of loyalty in serving the people of Catalonia.

Josep Fontana

The Ramon Llull International Prize is awarded annually by the Congress on Catalan Culture Foundation for: 1) an individual's body of work, written in any language and which has shown important knowledge about the Catalan historical and/or cultural reality; 2) a foreign institution which has dedicated itself to promoting Catalan culture in its country; 3) the constant dedication to translate Catalan works into any language; 4) the theoretical contribution by any person from any country that has been important for the knowledge and defense of cultures or ethnic groups without their own political state.