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## The Poetry of El Clamor Público

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The Poetry of El Amor Público  
(TITLE)

BY

Nicholas Connolly

**UNDERGRADUATE THESIS**

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"The Poetry of *El Clamor Público*"

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## The Poetry of *El Clamor Público*

### Preface

What is Chicano literature? For some, such as critic Bruce-Novoa, Chicano literature is the body of work stemming from a legitimized political and cultural consciousness of Chicano identity that was initiated and defined by the activism of *El Movimiento* during the mid-1960s (3). Others, including theorist Raymond A. Paredes, offer more historically extensive and conceptually broad characterizations of Chicano literature:

Chicano literature is that body of work produced by United States citizens and residents of Mexican descent for whom a sense of ethnicity is a critical part of their literary sensibility and for whom the portrayal of their ethnic experience is a major concern of their art. (104)

In his book, *Chicano and Chicana Literature*, Charles M. Tatum argues that “literature should not be defined narrowly to include only established genres ...” (9). Indeed, limiting the scope of the Chicano contributions to the American literary canon, as Bruce-Novoa permits in his rendering of the canon as ideologically linked only to *El Movimiento*, dismisses earlier works in a way that undervalues their actual importance to the Chicano identity in general; this perspective, therefore, also quiets the voices of thousands of Chicanos who did, in fact, have much to say about themselves and their places in American history, culture, and institutions prior to the 1960s. Most literary critics and theorists who study Chicano literature agree, at least, that the foundations of the canon begin in 1848 at the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, when more than 100,000 Mexicans became United States citizens with the annexing of the Southwest.

For the purposes of this paper, however, the label of “foundation” is itself quite limited in scope and not an appropriate category for the classification of the real power and influence of the Chicano literature that preceded *El Movimiento* during the 1960s. Although Paredes clearly wishes to demarcate an inclusive, flexible space for Chicano literature to be characterized and thus critically understood, his perspective on what constitutes literature itself is somewhat restricted. This is clear in his dismissal of the popular love poetry that many Chicano authors contributed to the canon during the mid-nineteenth century as “precious, effete, and more than a little silly” (82). He is not alone in this analysis, as evidenced by the shockingly widespread under-appreciation for Chicano poetry that does not coincide chronologically with *El Movimiento*. When describing the “ideological foundation” of Chicano literature, Cordelia Candelaria, in her contextual analysis of Chicano poetry, *Chicano Poetry: A Critical Introduction*, lists only the following as sources for a critical understanding of the depth and power of the Chicano political and cultural ethos during the mid-nineteenth century: letters, diaries, newspapers, and pamphlets (15). Missing from this list, of course, are novels and poetry. Not until the late 1880s, Candelaria writes, do Chicanos begin “to take literary cognizance of the changed political order” following the annexation of Mexico and attempt to move beyond folk narratives and reflections of conventional Mexican forms to a uniquely Mexican-American literature founded on a legitimate cultural ideology (16). Candelaria’s position is echoed by many authorities of the American literary canon who often include in their anthologies a few sad handfuls of “significant” oral folk tales and “important” news clippings during their obligatory discussions of the Chicano identity following the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

One important resource that Chicano literary theorists acknowledge is the bi-weekly newspaper *El Clamor Público*, which was published by seventeen-year-old Francisco P.

Ramirez, who, in 1855, was a newly-minted American. The Mexican-American War of 1847-48 had resulted in the annexation of California and Texas—in addition to other regions now collectively known as the American Southwest—to the United States. According to the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, U.S. citizenship was extended to residents of these regions, and many of the Spanish-speaking population looked to their new status as members of an American democracy with optimism. But over the course of the decade that followed the annexation, the experiences and outlook of these new Americans became less sanguine (Tatum 46). Produced during this key moment in the Chicano experience, *El Clamor Público* offers a unique window onto a defining period of U.S. social, intellectual, and, importantly, literary history. At its inception, *El Clamor Público* provided its readership with a variety of useful information about U.S. history, civics, and current events. Additionally, Ramirez utilized his paper throughout its publication as a forum for sharing Chicano poetry--works that simultaneously embrace the new sense of national belonging and expand on a literary tradition of Mexico itself.

Very soon after its initial publication, *El Clamor Público* began to register a distinct tone of disappointment with the promises of U.S. citizenship as well as an insistence that its readers preserve their culture – a recurring theme that clearly delineates the Chicano literary tradition from Mexican conventions. The editorials increasingly grew outwardly critical of the government's dealings with its Chicano citizens, and in a parallel way, the poetry of the newspaper captures both disillusionment with life as a second-class citizen and a longing for the familiarity of a home that no longer exists. These poems carry the voices of Chicanos who formed the first generation of Americans to live a new reality after the annexation because they extend directly from America's conquest of the Southwest and a war whose ramifications

continue to perforate the lives of Hispanic residents on both sides of the national border (Tatum 50). Unfortunately, the newspaper has remained largely untranslated, despite its wide acknowledgement as the “foundation” upon which the ideology of *El Movimiento* was constructed a century later. As cultural artifacts that come from the era of uncertainty that followed the annexation of Mexico, the poems Ramirez published in his paper are essential keys to unlocking the Chicano narrative in American history.

