

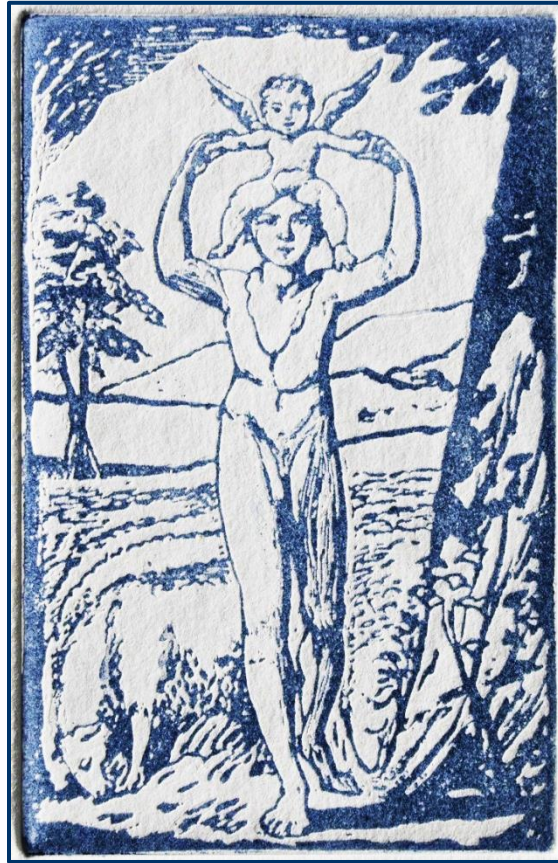


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TRANSLATING POETRY:

A Self-Published Translation of William Blake's

Songs of Experience

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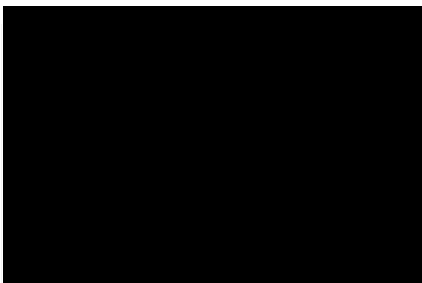
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ABSTRACT

This project is the published version of a bilingual translation of William Blake's *Songs of Experience*, in printed format. It is a self-published edition, that is, the book of translations is translated and published exclusively by the author of this project, without any kind of involvement of an established publisher. It is also an artistic edition: in it, it is emphasized the artistic expression in the bookbinding and the arrangement of the edition. Moreover, the book includes some of William Blake's original engravings. The translations are introduced by a brief preface divided in three parts: an introduction to *Songs of Experience*, a reflection about poetic translation and, finally, a note on other translations of this work, which are commented and compared to the ones of this project.

Key Words: William Blake, *Songs of Experience*, Translation, Self-publishing, Artistic Edition.

RESUMEN

Este proyecto es la publicación de una traducción bilingüe de *Canciones de Experiencia*, el poemario de William Blake, en formato impreso. Es un libro auto-editado, es decir, la edición ha sido traducida y editada exclusivamente por el autor de este proyecto, sin la intervención de ninguna editorial. También es una edición artística: en ella se acentúa la expresión artística de la maquetación y la composición del texto. Además, el libro incluye algunos de los grabados originales de William Blake. Por otro lado, hay un breve prefacio que sirve de introducción a las traducciones. Éste está dividido en tres partes: una introducción a las *Canciones de Experiencia*, una reflexión sobre la traducción poética y, finalmente, una nota sobre las otras traducciones de este poemario, donde se discuten y se comparan con las de este proyecto.

Palabras clave: William Blake, *Canciones de Experiencia*, Traducción, Auto-edición, Edición Artística.

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INTRODUCTION

Without contraries is no progression.

Marriage of Heaven and Hell,

William Blake

In 1794, William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* were bounded in a same volume under the name of *Songs of Innocence and Experience: Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. Although the complete title is no longer used in modern editions, it helps us, the readership, to think on the interdependence of the two opposite states, and also to apprehend that we cannot understand Experience without considering Innocence. This introduction aims to approach the reader to the interaction between the two contrary states, so that he or she may read the translated poems presented in this edition (*Songs of Experience*) under the light of its pair.

It is of William Blake's beliefs that every living being has been formed from an Essential Unity, that is, a common origin where everything coexists in natural harmony. In the act of human creation, the new-born is separated from this Unity and thus bounded to a mortal life. Nevertheless, the human being, during infancy and youth, has not completely lost the purity of the Essential Unity, the original connection with Nature, Love, God and his Angels (Valentí, 1977, p. 28). This communion is what Blake calls the State of Innocence. In the first book of songs, the poet evokes a society where children and youth grow under the care of their protectors (parents, nurses, angels, God and Nature). Together, they hold harmonious relationships with the world, free from any kind of social or moral bond.

