

POETIC WAVES OF MOTION AND SCIENTIFIC
METAPHORS: A TRANSLATION OF MARIA CEGARRA
SALCEDO'S *CRISTALES MIOS*

by

APRIL L. OLESON

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Spanish
and the Robert D. Clark Honors College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts

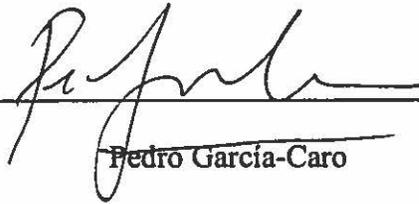
June 2016

An Abstract of the Thesis of

**April Oleson for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
in the Department of Spanish to be taken June 2016**

**Title: Poetic Waves of Motion and Scientific Metaphors: A Translation of María
Cegarra Salcedo's *Cristales míos***

Approved: _____



Pedro García-Caro

This work aims to translate María Cegarra Salcedo's first published book of poetry, *Cristales míos*, published in Spain in 1935. María was the first woman Chemist to gain professionalism in Spain, and her poems express the awe and wonder felt at the beginning of the 20th century, with its exciting scientific innovations, political divisions, and modern expressions of art. This series of translations serves to provide further public access to a faith-filled yet scientific woman's metaphors of the world.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank María Cegarra Salcedo for leaving behind a voice that truly speaks to me. I would also like to acknowledge the time and participation of my thesis committee Pedro Garcia-Caro, Michael Kellman, and Monique Balbuena, as well as the work of Miriam Jordan. Additionally, I wish to thank all of my influential college professors and high school teachers (particularly Patrick Naumes and Vincent Comerchero) who have helped improve my writing and educational independence. And of course, I have intense gratitude towards my family for their encouragement and emotional support. I also wish to say a very special thank you to Jeffery Cina for his guidance throughout the final years of my educational experience, for through his example, amidst a background of perpetual laughter, I have learned the greatest gift: to cultivate my own curiosity.

I wish to dedicate this work to my dearest mother, *Tanya Oleson*, for she is the one who understands the unspoken depths that this project means to me. And it is she who has instilled a strong value for education in me, one that nourishes the spirit and carves a strong character, and thus this project is as much a result of her efforts as it is of mine.

Table of Contents

Timeline	v
Introduction	1
María's Biography and Science History	1
The Science in María's Poems	13
A Note on Translation	26
Translation Theories	26
Poetic Context	33
Translation of <i>Cristales míos</i>	40
Bibliography	94

Timeline

- 1687 Newton publishes *Principia Mathematica*
- 1800s Maxwell equations and electromagnetism
- 1887 Michelson & Morley find that light is constant in every reference frame
- 1903 María Cegarra Salcedo is born
- 1905 Einstein's "Miracle Year" (papers on Brownian motion, the photoelectric effect, special relativity, and $E = mc^2$)
- 1908 Perrin finds experimental evidence for Brownian motion
- 1909 Beginning of the Italian futurist poetic movement
- 1911 Rutherford discovers that atoms are comprised of mostly empty space
- 1913 Bohr's model for the hydrogen atom
- 1915 Publication of the general theory of relativity
- 1918 Avant-garde poetic movement in Spain
- 1919 Eddington photos of an eclipse provide evidence for the general theory of relativity
- 1923 Millikan wins Nobel Prize for light particle-wave duality
Einstein lectures in Madrid
- 1926 Beginning of quantum theory
- 1927 Bohr's Principle of complementarity
Discovery of the Heisenberg uncertainty principle
- 1928 Andrés Cegarra Salcedo dies
- 1929 deBroglie wins Nobel Prize for the electron wave-particle duality
Hubble's discovery that our universe is expanding
- 1930s Shift in poetry from short to long verse, with a focus on emotions and daily life

- 1932 Discovery of the neutron
Heisenberg wins Nobel Prize for uncertainty principle
Cockcroft & Walton split the Li atom, supporting $E=mc^2$
Eddington lectures in Spain
- 1933 Schrödinger wins Nobel Prize for the wave equation
- 1935 *Cristales míos* publication
Schrödinger cat paradox
- 1936 The beginning of the Spanish Civil War
- 1939- Franco Regime
1975
- 1978 *Desvarío y formulas* is published
- 1986 *Poemas para un silencio* is published
- 1992 María Cegarra Salcedo is named Hija Predilecta
- 1993 María Cegarra Salcedo dies

Introduction

Go gather by the humming sea
Some twisted, echo-harboured shell,
And to its lips thy story tell,
And they thy comforters will be,
Rewarding in melodious guile
Thy fretful words a little while,
Till they shall singing fade in ruth
And die a pearly brotherhood;
For words alone are certain good:
Sing, then, for this is also sooth.

~ ~ ~

Excerpt from *The Song of the Happy Shepherd* by WB Yeats (2)

María's Biography and Science History

If you press a conch shell against your ear you can hear the mimicked echo of the ocean waves upon the shore—the shore, the union between the land and the sea, the border between two unique domains, which add together to equal the world's endless form. Conch shells were a favorite of María Cegarra Salcedo's, and she molded her own in the form of her poetry, one that spirals inward just enough to echo the sounds along the uniting border between faith, science and metaphor—the border between all of the elements of her world. And in turn, she left a shell that any curious passerby may pick up and hold to his ear in order to hear that sonorous echo of a harmony, one that resonates from the town in which María lived for her entire life—La Unión—Union. And her words reflect the motion of the waves, flowing between the rational and irrational, between faith and the empirical, and between the living and the dead, with commas as their nodes.

María herself embodied a border between tradition and the new. Her character's complexity could easily be confused with the adjective *contradictory*. While she was a conservative Catholic, sympathizing with the monarchy, her image is also that of a progressive woman. María Cegarra was the first woman in Spain to receive professionalism in Chemistry (Saez, "Retrato" 22), at a time when few women were educated in Spain. Even though there were also private institutions, by 1923 only 12% of students in the Spanish public schools were women (Esdaile 53). Throughout her life, María participated in efforts to educate women, teaching at the Colegio de Carmelitas and then teaching Physics and Chemistry at the local university La Escuela de Peritos Industriales y Maestría (Saez, "Retrato" 19). María was also friends with the feminist poet Carmen Conde, with whom she assisted in creating a school for illiterate women during the difficult times under the Franco Regime (Alfaro 368). Additionally, during the Civil War María helped distribute food to girls through the organization Auxilio Social (Jiménez Godoy 62). She supported her family by means of her scientific pursuits, analyzing rock from the local mines in her personal laboratory at home (Giménez Caballero 266). Furthermore, this independent woman chose a life of solitude, remaining unmarried, and living in her home at Bailén nº10 (Delgado "Introducción" 239), loyal to her brother's mission to regenerate the mines of La Unión for her entire life (Rubio Paredes 282).

When Giménez Caballero, the author of the original prologue to *Cristales míos*, walked into her apartment and entered her laboratory, he noted two portraits upon the wall, portraits of María's two idols: her younger brother Andrés Cegarra Salcedo and the famous woman chemist Marie Curie. Now, together these portraits merge to form

one single reflection of María herself. She considered her poetry to be a continuation of Andrés, his spirit working through her, producing pieces of the great works that he would have been destined to complete were he not lost at such a young age due to a muscle deteriorating disease (Godoy 59-60). And while mourning for her beloved brother consumed a large part of her life, her poetry always seeded in his memory, the other part of her had molded her own unique and strong identity as a woman, as a chemist and as a teacher, one which diffused into her poetry through her feminine vocabulary, her mathematical and chemical terminology, as well as through the observational perspective of each poem's protagonist, through which one tries to better understand the universe.

While María did not discover radium, nor did she win a Nobel Prize, she did, however, persist. And through her quiet and humble persistence, her name is respected in the title of the Instituto de Escuela Secundaria (IES) María Cegarra Salcedo in La Unión as an award for her love and dedication of teaching. Then, on the 24th of October in 1992, La Unión's city hall gave her the honored title Hija Predilecta (Saez "Bailén" 300). Furthermore, she left behind her unique voice in the form of three laconic volumes of poetry that give insight into her world and personal discoveries: *Cristales míos* (1935), *Desvarío y formulas* (1978), and *Poemas para un silencio* (1986).

Cristales míos, María Cegarra's first book of poetry, was published in 1935, the year before the Spanish Civil War began. While Spain was suffering from political divisions and unrest, this period in time also globally produced some of the most innovative scientific thoughts in history. And while the author may not be a product of her environment, certainly the thoughts of the time greatly influenced her work.

Communication and the spread of information was slow in the early 20th century, diffusion of scientific news was scarce in Spain and Europe before the 1920s and evidence lacks to provide the exact knowledge that María Cegarra had acquired (Gala 22); however, an awareness of the radical scientific advancements during this time, Nobel Prize awards, acclaimed scientists' lectures in Spain, as well as scientific publications in Spanish magazines can support several assumptions about the knowledge that the author most likely would have accessed, considering she wrote *Cristales míos* between 1928 (when Andrés passed away) and 1935 (when her poems were published). The first assumption is that she followed the theory of special and general relativity. Secondly, that she was aware of radioactive decay, atoms and a few of their components. Thirdly, that she followed the public's fascination with X-rays, radio waves and the invisible forms of electromagnetic radiation. And finally, that she was familiar with the early stages of quantum mechanics.

María's poetry takes several of these nascent concepts and morphs them into her own unique metaphors, connecting them to both her faith and surrounding life. While a reader's familiarity with the basic definitions and central elements of each scientific idea may prove useful in identifying their existence in María's metaphors, in order to break the reader out of a blurred vision of viewing these concepts as taken-for-granted facts, I wish to emphasize the relationship between the previously accepted scientific model of the physical world and the arising innovative thoughts that emerged in the early twentieth century, which ultimately helped nourish the gestation of *Cristales míos*. The context from which these scientific ideas emerged will hopefully elicit a better appreciation for the awe and power of these theories in her metaphors.

To begin with, science at the end of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth century suddenly began to focus on objects which the human eye is incapable of seeing. While infrared (IR) and ultraviolet (UV) waves had been detected in the early 19th century, and while Maxwell's relations mathematically predicted their existence, radio waves and X-rays were not detected until the dawn of the 20th century, and microwaves had still not yet been detected (Joy 145). Visible light, IR, UV, radio waves, and X-rays are all electromagnetic waves (waves formed by the ebb and flow between alternating magnetic and electric fields), all which travel at the same velocity, which is proposed to be this universe's ultimate speed limit—the speed of light. The most popular topic in Spanish scientific articles (besides relativity) discussed X-rays and wireless telegraphy, demonstrating the public's fascination with the powers of the unseen (Gala 9).

Light, in general, also had a profound importance on many scientific studies during this time and appeared as an important subject in several of Spain's scientific journals. In 1887 Michelson and Morley discovered an interesting characteristic of light—that its speed is constant in every reference frame. In their experiment, light's velocity did not slow down when traveling against the Earth's rotation when compared to its velocity traveling with the Earth's motion, ultimately disobeying the addition of velocities. This implied that light behaves differently than other moving objects that we observe in the physical world. This particular fact is a fundamental basis for Einstein's special theory of relativity, which was published in 1905. In this theory, he proposed that the speed of light be held constant in all reference frames, but in order for this to be true, one must throw out Newton's idea of Absolute Time and Absolute Space, which

were manifested in the belief of an undetected ether, and which had been accepted for the previous 200 years. But now, both space and time become united as one single four-dimensional spacetime, in which every participant is carrying his or her own clock that ticks at a unique beat relative to a neighbor's (Hawking 15-34). Therefore, special relativity significantly redefined our definition of time, discarding the presumption of the Absolute, and opening doors to new facets that one can explore within his or her imagination.

Nevertheless, Einstein realized that his special theory of relativity was incomplete, since his theory conflicted with gravity. The Newtonian model of gravity implies that when two objects move apart (or together), the change in force is instantaneous, suggesting that gravity travels at an infinite speed, a speed that lies outside of the bounds of special relativity—the speed of light (Hawking 29). Therefore, Einstein set out to make his theory complete, and achieved this through his general theory of relativity, which incorporates the effects of gravity on spacetime. Einstein imagined that gravity was a consequence of an object's influence on spacetime, and so he turned it into a field. He concluded that objects “bend” 4D spacetime depending on their mass, and this distortion produces what we experience as gravity. Einstein's new theory could now predict the behavior of objects traveling at velocities close to the speed of light, reference frames in which Newtonian mechanics failed. It also could predict Mercury's perihelium in addition to the orbits of all of the other planets, an orbit which puzzled astronomers throughout history (Hawking 31). This new and more accurate definition of gravity and spacetime ultimately demonstrates the importance that

creativity has in one's ability to express the world that we are incapable of directly seeing.

While a theoretically supported idea can result in a disturbance in a scientific model, measurable evidence makes the theory more powerfully rooted. Einstein published this theory in 1915, but there was not sufficient evidence for its acceptance within the scientific community until 1919. One of the theory's predictions is the bending of light around largely massed bodies. In 1919 Eddington's photos during a solar eclipse demonstrated this to be true (Hawking 32). Eddington visited and shared his work in Spain in 1932 (Gala 9), three years prior to María's publication of *Cristales míos*. Therefore, the general theory of relativity overrode Newtonian mechanics, which had been an accepted model of the universe for the previous two centuries. The general theory of relativity now gained momentum and began to spread throughout the scientific communities, seeding new possibilities in the way in which we perceive the physical world.

Einstein performed a series of lectures to share this new model, one inspired by the imagination, and in 1923 he lectured at La Residencia in Madrid, at which several poets from the Generation of 27 possibly attended (Gala 5), poets with whom María was familiar (Carceles Aleman 180). Spain published the first article in the *Crónica científica* on relativity, which discussed Minowsky's 4D spacetime, the new ability to predict mercury's perihelium, and the results of the Michelson and Morley experiment in the context of the new theory. In 1924, *Madrid científico* published a summary of relativity concepts, showing its popularity and persistence (Gala 8-11). Relativity was exciting and new, and as a chemist, María Cegarra surely knew of at least its main

implications. In fact, many of her poems express motion, allude to reference frames, or play with the notions of space and time.

Einstein not only contributed to radically overthrowing ideas of the Absolute, but additionally, during his “miracle year” in 1905, he also contributed to theories of light quanta and the existence of atoms, and proposed his famous equation $E = mc^2$, all of which exemplify this modern change in perspective of the world. Up until the beginning of the twentieth century, scientists doubted or disagreed on the existence of atoms (Isaacson 94-137), which had been introduced in the context of chemical compounds since 1803 (Hawking 63). Prior to the atom, electricity had been discovered and associated with the naked electron, for which its discovery was awarded to J.J. Thomson in the 1906 Nobel Prize (Joy 47). But it took until 1905, in Einstein’s paper on Brownian motion, to provide sufficient theoretical evidence to further convince the world of another invisible element’s, the atom’s, authenticity. Perrin provided experimental support to this theory in 1908, and won the Nobel Prize for this work in 1926 (Gala 36, Joy 99-102). The current scientific developments that formed models of electricity, electromagnetic waves, and the atom were focusing upon all of the smaller components of our universe, which required some imagination to see. Additionally, in 1932 Cockcroft and Walton split a lithium atom, which was the first experiment to prove Einstein’s prediction of the equivalence of mass and energy (Joy 171-2). This equivalence highlights a connection between seemingly disparate concepts, once again moulding the mind so that the eyes can shift to a new understanding of the universe, making unforeseen connections.

Once the atom was an acceptable model to describe the miniscule building blocks that compose matter, experimentalists began proposing its underlying structure. In 1911 Rutherford discovered that atoms are mostly comprised of empty space and detected the small nucleus in the atom. In 1913, Bohr and Rutherford predicted a model of the hydrogen atom, which continuously underwent adaptation as further experiments revealed that the nucleus was not only composed of protons but also of neutrons (in 1932), and as classical thinking contradicted the electron's orbitals, an idea which eventually contributed to advancements in quantum theory (Joy 107-11, 197). The subatomic world continued to expand and reveal new complexities of nature and the numerous components that actually exist in the unobservable world.

While the structure of atoms was of great interest, patterns between the different elements also blossomed into new theories, supporting the notion of a predictable subatomic world. In 1916, Gilbert's octet rule proposed that atoms react in order to gain a more stable noble gas configuration. Then in 1932, Linus Pauling derived the electronegativity scales (Joy 188). In 1902 Rutherford and Soddy had attempted to explain the characteristics of radioactive decay, but throughout the following decades, as the structure of the atom became better understood, many other scientists, including Marie Curie focused on radioactive isotopes and their mechanisms, trying to understand how an atom can transform into a new element due to a change in its mass (Joy 107-10). Each new idea contributed to modelling the universe that humans cannot directly see, expanding the scope of study to a myriad of new possible views, ones that still relied on predictability and trends, and ideas which María seems to extend to the unobservable human characteristics, such as emotions.