Although a couple of Chicano literary theorists have acknowledged that the poems published in *El Clamor Público* occasionally speak to the Chicano condition following the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, almost no one has treated them as culturally and ideologically significant to the American literary canon. Sadly, they are most often cited in footnotes or briefly mentioned as byproducts of Ramirez’s editorials, if remembered at all. Worse, theorists such as Paredes dismiss the poetry as distinctly lowbrow and “silly” (82). For most contemporary literary theorists, *El Clamor Público* remains significant simply because it was an outspoken, “pro-*raza*” newspaper during the mid-nineteenth century (Candelaria 5). But even though Ramirez would often include amateur love poetry or light-hearted, observational verse, a large number of the poems achieve well-structured, refined insight into a deep, complex Chicano identity following one of the most significant events in American history. Regardless of the content or form of the poems that Ramirez published in his newspaper, each and every poem is a cultural artifact that deserves to be critically considered, valued, and placed within the American literary canon as a significant contribution from a people in transition.

By not acknowledging the significance of the poetry published in *El Clamor Público* during the decade following the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, critics such as Paredes unfairly dismiss an important cultural resource that speaks profoundly to the Chicano and American

identity. Worse, they envision *El Clamor Público* as nothing more than a bi-weekly newspaper whose only contribution to the American literary canon lies in its editorials; consequently, the artistic voices of a population that should be heard and validated are, instead, actively ignored. Every Mexican-American poet who contributed to *El Clamor Público* produced a legitimate expression of what it means to be Chicano—to be a citizen of the United States—and should be considered, rather than dismissed, as part of an artistic tradition that is not predicated solely on ability or anachronistic notions of Chicano political identity. I posit, then, that the Chicano literary canon must be extended farther back than Rodolfo Gonzales and his poem, “Yo Soy Joaquín”, or María Amparo Ruíz de Burton’s *Who Would Have Thought It?*, back to 1848, and sought for more deeply within the pages of publications such as *El Clamor Público*. Even the “silliest” of the poems that Ramírez published in his newspaper can be critically understood as a genuine expression of the Mexican-American identity at its inception. The poetry of *El Clamor Público*, indeed, enriches not just the American literary canon, but also refines our conceptualizations of the Chicano experience, of life *en la frontera*.

“Foreigners in their own land”: Recovery, Redistribution

*There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism. When I refer to hyphenated Americans, I do not refer to naturalized Americans. Some of the very best Americans I have ever known were naturalized Americans, Americans born abroad. But a hyphenated American is not an American at all... Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States. We must unsparingly condemn any man who holds any other allegiance.*

- Theodore Roosevelt, 1915

Following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, Mexican people living in the newly annexed American Southwest had two options: remain citizens of Mexico and relocate to lands within their native country's diminished borders or, alternatively, keep their lands and become citizens of the United States. But, as simple as such a concept appears in theory, the practice of reconciling an individual's deeply rooted, generations-long national and cultural identity with a dubious geopolitical one is easier said than done. Those people who chose to become U.S. citizens in 1848 soon found themselves living on a literal and metaphorical borderland, paradoxically straddling the line dividing two distinct cultural and national identities, a line physically manifested by a – and conceptualized by Gloria Anzaldúa as

Set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. (3)

As scholar Genaro M. Padilla puts it, the boundaries established in 1848 were essentially “social rupture[s]” that “led to a decontextualization of individual and collective life that required a form of verbal restoration of the community with which the individual had identified his or her very locus of meaning” (289). In a way, the Mexican-Americans living during the mid-nineteenth century had themselves been annexed, hyphenated, and they needed to verbalize their condition in order to understand it and resist what Padilla identifies as an impending “social death” that would define their total alienation or

assimilation into the United States (289).

Despite the U.S. government's promises of equal citizenship and land rights, many Mexican-Americans were eventually dispossessed of their lands, ignored by the judicial system, and generally treated as foreigners in their own land; even if they wished to assimilate into United States culture as thoroughly as possible, Chicanos were generally regarded by the government as second-class citizens (Kanellos 11). Clearly, the Mexican-American condition in the mid-nineteenth century was marked by significant social subjugation as well as tension between multiple identities. Not only did early Chicanos encounter fierce racism from their fellow Americans, for example, but they were also actively excluded from the United States' judicial system (12). This friction is precisely what Gloria Anzaldúa describes as "*una herida abierta* [an open wound] where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds" (3). It is the friction experienced by those who live in *la frontera*, and, Anzaldúa argues, it requires human expression because it is a very human experience (3, 13). Almost immediately after the annexation, people such as Francisco P. Ramirez became conscious of the condition of Mexican-Americans who were living in the borderland and intentionally wrote about it (Kanellos 10). Therefore, a close analysis of the literature produced during this time period by people such as Ramirez is utterly critical for the development of a deeper understanding of the Chicano identity in general, not just the one that became "socially relevant" during *El Movimiento* of the 1960s.