"If the *Songs of Innocence* have the shape and smell of leaves or buds" writes the English poet Swinburne, then *Songs of Experience* "have in them the light and sound of fire and sea" (1868, p. 125). The shift from the first book to the second is certainly abrupt: where we first heard melodious songs about children delighting in freedom and joy, now we hear the hoary voiced and captive Earth, "prison'd on watry shore" (Blake, 1794/2014, "Earth's Answer", p. 28), and the weeping cries of children, bounded in iron chains, being burned "where many had been burn'd before" (Blake, 1794/2014, "A Little Boy Lost", p. 40). In *Songs of*

Experience, the children become prisoners of the “mind forg’d manacles” (Blake, 1794/2014, “London”, p. 37) and the youth are ashamed and punished for their acts, as if what in the first book was permitted, in the second were forbidden. The falsehood and hypocrisy that condemn what should remain free is, to Blake, the dramatic loss of Innocence, what Elena Valentí calls “the unavoidable men’s tragedy” (1977, p. 31)¹.

However, Blake’s intention is far from identifying Innocence with Good and Experience with Evil. One contrary state is necessary for the other: they occur simultaneously despite being opposites, and this coexistence, Harold Bloom states, demonstrates that “neither merely negates the other” (1971, p. 33). But what the poet does claim is that experience –beauty, knowledge, maturity- is only reached with imagination, “the authentic cognitive instrument of man” (Valentí, 1977, p. 23). Contrarily, reason is the deceitful vehicle by which men reject imagination and learn “how to entrap and retain such fugitive delights as children and animals enjoy”, living in subjection to their senses which “in their turn, bring the senses into subjection” (Swinburne, 1868, p. 125). In this sense, Blake writes in a letter: “The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way. Some see Nature all ridicule and deformity, and by these I shall not regulate my proportions; and some scarce see Nature at all. But to the eyes of the man of imagination, Nature is Imagination itself” (as cited in Valentí, 1977, p. 23). The state of experience reached through imagination becomes the return of man, now from a mature age, to the lost paradise, to the harmonious relationship with Nature and the Essential Unity. Thus, the tree that stirs the emotions of this man is very different from the man that reaches experience through reason: this other tree is an obstacle without beauty, no more than a senseless object, as it is not a profitable good for men. Blake knows well the self-deception of the latter perspective and through the *Songs of Experience* strives to show the various institutions of reason that deprive youth and children from their innocent delights: politics, religion and education. All of which, as Jordi Turull notes, are considered by the poet “criminal manners of destroying humanity” (1975, p. 9).

William Blake wrote *Songs of Experience* as the missing half of *Songs of Innocence*. Therefore, it is natural that, if we readers desire to read one of them, we may also want to approach the other, in order to experience the complete beauty of the poems.

¹ All citations in Catalan and Spanish have been translated into English by the author of this project.

NOTE ON TRANSLATING POETRY

Regarding the translation of poetry, it is common to say that only those who write verses are able to translate. Perhaps it is too daring to believe in this affirmation as a universal truth, but, considered from a broader perspective, a different meaning arises: that solely those who *understand* can excel at translating poetry. And what is suggested by these last words is neither a subtle eye nor a poetic soul but rather, a closeness between the verses and the translator, carried by the latter to inconceivable extremes.

Fortunately, after several centuries of translation, we modern translators have been left the legacy of many others that have dared to translate. Thus, the modern translator gathers in him/her the knowledge of his/her previous colleagues and is no longer an innocent person lost in the realms of translation.

The national faithfulness is one of the widely known chimeras in the translation of poetry, at least in its most strict sense. The main impediments to a faithful translation are probably the intricacies of changing one language to another. Tone, rhythm, musicality, rhyme, ambiguity, connotations: all of these will never be as present as in the source text. Therefore, the modern translator has to re-elaborate his/her own notion of faithfulness and translation, creating a personal meaning that will gradually become his/her methodology.

The Catalan poet Joan Margarit, in his reflections about translating Thomas Hardy, writes: “a poem speaks from many perspectives, it is a polyhedron with its infinite sides and reflections. It is in this diversity of perspectives where the translator's decisions -not betrayals- take place” (2016, p. 41). All the perspectives and sides of a verse cannot be translated in its entirety: some are to be chosen, some to be left. Hence, the translator decides in favor of certain qualities of the poem; it is the sum of his/her decisions that distinguishes one translation from another. Umberto Eco, in *Experiences in Translation*, also defines translation in a similar sense: an act of negotiation (2009, p. 23). Certain ways, which he calls “licenses”, have to be followed to avoid the obstacles of a language. Then, the final translation is the result of the translator's negotiations, where the reader is offered what the translator has decided to keep for the sake of quality.

In a figurative sense, faithfulness is always to be respected by the translator. All decisions and negotiations have to depart from unyielding honesty both to the poet and to oneself. If not, the translator is in danger to commit “one of the most frequent mistakes in translation” (Margarit, 2016, p. 41): to translate one's own verses instead of the ones written by the poet. Fray Luis de León, in his prologue to his translations of *Song of Solomon*, describes the translator's honesty: “one who translates must be faithful and honest and, if possible, count the words to give others and no more. These must be of the same quality, condition and variety of meanings than the original words”. However, he continues: “the particularities of our tongue force us to add some words. Without them, the meaning would remain unclear” (1580/1994, p. 52). This honesty is one of a complex kind, full of tangled ways. Then, if the translator adds a few words to a verse, in order to clarify what otherwise would be obscure in the target language, would not the original concision be disturbed? Would not the melody or the rhyme be affected? The translator must be aware of the complexity of his task and still be honest in every decision.