While predictive trends of the subatomic world revealed themselves to scientists, another major theory, the theory of quantum mechanics, began to challenge the predictable comfort that is found in our classical world. Quantum theory emerged in the 1920s, focusing on the wave and particle duality of matter. In 1923 Millikan won the Nobel Prize for his conclusion that light has properties of both particles and waves, when previously it had been thought that light was only a wave (Joy 93). Then, in 1929, de Broglie wins the Nobel Prize for theorizing that electrons (not just photons) are also particle-waves (Joy 147-50). Now the world is no longer simplified into specifically distinct and separate categories, but rather exists as a hybrid of seemingly contradicting characteristics.

Additionally, quantum theory contradicts with a classical world, because as demonstrated in Einstein's 1905 paper on the photoelectric effect, the introduction of light quanta demonstrated that the underlying structure of quantum systems consists of integer and discrete energy levels, whereas the classical version saw them as continuous. Quantum mechanics shows that, on the scale of the minuscule, an inaccessible gap exists between two energy states; however this contradicts with the macroscopic world's continuous transitions. Furthermore, the theory opposes a consistently deterministic world, as the subatomic quantum systems can only be expressed in terms of probabilities rather than singly predicted outcomes. Therefore, this theory philosophically sparks a debate between chance and determinism, and María's poetry possess elements of this conflict, where her faith in God's determinism always wins.

Furthermore, in 1926 the mathematical discovery of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle revealed the disconcerting nature of matter; for unlike classical systems, quantum systems were found unable to possess both a position and a momentum simultaneously (*The Ghost* 7). This principle is not a mere consequence of the human lack of ability to make the measurements, but more profoundly demonstrates that it is part of the intrinsic properties of matter. Heisenberg won the Nobel Prize for this mathematical relation in 1932, again three years before María completed *Cristales míos* (Joy 156). This concept appears to aid María's metaphors in her expression of the spirit, helping her cope in her battle of mourning.

And finally, Schrödinger won the Nobel Prize for his famous wave equation in 1933, which was the capstone to the initial quantum theory (Joy 162). In 1935, the analogy of Schrödinger's cat expressed the disconcerting implications of this equation; the equation inconclusively interprets the nature of all quantum systems to exist in a superposition of multiple possible states until an observation of one single state magically collapses all other states except for that which is observed (*Ghost* 29). However, since this dilemma emerged during the same year that *Cristales míos* was published, María would not have been aware of the superposition states present in quantum theory.

Nevertheless, Bohr explained the principle of complementarity in 1927. This theory expresses the idea that due to the complex, non-classical wave-particle duality of nature, the type of measurement limits the scope of our observation, as we are unable to detect both types of features at the same time (Gala 37-8). This concept sparked philosophical perplexity about the role of observation in experiment. The role of

observation does appear as a theme in María's poetry, although applied outside of the realm of science and more in the context of freedom, where detection results in a loss of freedom.

While these developments in quantum mechanics were more famously recognized towards the end of María's first book of poetry, this does not disprove their absence in her inspiration, for María studied science and worked as a teacher and a researcher. It is likely that she would have known of these developing notions before they gained awarded momentum. In fact, both Heisenberg and Schrödinger first discovered quantum theory in 1925 using two unique mathematical approaches. And in 1926 Schrödinger demonstrated that they are indeed the same theory (McQuarrie 53). This was just before the early period in which María was writing her poetry, and it is not unreasonable to postulate the theory's impression on her developing poetic expressions. Today, quantum mechanics remains one of the most prevailing theories, one that drives our modern world, one that questions the role of observation in any scientific experiment, and one that engenders the philosophical limits of true knowledge. Consequently, while themes of the unseen are infused within María's poetry, she simultaneously plays with the effects of perspective in an observation, while also commenting on the inaccessibility of truth through the limits of human understanding.

Overall, during the writing of *Cristales míos*, not only did the universe reject the idea of the Absolute and support a new four dimensional spacetime, but now it began to exhibit further complications; such as, an innate uncertainty, a rejection of absolute determinism, and scrutiny of the role of observation in our reality. Moreover, during

this time period there was also a collective preeminent focus on the unobservable. All of these elements combined to help spark some of the imagery and metaphors in *Cristales míos*. And since María's poetic process always began with an idea (Belmonte Serrano 175), these concepts are critical to understanding the depths of her poetry.

Expanding this focus on the unobservable to a range outside of scientific advancements, Gala notes the correlation between the new scientific advancements and the new approaches of art during the 1920s: "The whole enterprise of modern art, literature, and physics was in the search for the unobservable" (17). María, both an artist and a scientist, does indeed incorporate a focus on the unobservable in her poetry; however, her poems demonstrate that she recognizes the limits of human observation itself, and fills in the unknown gaps with her imagination and her own profound faith in God, and in this way she offers her own unique poetic perspective as she not only incorporates science into her poetry, but she evades a purely practical and calculative perspective by additionally integrating the irrational, the marvelous, and her faith.

The Science in María's Poems

Numerous, exciting scientific discoveries filled the period in which María wrote *Cristales míos*, while concurrently, the approaches of art were also viewing space and time through different perspectives, cubism and surrealism being most predominant examples. Gala recognizes the potential role of both scientific advancements as well as the cubist movement in the poetry of the Generation of 27, several poets from María's generation. Gala identifies the importance of the union between space and matter in the

poetry and art during this time. He suggests that the “Poet and painter experiment with blank spaces and typography observing how words and images interrelate with their spatial background and how they inform one another. The result is the work of art as a web of interactivity where meaning takes shape in relation to other elements in the context” (17). And as a result of a 4D spacetime, artists begin to place objects in the context of a whole, rather than in pure isolation, while the imagery is often a vision, or that of something observed (Gala 18). Therefore, even if María were not a scientist herself, one cannot ignore the underlying influences of these scientific models in modern art, the time in which María wrote. In fact, María’s poetry does recurrently demonstrate a union of the seemingly contradictory, and highlights the interconnectedness of objects and emotions. Moreover, María’s poetic perspective focuses on the complexity of the whole, emphasizing her belief that there is always a whole, and her philosophically scientific metaphors again serve to demonstrate this aim.

Motion (or lack of motion) is a recurring theme throughout *Cristales míos*, often representing freedom (or duration) and depending on its metaphorical usage, it reflects either quantum mechanical or relativistic ideas, which suggests that either intentionally or unconsciously these revolutionary physical models served as a profound undercurrent of inspiration in María’s unique metaphors. Relativistic themes predominate the poems that express relative motion in terms of space, expansion, and contraction, whereas elements of quantum theory metaphorically appear in her poetry that conveys a loss of motion due to detection of position. However, motion is not the sole illustration of the influences of the scientific thoughts at the time, for additionally, María uses her scientific language in her metaphors in order to include emotions as part of this

unobservable subatomic world. In this sense, María attempts to create a whole by understanding the limits and the chaos of human life both in the context of their parallels to the behavior of the natural universe.

To begin the discussion of scientific components in her metaphors, in poem 9, María describes the experience of reading a book using a relativistic metaphor. It is clear the author plays with reference frames, as she sees herself as “immobile,” when really she is moving at the speed of light. This could be related to Einstein’s famous thought experiment of traveling on a light beam, which led to developing his renowned theory (Isaacson 3); however, in María’s case the reference frames are not purely physical, for it is her body that is in the rest frame, while her mind (or spirit) appears to be traveling at or near the universe’s speed limit, alongside a thought. She can “annul the exact hour of parting” because time is no longer absolute, and she may begin her journey at different times, depending on the observer’s frame of reference, or rather when she chooses to open a book. In this poem, María uses contemporary scientific concepts in her metaphors in order to more powerfully convey her own interpretation of one of her life’s little joys.

María also enhances the imagery in her poetry through her use of curved space. Poems 16 and 40 imply a type of curved space, inspired by the bending of spacetime in general relativity. In poem 16, the ambiguous “controversy” could be Einstein’s new theory before the proof brought by Eddington’s photographs of the eclipse. This poem encapsulates the ultimate aim of any scientific hypothesis—to “change the gaze.” María chooses to describe this controversy by means of spatial imagery. The “complicated smoothness inclined the plane,” suggests the gravity-incorporated spacetime, while also

serving as a metaphor that expresses the accompanying intellectual journey as one travels along this new model of the universe. Similarly, in poem 40, the sea is replaced by inclines in space itself, which generate motion. Because of this, the reader may extract the word “sail” from its natural context and replace it in reference to space in general, the image ultimately enabling the reader to experience a new way of traveling through the world.

In other poems, María ponders the connection between space and time and its metaphorical abilities to express the nature of emotions. In poem 18, a concentrated, or dense, object would indent spacetime, and María uses this image to express the overwhelming emotion felt at an intense moment in life, perhaps imprinting a memory in time, or perhaps it is a moment so overpowering that one is fleetingly taken out of life itself. Additionally, poem 20 connects the idea of space and time through the expressions “absence is not due to time but rather to distance” and “one long minute is the pit of a tomb.” Here, María changes the perspective, where absence’s association with time is a mere consequence of its relation to space, yet in the end she maintains their inseparability. But it is this innate connection which helps to illustrate the emotion felt by abandonment. These two examples demonstrate how María can use a scientific model for the universe in order to abstractly and poetically describe something as irrational as the emotions that accompany the human experience.

Another aspect of relativity that appears to be present in María’s poetry is the concept of time and space dilation and contraction. Objects can contract and expand, depending on their reference frame of motion. If an object is at rest and an observer is moving towards it, this object appears to expand, and time runs more slowly for this

object, since time is connected to space. If that same object is now moving while the observer is at rest, it appears to contract and time runs faster for that same object. Poem 8 reflects elements of this idea. The protagonist is immobile, and has expanded relative to the moving earth, (or rather the earth in its motion has contracted relative to her state of rest) with “my feet joined to the earth, my head stuck to the sky.” But María further exaggerates this concept into a metaphor expressing a feeling of limitation.

Additionally, in poem 11, the idea that the self-condensing day creates a perpetual night, suggests a type of time-dilation, where the dense mass disturbs spacetime enough to shorten time (as time moves more quickly in larger gravitational fields), leaving the outside observer to marvel at what seems to be a lack of time. Yet this scientific idea is not the focus of the poem, but rather serves as a tool to paint her unique poetic imagery, which expresses the protagonist’s emotions and humanly personal observations.

Furthermore, María uses imagery that mimics Eddington’s photos of the eclipse. Poem 33 conveys a beautiful image that imagines an abstract form of empowerment, where the sun is the star that the moon extinguishes, and one can now observe the bending of light around the sun, which is the “river of light” forming arcs as it reaches new heights. María’s poem ultimately relocates this famous photo of an eclipse in context of a poem in order to rewrite the antiquated poetic image of the moon, making it her own.

As a further consequence of relativity, in 1929 Hubble confirmed Friedmann’s prediction that our universe is expanding, upending the belief in a static universe (Hawking 44), an idea that also appears in María’s poems. In poem 58, the protagonist is traveling along a mathematical limit, as she is “so close to infinity” and has “negated

the horizons” which may mirror the exhilarating idea of an unbounded, expanding spacetime. Yet María personalizes this fascinating concept by fusing it with her faith and personal experience of her journey to self-discovery.

This particular set of poems also conveys abstract elements of quantum theory as well as relativity. However, the imagery is less obvious than it is for relativity, and thus the following analysis depends more upon the conceptual elements in her poetry; however, the following discussion serves to consider additional scientific sources that contribute to María Cegarra’s distinctive poetic fingerprint. The most discernible components of quantum mechanics in her poetry are the uncertainty principle, Bohr’s principle of complementarity, and the probabilistic nature of quantum systems. Her depictions of motion, immobility, mourning, and the unseen occasionally convey subtle hints at several quantum mechanical concepts.

In poem 2, María extends the philosophical implications of the uncertainty principle to her depiction of a ghost. The protagonist cannot identify the position of the brother; however, she can feel his presence by the air, which his position has displaced. In this way, she suggests that the spirit demonstrates particle and wave duality, where she feels the effects of the momentum, while losing the exact location of what she is searching for. When she “knows” him to be far, she still can only look in his direction, “believing” to see a reflection, while never locating him with exact certainty. In the conclusion of the poem, it is this inability to locate the brother that grants him freedom to exist everywhere. “The heart restlessly sways, refusing to align” highlights the nature of all particles—that they simply do not possess both a position and momentum

simultaneously. The author merely extends this concept to the soul, in order to better understand her own grief.

Again, María plays with the contrast between mobility and immobility in poem 6, but in this case the paralysis is a result of the protagonist's inability to choose a direction. The image here is that of the winds applying equal force in all directions so that she remains in one place. This could be compared to the dilemma of Bohr's theory of complementarity, where she has been detected by the winds, and in turn she has lost the ability to move forward in any different pathway. In this way, María metaphorically extends the subatomic world to humans, their choices, and their directions in life, humbling humans out of their own control, and placing the soul in the context of an observed whole, which belongs to both the large and miniscule components of our universe.

Again poem 14 ponders the limits brought by observation. The line "Remain with what's true and leave me to fly in the amplitude" expresses that what the observer is able to identify as a truth is limited to the scope of each specific measurement. Whereas, outside of this single measurement, lies a larger world, one that is built with the human gift of creativity, and one that is necessary to better understand the whole of everything. And María's most profound characteristic is her pursuit of unification.

Poem 38 further exemplifies this idea that exact destinations and locations result in a loss of freedom; but in this case, María describes this consequence in terms of ports and the sea. She tells us to rid of the ports so that we do not have an exact destined position, and then to remove the light from the beacons so that there is no specific pathway to follow. She wants to break free from the limits of measurement and human

observation. In this way, she breaks free from the physical, and enters the realm of the spirit, whose “straight” is the entire sea, with unbounded freedom. Through these poetic metaphors, María includes humans in the confusing and contradicting behavior of the subatomic world, but, while doing so, she recognizes the limit in understanding both.

María once more looks at the whole and all of its incomplete singular components in poem 24, where Bohr’s principle of complementarity could also be applied. The line “everything a sector in its soul” shows the complex entity of the entire “it,” and she uses mathematical vocabulary to describe the emotions so that “it” is unable to be completely described by any one sector. The line, it “does not complete felicity nor does it finalize pain” could also reflect images of the uncertainty principle, as there is an intrinsic uncertainty, and inability to fully detect these emotions. Emotions belonging to the unobservable world, María appears to metaphorically associate them with the philosophy of the developing model of quantum mechanics. This relationship helps to better understand the complexity of human emotions and includes them inside of a whole. The final piece of this poem that is worth noting is the mention of “forever at the center of a sentiment,” which is then proceeded by a stream of different sentiments. During this time further models of the universe were being formulated, and in 1922 one aspect of the Friedmann model was that there is no singular center of the universe, but that each point of the universe is a center (Hawking 40). In this way, María’s poem defines a universe of sentiments, that mirrors the model of the spatial one in which we live. While Friedmann’s model was not well known until later, Einstein’s theory of relativity also expresses a similar idea of no absolute center, as there is no

absolute space or time. Either way, María's metaphor powerfully conveys the relativity of life, even on an emotional level.

Poem 3 incorporates the philosophical implications of quantum theory, expressing the limits of measurement, but also expresses the inability to predict a single event because the world's building blocks now lie in a sea of probability patterns that are formed over time. Because of this, the compass rose cannot detect the brother's singular course. However, the last two lines of the poem suggest that María does believe in distinct pathways (or fate); however, she implies that only God is aware of those determined pathways. Again, she expresses the uncertainty that accompanies the loss a loved one in terms of observation, where the spirit belongs to the world we cannot see, the one about which we are left only to imagine in our limited terms. And her metaphors exemplify similar perplexities pertaining to what was known of quantum theory at the time of *Cristales míos*. In turn, these metaphors serve to accept human limitation and to amplify and find solace in her own faith in God.

Furthermore, María seems to grapple with the new idea of a probabilistic world, suggested by quantum theory. In poem 37, the line "fallen without direction or origin" conveys a sense of probability, as there was no set pathway that determined its present location, hence there was no direction, and the mere idea of an origin suggests a predictable function, which does not exist in probability. María's metaphor conveys the role of chance in either creativity or emotion (or whatever the reader sees in the "world of ignited basalts"). And this randomness has caused the miniscule entity to expand into something so immense. By means of this metaphor, the protagonist feels a deep amazement at the overall effect that this new, small and single idea is capable of

producing. Perhaps even similar to the effect that relativity or quantum mechanics had upon the scientific community.

Outside of relativistic and quantum mechanical ideas, María also demonstrates the spirit of a true scientist in her ability to recognize the limits of the current scientific models as well as the perpetual search for the unattainable truth. Poem 27 repeats María's understanding of the limits in the scientific models that describe our universe, as well as the importance of imagination and creative thought, as Einstein so profoundly demonstrated through his theory of relativity. María claims that thought is the only reality, and what we imagine is life. She further elaborates this idea of limitation through the line: "you persist, though my eyes may not reach you" where the truth lies outside of themselves, finding beauty and solace in the idea that so much more exists in this universe than what human-made models are capable of observing.