Sadly, there exists a void in the study of Chicano literature before the 1870s (Padilla 286). "Chicanos have been silenced not only by the grave," writes Padilla, "but by political transformation, social dispossession, cultural rupture and linguistic alienation" (286). In his powerful treatise for the recovery of Chicano historiography, scholar Manuel M. Martín-

Rodríguez elaborates on Padilla's observation, and he argues that a more thorough examination of Chicano writings found in "nontraditional spaces" that precede *El Movimiento* is necessary for the expansion of subaltern discourses as well as the empowerment of readers who wish to engage with Mexican-American narratives (799, 803). However, *El Movimiento* was characterized by a specifically nationalistic attitude, and the recovery of literature that speaks to the Mexican-American transnational experience has often been criticized as a process prone to the "confusion" of the established Chicano identity of the mid-twentieth century (803). But Martín-Rodríguez warns us not to "fabricate the prehistory of Chicana/a literature as we would like it to have been" and reminds us that "we should acknowledge the diverse and contradictory tensions that have shaped it" (804).

For most scholars of Chicano literary history who study works that precede *El Movimiento*, the Mexican-American condition immediately succeeding the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo can be recognized in the periodicals and political essays written during that time. As discussed previously, not much attention is paid to the creative literature produced by Chicanos during the mid-nineteenth century. But, of course, there exists a body of creative literature – especially poetry – that speaks to the condition of these early Chicanos, people in transition. These works, along with the autobiographies that Padilla has uncovered and the wealth of letters Martín-Rodríguez has illuminated, deserve to be recovered and placed within a more inclusive, transnational Chicano literary canon. In particular, the poems located within the pages of Francisco P. Ramírez's influential bi-weekly newspaper, *El Clamor Público*, are keys that help unlock the narratives of those who found themselves residing in the Mexican/U.S. borderland in the

mid-nineteenth century.

Historian Nicolás Kanellos observes that from the outset Ramirez intended his newspaper to challenge the United States' imperialism even as it embraced the U.S. constitution and citizenship (10). Kanellos writes,

Although from the outset of his newspaper career Ramirez perceived a glaring disjuncture between the rights promised to citizens and those that the native Californios actually received, he highly valued the acquired rights that came with U.S. governance, specifically and most dearly, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. (10)

Essentially a "one-man operation," the publication of *El Clamor Público* was a daring enterprise, the first of its kind, and a significant sociopolitical contribution from the Mexican-American community during a turbulent and influential era of American history (10). Kanellos argues that the newspaper was even "ahead of its time" as Ramirez's editorials continually attempted to distinguish the Spanish-speaking community that had been successfully annexed in 1848 as capable of constructing its own purposes and ideals that did not always coincide with those of the United States government (10). Facing an "overwhelming ideology of Anglo superiority that was proclaiming all things Mexican and Hispanic as... worthy of obliteration from the face of the Earth," Ramirez's task was certainly a daunting one, as well as an endeavor that would not be legitimized until a century later during *El Movimiento* (11).

Ramirez's conscious acknowledgment of the disenfranchisement of Mexican-Americans that followed the annexation of Mexico is evident, as Kanellos notes, even in the naming of his paper "the public outcry" (12). Historians consider Ramirez and his

newspaper to have undergone an evolution from assimilationist to nationalist, and the years of *El Clamor Público*'s publication an "odyssey" that was transnational in scope and "pro-*raza*" (pro-Mexican-American) in intent (12). Certainly, Ramirez was interested in writing his editorials with the expressly political intentions of both preserving Mexican traditions and heritage and supporting the Spanish-speaking community in ways that were direct challenges to the unjust endeavors of the United States government (13). "His calls for union among the diverse group in the Hispanic population became more frequent and desperate in order to try to assume some power," Kanellos observes (14). Especially important to Ramirez was the dispossession of the lands held by Mexican-Americans that were expressly guaranteed by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo to remain in their possession. He writes,

The people are struggling under the oppression of the judges, and so effective have been the injustices committed by them ... what good does it do for a man to possess something, while being exposed to losing it all because of legal technicalities or the maliciousness of judges and their conspirers? (13)

Kanellos believes that virtually everything that Ramirez published in *El Clamor Público* was what the young man "believed mattered most, or personally wanted to matter the most, to his readers" (10). For this reason, it is clear that even the poetry Ramirez included in almost every issue of his newspaper coincided, for the most part, with his political aspirations and cultural assumptions.

