

FROM BARCELONA TO L'ILLA DEL TRESOR. COMPARATIVE READING BETWEEN JOAN MARGARIT'S *CRÓNICA* AND *RESTES D'AQUELL* *NAUFRAGI*

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Abstract || This paper proposes a comparative reading between *Crónica*, one of the first books by Joan Margarit, published in 1975, and the re-writing of the same work presented in the later anthology *El primer frío*, from 2004. The time span of more than twenty years from one book to the other shows a significant poetic shift in his work. The title of this paper, *From Barcelona to l'Illa del Tresor*, draws on the symbolic trip that leads to that evolution, which shifts from a more empirical poetry to the search of a broader, more *impersonal* experience.

Keywords || Joan Margarit | anthology | re-writing | symbolism | depersonalization.

0. Introduction

In a short story by Borges, the German Gustav Theodor imagines that some day a library could be built to host all the books of the World. In such a place, the *great* works from all times —he thinks— will be carefully kept: philosophical treatises, manuscripts, literary manifests, scientific essays, unpublished drafts, etc. And he thinks that there will also be space for works forgotten by the critics, for those written by other *voices*, which barely had the opportunity to be known by the public. In the last bookcases of that imaginary library there are also those books which have not been written, those which have yet to take shape. The laws ruling this utopian place are described in the first studies on ancient philosophy (this is what the short story says): atomism, analytic combinatorics, indeterminism and typography will shape, within their numerous possibilities, all the stories of the world. The project is presented by Kurd Lasswitz in a volume of fantastic tales, meaningfully entitled *Traumkristalle* [*The crystal dream*], thus warming about the fragility —and impossibility— of the architecture of this library. Everything, the narrator predicts, will be in the shelves of that place:

la historia minuciosa del porvenir, *Los egipcios* de Esquilo, el número preciso de veces que las aguas de Ganges han reflejado el vuelo de un halcón, el secreto y verdadero nombre de Roma, la enciclopedia que hubiera edificado Novalis, mis sueños y entresueños en el alba del catorce de agosto de 1934, la demostración del teorema de Pierre Fermat... (Borges, 1999: 24).

Following the list proposed by the narrator, it could be thought that everything —what has already been written and what can still be created— is in this library, but the truth is that there is a sort of books not mentioned in any moment. Which place is taken up by the anthologies?

Since the complete works by every poet, writer, philosopher, artist and scientist are part of this library, what would be the sense of their (partial) duplication in an anthology? This genre was traditionally conceived as a selection of the most significant within the trajectory of an author. That is, anthologies refer, in some way, to an *original book*; reason why it could be thought that they do not add anything new to which has been created already. But on the contrary, anthologies —where there always are oversights that have *their* own sense— cannot be considered simply as a selection or an inventory where a part of the previously published works by an artist is collected. Anthologies are also works of creation, providing a new perspective on what is already written. The poems (or short stories) appear in a different context with respect to the original work, reason why they can acquire a new sense. In some way, anthologies would have the

same function that the books in the last bookcases of the total library of Borges: the works to come, which have to adopt an understandable shape, will inevitably modify (our way to read) those which already exist.

That is the way it happens with the anthology *El primer frío* published by Joan Margarit in 2004. If the indication as a kind of subtitle *Poesía escrita entre 1975 y 1995*, were true, in this anthology the poetry—or part of it—written in such interval of time would be found. But the comparative reading between the anthology and the selected collections of poems reveals the fact that Joan Margarit constantly re-writes as he revisits his first works. In the first section of the anthology, entitled “Restes d’aquell naufragi”, there are only four poems from the seventy one of *Crónica*, the third book by Margarit published in 1975 and written in Spanish. The novelty this anthology holds can be verified going to *Crónica* and ascertaining that the poems found there are not very related or not related at all with those collected in *El primer frío*. Therefore, it seems that *El primer frío* is not limited to collect the more representative poems—in fact, as the author himself reveals in the prologue, the books which received any awards from the critics have been voluntarily forgotten—but “desescriu” (Rovira, 2004) and re-writes his own works, subjecting it to a critic reading and a demanding correction. This is because, among other reasons, there are twenty years, a trajectory in poetry and a change of literary language between *Crónica* and *El primer frío*.

