

**Feminist Translation in Catalonia: the case of  
Montserrat Abelló's translations of Sylvia Plath and  
Maria-Mercè Marçal's poetry.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

As Feminist Translation consolidates itself as a translation theory, it might be important to analyze whether Catalan translators are adopting these practices or not and what their position towards this theory is. For this reason, the present study focuses on the figure of Montserrat Abelló i Soler as a translator. It includes an analysis of the translation techniques used by Abelló in three of her works: the anthology *Cares a la finestra*, Sylvia Plath's *Sóc Vertical* and Maria-Mercè Marçal's *The Body's Reason*. This research is based in Louise von Flotow's article "Feminist Translation: Contexts, Practices and Theories" (1991) which outlines some of the most important techniques used by feminist translators such as supplementing, prefacing, footnoting and hijacking. The outcome of this analysis shows that, while Abelló does not identify herself as a feminist translator, she shares some of their motivations and she uses some of their techniques to make the feminine visible in the texts.

**Key words:** feminist translation, Montserrat Abelló, Sylvia Plath, Maria-Mercè Marçal, Catalan translation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“My translation practice is a political activity aimed at making language speak for women. So my signature on a translation means: this translation has used every translation strategy to make the feminine visible in language” (Lotbinière-Harwood as quoted by Simon 1996:15).

Translation Studies have traditionally been concerned with the topic of fidelity, giving importance to the invisibility of the translator in the rendered text, leaving the original source intact and the original author’s message untouched. As Arrojo points out: “[...] contemporary, postmodern theories of language are beginning to recognize the inevitable echoes of the translator’s voice in the translated text” (Arrojo 1994:148). In the last few decades, there has been a proliferation of theories that give importance to the figure of the translator and the information that they might add to the subject of the original material.

One of the theories to which Arrojo is referring to in the above quote is Feminist Translation. Since its emergence in the 1970s as a critical response from Canadian Feminist writers to patriarchal language (von Flotow 1991: 72), Feminist Translation has become a broad research and theory field. As von Flotow indicates: “Gender awareness in translation practice poses questions about the links between social stereotypes and linguistic forms, about the politics of language and cultural difference, about the ethics of translation, and about reviving inaccessible works for contemporary readers” (von Flotow 1997:14).

As the Feminist Translator Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood expresses in the quote heading this essay, which forms part of the preface of one of her own translations (Simon: 1996), she sees translation as a political action against the language that has oppressed women all through history. Feminist Translation is concerned with showing the discrimination rooted in the hegemonic vocabulary used in translation. It is also



concerned with the recovering of female writers and translators that have been historically silenced.

Feminist Translation has been criticized from within other areas of Feminism and from outside feminist approaches (von Flotow: 1997). This practice is frequently denounced because these translators are accused of interfering with the original text and, therefore, with what the original author intended to express in that same text. These critics ask themselves to what extent it is licit to appropriate a text in order to adapt it to one's political position and one's own beliefs. Although this question is open to interpretation, the production of Feminist Translation practice and theory continues increasing every year and it is incorporating other areas such as the translation of queer texts and authors (von Flotow: 2001).

This investigation will be based on Louise von Flotow's study of the practices used in Feminist Translation, outlined in her article "Feminist Translation: Contexts, Practices and Theories", published in 1991. According to this researcher, the most important strategies used by feminist translators are supplementing, prefacing and footnoting, and hijacking (von Flotow: 1991). This research will also take into account some of the theories that have been developed after von Flotow's study, including some theories by von Flotow herself. This study will reflect on the existing Feminist Translation theories as well as the techniques that Feminist Translators have been using when applying these theories. It will also contain a review of the state of Feminist Translation in the Catalan context.

This project will focus on whether Feminist Translation practices are applied in the Catalan translation of English texts and vice versa. For this purpose, it will concentrate on Montserrat Abelló's translation of Sylvia Plath's poems into Catalan and Maria Mercè Marçal's poems into English. Using von Flotow's list of practices as a

base, this study will try to show whether feminist translation theory is used when translating texts that are traditionally seen as feminist, from Catalan into English and from English into Catalan.

As Feminist Translation consolidates itself as a translation theory, it is important to analyze whether Catalan translators are adopting these practices or not and what their position towards this theory is. Taking into account that Montserrat Abelló has been one of the most influential female translators in Catalonia in the last few decades, it might be relevant to study whether she uses feminist theory in her translation practice, and whether she does so consciously or unconsciously. For this reason, this study will include an analysis of the translation techniques used by this translator in some of her most significant and appraised productions.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Gender, Translation and Language**

With the entrance of women in the academic world in the 1960s and 1970s, there was an increase in the attention to gender issues. The feminist movements of these two decades led to a period of feminist revisionism in the academic community. Feminist scholars challenged the traditional views of the “universality” of knowledge that prevailed in scholarship, which led to women-centered perspectives in many disciplines such as psychology, history, sociology or literature, which began to be studied from women’s points of view (von Flotow 1997:7). One of the disciplines in which the matter of gender began to be analyzed was translation.

Gender studies and translation studies are both interdisciplinary fields; they are studied in correlation with other disciplines in order to broaden their topics of research. The interaction between these two study fields was formed as a result of their common

concern in the power of language. Some researchers argue that language is a political act of communication and negotiation that is able to defy or preserve the social and power structures and can be used as a manipulative tool (Castro 2013:5; von Flotow 1997:8). The role of language as a manipulative tool has always been a topic of discussion for feminist researchers, and the transfer of language is one of the fundamental components of translation (von Flotow 1997:1).

Translators are able to communicate a text to communities with other languages and therefore, with other cultural and social contexts. They can manipulate a text as “cultural intervention”, changing the expressions, concepts, grammar or vocabulary that contribute to the language of oppression (Simon 1996:9). Nevertheless, language is not the only concern that Feminism and Translation have in common. According to Simon:

“Translation studies have been impelled by many of the concerns central to feminism: the distrust of traditional hierarchies and gendered roles, deep suspicion of rules defining fidelity, and the questioning of universal standards of meaning and value. Both feminism and translation are concerned by the way “secondariness” comes to be defined and canonized; both are tools for a critical understanding of difference as it is represented in language” (Simon 1996:8).

Feminist translation was developed as a means to “battle patriarchal language” by Canadian Feminist writers in the 1970s and 1980s (von Flotow 1991:72). Their aim was to deconstruct the misogynist language that had been used by society to oppress women all through history. Most of the research that has been carried out in Feminist Translation in the last few years emphasizes the importance of translation and language in the construction of gender roles (Castro 2013:5).

Theories elaborated by feminists about the way language should be changed are varied. Some of these researchers claim that the only possibility to make language less dangerous for women is a radical change of the whole structure of language. Other scholars focus on creating new dictionaries and reclaiming the etymology of words such

as “hag” which are used negatively towards women but did not have negative connotations when they were formed (von Flotow 1997: 11).

The misogynistic vocabulary that these feminist translators refer to can be found in the discourse of translation theory. In her research on the metaphors of translation, Lori Chamberlain focuses on the comparison between the subversive role of women towards men and the subversive role of the translation towards the original text (Chamberlain 1988). This sexualization of translation can be seen in the expression “les belles infidèles”, which is a metaphor used in translation that refers to the opinion that “like women, translations should be either beautiful or faithful [...]. Fidelity is defined by an implicit contract between translation (as woman) and original (as husband, father, or author)” (Chamberlain 1988:455).

## **2.2 Feminist translation practices**

Feminists have always been concerned with recovering female authors that fell out of the traditional canon, which is influenced by the patriarchal society in which it was created. Translation has been useful to make these women and their work visible and available to the general readership. These translations are often supplemented with commentaries by the translator and the editors (von Flotow 1997:30). This feminist practice led scholars to try to recover the work by female translators that were taught to be silent by their historical and cultural contexts.

From the Middle Ages in Europe, translation was the tool some women used in order to enter the world of literature which was unavailable to them through authorship (Simon 1996: 2). This situation was still present during the Renaissance. These translators occasionally left their mark in the texts:

In the discussions of the translations, the emphasis is often placed on the moments where these women’s own voices become audible. In an era when women’s work was highly restricted, personal moments in their translations are seen to reflect

their own experience and understanding of contemporary sociopolitical situations  
(von Flotow 1997:67)

Feminist translators focus on these marks of the translator persona that might be present in the text, whether they were left knowingly or accidentally. This tradition of making the female translators visible derives from the need to acknowledge the contributions of women to society albeit the impediments that were usually placed against them (von Flotow 1997:75).