Finally, one more predominant characteristic within this set of poems is the poet's use of scientific terms in order to express the irrational and intangible, such as emotion, faith, or the presence of the spirit of a deceased loved one. This represents an extension of the scientific feats of the time, which were able to mathematically predict many invisible components of the world. Yet, what is more is that sometimes this relationship is reversed, where she then uses the irrational to describe the rational. This interchangeability between the roles of the rational and the irrational, supports a belief in their exact likeness, as María deeply understands the limits and imperfections of scientific models, ultimately exposing the underlying irrationality of what humans define as rational.

To provide examples, in poem 5 María describes her mother's state of mourning as unable to release even an "atom of your pain," where she uses the image of an atom to demonstrate how incapable the mother is of letting go. Yet she also ascribes a known physical model, which describes the unobservable, to emotions, which are another invisible component of life. While emotions can represent irrationality, María associates them with logical images, merging both the explicable and the inexplicable into one model.

In poem 7 she expresses the natural limits of human control by relating the flow of emotions to an osmotic system, where emotions appear to follow a thermodynamic nature. In poem 24, she uses mathematical imagery of a center, ciphers, lines and sectors to portray a series of sentiments. In poem 76, María again associates feelings with a rational physical model, through her use of the thermodynamic term "equilibrate," to describe the behavior of feelings. As a chemist, María understood the ideal that each phenomenon in this universe may be described by a mathematical equation, and to her, emotions are no exception. In fact, portraying them in mathematical terminology only amplifies their intense connectedness to nature, since nature can be expressed through equations.

Additionally, poem 25 describes a whisper through its physical sound wave, where it propagates, echoes, and reflects. However, in this poem the protagonist seeks permanence, rather than the natural wave-like motion of life. For through the uncertainty principle, complete permanence is impossible, and yet we desire permanence. Hence, María assigns quantum wave-particle duality in order to explain the contradicting nature of our human desires.

Poem 74 uses the term “transmutation” which is most likely referring to the transformation of one heavier atom into a new lighter one, through the process of radioactive decay. Except, in this case the poet uses transformation to paint an image of a human breaking down into its smaller and smaller building blocks so that one can essentially only exist as a spirit. This image serves in order to unite with that other spirit of a lost loved one. Here, she rationally decomposes a physical human body, recognizing its composition of atoms, and yet she does so in order to emphasize her irrational belief in a fundamental element of nature that science cannot explain—the human spirit.

Finally, poem 80 describes the nature of perfumes through a metaphor pertaining to electricity, but at the same time she metaphorically describes this electricity as a “weapon of love,” giving it human-like motives and desires. The perfumes speak through scent, but to speak requires an intention to communicate, giving feelings and purpose to inanimate compounds. This poem in particular highlights her own imagined irrational side of the rational, demonstrating her persistent belief that there is more to the scientific models, in which only her faith can preside.

To conclude this section, poem 15 encapsulates María’s passionate being, expressing the general love and wonder that she feels towards science. Science is filled with “broken bridges of thought,” some of which scientists reveal and connect, (or perhaps this is more a reference to the discrete quantum energy levels that make up the quantum world), but it also suggests that she herself wishes to create new and connected thoughts. She wants to “find the light in the flame,” actually observing the basic building blocks that compose the macroscopic. She wishes to “negate gravity” not only

to float or to have time move more slowly, but also to see, create, and imagine a world without gravity so that she may confirm or defy it in her own discovered universe. For to her, the invisible elements of the world require the presence of faith. And therefore she wishes to “beget in order to believe.”

A Note on Translation

Translation Theories

There are many reasons to translate a work. Edith Grossman reminds audiences that translated works significantly influence many great authors; for example, translations of Faulkner had influenced García Márquez and many other Latin American writers (21). Itamar Even-Zohar further notices the prospect for new language adaptation by means of translating a foreign language into one's own, for the translator introduces new "principles and elements" into his or her language that had not existed before, ultimately creating new poetic forms of expression and instigating new compositional patterns and techniques (200). Of course, translation also becomes important in the modern world of globalization, removing language barriers between cultures, and permitting greater access to works of art for much larger audiences. And while many translation theorists, including Venuti and Grossman, would agree that the role of translation is to communicate, other theorists would disagree.

Walter Benjamin challenges its role of communication with his paradoxical famous lines: "No poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener" (71). Thus, if a work of art is not intended to communicate, how is any translation of a piece of art supposed to function in a way that the original was not (Benjamin 72)? And so, according to Benjamin, it is not the translator's job to communicate a work, but simply to renew its essence in an ever-changing time, without being preoccupied with its likeness to the original (73-5). However, Benjamin's ideas

conflict with Neitze's, which are unique from Octavio Paz's, and in the end each theorist has his or her own interpretation of how a translator should approach each work of art. And so, ultimately the translator is gifted with a type of freedom to choose what exactly translation means.

Through *my eyes*, a translation of *Cristales míos* not only provides access to the poems of another Spanish woman poet in the early twentieth century, or to the poetic perspective of a scientist in the midst of a divided country, or perhaps to a source of inspiration for future influential authors, but its purpose more profoundly extends to provide further access to an almost timeless piece of art, one that is told through the lens of a relatable protagonist who seeks to understand the transcending components of the universe and humanity by means of a series of unique, scientific and faith-filled metaphors. In this way, María Cegarra Salcedo highlights the equivalence between artist and scientist, a link often skewed by the modern stereotypes of their differences. Therefore, I am translating María Cegarra Salcedo's first book of poetry in the hopes to share her unique artist-scientist perspective of our world.

While the exact role of translation varies by translator, most translational theorists agree that it is impossible to acquire a perfect equivalence of one text in one language from the words of the same text in another (Schleiermacher 46). This is due to the innate differences between languages in their unique forms of expressions. What one is able to convey in Spanish, he or she may not be able to transduce in meaning or in manner in the English language. Thus, the attempts of the translator to create an approximate equivalence must depend on his or her approach to translation.

The history of translation theory begins with a debate between two traditional ways of prioritizing a translation: between *semantic* and *communicative* (Lefevere 10) or between *equivalence* and *function* (Venuti 2). *Semantic* translation correlates most with a literal or direct translation, trying to translate word-for-word the exact meaning of the text, in the hopes of maintaining a more literal accuracy. While not every word in a single language is reproducible in another, its main goal is to stay as true to the original text, on a word-by-word basis. The goal of *communicative* translation is to adapt the message of the work culturally, attempting to communicate the original author's message and information across all cultural barriers (Lefevere 10-11). Of course, these are the original bases for categorizing translation, and many translators have further specified, combined, and furbished these two branches.

Within these branches are three simple ways to describe the route that a translator may take. The first, most archaic way to translate is by *metaphrase*, which is a direct word-for-word translation. The second way is to *paraphrase*, and merely convey the author's sense in one's own language. Jorge Luis Borges supports the *paraphrase* approach through his belief that translated works are more readable if the translator acts more as an "illustrator" and translates scenes rather than words, where the work is "rethought" in a new language (105-6). The third way is to translate through *imitation*, which resembles a hybrid between the first and second means, where the translator veers from the word-for-word translation only when he or she feels it more important to preserve a different element, one that the translator supposes the original author would have done him/herself (Dryden 38). Most modern translators assume the role of imitator, as have I.

Imitation further breaks down into *formal* and *pragmatic equivalence*, depending on the translator's intended effect that he or she wishes to impose upon the reader. *Formal equivalence* tries to preserve the form and content of the original author's message itself, communicating the text so that the audience experiences the foreignness of the text and recognizes the work as a translation. *Pragmatic equivalence* incorporates the context of the translator's own culture, disguising the translation as a work that appears native to the language in which it is translated (Nida 156-7). In translating *Cristales míos*, I have tried to maintain proper English syntax; however, there are specific cases in which I play with the placement of adjectives, or where I personify nouns in order to capture the foreign spirit of the author. In this way, my approach to translation is *pragmatic* while occasionally trying to preserve foreign elements of the author's individual voice.

Unfortunately, when extended to the case of poetry the non-equivalency between the original and the translated text only amplifies. Roman Jakobson makes note of the ineradicable sever between poetic form and the meanings of the words themselves, for "Poetry by definition is untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another, or interlingual transposition – from one language into another" (143). Additionally, Eugene Nida's advice "do not translate so that the reader is likely to understand, but translate so clear that no one can misunderstand" (155) is less applicable in terms of poetry, since a significant characteristic of poetry is its ambiguity and its abstract metaphors and play on language, sometimes making it difficult to understand the message even in the original language. Therefore, the translator of poetry must make

additional choices and sacrifices, which will alter the exact communication of the original work into the new language.

Lefevre supposes that “the best that can be done is to teach students of translation to identify and recognize problems, to adopt solutions, and to check those solutions against the text as a whole, the ‘universe of the course’ (things, concepts) referred to in that text, and the poetics and the ideology of a culture at a given time” (18). Most translators face a dilemma when they encounter alliteration, rhyme, literary/cultural/biblical allusions, puns, idioms, improper grammar, metaphors, and even names. The final syntax of the work can also be a challenge. In the end, when the translator sacrifices one poetic element, he or she may merely relocate the same element, or try to make up for it using a similar means, as long as he or she believes it is “in the spirit of the original” (Lefevre 105). Therefore, when translating, it depends on the translator to rank the importance of either message or manner by each unique situation. In doing so, the translator must consider the nature of the message, the purpose of the author, and the audience to whom he is communicating (Lefevre 154). Throughout my translations I have considered the message of each overall poem (where examples were previously discussed in section II), the poetic elements that the author uses in the original (examples of which are included in the accompanying footnotes of the poems), and I wish my audience to be general and include readers from both scientific and literary fields, but non-specific to the culture in the United States.

While translating, I recognized many of the dilemmas proposed by Lefevre and mentioned above. To begin with, two key differences between Spanish and English, of which I wished to find a way to convey in English are 1) genderized nouns and as a

result of this (as well as common verbal conjugations) 2) frequent end-rhymes between words. Giving nouns genders in English is the same as poetically personifying them. Therefore, I did not do this often, as I did not wish to overwhelm the reader, or to make the translations sound unnatural. However, María does characteristically fill her poetry with a majority of feminine vocabulary (Vera Saura “La poeta” 325). Therefore, in an attempt to convey this unique trait, I often personified feminine nouns when the grammar allowed for the inclusion.

While English is unique in that it is difficult for words to have end-rhymes without having full rhymes, I therefore tried to convey this natural poetic feature of Spanish through alliteration in English. I felt this important in conveying a better sense of the whole in the original, while also preserving a sense of motion, which I found essential to María’s work. However, I will note that other times, when confronted with full rhymes between words, I would also have to resort to alliteration as the best substitution, making no distinction between these two cases. Nevertheless, if I could not repeat a rhyme, I often tried to relocate it in a different part of the text. I was able to do so because María’s poems follow no specific form and are considered free verse. The largest sacrifice that accompanies these decisions is minor deviations in the exact meanings of the words. However, the times I did choose to preserve the poetic elements, I felt the overall meaning of the whole poem still to be conveyed.

Another important poetic element is rhythm, which may be created through alliteration or rhyme, but also through syllables. I did not try to preserve the exact number of syllables of the original throughout my entire translation, for what is poetic in English may not match the syllabic length in Spanish. Shorter, more concise and

precise vocabulary is more poetic in English, whereas some Spanish adjectives, adverbs, and verbs have much longer endings than their English partners. My first priority was to end sentences in shorter, one or two-syllable words, mimicking patterns observed in works by such poets as W.B. Yeats. However, sometimes I would observe María's own brevity in the original work, and I would then try to match the exact number of syllables. I did this mainly in the opening or ending lines in order to convey its original strength. Unfortunately, in a few cases I had to try to avoid awkward syntax, which resulted in having to elongate the rhythm of the original. Sometimes I was able to resolve this by altering the grammar (e.g. turning nouns into adjectives or vice versa).

I encountered two cases of neologisms in my translations; where María had appeared to invent words in her own language based on the root of a common word. The two words are *morfinándose* and *rubiamente*. In Spanish, *morfina* is morphine. Verbs often ending in *-se* are reflexive and or usually imply some sort of action towards oneself. The *-ando* ending is similar to the *-ing* ending in English. Therefore I chose to translate this new word as *morfining herself*. *Rubia* in context of hair refers to blonde. The *-mente* ending makes it an adverb. Therefore I made an adverb of blonde in English to be *blondely*. These were the only two cases I encountered.

The major syntax differences between Spanish and English are adjective placement, possessive case, and the inability to repeat certain words through the use of but a single word. I usually placed the adjective before the noun when translating into English; however, occasionally I kept them as a list after the noun in order to preserve a sense of ambiguity, or when the following descriptions were too long to place before the noun. The possessive case in Spanish is much longer-winded than when using the

preceding - 's after a noun in English. However, it can also be more directly translated into English by using *of* (e.g. the petal of the flower versus the flower's petal). In my translations I used both ways of expressing the possessive case in English, usually combining the two if María used it more than once in a sentence or poem. I used the - 's when it read more fluidly in English and I used *of* when it needed to be followed by a long descriptive metaphor.

Poetic Context

Before translating María's poetry, it is also important to consider the surrounding poetic movement, what others have previously noted about her poetry, as well as what she herself has mentioned about her own poetic process. To begin with, María's poetry will be put into context of other futurist, ultraist, vanguard and modernist poets during this time period. While others have not included her to be a part of any particular movement, her poetry nevertheless mirrored some of the characteristic elements that they conveyed, in addition to her own unique style. Lastly, María's own voice reveals that her purpose for writing was merely for herself—an important perspective for any translator to consider about her works.

The start of the Italian futurist movement began around 1909 and eventually influenced the ultraist movement in Spain, which emerged as an avant-garde movement around 1918, one which helped to support the foundation of the Generation of 27 (Geist 29-30, 49). Some characteristics of Italian futurists include a focus on modern life, with imagery of machines, automobiles, and velocity. In their writing, they limited the use of

verbs, minimizing them to their infinitive form, if they used them at all, and mainly resorted to using nouns. They also pushed the limits of punctuation, often eliminating commas and capitalization. While María does use verbs outside of their infinitive form, as well as punctuation, her choice in nouns and adjectives conveys to the reader a strong sense that he or she is an observer. And her punctuation interrupts pieces of thoughts, and serves mostly as pauses between fragments of incomplete sentences. Additionally, motion (including velocity) is a predominant theme throughout her poems, perhaps a consequence of both the Italian futurists as well as new scientific theories.

Themes of the Italian futurists carried over into the avant-garde ultraists, who identified as anti-tradition, with similar imagery as the futurists. This group of poets eliminated the restrictions of rhyme (Geist 40), which we see in María's poetry as well. Another attribute of the vanguards is their use of contradicting objects in order to create an additional order of reality. Aiming for objectivity, they would incorporate hard objects rather than soft ones, finding adjectives unnecessary and eliminating punctuation in parts. The Generation of 27 also shared the same goal of objectivity (Geist 57-63). María's poetry does not rhyme and also focuses on contradicting objects (by using physical objects to describe invisible feelings); however, adjectives are extremely important to her unique style.

A group of educated poets whose goal was to practice *pure creation* and to write *pure* poetry then succeeded the ultraists and called themselves the Generation of 27 (Geist 76). Several members of the Generation of 27 include Jorge Guillén, Pedro Salinas, Gerardo Diego, and Dámaso Alonso. The idea of *purity* originated from poet Juan Ramón Jiménez, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Poetic Principle* and French symbolists

Baudelairs, Mallarmé, and Valéry (Geist 119). The symbolists desired to reduce semantics and increase phonetics in the expression of language. The other major attribute of the Generation of 27 is the metaphor. The metaphor continued to be the principle component of poetry in the 1920s, with the aim of creating new realities (Geist 77-92), and it is one of the most dominating attributes of María's poetry as well.

The Generation of 27 similarly continued the vanguard notion that there are two distinct and separate realities—the objective and the poetic, where the poetic reality only exists through language (Geist 94). They also eschewed poetry's potential role to serve as political, ethical or moral propaganda. However in 1929, the seven years leading up to Spain's Civil War, the magazine *La Gaceta Literaria* began to highlight and debate the social role and possible obligation of politics in art. From 1930-36 politics dominated literature in Spain (Geist 105-6, 171-2). María's poetry is not political, and reveals little about her Republican views during this politically heated time. This absence of political expression actually distinguishes her poetic style and her similarity to the Generation of 27.