Finally, considering the sublime quality, rhythm, fluidity and melody of William Blake's verse, we have tried to remain close to these aspects in the translations of this edition. We have followed every way that we have deemed necessary, always knowing that a dubious decision will always lead to dishonesty with the original poems. In this sense, the translations are inspired by the following words of the poet Joan Vinyoli, written in his Rainer Maria Rilke translations: “I do not approve a licentious translation of any poet, especially of those poets that, in their poetry, speak out things or communicate thoughts that are beyond the poetic expression, which must prevail over everything else” (1984, p. 9).

NOTE ON OTHER TRANSLATIONS OF *SONGS OF EXPERIENCE*

The bilingual translation present in this edition has tried, as far as possible, to respect the poetry of William Blake in *Songs of Experience*. As the title of the book indicates, it is a collection of songs, that is, the poems are lyrical, rhymed and concise, and never use more words than necessary. To maintain these poetic qualities, the musicality of the poems has been adapted to the translation: all decisions have been taken in favour of rhythm, rhyme and

simplicity. And most important, in favour of honesty: the translations have attempted in every moment to give the Spanish-speaking reader the same meaning of William Blake's poems, without licenses or inventions.

The study and comparison of published translations of *Songs of Experience* have been of great help for this project. To see the decisions that each translator takes over one single verse has become a valuable strategy, as each version offers different methodologies. Among the four or five translations of *Songs of Experience* into Spanish, two of them have been thoroughly consulted: the one of Enrique Caracciolo and the one of José Luís Caramés and Santiago González. Also, a translation into Catalan has been consulted, as the particularities of a language different from Spanish offer additional solutions to the obstacles of translation. It is the translation of Toni Turull.

In the first place, Caracciolo's translation stands out for his great command of the Spanish language, which allows him to solve the difficulties of translation in creative ways. The narrative tone, as it is frequent in many translations, is preferred over lyricism. That is to say, tone and meaning prevail, while rhythm and melody disappear. It should be noted that his translations are part of an anthology and thus, although there is a greater knowledge of the author's work, there is a lesser degree of expertise in *Songs of Experience*.

The translation of Caramés & González shows their great interest for the world of the author, his ideas and his own mythology. Knowing very well the particularities of Blake's poetry (unusual system of punctuation, changes in orthography and verbal tenses, etc.), they perform a meticulous effort in adapting them successfully to the Spanish language. Still, as in Caracciolo's translation, Caramés & González attach too much importance to the strict sense of the original verses, thus sacrificing lyricism, giving the impression that what is being read is not a poem, but a translation. Moreover, their repeated use of footnotes may put at risk the reader's freedom of thought, his/her capacity of understanding every poem without more indications than the ones that the author provides.

Finally, Turull's version is the freest and most personal translation of the three works. As he states in his prologue, he also tries to be faithful to the author's lyricism: "About the translation, I only wish to remark that I have tried to reflect the formal simplicity that is characteristic of Blake" (1975, p. 9). However, some of the decisions and licenses of his

translations, although coming from honesty, may put in danger the original meaning of the poems.

We have chosen two examples to illustrate how the translation of our edition solves some problems of the mentioned translations. The first one, from “Earth’s Answer”, seems to be problematic due to the ambiguity of the subject and the polysemy of the verb “bear”:

Can delight, /Chain’d in night, / The virgins of youth and morning bear?

(Blake, 1794/2014, p. 28)

-*Caracciolo*: ¿Puede el deleite, / Encadenado en la noche, / Engendrar las vírgenes de la juventud y la mañana? (Blake, 1794/1987, p. 83)

-*Caramés & González*: ¿Podrán el placer / encadenado en la noche / liberar las vírgenes de la juventud y la mañana?

(Blake, 1794/1999, p. 117)

-*Turull*: ¿Encadenades a la nit / Poden les verges / Del matí de la juventut parir el delit? (Blake, 1794/1975, p. 39)

See that E. Caracciolo understands that the subject of the question is “delight”, while the other translators believe that “The virgins of youth and morning” are the ones who perform the action of “bear[ing]”. Together with the subject ambiguity, the multiplicity of meanings of “bear” also contributes to obscure the clarity of the sentence. Caracciolo thinks on the verb as “give birth” (“engendrar”) just as Turull does (“parir”), but the latter with a different subject; while Caramés & González, considering the same subject as Turull, believe that the verb means “to set free” (“liberar”). This edition has interpreted these verses in the light of other similar questions that the author raises in his poems. “Does spring hide its joy / When buds and blossoms grow?” (Blake, 1794/2014, “Earth’s Answer”, p. 28) or “How can the bird that is born for joy, / sit in a cage and sing” (Blake, 1794/2014, “The Schoolboy, p. 42”), as the verse in the previous example, pose a rhetorical question. Of the three given translations, this is only seen in Caracciolo’s version, where he is faithful to the inquiring

tone of the question. Our edition also assigns the subject to the “virgins of youth and morning”, but the meaning of “bear” has been interpreted as “to tolerate, to allow”. Hence, the resulting translation is a rhetorical question, where the narrator inquires if delight, limited only to night-time, can be allowed by the virgins: “¿Es el placer / encadenado a la noche / para las vírgenes del alba y juventud?” This example suggests that a misunderstanding of a translator for a particular verse may impair the reader’s comprehension of the whole poem. A misinterpretation of a verse not only leads to a loss of the original meaning, but also to a lack of clarity in the actual translation, as if the translator’s doubts about the meaning of the poem had also been translated.