Feminist translators are also concerned with the existing translations of both feminist and non-feminist texts. Hence the processes of rereading and rewriting that researchers on feminist translation carry out. When rereading existing translations feminist critics realize that, in some cases, there are pieces of the text and references missing or that sexual and vulgar content is censored (von Flotow: 1997). Rewritings of translations or “re-translations” attempt to remove the male influence of the patriarchal context of the original translation, thus making the translation more inclusive to a contemporary audience (von Flotow 1997: 57).

The comparative analysis of different translations of the same text is also a practice in feminist translation. When comparing two different translations created in different historical, geographical or social contexts, researchers observe how these contexts affect the way in which a translator produces his or her work. In most of these cases, the translations considered are pre-feminist and post-feminist, therefore showing the gender bias present in the work (von Flotow: 1997).

### **2.3 Fidelity and Interventionism**

The concept of fidelity is a recurrent point of discussion in translation studies. The conventional views of translation place the source text as the active original and the translation as a passive representation of the source text. (Derrida as quoted by Simon

1996:11). According to this view, the translation should be a direct and faithful representation of the source text into the target language and it should not include any alterations. In this case, the translator is seen as an invisible tool for the transfer of the original text from one language to the other (Godard 1990:91).

Feminist translation has a different attitude towards fidelity: “For feminist translation, fidelity is to be directed toward neither the author nor the reader, but toward the writing project – a project in which both writer and translator participate” (Simon 1996: 2). When the concept of fidelity is questioned as it is in feminist translation, we encounter the following dilemma: to which extent is it ethic and appropriate to alter an original text to suit the translator’s political views? (Simon 1996:11). This question is one of the most debated aspects in feminist translation research and its criticism, although there is not a clear or definitive answer.

Simon argues that translators “communicate, re-write and manipulate in order to make it available to a second language public” (Simon 1996:9). They are able to intervene in the grammar, vocabulary and meaning of the text in order to change the language of dominance. For feminist translators, there is a clear difference between translating politically friendly texts and texts that stand against their beliefs. Nevertheless, when feminist translators intervene in a text, they usually highlight these interferences:

When feminist translators intervene in a text for political reasons, they draw attention to their action. In so doing, they demonstrate how easily misogynistic aspects of patriarchal language can be dismantled once they have been identified. They also demonstrate decision-making powers (von Flotow 1997: 25).

In this case, von Flotow is drawing attention to an overt intervention in the text, which is acknowledged by the translator and the readers. The intervention in the text can also be covert. In these cases only the translator and people who know the original source would notice the changes.

The case of the translation of radical experimental feminist writing of the 1970s could be seen as an example of politically friendly texts for feminist translators. These experimental works were part of an international movement that sought to create a new language for women, with new vocabulary, syntax, morphology, grammatical constructions and so on. By translating sex, sexuality and the female body, they tried to give a voice to some parts of women's lives that could not be described before or that were described in male terms. These texts were difficult to translate as a result of their experimental nature, since they were filled with puns and word-plays (von Flotow: 1997). In these translations, the translator considers her or himself as a tool for the women's movement.

Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood is one of the clearest examples of radical interventionism in feminist translation. She sees her translation practice as a political activity and sees censorship as an option. After translating texts that did not comply with her political beliefs, she decided to only ever translate feminist texts, but she still uses intervention in her translations. In her opinion, there is a need to call attention to the sexism found in texts. She usually includes an extensive number of footnotes and a preface, so the readers acknowledge her changes (von Flotow: 1997).

When a feminist translator deals with texts that do not adhere to his or her ideology, there are some cases in which the translator decides to "correct texts that they translate in the name of feminist truths" (von Flotow 1997:24). Some translators willingly intervene in their texts when they part from their political perspective. This is one of the most controversial aspects in feminist translation, although it is a practice that has been used all through history in different ideologies. When dealing with misogynist texts, feminist translators do not want to reproduce the sexist content. This is the case of Carol Maier and Suzanne Jill Levine's work on South-American male poets. They

admit they intervened in the texts, although these interventions are infrequent (von Flotow: 1997).

## **2.4 Metatexts**

The feminist influence in translation studies is openly visible in the metatexts that often accompany the translated texts: “the statements, theoretical writings, prefaces and footnotes that have been added to work published since the late 1970s” (von Flotow 1997:35). Barbara Godard believes that translation is a reworking of meaning. Because of this, she goes as far as to keep a translator’s diary, which becomes a record of the process of rewriting and production of meaning that she employs in her translation practice (Simon 1996: 23-34). Feminist translators use these metatexts to assert their own identities as feminist individuals.

When a person is translating a text, she or he is inevitably influenced by their own cultural and social contexts. For this reason, it is not unusual to find references to the translator’s own personal experiences in the metatexts. Von Flotow calls this practice: “the translator-effect: the mark each translator, as a gendered individual, leaves on the work” (von Flotow 1997:35). When the translator identifies her or himself as a feminist, there is a high chance that the references in the metatexts will be focused on their identities as feminist individuals, thus explaining their motivations when translating the source text and their “affinities and frustrations in their translation work” (Simon 1996:7).

Metatexts are usually used with a didactic purpose. Because of this, feminist translations frequently include scholarly essays, book reviews or conference texts. Prefaces and footnotes can also fulfil an educational function. All those metatexts highlight the work done by the translators, for example the research on the historical, literary and biographical context of the source text. It is important to note that these



metatexts are also useful to expose the restrictions of the transfer of culture. According to von Flotow, there is some material which cannot be transferred, it cannot be understood when transmitted from one language in one specific culture to a different culture altogether. The explanations in footnotes, prefaces, endnotes and so on, are crucial to decipher these differences (von Flotow: 1997).

## **2.5 Von Flotow's feminist translation techniques**

Louise von Flotow is one of the most cited researchers in the theory of the translation of social gender. Her book "Translation and Gender: Translating in the Era of Feminism", published in 1997, is a crucial text in feminist translation theory. Her article "Feminist Translation: Contexts, Practices and Theories", published in 1991, provides the readers with an overview of the most important practices and theories in Feminist Translation and deals with the context in which this theory appeared. She begins her article with a discussion on the importance of fidelity in translation and an overview of the theory produced by other researchers before the publication of this study.

In this research, she lists the most important strategies used by Feminist Translators: supplementing, prefacing, footnoting and hijacking. Supplementing, also referred to as "over-translation" (von Flotow 1991: 75), compensates for the variations between the source and target languages, and it establishes the voluntary action of the translator on the translated text. Simon argues that "supplementing, the equivalent of what some theorists call compensation, has also been recognized as a legitimate process of translation" (Simon 1996:14). The clearest example von Flotow provides from this practice is the translation of the line "Ce soir, j'entre dans l'histoire sans relever ma jupe". The traditional translator, translated it as "this evening I'm entering history without pulling up my skirt" while the feminist translator translated "this evening I'm

entering history without opening my legs”. The first translation is more literal, while the second tries to emphasize the message of the text.

The second practice von Flotow describes is prefacing and footnoting. This practice recapitulates the use of metatexts as explained in the previous section “4. Metatexts”. Von Flotow notes that it has become routine for translators to give themselves a voice in the preface and make their presence visible in the translation through the footnotes (von Flotow 1991:76). Lastly, von Flotow talks about “hijacking”. Hijacking is a process of “correction” of the source text. This practice is a radical form of intervention by which the feminist translator changes the text in order to make the feminine visible. The researcher gives the example of Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood, who uses her translations to make her political intentions visible in her work (von Flotow 1991: 78-79).

## **2.6 Feminist Translation in Catalonia**

The practice of translation in Catalonia has been highly affected by its cultural and historical contexts. This influence was even more prominent when these translations were carried out by women. Because of this, it is not common to find Catalan translations made by a woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Pinyol argues: “En el segle XIX no va ser fàcil ser escriptora, i menys en català, i menys encara, ser traductora en Català” (Pinyol 2006:75). Joaquina Santamaria i Ventura, Francesca Bonnemaïson de Verdaguer, Carme Montoriol and Maria Teresa Vernet are some of the female translators who were working before the Spanish Civil War whom Godayol mentions in her review of the history of gender and translation in Catalonia (Godayol 2011).

