

20 Novembre 89

Amic Alan Yates,

m'agradaria que m'enviessis l'edició que heu fet de la primera Historia d'Esther, de l'Espriu. Amb aquesta carta venen un xec (son quatre lliures, oi?) i també un parell de poemes d'en Gabriel Ferrater que vam traduir amb un amic educat aquí a Anglaterra. Em va fer gràcia veure que l'Arthur Terry, entre molts possibles, havia triat precisament un dels nostres, que començen son dos (per ara). Suposo que la diferència fonamental és que vam fer un esforç per a verificar. Les solucions més particulars, per l'altra banda, crec que son discutibles i millorables.

Voldria afegir que la tria de l'homenatge a Joan Bili és

excel·lent, al meu judici, i la intro-
ducció la millor peça de propa-
ganda possible per a la literatura
catalana dels darrers quaranta anys.

Es diria que aquí hi ha hi
ha una tradició.

Desitjo que no et senti ve-
lament que un home prei la
libertat de fer aquests comen-
taris. Et desitjo també sort.

Joan P.

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GABRIEL FERRATER

SOME POEMS FROM *LES DONES I ELS DIES*

(translated from the Catalan by Jose Luis Bermúdez and Joan Pau Rubiés)

HELENA

Twenty today, Helena,
Coming from an unremembered place
eyes before you,
you strive to wrest a single
clean, transparent whole
from the thousand fragments of splintered glass
(one after another)
that are your days
and through which you will watch Time
reveal itself to you,
So delicate, the curve
of the crow, taking wing
to tilt the sky
and bend the trees,
fashioning a new order
from field and evening,
Like him, year after year,
you must slice through blue sky
Time and world,
your gaze fixed upon his flight, Helena,
Long-throated young woman
always laughing upwards
and inclining your body
slightly, to the right,
to the left, and yet now
(for you are twenty)
you can balance yourself
upon the furrows of the world,
and the voices of all that is old
(as I myself am).

LOOKING BACK

Let me flee from here, and go back to your time,
To meet again where we met before,
I can see the white sky, the black
thin iron footbridge, the humble grass
in coal-earth, and I hear the whistle of the express,
The enormous trembling passes near us
and our words are forced into shouts, We give up,
and I laugh in reply to your laughter, because still not hearing,
I see your sky-grey blouse, the dark blue
of the short and ample skirt,
and the big red scarf around your neck,
Your country's flag, I told you,
All so like that day, The words we used
are coming back, And now, you see,
the same bad moment returns, Without reason
we fall silent, Your hand suffers, and moves
like before: a wavy flight,
abandonment, and the game with the sad sound
from the bicycle bell, Lucky for us that now,
as on that other day, heavy steps
pass over us, and the overloud
song of the green men, steel helmeted,
encircles us, and an imperious shout,
like the malignant gold of a snake, rises toward us
unexpected, forcing us to hide our heads
within the deep lap of fear,
until they go, We have already
forgotten ourselves, Happy again
as they draw away, This movement without memory
brings us together,
and we are happy to be here, the two of us,
no matter if we don't speak, We can kiss,
We are young, We feel no piety
for past silences, and fear of others

distracts us from fear of each other,
We walk down the avenue, and beneath each tree
and the dense shadow it casts over us
we are cold, and we travel
from cold to cold, without thinking.