Through the re-writing proposed in the anthology *El primer frío*, we can access one of the first works by Margarit, at the beginning of a poetic career that is still developing—although *Cantos para la coral de un hombre solo*, had been published in 1963. It could be ventured that he only takes four poems from such beginning because “no va arribar a canalitzar adequadament la seva energia creativa fins l’aparició del seu onzè recull en català, *Llum de pluja*, el 1987” (Abrams, 2005: 21). If we considered the reading by Sam Abrams as correct, it could be stated that Margarit found his poetic way when he changed his poetic language, from Spanish to Catalan. Although his works are still being traduced to Spanish, the bilingual anthology *Arquitecturas de la memoria*, published in 2006 by José Luis Morante is the proof. It is interesting to check that in this recent anthology, the poems of *Crónica* re-written in the anthology *El primer frío* do not appear.

Modifications brought about by the new re-writtingwriting proposed in *El primer frío* are indicating a change in his poetic, an evolution in his own trajectory and, in any way, the can become a medium to approach the poetry by Joan Margarit. This discovery given by the reading of *El primer frío*, the distance it draws regarding his first “poetic milestone”—this is the way he refers to *Crónica* in the prologue for the

anthology (2004:9)— has displaced the subject to discuss initially in these pages: the conflict that appears between poetry of experience and depersonalization of the poetic self. Luis García Montero solves this conflict in the revealing anthology, *Además*:

apostar por el realismo no significa creer en una copia espontánea de la naturaleza, sino el intento consciente de crear artificios con apariencia de realidad, crear las condiciones para que el lector pueda vivir el poema, reconocerse, identificarse con él (1994: 14).

The question discussed for many decades is solved at a stroke: the sincerity of poetry, the confessional tone adopted in many poems by both, García Montero and Margarit, simply answers to the «artificio estético de la naturalidad» (García, 1994: 11). That is, we should not search beyond the writing to the (auto) biographic self: depersonalization or *escape from personality* works the same way both in the poetry of experience and in the symbolist poetry. Initially considered worthy mentioning statements—Joan Margarit confesses in an interview with Rosa Maria Piñol: “I feel myself increasingly a realistic poet” (2005)—, are now seen after many readings as a part of a poetic that depends as much or as few on the life as the most symbolist poetry. Poetry of experience lends to the literary game of depersonalization too. Hence there was no conflict to solve anymore.

1. Comparative reading: *De Barcelona a l’Illa del Tresor*¹

Crònica is published within the collection *Ocnos* in 1975. Margarit had two previous books, almost impossible to find these days. In the same way other writers did, he started its career writing in Spanish, just adopting (or recovering) later the language always used in his family setting, Catalan. Margarit bilingualism has allowed him to have a wide acceptance in and out our country, gaining recognition from different poets (Luis Antonio de Villena or Luis García Montero, for example). The linguistic change, from Spanish to Catalan, took place in 1980 and if it did not happen earlier it was due to the fact that the Spanish literary tradition was more solid than the one from Catalonia, which is confirmed by Margarit himself in an interview by Zeneida Sardà. Nevertheless, as it is stated by Dolors Oller in *Poesia catalana del segle XX*, it is with Josep Carner and Carles Riba that “entren a la poesia catalana les grans línies de la modernitat poètica” (1986: 89), in reference to symbolism and hermeticism, to the *pure poetry*. With the appearance of new voices like Francesc Parcerisas, Marta Pessarrodona or Antoni Marí, a “poesia absolutament contemporània i de gran estil” (Oller, 1986: 97) would be produced. The matter is noted here in a very superficial way only and deserves a deeper study. This is the moment in which Margarit starts to compose in Catalan and with the publishing of *Llum de pluja*, his own poetry

NOTES

1 | The trajectory I want to outline in this reading and that is pointed in the title of the section, goes from Barcelona, in the poetic recreation of the city made by Joan Margarit, up to the *Treasure Island* the magical settlement where *El primer fríu* is placed.

begins to take a different direction. In any case, *Crónica* can be considered the “millor llibre en castellà de Margarit” (Gràcia, 1994: 98), as hard to find today as the first ones are.