With the beginning of the Spanish Civil War and the consequent uprising of the Francoist Dictatorship, the production of translation works in Catalan practically disappeared: “La guerra i la dictadura van resultar anihiladores per la traducció catalana en general i per a la incipient traducció femenina” (Godayol 2011:59). It was not until the 1960s that the censorship of the Catalan language implemented by Franco’s regime began to relax (Bacardí, Godayol 2013:13). As a consequence of this, there was a proliferation of women translators that sought to recover the Catalan language that had been previously oppressed:

A poc a poc, quan la literatura catalana comença a eludir el marasme de la dictadura, unes quantes traductores se senten responsables davant del repte d’enriquir la llengua pròpia amb obres de la literatura universal. La traducció es converteix en una manera de forjar nous llenguatges mínimament normalitzats que ajuden a reviscolar la salut de la llengua (Godayol 2011: 60).

In this new wave of translators, we can find some of the most influential professionals of this field: Carme Serrallonga, Maria Aurèlia Capmany and Montserrat Abelló, among others (Godayol 2011).

These translators were concerned about the state in which the Catalan language had been left after Franco’s regime and about the corpus of literature that was available to the Catalan readership at the time. In some cases, these translators used their work to recuperate authors that had not been taken into account by previous translators or that had fallen out of the Spanish or Catalan canon. These motivations can be observed in the metatexts that accompany some of the productions by these translators, which also show that they chose the texts according to their own personal convictions (Bacardí, Godayol 2013:13).

In the 1980s, there was an emergence of Catalan authors that combined their jobs as writers and translators. They used translation for financial stability in order to be able to devote themselves to their writing careers. In this generation we can find some

of the most prominent Catalan female authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Maria Àngels Anglada, Helena Valentí, Maria Antònia Oliver and Maria-Mercè Marçal (Godayol 2011).

As Bacardí and Godayol comment in their compilation of some of the prologues of translations made by women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not many of the translators they are dealing with make explicit feminist statements about their approaches. Only two of the women they analyze use the prologues of their works for this purpose, Mercè Otero and Montserrat Abelló, and in both cases these prologues were written from the 1990s onwards (Bacardí, Godayol 2013:18). Even though all these women translators do not explicitly say that they are contributing to the feminist cause, it seems clear that, by making authors that had been previously ignored visible, they are helping to create a feminine genealogy of writers not influenced by the patriarchal society that generally controls the canon. This concept is what Maria-Mercè Marçal claimed that translators in Catalonia should accomplish: “reivindicava la necessitat de construir una genealogia pròpiament femenina, atès que la cultura universal ha estat essencialment masculina: només hi consten alguns noms de dones i sempre d’una en una, sense aparent relació entre unes i altres” (Marçal as quoted by Bacardí, Godayol 2013:12)

### **3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1 Montserrat Abelló: poet and translator**

Montserrat Abelló i Soler was born in Tarragona in 1918 and died in Barcelona in 2014. Her family moved around Spain and Europe all through her childhood due to her father’s job, and she spent a few years in London, where she learned English. During the Spanish Civil War, she acted as an interpreter for the International Brigades in Barcelona and, after the Francoist victory, she and her father went into exile in

France and London. Eventually, she went to Chile, where she spent twenty years of her life and formed a family with Joan Bofill, another exiled Catalan.

After her return to Barcelona in 1960, she finished her studies in English Philology that she had started during the war, and began teaching English. It was also in the 1960s that she published her first book of poetry *Vida Diària* (1963) and her first translations of novels by Iris Murdoch, Agatha Christie and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. It was not until she retired from her teaching career in the 1980s that she devoted herself entirely to her poetry and translation. Her work as a translator has been highly recognized by critics for contributing to the reconstruction and consolidation of the Catalan language and literature in post-war Spain. Abelló has won several awards for both her poetic production and her translations, such as the “Crítica Serra d’Or”, the “Cavall Verd-Josep Maria Llompart” and “La Creu de Sant Jordi”, granted by the Catalan Government (Torrents 2006; Bacardí and Godayol 2013; Carné 2015).

Even though Montserrat Abelló’s first translations were novels, after her retirement she focused on translating poetry and particularly, female poets of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. She has translated collections of poems by essential female authors such as Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich and she has included others like Margaret Atwood and Alice Walker in her anthology of poetry in English by women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *Cares a la finestra*. According to Carné, Abelló was conscious of the importance that gaining knowledge of these poets had for the creation of an inherent cultural and literary tradition in Catalonia (Carné 2009: 91-92).

On several occasions, Montserrat Abelló has made clear her motivations when choosing the authors she was going to translate. In an interview with M. Elena Carné, Abelló recognized that, most of the time, she translated works created by women because she wanted to make them visible: “he traduït la poesia de dones perquè he

volgut fer-les conèixer. Si no les hagués traduït jo, no hi serien” (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015: 36). She also claims that she wanted to make sure that Catalan readers realized that poetry written by women was as strong as poetry written by men and that it could be even better than that of male poets (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015:34). Abelló’s translation works have connected the Catalan culture with 20<sup>th</sup> century Anglophone poetry written by women (Carné 2009: 92), which may have influenced Catalan poets to follow their steps.

When asked about the new translation theories that have appeared in the last few decades, Abelló recognized that she did not have any insight but would like to study them to satisfy her own curiosity. She does not believe in new translation theories, because in her own words: “de traduir, se n’aprèn traduït” (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015: 30-31). According to this, we could deduce that she did not have knowledge about the incipient theories of gender and translation that were being developed in English-speaking countries. This theory is supported by the fact that she is against the translator’s manipulation of the text involved in interventionism as some feminist translators apply in their work:

Estic en contra de fer versions, per mi és una traïció, perquè és posar molt de tu en un poema que no és teu. Per poc que pugui, no faig la primera lectura pensant en la traducció, i em surt més bé si tradueixo els versos a mesura que van apareixent. Procuero ser fidel als sons i al ritme. En traduir no tan sols el significat, sinó tant com sigui possible, la cadència i el so, que també és important en poesia, ens acostem molt més a la força de l’original. Traduir és una manera diferent de llegir, molt més aprofundida (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015:32)

She follows the original text as much as possible, not letting her own persona be discernible in the target text. She tries to be as faithful to the source text as she can, and she sees herself as an accomplice of the author, not her rival (Carné 2015).

### **3.2 *Cares a la finestra***

*Cares a la finestra: 20 dones poetes de parla anglesa del segle XX* is a bilingual anthology of poetry written by English-speaking women from the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

published in 1993 and translated and edited by Montserrat Abelló i Soler. It includes poems by Stevie Smith, Dorothy Livesay, May Sarton, Muriel Rykeyser, Gwendolyn Brooks, Denise Levertov, Carolyn Kizer, Elisabeth Jennings, Anne Sexton, Adrienne Rich, Elaine Feinstein, Sylvia Plath, Anne Stevenson, Fleur Adcock, Marge Piercy, Margaret Atwood, Susan Griffin, Alice Walker, Penelope Shuttle and Rhea Tregebov. It also includes a brief biography of each of the poets translated that incorporates a short list of their works. In this collection we can find the translation of five of the most representative poems by Sylvia Plath: “Little Fugue”, “For a Fatherless Son”, “The courage of Shutting-Up”, “Lesbos” and “Childless woman”.

Abelló made clear her motives for the creation of *Cares a la finestra* in some of her interviews: “Vaig adonar-me que la poesia de dones era maltractada, només calia veure qualsevol antologia, i vaig voler fer una antologia de dones de parla anglesa del segle XX. Creia que era una poesia forta, valenta i molt bona, com qualsevol altre feta per homes” (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015:29). She wanted female Catalan poets to have more diverse models that could influence their poetic production. In Abelló’s opinion, the poetry written by women in Catalonia has always been seen as inferior to the poetry written by men thus, this anthology is in a sense, a protest against this situation (Torrents 2006; Carné 2009). These motivations agree with those by feminist translators who, as it has been said in previous sections, have always been concerned with reclaiming those female writers that had been previously ignored.

