

## Reflections in Time

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Schopenhauer begins his book *On the Suffering of the World*<sup>ii</sup> by observing that misfortune seems to be the rule of our lives. The inevitability of our fate, the repetition of human tragedies. Loss. Courage in the face of the ineluctable, of what awaits us in one way or another, seems strange.

To think, then, of time, not as something that passes, but as those events that we will not see and that will happen, in losses in which we will not be present. "Las canciones que nunca cantarás (The songs you will never sing)", in verse by José Agustín Goytisolo<sup>iii</sup>. How many years after the disappearance, when the children are already old (if all goes well), they remember their parents and how. The poem by Antonio Machado: "En el tiempo. 1882-1890-1892. Mi padre (In time. 1882-1890-1892. My father)."<sup>iv</sup> And the children later. In any case, in memory, people remain anchored in time, and yet we continue to generate the same perception or experience. The father, the mother, will always appear the same, they will be the same even when we have reached an older age. The feeling will remain. There is something strange in this, and it implies the deepest identity that each of us has. That is, of human experiences as facts which are irretrievable because they are not possible, which would correspond by right, but which life stubbornly and irreducibly denies.

So, some thoughts and some poems, a bit random. Firstly, about the absolute courage with which we live in this fast pace that we have in this world. As beings that we know will cease to exist, we maintain a life that we give personal meaning, a purpose. " Un día llegaste/ un día morirás (Some day you came/ some day you'll die)", wrote Cesare Pavese<sup>v</sup>. But above all, nostalgia and tenderness. Luis Cernuda: " "Quizá mis lentos ojos no verán más el sur (Perhaps my slow eyes will no longer see the South)"<sup>vi</sup>. Carver's poem<sup>vii</sup>: As if we understood each other, but it doesn't matter... How is it possible to feel towards the past, which is already certain (though not in our imaginary reconstruction), and towards the future, which is possible but will happen?

There is something terrible in reality. In a person who watches the night sky, the distant stars, indifferent but beautiful, and, like so many before and since, relives the sensation felt with Khayyam's poem<sup>viii</sup> "¿Mañana?... Tal vez mañana yo mismo perteneceré a los siete mil años del Ayer (Tomorrow'? .... Perhaps tomorrow I myself will belong to the seven thousand years of Yesterday)."

Yet there is something great in being able to live for a while, to feel and perceive. In the bittersweet taste of liquorice, in the shiver of the cold night breeze, in the chiaroscuro of

the curtains fluttering in the moonlight, in the fire in the middle of the night, in the frozen dawn in the middle of the meadow breathing with nature, in the birth and meeting of mother and child, ... Passing moments that are lost, but which are passionate, real. Yes, I think that pain is present and repeated, but also that we are surrounded by the pleasure of feeling and sharing, even if we are not sure that we are understood (or are sure that we are not). What is writing if not another way of trying?

It is strange that we are born crying and we die crying, that we react to the beginning and the end in the same way. Also that intense laughter makes us weep with uncontrollable tears.

How can we not be surprised by every event, every experience, every memory in the fleeting time in which we live?

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<sup>ii</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer. *Los dolores del mundo*. Madrid: Sequitur, 2020. Originally published in 1850.

<sup>iii</sup> José Agustín Goytisolo. *Woman of Death*. In *Poesía*, Libro El Retorno. Madrid: Cátedra, 2009.

<sup>iv</sup> Antonio Machado. *Poesías completas*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1975. Prologue by Manuel Alvar. Poem of 13 March 1916.

<sup>v</sup> Cesare Pavese. *Last blues, to be read some day*. In *Vendrá la muerte y tendrá tus ojos*. Translation by José Palacios. Almería: Ediciones Perdidas, 2005. Poem from 1950.

<sup>vi</sup> Luis Cernuda. *Quisiera estar solo en el sur*. In *Poesía completa*. Barcelona: Barral Editores, 1973.

<sup>vii</sup> Raymond Carver. *El don de la ternura (The Gift)*. In *Vos no sabés lo que es el amor y otros poemas*, Esteban Moore Versions, Buenos Aires, 1989.

<sup>viii</sup> Omar Khayyam. *Poema XX*. In *Los Rubayata*. Madrid: Estrella, 1920. In Digital Library of Castilla y León.