

## BROKEN IMAGES: ELIOT, LORCA, NERUDA AND THE DISCONTINUITY OF MODERNISM

T. S. Eliot's powerful trope in *The Waste Land* ("a heap of broken images"), which may derive in part from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, has overflowed into Lorca's *Poeta en Nueva York* and Neruda's *Residencia en la tierra*. What these three poets see while "walking around" is the detritus of urban life, broken and abandoned objects. With values fractured and icons turned into shards, Eliot's image relates as well to the discontinuity that underlines many examples of modernism, not only in the arts but also in science.

Few will contradict Harold Bloom who, finding himself uncomfortable with Eliot's Anglo-Catholic, Royalist, classic stance, nevertheless insists that *The Waste Land* is "indisputably the most influential poem written in English in our century" (Bloom, 1985: 77). "Eliot en su poema," Lorca said in 1930 to a Madrid audience, recognizing that also in Spain to mention Eliot was tantamount to mentioning *The Waste Land* (García Lorca, 1990: 259).

The long shadow cast by Eliot's poem in the Hispanic world is still being charted (Young, 1992; Barón Palma, 1996). For the purposes of the present paper, it seems certain that Lorca read Angel Flores's translation of *The Waste Land* while the latter was working on it. *Poeta en Nueva York* contains images that strongly suggest acknowledge of *La tierra baldía* (1930). Pablo Neruda, an avid reader in Rangoon of Anglo-American literature, could hardly have escaped Eliot's poem. The "pequeño empleado" who seduces the girl next door and takes her to cheap movies links with the perfunctory seduction carried out by Eliot's

“small house agent’s clerk,” and the proliferation of present participles in “Galope muerto” may be a calque of Eliot’s technique in the famous opening lines of *The Waste Land*: breeding, mixing, stirring, covering, feeding.

*Poeta en Nueva York* and *Residencia en la tierra* share many general characteristics with *The Waste Land*, traits that, although common to the period, are not as incidental as they might seem. If alienation is part of the emotional baggage of many artists, it was especially manifest in multiple ways in Lorca, Neruda, and Eliot. Eliot in the autumn of 1915 came to settle in London, a city at war. The schoolboys he taught considered him a foreigner, the Bloomsbury group thought him a cold fish, his marriage unraveled, and while recovering from a nervous breakdown, he drafted *The Waste Land* in Lausanne and published it in 1922. Lorca’s enchanting personality hid an overwhelming sadness and anger that colored his work. It was brought on, in part, by the difficulties in dealing with his homosexuality, no easy task in Spain in the twenties. His problems dictated his sympathy with other alienated groups: Spanish gypsies and Harlem blacks. In the case of *Poeta en Nueva York*, alienation was intensified by the blatant linguistic and cultural otherness into which he had so heedlessly plunged. “Nueva York me parece horrible, por eso mismo me voy allí,” he wrote to Carlos Morla Lynch (García Lorca, 1997: 611). By contrast the excruciatingly timid Dalí kept saying in his autobiographical *Secret Life*, “I want to go to America! I want to go to America!” (Douglas, 1995: 436).

Neruda went against the grain early in his career with, for the times, the strong erotic pulse of *Veinte poemas de amor*, and he, too, eventually found himself exiled in a strange land comforted by constant reading (much of it in English), and erotic episodes both real and fancied. On February 22, 1928, he said in a letter: “La vida en Rangoon es un destierro terrible” (Neruda, 1987: 23). This sense of *destierro terrible* to which Eliot first gave such effective expression —*The Waste Land* yearns intensely for what is absent (Scofield, 1988: 116)—doubled, in the case of Lorca and Neruda, by the otherness of language and culture serves well as an epigraph for our three titles.

*The Waste Land*, *Poeta en Nueva York*, and *Residencia en la tierra* predictably share a common aggressive attitude toward the prevailing notion of art.

Eliot’s poem exploded like a bombshell in the literary landscape of 1922. Fragmentary, lacking in transitions, and hermetic, it was, some thought, the product of a deranged mind (a common charge in the case of our three texts). Its heteroglossia (Greek, Latin, French, German,

Italian, Sanskrit) inviting incomprehension, its dismantling of the narrativity so dear to admirers of Browning and Tennyson, its elevation of allusion to the level of a trope, its introduction into European poetry of phrases like “slimy belly” and “jug jug,” anticipating the polemic between the followers of Juan Ramón and Pablo Neruda over poetic diction: all this produced what Calvin Bedient has termed “an aggression against audience, medium, ‘art’” (Bedient, 1986: 36).