Then poetry took a shift from the 1920s to the 1930s from short verse to long verse and from objectivity to passion (Geist 159). It began to include *impure* elements, more neo-romanticism, with feelings and subjects of daily life, subjects that better characterize María's poetry. While the vanguards had rejected traditional metrics due to the limitations that they imposed upon poetry, the modernists eventually returned to the classical tradition of the stanza, arguing for the creative possibilities that are accessible only by a pre-established order—combining both the modern and the traditional (Geist 134, 139-40). The *poema breve* (short poem) also represented this fusion of the modern

and traditional and was popular until about 1929. Symbolically what poets called “lo pequeño” (the small) contained large amounts of freedom, where each brief poem is considered a fragment of the whole (Geist 142-8). While some of María’s poems are longer than others, *Cristales míos* contains a majority of short and pithy prose, in the style of both the *poema breve* as well as her brother Andrés’ poetry (“Entrevista con Santiago” 56). Through this collection of brief poems she created a series of fragments, or crystals, that contribute uniquely to the whole. Each one of her individual poems resembles a fractal of the entire collection, as they too attempt to encapsulate an objective whole within their concise expression.

María Cegarra’s birth would categorize her as part of the Generation of 27; however her first book was published in 1935, which belongs to the Generation of 1936. Nevertheless, in the end, she is not well recognized as a member of Spanish poets in this century (Vera Saura, “La poeta” 315). Wishing to emphasize her originality, Giménez Caballero does not find it important to label María Cegarra as a poet belonging to the *pure school* of poets or to other women poets at the time, but finds her differences from these groups to be the more significant (267). Ana Carceles Aleman claims María writes in the spirit of the Generation of 27 (180) and others propose her poetry is *pure* (Barcelo Jiménez 199); however different accounts suggest that she does not write *pure* poetry because she includes emotions and “her heart” (Carceles Aleman 209). But Giménez Cabellero claims that it is not compelling to discuss whether or not she is *pure*, but rather he suggests that her most important characteristics are her differences from the *Escuela pura*: which are her sincere emotions and feelings as well as her chemical formulism (267). In the end, María is in-between, encapsulating and uniting two

extremes. And it is this balance that is most characteristic of her individual poetic movement.

The second of the most important attributes of María's poetry, according to Giménez Cabellero, is her chemical formulism. Many essays and commentaries on her poems further claim that the most unique and interesting component of María Cegarra's poetry is the inclusion of science and its seemingly contradicting character in relation to both poetry itself and her religious faith. Vera Saura recognizes that chemistry is not a common theme in most other published poetry ("María" 307). In addition, Giménez Cabellero, writes "It seems a lie that so brief a book, so almost inexistent, could enclose such ardor for the mysterious in its epigrammatic, mathematic, and concise formulas: through the presence of someone disappeared and the soul of the mines" (Giménez Caballero 267). However, to delve into the world scientifically, only elucidates its mysteries, which often amplifies a sense of faith. One must also remember that many scientists during this time were religious. It was a Catholic priest who proposed the original idea for the Big Bang Theory, despite the absence of its title at the time, and Einstein himself had trouble accepting the completeness of quantum theory because he claimed, "God does not play dice." (Hawking 56) Therefore, while I do argue that her inclusion of science in her poetry is one of the most unique and interesting aspects of María Cegarra Salcedo's poetry, I disagree that the reason lies in its contradictions to both her faith and poetry itself. Rather María powerfully illuminates the harmonious union between science, poetry, and faith.

In the end, while it is important to contextualize María's poetry within artistic movements as well as events in both a general and a personal history, poetry its unique

to each poet and it is therefore more important for the translator to be able to avoid being swallowed up by the events of the time and to also look at it through the eyes of the original author. Fortunately, María has left behind a few of her own words about her poetry, which I was able to consider when translating.

When personally interviewed, María described her poetry process as spontaneous, despite admitting that spontaneity is not necessarily her belief on how poetry should be written. To her, poetry is about feeling, and she claims that she was always guided by feelings and emotion when writing (“Entrevista con Antonio” 66, “Declaraciones” 73). She wanted her poetry to be “free, without rhyme, capturing concise thoughts, and nothing more” (“Entrevista con Antonio” 66). When asked to describe her poetic process, she replied,

“It is very difficult to explain the genesis of a poem. I have already told you that first I have an idea, a verse that comes out of nowhere and then slowly develops onto paper. I develop it, looking for what sounds best, I add to it or remove an adjective (...) Afterwards comes the labor of correction and, sometimes, of elongation” (Belmonte Serrano, “Pasión” 51).

While María claims she avoids rhyme, she does however admit that sound is important to her poetry. When María refers to rhyme above, it most likely refers to the more traditional stanza rhyme. Therefore, in my translations, I have attempted to preserve the few rhymes that do appear in Spanish, because they contribute to the overall sound of her poems.

Furthermore, she describes herself as a woman of “silences rather than words” (Belmonte Serrano, “Pasión” 51). In this way, the silences within her poetry are also an important aspect to try to translate. In order to avoid losing these silences, I have tried to avoid paraphrasing, or explaining more than the original author had. I also tried to

preserve the breaches in punctuation, and the breaks in a thought or sentence by avoiding unnecessary rearrangement of the order of the words (pushing the limits of acceptable syntax in English).

Lastly, she wrote for herself and did not care whether or not anyone else read her work (“Entrevista con García” 61, “Yo escribo” 395), and because of this, her poetry follows the paradox proposed by Walter Benjamin. Thus, I am left to communicate a work that was never meant to communicate to any particular audience, and my task is to translate the essence of her art. Another translational theorist, Dean-Thacker, writes that the writer may not be “conscious of his purpose at the moment of writing” and therefore art has no purpose and no intention, but it is the translator who finds a purpose and intention that is unique to his or her being and implements it through his or her translation (231). The personal purpose I have found in María’s writing is an abstract quest to unify and better understand the surrounding universe, which I aim to convey through her metaphors as well as through the flow of rhythmic motion she creates with her word choice.

Overall, in my translation process I have composed three drafts of María’s poems. The first was a word-for-word direct translation in order to understand the overall meaning of each poem. The second, more intricately focused upon sounds and rhythm, with a focus on the poetic elements of rhyme and alliteration. The final draft focused on the register of the language, polishing the syntax, trying to consider the entity of the whole collection of poems.

Translation of *Cristales míos* (*My Crystals*)

I

BIOGRAFÍA

El 3 de Mayo, día de las cruces de flores, naciste. Y tu vida fue una pasionaria—
flor de cruces—que subyugaba y conmovía.

I

BIOGRAPHY

On the third of May, day of the crosses made of flowers, you were born.¹ And
your life was a Passiflora—flower made of crosses—that moved and enchanted.²

¹ The 3rd of May is the feast day of Saint Philip the Apostle, whose symbol is the cross.

² I wanted to keep her play on words “día de las cruces de flores” and then later “flor de cruces;”
however, additional syllables are a consequence.

2

No escuchamos tu voz, pero sentimos que estás muy cerca de nosotros. Tanto, que nos llega al rostro el leve aire que desplaza tu invisible figura. Otras veces, en cambio, te sabemos tan lejos, que miramos con ansia los remotos luceros creyendo adivinar en ellos un reflejo de un nuevo y distante paradero.

Si supiéramos que habíamos de encontrarte recorreríamos el mundo, pero el corazón vacila inquietante sin orientarse.

¿En dónde nos esperas?

2

We do not hear your voice, but we feel that you are very near to us. So close, that we are brought to your face by the faint air that displaces your invisible figure. Other times, for a change, we know you to be far, so that we longingly look upon the distant stars, believing to foresee in them a reflection of a new and distant locality.³

If only we knew that we were to find you traversing the world, but the heart restlessly sways, refusing to align.⁴

Where do you await us?

3

No hay carta geográfica que marque tu ruta ni brújula que indique tu punto cardinal. La brisa que oreaba tu frente en la marcha no figura en la rosa de los vientos. Y es que elegiste el camino que conduce a Dios.

³ In the original, “lejos” and “luceros” share a subtle rhyme as well as alliteration. Far and star have a stronger rhyme but no alliteration. However, in English, ending sentences in shorter words sounds more poetic, and I hoped to make up for the lack of ability to fully rhyme “luceros” with “paradero.” In this dilemma, I was unsuccessful in finding a rhyming word that still preserves the meaning of “location” or “whereabouts,” or even “stop” and instead chose a short, soft word with which to end, while still maintaining the general meaning. In her brother’s work *Gaviota*, he uses the term “estrellas remotas” and in the original here she uses “luceros remotos” to convey the distant stars (Vera Saura “La poeta” 317).

⁴ The Spanish word “orientarse” possesses an element of self-orientation, hence the heart, by not orienting itself, is refusing to do so. I wished to end this sentence in a short word, to sound more poetic in English, and “align” rhymes with “find,” whereas in the original, “encontrarte” has a rhythm with “orientarse.”

3

There is no geographical chart that marks your route or binnacle that indicates your cardinal point.⁵ The breeze that bares the brow of your course does not appear in the compass rose.⁶ T'is clear you sought the lane that leads to God.⁷

4

Hermana –figura de mausoleo--, como siempre estás sobre la losa fría de su sepulcro, has perdido tu calor.

Golondrina negra –hermana--, de tanto cruzar el camino que va a sus cenizas, se han quebrado tus alas.

Aquel pico del monte ha desgarrado el cielo para que Dios te sonría.

4

Sister –statue of the mausoleum--, as you are always upon the cold tombstone of his sepulcher, you have lost your warmth.

Black swallow –sister--, from continually crossing the road that spans to his ashes, your wings have burned.

That mountain peak has ripped open the sky so that God would grant you a smile.⁸

⁵ The original has a unique rhythm between “ruta” and “brujula,” which I tried to mimic with the rhyme between binnacle and cardinal, even though the rhyme is displaced, since it does not rhyme with route.

⁶ In Spanish, “oreaba,” “marcha,” “figura,” and “rosa” are all short rhyming words. I tried to substitute this with alliteration of “bares the brow.” I chose the word “course” for “marcha” because it has alliteration with “compass” to try to make up for its lack of rhyme.

⁷ Andrés Cegarra Salcedo uses the phrase “el camino que conduce a Dios” in his work *Gaviota* (Vera Saura, “La poeta” 317). In my translation, to preserve the alliteration of “camino que conduce,” I chose “lane” instead of path or road and I chose “lead” to translate “conduce.” “Vientos” rhymes with “Dios” in the original. While wind is difficult to manipulate into sounding similar to God, I tried to keep a subtle rhyme elsewhere by choosing the word “sought” rather than “chose” because it has a long ‘o’ like that in God.

⁸ Andrés is buried at the foot of the sierra mines, which Asensio Saez refers to the mountains as “his mausoleum” (“Bailén” 296). In the translation, “te sonría” would literally translate as “would smile at you,” but I chose to say “grant you a smile” in order to introduce alliteration with God to replace the flow between the soft ‘s’ of “Dios” and “sonría.”

5

Tú, madre, siempre tan callada, avara de sufrimientos, ni suspirar quieres para que no se pierda un átomo de tu dolor.

5

You, dear mother, always so silent, greedy with sorrows, nor do you wish to sigh so as not to release a single atom of your pain.⁹

6

Los caminos y el mar son para mí murallas tendidas a lo largo; pero me llegan los vientos de todas las latitudes dándome agitación de veleta. Movilidad inútil y parada que sueña en la hoja muerta que la corriente arrastra.

6

To me, the roads and sea are walls unfurled lengthways; but the winds arrive at me from all latitudes with the agitation of the weathercock.¹⁰ Seized and useless mobility dreaming of the dead leaf that the current sweeps away.¹¹

⁹ I added “dear” because “mother” by itself seemed too abrupt and even rude, when in fact the poem expresses deep sympathy. In the original, “callada” rhymes with “avara” and “suspirar.” “Silent” forms alliteration with “sigh,” and “suffering,” which tries to substitute for the lack of rhyme.

¹⁰ In Spanish, “tendida” might mean “stretched out” more literally, but it sounds choppy when “murallas tendidas” sounds soft. So I chose the word “unfurled.”

¹¹ In the original, “parada,” “sueña,” “hoja,” “arrastra” all share rhyming endings. I was able to try to preserve this without substituting for alliteration by inserting “seized,” “dreams,” “leaf,” and “sweeps.”

7

He cerrado la puerta de mi corazón con una recia muralla de indiferencia, y a través de ella se ha filtrado —ósmosis de sentimientos—el paisaje anímico de unsonrisa.

7

I have closed off the entrance to my heart with a secure wall of indifference, and through her has leaked—osmosis of feeling—the sentient landscape of a smile.¹²

8

El horizonte ha venido hacia mí; por esto no puedo moverme. Estoy circundada, oprimida por la limitación. No existe el espacio. Los pies junto a la tierra, la cabeza pegada al cielo.

Llevando el mundo dentro y los ojos vacíos se puede soñar y cantar.

8

The horizon has come towards me; for this I cannot move. I am surrounded, oppressed by limitation. Space does not exist. My feet joined to the earth, my head stuck to the sky.

Wearing empty eyes and the world within one may dream and sing.¹³

¹² Reviewers have noted María's majority use of feminine nouns (Vera Saura, "La poeta"). Since English does not have gender, I tried to implement this by giving wall a feminine possessive. This poem is filled with feminine nouns, and additionally, they are a group of words with similar endings: "puerta," "muralla," "indiferencia," "sonrisa." I tried to maintain these similar endings by choosing the words "entrance," "indifference," and "sentient."

¹³ Originally, I wanted to replace "sing" with "croon," because it has a more similar ending to "dream," like "soñar" and "cantar." But unfortunately, "croon" is much less common in English, than "cantar" is in Spanish. So, in order to preserve María's own voice, I chose "sing."

9

No es la tierra quien me sostiene, sino la luz del día. Y aunque me veo inmóvil llevo una velocidad de miles de kilómetros. Vehículo ideal para el transporte diario a regiones de ensueño, porque anulas el vértigo, y la hora exacta de partida, y la conversación importuna del otro peregrino. Cada cual por su ruta, veloces y sueltos, haciendo un alto al capricho y con el ligero bagaje de un libro.

Mañana quiero ir a Ceylán, que es una isla remota, de perlas y canela.

9

It is not the earth who sustains me, but rather the light of day. And although I see myself as immobile I carry a velocity of thousands of miles.¹⁴ Ideal vehicle for the daily transport to regions of dreams, because you dissolve all dizziness, and the exact hour of parting, and the conversation plagued by the other pilgrim. To each his own route, swift and undone, halting for a whim, with the lightweight baggage of a book.

Tomorrow I wish to go to Ceylon, which is a remote isle, of cinnamon and pearls.

10

Madre, ¿es éste tu rostro? ¿Aquél de luz y de risa y el perenne cantar en los labios?

No te pareces, madre.

Tienes ahora la cara ensombrecida y llevas el andar cansino, y si me apoyo en tu hombro no me sostienes, y si te hablo, lloras amargamente.

No te pareces, madre, no te pareces.

10

Mother, is this your face? That of light and of smile and the perennial song upon those lips?¹⁵

You do not seem yourself, mother.

Now you have a shadowed face and carry a weary gait, and if I support myself upon your shoulder you do not hold me, and if I speak to you, you cry bitterly.

You do not seem yourself, mother, you do not seem yourself.

14 The exact translation here would be “kilometers,” but “miles” reads more smoothly and is also a more common measurement unite in the U.S.

15 “Cantar” in Spanish is a verb “to sing,” but here I have replaced it with its noun, “song.”

11

El día amaneció doblado, ya con luz de atardecer en el comienzo. Y siguió caprichoso en su tono viejo, gris opaco, sin velocidad de día, sin novedades de luz, dejando entrar la noche prematura, queriéndose abreviar para dormir, morfinándose con eyectores vacíos de claridad.

No ha habido frescor temprano, ni despedida con locuras de color. Día desgajado, briznoso, sin sabor de temperaturas, sin respiración de tacto.

Espanja seca de una orilla sin mar.

11

The day awoke folded, at once with the light of dusk in its beginning. And on it went, capricious in its ancient, gray opaque voice, without velocity of day, without novelty of light, leaving the night to enter prematurely, wishing itself to condense in order to sleep, morphining itself with injections empty of clarity.¹⁶

The fresh dawn never came, no departure with madness of color. Broken day, fragmented, without taste of temperature, without breath of touch.

Dry sponge as a shore without a sea.

12

El aire tiene su amor en las hojas de los árboles –risa de movimiento--, y su desdén en la faz pétrea de las esquinas sombrías.

12

Air contains its love in the leaves of trees –swinging laughter--, and its disdain in the stone face of the shaded corners.

¹⁶ María turns “morphine” into a verb in Spanish, even though one does not exist. I tried to mimic the same in English.

13

Viento pregonero, entrometido y conversador, cuenta la verdad que sabes: Dí que, el sol me ha citado y me espera en la otra orilla del mundo.

13

Heralding wind, talkative and meddling, recount the truth that you know: Say that the sun has summoned me and awaits me at the world's other shore.