The other example, from “The Little Vagabond”, is related to a lack of research. These are the translations:

“And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at Church,” (Blake, 1794/2014, p. 37)

-*Caracciolo*: “Y la recatada dama Borrachera, que siempre está en la Iglesia,”
(Blake, 1794/1987, p. 109)

-*Caramés & González*: “y la callada señora Tambaleo, que siempre está en la Iglesia,” (Blake, 1794/1999, p. 143)

-*Turull*: “La modesta Na Rut, que sempre és a l’Església,” (Blake, 1794/1975, p. 56)

Note that “modest Dame Lurch” is a teacher from a dame school, a kind of private elementary schools where children were taught by women. While the English reader may be familiar with this kind of school, the Spanish one is not, as dame schools only existed in English-speaking countries. Therefore, the Spanish translation should be aware of this trouble, for if this verse is not comprehended, the following verse “Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch” (Blake, 1794/2014, p. 37) will be obscure. None of the translations suggest that Dame Lurch is the teacher of the children but rather, one woman who happens to be at Church and that behaves badly with children, thus eliminating Blake’s critique about the

harsh educational system in England. The translation of our edition omits –negotiates- the nickname “Lurch” and substitutes it for “Maestra”, a Spanish equivalent for “teacher”: “y la buena Maestra, fiel a la Iglesia,”. This omission of “Lurch” is not only motivated by the sake of clarity, but also by the rhythm and concision of the original verse, which this translation tries to imitate. Again, this example, as the previous one, also illustrates the complexity of the translator’s job. Every verse of every poem must be crystal clear for the one who translates. If not, will the translator be honest in his/her work?

Consulting the work of different translators may be an essential part of the translating process. One mostly learns from their successes, not from a few errors. In the end, the comparison of different works helps to reflect on one’s own ideas about translation, which should be held in constant revision by the translator. The version here presented may assimilate some strategies of other translators, but still needs time and care to improve. Rather than closing the process of this translation, we have decided to leave it open, so any future reader will be free to suggest new ideas, new strategies that will help the improvement of this edition.

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SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

CANCIONES DE EXPERIENCIA

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Introduction

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll.
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watery shore
Is giv'n thee till the break of day.

Introducción

¡Escucha la voz del Bardo!
Él contempla Presente, Pasado y Futuro
y a sus oídos llega
la Palabra Sagrada,
que entre árboles antiguos caminaba.

Invocando el alma extraviada
y llorando en el rocío del ocaso:
así podría dirigir
el polo estrellado
¡y renovar la caída luz!

¡Tierra, oh Tierra, regresa!
Álzate de la hierba rociada;
la noche envejece
y el alba
despunta en la soñolienta masa.

No te apartes más:
¿por qué lo harías?
El suelo estrellado
la orilla bañada
se te conceden hasta que rompa el día.

Earth's Answer

Earth rais'd up her head,
From the darkness dread & drear.
Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks cover'd with grey despair.

Prison'd on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the Father of the ancient men

Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chain'd in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear.

Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower?
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darkness plow?

Break this heavy chain,
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bondage bound.

Respuesta de la Tierra

La Tierra alzó su cabeza
de la oscuridad siniestra y triste.
Su luz huyó:
¡pétreo terror!
y sus bucles cubrió la gris desesperación.

Cautiva en la orilla bañada
la Envidia Estrellada guarda mi caverna
fría y helada
llorando
oigo al Padre del hombre de antaño.

Padre egoísta de los hombres
miedo cruel, celoso, egoísta
¿es el placer
encadenado a la noche
para las vírgenes del alba y juventud?

¿Acaso la primavera esconde su alegría
cuando brotan flores de sus capullos?
¿Acaso el sembrador
siembra de noche?
¿O el labrador ara en la oscuridad?

Destruye esta pesada cadena
que congela todos mis huesos
¡Egoísta! ¡Vanidoso!
¡Eterna ruina!
Que al libre Amor sometes a tu yugo.

The Clod & the Pebble

Love seeketh not Itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.

So sang a little Clod of Clay,
Trodden with the cattles feet:
But a Pebble of the brook,
Warbled out these metres meet:

Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to Its delight,
Joys in anothers loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.

Holy Thursday

Is this a holy thing to see,
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reduced to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine.
And their fields are bleak & bare.
And their ways are fill'd with thorns.
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,
And where-e'er the rain does fall:
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appall.

El Terrón y el Guijarro

El Amor no anhela complacerse,
ni guarda para sí ningún desvelo;
mas por el prójimo renuncia al sosiego,
y hace un Cielo del ruinoso Infierno.

Así cantó el Terroncillo de Barro,
trillado por las patas del ganado;
mas un Guijarro del arroyo
gorjeó estos versos adecuados:

El Amor sólo anhela complacerse,
atar al prójimo a Su propio deleite;
goza si otros pierden el sosiego
y hace un Infierno a costa del Cielo.

Jueves Santo

¿Es una imagen sagrada,
en la próspera y rica tierra,
críos reducidos a la miseria
por una mano fría y usurera?

¿Ese trémulo grito es una canción?
¿Podría ser una canción de dicha?
¿Y tantos niños pobres?
¡Es una tierra de pobreza!