Metaphors of refuse, human waste, and slaughter make an assault upon the reader of *Poeta en Nueva York*. Two early critical reactions validate this point. Conrad Aiken, Eliot’s close friend, noted the prodigality of Lorca’s imagination as well as its tendency towards self-indulgence (Aiken, 1961: 276), and from his exile in Buenos Aires Alberti said, “Sin bridas y sin estribos, este libro” (Alberti, 1940: 148). The impression persists today in references such as those by Edward Hirsch, who in his review of a recent English translation of *Poeta* called it perhaps the greatest book of poems ever written on New York, but also a “perplexing classic,” a “dark... howl of loneliness” (Hirsch, 1988: 84). More desolate than *The Waste Land*, more chaotic than Brecht’s asphalt jungle, *Poeta en Nueva York* continues to give critics pause (Sinclair, 1985: 239).

As for Neruda, Amado Alonso promptly noted the shift in *Residencia en la tierra* from melancholy to anguish. *Veinte poemas* talks about infinite grief, Alonso says, but *Residencia en la tierra* embodies it in a powerful and shockingly abundant way (Alonso, 1951: 13).

It is abundantly clear that these books go fiercely against the grain, but what especially interests the comparatist is their commonality in expressing a sense of breakdown of icons, ideas, institutions, and beliefs, of assuming discontinuity as the norm, of accepting the notion that life is not ruled by justice, nor mitigated by beauty, that any search will ultimately encounter, in Lorca’s phrase, only a vacuum.

To get a broader impression of this breakdown of meaning and purpose, I would like to turn to a set piece of Victorian poetry that was, until World War II part of the Anglo-American canon: Alfred Lord Tennyson’s *The Idylls of the King*. It leads first to Eliot and then back to Spain.

One by one the remaining knights of the round table fall in the final battle. Sir Bevidere, the first and now the last of Arthur’s champions, carries his King “deeply smitten through the helm” (Tennyson, 1983: 293) to a chapel standing near the field of combat. With death upon him, Arthur asks Sir Bevidere to return Excalibur to the Lady of the Lake. Twice the knight, besotted by Excalibur’s jeweled hilt, lies to

Arthur, but finally he overcomes temptation and hurls the magic weapon far into the lake. Just as the famous blade is about to dip into the water, a mystic arm—clad in the same white samite as the hand that entrusted Excalibur to the young king—arises, catches it, brandishes it three times, and then draws the invincible sword under in the mere.

The final scenes of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1859-1885) give off a satisfying sense of wholeness: the circle is complete, closure impressively reached. It is a richly suggestive experience to read Tennyson's blank verse on the passing of Arthur as the conclusion of an epoch begun by Malory, a point near the end of a continuum of romantic legend. Metonymy for a righteous king, the sword does not suffer the fate of narcissus or Bécquer's hero of *Los ojos verdes*. It represents power returned to its source and held in abeyance until some future time when a "twice-fair" Arthur appears once more on the field of battle. This sense of completeness and purpose will not be around long in Western literature. It is what Eliot hoped to recover in the dust and bewildering fragmentation of time, space and language in *The Waste Land*, an interval when the boat responded "gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar (vv 418-419)."

The collapse of ontological continuity, the resulting sense of fragmentation, the foregrounding of irony routinely associated with modernism in letters and art are elements traceable in fields other than literature. In 1872—midpoint in Tennyson's retelling of the Arthurian legends for his Queen and country—the German mathematician Richard Dedekind, recently endorsed as the first modernist<sup>1</sup> wrote a paper that accepted the fact that between the numbers 1 and 2 there existed an infinite set of rational and irrational numbers, thus separating the digital from the idea of continuity, and placing emphasis on a state of *in between*, a situation hardly inimical to the modernist attitude.

A meeting of the Congress of the German Anatomical Society at the University of Berlin in October 1889 produced an example of discontinuity of special interest to this paper. An unknown Spanish scientist read a monograph in very bad French on the discovery he had made while dissecting the cerebellum of small birds. No real communication took place until the scientists crowded around to inspect the slides Santiago Ramón y Cajal had prepared. It is a key moment in the history of neurology. "Each stained cell stood out

<sup>1</sup>"Separating forever the digital from the continuous, at least in arithmetic, Dedekind become the West's first modernist in 1872" (Everdell, 1997: 30).

perfectly against a background of staggering complexity, and no matter how many times the tiny fibers of one cell met those of another, there was clearly no physical connection between them" (Everdell, 1997: 100). Previous to Ramón y Cajal's brilliant work the traditional assumption had been that all the nerve fibers of the gray matter were mutually connected. Cajal's discovery of the synapse proved to be another triumph for the *in between*.