14

No me sirve el apoyo de tu hombro; tú caminas despacio. Quédate con lo cierto y déjame volar en la amplitud. Para ti las planicies, yo quiero arquitecturas.

Y alzaré los sistemas hasta hallar un nuevo panorama.

14

The support from your shoulder does not serve me; you walk slowly.¹⁷ Remain with what's true and leave me to fly in the amplitude. For you, the plateau, I wish for buildings.¹⁸

And I will erect the systems until I perceive a new scene.¹⁹

¹⁷ In the original, there is a rhyme between "hombro" and "despacio," which I tried to preserve with "serve me" and "slowly."

¹⁸ In Spanish, "para ti" rhymes with "planicies," and I chose "plateau" instead of "plains" because while "plateau" does not rhyme with "you," it has an off-rhyme.

¹⁹ In the original, "arquitecturas" has a rhythmic end-rhyme with "panorama," and in English I chose "scene" instead of "panorama" because it has an end-rhyme with "buildings."

15

Quiero ser constelación. Asomar mis instantes de la mano a las balsas del mundo, al puente roto de los pensamientos, ver en la llama la luz, negar la gravedad, y crear para creer.

15

I want to be a constellation. To reveal the sparks from my hands to the pools of the world, to the broken bridges of thought, to find the light in the flame, to negate gravity, and to beget in order to believe.²⁰

²⁰ In Spanish, “instantes” literally means “instants” or “moments” but here María seems to refer to bursts of atoms or stars. While I felt “flickers” could work, I chose “sparks” because it has fewer syllables and is more precise. The “broken bridges of thought” could represent an image of discrete quantum states rather than continuous states. In Spanish, “ver” means “to see” but “find” has alliteration with “flame,” and it reveals more of why she is seeing. Lastly, in the original, “crear para creer” has a great alliteration that strengthens the end of the poem. I try to preserve this with “beget in order to believe,” rather than “create” and “believe,” even if “beget” is more archaic in English, I think the alliteration in this case better matches the whole of her poetry.

Controversia

Exacto, necesario.

Era un verde contorno de teorías levantando su límite de fortalezas. Trajo el viento, echó la luz, cambió la mirada. Suavidades complejas inclinaron el plano, donde una lentitud intrigante de precipitación irremediable, espera –sonrisa en el tiempo—la cierta afirmación silente.

Controversy

Critical, exact.²¹

It was a green contour of conjectures raising its limit of valor. She brought the wind, cast the light, changed the gaze. Complicated smoothness inclined the plane,²² where an intriguing lethargy of irremediable precipitation, awaits—a smile in season—the certain silent affirmation.²³

²¹ “Exacto” and “necesario” have an end-rhyme, which leads to a strong beginning. “Exact” in English makes a hard sound, so I chose “critical” rather than “necessary” because it also has a hard sound, one that continues throughout the poem, and I wanted to preserve the rhyme through the fact that the second word has one more syllable.

²² “Controversy” is a feminine noun and I tried to personify this in order to continually emphasize the feminine vocabulary that is in the original. Additionally, “fortalezas” has an end-rhyme with “mirada.” “Gaze” rhymes with “plane,” and while the rhyme is displaced by this, it still carries a similar flow.

²³ I wanted a word that conveys both weather and time because “tiempo” can either mean “time” or “weather.”

La copa rota

Fue un suicidio. Se partió por más abajo del corazón.

Llevaba un rubí encendido –aorta de cristal—en el vértice del fondo.

Esbelta, sonora, adolescente en el tránsito de los tamaños, con avidez ensanchada de audacia, las estrías graciosas daban una visible ansia de espuma picante, viva, desbordada.

Quiso matarse para que la amaran más, para que se condolieran de su belleza perdida, de su armonía deshecha. Para sentir las manos, y la mirada, y la voz –tenues, tibias—en toda su fragilidad. Para escapar del conjunto uniforme y enterrarse aislada, negando su generosidad de optimismo.

Pensó –suspicaaz orgullo de su transparencia—que en la casa de amor naciente no se ocuparían de ella.

The Broken Cup

It was suicide. Split through far beneath the heart.

Wearing a burning ruby –crystal aorta—in the apex of the depth.

Slender, sonorous, adolescent in the transit of sizes, with avidity expanded from audacity, the gracious grooves emitting a visible anxiousness of cutting smoke, alive and bursting.

She wanted to slay herself so that they loved her more, so that they would condole her lost beauty, her undone harmony.²⁴ In order to feel her hands, her gaze, and her voice –faint, tepid—in all of their fragility. In order to escape the uniform ensemble and to bury herself in isolation, negating their generosity of optimism.

She thought --proud suspicion of her transparency—that in the house of dawning love, to her they would pay no heed.²⁵

²⁴ “Matar” means “to kill” but “kill” is less poetic and too abrupt, so I chose “slay.”

²⁵ I chose “heed” because it rhymes with “transparency,” and in the original, “transparencia” rhymes with “ella.”

18

Sin saber si fué tiempo o hueco de existencia, el momento, pequeño no por humilde, sino por concentrado, pasó –cuenco de un transcurso—dejando simas en las ancas alturas últimas.

18

Without knowing if it were time or a fissure in existence, the moment, small not for humble, but rather for concentrated, elapsed —a pocket in a path—transcending chasms into the furthest apical verges.²⁶

19

Montañas suaves y mar caliente son las sendas de voz. Alcanzan los sentimientos perdidos, profundos y silenciosos. Y ya viajeros del sonido llegan a los ecos abiertos de la inquietud.

19

The gentle mountains and the raging sea are the pathways of voice. They attain those lost, vast, and tacit sentiments.²⁷ And now migrants of sound they arrive at the gaping echoes of unease.²⁸

²⁶ In the original, “tiempo” and “hueco” have a nice rhyme in the original, but here I could not find a good substitute for “gap,” and instead replaced the original rhyme to be the rhythm between “fissure” and “existence.” The syntax here is a little strange, but it was common of ultraists to eliminate verbs so I feel that the absence of verbs is important here. This poem contains a lot of words that end in a strong ‘o’: “pequeño,” “concentrado,” “pasó,” “cuenco,” “transcurso,” “dejando,” “momento.” While I am unable to repeat the amount of rhyme, “elapsed” maintains a rhyme with “path,” and “pocket in a path” keeps a similar semi-alliteration of “cuenco de un transcurso.” In the original, “ancas alturas últimas” has a unique rhyme and alliteration. “Highest ultimate haunches” would maintain some alliteration and would be a more direct translation, but would lose the rhyme. “Furthest” and “verges” loses alliteration but preserves a rhyme, and I chose this because I felt the rhythm was more important in the ending.

²⁷ In Spanish, adjectives naturally have gender and number and smoothly share the same endings. This is not always possible in English, but in this case I was able to have three terse adjectives, “lost,” “vast,” “tacit” with the same ending, while also preserving the same sentiment as “perdidos,” “profundos” and “silenciosos.”

²⁸ In Spanish “viajeros” has a rhyme with “sentimientos” and “silenciosos.” “Sentiment,” “tacit,” and “migrant” maintain a rhyme.

20

Las ausencias no lo son por el tiempo, sino por la distancia. Un minuto lejano es zanja de sepultura. Y en la invisible proximidad, saltan, seguras y apretadas, las caravanas de colores de los sentimientos.

20

Absence is not due to time, but rather to distance.²⁹ One long minute is the pit of a tomb. And in the invisible proximity, it springs, secure and clenched, the cavalcade made of all the colors of ardor.³⁰

21

Ahora que pasa el otoño deja caer tu arco. Es el tiempo del descenso.
Hacia sus centros las diafanidades en reposo; las sombras con tenacidad de obstáculo; el ansiar envolvente. Ya en el viento se abrió el cantar y hay que dar la pausa a su extensión.

21

Now that autumn passes, leave your bow to fall. It is the moment of descent.³¹
Toward their centers, the transparencies are in repose; the shadows with a tenacity of interference; the encasing desire. The song is then released into the wind and one must give pause to its extension.

²⁹ While the original poem expresses plural “absences,” I made it singular so as not to sound as awkward and to sound more poetic.

³⁰ The original has similar endings with 3-4 syllables: “seguras,” “apretadas,” “caravanas.” I chose to have a slight alliteration of hard ‘c’ by using “secure,” “clenched,” and “cavalcade” in order to make up for the loss of end-rhyme in Spanish.

³¹ In Spanish, “tiempo del descenso” has an end-rhyme, which I tried to translate through “moment of descent.”

22

La imaginación es el boceto de una ignorancia.

22

Imagination is the outline of an ignorance.³²

23

El galopar negro y subterráneo de las tumbas, tiene su eco en el aliento de los cipreses, árboles máximos afilados de sentido, con savia de corazones muertos y clorofila de iris en despedida.

23

The black galloper and underground room of the tombs, holds his echo in the breath of the cypress, trees maximally tapered in track, with sap as dead hearts and chlorophyll as an iris in farewell.³³

³² During this time, the importance of theoretical physics amplified, for it serves as a powerful tool to explain and predict the components of the universe that the human eye cannot directly see. Theory now began to either explain experiment using created models of understanding, or predict new, undetectable models in our universe, which only later instigated experiments that would test their validity. This required the use of extreme imagination.

³³ While “breath” loses its original rhyme with “echo” in Spanish “aliento” and “eco”, it gains an end-rhyme with “cypress.” While “sentido” could translate as “direction,” I chose “track” in order to maintain a rhyme with “black,” while substituting alliteration with “taper” and end-rhyme with “sap” in lieu of the original sound of “negro” and “subterráneo” in the beginning. At the end of the poem in Spanish, “clorofila” rhymes with “despedida,” which I tried to preserve with the end-rhyme between “chlorophyll” and “farewell.”

24

Siempre de la mitad de un sentimiento. Sus emociones son cifras, sus placeres líneas, su amor y su fe luces quebradas. No completa la alegría ni finaliza el dolor. Todo es sector en su alma. Únicamente es doble el eco de su conciencia.

24

Forever at the center of a sentiment. Its emotions ciphers, its pleasures lines, its faith and ardor burning luster.³⁴ It does not complete felicity nor does it finalize pain. Everything is a sector in its soul. The echo of its consciousness is the only double.³⁵

25

Es como un rumor de pasos que se alejan.

Tú que conoce los sonidos dame el matiz compañero. Que no se propague, que amortigüe el eco de las indiferencias, que quede un reflejo de empeño, que nunca se acabe el susurro.

25

It is like a murmur of footsteps that disintegrates.³⁶

You, to whom the sounds are familiar, give me the nuanced companion. That it does not propagate, that the echo of indifference should fade, that a reflection of determination remain, that the whisper never cease.

³⁴ In the original, “siempre” alliterates with “sentimiento.” In English, while “forever” loses this, “center” preserves it. In Spanish, “amor,” “dolor,” and “sector” all rhyme, which I tried to maintain with ardor, sector. Since pain loses its rhyme here, I changed what would be translated as “lights” to “luster” in order to keep 3 rhyming words.

³⁵ In Spanish, “alegría” has a nice end-rhyme with “finaliza,” and I tried to preserve this through “complete” and “felicity.” The original poem has a rhyme between the last two lines with “alma” and “conciencia.” I tried to preserve this rhyme through “soul” and “double,” despite their different sound.

³⁶ This poem ends with a rhyme between “susurro” and “compañero.” I chose to keep the English word “cease” (instead of “dies”) in order to preserve the soft sounds of “susurro,” and I could not find a sufficient replacement for “companion” to keep a rhyme. Therefore, I chose to begin the poem with a rhyme between “disintegrate” and “propagate.”

Abril

La colegiala, dorada de inquietud, con ráfagas de un rosa sombrío en los ojos –cicatriz heredada--, agotó la tarde de primavera. Por ella el gesto contento del día, denso de luz, derramado, cayéndole en los hombros agudos, como un aceite tibio. Es un no poder desprenderse las calles y las plazas, adheridas al cuerpo, acomodadas, fibras flexibles de claridad y alegría.

No hubo crepúsculo, porque nunca está hecho, y la cabeza rubiamente tostada de la muchacha, cerró el camino del tiempo con el sonido de sus cabellos de cascabel.

A la oscuridad súbita, brincó –último salto, llave de pirueta de la libertad--, el blanco portal de su internado.

Se encogieron los miembros antes elástico, se divulgaron, en un viento marinero de lluvias, suspiros secretos de adioses inconscientes. Al deslizarse junto a las paredes frías, costrosas, desmoronadas –interior en norte distinto--, huía ocultándose, temerosa de reproches por su vuelo escapado. Sintióse convaleciente de voz, de ademanes. Y desconocida de sí misma, hundida en su susto –remordimiento, carga negra, gozo arrepenido—gemía.

La rodearon pronto, próximos, brazos plegados que no la apoyaban.

Imploró llorosa, azulada ahora.

La noche abierta miraba al cielo.

April

The student, effulgent from unease, with bursts of a shadowed rose in her eyes – inherited wound--, exhausted the spring afternoon.³⁷ Upon her, the day's contented grimace, dense with light, spilled, falling upon her sharp shoulders, like tepid oil. 'T is an inability to free oneself of the streets and the plazas, adherent to the body, comfortable, flexible fibers of clarity and bliss.

Dearth of dusk, as it is never made, and the girl's blondely browned head, closed off the road of time with the chime from her ringlets of bells.³⁸

At the unexpected darkness, she lunged –ultimate leap, key to the pirouettes of liberty--, the white portal of her academy.

³⁷ In Spanish “colegiala” rhymes with “dorada,” which I tried to mimic with a rhyme between “student” and “effulgent.” There is also an end-rhyme between “heredada” and “primavera,” which I chose to rhyme “wound” with “afternoon” in English.

³⁸ In Spanish, “no hubo crepúsculo” has a unique rhythm and rhyme, which I tried to repeat with the alliteration and brevity of “dearth of dusk.” I created “blondley” as its English adverb version of “blonde.” Finally, “tostada de la muchacha” has a difficult rhyme to repeat, so I chose “browned,” rather than “toasted,” in order to alliterate with “blondely.”

The elastic members rather contracted, leaked out, in a mariner's wind of rains, secret whispers of unconscious goodbyes. At slipping away, joined to the walls, cold, covered with crust, eroding –inland clear north--, she was fleeing, hiding herself, timorous of reproach for her escaped flight.³⁹ She feels herself convalescent of voice, of expression. And unknown to her own self, sunken in her fright –remorse, blackened burden, repentant pleasure—she moaned.

They surrounded her quickly, closely, crossed arms that would not cradle her.⁴⁰
She sorrowfully implored, now turned blue.
The gaping night was gazing towards the heavens.⁴¹

27

La única realidad el pensamiento. Lo que se imagina, esa es la vida.
Estás, aunque mis ojos no te alcancen, y cuando canto mis sueños existo en tu
sonrisa.
Fuera de ti, de mí, la verdad cautiva en éxtasis eterno.

27

Thought—the only reality. What is imagined, that is life.⁴²
You persist, though my eyes may not reach you, and when I whisper my dreams,
I subsist in your smile.⁴³
Outside of you, of me, the truth captive in eternal ecstasy.

³⁹ In Spanish, the adjectives are usually placed after the noun, whereas English they are usually placed before. Here I chose not to put adjectives before *walls* because they appear to describe both the protagonist and the wall, and this placement better preserves this ambiguity.

⁴⁰ In the original, *brazos plegados que no la apoyaban* has a unique rhythm, with both a rhyme between the first two words followed by alliteration with the 'p' of *plegados* and *apoyaban*. Instead of saying *crossed arms that would not support her*, I chose to say *crossed arms that would not cradle her*, to preserve some alliteration. Here, the meaning between *cradle* and *support* is stretched, but I felt this line of the poem to be poetically more important.

⁴¹ The last line has an end-rhyme between “abierta” and “miraba,” which I tried to preserve by alliteration between “gaping” and “gazing.”

⁴² This is a most difficult line to translate as “lo que se imagina, esa es la vida” has a beautiful rhyme and rhythm that is extremely difficult to directly replace in English. I believe that her word choice here is also important, and so substitution for rhyme would also be too large a sacrifice. I tried to maintain the inclusion of imagination by using “the fancy,” and I chose a verb that has a slight rhyme with life, “devise”, so as to read “what the fancy may devise, that is life,” but this lost the simplicity and the rhythm of the original poem.

⁴³ In the original, there is alliteration between “cuando” and “canto;” which I tried to preserve using “when I whisper;” although “canto” directly means “I sing.”

28

No había distancias, y era exacta la albura de tu amanecer. Pero cayó sobre mis
sienes helor de madrugada sin estrellas, y en mi corazón el arrasante calor de una
verdad.

28

There were no distances, and the silver in your sunrise was exact.⁴⁴ But an
iciness of starless dawn fell upon my temples, and a truth's triumphant heat upon my
heart.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ While the direct translation would be "whiteness" rather than "silver," I wanted to preserve the slight alliteration between "albura de tu amanecer," and "silver" and "sunrise" share a soft 's.' Additionally, "distances" was kept plural in order to maintain the imagery of multiple directions.