Y sus soles nunca brillan.
Y sus campos son lóbregos y secos.
Y sus caminos llenos de espinas.
Es allí eterno invierno.

Pues allá donde el sol brille,
y allá donde la lluvia caiga,
el crío no pasa hambre,
ni la pobreza la mente espanta.

The Little Girl Lost

In futurity
I prophetic see,
That the earth from sleep,
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek:
And the desert wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summers prime,
Never fades away;
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told,
She had wandered long,
Hearing wild birds song.

Sweet sleep come to me
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother weep.-
Where can Lyca sleep.

Lost in desert wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep,
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ache,
The let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning frowning night,
O'er this desert bright,
Let thy moon arise,
While I close my eyes.

La Niña Perdida

En tiempos futuros
veo en la profecía,
que la Tierra de su sueño
(graba bien esta oración)

se alzaré y buscaré
a su dócil creador:
y el desierto salvaje
será jardín afable.

En un país austral,
donde el esplendor estival
nunca se desvanece,
yace la dulce Lyca.

Siete veranos, decían,
la dulce Lyca tenía.
Había paseado largamente,
escuchando los pájaros silvestres.

Dulce sueño ven a mí
a la sombra de este árbol.
Padre y madre lloran.
Y Lyca, ¿dónde dormirá?

En el desierto salvaje, perdida,
está vuestra pequeña niña.
Y Lyca ¿cómo reposa,
si su madre llora?

Si su corazón sufre,
haz que Lyca despierte;
si mi madre duerme,
Lyca no llorará.

Grave grave noche,
sobre el desierto luminoso,
haz que tu luna se alce,
mientras yo cierro mis ojos.

Sleeping Lyca lay;
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
View'd the maid asleep

The kingly lion stood
And the virgin view'd,
Then he gambold round
O'er the hallowd ground;

Leopards, tygers play,
Round her as she lay;
While the lion old,
Bow'd his mane of gold.

And her bosom lick,
And upon her neck,
From his eyes of flame,
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness,
Loos'd her slender dress,
And naked they convey'd
To caves the sleeping maid.

Duerme y reposa Lyca;
los depredadores, entretanto,
surgieron de profundas cavernas
y hallaron la doncella dormida.

Se detuvo el regio león,
y cuando la virgen descubrió,
se puso a retozar
sobre la tierra sagrada.

Jugaban tigres y leopardos,
en torno a ella dormida;
entonces, el viejo león
inclinó su melena bruñida.

Y el pecho de ella lamió,
y sobre su cuello cayeron,
de sus ojos en llamas,
rubíes en forma de lágrimas;

Mientras tanto, la leona
soltó su apretado vestido,
y desnuda la doncella,
llevaron a las cuevas.

The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe,
Lyca's parents go:
Over vallies deep,
While the desarts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,
Hoarse with making moan:
Arm in arm seven days,
They trac'd the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep,
Among shadows deep:
And dream they see their child
Starv'd in desert wild.

Pale thro' pathless ways
The fancied image strays,
Famish'd, weeping, weak
With hollow piteous shriek

Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest,
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore,
Her arm'd with sorrow sore;
Till before their way,
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane,
Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalk'd around,

Smelling to his prey.
But their fears allay,
When he licks their hands;
And silent by them stands.

La Niña Encontrada

Toda la noche en pena,
los padres de Lyca
van cruzando vastos valles,
bajo el llanto del desierto.

Cansados y afligidos,
raucos de sollozar;
siete días abrazados,
trazan las sendas del desierto.

Duermen siete noches
entre hondas tinieblas:
en sueños ven su niña
en el desierto hambrienta.

Pálida, por lugares sin camino
se aleja la imagen soñada;
débil, famélica, llorosa,
de hueca angustia clama.

Al despertar de la pesadilla,
se apresura la mujer temblorosa
con pies de pesada congoja;
más no puede caminar.

Él la lleva en sus brazos
cargando su triste dolor,
hasta que enfrente del camino
yace reposando un león.

Vano sería escapar;
pues su pesada melena
los arroja al suelo,
y empieza a merodear

olisqueando su presa;
mas sus miedos de disipan
cuando lame sus manos
y ante ellos en silencio queda.

They look upon his eyes
Fill'd with deep surprise:
And wondering behold,
A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown
On his shoulders down,
Flow'd his golden hair.
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed
Where the vision led:
And saw their sleeping child,
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell
Nor fear the wolvis howl,
Nor the lions growl.

Contemplan sus ojos
con profundo asombro:
y descubren maravillados
un espíritu revestido en oro.

Y una corona en su cabeza
y sobre sus hombros, en cascada,
cae la cabellera dorada.
Ya no les preocupa nada.

«Seguidme» dice él,
«no lloréis más por la doncella;
en la hondura de mi palacio
yace Lyca dormida».

Entonces fueron
a donde guiaba la visión
y vieron su niña durmiendo
entre tigres salvajes.

Hoy habitan todavía
el valle solitario;
y no temen el aullido del lobo,
ni el rugido del león.

The Chimney Sweeper

A little black thing among the snow:
Crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!
Where are thy father & mother? say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

Nurses Song

When the voices of children, are heard on the green
And whispings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise
Your spring & your day, are wasted in play
And your winter and night in disguise.