The "Passing of Arthur" betokens in literature the closing of an era in which art had consented to celebrate continuity and wholeness. At the same time, it contains markers pointing to high modernism, a period of fragmentation and breakdown of traditional form of which Eliot's *The Waste Land* is the gospel.

The chapel where Sir Bevidere brings King Arthur displays symptoms of neglect and decay: "A broken chancel and a broken cross" (Tennyson, 1983: 292). Furthermore, the chapel stands on a dark strait of "barren land" (Tennyson, 1983: 292). When the funeral barge appears to take away the dying king, the wailing of three queens is like "a wind that shrills / All night in a waste land" (Tennyson, 1983: 298). The whole round table, "which was an image of the mighty world," (Tennyson, 1983: 299) has been figuratively broken by the deaths in its chivalrous circle. Arthur will depart this waste land with its broken cross, his "light and lustrous curls now parched with dust" (Tennyson, 1983: 299).

The most casual reader of *The Waste Land* recognizes the terrain, senses fear in the handful of dust on Arthur's curls, and is led by Tennyson's broken chancel and broken cross to *The Waste Land's* "empty chapel, only the wind's home. / It has no windows and the door swings," (vv 388-389) and hence to Eliot's "heap of broken images" (v 22). The Son of Man can find nothing growing in *The Waste Land* and knows only a heap of broken images, writes Eliot, drawing upon Ezekiel 6:3-4. Ezekiel is referring to the images of Israel which have been crushed by an angry Jehovah. By contrast, Tennyson's chancel and cross are victims of neglect, symbols for the situation depicted in Arnold's "Dover Beach," (1867) and they form the context of Eliot's poem as much as Ezekiel's "heap of broken images."

As a culture of analysis, modernism is at home with bits and pieces (Everdell 28). *Contra esto y aquello*, Unamuno's procedure compressed into a title; Azorín's "primores de lo vulgar"; Gabriel Miró's gems without closure; Rosa Chacel's *Estación. Ida y vuelta*: when the history of Spain's modernism is finally written these are some examples that will constitute its telling. In the meantime, the story of the breakdown

of wholeness into bits and pieces in Spain can be taken up by Ramón Gómez de la Serna.

Mild-mannered, pipe-smoking, he played in Spain the role of a less pugnacious Ezra Pound. *Prometeo* had none of the éclat of *Vortex* or *Blast*, but it nicely enabled the transition from symbolism to modernism. When *Le Figaro* published Marinetti's futurist manifesto on 20 February 1909, Ramón Gómez de la Serna himself turned the theatrical and violent Italian rhetoric into Spanish for the April 1909 issue of *Prometeo* (Marinetti, 1909: 65-73). Marinetti promptly paid a visit to Spain and obliged *Prometeo* in 1910 with a "Proclama futurista a los españoles," in which Spain is exhorted to recover its conquistador energy and to seek the combination of sex and violence favored by Marinetti, who seemed to feel that the Spaniards had exhausted their libido in the conquest of America, when the last flames in hell "lamían sus nalgas de machos encarnizados sobres los bellos sexos glotonos como ventosas" (Ilie, 1969: 75).

Futurism supplied many an ode to machines, and the results were often robotic, as in this example from Rafael Laffón, contemporary to Salinas:

Señorita, saca usted un ritmo  
a la Underwood, de nueva emoción;  
el ritmo puro del logaritmo  
de la sonata 'Cotización'.

(Laffón, 1927: 51-52)

Spaniards, on the whole, got only mild cases of futurism. Salinas had a moment close to Marinetti, when the sight of airplanes at night in the Parisian sky, caused him to write to his future wife to describe a completely new emotion that had seized him, "de la audacia, del esfuerzo, de la fuerza que el hombre ha llegado a desplegar" (Salinas, 1984: 246). As Andrés Soria Olmedo suggests, the scene marks a transition from the poet who relied heavily in his love letters on quotations from Juan Ramón Jiménez to a poet now more of the twentieth century (Soria Olmedo, 1993: 94), one who would write graceful odes to the typewriter and the light bulb.