Indeed, many of the poems that Ramirez published in his newspaper are clearly political in content. First presented in the March 29<sup>th</sup> issue of *El Clamor Público* in 1856—not even a year after the newspaper's initial publication—the poem sardonically titled "*La*

*Justicia* ("Justice") exemplifies the politically aware consciousness that informed many of the local poetic contributions and was predicated on inequality. Its first three lines are thus: "*Allá en la Corte Suprema/Donde reina la integridad/Veo que no hay igualdad*" ("There in the Supreme Court/Where integrity reigns/I see that there is inequality") (Vol. 1.40). In just these three lines, the anonymous author of this poem points out the hypocrisy of the United States judicial system by emphasizing a jarring disconnect between conflicting notions of integrity. Even the first word, "*allá*," means "over there," suggesting an unsettling distance between the speaker of the poem and a Supreme Court that is supposed to protect the rights of all citizens. As the poem progresses, it registers a distinct tone of frustration with the Court's preferential treatment of the wealthy and exploitation of those too poor to literally "pay the doorman" for entrance into a courthouse. Clearly, the author of "*La Justicia*" was fully capable of using artistic written expressions in order to expose the baseless "integrity" that, for the Supreme Court, meant "White and with money." Most importantly, the author was conscious of the line ( - ) that separated the Chicano community from accessing all of the privileges—including fair trials—that their non-hyphenated compatriots enjoyed.

"*La Justicia*," of course, is just one of the numerous, diverse, and politically motivated poems that Ramirez incorporated into almost every issue of *El Clamor Público* throughout its run. Although not every poem that was published in the newspaper carried explicitly political content, the majority of them were intentionally included because of their alignment with the sentiments of the Mexican-American diasporic experience (Kanellos 10). Take, for example, a stanza from the poem "*A Una Tortola*" ("To A Dove"):

Hija apacible de la selva umbría,  
Gentle daughter of the shady jungle,

Amiga del dolor: en la espesura  
*Friend of pain: in the weeds and brush*

Mas dulce, melancolica y oscura,  
*Sweetly, melancholy and dark,*

Sollozas en erotica alegría.  
*You sob in erotic joy. (Vol. 1.2)*

Here, the anonymous author begins the stanza with a reference to a jungle landscape that is not present within the southwestern United States. Throughout the poem, the author includes various images of a land that exists outside of the United States' borders. As the poem progresses, it is this setting that eventually inspires the speaker's introspection in addition to his or her external considerations of eroticized beauty. Such poems, it should be conjectured, were important for Ramirez to publish in *El Clamor Público* because they, along with the expressly political ones, were vehicles for the Chicano community of the mid-nineteenth century to transmit messages of cultural identity to the newspaper's audience.

With the essay, "Linchocracia: Performing 'America' in 'El Clamor Público,'" Coya Paz Brownrigg argues that the various contents of Ramírez's newspaper "must be understood as public performances staged to transmit particular cultural messages to a variety of audiences" (40). As part of the "transnational consciousness" that Ramírez used to construct a framework for the articles and artistry within *El Clamor Público*, the inclusion of poems that utilized traditional Mexican structure and themes, such as "*A Una Tortola*", was one of the means by which Ramírez could "cross borders, territorially as well as culturally and politically" (Kanellos 12). Literary theorists Sergio D. Elizondo and Dennis W. Riggs notice that, in the works of Chicano poets, such as the prolific twentieth century

artist, Alberto Baltazar Urista Heredia (pen name “Alurista”), there is a “strong urging for a return to the Chicano’s classic Mexican heritage, to the freedom of existence itself, and finally, to the appraisal of fundamental values that will furnish the Chicanos with new metaphysics, the latter constituting the essence of *chicanismo*” (24).

Essentially, such themes encourage Mexican-Americans to reevaluate their positions within society while at the same time maintaining certain cultural “truths” that link them to “the nobleness of both ... past and present Mexican civilizations” (24). The last poem that Ramírez includes in *El Clamor Público*’s final issue, “*Seguidillas*,” or “Folksongs,” is not clearly political in content, but it reflects the very Chicano sentiment that Elizondo and Riggs describe through its nostalgic descriptions of an idealized land “full of flowers” and *muchachas* on their way to a dance (Vol. 5.27). As for the variety of “silly” love poems that Ramírez also published (and which critics such as Paredes are too quick to dismiss), they, too, offered the newspaper’s audience artistic—if “cliché”—connections to a Mexican literary heritage that helped them formulate an identity while living in the borderlands.