The only explicit inclusions of the translator-persona in *Cares a la finestra* are the already mentioned biographies of the authors that serve to contextualize the poems, and the prologue. According to von Flotow, prefacing and footnoting are some of the tools that feminist translators use when they are working. Abelló uses the prologue as a means to explain her motives for the creation of the anthology:

L'impuls de fer aquesta antologia de dones poetes de parla anglesa em vingué donat per diverses raons: adonar-me del poc conegudes que eren aquí la majoria d'aquestes poetes, les traduccions gairebé inexistent i la tradició poètica nostra, d'alt nivell en molts casos, però bastant desfasada quant a noves tendències i, sobretot, la falta de precursors o models en què emmirallar-nos en un país com el nostre, en el qual la poesia de dones sempre ha estat mirada des d'una òptica masculina, com una poesia menor, i no han estat mai més de dues o tres les poetes considerades dignes de figurar entre els seus companys masculins. No és cap exageració: no cal sinó agafar qualsevol antologia, llibre de text, llista de participants a lectures poètiques, etc., perquè això es faci evident (Abelló 2010:7).

In this first paragraph of the prologue, she already sets the tone of her translation. Although in the preface she does not explicitly declare that she has a feminist agenda in mind when translating these poems, it seems clear that she is instigating other authors to recognize the works of female writers that were neglected before. This “translator-effect” can be also seen in the prologue when she asserts her work as an anthologist, explaining that she has chosen that poems she best liked or thought were more representative for each of the authors.

Abelló's translation technique consists in following the original's grammar and lexicon as much as she can. She tries to adhere to the syntactic order and the form of the poem. She also tries to communicate the same musicality, rhythm and sonority of the original poem (Carné 2015: 91-92). Taking this into account, alongside with her abundant proclamations against interventionism in translation, it seems clear that she does not believe in the “hijacking” of the text as von Flotow states in her study.

This anthology does not contain any footnotes, endnotes or translation notes. Consequently, there are some cultural references that get lost in the translation. This can be seen in the twentieth line of the poem “Little Fugue<sup>1</sup>” by Sylvia Plath:

(1) “The yew hedge of the Grosse Fuge.”

(2) “La tanca de teixos de la Grosse Fuge.”

(“Little Fugue”, Abelló 1993: 188-191).

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex B.1 for the complete poem.



In this case, “Grosse Fuge” refers to a composition by Ludwig van Beethoven. Abelló might have decided not to clarify this information in a footnote since in the English version Plath decided to use the original name in German instead of translating it into English. There is also a previous reference during the poem to Beethoven (Line 13), which might also be one of the reasons why she does not feel the need to clarify this translation decision. A similar phenomenon happens in the twenty-second line of the poem “The Courage of Shutting-Up<sup>2</sup>”:

(1) “Hung up in the library with the engravings of Rangoon”

(2) “I’han penjada a la biblioteca amb els gravats de Rangoon”

(“The courage of Shutting-Up”, Abelló 1993: 194-197).

In this case, “Rangoon” is the way Americans refer to Yangon, one of the biggest cities in Burma. Although, nowadays it is called by its Burmese name, it used to be known as “Rangun” in Catalonia. Abelló decides to keep the American version of the word instead of using the Burmese version or the Catalan one.

As we have already seen, Montserrat Abelló does not like to make versions in her translations and therefore, she follows the original as much as possible. Nevertheless, there are variations between languages that have to be resolved during the translation. When translating from English to Catalan and vice versa, we can find difficulties with translating gender, which is grammatical in Spanish and natural in English. That is to say, in English gender is classified according to their natural sex or lack thereof, while in Spanish it depends on their morphological gender (Tubau 2013: 52). For this reason, the translator has make decisions on how to translate gender:

(1) “Black and leafy, as in my childhood”

(2) “negra i frondosa, com quan era petita”

(“Little Fugue”, Abelló 1993: 188-191).

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<sup>2</sup> See Annex B.1 to read the complete poem.

In the poem “Little Fugue”, the translator uses the feminine adjective “petita”. Abelló assumes that the poetic persona is a female, whereas in the original poem we cannot find any indication of the speaker’s sex. It is relevant to add that the poetic voice in Plath’s poetry is usually feminine. This translation choice is curious since it would have been easy to translate it without showing the sex of the speaker. The approach Abelló uses in this example could be correlated with Von Flotow’s technique of “supplementing”, which is a legitimate process in translation practice.

### **3.3 *Sóc Vertical***

*Sóc Vertical* is a recollection and translation of all the poems written by Sylvia Plath between 1960 and 1963. It was created by Montserrat Abelló i Soler and published in 2006. The relationship between the translator and Sylvia Plath’s poetry did not start with this book, since she had previously translated *Winter Trees* and *Ariel*. Abelló discovered Plath’s poetry while on a trip to London with some friends. She was captivated by the poet’s way of expressing herself through her poetry and she felt identified with her writings: “per primera vegada veia corroborada, a través dels seus poemes i els seus diaris, la meua manera d’entendre la poesia, perquè ella també dona molta importància al pes de la paraula” (Abelló as quoted by Carné 2015: 41).

At the beginning of *Sóc Vertical* we can find an introductory note written by the translator. In this note, Abelló expresses her intention of making the poems by one of the most important poets of the twentieth century available to the Catalan readers. She also reiterates her opposition to hijacking the text and her intention of being as faithful as possible to the original work:

Finalment quant a la traducció, com en totes les meves, he obviat les “versions”, sovint traïdores, i he intentat ser molt fidel a l’original (que no vol dir de cap manera ser literal) i he traduït, sempre que m’ha estat possible, el poema vers per vers. Basant-me en el significat intrínsec i el so de les paraules que més s’acosten a l’original, feina que m’és facilitat per les moltes similituds fonètiques que hi ha

entre el català i l'anglès, tant important en la poesia. I perquè crec, com Sylvia Plath, que la poesia és per dir-la en veu alta (Abelló 2006: 15).

Some critics such as Parcerisas conclude that Abelló's translations are so faithful that none of the "tortured and autodestructive obscurity" of Plath's poetry is lost in translation. Abelló's translations just help the Catalan readers to avoid the obstacles of language and enjoy the real essence of the poems (Parcerisas 2009: 102).

The introduction is not the only metatext present in this book. There are ten footnotes distributed throughout the compilation<sup>3</sup>. All these footnotes are used in order to clarify possible cultural interferences and therefore, any of these references include allusions to the translator's own personal experiences. The approach Abelló takes when using footnotes is sporadic and discontinuous. This is reflected in the poem "Small hours"<sup>4</sup> in which she clarifies the meaning of the word "Nike":

(1) "Mother of a white Nike and several bald-eyed Apollos".

(2) "mare d'una blanca Nike\* i diversos Apol·los d'ulls escarits".

Footnote: Divinitat grega, representació de la Victòria, considerada filla de Zeus i associada amb el culte d'Atenea (*N. de la T.*)".

("Small hours", Abelló 2006: 300-301).

The goddess Nike appears in previous poems in which she is not defined. This is the case of the poem "Barren woman"<sup>5</sup>, which is the exact same poem with a different title, and was included in both Plath's *Ariel* and *Crossing the Water*:

(1) "Mother of a white Nike and several bald-eyed Apollos".

(2) "mare d'una blanca Nike i diversos Apol·los d'ulls buidats".

("Barren woman", Abelló 2006: 32-33).

It would also be interesting to note that she does not include notes every time a figure of the Greek mythology or other important historical figures appear, as can be seen in the

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<sup>3</sup> See Annex A for the complete list of footnotes.

<sup>4</sup> See Annex B.2 to read the complete poem.

<sup>5</sup> See Annex B.2 to read the complete poem.

poem “Ariel”, where the author mentions Lady Godiva (Abelló 2006: 68-71); in the poem “Getting there”, where the author mentions the Krupp family and Lethe (Abelló 2006: 116-119); and in the poem “Winter Trees<sup>6</sup>”, where Plath mentions Leda (Abelló 2006-180-181). The same happens with geographical places and the names of companies, they are sometimes clarified and sometimes not.

As it happened in *Cartes a la finestra*, in *Sóc vertical* Abelló had to take some decisions when translating the English natural gender to the Catalan grammatical one. Again, in most poems Abelló assumes that the poetic voice is a woman and translates the whole poems from a feminine perspective. “The jailer” and “I am vertical” are two clear examples of this translation technique:

(1) “I have been drugged and raped. [...] Hung, starved, burned, hooked”.

(2) “He estat drogada i violada. [...] Penjada, afamada, cremada, burxada”.

(“The Jailer”, Abelló 2006: 48-51).

(1) “It is more natural to me, lying down”.

(2) Per a mi és més natural, ajaguda”.