In the prologue to *El primer frío*, Margarit states what follows: “de aquellos años, cualquier poema que no figure aquí preferiría que ya no apareciese nunca más en lugar alguno” (Margarit, 2004: 10). Perhaps that’s why his earliest creations have never been reissued, due to the author’s requirements. To sum up, by any means is interesting to have access to *Crónica* through the recent poetry by Margarit. That book, *Crónica*, has two different sections: the first one, “Barcelona, fin de un estío”, made up of eight poems, and the second one, “Crónica”, with fifty three. In the first one he places the reader in a place from which a *symbolic* travel to the past, to his childhood, is going to be started. And the second one, as it is stated in the eighth poem, which could be just considered a poetic for the book itself, is the chronicle of ten years of silence:

He pasado diez años sin hablar
y ésta es la crónica de aquel silencio:
hileras de palabras en la niebla,
reposado viaje hacia la ausencia.
El cenicero blanco se ha llenado
y las cenizas, grises mariposas,
se extienden por la mesa: ya la noche
ha dejado el pequeño bar vacío.
Salgo a la carretera y en el cielo
la oscuridad es el inmenso techo
sobre el trigal de luz de la ciudad.
Oigo aún el murmullo de mi infancia
con sus rostros de aire entre los árboles,
y, arrancando ramitas de los setos,
regreso lentamente al automóvil
bajo unas melancólicas estrellas,
con una hoja amarga entre los dientes
y un gran buey moribundo en mi memoria.
Reconozco en silencio los recuerdos
que empujan nuestra voz, igual que el viento
hace sonar un órgano en la noche
(1975: 18).

In the first place, we should wonder about the sense of writing a chronicle, a “book in which the events are referred in temporal order”, in verse in this case. A possible answer for this question can be found in the comparative reading between two texts by Carlos Barral —a fragment from *Memorias de infancia* and the poem “Fiesta en la plaza” from *Diecinueve figuras*— made by Pere Ballart in his essay *El contorno del poema*. The differences that brings about the remembrance of an event in prose or in verse are made evident through these two texts, not counting on the fact that “cualquier expresión verbal estiliza y transforma, en cierto sentido,

el acontecimiento que describe” (Jakobson, in Ballart, 2005: 108). That is, the remembrance through the poetic filter becomes *other*, something different. The interesting thing is to point out that prose is a quest for “la exactitud de los acontecimientos” while verse is “la exactitud de la sensación” (Ballart, 2005: 101, 106). Therefore, the medium chosen by Margarit to remember childhood (it is understood, that of a poetic self, which has been fictionalized) is verse and what he is looking for through this is to (re)create an emotion, not to order a series of events or experiences. In fact, the coexistence with Raquel, character that still happens to appear in his verses, is previous to the childhood in the village and, if it was a chronicle in prose made with certain accuracy, such chronological disorder could not be accepted. It is not the passage of time that matters to show here, but the way it keeps stopped within words. Whether he achieves so is a different question.

According to Jordi Gràcia, a poetic of symbolic allusion does not become completely effective to transcend the experience recreated in the verses. It has to be considered too that most of the poems are images from some important place in the memory of this lyrical self.

For example, in the first one, the image of the city of Barcelona is described, as it is outlined while the poetic self goes away by a road. The alternation between natural elements and artificial elements built by the human being employed is significant. From such perspective Barcelona seems to be the ideal city where nature and architecture are mixed:

En esta dulce tarde de septiembre
la Escuela Superior de Arquitectura
es tan sólo un vestíbulo vacío
cruzado suavemente por el sol,
que ya se inclina sobre el horizonte
en las azules pistas de la tarde.
Abro grandes puertas de cristal
y en los grises peldaños de granito
el cielo y sus lejanas transparencias
extienden sobre mí como el naufragio
de una lujosa soledad de antaño.
Arranca lentamente el automóvil
y abandono las anchas avenidas,
asciendo por las calles con jardines
hasta la vieja, amada carretera
de los bosques de pinos y retamas,
con sus lejanas curvas suspendidas
como grandes balcones sin barandas
abiertos a las ocres amplitudes
de la ciudad, que bajo el sol poniente
no parece, lejana, haber cambiado
(2004: 11).