Widely traveled, Ramón Gómez de la Serna kept up with literary movements through out Europe. His *tertulia* at the Café Pombo, where Buñuel was a regular, funneled the European *vanguardia* into Spain. A visit by Angel Flores provoked the following comment by Ramón, which is one of the earliest references in Castilian to T. S. Eliot: "La última obra de Angel Flores ha sido la traducción del poema inglés *Tierra baldía*, del extraño T. S. Eliot, el de las palabras de oro, con lo

cual queda presentada la dificultad pasmosa de revertir cada palabra al castellano" (Gómez de la Serna, 1931:11).

Upon Ramón Gómez de la Serna's death in 1963, Luis Cernuda, casting about for a way to characterize a prolific *obra* of novels, biographies and hundreds of *greguerías*, thought of Eliot's famous line: "These fragments I have shored up against my ruins." "Sin composición, sin organización fundamental, el conjunto de su obra es madreporico [y] la greguería es la unidad que constituye ese conjunto fragmentario" (Cernuda, 1964:260-261).

The first *greguerías* appeared auspiciously in the pages of *Prometeo* in 1910. Metaphors with a sense of humor, witty, clever, they flowed in great abundance from Ramón Gómez de la Serna's pen and, as Cernuda has also pointed out, many of the metaphors in the poetry of the Generation of 27 read as if they owed their existence to Ramón's invention. Taken out of context, Jorge Guillén's "Radiador. Ruiseñor de invierno" is indistinguishable from these literary bits and pieces (Cernuda, 1994: 178). Seeking restitution for Góngora, such poets as Salinas, Lorca, Guillén, Diego could hardly fail to benefit from Ramón's tongue-in-cheek *gongorismos*. But the *greguerías* themselves have no immediate textual context, they exist somewhere in between haikai and aphorisms and exemplify the in-between, the synapse that keeps the whole from its parts.

#### "WALKING AROUND"

Unlike J. Alfred Prufrock, Wordsworth was willing to tackle overwhelming questions, but not as a flâneur. Walking the overflowing streets of England's rapidly developing cities, he found himself disoriented by so many unknown faces. He fled to country lanes where he encountered people and places that inspired his homilies or epiphanies. His common imperative, "Behold," directs the eye to the source of a perception that, clothed in the rhetoric of lyrical proclamations or dicta, becomes an event. "I saw a man before me unawares" (v 55) is prelude to the homily about resolution and independence built around the leech-gatherer. Similar proclamations crowd the lines inspired by Tintern Abbey: "Once again / Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs" (vv 4-5): "Once again I see / These hedge-rows" (vv 13-14). They prepare us for Wordsworth's epiphanous joy of elevated thoughts. He did not collect scattered objects; his eyes beheld what he could fit into a moral or aesthetic wholeness. There was no *in between*.

Within the metonymy of the poet as a boat in *Le Bateau ivre* (1871), Rimbaud turns his “I” into the “otherness” of a sea-going vessel. The voyage to be undertaken has no fixed port of call, but it will acquire viewing rights to the ocean of imagination. Time and again, the poet’s voice introduces a stanza with the same verbs of proclamation that Wordsworth resorted to: *je sais, j’ai vu*:

Je sais les cieux crevant en éclairs, et les trombes  
 Et les ressacs et les courants: je sais le soir,  
 L’Aube exaltée ainsi qu’un peuple de colombes,  
 Et j’ai vu quelque fois ce que l’homme a cru voir!  
 J’ai vu le soleil bas, taché d’horreurs mystiques,  
 Illuminant de longs figements violets,  
 Pareils à des acteurs de drames très-antiques  
 Les flots roulants au loin leurs frissons de volets.  
 (Rimbaud, 1967: 116)

These are not typical announcements of romanticism made in preparation for the mingling of identity with the universe, but rather a call to share in a vision stripped of transcendence, or rather a vision in which transcendence attaches to objects by the strength of adjectives and metaphors: the sun spots endowed with mystical horrors, the violet clots across the sky, or a metaphor that anticipates Lorca’s imagination—waves roll like shivering shutters. All these things the poet has seen, plus, for he is still a seer, things that others only think they see. But by the time of *Les Illuminations*, Rimbaud has become “resolutely discontinuous” (Everdell, 1997: 90). Here lies an anaphora to supply rhetorical power to his list-making; *il y a* replaces *j’ai vu*, but the objects themselves have no direct claim on reality:

Il y a une horloge qui ne sonne pas [is it broken?]  
 Il y a une fondrière avec un nid de bêtes blanches.  
 Il y a une cathédrale qui descend et un lac qui monte.  
 (Rimbaud 1967: 216)

Walkers in time became street walkers in real urban places, Paris first, then London and eventually New York. “Rhapsody on a Windy Night,” shows Eliot the flâneur reporting on the detritus of the city scene, its broken and abandoned bits and pieces. Catalogues could be made of broken blinds, scattered newspapers, body parts but rarely whole bodies (Lentricchia, 1994: 248). But let the poetry speak for itself: “A crowd of twisted things” (v. 24), “a broken spring in a factory yard / Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left” (v. 30-31). We have returned to the recognizable and found it wanting. *The Waste Land*, *Poeta en Nueva York*, and *Residencia en la tierra* are about the



gutting of form, the spring that retains the shape of force but has no substance. These tropes arguably reflect cultural infirmity, but they also sound surprisingly like Hegels's description in 1844 of the appalling waste and debris occasioned by urban crowding.

Spain's earliest collector of shards was the indomitable Ramón Gómez de la Serna. If bits and pieces seem to suggest a sense of parts greater than the whole, then we might be forgiven for thinking that the first step in reconstruction is the making of a catalogue. To read Rimbaud, Whitman, or Lorca in the tradition of the catalogue *dichter* is one way, as Amado Alonso saw, to keep enumeration from becoming chaotic.

Today Ramón Gómez de la Serna stands side by side with Baudelaire's flâneur and Whitman's maker of lists. From one cataloguer to another Pablo Neruda wrote: "Abrió Ramón la cajonería del mundo y fue catalogando las cosas y los seres, los más harapientos y los más eminentes" (Gómez de la Serna, 1971: 8).

Ramón's purpose, however, was not to reconstruct. In his work objects seem to acquire an ontology. Borges himself, tantalized by the kaleidoscopic nature of the world, saw that Ramón Gómez de la Serna caressed and flattered objects without any "prejuicio de unidad" (Ugarte, 1996: 104). He treats with uniformity of tone the conglomeration of cheap jewelry and worn furniture in El Rastro, Madrid's famous flea market, and the arrival of urinals for the Puerta del Sol. Even his autobiography makes no attempt to give the reader "a picture of wholeness or a transcendent truth" (Ugarte, 1996: 112).<sup>2</sup>

Dalí preferred to record, in the disordered manner of the surrealists, what he saw while walking around. He scattered his precisely drawn beaches with strange creature-like objects, inspired by Yves Tanguy, apparent eruptions from the sea, and added recognizable human objects that were flare-ups from his subconscious.

In October 1927, he trespassed on Lorca's territory with some verse in Catalan. Boasting that only painters were producing genuine poetry, he duly sent Lorca a copy in Spanish. Lorca's reaction to Dalí's catalogue of disjointed objects is unknown (Gibson, 1997: 173), but the list shows how Miró, Gasch, Foix and the ambience of *L'Amic de les Arts* had drawn Dalí closer to surrealism. And it is strongly suggestive of the kind of language that will appear in *Poeta en Nueva York*.

<sup>2</sup>It could be argued that Azorín's lists belong in this account. But I read the catalogue of the contents of a house in Castile as part of a whole, an ongoing story that brings out the genius loci of Spain, or emphasizes the time-bound nature of viewer and viewed. For a further opinion, see Ugarte, 1996: 157-183.

Poema de las cositas

Mi amiga tiene la mano de corcha y llena de puntas de paris [sic].

Mi amiga tiene las rodillas de humo.

El azúcar se disuelve en el agua, se tiñe con la sangre y salta como una pulga.

Mi amiga tiene un reloj de pulsera de macilla [sic]...

Cositas, cositas, cositas, cositas...

(Sánchez Vidal, 1988: 164-165)

Now it was Lorca's turn to walk the streets, parks, and beaches of New York City, where the breakdown of continuity, the shock of New York's masses would never inspire a diminutive.

*Poeta en Nueva York* repeats, copies, and traces its opening poem, "Vuelta de paseo", which might be paraphrased à la Wordsworth as thoughts recollected after walking around:

Asesinado por el cielo.

Entre las formas que van hacia la sierpe  
y las formas que buscan el cristal,  
dejaré crecer mis cabellos.

Con el árbol de muñones que no canta  
y el niño con el blanco rostro de huevo.

Con los animalitos de cabeza rota  
y el agua harapianta de los pies secos.