(“I am vertical”, Abelló 2006: 266-267).

The translation of gender from English to Catalan can also cause problems when talking about professions, as we can see in the poem “Getting there”:

(1) “It is a trainstop, the nurses”.

(2) “És una parada de tren, les infermeres”.

(“Getting there”, Abelló 2006: 116-119).

In this case, Abelló decides to translate “nurses” for the feminine “infermeres”, even if the original does not show the sex of the subject. The profession of nursing has been historically seen as feminine. Most probably, Abelló made this decision taking into

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<sup>6</sup> See Annex B.2 for the complete poems.

account the history of nursing and how in Plath's time, this profession was usually performed by women.

### **3.4 *The Body's Reason***

*The Body's Reason* is a translation of *La raó del cos*, a book written by the Catalan poet Maria-Mercè Marçal in the last years of her life. This translation by Montserrat Abelló and Noèlia Díaz Vicedo, published in 2014, is the first collection of poems by this Catalan author to be translated into English. Maria-Mercè Marçal, a well-known fighter for women's rights, shared Abelló's feeling for the need of a feminine history of literature. She wanted female writers to have models that could influence them in their writings. Because of this, she encouraged other women to find and study these authors that had been invisible before (Bacardí and Godayol 2013:12).

As all of Montserrat Abelló's translations, this book is highly faithful to the original text; there is not an open intervention by the translators to make the feminine visible. There are not footnotes either although this might be due to the fact that there are not many cultural references in Marçal's poetry that might confuse the readers. Nevertheless, what Abelló and Díaz Vicedo include in this book is a translator's note. We can also find the translated prologue from the original Catalan version written by Lluïsa Julià and a note to the English version written by Dominic Keown. In the translator's note, Abelló and Díaz Vicedo introduce Maria-Mercè Marçal's life and work, and her feminist background: "She had a pioneering role in developing an entire body of thought on feminism and Catalan literature and her poetry reflects awareness and concern for topics and themes never previously encountered in Catalan poetry, such as pregnancy, motherhood, Sapphic love and the process of fighting cancer" (Abelló and Díaz Vicedo 2014: 13).

When translating this collection of poems from Catalan into English we find the opposite problem than in the previous two books. In Catalan, the poems have a grammatical gender and therefore, you can tell in the adjectives if the speaker is a woman or a man. When translating these adjectives into English, they lose the gender signifiers and therefore, if the translator wants the feminine to still be visible, there is a need to supplement the text. In the particular case of *The Body's Reason*, Abelló and Díaz Vicedo decide not to add any new information in the poems and therefore, they become gender-neutral. This is the case of the poems “Per cada gest...”, “Però cosides...” and “Covava l’ou de la mort blanca...<sup>7</sup>”:

(1) “Pròdiga / escampadissa”.

(2) “Lavish / scattering”.

(“Per cada gest...”, Abelló and Díaz Vicedo 2014: 46-47).

(1) “Però cosides / l’una contra l’altra, / clavades”.

(2) “But sewn one / against the other, / nailed”.

(“Però cosides...”, Abelló and Díaz Vicedo 2014: 68-69).

(1) “agafada a la mà de l’esglai”

(2) “and hold hands with the horror”

(“Covava l’ou de la mort blanca...”, Abelló and Díaz Vicedo 2014: 68-69).

All these poems, which were written from a feminine perspective in the English original, become neutral in the Catalan version, and therefore, they lose some of their connotations.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The aim of this study was to examine whether Montserrat Abelló used feminist translation techniques when translating Sylvia Plath’s poetry into Catalan and Maria-Mercè Marçal’s poetry into English. For this purpose, this analysis includes an

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<sup>7</sup> See Annex B.3 to read the complete poems.

overview of the history of feminist translation both internationally and in the Catalan context. Alongside this analysis, it contains a review of Louise von Flotow's study on the practices used in Feminist Translation, outlined in her article "Feminist Translation: Contexts, Practices and Theories", published in 1991. The present study contains an analysis of three translations carried out by Montserrat Abelló: the anthology *Cares a la finestra*, Sylvia Plath's *Sóc Vertical* and Maria-Mercè Marçal's *The Body's Reason*. This analysis has been conducted taking into account Von Flotow's translation techniques outlined in the aforementioned article: supplementing, prefacing, footnoting and hijacking.

The analysis of the translations by Montserrat Abelló has shown that she does not intervene in the texts she is translating. Abelló does not believe in the hijacking of a literary work from the hands of the translation and believes in the fidelity towards both the author and the text. She prides herself of being as faithful to the original source as she can be, translating verse per verse and adapting the sounds and lexicon to the target language as much as possible. In her own words, she does not like to make versions of the original text.

Her use of metatexts changes depending on the translation. All three books include a preface or translator's note. She uses these prologues to describe her motivations for doing the translations of these texts which often include the desire to make these female authors available to the target readers so they could serve as models for future female poets. She also uses these prefaces to show that poetry written by women is as good and strong as that written by men and to defend the importance of these authors in the development of an equalitarian canon of literature. Abelló's use of footnotes is irregular. She only makes use of this metatext in *Sóc Vertical*, and they are sporadic and only used to explain cultural interferences.

The last of von Flotow's techniques, supplementing, is present in the three translations due to the differences between the natural gender we find in the English language and the grammatical gender we see in Catalan. In the case of the translations into Catalan of *Cares a la finestra* and *Sóc Vertical*, this compensation generates a change in the poetic voice, which sometimes becomes feminine when the original English version does not show the gender of the speaker. The opposite happens in the translation into English of *The Body's Reason*, in which some poems lose the feminine poetic voice and become neutral on account of the lack of gender signifiers in the translation.

All in all, and taking into account that Montserrat Abelló usually translates texts that already include feminist themes, we can conclude that Abelló shares her motivations with feminist translators when it comes to making the female authors visible. She also uses some feminist translation techniques, but is entirely against radical interventions of the original work in order to favor her own political agenda. In conclusion, Abelló would not completely agree with Lotbinière-Harwood's quote at the beginning of this study. Although she does use her translations as a means to "making language speak for women", she does not use every translation strategy to make the feminine visible in language.

In the future, it might be interesting to carry out comparative analyses between the translations of Sylvia Plath into Spanish and into Catalan to observe if there are differences in the translation techniques. It would also be interesting to analyze other Catalan translators, and to compare if men's translations differ from those made by women. Lastly, it is important to continue recovering female authors that have been silenced by the traditional canon and to make these author's available for the readers in other languages.



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## APPENDIX A: *Sóc vertical* Footnotes

Page	Poem	Verse and footnote
p. 64-67	“El detectiu” “The detective”	<b>Original verse:</b> “There is nobody in the house at all”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “No hi ha ningú*, cap cadàver dins la casa”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> “Aquí juga amb els dos significats en anglès, de nobody, ‘ningú’, i no body, ‘cap cadàver’ (N. de la T.)”.
p. 124-129	“Purdah”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Purdah”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “Purdah*”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> “Sistema hindú que obliga les dones a la vida retirada, cortina, persa, també prostituta (N. de la T.)”.
p. 142-145	“Amnesiac” “Amnèsica”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Sweet Lethe is my life”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “dolça Leto* és la meva vida”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> “Leto, divinitat grega, filla de titans, de la unió amb Zeus concebé Àrtemis i Apol·lo (N. de la T.)”.
p.172-175	“Wintering” “Hivernant”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Tate and Lyle keeps them going”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “Tate & Lyle* les fan trespasar,”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> “Es refereix a una antiga fàbrica de sucre anglesa. Tate & Lyle. Tate va ser el fundador de la Tate Gallery (N. de la T.)”.
p. 198-201	“Lyonnesse”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Lyonnesse” .
		<b>Translation:</b> “Lyonnesse*”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> “Lyonnesse, antiga regió a l'oest de Cornualla, ara ensorrada al fons del mar, a més de quaranta brases de profunditat (N. de la T.)”.
p. 276-279	“Leaving early” “Anar-se'n d'hora”	<b>Original verse:</b> “The roses in the Toby jug”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “Les roses dins el “Toby jug*”.
		<b>Footnote:</b> Gerra de cervesa en forma d'un personatge amb levita i barret tricorni (N. de la T.)”.