As it can be seen throughout the book, the places recalled by this lyrical voice are numerous: the pub on the hill, the harbour of Barcelona, the train station, the neighbourhood of Sarrià, the Café de la Ópera, las Ramblas, the cemetery, Montjuïc, the Café Vienés, the General Hospital, an inland village, the National School for children,... References to these places are scattered throughout the work and there is no poem not *placed* in some of these spaces. Maybe such insistence does not only stem from the interest of the memory to recreate the space of childhood and experience, but obeys to a poetic quest. The prologue to *El primer frío* says: “Cantamos al propio misterio. Queda por decidir desde dónde cantar, y esa es la búsqueda que cada poeta realiza a su manera [...]. El lugar desde el cual yo lo intento es un lugar en el tiempo” (2004: 12). Such is addressed in the first section of *Crónica*: “Barcelona, fin de un estío”. Therefore, there is an intention to set the lifetime in the rhythm of the verse.

The tone used in *Crónica*, the attitude of the poetic voice towards that is singing to, is perhaps what prevents the experience, the remembrance, to transcend beyond the lyrical recreation itself. Comparing the first books of Margarit with *Edat roja* and *Els motius del llop* (both rewritten in *El primer frío*), Jordi Gràcia points out: “ara encaixa al poema alguna cosa més que la verificació melancòlica de la memòria” (1994: 99). The tone is a nostalgic one, melancholic, pessimistic: “Con qué oscuras urgencias he añorado,/ciudad, tu triste lejanía”, “Recuerdo lejanísimos inviernos,/cuando al alba mi madre se alejaba”². Everything is described in past (using past tenses), recalling this way an irretrievable experience, only drawn through the imprecise outlines of the memory and the nostalgic voice of the lyrical self that appears in every poem of *Crónica*. By contrast, in *El primer frío*, tenses become present, future or conditional. There are also cases of past tenses, but the tone has changed, there is more variety and, if tone is “un problema de sinceridad, de llegar a creérselo, de encontrarle sentido” (García, 1994: 9) —finally, a question of attitude—, there are more probabilities for the experience recalled in the verses to become an occurrence.

RÈQUIEM PER A UN ESPECTRE

He devorat tants anys la meva mort
que avui estic cansat de ser vençut
per la misèria del nostre amor.
Has sortit del passat a pas de llop.
Per què has vingut des del teu mar d'hivern?
No tornis, continua absent i ajuda'm
des d'on ja no et perdré: des de dins meu.
Mai més ningú no em tornarà a jutjar.
La ironia és el seny de la derrota
i jo ja no sóc res a aquest mercat.
(2004: 182)³

NOTES

2 | These verses are extracted from two poems from *Crónica* (Margarit, 1975: 15 y 47).

3 | This poem is extracted from the section *Edat roja*, of the anthology *El primer frío* (2004).

The allusion to two collections of poems by the author himself, in verses 4-5 —*Els motius del llop* (1993) and *Mar d'hivern* (1986) — leads the reader to interpret this poem as a dramatic monologue addressed by the poetic self to himself. Somehow, he wonders why he has been so many years remembering a time in which he cannot live again, a relationship that has just finished in an absolute disillusionment, and urge himself to withdraw from “aquest mercat” (v. 10), from the literary scene. It is just the change of attitude what brings him out, if I may be allowed to use the expression, after «un naufragio poético de más de veinticinco años» (Margarit, 2004: 10), the change of tone, which nowadays is “abrupte o sarcàstic, o tendre, o sentimental, o covard” (Gràcia, 1994: 101) and in very few cases melancholic.