Unfortunately, most of the poems that Ramírez published in *El Clamor Público* have remained untranslated or have been forgotten. Although he is specifically interested in the recovery of Chicano autobiography, Padilla imagines the impact of what he calls a “reconstruction of history” through the salvaging of such works: “Constructing a [new] tradition... demands making decisions that are likely to have socio-literary, cultural, and ideological consequences” (287). This perspective applies to the recovery of the nineteenth century Chicano poetic tradition, which, like Chicano autobiography, is rooted in an era of “social rupture” during which Mexican-American society was in need of “verbal restoration” (Padilla 289). Through the translation of poems that Ramírez included within

almost every issue of his newspaper into English, the restoration of a clearly verbalized identification of the Mexican-American experience can be realized, understood, and appreciated (301).

In his book, *The Translator's Invisibility: The History of Translation*, scholar Lawrence Venuti identifies the translation process as one that is inherently violent because "the chain of signifiers in the translating language which the translator provides on the strength of interpretation" are subjective and depend entirely upon the translator's values and cultural knowledge (13). That is, the language into which a work is translated is a unique conceptual space in which "many different semantic possibilities" are possible (13). Representations of a translated work, then, are "always configured" within the social condition of the translating language, and they are subject to its "hierarchies of dominance and marginality" (14). What this means for translating a text from Spanish into English is that an "act of violence" takes place in the process, which, in turn, is manifested through the exchange of one set of signifiers for another, one set of cultural knowledge for another (14). In a way, translating the poems of *El Clamor Público* means removing them from their intended cultural context and reassigning them an "Other-ed" status in the context of the translating language—an enterprise that means the translated text "can never be manifested in its own terms" (15).

Although the process of translation is an inherently violent one, Venuti argues that translators, to some extent, do have control over the "direction of the violence at work" (15). He cites the German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher's methods of translation:

There are only two. Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much

as possible and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him. (15)

Described as “foreignizing translation,” Venuti argues that the first method is that with which a translator is most able to illuminate the “truth” of the original text so that it is reflected in the translating language (15). “[This] practice”, Venuti writes, “can be useful in building national culture” or “forging a foreign-based cultural identity”(84). These were both goals of *El Movimiento* during the 1960s, and also of *El Clamor Público* during the 1850s; additionally, they coincide with my goals as a translator of texts that mostly reside outside the boundaries of the American literary cannon because they were written in Spanish.

Venuti writes,

Translation is a process that involves looking for similarities between languages and cultures—particularly similar messages and formal techniques—but it does this only because it is constantly confronting dissimilarities. It can never and should never aim to remove these dissimilarities entirely. (264)

Indeed, during the process of translating the poetry of *El Clamor Público* from Spanish to English, I have striven to maintain the passion, figurative language, syntax, and culturally specific vocabulary of the original texts. At the same time, I have not resisted using my own culturally informed poetic techniques and language in order to enhance the original texts’ readability in English. Ultimately, my goal as a translator has been to produce what Venuti calls a “liberating moment” for an English speaking reader of *El Clamor Público’s* poetry during which he or she can experience and appreciate the ideals and themes that were

important to mid-nineteenth century Chicano writers. These translations should be a place where readers can obtain “some sense of a cultural other”—a place where they can, for a moment, experience for themselves the meaning of living in a “borderland”. Finally, these translations have the generative potential of constructing a scaffold upon which new, legitimate conceptualizations of mid-nineteenth century Mexican-American poetry can be built. After all, the poems themselves exemplify the true depth and richness of the Chicano literary canon. They are boundless (270).

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“A Una Tortola”

Hija apacible de la selva umbría,  
Amiga del dolor: en la espesura  
Mas dulce, melancólica y oscura,  
Sollozás en erótica alegría.

¡Cuánto mueve mi tierna simpatía  
Tu vida solitaria de amargura,  
Imagen fiel del alma sin ventura,  
Del alma cual invierno triste y fría!

¡Oh sensible a mis penas ave amada!  
Yo tu viudez lamentaré y dolores,  
Tu mi llama de amor casi apagada.

Arboles, fuentes, (unclear), y flores,  
A nuestra queja unisona y tempiada,  
Responderán con ecos gemidores.

“To a Jungle Bird”

Silent daughter of the jungle shadows,  
Friend of pain: in the undergrowth  
Sweet, melancholy and dark,  
You sob with erotic joy.

¡How my tender sympathy is moved  
By your solitary life of bitterness,  
A sad image of the soul with no hope,  
A soul as mournful and frozen as winter!

¡Oh feel my sorrow, sweet dove!  
I lament your widowhood and pain,  
You, flame of my love, are almost spent.

Trees, fountains, grasses, and flowers,  
In time with our rhythmic lamentations,  
Will respond with deep, echoing moans.

- Anonymous

“El Anochecer”

Opaco el sol y de alumbrar cansado,  
De pronto se despeña en Occidente;  
El vuelo corta hacia el sauz doliente  
Flébil ave, su pico ya cerrado.

¡Ya no hay colores en el fértil prado!  
¡Ya no hay cristales en la mansa fuente!

¡Adios color! ¡adiós luz refulgente!  
¡Adios ecos del bosque y del collado!