⁴⁵ In Spanish, "sobre mis seines" has a soft alliteration, and while "upon" and "temples" does not preserve this, "upon" and "dawn" have a nice rhythm.

Semana Santa

Como antes había llovido, quedó la noche tersa, embriagada de calma. La oscuridad elevó el cielo ensanchando el espacio. Vibrar de músicas, entrechocadas con el frescor de las luces blancas y la lenta agonía de las flores segadas en los huertos cercanos, empujaban la procesión, la fatiga de los hombres que conducían los tronos, el andar rítmico, balanceado –cuna de amarguras—de los judíos y los nazarenos.

Temblantes, humanas, consumiéndose en alientos y palpitaciones de existencia, las llamas de las velas junto a las figuras de los santos, dulcificando el resplandor de la otra luz conducida, la que expande en madejas metálicas y globos cerrados de cristal, y no se conmueve por el viento.

Ardía la atención de las gentes, inflamada en miradas, escuchando con los ojos, gustando en gozos de fiesta el recuerdo martirizante.

En aquella plaza última encuadraba el cortejo su cansancio, sus pausas, el peso de las vestiduras, *los pasos* recamados de lujo y piedad.

Los sonidos mezclados despertaban el amanecer en anunciación esplendorosa.

Allí también se quedó su voz azul –pureza, firmamento—encontrada como quien levanta la frente y ve cruzar una paloma asaeteada de sol.

Holy Week

It had rained as before, the terse night lingered, enraptured in calm. The darkness heightened the heavens, expanding the space.⁴⁶ Vibrating as music, chattering alongside the crisp white lights and the slow agony of the brittle flowers in the gardens abreast, pushing the procession, the fatigue of the men who were driving the thrones, the rhythmic walk, balanced –cradle of woe—of the Jews and the Nazarenes.⁴⁷

Trembling, human, consuming themselves in breaths and palpitations of existence, the taper's flames together with the figures of saints, sweetening the splendor of the other conducted light, that which expands in metallic yarns and balloons encased in crystal, unmoved by the wind.

The crowd's attention burns, ablaze in gazes, their eyes heeding, savoring the searing memory in festival delights.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Is Spanish, "elevó el cielo" has an end-rhyme, which I try to make up for by the alliteration of "heightened the heavens."

⁴⁷ I could not reproduce the flow and rhyme of "cuna de amargura," that reads so poetically in the original, but "woe" has a flow and rhyme with "throne," which I chose instead of "sorrow," "grief," or "bitterness."

⁴⁸ In the original, "inflamada en miradas" has a beautiful rhythm and end-rhyme. I tried to substitute this for the rhyme present in "ablaze in gazes." Again, there is great alliteration within "gustando los gozos," which I tried to mimic with "savoring the searing."

In that final plaza the cortege was framing its fatigue, its pauses, the weight of the apparel, the ornament *footprints* of mourning and piety.

The melded clamor was rousing the morn in splendid enunciation.

There too, the blue voice remained—purity, firmament—beheld as she who lifts her face and sees a dove cross, lanced by the sun.⁴⁹

30

Entre el mar y yo, tú. Entre mi alma y el mar una amargura infinita.

30

Between the sea and me, you. Between my soul and the sea, an infinite sorrow.

31

Me cogí a la risa falsa, ajena, persistente, agua enterrada para mi sed, y sostuve en equilibrio la tarde incomprendida.

31

I clung to the false, alien, persistent laughter, buried water for my thirst, and I sustained the incomprehensible evening in equilibrium.

32

No me viste saltar el viento y romper la noche?
Iba transparente y fuerte, como una realidad exprimida.

32

Did you not see me leap into the wind and shatter the night?
Going transparent and strong, like an expended reality.

⁴⁹ In the original poem, the gender of the person who lifts his face is ambiguous. I chose the feminine version, in the spirit of María's more feminine-worded poetry. The "blue voice" might be a reference to her brother, as Vera Saura notes that "light and voice are the principle manifestation of her absent brother" ("La poeta" 319).

33

Yo soy quien enciende las estrellas. Llevo un río condensado de luz, que hace arco con la altura.

33

I am she who extinguishes the stars. I carry a condensed river of light, which turns altitude into arc.

34

Reacción

Todo el día será amanecer, claridad recién despierta, sol nuevo, voces descansadas. Nadie sabrá de mí, porque estaré cantando.

34

Reaction

All day it will be dawn, recently awoken clarity, new sun, renewed voices. No one will know of me, because I will be singing.

La caravana de gitanos irrumpió en la soledad de la costa. Mujeres y hombres de barro oscuro barnizado –tan relucientes y densos de color--; chiquillos como tallados en piedra negra, áspera y polvorienta. Pronto acamparon en la arena adentrada salpicada de charcos.

En un círculo pequeño hicieron fiesta de cantos y danzas.

La muchacha de cabellos quemados por el sol, daba su voz acompañada para que ellos, ebrios ya—ebrios siempre--, bailasen inseguros.

Era desigual, inquietante, la calma del agua azul, y el grupo sudoroso, maloliente, confuso.

Cuando bailó el más mozo de la tribu le acompañaron más cantares y palmadas femeninas, y los ancianos se apretaron al estrecho anillo, ensanchándolo.

Tenía el muchacho un mirar ansioso y desengañado.

En la inmensidad roja del poniente marino, su figura encendida de rutas era palmera herida de ritmo y arrullos, vela grácil que conjuraran al viento, piloto de las estrellas.

Aquella tarde no había marineros en la playa. El mar quiso ser cielo inmóvil, y se aquietó, indiferente al desaliento de las barcas.

The gypsy caravan burst into the loneliness of the coast. Women and men of dark and glazed clay –so lustrous and dense in color--; children nearly sculpted from coarse, dusty, black, rock. Soon they settled on the pervaded arena, sprinkled with puddles.⁵⁰

In a small circle, they made a festivity of song and dance.

The girl with locks singed by the sun, bequeathing her harmonized voice so that they, already tipsy—always tipsy—dangerously dance.

It was unequal, unsettling, the calm of the blue waters, and the fetid, sweaty, confused group.

As the most adolescent of the clan danced, more claps and feminine singers followed, and the elders gathered, widening the narrow ring.

The boy had a face disabused and uneasy.

In the red immensity of the mariner's west wind, his figure flushed with new routes, was a palm tree wounded by rhythms and coos, graceful candle that wards off the wind, pilot of the stars.

There were no mariners on the beach this evening. The sea wanted to be an immobile sky, and it allayed, indifferent to the dismay of the ships.

⁵⁰ Inserted comma to read more fluently in English.

36

Sino, signo, llevar en mi frente tu inmensidad.

36

Fate, fatality, wearing your immensity on my front.⁵¹

37

En mi costado esta chispa de pedernal, caído sin dirección ni origen, ha formado un mundo de basaltos encendidos.

37

In my side this spark of flint, fallen with neither direction nor origin, she has formed a world of ignited basalts.⁵²

38

Ya no hacen falta puertos. Que quiten las banderas de luz de los faros, y encierren los navíos. El mar ha estrechado su inmensidad, y sólo queda una angostura para que pase mi espíritu.

38

Ports are no longer requisite.⁵³ May they shed the beacon's banners of light and lock up the vessels.⁵⁴ The sea has stretched out its immensity, and all that remains is a straight so that my spirit might pass.⁵⁵

⁵¹ I tried to mimic the play on "sino," "signo" while still maintaining the meaning. "Fate" was chosen over "destiny" or "fortune" due to its frequent poetic occurrence. "Fatality" was chosen so as to maintain a noun (rather than "fatal" an adjective), and the definition implied here is "something established by fate," as "signo" merely means "sign."

⁵² Inserted "she" in order to give gender to the "spark of flint," in the spirit of María's characteristic use of feminine nouns.

⁵³ I could say "necessary," but it introduces an extra syllable, whereas "vital" is one too less. "Requisite" might not sound as poetic, but it maintains the syllables and rhythm

⁵⁴ In Spanish, "faros" and "navíos" rhyme, which I tried to repeat with an off-rhyme between "banners" and "vessels."

⁵⁵ In Spanish, "para que pase" has alliteration that I try to preserve with the soft 's' sounds within "straight," "spirit," and "pass."

39

Siempre escuchándote, y súbita, al fin, la voz.

39

Always listening to you, and unforeseen, at last, the voice.⁵⁶

40

Aún, después de todo, existe la estática. Sesgada hacia las casas blancas y los molinos, navego sin azul.

40

Still, after everything, ecstasy exists. Slanted towards the white houses and the windmills, I sail without the blue.

41

Los árboles quieren asomarse al fondo de mi aterida transparencia. Porque se ahogaron las rosas del ensueño, y mi superficie –adverbio de tu resplandor—es una fortaleza de cristal.

41

The trees would like to protrude into the depths of my frigid transparency. Because the roses drown in the reverie, and my surface –adverb of your splendor—is a fortress of crystal.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Here, I tried to maintain total amount of syllables because it is such a brief poem.

⁵⁷ I chose “reverie” instead of dream because it mimics the sound of “superficie” in the original text, while also adding a nice rhyme to “transparency,” which I thought would be a poetic choice that María would make.

42

Esta mentira, verdad de lo imaginable, flota siempre en su agonía.

42

This deceit, truth of the imaginable, forever floats in her agony.⁵⁸

43

Llegó a la costa, de tierra adentro, y parecía desembarcado de una lancha de Pescadores, remero de aguas y vientos, bravamente curtida de piel, alucinada la mirada verde blanquinosa brillante, apóstol de luces submarinas.

Sabía izar el color de los limoneros en sus mediodías oxidados, y anclar al cielo —él mástil— las anchuras ocre de los campos.

No tuvo nada que hacer el sol en su frente, ni el mar en sus sueños.

43⁵⁹

He arrived at the coast, from lands within, and appeared disembarked from a boat from Pescadores, rower of waters and winds, gallantly tanned of the skin, the hallucinated, brilliant whitish green gaze, apostle of submarine lights.⁶⁰

He knew to hoist the lemon trees' color in their oxidized midday, and to anchor the sky—the mast—the ocher wideness of the fields.

The sun had nothing to do with his front, nor the sea in his dreams.

⁵⁸ In Spanish, “mentira” rhymes with “agonía,” so instead of “lie,” I chose “deceit” in order to off rhyme with “agony.” In Spanish “deceit” is a feminine noun and so I inserted “her,” rather than “its,” in order to give it feminine gender in English, while also contributing to the feminine whole of María’s poetry.

⁵⁹ One article claims that poems 43–48 are inspired by Miguel Hernández’ visit with María (Delgado, “Miguel” 150) María met Miguel in 1932 (Pérez Álvarez 141) and some sources claim that he eventually dedicated his poem *El rayo que no cesa* to her (Delgado “Miguel” 161).

⁶⁰ I tried to substitute the rhyme within “alucinada la mirada” by the alliteration of “green gaze.”

La luna se quedó naciendo del mar.
 Esperaban las playas la nueva luz mojada, de amarillo frío, sal muerta en óleos
 de inmensidad.

(Ellos pasaron cantando.)

Los álamos respondían con su inquieto revés blanco, no de planta, ausente.

El aroma afilado de los pinos abría rutas redondas de soledad.

Un final de cañas sonoras, muy vestidas y apretadas, cubría el poniente caído,
 hundido en la sierra enferma de pozos.

(Ellos cruzaron sus sueños.)

Otra luna –honda y alta—eco de recuerdos—barranco en el cielo—fue
 levantando la noche.

¿Es más fuerte el silencio que la voz?

The moon remained rising from the sea.

The shores anticipating the new wet light, of cold gold,⁶¹ dead salt in oil
 paintings of immensity.

(They passed on singing.)

The poplars responded with their uneasy white misfortune, not that of plant,
 absent.

An end of resonant reeds, too wrapped and replete, covering the fallen west
 wind, sunken in the sierra that was sick from the wells.

(They exchanged their dreams.)

The other moon –lofty and abysmal—echo of memories— rift in the sky—was
 lifting up the night.

Is silence louder than voice?

⁶¹ In Spanish, “amarillo frío” has a nice rhyme; I tried to imitate this with “cold gold,” but by doing so the color changes from the direct translation of “yellow” to the metallic version—“gold.”

45

La lluvia lavó los horizontes y puso, al pie del eucalipto de la senda, un charco de agua cargada de reflejos. El viento, el sol, los pájaros, bebían primorosamente. Y el árbol se inclinaba de pesadumbre ignorando sus raíces.

45

The rain wiped away the horizons and placed, at the foot of the path's eucalyptus, a pond of water weighted with reflections.⁶² The sun, the wind, the birds, were splendidly drinking.⁶³ And the tree bent in from sorrow, ignoring its roots.

⁶² In Spanish, “agua cargada” has a beautiful sound and end-rhyme. Instead of translating this as heavy water, I tried to implement alliteration to maintain some of the poetics of the original, by saying “water weighted with.”

⁶³ In Spanish, “primorosamente” directly translates as “exquisitely,” but I chose the word “splendidly” because many of the original Spanish words have ‘p’ sounds, and while I could not preserve it everywhere I chose to incorporate it here.

Las calles estaban anchas, blancas, rebosantes de luna. No cabían lágrimas, ni voces, ni silencios. Entre las esquinas que miran a su ciudad –cuchillos al viento y al campo—se quedó el sentimiento, roto ya de las palabras que no dije, de las angustias que flotaron en sonrisas.

Como en un deshielo de amanecer, confundido en claridades, pasó el acero de mi pensamiento.

The streets were wide, white, brimming with moon. No tears, or voices, or silences would fit. Between the corners that gaze upon their city –blades to the field and wind—the feeling remained, already broken from words that I did not say, from the anguish suspended in smiles.⁶⁴

As in the defrosting of daybreak, confused in clarities, the steel of my thought continued on.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ In the original, “esquinas miran” has a slight end-rhyme, which I could not reproduce in “corners watching” or “gazing,” so I chose to have the off rhyme between “gaze” and “blade,” even though the direct translation would be “knives” instead of “blades,” but since “cuchillo,” “viento” and “campo” all end in a strong ‘o’ I chose “blade” also because it ends in ‘d’ to match with the ends of “field” and “wind.” Additionally, the direct translation would be “floated,” but in the original “angustias” and “sonrisas” have a unique rhyme that I cannot reproduce, and so I chose to substitute “floated” with “suspended,” to produce alliteration with “smiles.”

⁶⁵ “Pasó” directly translates as “passed,” but in the original, “pasó” end-rhymes with “acero” and “pensamiento,” and while I could not reproduce this, I chose “continued on” in order to further the alliteration between “confused” and “clarities.” “Acero” could also be “blade,” but I chose “steel” because it seems a source of protection.

Se parecían.

Yo no quería que el recién llegado dijera mi nombre deleitándose en una creación de mayúsculas gallardas y sonoras.

--¡M – A – R – Í - A!—Como un grito que se envolviera en sí redondeando sus filos, o una voz lejana que se agudizara sin herir.

--¡M – A – R – Í - A! – Y aguardaba callado -- ¡él también! – que yo no respondiera, que me ungiera de sentirme bien llamada, que supiera del contacto mío con mi nombre.

Más que parecerse, idénticos, los mismos en la sorpresa, gemelos en el decir ¡M – A – R – Í – A!, y esperar, como si lloviese el nombre en el silencio después de dicho, milagro de ellos sólo.

They seemed the same.

I did not wish that the recently arrived had said my name, delighting in a creation of graceful and sonorous capital letters.

--M – A – R – Í - A! –Like a cry might have shrouded itself in essence, rounding off its edges, or a faraway voice might have worsened without wounding.⁶⁶

--M – A – R – Í - A! –And waiting silent – he too! – that I might not have responded, that I might have anointed myself feeling well-called, that I might have known contact with my own name.

More than resembling, identical, the same in the surprise, twins in the saying M – A – R – Í – A!, and waiting, as if the name itself would have rained on the silence after being spoken, miracle of them alone.

⁶⁶ In Spanish, the subjunctive clause expresses a feeling of uncertainty, whereas this is not as strong in the English version of subjunctive, so I tried to preserve this by inserting “might” throughout the poem where the subjunctive appears.

48

Tu voz es como un rocío de pétalos, como una primavera que cuajara en acentos; como si la pureza –flores, aromas, color, luz—sublimara en palabras.

Tu voz es vuelo y brisa –alas--, inquietud y sosiego, realidad y esperanza. Tu voz es la montaña si se volviera humilde –fortaleza hecha beso—y la llanura llovida de estrellas –beso hecho cielo--.

