

ENCONTRE

A Stephen Spender

*Cinquanta anys després,
un matí assolellat de juny,
va suggerir de quedar a l'entrada
del museu d'Art Romànic, a Barcelona
("the most magnificent collection
of what is called Romanesque Art",
deia, entusiasta, al seu amic Christopher
en una carta de l'abril del 36),
d'hora, cap a quarts d'onze,
pero l'avió, ja se sap, va retardar-se.
Mentre l'esperava vaig rellegir
algun dels seus poemes:
travessen tota una vida, em deia,
lentament, cada cop més lentament,
com un ample riu que tot ho abarca
sense violències:
la guerra dels uns, la dels altres,
les petites conteses particulars,
records de països i encontres llunyans...*

*Passejàrem després entre frescos antics
de remotíssimes esglésies pirinenques
—rics de colors, potents,
agosarats sense saber-ho—,
en comentàrem algun detall,
i, en sortir, mirant-lo i escoltant-lo
—la seva alta figura lleument encorbada
pels anys i els records—,
no vaig poder sinó agrair, dins meu,
intensament,
la vida que s'allarga,
els destins que s'encreuen,
les coses que queden.*

MEETING*For Stephen Spender*

*Fifty years later
on a sunny morning in June,
he suggested a meeting at the entrance
of the Museum of Romanesque Art, in Barcelona
("the most magnificent collection
of what is called Romanesque Art",
he enthusiastically told his friend Christopher
in a letter dated April '36),
early, around ten-thirty,
but the plane, of course, was late.
While I was waiting for him
I re-read some of his poems:
traversing a whole life, I thought,
slowly, more and more slowly,
like a wide river which embraces everything
without violence:
the wars of some, the wars of others,
the small private battles,
memories of countries and distant meetings...*

*Afterwards we walked among old frescoes
from remote Pyrenean churches
—rich in colour, powerful,
daring without knowing it—
discussing some of their details,
and, as we left, looking at him and listening to him
—his tall figure slightly bent
by years and memories—
I could not help but be intensely grateful
within myself
for life which persists,
destinies which cross,
things that remain.*

EL VENT DE L'ILLA (MENORCA)

A Gerard Gormezano

*Pentina el vent tota l'illa,
insistentement vincla els arbres,
bat els penya-segats i assota els homes,
amb fúria s'endu la grava,
la pols dels dies,
i sembla que mai no hagi de cessar el seu esforç.
Cada cara duu l'empremta del seu pas,
cada camp, cada camí, cada pedra,
tot ho ha esmolat la seva mà,
fins la pell i l'escorça de tota cosa nada,
res no pot amagar el seu garfi omnipotent.*

*Però els qui l'habitarem mai no sabrem
quina estranya llei ha comandat els seus embats:
com l'amor, el vent serà sempre un desconegut
que dins nostre s'esminyirà quan així ho vulgui,
amb la força inalienable de certes paraules o llampecs.*

THE ISLAND WIND (MINORCA)

For Gerard Gormezano

*The wind combs the whole island,
insistently bends trees,
beats cliffs and whips men,
with fury carries away gravel,
the dust of days,
and it seems that its efforts will never cease.
Every face bears the imprint of its passing,
each field, each path, each stone,
everything sharpened by its hand,
even the skin and the bark of every born thing,
nothing can hide from its omnipotent claw.*

*But those of us who live in it never know
what unknown law has determined its batterings:
like love, the wind is always a stranger
who steals into our selves whenever it likes
with the incredible force of certain words or lightning.*