The most important change in the poetry of Margarit, even more than the language, is the tone and the attitude adopted by him regarding to what he is *telling*, as well as his disposition towards the reader. But there is something more that contributes for *El primer frío* to be a memorable book as opposed to *Crónica*. The poems from the last one have an strange (inter)dependence on each other, that is, they are not autonomous poems. There is a number of repeated elements in various poems and, unlike “birds” or “sea”, resignified by Margarit in different books and which can be interpreted in different ways depending on the poem in which they appear; “tea” for example, appearing in *Crónica*, is part of the same lyric sequence. It appears in three poems specifically:

Va quedando a lo lejos el estío
y en el pequeño bar de la colina
una taza de té al atardecer
tiene el sabor antiguo del otoño [...]
(2004: 12).

El sabor áspero del té, que humea
igual que un incensario entre mis manos,
evoca rostros desaparecidos
cuyo pasado es su presencia ahora, [...]
(2004: 13).

Es hermoso el crepúsculo, los pájaros
guardan el silencio entre los grandes pinos:
el tiempo de elegir ya se ha perdido
y en la taza vacía queda ahora
el limón oxidado por el té [...]
(2004: 14).

It is not by chance that this element appears in three consecutive poems from the first part. This is the proof that the book, as *L'ombra de l'altre mar* (1981), is conceived as in a unity; what is more “el conjunt (el poema) resta obert en tant que obra perfectible i, en certa manera, no acomplerta, que el lector pot arrodonir i, segons com,

acabar” (Martí i Pol, 1981: 15). Perhaps this might explain that what is presented as different poems in *Crónica* become stanzas of the same poem in “Restes d’aquell naufragi” from *El primer frío*. In fact, these first verses are collected in a same poem “2 Collserola”. Its first stanza is the previously quoted poem in its integrity, “En esta dulce tarde de septiembre”. Which had been interpreted as an image of Barcelona is actually Collserola. It is impossible for the reader to recognize the places mentioned in *Crónica* because, among other reasons, the poems have no title.

In the prologue for *Aiguaforts* (1995) Margarit states: “Sempre he procurat que el títol —dins la limitació de la seva brevetat— faci referència a un contingut” (s.p.). However, in *Crónica* the poems are not numbered and do not have a title either. Perhaps it could not be possible to make reference to a clear content in each poem, a distinct content I mean, because the book, as we have deduced from the words of Martí i Pol —in the prologue of his book *L’ombra de l’altra mar*—, is conceived as a unity and the poems do not get entire autonomy. It is significant that more than sixty original poems are reduced to four in *El Primer frío*. What is more, the title given to such poems: “1 Últimos ecos”, “2 Collserola”, “3 Cerdeña 548” and “4 Madrid”, as well as their numeration are indicating various things. First, that the searching of a “place in time” from which to write poetry has, in a way, ended. Second, that the project to write a real *Crónica* has been finally reached: poems are chronologically ordered. The exact date of composition is not detailed, but I do not mean that kind of chronology, but to the content of the poems. “1 Últimos ecos” collects as stanzas those poems which in *Crónica* talk about the childhood of the poetic self. “2 Collserola” goes through the image of a cup of tea which smokes until the lemon gets rusted over his relationship with Raquel. “3 Cerdeña 548” is dedicated to the city and recalls the places he frequented in the company of his partner. The last one, “4 Madrid”, speaks about the lonely “noches de hotel, esperas de ascensor”.

In this *Crónica*, re-written twenty years later, everything acquires an order and a new sense. The original book is reduced, many poems are eliminated and many others become —with every of its verses— stanzas of a same unity. The poetic is evidently changed and, with it, the voice, the language, the subjects and the tone of the poet: “S’ha perdut el respecte a la franquesa moral i s’ha rebaixat el valor del lirisme vaporós, si volem inquietant i enigmàtic, a favor de la paraula dita amb propòsits menys endogàmics i més desemascaradors” (Gràcia, 1994: 99). It is lost, as a matter of fact, the conception of the book as a travel through memory, although in a sense, the re-writing of *Crónica* is more appropriated to its title.