p. 276-279	“Leaving early”	<b>Original verse:</b> “By chysanthemums the size Of Holofernes’ head”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “uns crisantems de la mida del cap d’Holofernes*”.
	“Anar-se’n d’hora”	<b>Footnote:</b> “Personatge bíblic del Llibre de Judit, general que servia Nabucodonosor, que fou mort per Judit. Sovint la pinten portant el seu cap en una safata (N. de la T.)”.
p. 300-301	“Small hours”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Mother of a white Nike and several bald-eyed Apollos”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “mare d’una blanca Nike* i diversos Apol·los d’ulls escarits”.
	“De matinada”	<b>Footnote:</b> Divinitat grega, representació de la Victòria, considerada filla de Zeus i associada amb el culte d’Atenea (N. de la T.)”.
p. 314-317	“A life”	<b>Original verse:</b> “Of valentine-faces might please a collector”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “amb cara de “valentine”* podria plaure a un col·leccionista”.
	“Una vida”	<b>Footnote:</b> “Valentine” postals que s’envien el dia de Sant Valentí, generalment amoroses (N. de la T.)”.
p. 334-337	“Last words”	<b>Original verse:</b> “And the shine of these small things sweeter than the face of Ishtar”.
		<b>Translation:</b> “i la lluïssor d’aquestes coses petites més dolça que el rostre d’Istar*”.
	“Darreres paraules”	<b>Footnote:</b> “Istar: deessa d’Assíria i Babilònia de l’amor i la fecunditat, identificada amb la fenícia Astarte. Associada amb la lluna i amb el planeta Venus, en foren la representació abstracta. Probablement d’arrel neolítica. Els grecs l’identificaren amb Afrodita (N. de la T.)”.

## APPENDIX B: Poems

### Appendix B.1: *Cares a la finestra*

Little Fugue	Petita fuga
<p>The yew's black fingers wag; Cold clouds go over. So the deaf and dumb Signal the blind, and are ignored.</p> <p>I like black statements. The featurelessness of that cloud, now! White as an eye all over! The eye of the blind pianist</p> <p>At my table on the ship. He felt for his food. His fingers had the noses of weasels. I couldn't stop looking.</p> <p>He could hear Beethoven: Black yew, White cloud, The horrific complications. Finger-traps –a tumult of keys.</p> <p>Empty and silly as plates, So the blind smile. I envy the big noises, The yew hedge of the Grosse Fuge.</p> <p>Deafness is something else. Such a dark funnel, my father! I see your voice Black and leafy, as in my childhood,</p> <p>A yew hedge of orders, Gothic and barbarous, pure German. Dead men cry from it. I am guilty of nothing.</p> <p>The yew my Christ, then. Is it not as tortured? And you, during the Great War In the California delicatessen</p> <p>Lopping the sausages! They color my sleep, Red, mottled, like cut necks. There was a silence!</p> <p>Great silence of another order. I was seven, I knew nothing. The world occurred. You had one leg, and a Prussian mind.</p>	<p>Els dits negres del teix es mouen; llisquen núvols freds. Com els sords i els muts fan senyals als cecs, que els ignoren.</p> <p>M'agraden les fosques afirmacions. Aquell núvol desdibuixat, ara! Com un ull del tot blanc! L'ull del pianista cec.</p> <p>a la meva taula del vaixell. Menjava a les palpentes. Els dits amb nas de mostela. No podia deixar de mirar-me'l.</p> <p>Ell escoltava Beethoven: teix negre, núvol blanc, les horribles complicacions. Parany per als dits: una allau de tecles.</p> <p>Enzes i buits com plats, així somriuen els cecs. Envejo els grans brogits, la tanca de teixos de la Grosse Fuge.</p> <p>La sordesa és una altra cosa. Un túnel tan fosc, pare! Veig la teva veu negra i frondosa, com quan era petita,</p> <p>una tanca feta de lleis, gòtiques i bàrbares, del tot germàniques. Hi ha morts que encara ho ploren. Jo no en sóc culpable.</p> <p>El teix és el meu Crist, doncs. No el turmenten igual? I tu, durant la Gran Guerra a la xarcuteria de Califòrnia</p> <p>capolant salsitxes! M'acolorixen el son, roges i pigallades com colls tallats. Hi havia un silenci!</p> <p>El gran silenci d'un nou ordre. Tenia set anys, no en sabia res. El món s'esdevenia. Tenies una sola cama, i una ment prussiana.</p>

<p>Now similar clouds Are spreading their vacuous sheets. Do you say nothing? I am lame in the memory.</p> <p>I remember a blue eye, A briefcase of tangerines. This was a man, then! Death opened, like a black tree, blackly.</p> <p>I survive the while, Arranging my morning. These are my fingers, this my baby. The clouds are a marriage dress, of that pallor.</p>	<p>Ara núvols semblants escampen llençols de buidor. És que no en dius res? La memòria em coixeja.</p> <p>Recordo un ull blau, una cartera amb mandarines. Allò era un home, doncs! La mort s'obria, com un arbre negre, foscament.</p> <p>Sobrevisc aquell temps, arranjant el matí. Aquests són els meus dits, aquest el me fill. Els núvols un vestit de núvia, amb aquella pal·lidesa.</p>
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<b>The Courage of Shutting-Up</b>	<b>El coratge de callar</b>
<p>The courage of the shut mouth, in spite of artillery! The line pink and quite, a worm, basking. There are black disks behind it. The disks of outrage, And the outrage of a sky, the lined brain of it. The disks revolve, they ask to be heard-</p> <p>Loaded, as they are, with accounts of bastardies. Bastardies, usages, desertions and doubleness, The needle journeying in its groove, Silver beast between two dark canyons, A great surgeon, now a tattooist.</p> <p>Tattooing over and over the same blue grievances, The snakes, the babies, the tits On mermaids and two-legged dreamgirls. The surgeon is quiet, he does not speak. He has seen too much death, his hands are full of it.</p> <p>So the disks of the brain revolve, like the muzzles of cannon. Then there is that antique billhook, the tongue, Indefatigable, purple. Must it be cut out? It has nine tails, it is dangerous. And the noise it flays from the air, once it gets going!</p> <p>No, the tongue, too, has been put by, Hung up in the library with the engravings of Rangoon And the fox heads, the otter heads, the heads of dead rabbits. It is a marvellous object- The things it has pierced in its time.</p>	<p>El coratge de la boca closa, malgrat l'artilleria! La ratlla rosa i quita, un cuc, assolellant-se. Hi ha discs negres al darrere, els discs de l'ultratge, i l'ultratge d'un cel, el del seu cervell folrat. Els discs giren, demanen que se'ls escolti,</p> <p>carregats, com ho estan, amb històries de bastardies. Bastardies, costums, desercions i falsedats, l'agulla fa camí en el seu fondal, bèstia de plata entre dues fosques gorges, un gran cirurgià, que ara tatua,</p> <p>tatua un i altre cop els mateixos blaus greuges, les serps, els infants, els pits a sirenes i a noies de somni amb dues cames. El cirurgià està callat, no parla pas. Ha vist massa mort, en té les mans plenes.</p> <p>Així els discs del cervell giren, com boques de canó. Després hi ha aquella antiga podadora, la llengua, infatigable, purpúria. Caldrà tallar-la? Té nou cues, és perillosa. I el brunzit que arrenca de l'aire, un cop s'engega!</p> <p>No, la llengua, també, ha estat desada, l'han penjada a la biblioteca amb els gravats de Rangoon i els caps de guineu, els de llúdria, i els caps de conills morts. Es un objecte meravellós: les coses que ha foradat en el seu temps!</p>

<p>But how about the eyes, the eyes, the eyes? Mirrors can kill and talk, they are terrible rooms</p> <p>In which a torture goes on one can only watch.</p> <p>The face that lived in this mirror is the face of a dead man. Do not worry about the eyes-</p> <p>They may be white and shy, they are no stool pigeons, Their death rays folded like flags Of a country no longer heard of, An obstinate independency Insolvent among the mountains.</p>	<p>I què me'n dieu del ulls, els ulls, els ulls? Els miralls poden matar i parlar, són cambres terribles on hi ha una tortura contínua que tan sols es pot mirar. El rostre que vivia en aquest mirall és el rostre d'un mort. No us preocupeu dels ulls:</p> <p>poden ser blancs i tímids, no són pas delators.</p> <p>Els seus raigs letals plegats com banderes d'un país del qual ja no se'n sap res, una obstinada independència, insolvent entre les muntanyes.</p>
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### Appendix B.2: *Sóc vertical*