¡Ay! Que la sombra y el silencio imperar.  
En las aguas, los campos y los cielos;  
¡Ay! Ya que el gozo y el bullicio huyan.

¿Ni estas horas de paz a mis desvelos  
El reposo traerán que apeteciera?  
¿No te cansas, mi Clori, en darme celos?

“Dusk”

The opaque sun is tired of shining,  
Soon it plunges into the West;  
The flight is short to the ailing willow  
Little bird, your beak has already closed.

¡There are no colors in the fertile meadow!  
¡There are no crystals in the gentle fountain!  
¡Adios, color! ¡Farewell, effulgent light!  
¡Adios, echoes of the forest and hills!

¡Ay! How darkness and silence reign  
In the waters, the fields and the skies;  
¡Ay! Already joy and prosperity have fled.

¿Are these not the tranquil hours when my  
concerns should be brought to rest?  
¿Do you not tire, my Clori, of being jealous?

-Anonymous

“Canción”

Lucha una idea en mi mente,  
Y en mi corazón doliente  
De continuo abierta esta  
Herida que el alma siente  
Que devorándome va;  
Y mientras luchando abrigo  
La idea, y tras ella voy;  
Mas la herida abriendo estoy  
Que habrá de morir conmigo:  
Sabe el cielo  
El afán con que batallo  
Entre un seden que recelo  
Y entre un amor que no hallo.

De ame rigores cogí;  
Y con frívola altiveza  
Luego burlarme creí  
Del poder de la belleza,  
Hasta el día en que te ví:  
Ahora busco tu mirada  
Con amante desvario,  
Y acobarde el pecho mio  
Temor de verte enojada:  
Ahora hablarte  
Solo, idolatra, deseo,  
Y ante el temor de enojarte  
Enmudezco si te veo.

Dióme el cielo con mil daños  
Un corazón que corrió  
Batallando años tras años  
Entre sueños que trocó  
Por acerbos desengaños;  
Y que ahora ciego se lanza  
Tras la ilusión de tu amor  
Donde batalla mayor  
Mi naufrago pecho alcaña;  
De a saber  
Tu desdeñoso desvío  
Corro tal vez para ver

“Song”

Conflicting ideas in my mind,  
And in my aching heart  
An open, free flowing  
Wound that my soul knows  
Will devour me;  
Meanwhile, I strive to forget  
The idea and move on;  
But I keep opening the wound,  
Confident that it will die with me:  
Heaven knows  
The eagerness with which I struggle  
Between a lurking suspicion  
And a love I cannot find.

I never took love seriously;  
And with frivolous pastimes  
I sought to mock  
The power of beauty –  
Until the day I saw you:  
Now I search for your gaze,  
Delirious with love,  
And my chest cringes  
In fear of finding you angry:  
Now, when I speak with you  
Alone, idolatrous, filled with desire,  
For fear of angering you,  
My eyes avoid yours.

With great pains, you gave the sky  
To a heart that continued  
Struggling year after year  
Among bartered dreams  
And bitter disappointments;  
And now blindness lurks  
Behind the illusion of your love  
Where my heart  
Engages in a fierce battle,  
Mostly because it knows  
Of your casual distraction.  
Maybe I am too hasty,

Desengaño el amor mio.  
Mas, si por dicha te apiada  
Ese tormento que lloro,  
Esa cadena dorada  
De mi vida enamorada  
Que arrastro porque te adoro;  
Dime adiós; huir prefiero  
De mi temerario amor,  
Si es cierto tu desamor  
Mientras yo amándote muero;  
Que es azar  
Mayor en trance tan fuerte  
Esperanzando adorar,  
Que desdeñado perderte.

Disillusioned with love.  
Also, if somehow you pity  
My torturous cries,  
This golden chain  
From the love of my life  
Will bind me because I adore you;  
So say goodbye; I prefer to flee  
From this dreadful love,  
Because you certainly don't love me  
Even though I die loving you;  
How lucky  
To live in a fervent trance  
Awaiting adoration,  
Than to spurn and lose you.

-Anonymous

“La Justicia”

Allá en la Côte Suprema  
Donde reina la integridad  
Veo que no hay igualdad  
Por llevar otro sistema.  
¿Quién es el que no se quema  
Al mirar que el Tribunal  
No nos considera igual  
Ni en su última providencia,  
Dándole la preferencia  
*A don fulano de tal.*

Observen con atención  
Las causas que están en tabla;  
Si de éste modo no habla  
Merezco una maldición,  
Siempre regalon *el don*  
A los que tienen dinero  
Y siempre hallarán primero  
La causa de *don fulano*,  
Porque el pobre no es cristiano  
Ni le *regala* al portero.

Tiene un poder sobrado  
Para hacer las distinciones,  
Porque ya los *doce dones*  
Todos los han regalado.  
Solo uno les ha quedado  
Y ese no tiene malicia,  
Porque es el *don de Justicia*  
Que tiene su preferencia  
Y lo regala la audiencia  
Para saciar la codicia.