48

Your voice is like a dew of petals, like a spring that were to curdle in accents; as if what is pure –flowers, aromas, color, light—were to sublime into words.⁶⁷

Your voice is flight and breeze –wings--, restlessness and serenity, reality and hope. Your voice is the mountain if it became humble –fortress turned kiss—and the plain showered by stars –kiss turned firmament--.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ “Pureza” would directly be translated as the noun “purity,” but in order to preserve a rhyme with “words,” I chose to change it to a passive version of its adjective.

⁶⁸ In Murcia, there are remains of fortresses on the mountaintops, and María is most likely referring to this image.

En la noche

1—Cuando el pueblo dormía, y estaban las casas miedosas y pesantes de blancura, salí, empujada de mí sin soltarme, acuciada de voz tirada desde arriba, todo el día, en sólido desmayo frío.

¡Qué suave su existencia deshecha, desmenuzada, superpuesta sin ruido, formando arquitecturas acróbatas en vilo de muerte!

Martiricé las calles gozosas abrasadas de hielo immaculado; me mojaron los árboles en su llover intermitente de nubes prendidas en las ramas; alcancé cuanta pureza pude, en regusto de destrozo.

Al retorno, la fatiga y un leve remordimiento me acompañaban.

Me hice de niebla y abrí mis ojos al no ver de la noche, soñando que yo era, ardida y agitada, toda la nieve.

In the Night

1—When the town was sleeping, and the houses were fearful and heavy with whiteness, I withdrew, pushed from me without breaking free, impelled by a voice propelled from above, all day long, in solid cold dismay.⁶⁹

How smooth its undone existence, in pieces, overlapped without sound, forming acrobatic architecture on the edge of death!

I martyred the merry streets, dried out by immaculate ice; the trees doused me in their intermittent rain from clouds fastened in their branches; I procured as much purity as I could, in the aftertaste of destruction.⁷⁰

Upon return, fatigue and slight remorse accompanied me.

I turned into mist and opened my eyes at not seeing the night, dreaming that I was, burnt and agitated, all of the snow.

⁶⁹ I tried to keep the rhyme in Spanish between “salí,” “empujada de mí” through “me” and “free,” rather than choosing the words “myself” and “releasing.” Later, I try to mimic the original rhyme between “acuciada” and “tirada,” with the words “impelled” and “propelled,” rather than the more direct translations of “urged” or “driven” and “thrown down.” Later, I could say “the whole day” in order to make up for the lack of rhyme that it has with “propel” and “impel” (like it has in the original), but I liked how in the original poem the last line does not rhyme with the previous sequence of rhymes. So I chose to break the rhyme by saying “all day long” instead.

⁷⁰ In the original, “pureza” and “pude” has a strong alliteration between ‘p` sounds; I was happy to mimic this with “procured” and “purity,” where in English the order of words is rearranged, but the alliteration stays in the same place. “Procure” translates “alcancé,” which would more directly translate as “I achieved.”

El minero muerto

2—Alguien le advirtió el riesgo de la cuesta, resbaladiza con la nueva alfombra que anulaba las piedras brilladoras, sostén del pendiente caminar.

No aceptó el propuesto desvío.

Todo blancamente callado, esperando para hermanarle.

Su vida reseca de tierras oscuras, se dejó cortar por el viento y el frío, en final insospechado, glorioso.

A la mañana nueva, cuando fue desenterrado de la albura, tenía desgarradas las ropas del pecho, como en un caluroso desvanecer.

The Dead Miner

2—Someone warned him of the threat of the gradient, sensitive to the fresh rug that reneged the sparkling rocks, support of the sloping walk.⁷¹

He did not accept the proposed detour.

Everything whitely quiet, waiting so as to unite him.

His life dried by darkened lands, was left to be cut by the wind and cold, in the unsuspected, glorious close.⁷²

In the new morn, as he was unveiled from the white, he carried undone garb across his chest, as in a heated unenduring.⁷³

⁷¹ In the original, “advirtió” rhymes with “riesgo;” I tried to continue the similar endings of words by using “threat” instead of risk, so it could share the ‘t’ ending with “gradient.” In the original, “alfombra” and “anulaba” share a beautiful alliteration, which I tried to implement through “rug” and “reneged,” although the direct translation would be closer to “annul” than “renege.”

⁷² In the original, “frío” and “glorioso” have an end-rhyme that makes the ending of the sentence poetic. I tried to preserve this with “cold” and “close,” again where the words have been rearranged in English, but the poetic elements remain in the same location.

⁷³ In the original, María plays on words that begin with “des-,” which in English would be words that begin with “un-.” I tried to mimic the repetition between “desenterrado,” “desgarradas,” and “desvanecer” through “unveiled,” “undone,” and “unenduring.” However, “unenduring” is not as common of an English word as “desvanecer” is in Spanish. Yet, I felt the trio of words to be more important to María’s original.

La luz del faro
(Cabo de Palos)

3—Comenzó como todos los días, rítmica, circular, caliente de color, robando sombras, anunciado peligros de geografía con sus gritos de luz.

Espumas dulces de las altas mareas celestes, cubrían la costa, diluían con afán el verde sorprendido de las aguas.

Tal reflejo le devolvieron a la luz del faro las playas distintas, los acantilados en total panorama sustituido, que enloqueció, despavorida de blancura.

Ella misma, ella sola, rompió su armadura y bajó sin camino, por fuera de los escalones de la lente, por dentro del junco de piedra, precipitada, suicida, buscando la otra cara de la tierra y el mar.

The Lighthouse Beam⁷⁴
(Cape Palos)

3—It began like every day, rhythmic, circular, warm in color, stealing shadows, presaged perils of geography with its cries of light.

Soft foam from the high celestial tides, covering the coast, dissolving with fervor the green surprised by the waters.

Such reflection returned to the lighthouse beam the distinct shores, the cliffs in complete surrogate horizon, that maddened, terrified of whiteness.⁷⁵

She herself, she alone, broke her armor and fell without course, fell outside the rungs of the lens, fell inside the reeds made of precipitated, suicidal rock, seeking the other face of the earth and sea.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ A more direct translation might be “The Light from the Lighthouse,” but this reads long and awkward when the same phrase returns in the poem body, so I changed it to “Lighthouse Beam” to be more concise and less awkwardly repetitive.

⁷⁵ Here, while the syntax is still acceptable in English, it is less easy to read. However, in poetry syntax is often sacrificed to preserve other elements. Here, it was too difficult to place the objects before the receiving noun due to their accompanying long descriptions.

⁷⁶ I chose to continue to repeat the previously mentioned word “fell” in place of the Spanish word “por,” which would be something more like “by,” because it sounds more natural and poetic in English.

Intima

4--¡Cómo me alegró la nieve! Creí que se enfriaba el mundo, y que --¡por fin! – se apagaba mi corazón.

2 febrero 1934.

Intimate

4—How the snow livened me! I felt that the world was freezing, and that —at last!—my heart was extinguishing.⁷⁷

February 2, 1934.

⁷⁷ I could not reproduce the beginning repetition between “creí que” and “y que” and so I chose two rhyming ending words: “freezing” and “extinguishing.”

Paisaje

El campo, cuadrado y grande, descuidado a trozos, descuidado a trechos, mira hacia las ramblas secas y los horizontes limpios. Se recorta, lejana, la silueta de los montes mondos, calizos; más aquí *el eucalipto* –encarnado de tierno--, *la morera*, *el almendro*, solos en unidad de especie, muestran su verdor y su tamaño con presunción de modelos, de posible existencia, de concesión amorosa de la tierra.

Un caserón alto, detiene los vientos fuertes de levante, encuadrando al mediodía. Las abejas han instalado en él su labor silenciosa, y las flores se dejan robar en los cálices calientes y mecidos.

Toda la tarde el cielo sobre mí, blanco y dorado, gozoso, dándome sus júbilos. Cuando desaparecieron las malvalocas rosadas de la senda, florecieron estrellas. Una, desprendida del tallo azul, dejó en nuestros ojos su camino.

Dijo la voz adolescente, delgada, inquieta en mansedumbre como un arroyo claro.

--Cuando se corre una estrella se concede una gracia.

La hora era de armonía y pureza. El secreto de las súplicas trajo su misterio como círculo de antorchas invisibles.

Nacían y se quemaban auroras, hojas y frutos, en vértigo de resurrección, albor y acabamiento.

El miedo apagó de pronto la confianza del ensueño.

¿De dónde viniste, desvelo oculto, a clavar en mi sien tu desosiego?

Landscape

The pasture, square and vast, neglected to bits, neglected to breadths, looks upon the dry ravines and clear horizons.⁷⁸ It is trimmed, remote, the silhouette of the bare, alkaline mounds; Here too, *the eucalyptus* –earth’s incarnate--, *the mulberry tree*, *the almond tree*, alone in unity of species, display their lushness and their size with presumption of models, of possible existence, of amorous concession of the earth.

A tall ramshackle house, detains the strong eastern winds, framing the midday. In him, the bees have installed their silent labor, and the flowers leave them to steal in the warm and swaying calyxes.⁷⁹

All afternoon the sky above me, white and golden, joyful, giving me its jubilations. When the pink hollyhocks vanished from the path, stars flourished. One, benevolent of the blue shoots, left her course in our eyes.⁸⁰

The acute, adolescent voice spoke, restless in meekness like a clear stream.
--When a star crosses, it concedes an elegance.⁸¹

The hour was of harmony and purity. The secret of the pleas carried their mystery like a circle of invisible flares.

Auroras were rising and burning, leaves and fruit, in vertigo of resurrection, dawn and completion.

Fear suddenly extinguished the faith in the dream.

From where did you come, hidden insomnia, to nail upon my temple your unease?⁸²

⁷⁸ There is a beginning alliteration between “trozos” and “trechos” in Spanish, which I was able to convey through “bits” and “breadths.”

⁷⁹ This could say “him,” but I chose “them” in order to include both the bees and the protagonist, trying to preserve some ambiguity that is conveyed in the original.

⁸⁰ The Spanish word “tallo” more directly translated as “stems,” but I chose “shoots” because it could refer to stars as well, and it rhymes with “blue.” Again, I chose the possessive “her” because in the original “One” is feminine in Spanish, and also to contribute to María’s feminine vocabulary.

⁸¹ Here, “run” or “pass” would also work, but I wished to maintain the alliterating sounds of “corre...se concede” so I chose “concedes” because the hard ‘c’ matches that in “crosses.”

⁸² The last two lines of the poems rhyme between “ensueño” and “desosiego;” I tried to mimic this by rearranging the last line so that “dream” can rhyme with “unease.”

Excursión

Se la llevaba, ambicioso, el viento.
 El monte quiso quedarse con ella –por enhiesta y confiada—supliendo al pino
 desaparecido.
 La llamó el mar con voz de collar deshecho, de cuentas en desordenado rezo
 simultáneo, oración de las piedrecitas blancas engarzadas en agua.
 La isla le daba su soledad submarina y emergente.
 El faro le ofrecía su altura para escalar al cielo.
 La defendimos contra todo fuertemente cogida de la mano.

Excursion

It took her, ambitious, the wind.
 The mountain wanted to remain with her –for erect and secure—replacing the
 perished pine.⁸³
 The sea summoned her with a voice of an undone necklace, of beads in tangled
 and synchronized pleas, prayer of the little white stones set in water.
 The island gave her its submarine and surging solitude.
 The lighthouse offered her its height so as to climb to the heavens.
 We defended her against everything strongly seized by the hand.⁸⁴

⁸³ In the original, “erect” and “secure” ambiguously describe both the woman and the mountains, which may not be as obvious in English, but it is still there. There is an end-rhyme between “pino” and “desaparecido,” and while I could have worded this as “disappeared pine,” I chose “perished pine” in order to implement alliteration in place of the Spanish end-rhyme.

⁸⁴ In the original there is no comma between “everything” and “seized,” but it is implied by the genderization of “cogida,” which refers to the female subject. While a comma would be more proper here, I chose not to insert one in order to preserve a sense of the original, where the author did not always form grammatically perfect sentences.

55

Como una bengala de alegría el arco de su acento en la primavera.

--¡Marujaaa...!

Yo no acudo. Desde la orilla de mi silencio veo como todo el cielo se llena de borreguitos blancos.

55

Like a flare of happiness: the arch of his accent in spring.

--Hooousewife...!

And I do not come. From the shore of my silence I see how the entire sky is filled with little white lambs.

Los pinos perezosos

Parecen dormidos. Los electrizaron los vientos y cayeron a tierra, ciegos, sin fortaleza ni sombra ya. Echados sobre la senda –regazo ardoroso y áspero—que conduce al acantilado, escuchan –como espías— los pasos del mar que corre en su pista. Ellos esperan que, un día de ímpetus rebeldes, les lleguen las aguas inquietas, tentadoras.

Cuando el hachazo cóncavo y gigante de los vientos calma su furor, podrían levantarse, sacudir su letargo, alzar sus copas del pedregal, respirar verticales, ser árboles. Pero se ha enroscado a sus venas –savia de pecado—la pereza, jugo jamás gustado cuando erguidos.

Y están siempre besando los chinarrros del declive, hundidos en su abandono, viviendo alegres su encontrada indiferencia sin propósito.

The Lazy Pines

They seem to be sleeping. The winds electrified them and they fell to the earth, blinded, with no more strength or shadow. Cast over the path—uneven and ardent bosom—that leads to the cliff, they listen—like spies—to the steps of the sea which runs in their track. They hope that, one day of impetuous rebels, they might reach at the restless, temptress waters.

When the wind's gigantic and concave chop calms their frenzy, they would rise up, dust off their lethargy, raise their cups from the stone ground, breathe vertical, be trees. But their veins have coiled –sap of sin—slothfulness, juice never savored when erect.⁸⁵

And they are always kissing the pebble stones of decline, sunken in their abandonment, their inconsistent indifference living cheerfully without purpose.

⁸⁵ The Spanish word for “savia” could also translate as “vitality.” I chose “sap” because of the reference to trees.

57

Fue un desvarío. Vuelo de gaviota entre azules profundos y altos. Si llegué al corazón sin corazón del espacio, tuvo que saber de mí; porque yo era como el viento dormido rozando sus ojos.

57

It was absurdity. A seagull's flight between deep and high blues. If I arrived at the heart without the heart of space, I had to know of me; because I was like the sleeping wind grazing your eyes.⁸⁶

58

Sus manos dejaron en mi frente señal de alas. Por eso estoy tan cerca del infinito. Cuando negué los horizontes traspasé su desvelo, encontrándome.

58

His hands left a mark of wings on my forehead. Because of this, I am so close to infinity. When I negated the horizons I penetrated its wakefulness, discovering me.

⁸⁶ The phrase "If I arrived at the heart without the heart of space" may play on the idea of no absolute space in relativity, where there is no center in spacetime.

59

No disgustaros con el viento; dejad que haga lo que quiera!
Era su voz –serenidad, promesa—que ponía la paz en el descontento.
El cielo empujaba los montes, los montes a las palmeras, las palmeras a
nosotros.

Todos caminábamos hacia el mar.

Cuando llegamos a su orilla, para que el universo no se precipitara al fondo de
las aguas, interpuse mi ensueño, más fuerte que los montes y los cielo.

59

Not displeased with the wind; let go of doing what one wants!⁸⁷

It was his voice –serenity, promise—that placed peace amidst discontent.

The sky impelled the mountains, the mountains the palm trees, the palm trees us.

Everyone was walking to the sea.

When we arrived to its shore, lest the universe were to precipitate to the heart of
the waters, my dream impeded, stronger than the mountains or the sky.⁸⁸

60

Asomamos nuestras miradas al camino de sol sobre el mar.

La tarde se iba, naufraga.

--¿Qué quieres ser, el agua o la luz?

--Lo que no seas tú, para encontrarnos.

60

We lift our glances towards the sun's path above the sea.

The afternoon embarked, shipwrecked.

--Which would you rather be, water or light?

--Whichever you are not, in order to find each other.

⁸⁷ In the original, “disgustaros” is an enclitic word, and so I chose to use the verb as an adjective, “displeased,” to shorten the phrase in the poem.

⁸⁸ In the original, “para que no...” would mean so that they would not. In order to avoid inserting extra words and syllables, I tried to shorten this while conveying the same meaning by choosing “lest,” which also preserves the subjunctive clause.

61

Cuando me visitaste

Yo confiaba en que la tarde hiciese una muralla de sus horas y cerrase el camino de regreso.

 Tuve fe en que el sol quemaría con su lumbre la senda de retorno.

 Pero la tarde se echó a tus pies humilde y admirada, y el sol hizo un puente con su fuego para llevarte.

 Me quedé con una visión de firmamento, y en soledad de océano huído del mundo.

61

When You Came to Visit

I trusted that the afternoon might build a wall from its hours and close off the road to regression.

 I had faith that with its light the sun would burn the path of return.

 But the afternoon threw itself down upon your lauded and humble feet, and the sun built a bridge with its fire in order to take you away.

 I remained with a vision of firmament, and in solitude as an ocean that has fled from the world.