El Deshollinador

Una cosita negra entre la nieve:
«¡'Ollinador!» grita, en notas de dolor.
Dime, y tus padres, ¿dónde están?
Ambos han ido a la iglesia a rezar.

Porque yo era feliz entre la maleza
y sonreía en la nieve invernal,
me vistieron con ropas de muerte
y notas de pena me hicieron cantar.

Y como alegre canto y bailo,
creen que no me han hecho daño;
y a Dios y al Cura y al Rey alaban,
que hacen un cielo de nuestro mal.

Canción del Aya

Cuando las voces de los niños se escuchan en los prados
y van los susurros por los valles,
los días de mi juventud emergen en mi mente claros:
mi rostro se tiñe de verde pálido.

Venid a casa, mis niños, el sol ya se pone
y llega el rocío de la noche;
en juegos, perdéis vuestra primavera y jornada,
y vuestro invierno y noche, en máscaras.

The Sick Rose

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The Fly

Little Fly
Thy summers play,
My thoughtless hand
Has brush'd away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink & sing:
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength & breath:
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live,
Or if I die.

La Rosa Enferma

Oh Rosa, estás enferma.
El gusano invisible,
que vuela de noche
en la aullante tormenta,

ha encontrado tu lecho
de gozo escarlata:
y su oscuro amor secreto
con tu vida acaba.

La Mosca

Pequeña mosca,
tus juegos veraniegos,
mi ingenua mano
ha rechazado.

¿No soy yo,
una mosca como tú?
¿O no eres tú
un hombre como yo?

Porque yo bebo
y canto y bailo
hasta que una ciega mano
acabe con mi vuelo.

Si la razón es vida
y fuerza y aliento,
y la falta de razón
es muerte;

entonces yo soy
una dichosa mosca,
tanto si vivo,
como si muero.

The Angel

I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe, was neer beguil'd!

And I wept both night and day
And he wip'd my tears away
And I wept both day and night
And hid from him my hearts delight

So he took his wings and fled:
Then the morn blush'd rosy red:
I dried my tears & armed my fears
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again;
I was arm'd, he came in vain:
For the time of youth was fled
And grey hairs were on my head.

El Ángel

¡Soné un sueño! ¿Qué pudo ser?
Era yo una Reina virgen
y un buen Ángel me guardaba:
¡mas al necio dolor no pude engañar!

Y lloraba de noche y de día
y él mis lágrimas enjugó.
Y lloraba de día y de noche
ocultando mi feliz corazón.

Así que alzó el vuelo y huyó
en el alba sonrojada.
Sequé mis lágrimas, armé mis miedos
con mil escudos y lanzas.

Pronto mi Ángel vino de nuevo;
estaba armada, vino para nada:
la juventud se había fugado
y ya mi cabeza cubrían las canas.

The Tyger

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

El Tigre

Tigre, Tigre, ardiente Tigre,
reluces en las selvas de la noche;
¿qué mano, qué ojo immortal
trazó tu osada simetría?

¿En qué cielo o lejano abismo
ardió el fuego de tu mirada?
¿Con qué alas alzó el vuelo?
¿Con qué mano tomó la llama?

¿Qué fuerza, qué arte
trenzó los nervios de tu corazón?
Y cuando tus latidos arrancaron
¿qué terrible pie, qué terrible mano?

¿Qué maza, qué cadena?
¿En qué fragua nació tu conciencia?
¿Qué yunque, qué terrible brazo
osó abrazar su terror mortal?

Cuando los astros arrojaron sus lanzas
y rocíaron el cielo con lágrimas,
¿al contemplar su obra sonrió?
¿Fue el que hizo al Cordero tu mismo creador?

Tigre, Tigre, ardiente Tigre,
reluces en las selvas de la noche;
¿qué mano, qué ojo immortal
pudo trazar tu osada simetría?

My Pretty Rose Tree

A flower was offered to me;
Such a flower as May never bore.
But I said I've a Pretty Rose tree:
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree;
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turnd away with jealousy:
And her thorns were my only delight.

Ah! Sun-flower

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the Sun:
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire,
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

The Lilly

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:
The humble Sheep, a threatning horn:
While the Lilly white, shall in Love delight,
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

Mi Bello Rosal

Una flor se me ofreció,
una flor como nunca brindó mayo.
Pero dije: «¡yo tengo un Bello Rosal!»
y la dulce flor dejé de lado.

Entonces fui a mi Bello Rosal
para atenderlo de noche y de día;
mas celosa, mi Rosa se apartó:
y obtuve sólo el placer de sus espinas.

¡Oh! Girasol

¡Oh Girasol!, hastiado del tiempo,
que sigues los pasos del Sol:
buscando esa tierra suave y dorada
donde el viajero termina su jornada.

Donde la Juventud candente fallecida
y la blanca Virgen que la nieve cubrió,
aspiran, saliendo de sus tumbas,
la tierra que anhela mi Girasol.

El Lirio

La tímida Rosa muestra su espina,
la Oveja humilde, su peligrosa asta;
mas el blanco Lirio el Amor celebra:
ni cuernos ni espinas su belleza manchan.