Small Hours	De Matinada
<p>Empty, I echo to the least footfall, Museum without statues, grand with pillars, porticoes, rotundas. In my courtyard a fountain leaps and sinks back into itself, Nun-hearted and blind to the world. Marble lilies Exhale their pallor like scent.</p> <p>I imagine myself with a great public, Mother of a white Nike and several bald-eyed Apollos. Instead, the dead injure me with attentions, and nothing can happen. The moon lays a hand on my forehead, Blank-faced and mum as a nurse.</p>	<p>Buida, em torno eco al més lleu pas, museu sense estàtues, grandiosa amb pilars, pòrtics, rotundes. Al meu pati, un sortidor salta i es torna a engolir a si mateix, amb cor de monja i cec pel món. Lliris de marbre exhalen la seva pal·lidesa com perfum.</p> <p>M'imagino a mi mateix amb un gran públic, Mare d'una blanca Nike i diversos Apol·los d'ulls escarits. En lloc d'això, els morts em fereixen amb atencions, i res no pot passar. La lluna em posa una mà al front, Amb nostre impàvid i silenciosa com una infermera.</p>

Barren Woman	Dona Estèril
<p>Empty, I echo to the least footfall, Museum without statues, grand with pillars, porticoes, rotundas. In my courtyard a fountain leaps and sinks back into itself, Nun-hearted and blind to the world. Marble lilies Exhale their pallor like scent.</p> <p>I imagine myself with a great public, Mother of a white Nike and several bald-eyed Apollos. Instead, the dead injure me with attentions, and nothing can happen.</p>	<p>Buida, resono al so del més lleu pas, museu amb estàtues, sumptuós amb pilars, pòrtics, rotundes. Al meu pati una font hi brolla i torna a engolir-se, amb cor de monja i cega vers el món. Lliris de marbre exhalen com perfum la seva pal·lidesa.</p> <p>M'imagino davant d'un gran públic, mare d'una blanca Nike i d'Apol·los d'ulls buidats. En lloc d'això, els morts em martiritzen amb atencions, i no pot passar res.</p>

The moon lays a hand on my forehead, Blank-faced and mum as a nurse.	La lluna em posa una mà al front, Impàvida i callada com una infermera.
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Ariel	Ariel
Stasis in darkness. Then the substanceless blue Pour of tor and distances.	Estasi en la foscor. Després, el blau i insubstancial esllavissar-se de cims i llunyanies.
God's lioness, How one we grow, Pivot of heels and knees!- The furrow	Lleona de Déu, com ens despleguem en un, pivots de talons i genolls! La fesa
Splits and passes, sister to The brown arc Of the neck I cannot catch,	s'obre i passa, germana de l'arc bru del coll que no puc abraçar.
Nigger-eye Berries cast dark Hooks-	Ull de negre les mores llancen foscos hams.
Black sweet blood mouthfuls, Shadows. Something else	Bocades de sang negra i dolça, ombres. Una altra cosa
Hauls me through air- Thighs, hair; Flakes from my heels.	m'estira per l'aire; cuixes, cabells; cauen flocs dels talons.
White Godiva, I unpeel- Dead hands, dead stringencies.	Blanca Godiva, m'escorxo; mans mortes, mortes rigideses.
And now I Foam to wheat, a flitter of seas. The child's cry	I ara esdevinc escuma de forment, llúissor de mars. El crit de l'infant
Melts in the wall. And I Am the arrow,	es fon en el mur. I jo sóc la fletxa,
The dew that flies Suicidal, at one with the drive Into the red	la rosada que vola suïcida, a l'una amb la cursa endins de l'ull
Eye, the cauldron of morning.	roig, caldera del matí.

Getting there	Arribant
How far is it? How far is it now? The gigantic gorilla interior Of the wheels move, they appall me- The terrible brains	És gaire lluny? És gaire lluny encara? La gegantesca entranya de goril·la de les rodes avança i m'esborrona: el terrible cervell



<p>Of Krupp, Black muzzles  Revolving, the sound  Punching out Absence! Like cannon.  It is Russia I have to get across, it is some war or other.  I am dragging my body  Quietly through the Straw of the boxcars.  Now is the time for bribery.  What do wheels eat, these wheels  Fixed to their arcs like gods,  The silver leash of the will-  Inexorable. And their pride!  All the gods know is destinations.  I am a letter in this slot-  I fly to a name, two eyes.  Will there be fire, will there be bread?  Here there is such mud.  It is a trainstop, the nurses  Undergoing the faucet water, its veils, veils in a nunnery,  Touching their wounded,  The men the blood still pumps forward,  Legs, arms piled outside  The tent of unending cries-  A hospital of dolls.  And the men, what is left of the men  Pumped ahead by these pistons, this blood  Into the next mile,  The next hour-  Dynasty of broken arrows!  How far is it?  There is mud on my feet.  Thick, red and slipping. It is Adam's side,  This earth I rise from, and I in agony.  I cannot undo myself, and the train is steaming.  Steaming and breathing, its teeth  Ready to roll, like a devil's.  There is a minute at the end of it  A minute, a dewdrop.  How far is it?  It is so small  The place I am getting to, why are there these obstacles-  The body of this woman,  Charred skirts and deathmask  Mourned by religious figures, by garlanded children.  And now detonations-  Thunder and guns.  The fire's between us.  Is there no still place  Turning and turning in the middle air,  Untouched and untouchable.  The train is dragging itself, it is screaming-  An animal</p>	<p>de Krupp, negres musells  que furguen, el soroll  escopint l'absència, com un canó.  És Rússia que he de travessar, és una o altra guerra.  Arrossego el meu cos  lentament per la palla dels furgons.  Ha arribat el moment de subornar.  Què mengen les rodes, aquestes rodes  fixades als arcs com els déus,  ronsal de plata de la voluntat:  inexorables. I el seu orgull!  Els déus no saben sinó els destins.  Jo sóc una carta en aquesta bústia:  volo cap a un nom i dos ulls.  Hi haurà foc? Hi haurà pa?  Aquí hi ha tant de fang!  És una parada de tren, les infermeres  fan servir l'aigua de l'aixeta, els seus vels, vels  en un convent,  toquen els ferits,  homes amb sang que encara borbolla,  cames i braços apilats fora la tenda  d'inacabables planys:  un hospital de nines.  I els homes, el que resta dels homes,  empesos per aquests pistons, aquesta sang  fins a la milla següent,  l'hora següent.  Dinastia de rompudes fletxes!  És gaire lluny?  Tinc els peus plens de fang,  espès, rogenic i relliscós. És el costat d'Adam,  la terra d'on m'alço, jo en agonia.  No me'n puc desfer, i el tren fumeja.  Fumeja i esbufega, té les dents  que carrisquegen, com les d'un diable.  Hi ha un minut a la fi,  Un minut, una gota de rosada.  És gaire lluny?  Petit com és  l'indret cap a on m'adreço, per què tants  entrebancs?  El cos d'aquesta dona,  faldilla calcinada i màscara mortuòria  plorada per figures religioses, per nens amb  garlandes.  I ara detonacions:  trons i fusells.  El foc entre nosaltres.  ¿No hi ha cap lloc  que giravolti a mig aire,  intocat i intocable?  El tren va arrossegant-se, udola:  un animal</p>
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<p>Insane for the destination, The bloodspot, The face at the end of the flare. I shall bury the wounded like pupas, I shall count and bury the dead. Let their souls writhe in a dew, Incense in my track. The carriages rock, they are cradles. And I, stepping from this skin Of old bandages, boredoms, old faces</p> <p>Step to you from the black car of Lethe, Pure as a baby.</p>	<p>enfollit pel que li espera, per la taca de sang, la cara enmig de les flames. He d'enterrar els ferits com crisàlides, he de comptar i enterrar els morts. Que les ànimes se'ls retorcin en rosada, encens al meu camí. Els vagons es gronxen, són bressols. I jo, sortint d'aquesta pell de vells emplastres, tedi, cares velles,</p> <p>vinc cap a tu, des del negre carruatge del Leteu, pura com un infant.</p>
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<b>Winter Trees</b>	<b>Arbres d'Hivern</b>
<p>The wet dawn inks are doing their blue dissolve. On their blotter of fog the trees Seem a botanical drawing- Memories growing, ring on ring, A series of weddings.</p> <p>Knowing neither abortions not bitchery, Truer than women, They seed so effortlessly! Tasting the winds, that are footless, Waist-deep in history-</p> <p>Full of wings, otherworldliness. In this, they are Ledas. O mother of the leaves and sweetness Who are these pietas? The shadows of ringdoves chanting, but easing nothing.</p>	<p>Les tintes molles de l'alba deixen un blau que dissol. Sobre el seu paper assecant de boira, els arbres semblen un dibuix de botànica. Els records creixen, anell sobre anell, un seguit de noces.</p> <p>No saben res d'avortament ni de mesquinesa, més fidels que les dones, lleven sense esforçar-s'hi! Tasten els vents, que no tenen peus, ben endinsats en la història,</p> <p>plens d'ales, d'altres coses mundanes. En això són Ledes. Oh mare de fulles i dolcesa, qui són aquestes pietats? Ombres de tudons que canten, però no mitiguen res.</p>