Existe la monarquía  
En todos los Tribunales,  
Y se acrecentan los males  
Mucho de día en día.  
Se entronó la jerarquía,

“Justice”

There in the Supreme Court  
Where integrity reigns  
I see that there is inequality  
For he who knows another system.  
Who would not complain  
When he sees that the Court  
Does not consider us equal  
Even in its final ruling?  
It gives preference  
*To anyone who brings a gift.*

Pay close attention  
To the causes that reach the bench;  
If this isn't the case,  
Then I'll be damned:  
They always give *the gift*  
To those with money  
And they always start with  
The cause of the *gift bearer*  
Because the poor aren't Christian  
And can't *tip* the doorman.

It has more than enough power  
To make such distinctions,  
Because already *twelve gifts*  
Have been doled out.  
Only one remains to them  
And this has no malice,  
Because it is the *gift of Justice*  
That is given preference  
And is awarded an audience  
In order to quench their greed.

There is a monarchy  
In all the Courts,  
And its evils continue to grow  
Unchecked from day to day.  
This is heirarchy enthroned,

Que es el mas terrible azote,  
Los tiempos de *don* Quijote  
Nos recuerda muchas veces  
El proceder de los jueces  
De la Ilustrisima Corte.

The most terrible scourge,  
The era of Don Quixote  
That continues to live  
In the conduct of the judges  
Of the Illustrious Court

- Anonymous

“El Jugador”

¿No ves a ese hombre de mirar sangriento,  
De rostro enjuto, seco y descarnado?  
¿Eso que con el sello está marcado  
De la infamia, del crimen, del tormento?

¿Ese que marcha triste y macilento,  
Siempre de angustias y dolor cercado,  
Que se ve de los hombres execrado,  
Peor que mendigo mísero y hambriento?

¿Ese infeliz que al crimen impelido  
Arrastra su vivir negro, espantoso,  
En medio de un pantano corrompido.

¡Húyete... sí! Su aliento es ponzoñoso;  
Este es el JUGADOR envilecido,  
Y el oprobio del hombre laborioso.

II.

¡Mirad ese patíbulo enlutado  
Que en medio de la plaza se levanta,  
A do la muchedumbre se adelanta  
A ver le ejecución de un desgracias!

¡Miradlo a él marchar atribulado  
Con vacilante y con incierta planta;  
Su rostro cadavérico que espanta,  
Lleva el sello del crimen estampado!

¡El verdugo le pone la mascada,  
Y tira de ella...! Oid el ronco grito  
Que le arranca la muerte malhadada...

Su vida pasó siempre en el gario,  
¡La sociedad está purificada...!  
¡Tal es el fin del JUGADOR MALDITO!

III.

“The Gambler”

Don't you see that bloodied man,  
With a gaunt face, dry and gritty?  
That one, who is marked with the seal  
Of infamy, crime, and torture?

That one, marching, sad and haggard,  
Always surrounded by anguish and pain,  
And in the sight of the lowliest men,  
Is worse than a miserable, hungry begger?

That unhappy man, driven to crime,  
Clings to his black, frightening, life,  
Trapped in a swamp of corruption.

The smell ... yes! His breath is poisonous;  
This is the vile GAMBLER,  
The shame of the working man.

II.

Look at the mournful gallows  
Raised in the middle of the square;  
They draw the crowd nearer  
To see the execution of that disgrace!

Look at his beleaguered marching,  
Trembling and uncertain he plods;  
His cadaverous, frightening face,  
Carries the stamped seal of crime!

The executioner covers him with a hood,  
And pulls it ...! Hear the hoarse cry  
That is snatched by gruesome death...

His life was never worth more than trash,  
¡Society is purified ...!  
¡Such is the end of the DAMNED  
GAMBLER!

III.

¿No ves a esa mujer, a esa mendiga,  
Con inmundos harapos encubierta,  
Pálida, enferma, estenuada, yerta,  
Que abandona la choza en que se abriga?  
¿La mirais implorar de mano amigo  
*Un duro y negro pan de puerta en puerta?*  
Examine y convulsa, y casi muerta,  
El hambre horrible a sucumbir la obliga.

Sollozando le piden el sustento  
Sus tiernos hijos con doliente queja;  
¡Madre infeliz! ¡Atroz es tu tormenta!

El hombre sin piedad de ti se aleja...  
¡Ay! Este porvenir triste y sangriento,  
El JUGADOR a su familia deja.

Don't you see that woman, that beggar,  
Covered in filthy rags,  
Pale, sick, exhausted, stiff,  
Who is leaving a hut in her wraps?  
Imploringly, she stretches out her hands  
For hard, burnt crusts from door to door?  
Scrutinized, convulsive, and almost dead,  
She will soon acquiesce to relentless hunger.