The Garden of Love

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not, writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

The Little Vagabond

Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm;
Besides I can tell where I am use'd well,
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale.
And a pleasant fire, our souls to regale;
We'd sing and we'd pray, all the live-long day;
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray,

Then the Parson might preach & drink & sing.
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring:
And modest dame Lurch, who is always at Church,
Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch.

And God like a father rejoicing to see,
His children as pleasant and happy as he:
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barrel
But kiss him & give him both drink and apparel.

El Jardín del Amor

Fui al Jardín del Amor
y vi lo que no vi jamás:
una Capilla elevada en el centro
de la hierba en que solía jugar.

Y sus puertas estaban selladas,
y «No lo harás» grabado en la entrada;
me volví hacia el Jardín del Amor,
que tan bellas flores me dio.

Y lo vi repleto de tumbas
y de lápidas donde flores brotaban,
y rondaban los Curas de negro,
enzarzando mis dichas y anhelos.

El Pequeño Vagabundo

Querida Madre, la Iglesia está helada,
mas la Taverna es limpia y cálida y grata;
y puedo decirte donde mejor me tratan,
tal trato en el cielo nunca se da.

Si en la Iglesia nos dieran Cerveza
y animaran nuestras almas con hogueras,
estaríamos siempre cantando y rezando:
la Iglesia no osaríamos dejar.

El Cura podría orar, beber y cantar
y seríamos como aves en primavera;
y la buena Maestra, fiel a la Iglesia,
no azotaría ni dejaría sin merienda.

Y Dios sería un padre feliz
al ver sus niños alegres como él;
y ya no reñiría con Barril o el Diablo:
le daría vino, ropa y abrazos.

London

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

Londres

Vago sin fin por calles sumisas,
junto a la orilla del sumiso Támesis,
y descubro en cada rostro que encuentro
huellas de fatiga y de tormento.

En cada grito Humano,
en cada grito de Niño asustado,
en cada voz, en cada prohibición,
siento las cadenas de la razón.

Y cómo el grito del Deshollinador
consterna la sombría Iglesia,
y cómo el jadeo del triste Soldado
ensangrienta los muros del Palacio.

Pero lo que más siento en las calles nocturnas
es la maldición de la joven Prostituta,
que condena el llanto de las Criaturas
y arruina los Novios en la fúnebre carroza.

The Human Abstract

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody Poor:
And Mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace;
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears:
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the Catterpillar and Fly,
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the Raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain.

La Esencia del Humano

No existiría la Piedad,
si no sembráramos Pobreza en los demás;
y no habría Misericordia,
si fuéramos felices por igual;

y el miedo compartido trae la paz,
que hace al amor egoísta madurar.
Entonces la Crueldad, con un lazo,
prepara su trampa con cuidado.

Él se arrodilla con miedos sagrados
y rocía la tierra con su llanto:
entonces puede la Humildad
bajo sus pies arraigar.

Pronto crece la sombra funesta
del Misterio sobre su cabeza;
y tanto la Oruga como la Mosca,
se alimentan de sus hojas.

Así nace la fruta del Engaño,
rojiza y dulce al paladar;
y el Cuervo, su nido ha preparado,
en la más frondosa oscuridad.

Los Dioses del mar y la tierra
buscaron este Árbol en la Naturaleza;
mas su búsqueda fue vana:
crece uno en la Mente Humana.

Infant Sorrow

My mother groand! my father wept.
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud;
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my fathers hands:
Striving against my swadling bands:
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mothers breast.

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.

La Pena del Recién Nacido

¡Mi madre gimió! Mi padre lloró.
Llegué a un mundo amenazador:
débil, desnudo, cantando a gritos;
como un demonio oculto en las nubes.

Pugnando en las manos de mi padre
por deshacer las bandas de mis pañales:
atado, abatido, creí mejor resignarme
y hundirme en el seno de mi madre.

Un Árbol Venenoso

Me enfadé con mi amigo:
lo conté, mi enfado acabó.
Me enfadé con mi enemigo:
lo guardé, mi enfado creció.

Y lo rocié de noche y de día
con lágrimas y temores;
y lo soleé con sonrisas
y con dulces falsas palabras.

Y creciendo de día y de noche,
me dio una manzana dorada.
Brillante, la vio mi enemigo
y supo que era mi manzana.

Y en mi jardín entró sigiloso,
cuando el polo estaba velado;
por la mañana veo complacido
que bajo el árbol yace mi enemigo.

The Little Boy Lost

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to Thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you,
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child.
In trembling zeal he seiz'd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admir'd the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,
Lo what a fiend is here! said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard.
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They strip'd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain.

And burn'd him in a holy place,
Where many had been burn'd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore.

Un Niño Perdido

No se ama ni adora al prójimo
más que a uno mismo.
Ni puede imaginar el Pensamiento
algo mejor que él.

Padre, más no puedo amaros,
a ti o a mis hermanos:
os amo como el pequeño pájaro
que recoge las migas que dejamos.

El Sacerdote oyó al muchacho.
Asió sus cabellos temblando,
lo arrastró de su pequeño abrigo
y todos admiraron el Piadoso acto.

Y lo llevó al altar gritando:
«¡Mirad este diablo!
Él juzga con la razón
nuestro Misterio más Sagrado».

El llanto del niño no fue escuchado.
Lloraron los padres, lloraron en vano.
Y vestido con su pequeña camisa,
con cadenas de hierro lo ataron.