<b>The Jailer</b>	<b>El Carceller</b>
<p>My night sweats grease his breakfast plate. The same placard of blue fog is wheeled into position With the same trees and headstones. Is that all he can come up with, The rattler of keys?</p> <p>I have been drugged and raped. Seven hours knocked out of my right mind Into a black sack Where I relax, foetus or cat, Lever of his wet dreams.</p> <p>Something is gone. My sleeping capsule, my red and blue zeppelin</p>	<p>La meva nit sua greix al seu plat d'esmorzar. La mateixa paret de boira blava és col·locada en el seu lloc amb els mateixos arbres i làpides. És això tot el que ell ens pot dur, El sacsejador de claus?</p> <p>He estat drogada i violada. Arrossegada set hores fora de mi dins un sac negre. On em relaxo, fetus o gat, alçprem dels seus somnis humits.</p> <p>Alguna cosa ja no hi és. La meva càpsula per dormir, el me zepelí roig i blau</p>

<p>Drops me from a terrible altitude. Carapace smashed, I spread to the beaks of birds.</p> <p>O little gimlets- What holes this papery day is already full of!</p> <p>He has been burning me with cigarettes, Pretending I am a negress with pink paws. I am myself. That is not enough.</p> <p>The fever trickles and stiffens in my hair. My ribs show. What have I eaten? Lies and smiles. Surely the sky is not that color, Surely the grass should be rippling.</p> <p>All day, gluing my church of burn matchsticks, I dream of someone else entirely. And he, for this subversion Hurts me, he With his armor of fakery,</p> <p>His high cold masks of amnesia. How did I get here? Indeterminate criminal, I die with variety- Hung, starved, burned, hooked.</p> <p>I imagine him Impotent as distant thunder,, In whose shadow I have eaten my ghost ration.</p> <p>I wish him dead or away. That, it seems, is the impossibility.</p> <p>That being free. What would the dark Do without fevers to eat? What would the light Do without eyes to knife, what would he Do, do, do, without me</p>	<p>em deixa caure des d'una terrible alçada. Closca aixafada m'escampo pels becs dels ocells.</p> <p>Oh petites barrines; amb quins forats ja n'és ple aquest dia com paper! Ell m'ha estat cremant amb cigarrets, fent veure que sóc una negra amb potes rosa. Jo sóc jo mateixa. No n'hi ha prou amb això.</p> <p>La febre degota i se m'encarcara pels cabells. Se'm veuen les costelles. Què he menjat? Mentides i somriures. Segur que el cel no té aquest color, segur que l'herba hauria d'onejar.</p> <p>Tot el dia, enganxo llumins socarrats a la meva església, somio en algú completament diferent. I ell, per haver-lo subvertit em fa mal, ell amb la seva armadura de fingiments,</p> <p>les seves màscares altives i fredes d'amnèsia. Com vaig arribar-hi aquí? Criminal indeterminada, em moro amb diversitat; penjada, afamada, cremada, burxada.</p> <p>Me l'imagino impotent com un tro llunyà, a l'ombra del qual he menjat la meva ració fantasmal. Desitjaria que fos mort o ben lluny. Això sembla, n'és la impossibilitat.</p> <p>Aquest ésser lliure. Què faria la fosca sense la febre de menjar? Què faria la llum sense ulls per clavar, què faria ell, ell, sense mi?</p>
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<b>I Am Vertical</b>	<b>Sóc Vertical</b>
<p>But I would rather be horizontal. I am not a tree with my root in the soil Sucking up minerals and motherly Love So that each March I may gleam into leaf, Nor am I the beauty of a garden bed Attracting my share of Ahs and spectacularly painted, Unknowing I must soon unpetal. Compared with me, a tree is immortal</p>	<p>Però m'estimaria més ser horitzontal. No sóc cap arbre amb les arrels dins la terra xuclant minerals i amor matern perquè cada març esponerosa brosti, ni tinc la bellesa d'un jardí amb flors que faci que m'emplenin d'ohs, i espectacularment em pintin ignorant que aviat m'esfullaré. Comparat amb mi, un arbre és immortal</p>

<p>And a flower-head not tall, but more startling, And I want the one's longevity and the other's daring.</p> <p>Tonight, in the infinitesimal light of the stars, The trees and flowers have been strewing their cool odours. I walk among them, but none of them are noticing. Sometimes I think that when I am sleeping I must most perfectly resemble them- Thoughts gone dim. It is more natural to me, lying down. Then the sky and I are in open conversation, And I shall be useful when I lie down finally: Then the trees may touch me for once, and the flowers have time for me.</p>	<p>i una tija en flor no és alta, però és més vistosa, i d'un en voldria la longevitat i la gosadia de l'altra.</p> <p>Aquesta nit, a la llum infinitesimal de les estrelles, Els arbres i les flors han estat escampant la seva fresca olor. Em passejo entre ells però cap no se n'adona</p> <p>De vegades penso que quan dormo Dec assemblem-m'hi a la perfecció -els pensaments abaltits. Per a mi és més natural, ajaguda. Aleshores el cel i jo conversem obertament, I seré útil quan definitivament m'ajegui; Llavors els arbres sí que podran tocar-me, i les flors tindran temps per a mi.</p>
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### Appendix B.3: *The Body's Reason*

Per cada gest...	For every gesture...
<p>Per cada gest que lleva fruit, pròdiga escampadissa de flor vermella. Vida, excés, hemorràgia: Imponderable tesor de la pèrdua.</p>	<p>For every gesture that bears fruit, lavish scattering of a red flower. Life, excess, haemorrhage: Imponderable treasure of loss.</p>

Però cosides...	But sewn one...
<p>Però cosides l'una contra l'altra, clavades una i altra pel mateix déu en la creu del no-res des del fons dels segles brandem la sang del nostre silenci, aigua i vi, a la ferida. I es poden comptar tots els nostres ossos.</p>	<p>But sewn one against the other, nailed one and the other by the same god into the cross of nothingness from the depth of centuries we shake the blood of our silence, water and wine, on the wound. And all our bones can be counted.</p>

Covava l'ou de la mort blanca...	I hatched the egg of white death...
<p>Covava l'ou de la mort blanca sota l'aixella, arran de pit i cegament alletava l'ombra de l'ala de la nit. No ploris per mi mare a punta d'alba. No ploris per mi mare, plora amb mi.</p>	<p>I hatched the egg of white death under my armpit, close to my breast and blindly fed the shadow of night's wing. Don't cry for me mother at break of dawn Don't cry for me mother, cry with me.</p>
<p>Esclatava la rosa monstruosa botó de glaç on lleva el crit. Mare, no ploris per mi, mare. No ploris per mi mare, plora amb mi.</p>	<p>The monstrous rose burst out, button of ice where the cry is born. Mother, don't cry for me, mother. Don't cry for me mother, cry with me.</p>
<p>Que el teu plor treni amb el meu la xarxa sota els meus peus vacil·lants en el trapezi on em contorsions agafada a la mà de l'esglai de l'ombra.</p>	<p>That your cry mesh with mine a net under my staggering feet on the trapeze where I writhe and hold hands with the horror of darkness.</p>
<p>Com la veu del castrat que s'eleva fins a l'excés de la mancança. Des de la pèrdua que sagna en el cant cristal·lí com una deu. La deu primera, mare.</p>	<p>Like the voice of one castrated that rise to the excess of what is missing. From the loss that bleeds in the crystal-clear song like a spring. The first spring, mother.</p>