Reparación

Hoy descubrí la palmera solitaria, meciendo su penacho entre los montes y la terraza del colegio.

Debió estar allí siempre, brincando las casas, sola, suelta, asomada al viento, saludando al azul, clavando su carne en los ojos.

Durante mucho tiempo, todos los días enfrentándome contigo, palmera solitaria sin huerto ni dueño, y nunca supe de ti.

¡Qué consuelo hoy –en retorno de recuerdos—robar la gracia de tu soledad en el horizonte, la frescura de tu belleza recién nacida, baño luminoso, tú en el otoño y el otoño en ti –luz con luz—y yo –reflejo—mirándote!

Te amaré, palmera fronteriza a la terraza del colegio, en desquite de mi adolescencia desdeñosa. Yo sé que me prefieres, porque te has hecho visible a mis ojos cuando ellos tenían ansia de lejanía, y estando tú más cerca no te alcanzaban.

Reparation

Today I discovered the solitary palm, swaying its tuft between the mountains and the schoolhouse terrace.

It should forever be, skipping ‘round the houses, ‘lone, loose, glimpse in the wind, greeting the blue, nailing its flesh to the eyes.⁸⁹

For a long while, every day I was facing you, solitary palm without orchard or master, and yet I never knew of you.

What comfort today –in return for memories—to rob the grace of your solitude in the horizon, the freshness of your recently born beauty, illuminated bath, you in the autumn and the autumn in you –light with light—and I – reflection—watching you!

I will love you, frontier palm at the schoolhouse terrace, in revenge of my contemptuous adolescence. I know that you prefer me, because you have made yourself visible to mine eyes when they once longed for distance, and as you were near, they did not reach you.

⁸⁹ In the original, “sola” has a flowing alliteration with “suelta;” I chose to shorten the word “alone” to “lone” in order to maintain this flowing alliteration with “loose.”

63

No amanece hasta que los niños no se despiertan. Ellos abren el día y dejan escapar la luz. Son la concha de nácar de la alegría y las zozobras. Dan transparencia y desvelos por cada sonrisa.

Niños de todas partes, llenos de halagos, tibios y suaves, como los que andais sueltos y desnudos, vais prendidos al corazón, porque sois eje, centro, universo.

63

It does not dawn until the children do not awaken. They open the day and let the light escape. They are the mother-of-pearl shell of happiness and shipwrecks. Through every smile, they give transparency and wakefulness.

Children from all parts, filled with flattery, tepid and delicate, like those that walk loose and naked, they are fastened to the heart, because they are the axis, the center, the universe.

64

Los párpados de los niños son transparentes, y aunque cierren los ojos les entra la luz. Para ellos no tienen oscuridad las noches, y regresan --¡siempre!--de una fiesta suntuosa de claridad.

64

The children's eyelids are transparent, and although they close their eyes, light enters through. For they do not have the nights' darkness, and they return from a party --always!--sumptuous in clarity.

65

Se cogieron las niñas de las manos y cantaron, blandamente, a la luna. Aunque la tarde estaba llena de sol y hecha su luz de mandarinas, acudió solícita la noche endulzada de otoño.

65

The children were taken by the hand and sang, tenderly, to the moon. Although the afternoon was full of sun and made her light from tangerines, she came soliciting the autumn-sweetened night.⁹⁰

66

La nena rubia

Cuánto sufrí! Creí que se hacía luz, y se marchaba convertida en camino propagado.

66

The Blonde Baby

How I suffered! I believed that light would be made, and that it would depart converted into a propagated pathway.

⁹⁰ I chose to personify afternoon, by later using the possessive “her,” since it is feminine in Spanish, and also to continue to emphasize María’s trademark feminine vocabulary. It is difficult to translate the final line without too many words, and instead of long-windedly saying “the night that was sweetened by fall/autumn,” I chose to hyphenate the adjectives to “autumn-sweetened” night to convey a more concise and poetic end.

*A la niña que no estrenó
su nombre*

María del Mar! Ni más bello ni mejor elegido el nombre.

Lo encontró tu madre en la costa de los pensamientos, como una chapina dorada entre las arenas –playa de recuerdos—de un candor distante. (Aquel barco a los pies de la Virgen en la iglesia del puerto, y el María traslúcido de voces, sólo, prodigado, dulce y rotundo como una medalla de consuelo.)

María del Mar, del Cielo ahora. En el vértice de dos océanos hiciste tu cuna, pasando dormida de uno a otro horizonte. Nadie vió tus ojos cerrados de ensueño, pero eran azules con reflejo de poemas ardidados, de los que como tú no nacen, porque son de alma.

To the Girl who did not
Premiere her Name⁹¹

María of the Sea!⁹² The name no more beautiful or better chose.

Your mother found it at the coast of thought, like a golden clog amongst the sand –shore of memories—of a distant candor. (That vessel at the feet of the Virgin on the church door, and the María, translucent of voice, alone, lavished, sweet and emphatic like a medal of comfort.)

María of the Sea, of the Sky now. In the apex of two oceans, you made your cradle, asleep, passing from one horizon to another. No one saw your eyes closed by dreams, but they were blue with a reflection of bold poems, as those that, like you, are not born, because they are of the soul.

⁹¹ In Spanish, “estrenarse” means “to make a debut.” I tried to shorten this through the verb “premiere.”

⁹² I was unable to produce the alliteration in “María del Mar.” I chose “sea” rather than “ocean” to maintain the correct amount of syllables.

68

Si alguna vez hay cerca de mí un niño en el que yo mande –mandato de mi sangre en su sangre, de mi alma en su alma—lo haré ingeniero de caminos, canales y puertos. Es decir, poeta del viento, del mar, de las montañas.

68

If at some point there is a child close to me of whom I rule –command from my blood in his blood, from my soul in his soul—I will make him an engineer of ports, canals, and roads. That is to say, poet of the wind, of the sea, of the mountains.

69

Adolescente

Sus venas son ríos minúsculos de candor.
Se acerca, expande sus amaneceres, y sigue caminando por donde nadie cruza.
Así es de confiado su paso tenue, como un cantar lanzado al viento.
Lumbre de sus hombros forman el cauce donde se pierden –ardidos, no ciegos—
todos los temores.
Es de cristal y advertencias. y bajo su frente –orillas hacia el cielo—viven
mariposas y soles irisados.

69

Adolescent

Its veins are miniscule rivers of candor.⁹³
It nears, expands his sunrises, and continues walking to where nobody crosses.⁹⁴
This way of trusting its faint step, like a poem launched into the wind.
Firelight from its shoulders forms the channel where all fears –bold, not blind—
are lost.
It's of crystal and warnings, and below its front –shores towards heaven—live
butterflies and iridescent suns.

⁹³ This poem is difficult to translate since I cannot place a gender as it is completely ambiguous throughout the entire poem. I tried to convey this through the pronoun “it” and possessive “its.”

⁹⁴ The original poem uses the Italian word for “expand.” It is so similar to Spanish, especially the specific pronunciation in Spain, so I also chose to translate this word into English rather than a language close to English.

POEMAS DE LABORATORIO

LABORATORY POEMS

70

La sílice es una afirmación con un círculo duplicado. Tierra y Dios: mi barro y mi atmósfera.

70

Silica is an affirmation with a duplicated circle. Earth and God: my clay and my atmosphere.

71

Hidrocarburos que dais la vida: Sabed, que se puede morir aunque sigais reaccionando; porque no teneis risa, ni aliento, ni mirada, ni voz. Sólo cadenas.

71

You hydrocarbons that give life:⁹⁵ Know that you can die even though you continue on reacting; because you possess neither laughter, nor breath, nor gaze, nor voice. Only chains.

72

La química lo afirma; pero se engaña. No existe la saturación.

72

Chemistry affirms it; but it deceives itself. Saturation does not exist.

⁹⁵ In Spanish, “vosotros” is an informal pronoun for a plural “you.” None of the other poems express a formal you, but if they were to, I would choose the archaic “thou” to contrast this.

73

La sonoridad de las ebulliciones y de los alambique, es como un viento sin mar y sin molinos.

Les falta actividad de velas agitadas de blancura.

73

The acoustics from the ebullitions and the stills, they are like a wind without the sea and without mills.

They lack the activity of candles agitated by whiteness.

74

Ansia de la transmutación! Para conseguírte, cada vez más pequeña, más minúscula, más átomo.

74

Longing for transmutation!⁹⁶ In order to reach you, each time a little smaller, more minuscule, more atom-like.

75

Balanza, urna de sensibilidad: Eres el crucifijo de la mirada.

75

Balance, urn of sensibility: You are the crucifix of the gaze.

⁹⁶ “Transmutation” more recently is associated with alchemy. However, its more general definition is when a substance transforms and acquires a completely new chemical composition. Radioactive decay is also a form of transmutation, which is most likely what María is referencing in her poem—a transformation into a smaller new element through the process of decay—not alchemy.

76

En planos de ágata y cuchillos de acero se equilibran –también—los sentimientos.

76

In planes of agate and knives of steel, feelings—they too—equilibrate.

77

En una quietud de balanza, que guarda su sensibilidad como un tesoro, mi corazón espera.

77

In a tranquility of balance, that guards its sensitivity like a treasure, my heart is waiting.

ENSAYO ESPIRITUAL DE LOS PERFUMES

I—Un perfume es más que un poema.

Las palabras, por muy bellas, tienen después de muertas —escritas—un esqueleto rígido que estorba. Cadáveres del pensamiento son los libros.

El perfume vive en agonía. Es dolor de olor lo que nos cede, martirio de huída por múltiples caminos simultáneos, sensibilidad en laberinto, emoción desconcertada, secreto esclavo que libra su profundidad.

Cuando un perfume se extingue radica en el infinito y deja en nosotros el hueco de un alma.

SPIRITUAL ESSAY ON PERFUMES

I—A perfume is more than a poem.

The words, for so beautiful, have after death—written—a rigid skeleton that obstructs. Books are the cadavers of thought.

The perfume lives in agony. It is a pain of pungency that which surrenders us, martyrdom of escape towards multiple simultaneous walks, sensitivity in labyrinth, disconcerted emotion, secret slave that frees his profundity.⁹⁷

When a perfume extinguishes it settles in the infinite and leaves the gap of a soul within us.

⁹⁷ In the original, “dolor de olor” has an amazing rhyme. I could not produce a successful rhyme in English, and chose rather to alliterate “pain” and “pungency” in its place.

79

2—No huele lo mismo un perfume a la luz, que a la sombra; en un recinto alegre, que en una casa triste; sobre la carne viva, que sobre el cuerpo muerto.

El corazón enamorado lo perfecciona dándole emanaciones calientes y turbadas; el cuerpo muerto lo congela y resquebraja restándole potencia; en el recinto alegre se agita con las risas volviéndose insinuante; en la casa triste se diluye en lágrimas y queda tenue, abatido.

Con el sol vuela en caricias, y la penumbra lo remansa.

79

2—A perfume does not smell the same to the light as to the shadow; in a happy precinct as in a sad house; over the living body as over the lifeless corpse.⁹⁸

The enamored heart perfects it, giving it hot and turbid emanations; the dead body suspends and cracks it, subtracting potential; in the happy precinct it is agitated with laughter turning suggestive; in the sad house it is diluted in tears and remains tenuous, dejected.

With the sun it flies in caresses, and is softened by the penumbra.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Here, I chose “lifeless” instead of “dead” in order to preserve a semi-similarity of sounds between the ‘s’ on the ends of the English words “lifeless” and “corpse,” because in Spanish “cuerpo muerto” has a unique rhyme.

⁹⁹ I made this passive voice so that the line may end with a similar sound as that in the original (“remansa” in Spanish and “penumbra” in English), instead of awkwardly ending the poem with the pronoun “it.”

80

3—Las armas de amor de la química son los perfumes.

Por conductores invisibles del espíritu llega la electricidad del aroma venciendo la voluntad.

Las esencias son voces nuevas del sentimiento que arroban y conmueven, escritura indeleble en la página estremecida del éter. Decir en olor es la expresión más justa.

Todo escucha cuando nace un perfume, oratoria del silencio.

80

3—Perfumes are chemistry's weapons of love.

Through invisible conductors, the electricity of the aroma arrives, vanquishing free will.

The essences are new voices of sentiment that move and enrapture, indelible writings on the trembling page of ether.¹⁰⁰ To speak in scent is the most equitable expression.¹⁰¹

Everything listens when a perfume is born, orator of silence.

81

4—Todos los perfumes tienen una voz conmovida, de queja amarga, de desolación. Están heridos, sangrando insomnios por sus venas de olor, plásticas en madrugada, crepúsculo y primavera.

81

4—All perfumes have an unsettling voice, of bitter complaint, of desolation. They are wounded, bleeding insomnias through their aromatic veins, expressive in dawn, twilight, and spring.

¹⁰⁰ Despite Einstein's theory of relativity disputing its existence, the ether was widely still believed to exist, and was still incorporated in science and art through the 1920s (Gala 41).

¹⁰¹ This could say "just" or "fair," but I chose "equitable" to make up for the lack of ability to repeat the earlier alliteration between "estremecida de éter" and relocating the alliteration in "equitable expression."

82

Mensaje

Cuánto tiempo que no oigo tu voz!
Por escucharte, canto. Por saber de ti, he inventado este falso renacer.

82

Message

How long since I have heard your voice!
By listening to you, I sing. By knowing of you, I have invented this false
renaissance.

Bibliography

- Alfaro, Dora M. "La fiel Maria Cegarra." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 367-368.
- Barcelo Jiménez, J. & Ana Carceles Aleman. "María Cegarra Salcedo del amor a la poesía cristalizada." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 195-204.
- Belmonte Serrano, J. "María Cegarra, medio siglo de poesía." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 175-177.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator." Trans. Harry Zohn. *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*. Ed. Rainer Schulte & John Biguenet. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992: 71-82.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. "The Translators of the Thousand and One Nights." Trans. Esther Allen. *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2004: 94-108.
- Boyd, Carolyn P. *Historia Patria: Politics, History, and National Identity in Spain, 1875-1975*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Carceles Aleman, Ana. "Trayectoria poética de María Cegarra: de 'Cristales míos; a 'Cada día conmigo.'" *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 179-191.
- Cegarra Salcedo, María. *Cristales míos*. Cartagena: Taller Tipográfico de "Gráficas: Norguera," 1935.
- Delgado, Santiago. "Introducción a 'Obra completa.'" *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 235-241.
- Delgado, Santiago. "Miguel Hernández en la obra poética de María Cegarra." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 149-161.
- Dryden, John. "From the Preface to Ovid's Epistles." *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2004: 38-42.
- "Entrevista con Santiago Delgado." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 55-58.
- Esdaille, Charles. *Spain in the Liberal Age: From Constitution to Civil War, 1808-1939*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

- Gala, Candelas. *Poetry Physics, and Painting in Twentieth-Century Spain*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Geist, Anthony L. *La poética de la generación del 27 y las revistas literarias: de la vanguardia al compromiso (1918-1936)*. Madrid: Guadarrama, 1980.
- Giménez Caballero, Ernesto. "Prólogo a 'Cristales míos.'" *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 263-274.
- Godoy, Jiménez. "Entrevista con García Martínez en 'Gente de Murcia'." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 59-64.
- Grossman, Edith. *Why Translation Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press: 2010.
- Hawking, Stephen. *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.
- Isaacson, Walter. *Einstein: His Life and Universe*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2008.
- Jakobson, Roman. "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation." *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2004: 138-143.
- Joy, Hakim. *The Story of Science: Einstein Adds a New Dimension*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 2007.
- Lefevere, André. *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1992.
- McQuarrie, Donald A. *Quantum Chemistry*. 2nd ed. Mill Valley: University Science Books, 2008.
- Nida, Eugene. "Principles of Correspondence." *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2004: 153-167.
- Pérez Álvarez, Ramón. "De 'Bol. C.O.P.I.T.I.' (Alicante, 1991-92)." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 141-142.
- Polo, Victorino. "(Sobre María Cegarra)." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 277.
- Rubio Paredes, Jose M. "María Cegarra o la intimidad frente a la muerte." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 279-303.

- Saez, Asensio. Bailén 10, La Unión, los hermanos Cegarra Salcedo." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 291-303.
- Saez, Asensio. "Retrato en sepia." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia : Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 17-46.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. "On the Different Methods of Translating." Trans. Susan Bernofsky. *The Translation Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 2004: 43- 63.
- The Ghost in the Atom*. Ed. P.C. W. Davies & J.R. Brown. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Vera Saura, Carmelo. "María Cegarra: La poetización de la vida." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 305-309.
- Vera Saura, Carmelo. "La poeta alquimista. Interpretación del mundo poético de María Cegarra." *Homenaje a María Cegarra*. Ed. by Santiago Delgado. Murcia: Editora Regional de Murcia, 1995: 315-348.
- Yeats, William B. *Early Poems*. New York: Dover Publications, 1993.