In the first composition “1 Últimos ecos”, three poems are re-written,

those from the pages 39, 40 and 41 of *Crónica*. The same operation seen in the poem about Collserola is repeated here again. The fact of converting three stanzas which were taken from three previous poems, consecutively disposed, in a same poem is revealing about the lack of autonomy of the compositions in *Crónica*. For example, the poem in the page 39 said:

Desciende, melancólico, el recuerdo
como la lluvia sobre el mar, y el aire
tiene el olor de un árbol rumoroso,
el inmenso eucaliptus cuya sombra
cubrió los mediodías de mi infancia. (v. 5)
El saco familiar de historias tristes
se abría en cada casa: personajes
que para aquellos niños fueron sólo
un nombre y un dolor en los retratos
explicados en tardes de domingo, (v. 10)
que sin la luz eléctrica acababan
oscurecidas como un gran desván.
Los hombres comenzaban sus trabajos:
con sus gastadas gabardinas
marchaban fatigados a su horario; (v. 15)
nuestra alegría se desparramaba
por todos los solares de los barrios,
entre hierbas y gatos, y silbidos
que se oían lejanos en la noche
mezclándose al llamado de las madres. (v. 20)
(Margarit, 1975: 39).

The lyrical self feels the way “desciende, melancólico, el recuerdo”, redundancy that delves into the general tone of the poems and recalls how he lived in his childhood. He employs an objective correlate to allude to the dead left in the civil war: “el saco familiar de historias tristes”, bag from which many pictures of missing persons are recovered. Beside the pictures, the bag constitutes one of the elements that create such objective correlate. That which could be considered the third part of the poem (vv. 13-20) is simply an image: children playing while adults go work.

In *El primer frío* this poem becomes the first stanza of a longer poem:

Aquella guerra había terminado.
El saco familiar de historias tristes
se abría en cada casa: personajes
que para aquellos niños fueron sólo
un nombre, un dolor vago en los retratos
explicados en tardes de domingo
sin luz eléctrica, que terminaban
oscurecidas como un gran desván.
Nuestra alegría se desparramaba
por todos los solares de los barrios,
entre hierbas y gatos, y silbidos
que se oían lejanos en la noche

mezclándose al llamado de las madres
(2004: 19)

On one hand, the first verses, which show the way the memories reach the poetic self, have been suppressed. Perhaps this is due to the past tense of the poem; besides, as the title indicates, “1 Últimos ecos”, it is evident that a past situation is going to be remembered and, therefore, the five first verses would seem redundant. On the other hand, the verses about workers are eliminated, because the poem does not end here, but has two more stanzas, and in the last one, the paternal figure to which probably the exhausted workers recalled appears. These changes are significant but, even that, they do not reach the poetic height of the last books, *Llum de pluja*, *Aiguaforts*, *Joana* or *Estació de França* —the tone, no matter how many verses are eliminated, still being the same—. Besides, slight differences are observed between these verses:

que para aquellos niños fueron sólo
un nombre y un dolor en los retratos
explicados en tardes de domingo,
que sin la luz eléctrica acababan
oscurecidas como un gran desván.
(*Crónica*, 1975: vv. 8-12)

que para aquellos niños fueron sólo
un nombre, un dolor vago en los
retratos
explicados en tardes de domingo
sin luz eléctrica, que terminaban
oscurecidas como un gran desván.
(*El primer frío*, 2004: vv. 4-8).

It is not about doing a detailed analysis of these differences, which would be more appropriate for a philological study, but to verify that the inclination of the contemporary poet is to eliminate that which is superfluous in his verses. The replacement of the conjunction “y” in verse 9 of the poem of *Crónica* for a comma in the second version does not appear to be an essential change, but the verse is not the same anymore. It forces the reader to stop in the middle of the poem and to notice which is being recalled. This pause changes the reading of the verses—the same change takes place in verse 7 of the second version— and consequently, its understanding. In any way, we can see it in the penultimate verse of the version in *El primer frío*; the closeness of the poems in *Crónica* is lost through the prose.