Sobbing, she asks for sustenance,  
Her young children with cry mournfully;  
Sad mother! Your torment is atrocious!

The man without pity sends you away ...  
Oh! This sad and bloody reality,  
When THE GAMBLER leaves his family.

-Anonymous

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“El Prisionero”

Triste canta el prisionero  
Encerrado en su prisión,  
Y a sus lamentos responde  
Su cadena en triste son.  
Abréme ¡oh viento! Camino a la voz.

Van mis horas, van mis días.  
Mi esperanza carcomiendo,  
El valor va sucumbiendo,  
Va se helando el corazón.  
Cuando espero, desespero,  
Que en destino tan tirano,  
Solo escucha el viento vano,  
Mi cantar y mi aflicción.  
Abréme, ¡oh viento! Camino a la voz.

Si a tu oído, vida mía,  
Mi cansion llegar pudiera,  
Yo se bien que no muriera  
Al rigor de mi pasión.  
Mas tu gozás descuida.  
De mis cuitas bien cadena  
Me acompaña en triste son.  
Abréme ¡oh viento! Camino a la voz.

¡Cuantas veces despertando  
Por el cristal del deseo  
Me imagino que te veo  
En amorosa ilusión!  
Yo te llamo y te acaricio,  
Los brazos audaz te tiendo;  
Mas tu me huyes, y yo entiendo  
¡Ay de mi! Que sueños son.  
Abreme ¡oh viento! Camino a la voz

Ríe y cantata, goza y vive,  
Mientras sueño, canto y lloro  
Y a sus lamento responde

“The Prisoner”

Sadly sings the prisoner  
Locked in his prison,  
And to his cries  
Only his chains respond.  
Set me free, oh wind! Follow my voice.

My hours, my days, fall away.  
I consume my own hope,  
Bravery falters,  
And my heart grows colder.  
How I hope, desperately,  
Bound by destiny's cruel chains,  
The hollow wind will listen to me sing  
And hear my pain.  
Set me free, oh wind! Follow my voice.

If to your ear, sweet life,  
My song could reach.  
I'd know that I would not die  
Because my passion is strong.  
But you relish your recklessness.  
Only my chains know my troubles  
And accompany my sorrow.  
Set me free, oh wind! Follow my voice.

How many times I have awoken  
Near the mirror of desire,  
Imagining that I see you -  
A charming illusion!  
I call to you and cherish you,  
Boldly I reach for you;  
But you flee from me, and I understand  
¡Ay de mi! what dreams are.  
Set me free, oh wind! Follow my voice

Laughter and song, joy and life;  
When I dream, I sing and weep  
And hear the mournful replies

Su cadena en ronco son;  
Los (echizos) que en ti adoro,  
Vida y sol del corazón.  
Aquí en tanto, hermosa mía,  
¡Norte y faro de mis ojos!

Al rigor de tus enojos  
Y al dolor de su pasión,  
Triste canta el prisionero  
Encerrado en su prisión,  
Y a sus lamento responde

Abréle, viento, camino a la voz.

Of my rusty chains;  
But still they whisper of you,  
Life and light of my heart.  
Here I am, beautiful one,  
To the north, light shines from my eyes!

Of the severity of your anger  
And the agony of his passion,  
The prisoner sings sadly  
Locked in his prison,  
Only his own laments respond.

Set him free, oh wind! Follow his voice.

- Anonymous

“Seguidillas”

¡Cual me gustan los campos  
Llenos de flores:  
El azul de los cielos  
Los verdes bosques!

Y mas me gusta  
La cara de una hermosa  
Morena o rubia,

Dio el Señor a la noche  
La blanca luna  
Cristales a la fuente  
Y al mar su furia  
!Ay! a la tierra  
La mujer, que es la imagen  
De la belleza.

Tiene amor muchas veces  
Ganas de risa  
Y bajándose al mundo  
Busca conquistas;  
Y se hace fuerte  
Escondido en los ojos  
De las mujeres.

Ese sol que el rio veis ocultarse  
Acecha a las muchachas  
Que van al baile;  
Pero celosa  
La noche tantas gracias  
Borra entre sombras.

“A Folksong”

What I like are fields  
Full of flowers:  
The blue of the sky,  
The green forests!

And I like even more  
The face of a beautiful woman  
Dark or fair,

God gave to the night  
The white moon,  
Crystals to the fountain,  
And, to the sea, its fury.  
Ay! To the earth  
The woman, who is the image  
Of beauty.

You love many times,  
Feel like laughing,  
And you fling yourself off the world,  
Searching for conquests;  
And you find strength  
Hidden in the eyes  
Of women.

You can see the sun hiding behind the river,  
Stalking the *muchachas*  
Going to the dance;  
But, jealous,  
The night gives many thanks  
And blends them into the shadows.

- J.G. de S.