Lo quemaron en un lugar sagrado,
donde tantos habían sido quemados:
lloraron los padres, lloraron en vano.
¿En Albión se cometen tales actos?

A Little Girl Lost

*Children of the future Age,
Reading this indignant page:
Know that in a former time,
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.*

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winters cold:
Youth and maiden bright,
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair
Fill'd with softest care:
Met in garden bright,
Where the holy light,
Had just removed the curtains of the night.

There in rising day,
On the grass they play:
Parents were afar:
Strangers came not near:
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet
They agree to meet,
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heavens deep;
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright:
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal care!
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair

Una Niña Perdida

*Niños del Futuro,
sí leéis esta página agraviada,
sabréis que en tiempos pasados
el Amor ¡el dulce Amor! creían pecado.*

En la Edad de Oro,
libres del frío invernal,
jóvenes y doncellas,
a la luz sagrada,
juegan desnudos en los rayos de sol.

Hubo una joven pareja
que, con delicada cautela,
entró en el jardín resplandeciente
cuando la luz sagrada
descubría el manto de la noche.

En el alba rosada,
jugaban tumbados sobre la hierba:
allí no había padres,
ni tampoco extraños:
pronto la doncella olvidó su reserva.

Cansados tras dulces besos,
acordaron reunirse a la hora
en que el silencioso sueño
ondea en el océano celeste;
y llora el vagabundo extraviado.

A su padre anciano
fue la doncella radiante;
mas su tierna mirada,
como el libro sagrado,
estremeció su cuerpo virginal.

«¡Ona! ¡Pálida y frágil!
Habla con tu padre:
¡Ay, el trémulo espanto!
¡Ay, la cautela funesta!
que sacude las flores de mi cabello cano».

To Tirzah

Whate'er is Born of Mortal Birth,
Must be consumed with the Earth
To rise from Generation free;
Then what have I to do with thee?

The Sexes sprung from Shame & Pride
Blow'd in the morn: in evening died
But Mercy changd Death into Sleep;
The Sexes rose to work & weep.

Thou Mother of my Mortal part.
With cruelty didst mould my Heart.
And with false self-deceiving tears,
Didst bind my Nostrils Eyes & Ears.

Didst close my Tongue in senseless clay
And me to Mortal Life betray:
The Death of Jesus set me free,
Then what have I to do with thee?

[It is Raised
A Spiritual Body]

A Tirzah

Todo el que Nace de Parto Mortal
ha de consumirse con la Tierra
para desligarse de su Concepción.
Dime, ¿qué tengo yo que ver contigo?

Los Sexos brotaron de la Vergüenza y el Orgullo:
despuntaron con el alba, expiraron en la tarde,
mas la Piedad transformó la Muerte en Sueño;
los Sexos se irguieron para el trabajo y el llanto.

Oh Madre de mi parte Mortal,
moldeaste mi corazón con crueldad
y con tus falsas lágrimas,
ataste mi Olfato, Oído y Mirada.

Sellaste mis Labios con la inútil Arcilla
y me abandonaste a la Vida Mortal;
la Muerte de Cristo me liberó.
Dime, ¿qué tengo yo que ver contigo?

[Renace
Un Cuerpo Espiritual]

The School-Boy

I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn,
The little ones spend the day,
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,
And spend many an anxious hour.
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learning's bower,
Worn thro' with dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy,
But droop his tender wing,
And forget his youthful spring.

O! father & mother if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away,
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and cares dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy.
Or the summer fruits appear,
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year,
When the blasts of winter appear.

El Colegial

Me agrada levantarme en las mañanas de verano
cuando canta un pájaro en cada árbol,
el cazador sopla su cuerno en la lejanía
y con la alondra entonamos melodías.
¡Oh, qué dulce compañía!

Mas ir a la escuela en mañanas veraniegas
¡oh, espanta mi alegría!
Bajo la decrepita mirada,
los niños pasan sus días
suspirando con melancolía.

Y me dejo caer en la silla
y paso las horas con angustia.
No encuentro placer en mis lecturas,
ni en los caminos de la enseñanza,
desgastado por tanta desgracia.

¿Qué hace el pájaro, nacido para la dicha,
cantando sentado en una jaula?
¿Qué hace el niño que aborrece el hastío?
Deja caer sus delicadas alas
y olvida su joven primavera.

¡Oh! padre, madre, si siegan los capullos
y se llevan las flores
y arrancan los brotes tiernos
el día de su nacimiento,
la fatiga y el tormento,

¿cómo se alzarán el verano con alegría,
o brindarán sus frutos veraniegos?
¿cómo cogeremos lo que destruyen las penas,
o bendeciremos las futuras cosechas
cuando el frío invierno aparezca?

The Voice of the Ancient Bard

Youth of delight come hither:
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teasing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led.

La Voz del Antiguo Bardo

Acércate, juventud del placer
y contempla cómo se alza el día,
imagen de verdad renacida.
Se despeja la duda y las nubes de la razón,
el turbio engaño y la sombría discusión.
La locura es un eterno laberinto,
raíces enmarañadas confunden sus caminos:
¡cuántos allí se han perdido!
Tropiezan cada noche con los huesos de los caídos
y creen conocer la generosidad
guiando a los demás; mas a ellos habría que guiar.