The comparative reading between the poems of *Crónica* and those re-written in “Restes d’aquell naufragi”, from *El primer frío*, shows up the change in the poetic along the twenty years that have passed from one book to the other. Nevertheless, re-writing cannot assume the change of subject (more amplitude than change), of literary language and poetic language, the ability to use the voice and the variety of poetic tones employed. However in the *de-writing* of *Crónica* this change of poetic is perhaps not entirely evident.

In the poetry written by Margarit in the eighties and nineties decades, also gathered in *El primer frío*, the past is not recalled anymore and

the places of the memory are not frequented either; now it talks about “de la condició tràgica essencial de la vida de l’home, del seu fracàs i del seu desengany” (Gràcia, 1994: 101). Hence Jordi Julià considers the poems by Margarit as “epigrames per al nou mil.leni”, since they are “una observació enginyosa de la realitat quotidiana per tal de desvelar el que de tràgic, profund o etern, es pot arribar a mostrar en els fenòmens de cada dia” (2005: 25). There are many poems that can be read as epiphanies, since they achieve to deautomate the way of looking in the formalist sense of the term. The following poem could be quoted as an example.

POÉTICA

Al ir tras la belleza estarás solo:
Si la encuentras, se desvanece y deja
polvo de mariposa entre los dedos.
Perseguirás de nuevo el resplandor
que sabes dentro de ti, como el relámpago
que muestra fugazmente,
hasta el lejano horizonte, la realidad.
(2004: 195)

Although it shows the passage of time, the failure left by the years, the lie behind human relationships, and in order to fight against all that, it provides a new sense to the closest reality, there is a recurrent place in his verses where dreaming is still possible. In his most recent poetry, Margarit configures a new poetic geography that broadens the possibilities of all those places visited in *Crónica*.

AL LECTOR

Tuyas serán las mujeres que amé
y que nunca he perdido, pese al viento
cruel de los años, y tuyo el enigma
de la isla del tesoro.
Tus ojos serán míos un instante
y, a cambio de dejarte oír en los cristales
la lluvia que ahora escucho, y hacerte cómplice
de mi futuro, que tú podrás conocer,
impedirás que muera y, una tarde,
me dejarás ser tú en otra lluvia.
(2004: 233)

The distance between these verses and those in *Crónica* is enormous. More than a lyric recreation of the landscape or the evocation of an irretrievable past, an imprecise outline of an experience that can be re-signified in each lecture is sketched out. The poetic tone is very different to that we found in the poems of *Crónica*. There is more: the second person pronoun, an empty place with undefined capacity for impletion, allows the reader to feel alluded in those verses. From the very title, the poem is dedicated *to us*. It is interesting to see that the concretion of the places, of the spaces that appear in *Crónica*,

become here in the symbolism of an enigmatic “illa del tesoro”⁴ which can be placed in a different place by each one. By not specifying the place to which it refers, the significant remains empty, and at the same time it is full with the sense we want to give it in each reading.

This new geography shows that Joan Margarit has found a new place in time from which to write his verses. Perhaps the coordinates of such Treasure Island cannot be outlined anywhere, because the image, the utopian space, comes from literature itself and has therefore the entity of a myth. But the simple fact that we discover this space in the limits of a poem makes possible for us to appropriate such place as readers, and end up identifying this utopia with the threshold of the room in which we are.

We would finish this brief commentary on the vast work by Margarit stating that following the *strange* capacity of this island to be *every place*, it deserves to be in the last bookcases of the imaginary library of Borges.

NOTES

4 | The homonymous poem from the book *Edat roja* says: “Mírala en los cristales. Hace tiempo/ que te alejabas porque ya temías/ fondear en el brillante aire sensual/ en el que se aventura tu recuerdo./ Mira por la ventana: sientes la música/ y el olor de café que, hospitalario,/ se extiende por la casa. Pero añoras/ el resplandor brumoso de la costa,/ el silencio de la isla, que ha vuelto,/ peligrosa y abrupta, esta mañana” (2004: 175).

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