Con todo lo que tiene cansancio sordomudo  
y mariposa ahogada en el tintero.

Tropezando con mi rostro distinto de cada día.

¡Asesinado por el cielo!

(García Lorca, 1986 [22nd edition]: 447)

The trope of brokenness, reinforced by the castrated tree that holds no birds, the dry feet that rustle as in *The Waste Land*, an identity that will not hold steady, blocked creativity ("mariposa ahogada en el tintero"), the echo from Eliot: "I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street / With my hair down, so" (vv 132-133): "Vuelta de paseo" subsumes in its twelve lines everything that might happen to the modernist flâneur.

Neruda's "Walking Around" begins on the note of ennui associated with the flâneur: "Sucede que me canso de ser hombre;" vacillates between *bastío* and typical avant-garde animosity towards the bourgeois: "Sin embargo sería delicioso / asustar a un notario;" expresses a desire to escape passivity: "No quiero seguir siendo raíz en las tinieblas... / absorbiendo y pensando, comiendo cada día;" and lanches into its famous list of sights:

Hay pájaros de color de azufre y horribles intestinos  
 colgando de las puertas de las casas que odio,  
 hay dentaduras olvidadas en una cafetera,  
 hay espejos  
 que debieran haber llorado de vergüenza y espanto,  
 hay paraguas en todas partes, y venenos, y ombligos.  
 Yo paseo con calma, con ojos, con zapatos,  
 con furia, con olvido,  
 paso, cruzo oficinas y tiendas de ortopedia,  
 y patios donde hay ropas colgadas de un alambre:  
 calzoncillos, toallas y camisas que lloran  
 lentas lágrimas sucias.

(Neruda, 1987: 220-221)

Neruda's *caminante* speaks with none of Eliot's distance; the *paseo* at various times provokes calm, hatred, oblivion; feelings are projected onto objects: the underwear, towels, and shirts weep dirty tears. It is "la noche de largas listas," says Neruda in an early *Residencia* poem (186). Neruda's fragments are partially held together by an unusually strong sense of self, and by the feeling that the objects need Neruda to bear witness. The "golpe de objetos que llaman sin ser respondidos" in "Arte poética" are constantly being recognized by the ambulatory *yo*. "Me piden lo profético que hay en mí," he writes in *Residencia's* "arte poético," underscoring the need for communication with a vaster audience that enabled him to escape with relative ease the "seres rotos" (91) of his Rangoon waste land. The world, said Neruda to a reporter in April 1936, "da la sensación de que se hace pedazos" (Lozada, 1971: 77 n 19). By then personal waste lands were fast being politicized across Europe.

Eliot's speaker in "The Burial of the Dead," echoing Ezequiel, explains the cause for the ignorance prevalent among the inhabitants of *The Waste Land*: "You cannot say, or guess, for you know only a heap of broken images" (vv 20-22). I have tried to show how Eliot's phrase "a heap of broken images" served as a metonymic trigger to portray the breakdown of knowledge and values that so heavily contribute to the despair present in *The Waste Land*, *Poeta en Nueva York*, and *Residencia en la tierra*, and I have suggested that the image bespeaks the discontinuity and break up that may be taken as general characteristics of modernism. The notion of ongoing narrative or purpose, strongly implanted in romantic poets and convincingly underpinning Tennyson's the *Passing of Arthur* gave way to the night of long lists, the making of one's way through shards. Eliot indeed

produced an emblematic phrase for the age that will not cease echoing through these books. Lorca cries "Todo está roto por la noche ... Todo está roto los tibios caños / de una terrible fuente silenciosa" ("Paisaje de la multitud que orina" 476) and laments the endless strewing of "objetos abandonados" ("El rey de Harlem" 461). Neruda wrote to his Argentine friend Eandi: "... no se halla usted rodeado de destrucciones, de muertes, de cosas aniquiladas?" (Neruda 1987: 28), an observation carried forward to one of the first poems of *Residencia en la tierra*: "Estoy solo entre materias desvencijadas" (98).

Visions close each book. Eliot's steady hand on the rudder prepares the way for his conversion, Lorca forsees a kingdom of wheat ushered in by un *niño negro*, and Neruda finds a prophetic strength. Eliot and Neruda will go forward, but the shots in Vízcar that end Lorca's life once again turn the heap of broken images into the emblem of an age.

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HOWARD T. YOUNG  
POMONA COLLEGE  
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA