



THE  
ANGLO-CATALAN  
SOCIETY

# L'ANY EN ESTAMPES THE YEAR IN IMAGES

M. VILLANGÓMEZ LLOBET

English Translation by Ronald James Cooper



INSTITUT  
D'ESTUDIS  
EIVISSENCs



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ANGLO-CATALAN  
SOCIETY

First published in Catalan by Editorial Barcino, Barcelona, 1956.  
The original text used for the English translation is that of the third edition:  
*“L’any en estampes”* (Institut d’Estudis Eivissencs, Eivissa, 1981).

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Present Bilingual edition by the Anglo-Catalan Society’s Occasional Publications (ACSOP), April 2016.

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## Translator's Introduction

This unusual work by Marià Villangómez Llobet is a classic account of the yearly round on the Mediterranean island of Eivissa in 1953. It is set in the rural parish of Sant Miquel (“Saint Michael”) but the August chapter (“News from the Village”) is dedicated, by way of contrast, to the capital town. The author’s original intentions and his subsequent reflections are detailed in the retrospective preface – written in 1975 – which follows this introduction. Each chapter of the book includes a carefully chosen set of verbal images of a month, elaborated from first hand notes in a distinctive and often very concise form of poetic prose. With a liberal use of fragmented sentences, evocative phrases and allusions, Villangómez was writing primarily for informed local readers at a time when the island was very different. Therefore, although some present-day English readers may prefer to go directly to the main text on the grounds that “a good wine needs no bush”, others may find the following background material helpful both as an introduction and for reference.

For historical and political reasons, the English reader is used to finding anglicised or original Castilian Spanish forms of place-related names – such as “Ibiza”, “Ibizan”, “Ibicencan” and “Ibicenco” – in any book set within the dominion of the Spanish state. However, the Catalan and Eivissenc forms have gained ground in the unfinished process of post-Franco normalisation and they have particular significance to Catalan authors like Villangómez. The translator has therefore used them throughout, although capitalised in the English manner. Thus the island is “Eivissa”, the islanders are “Eivissencs” and they speak a dialect of Catalan which is called “Eivissenc”. The capital town (officially a “city”) is called either “Eivissa” or “Vila”. In addition, although Villangómez uses standard Catalan, the book contains numerous words which are either

specifically Eivissenc or else have a different local meaning. Occasionally the author makes this clear in parentheses to avoid breaking the flow of the text with footnotes: the translator follows this practice for added information in general. Finally, it may be noted that the author includes various quotations in other languages (Castilian and French) which have also been translated into English.

A full calendar year between 1953 and 1954 is covered in the book but the description actually begins and ends in the middle of January. The starting point – the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, 1953 – is the feast day of St. Anthony Abbot, which coincided that year with the night of the full moon and the neap tides. The opening line is one of a number of Eivissenc proverbs which compare the length of the day at different times of the year with the stride of different creatures, emphasizing in this case the gradual lengthening of the days after the winter solstice. The book closes with the visible neap tides of January, which are traditionally accompanied by a spell of sunny weather as described. They are something of an event on Eivissa because the normal Mediterranean tidal movement around the island is barely noticeable.

It should be noted that when this book was written – and, indeed, until about the last third of the twentieth century – there was an unusually sharp cultural divide, reflected in dress, customs and speech, between the people who lived in the compact capital town and the inhabitants of the country parishes like Sant Miquel, most of whom lived in isolated farmhouses scattered over a wide area around the church and the small group of houses, shops and bars in its vicinity. The author, a teacher from the town, living and working in Sant Miquel, was therefore able to write about the country people with the detachment of an outsider, in spite of the smallness of the island and the shared language of Catalan or, more precisely, Eivissenc.

Although they have now totally disappeared – except in folklore or folkloric displays – the unusual traditional courtship customs (*festeig*) of rural Eivissa attracted the attention of many travellers and writers in the past, with a sensational emphasis on the common practice of carrying firearms and knives, which contributed to occasional deaths from rivalry until the early

part of the twentieth century. The girls lived in relative seclusion in the scattered country farmhouses, so young men would meet at a marriageable girl's home after the evening meal on appointed days. They spoke separately with the girl, taking strict turns. Two evenings a week were usual and there were other opportunities for courting on Sundays and feast days during the walk back from church, at the traditional local dances, etc. The September "Michaelmas" chapter mentions the girls' traditional festive adornments of golden and other jewellery (*emprendades*), much reduced in splendour at that time due to their requisitioning, sale or barter during the civil war and post-war period, which are outlined below. Here and elsewhere, Villangómez refers only briefly to the standard courtship practices but he devotes a whole section of the first chapter to the less authorised practice of night courtship (*anar de finestres*) and another in the August chapter "News from the Village" to the custom of the *fuita* ("flight" or elopement).

Villangómez makes full use of his historical knowledge of the island throughout the book and one of the chapters is devoted to "The History of Sant Miquel". But his concise poetic prose rarely includes dates and he often assumes other knowledge on the part of the reader. Past and present tenses mingle freely in his descriptions of the island, "since the past and its traditions always influence the present." And this feature also relates to the dependence of the mostly non-literate country dwellers of that time on a rich oral tradition, which contrasted with the very different, literate culture of his readership in the town and elsewhere. Various historical points may therefore need some clarification.

A succession of cultures – most notably those of the Phoenicians, Romans and Arabs – left their marks on Eivissa prior to the thirteenth century. The Arabic era comes back to life suddenly in the April chapter "Orchards in Springtime". The horticultural orchard described here is irrigated by one of the mainly wooden devices that were still common in rural Eivissa in the middle of the twentieth century, in this case a vertical wheel fitted with pots or buckets to draw water up from a well: its Catalan name (*sínia*) is of Arabic origin. A poem by a local eleventh century poet, Idris ibn al-Yaman, nicknamed *Al-Sabini* ("which evokes the savines that grow on the island") is invoked at this point as being the unique cultural remnant of those times, although subsequent research has discovered others.

The present era on Eivissa dates from the definitive Catalan and Christian conquest of Eivissa from the Arabs in the thirteenth century (1235). The expedition was led by the archbishop-elect of Tarragona, Guillem de Montgrí – just “Montgrí” in the text. Because of its strategic importance in the embattled western Mediterranean, the island was afterwards given a set of privileges and it had a high level of autonomy in the following centuries in spite of feudal obligations to the absentee ecclesiastic and royal co-seigniors. In the chapter “Orchards in Springtime”, the author makes an oblique reference to the sea salt production in lagoons where “the salty essence of the sea thickens into unblemished nuggets, which signify riches.” Although the production of this “white gold” continues today, it has lost its central role in the island economy. Formerly the common (though not equally shared) property of the islanders, it provided a vital part of their irregular incomes. But, after the Spanish War of Succession in the early eighteenth century, the salt works were expropriated by the Castilian-dominated state (and privatised later on). The war was a historical turning point for the island (as for Catalonia) because of the consequent consolidation of central state powers and the loss of the special island constitution and privileges.

For religious matters, the whole island – together with Formentera – formed a single parish dependent on the Church in Tarragona until the 1780s, when it became a bishopric and was divided into a set of new parishes, including one for Sant Miquel: hence the laconic statement in the May chapter, “The Church”, that “Sant Miquel was not always a parish church.” At the same time the church in the capital town acquired the status of a cathedral. Because of the ecclesiastical participation in the Catalan conquest and its subsequent sharing of seigniorship, even if from a distance, the influence of the Church was notably strong on Eivissa. In spite of this, the rural customs incorporated pre-Christian or pagan elements like the “lively fires of Saint John and the humbler ones of Saint Peter” mentioned at the beginning of the June chapter “The Stream”. An important turning point in the traditional agricultural year, St. John’s Day (June 24<sup>th</sup>) also marks the summer solstice and fires are still lit on the night before, with the burning of satirical effigies.



It may be noted that Villangómez makes frequent use – in the present tense – of the administrative divisions known as *quartons* (singular: *quartó*) in official use on Eivissa between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. The rural area had been divided into four parts for purposes of seigniorship after the 1235 Catalan conquest, by adapting prior Arabic divisions. But the term was extended afterwards to include a fifth area, the *Pla de Vila*, in and around the capital town. A church was constructed initially in each of the five *quartons*, although more would be built later on. Then, in the centralist reforms of the first half of the nineteenth century, roughly the same areas became the five present-day *municipis* (“municipalities”) of Eivissa, each forming a separate part of a new Balearic province governed from Mallorca. (The post-Franco structure is different but the municipalities are the same.) However, instead of Sant Miquel – the former capital of the *quartó* of Balansat, with one of the four original country churches – becoming the municipal centre of that part of the island, the village of Sant Joan was chosen: from then on, Sant Miquel would be just one of the parishes in the municipality of Sant Joan, with a significant loss of status.

The 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War (“the war”) cast a very long shadow on Eivissa, as elsewhere, even though the island changed hands twice with little resistance between July and September, 1936, remaining in Franquist hands thereafter. Over two hundred Eivissencs disappeared or died, mostly in summary executions by one side or the other. The majority of Eivissencs were either moderately conservative or politically indifferent but both social and personal issues were exposed by the conflict and they were compounded by economic hardships. The lengthy Franquist repression targeted unionists, teachers and other people accused of having left-wing or Republican sympathies. And the proscriptions even affected the traditional island language, place names and personal names. By the early 1950s, the harsh post-war period was beginning to give way to better times but the memory of the war was still fresh – though taboo – and the author’s 1975 preface mentions a continuing ban in 1954 on his own proposed use of Catalan prose in a newspaper supplement. On the other hand, his book is mainly concerned with the many aspects of rural life on Eivissa which continued relatively unchanged in the 1950s or else were evolving along lines which had commenced before the war. For these reasons, the war and its important consequences receive only a few – usually indirect – mentions. At the beginning of the September chapter “Michaelmas Day”, for example,

there is an allusion to “the former, profaned archangel”, which is presumably one of several references in the book to the Republican destruction of church furnishings during their brief occupation and control of Eivissa in the summer of 1936. And for many years after the war there were restrictions on the size and nature of public gatherings, which affected many local customs, including the traditional courtship and dancing. Carnival and the wearing of masks were also banned by the Franquist regime in 1937, but in some out-of-the-way places like Sant Miquel the celebrations managed to take place in one form or another, as described in the February chapter “The Village”.

Since the early 1950s, when the book was written, the history of the island has been dominated by the growth of tourism, whose timid beginnings in the 1930s had been cut short by the Spanish Civil War, followed by the Second World War. In his 1975 preface, Villangómez referred to a number of changes caused by the development of mass tourism in the 1960s but its effects have dramatically increased in more recent decades, radically transforming the economy, technology and society. Although farming continues, it now represents a very small part of the island income and it is no longer the subsistence polyculture of the peasant farming in the 1950s which is eloquently described in the October chapter “Rain and Seeds” and elsewhere. Instead there is now mass tourism, with all its trappings and consequences. To keep up with the new demands, the island population has more than tripled since the 1950s, when there were less than 40,000 inhabitants. The new population includes a high proportion of migrants from Spain and elsewhere, creating a multicultural modern society in which the identity and distinctive features of the Eivissenc culture, including its language, have come under increasing pressure, even though they are very resilient.

Even the physical appearance of the island – to which Villangómez devotes loving attention throughout the book – has undergone important changes. Much of the characteristic open countryside has been enclosed in recent decades, adding to the pronounced urbanizing impact of both scattered and compact development, with the use of modern materials in place of the traditional stone. The natural pine woods on mountainous hillsides once provided an important part of farming income but they are now frequently neglected, apart from recreational use and the building (only recently restricted by planning) of

private houses or holiday homes. As for the cultivated areas, some have been built over and others have reverted to scrub or woodland, while the rest of the patchwork of open fields or orchards, with terraces on the hillsides, in which fruit and nut trees usually coexist with ground crops, shows a lack of attention in many places. Drought-resistant Mediterranean trees – carobs, olives, almonds, figs, etc. – can still be seen on the predominant dry arable land (*secà*) but the formerly-vital, associated cereal crops – wheat, barley and oats – are less common nowadays. The many springs, wells and *torrents* (stream valleys of various types, most of them dry except after heavy rain) are also a notable feature of the island. Particular mention is made by Villangómez of the treasured irrigated horticultural orchards (*horts*) which were often situated in sheltered terraces in active stream valleys, as in Sant Miquel. In recent decades, however, the greater convenience of modern boreholes and new types of irrigated farming has led to the abandonment of many of the valley *horts*. And some of the old water sources have dried up or are suffering from salinization. At the same time, the capital town, Vila, has expanded out over part of the ancient irrigated area of *Ses Feixes* and the rest of it is currently covered by reed-beds, although there are conservation and restoration projects here and elsewhere on the island, some of which have already been put into effect.

Eivissa enjoys great natural beauty. Many features of the mountainous countryside, the old walled town, the rugged coast and varied beaches, together with the Mediterranean climate, sky and sea, are still those of the detailed verbal images in this book. And, as Villangómez meditates in the September chapter “Michaelmas Day”, with reference to the changes in the 1950s, “these new times do not only destroy; they also bring improvements.” In spite of all the recent physical, technological, economic and social changes – and sometimes because of them – Eivissa has individuality and a welcoming charm which has prompted many newcomers to make it their principal or second home, while millions more visit it as tourists each year. Much more could, of course, be said about an island like Eivissa and its ancient and modern history, society and customs. The reader will no doubt have further queries, although many are now easy to resolve by reference to the Internet or even by a visit to the island. But, in short, “The Year in Images” provides us in a distinctive manner with an unusual set of first-hand insights into the 1950s’ Eivissenc world, now lost in time but not forgotten by the present inhabitants – who have retained, revived or adapted many former habits and customs in the new leisure-oriented context of the modern touristic economy.

## Translator's Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to:

—The Hereus de Marià Villangómez Llobet for their willingness to give permission to publish this work in both electronic and physical form.

—The Institut d'Estudis Eivissencs for permission to make use of the complete text of the third edition (1981) of *L'any en estampes*.

—Patricia Anne Cooper for her assistance throughout to the translator, who also thanks Rosemary Stella Cooper and Martin Peter Davies for their comments on the first draft of the earlier chapters of the book.



*L'estàtua en bronze de l'autor, vora l'església.*

*The bronze statue of the author, near the church.*

## Pròleg retrospectiu de l'autor (1975)

A la primera edició de L'ANY EN ESTAMPES (Publicacions de «La Revista», Editorial Barcino, Barcelona, 1956), com en aquesta, el text es clou amb la data en què el vaig acabar: Sant Miquel, 13 de gener de 1954. Vaig començar a escriure els dotze capítols del llibre el febrer de l'any anterior, al mateix poble eivissenc. Del títol i de l'estructura del llibre, com del lloc i del període en què va ser escrit, ja es pot deduir què volia ser: la descripció del pas d'un any a la parròquia rural on jo treballava i residia quasi tot el temps, en dotze fragments a cada un dels quals s'agrupessin unes estampes (paisatges, escenes, aspectes del conreu, petites narracions, etc.) corresponents a un mes. D'altra banda, procurava centrar les proses de cada mes, sense una exigència absoluta, en un lloc determinat (les de maig a l'església i al puig on s'aixeca, les de juny al torrent, les de juliol al port i les d'octubre a l'escola i als seus voltants, per exemple) o en una part del dia (com les proses de gener a la nit, les de març a entrada de fosc i a les primeres hores del vespre i les d'abril des del matí avançat fins a la caiguda del sol). L'agost, temps

## Author's Retrospective Preface (1975)

I began writing the twelve chapters of “The Year in Images” (*L'any en estampes*) in the Eivissenc village of Sant Miquel during February 1953 and I finished them on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1954, the date shown at the end of the text. The book was first published in 1956, by Publicaciones de «La Revista», Editorial Barcino, Barcelona. Its title and structure, together with the time and place of writing, indicate its purpose. It describes the course of a year in the rural parish – where I lived and worked almost all of the time – in twelve monthly parts, each including a selection of appropriate verbal images: the countryside, scenes, aspects of farming, anecdotes, etc. Without being too inflexible, I also tried to choose a particular physical setting for each month, such as the church and the hill on which it stands for May, the stream valley for June, the port for July and the school and its surroundings for October. Otherwise I focussed on a particular time, such as the night in January, the dark early evening in March and the late morning through to sunset in April. As I had to leave Sant Miquel during the August school holidays, I used that month's chapter to describe the island capital. I thought it would provide an eloquent contrast and

de vacances, havia de deixar Sant Miquel; per això vaig dedicar el capítol corresponent (contrast que em semblava expressiu) a una visió de la capital de l'illa, on sempre ha estat la meva casa i on, sense allunyar-me'n, em podien arribar tanmateix unes «notícies del poble».

La primera idea, però, no va ser la d'un llibre, sinó la de dotze articles en un suplement literari que un grup d'amics fèiem al DIARIO DE IBIZA. El suplement, que es deia ISLA i era mensual, havia aparegut el febrer de 1953. Vaig pensar que hi podria publicar, a part d'altres escrits i d'algun poema, un article a cada número amb unes impressions d'un mes anterior, viscut al poblet. No podia concebre la sèrie sinó en la llengua de la terra, i per al març vaig escriure el primer article: LLUNA DE GENER. Les ordres de Madrid encara eren que en un diari hom podia publicar poesies en català, però no prosa, distinció ben especial. Jo vaig creure que ja no la recordarien o que, si algun escriptor no la feia, en un racó com Eivissa, no s'adonarien de la infracció. Anava ben errat; una contravenció semblant, a favor de la prosa, comesa feia unes setmanes al mateix diari, va ser desaprovada en una comunicació enèrgica a la seva direcció. Va arribar quan ja teníem el meu article

some of the “village news” could still reach me there, in my own home.

Rather than a book, however, my original idea had been to write a dozen articles for the monthly literary supplement “Isla” in the “Diario de Ibiza”, which first appeared in February 1953 and was compiled by myself and some friends. I thought that I could contribute a regular article – apart from my other pieces of prose and poetry – to reflect my impressions of a previous month of my life in the small village. In preparation for the March issue, then, I wrote the first article “January Moon” in the language of the island: I could not imagine using any other for the series. There still existed orders from Madrid that newspapers could publish poetry but not prose in Catalan – a most interesting distinction! But I thought that by then the ruling would have been forgotten or else it could be ignored by a writer in an out-of-the-way place like Eivissa, where the infringement would go unnoticed. I could not have been more mistaken. A similar offence in prose, committed a few weeks earlier in the same newspaper, had prompted a strong message of disapproval to the management. When it arrived, I had to withdraw my own article, just as it was about to be printed. Even so, I thought, my pieces could be expanded from

compost, i el vaig haver de treure. Vaig pensar, però, que els meus escrits, si no articles d'un diari, podrien ser, ampliat, capítols d'un llibre. Em vaig proposar, doncs, d'escriure un capítol cada mes, cosa que al cap de l'any suposaria un llibre complet. Així va néixer L'any en estampes, conjunt d'escrits sobre un any determinat, un dels centrals dels tretze que vaig passar ensenyant a Sant Miquel.

L'ANY EN ESTAMPES podria semblar un llibre de nostàlgia d'uns temps fugissers i d'enyor d'una il·lusió geòrgica o bé d'evasió cap a uns medis rurals, aliens a l'autor. No és cap de les dues coses, sinó un llibre de realitats vives —d'algunes realitats, experiències personals incloses—, amb referències a èpoques anteriors i algunes digressions històriques, el passat i la tradició exercint sempre la seva força en el present. Un dels capítols es titula precisament LA HISTÒRIA DE SANT MIQUEL, amb paraules semblants al títol ben conegut d'una obra que no he llegit; això indica que també vaig cercar la dimensió històrica —més literària que no científica— d'una terra actual i observada quotidianament. Ara, el llibre no vol ser tampoc un assaig sociològic, una investigació econòmica, un estudi

newspaper articles into the chapters of a book, so I set about writing one every month, aiming to finish the book in a year. That was how “The Year in Images” came into being, then, as a set of descriptions of a particular year, one of the middle years of the thirteen that I spent as a teacher in Sant Miquel. “The Year in Images” might give the impression of being a nostalgic book about fleeting moments in a disappearing georgic idyll or, perhaps, the escapism of an urban author in an unfamiliar rural setting. But, in fact, it is neither of these things: it is a book about real life and real events – including my own personal experiences – with references as well to previous times and occasional historical digressions, since the past and its traditions always influence the present. One of the chapters is actually called “The History of Sant Miquel”, bringing to mind the well-known title of a book that I have not read as yet. [Translator’s note. This is probably a reference to the Spanish version – *La historia de San Michele* – of Axel Munthe’s 1929 work “The Story of San Michele”.] I was also, therefore, attempting to find the historical dimension – in a more literary than scientific fashion – of a place observed on a daily basis at the time of writing. Nevertheless, the book makes no pretence of being an essay based on sociological or economic research into one of the rural parishes of Eivissa, nor is it a study of local customs or



costumista o una acusació davant unes condicions de vida, concretats dins l'àmbit d'una de les parròquies rurals eivissenques. Es tracta d'unes pàgines sobre la vida d'un poble i així mateix sobre la meua, en un període concret, amb uns elements vistos i uns sentiments. Hi ha una intenció de ritme i d'expressivitat, i no vaig deixar d'acollir, quan es presentava, una mica d'escalf poètic.

El llibre no va ser escrit des de la ciutat, ni que fos la petita ciutat d'Eivissa, sinó enmig de la gent i de la terra de què s'ocupa, en present i així que els mesos anaven succeint-se. El mateix origen tenen els llibres de poesia que parlen també de Sant Miquel, a la primeria, principalment, del paisatge —ELS DIES, per exemple—, i després, principalment —EL COP A LA TERRA—, de la pagesia. A “L'any en estampes”, escrit entre els dos reculls esmentats, tenen importància el paisatge i els canvis que hi marquen el pas dels dies i les inacabables feines agrícoles. El paisatge és sovint la terra conreada, amb les obres dels homes, els camps on aquests viuen i dels quals viuen, les cases disperses. La pluja, els vents, les característiques de les estacions, que tant condicionen els diferents cultius i el seu producte, també hi són

an exposure of rural living conditions. It is simply a few pages about the life of a village and my own life there for a while, including both my observations and my personal sentiments. It is intended to be rhythmic and expressive, and I tried to elicit a little poetic warmth wherever possible.

The book was not written from the distance of a city, not even from the small city of Eivissa, but rather amongst the people and countryside concerned, month by month and in the present tense. My books of poetry that relate to Sant Miquel were written in the same way, at first mainly about the countryside (e.g. “Els dies”) and later mostly about the country people (“El cop a la terra”). Written in between these two works of poetry, the book “The Year in Images” deals with the countryside, the day-by-day and seasonal changes, and the unending round of agricultural tasks. The countryside in question is often the cultivated land, marked by man, on which and from which he lives, in dwellings scattered among the fields. The rain, winds and seasonal changes, on which the different crops and yields so vitally depend, are also considered. Occasionally, we see nature in its most savage form, stretching human resources to the limit. This countryside and its people – the pine-clad mountains, the inhabited fields and the abrupt meeting of rock and sea – are

contemplats. Alguna vegada es reflecteix la natura en el seu aspecte més salvatge, on tot just arriba l'esforç humà. Aquest paisatge i la seva gent: la topada de la roca i del mar, la muntanya pinosa, els camps habitats, són una de les coses que l'escriptor ha estimat, i les consideracions subjectives tenyeixen les canviants estampes.

Llegit avui, el llibre pot semblar veritablement una visió nostàlgica, una reconstrucció malenconiosa, car en els vint-i-un anys que han passat hi ha hagut canvis importants al poble, i no diguem a la vida de l'escriptor, que el va deixar fa temps. Considerem només el cas del turisme, que ja anava augmentant a Eivissa, però encara no havia penetrat a Sant Miquel. Al poble ja pensaven en la conveniència que hi arribés, en els beneficis que reportaria: venda de terrenys poc o gens productius, increment del comerç i del transport, jornals. Portinatx, en una altra parròquia del mateix municipi, tenia visitants, les seves platges veien una concurrència creixent. És cert que ja hi havia la carretera de Xarraca i Portinatx, mentre que al port de Sant Miquel sols hi arribava un camí ben poc apte per als cotxes, encara que molt bell, amb les seves voltes que s'acostaven al torrent o se n'allunyaven. La il·lusió era que construïssin la

among those things which the writer has loved, and the changing images are coloured by his subjective impressions.

Now, in 1975, on the other hand, the book may well read like a nostalgic vision or a melancholy reconstruction. The writer left the village a long time ago and his own life is now different. There have also been important changes in the village in the twenty-one years that have passed since the book was written. At that time, for example, tourism was increasing on Eivissa but it had still not penetrated as far as Sant Miquel. The villagers were already looking forward to its arrival, thinking about the benefits which it would bring: opportunities to sell plots of poor or barren land, an increase in trade and transport, and more jobs. The new visitors had reached Portinatx, which belonged to another parish in the same rural municipality, and the beaches there were becoming increasingly crowded. Of course, there was already a good road to Xarraca and Portinatx, whereas the rough track to the port of Sant Miquel was quite unsuitable for motor vehicles, though very beautiful, twisting and turning to follow the stream valley, now closely, now a little farther away. The local people longed for this road to be made up, but lengthy delays are commonplace in all public works on Eivissa. Meanwhile, the port and its beach remained as solitary as we

carretera, però les obres públiques ja se sap que poden tardar molt a fer-se, a Eivissa, i el port i la seva platja, mentrestant, eren tan solitaris com els descriu a L'ANY EN ESTAMPES. Avui no sols hi ha la carretera al port, sinó també, per iniciativa privada, la que va a la punta de sa Creu passant per Na Xemenà, abans uns penya-segats eternament deserts, i la que assoleix la penyalosa i elevada costa de Rubió. Aquí hi ha una gran urbanització, la construcció de la qual ha quedat parada, per ara, a causa de la crisi, i a Na Xemenà i al port ja fa anys que funcionen alguns hotels considerables. Àdhuc es va poder celebrar al port de Sant Miquel, l'any 1971, un congrés mundial de disseny industrial. Ara, ¿fins a quin punt influeixen aquests negocis forasters en la vida del poble? Aquesta és una altra qüestió. El grupet de cases al peu de l'església s'ha vist augmentat amb alguns edificis més, però en conjunt el nombre d'habitants de la parròquia deu haver disminuït, com ha passat a tot el municipi de Sant Joan. Els altres municipis de l'illa, en canvi, han augmentat de població, malgrat les pèrdues en algunes parròquies enterament rurals. He tornat de tant en tant a Sant Miquel, en visites no prou llargues: al port, a Na Xemenà, al Puig de Missa. Al pati de l'església se celebren durant l'estiu representacions de

see them in "The Year in Images". Nowadays, on the other hand, there is not only a good road to the port but also another, constructed by private enterprise, up to the formerly eternally-deserted cliff-top area of Na Xamena and along to the point of Sa Creu. Yet another new road climbs up to the high and rugged coastline of Rubió, where the construction of a large group of holiday homes has been brought to a temporary halt by the current economic crisis. In the port and at Na Xamena, however, several big hotels have been in operation for some years now. By 1971, it was even possible to hold a world congress of industrial design in the port of Sant Miquel. To what degree, one might ask, do these non-local businesses affect the way of life of the local people? A good question. A few more buildings have been added to the little cluster of houses below the church, but the total number of people living in the parish must have decreased, as is the case for the whole municipality of Sant Joan. This contrasts with an increase in the population of other municipal areas on the island, in spite of the decline in a few completely-rural parishes. I have been back to Sant Miquel from time to time for visits that were all too short: to the port, to Na Xamena and to the Puig de Missa (the church hill). In the summer there are displays of Eivissenc peasant dances in the church courtyard. The Sant Miquel dance group is one of only two

balls pagesos eivissencs. El grup de danses de Sant Miquel és un dels dos que funcionen a l'illa. Ja no és el ball espontani, amb els vestits del moment, sinó la reconstrucció ordenada, amb la col·lecció de vestits antics i els diferents instruments i sonades. Un espectacle de gran puresa, bell i acolorit. Rengles de seients, turistes. Al camp, algunes cases han estat abandonades o ocupades per estrangers.

El text reproduïx el de la primera edició, però ha estat revisat. Un troba sempre, en aquests casos, defectes a esmenar i expressions a millorar, però he introduït tan pocs canvis com he pogut i no he tocat res fonamental. He de dir, sobretot, que les estampes continuen referint-se al Sant Miquel de 1953.

Eivissa, 9 de febrer de 1975.

on the island. It is no longer a spontaneous dance in contemporary clothing but instead an organised reconstruction, with a selection of former styles of peasant costumes, instruments and music. Beautiful and full of colour: a spectacle of great purity. Rows of seated spectators: tourists. And, in the countryside around, some of the houses have been abandoned or occupied by foreigners.

The present text is that of the first edition, although slightly revised. One always finds, in such cases, faults to correct and phrases to improve upon, but I have introduced as few alterations as possible and have avoided any fundamental changes. I would like to emphasise that the verbal images are still those of Sant Miquel in 1953.

Eivissa, 9th February, 1975

## LLUNA DE GENER

...como la luna a la aldea.  
Miguel Hernández

«Per Sant Antoni, una passa de dimoni.» Ha transcorregut, circuit de freds, barbablanc, el sant del bacó ran de cames, protector de les bèsties, i el dia, amb aquesta passa pintorescament expressada, s'ha allargat imperceptiblement. Damunt els seus últims calius, balb, el crepuscle s'acaba d'extingir, una miqueta més tard que per Nadal. Però ara, aquests dies, una vaga resplendor prolonga la llum somorta sobre la individualitat dels escassos vianants —pagesos amb les seves eines, l'ombra d'alguna dona, un infant cuitós— que tornen pels camins. És la lluna de gener. La més clara, segons el parer de la gent. Lluna plena, avui. Amb la posta del sol, el disc il·luminat s'alça, com amb astorament, sobre l'horitzó ondulat, amb perfil de pinedes. Lluna gran, que

## JANUARY MOON

...like the Moon in the hamlet.  
Miguel Hernández

“For St. Anthony’s Day, the stride of a demon.” Besieged by the cold, the day of the white-bearded saint, protector of beasts, with a piglet by his side, has now come and gone. And the day, picturesquely measured in the proverb, has indeed grown imperceptibly longer. In the chill sky, the last embers of twilight have died, a little later than at Christmas. But now, in the evening, a pale radiance prolongs the fading light over the sparse assortment of wayfarers heading home: peasants with their tools, the occasional shadow of a woman or a scurrying child. It is the January moon. The brightest moon, say the local people. And full moon, tonight. At sunset the luminous orb rises, timidly at first, over the undulating horizon, picking out the profile of the pines. A big moon, waxing steadily brighter, which watches over woods and

guaita amb faç cada vegada més encesa boscos i conreus, cases i carreranyes, i el pujol on s'encimbella l'església de Sant Miquel, una cara de pedra nua, l'altra de calç sensible a ombres i lluentors. I sembla que la terra s'enfonsi, apagada, sota la clara ascensió de la lluna.

Hom atribueix la resplendor excepcional a la floració dels ametllers. Els primerencs, és ben cert, han obert ja les seves corol·les tot al llarg de les múltiples branquetes. Són tanyes densos de flors, una blancor invasora i unànime, vora el fullam obscur de garrovers i oliveres, damunt els verds tendres. Aquest vestit que s'espesseix, sempre tou i lleuger, és, al sol, una suggestió de minves amb blaus serens, de fred lluminós cap a profunditats de cel torbadores. Ara, al vespre, és una insinuació de perfumada absència, de terra nostra i coneguda, i, amb tot, submergida dins un misteri llunyà, no sabem si del cor o dels espais.

La lluna sobre el poblet! D'una casa a l'altra, sembla que et dugui de la mà. A la tornada, és més alta, més solitària la nit, més prestigiosos els estels que consent. A les ciutats no es pot comprendre aquesta amable companyia

fields, dwellings and footpaths, and the hill crowned by the church of Sant Miquel, faced on one side with naked stone and on the other with whitewash, which responds to every gleam and shadow. And the earth seems to sink away, fading into nothingness, as the moon climbs ever higher in the sky.

This rare resplendence has been attributed to the flowering of the almond trees. It is true, at least, that the first petals have opened up all along the tracery of twigs and branches of the early varieties. The unanimous and pervasive whiteness of the dense blossom contrasts with the dull foliage of carobs and olives, and the fresh green carpet below. By day, this natural drapery – ever more closely woven but always soft and light – is a reminder of the neap tides with serene blues and with a luminous coldness reaching up into the disturbing depths of the sky. Now, in the night, there is just the lingering perfume of a land which is familiar and ours, but submerged, even so, in a distant mystery, whether in our hearts or somewhere else.

The moon over the village! It seems to lead you by the hand from one house to the next. On the way back it is higher and the night more solitary, yielding more prestige to the stars. The gentle company of the moon is lost in the modern city: people live with no knowledge of the moon of the romantics

de la lluna. El ciutadà modern viu desentès de la lluna dels romàntics i dels antics. Ací la nit és la nit, com als primers temps del món. Suaument lluminosa, amb lloms argentats de serres i perceptibles camins, com aquest vespre. O espessa, closa, negra, quan els núvols ajunten els seus ventres d'ombra i s'esborra tota senda. Tenebra invasora i total. Cada casa manté, durant unes hores, un redol insignificant de llum; però aferrada part de fora de les parets, comença la sobirania de la fosca, que estreny, irresistible, pedres, arbres, muntanyes. Pel finestró reixat, per la porta que s'obre, envesteix, dura i ràpida, l'obscuritat. Nit que ara devora, amb negra gola, la major part del cos del dia. Nit tota sola, d'infinites mans indigents i cegues. Nit antiga de Sant Miquel.

Nit indiferent i llarga, voltant el son dels homes. O el seu dolor deixondit, que espera de la remota matinada una treva lleugera. Nit del sentinella, de l'estudiós, de l'obsedit, del llunyà navegant. Nit que ajup el seu ventre contra el pressut i solitari vianant; del jugador que no s'adona del seu transcurs, entre càlculs i averanys, tota la passió posada en l'aleatòria combinació dels naips, segons la qual agafarà gruix el muntet de bitllets o es fondrà damunt la fusta. Nit dels amants, que encenen en

and of the ancients. But here the night is the night, as in the beginning of the world. Softly luminous, with the silvery loins of the hills and with the country lanes quite visible, like this evening. Or else – when the clouds unite their dark bellies – dense, impenetrable and pitch black, blotting out every pathway. Complete, pervading gloom. Each house keeps a tiny circle of light going for several hours, but just outside the walls the sovereignty of night presses irresistibly down on rocks, trees and mountains. The darkness forces its way through barred windows and doors ajar. Night, which now devours with black greed the greater part of each day. Night, nothing but night, with its infinity of blind, begging hands. The ancient night of Sant Miquel.

Interminable night, embracing with indifference the sleep of mankind. Or their suffering, wide awake, awaiting a respite of sorts when the distant day dawns. Night of the sentry, of the scholar, of the obsessed, of the distant seaman. Night that presses its belly against the hurrying, lonely traveller; night of the gambler, unaware of its passing between calculations and guesses, totally absorbed in the passionate scrutiny of fleeting card combinations, which will make his pile of notes grow fatter or melt away on the bare wood. Night of lovers, kindling warmth in their own small kingdoms of intimate

la foscor llur regne íntim d'estret delit. La nit s'aixeca, immensa, enllà del poble que es recull. Plou, o xiula el vent, o, com anit, la lluna vigila camps, aires quiets, la mar propera. Ones manses i solitàries a la platja, amb un reflex lunar; arbre que es deixondeix, de sobte, amb un tou alè de vent; òliba que desclou les ales i s'eleva blanament del seu racó ombrívol. Reposa el pagès del seu treball o del seu goig obscur, esfondrat dins unes hores tèbies i pregones, que es trencaran amb el crit enfilat d'un gall i les primeres clarícies de l'alba, glaçades i exigents.

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L'establiment, mig botiga i mig cafè, està sol enmig del camp. Acabada la manilla, un jove surt a la porta. La nit és clara, i el que és ell no sent massa el fred. Duu al ventre l'escalforeta del vi i als pensaments un subtil engrescament. Lluna rodona i alta. És tard, i el jovencell sent més aviat l'exaltació de la nit i del fred. Se li ajunta l'amic que ha guanyat amb ell la partida. Encara, amb la mà girada, es frega els llavis del got de vi. Parlen separats de tothom, amb l'esguard cap als camps tèrbols, que avui se'ls ofereixen incitants. De què parlen?

delight, behind the curtain of darkness. The night awakes, immense, above and beyond the conquered village. With rain or with whistling wind, or, like tonight, with the moon watching over the fields, the still air and the nearby sea. A few gentle waves on the beach, reflecting the moon; a tree suddenly swaying in a breeze; an owl which unfurls its wings and smoothly climbs away from its shadowy retreat. The peasant rests from his labours or his humble pleasures, deeply immersed in a few hours of lukewarm slumber, soon to be cut short by the shrill cry of a cockerel and the pale frosty summons of dawn.

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The establishment, half shop half bar, stands alone in the middle of the countryside. Now that the last round of cards (*manilla*) has been played, a youth emerges from the door. It is a clear night and in his present state he hardly feels the cold. The wine still warms his stomach and a subtle flame is kindling in his mind. The round moon rides high in the sky. It is late, but the youngster feels only the excitement of the cold night. He has won the game with the help of the friend who has followed him out, still wiping the traces of a glass of wine from his lips with the back of his hand. They talk, keeping to



Quelcom misteriós i fascinator deu ser l'objecte de la conversa secreta. Ja no es recorden de les figures ombrívoles que han deixat a la botiga. Qualsevol que s'acostés destruiria la màgia de les paraules. Sols per a ells tenen un sentit els propis gestos, veus i rialles. El qui ha sortit primer ha de complir els disset anys; l'altre està sobre els divuit.

—Toni —diu aquest—, ¿estàs segur que era na Catalina?

En Toni ensenya uns rulls negres sota la petita boina, i s'abriga el coll amb una bufanda gruixuda. Se li endevina abrinat el cos, treballat per les rústiques feines. El seu pare ha començat a considerar-lo un home i l'ha deixat sortir alguns vespres. Na Catalina: una al·lota que viu a l'altre cap del poble i que en Toni ha vist aquella tarda, per un camí.

—Si fins li he dat ses bones tardes!

L'amic, en Pere, és ros, i la nit li aombra un esguard blau i desvergonyit. Diu:

themselves and glancing towards the dark fields, which seem so enticing tonight. What are they talking about? The secret of their conversation must be something mysterious and fascinating. They have already forgotten the shadowy figures left behind at the bar. Anyone approaching would destroy the magic of their words. Their gestures, voices and laughter make sense to them and to them alone. The lad who came out first has yet to reach his seventeenth birthday and the other is about eighteen.

“Tony,” the latter asks, “are you quite sure it was Catherine?”

Tony is wearing a small beret, beneath which black curls can be seen, and he has a thick scarf around his neck. It is easy to imagine his sinewy body, sculpted by rustic labour. His father has started to treat him as a man and lets him go out on his own some evenings. That same afternoon, going along a track, Tony had seen Catherine, a girl who lives on the far side of the scattered village.

“Of course I’m sure. I even said good afternoon to her!”

His friend, Peter, has fair hair and impudent blue eyes, hidden at present by the darkness. He says:

—Ara sa mala cadella ja deu dormir.

Na Catalina, per a en Pere, és una noia com totes, tal vegada un poc més bonica que la majoria. Per a en Toni és única, una criatura a part; no comprèn com poden comparar-la amb les altres. No ho diu, i de vegades el fereixen les expressions dels amics indiferents. Estrafà un somriure a la frase admirativament grollera del companyó. Somia. Na Catalina, ara, adormida al seu llit! Recòndita dins la foscor, mentre a fora vigila la llum de la lluna.

—Trobes que ja deu dormir?

Que distant de la taverna! Uns llargs camins entremig, baixant, després pujant, amb totes les seves marrades, vorejant predis i pinars. Camins sota el pleniluni, amb les espesses ombres de l'arbreda. Qui fos, tan sols, a la vista de la finestra darrera la qual reposa la noia obsessiva!

—En Puig ja deu fer temps que l'ha deixada —precisa en Pere.

“The little minx must be asleep by now.”

Catherine, in Peter's eyes, is just a girl like all the rest, or perhaps a little prettier than most. For Tony she is unique, a creature apart: he cannot fathom how she can be compared with other girls. But he keeps this to himself and he is sometimes wounded by the casual comments of his friends. His companion's coarse gallantry prompts just a wry smile. He is dreaming now of Catherine asleep in her bed! Snug in the darkness, while the moon keeps watch outside.

“Do you really think she's already asleep?”

What a long way it is from the tavern! The tracks stretch out ahead, wandering uphill and down, skirting around the edges of fields and pinewoods. Tracks beneath the full moon, with dense shadows under the trees. If only he could just see the window behind which the girl rests, the object of his obsession!

“Hill must have left her some time ago,” Peter comments.

L'al·lota està promesa de poc ençà. Això és una evidència que turmenta l'ocult enamorat. En Toni i ella tenen la mateixa edat i no fa mig any que ell va acudir al seu festeig. Va adonar-se que ningú no li feia gaire cas. Però na Catalina, medita, se l'escoltava. Recorda que la va trobar amable i que se'l prenia seriosament. Ara que al cap d'un mes es prometia amb en Puig, que ja havia fet el servei militar.

Un dia va anar-hi, doncs, a festejar; de petits parlaven, i ara només es veuen alguna vegada, potser es saluden. No cal res més, però. Cap aquella casa llunyana vola el seu pensament.

—Saps? —insinua el company—. Sa seua germana per ventura sortiria a sa finestra.

La seva germana, que a ells els sembla molt més gran, ja és una dona com les altres. Ni tan sols el parentiu o la proximitat poden transfigurar-la per poc que sigui.

—I què en traurem, d'això?

—Bé, a mi m'agrada. Si hi anàssim?

The young girl had recently become engaged, a fact which torments her secret admirer. She is the same age as Tony, who had gone to a courtship evening at her home less than six months ago. He realised that no one there took any notice of him. But Catherine, he muses, did listen to him. He remembers that he found her kind and that she took him seriously. A month later, however, she became engaged to Hill, who had already done his military service.

One day, then, Tony had tried to court her; as children they had chatted together, and now they may just exchange greetings if they happen to meet. But no more is necessary. His thoughts fly ahead of him, towards that distant house.

“Do you know what?” interrupts his companion. “Perhaps her sister might come to the window?”

The girl's sister, who is much older in their eyes, is already a woman just like any other. Not even the relationship or her nearness can alter this fact.

“And what good will that do us?”

“Well, I like her. Shall we give it a try?”

—No tenguis por, no sortirà.

Però la nit s'obre a tota aventura. És una llàstima renunciar a aquestes hores, anar-se'n a dormir, sense res més. Bo i absurd, un camí s'imposa. No importa la migradesa dels mots, dels actes; tot pren aquesta nit un aire transcendent.

Allí a la porta tenen les bicicletes, però igual seria si hi haguessin d'anar a peu.

—Tu hi festejaràs, si pots. Jo no n'he de fer res.

—I tu et posaràs a l'aguard, per si ve algú.

Mentre corren cap a la casa de les al·lotes, el ros enceta una cançó atrevida, que sembla un crit d'exaltació i desafiament. En Toni calla, mentre passen les clapes de lluna i les ombres dels arbres.

—Podrien haver anat a viure a l'infern!

L'enamorat escolta la queixa, però no troba massa llarg aquell camí sense objecte. El mateix camí per on haurà tornat el promès. Avui és dijous, dia de festeig. El

“Why bother? She won't appear.”

But the night is open to any adventure. It would be a pity to give up these hours by going off to sleep without more ado. Quite absurd, in fact, when the open road beckons. The poverty of their words and deeds is quite unimportant; everything tonight takes on an air of transcendence. Their bicycles are right there, by the door, but it would be all the same to them if they had to go on foot.

“You can try a bit of courting when we get there. I'm not interested.”

“Then you can be the lookout, in case anyone comes.”

While they are riding towards the girls' house, the fair-haired lad launches into a bold song, like a cry of exultant defiance. Tony stays silent, while they cross the patches of moonlight and the shadows of the trees.

“They might just as well have gone to live in hell!”

Tony, in love, listens to the complaint, but cannot agree that the pointless journey is too long. Today is Thursday, a

pensament gelós imagina l'escena. Li fa exclamar:

—Mal llamp el puga secar!

—A qui?

—Ja saps per qui parl.

—Anit hauria volgut ser en Puig, per una hora.

En Toni no sap qui voldria ser: en Puig, en Pere, ell mateix, embadalit en una mena d'efusió universal. Ferida de l'amor, dins l'embriaguesa d'aquesta nit. Abans d'arribar, deixen les bicicletes amagades, a una distància discreta de l'alqueria. Una de les façanes brilla amb blancor lunar. S'atansen sense fer soroll. Tot és silenci. Roden la casa pel cantó de l'ombra. Aquella deu ser la finestra sospirada.

És un finestrell que cau un poc alt. En Pere, per posar-se a la seva altura, ha arrimat unes pedres. Toca amb summa discreció. Només l'al·lota podria sentir-lo, però dorm o fa el desentès. Ara la crida amb un alè de veu:

courtship day. The betrothed man will have returned home along this very road. Tony's jealous mind imagines the scene. It makes him exclaim:

“I hope he gets struck by lightning!”

“Who?”

“You know who I mean.”

“Tonight I wouldn't have minded being Hill myself, just for an hour.”

Tony does not know who he would like to be: Hill, Peter or himself, spellbound in a kind of universal flux. Smitten by love, in the intoxication of this night. Before they arrive, they leave the bicycles hidden away, at a discreet distance from the farmhouse. One of the front walls is shining white in the moonlight. They draw closer without making a sound. All is still. They go around the corner on the dark side of the house. That one must be the longed-for window.

It is quite high up, a small unglazed opening with a wooden shutter. Peter makes a pile of stones to reach up to it. He taps

—Lluïsa... Lluïseta...

Es cansa de l'espera. Diu baixet al company:

—I tanmateix jo sé que ha sortit alguna vegada.

Torna a gratar la finestra:

—Lluïsa...

Dos fadrins, gairebé uns al·lots. Expectació exaltada i atenta. Silenciós sobresalt i un indefinit anhel.

Ha començat a lladrar un gos invisible. Dels corrals veïns arriben sorolls, una palpitació calenta.

En Pere es desprèn per fi del finestró. Sacudeix el braç de l'amic encantat.

—Anem. En què penses?

—¿Deu dormir aquí, amb na Lluïsa, sa seua germana petita?

on it with the utmost discretion. Only the girl should be able to hear him, but she is, or pretends to be, asleep. Now he whispers to her:

“Louisa... Louisita...”

He tires of waiting and says quietly to his companion:

“I know for a fact she does come to the window sometimes.”

He scratches at it again:

“Louisa...”

Two bachelor lads, just out of childhood. A concentrated and exultant expectancy. Then, a silent start of surprise and slight anxiety. An invisible dog has begun to bark. From the neighbouring pens come noises, a warm palpitation.

Peter tears himself away from the window at last. He shakes the arm of his besotted friend:

“Come on, let's be off. What are you thinking about?”

Na Catalina, allí a la vora. Remota dins el seu somni, dins l'enclòs dels murs. Tan present a l'eròtica inquietud! Verament, ¿són la mateixa Catalina la qui dorm darrera aquella paret i la qui pobla un cor jove i agitat?

—Deixa fer na Catalina. No te'n faltaran a una altra banda.

S'han apartat una mica de la casa. Ara la veuen per davant, tota blanca de lluna. Continua la veu:

—Però aqueixa poca-vergonya de na Lluïsa! Me les té de pagar!

Li ve tota la ràbia del fracàs. Arreplega unes pedres, furiós.

—Què vas a fer?

—Ara veurà si es desperta o no.

—Ets mala entranya, Pere.

Una pedra brunz en direcció a la casa. Se sent el cop i uns testos que rodolen, romputs. La segona macada retrona sorollosament a la porta.

“Surely Louisa’s younger sister must sleep here too?”

Catherine, close by. So far away in her dreams, within the walls’ confines. So present in his erotic imaginings! Is the Catherine who sleeps behind the wall really the same as the one who occupies a young and troubled heart?

“Forget Catherine. There are plenty more fish in the sea.”

They have moved away from the house but look back at the white facade bathed in moonlight. Now Peter complains:

“That Louisa is a bitch! She’s going to pay for it!”

His frustration grows into anger. Furious now, he picks up some stones.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m going to find out if she’s awake or not.”

“You’re a bad loser, Peter.”

A stone goes whirring off towards the house. They hear its

En Toni necessita solidaritzar-se amb aquella represàlia. És que hi té cap obligació, envers na Catalina? ¿Algun pacte? Cal un acte negatiu, enfront de tanta adhesió. S'ajup per collir un còdol. Comprèn que el món ha tancat les portes a la seva il·lusió, que ha d'anar-ne tancant més, encara. No hi ha més realitat que la seva persona redreçada i dura. La pedra parteix violenta i rebotja en un finestró. El forassenyat amant engega les codolades contra una possible feblesa. ¿Per què na Catalina i no qualsevol altra al·lota? Totes enemigues, estimades. Cada pedra surt amb un fosc missatge: «Sóc jo, és un desig enlluernat, qui et desperta amb aquest estrèpit. Sóc jo, és una adoració, és una rebel·lia. Ho sents? Em sents?».

Un home eixia a la porta, irat i baladrer. En Toni l'hauria escomès, amb ànsia d'afirmar-se dins la nit estranya, irreal. L'amic se l'emporta, fugen tots dos de pressa. Recullen les bicicletes i s'allunyen d'aquells voltants. En Pere és el primer de parlar:

—Estava nic, son pare. Però elles s'hauran quedat tan tranquil·les. No hem tengut mala festejada.

impact and the rolling of broken flowerpots. The second stone clatters loudly against the door.

Tony feels an urge to join in. After all, what does he owe Catherine? Does he have any agreement with her? Such a conspiracy warrants a reprisal. He bends down to pick up a pebble. He realises that the world has closed its doors on his dreams and that they must be closed yet tighter. He alone is real, standing upright and firm. The stone flies violently away and rebounds off a shutter. The enraged lover hurls the pebbles at any possible weakness. Why does it have to be Catherine and not any other girl? All of them enemies, beloved. Each stone takes with it a dark message: “It’s me, a dazzled desire, which is waking you up with this racket. It’s me, an adoration, a rebellion. Can you hear it? Can you hear me?”

A man emerges from the door, shouting angrily. Tony is about to set upon him, anxious to assert himself on this strange, unreal night. His friend bundles him away and they run off together as fast as they can. They retrieve their bicycles and are soon well clear of the area. Peter is the first to speak:

“Didn’t their father get mad? But the girls won’t have minded in the least. We’ve not had a bad night’s courting, after all.”



## EL POBLE

Oh, vine, vine amb el teu seny  
i amb la teva esma;  
puja quieta pel pedreny,  
dolça Quaresma!

Josep Carner

Som al mig de l'hivern. El poble, els seus camps, tenen un posat hiemal, de vegades dur, tot el que consent la moderació mediterrània. «Febreret curt, més mal que es turc», deien els nostres avis, que coneixien les malifetes d'aquests enemics de la Fe. «Cara de turc», precisaven uns altres, evocant segurament la visió directa d'un rostre infidel i espordidor. Mes curt, en efecte; i dolent, a estonades. Amb gels, vents, pluges, i també amb dies clars i serens, de freda llum transparent recolzada en la maragda dels sembrats. En aquesta maragda quasi

## THE VILLAGE

Oh, come, come  
with your common sense  
and with your firm intent;  
climb calmly up the stony slope,  
sweet days of Lent!

Josep Carner

We are halfway through the winter. And the village and its fields do have a wintry appearance, even harsh at times, in so far as the mild Mediterranean climate allows. “February is short but it’s worse than the Turk”, our forefathers would say, acquainted as they were with the villainy of these enemies of the faith. “With the face of a Turk”, others would specify, no doubt evoking the real memory of a terrible heathen face. It is indeed a short month and a bad one too, at times. With frosts, winds and rains. But also with calm, clear days of cool, limpid light reclining on the green fields. Almond petals,

líquida va caient dels ametllers una nevada de pètals, desallotjats de les branques per la nova fulleta. I les cases del poble, a mig aire del pujol, contemplen el paisatge tendre dels dies bons o es reclouen amb pany i clau en arribar-hi l'hora rúfola i esquerpa.

I com el temps, els cors. Curt febrer de diferents aspectes. Forçosa alegria extravagant de Carnestoltes, i austera, seriosa penitència de la Quaresma. Menja abundosa del Darrer Dia, per a la qual es reserven les orelles i les potes del porc, i magre cuinat —bledes i verdura, ascètiques guixes— dels pàl·lids jorns de dejuni. Colles de joves i casats assagen les facècies carnavalesques. Imaginen el vestit grotesc, el gest paròdic i expressiu, la dita irresistible. Hi ha el Carnaval dispers, la comparsa emmariol·lada que tragina les veus d'espigueta i l'aguda xerradissa de casa en casa, i la disfressada pública, a un lloc determinat, amb cercle d'enriolats espectadors i, enmig, la farsa satírica i procaç de les colles de mascarots.

—Diu que hi haurà disfressada, enguany —comenten uns assabentats.

displaced from the branches by the shoots of new leaves, fall like snow on an emerald sea. The village houses, up on the hillside, gaze out over the soft countryside on the fine days, but they are swiftly locked and bolted at the approach of surly, stormy weather.

And like the weather, the moods. Short February is a month of contrasts. The obligatory, extravagant merriment of Carnival and then the austere and solemn penitence of Lent. The lavish feast of the “Last Day” (Shrove Tuesday) for which the pig’s ears and trotters have been specially saved, and then *cuinat* – the customary thin stew of ascetic vetches, chard and *verdura* (Bladder Champion) – during the dreary days of fasting. Groups of people, young and old, unmarried or married, prepare for the carnival antics. They dream up grotesque costumes, expressive parodies and irresistible jokes. There is an itinerant carnival, a fancy-dress procession which wends its way from one house to another, with rasping voices and sarcastic commentary. And there is a public pantomime, in a chosen place, where the groups of masqueraders perform a satirical and provocative farce, surrounded by a circle of merry spectators.

Els qui la preparen discuteixen els cops d'efecte, riuen per endavant del vers burlesc, de la paraula còmicament gruixuda. El rotllo de la gent, amb llum de tarda, tindrà un aspecte malenconiós, malgrat les rialles, perdut entre la vasta bellesa dels camps lliures. Els pitjats espectadors esguardaran l'accionat exagerat, les figures conegudes, el jai i la jaia, l'omnipresent al·lot bambo, el dimoni, la parella que es casa... El dimoni i sant Miquel hi són personatges importants, antagonistes de vàlua. Mentre l'arcàngel no es despenja d'un arbre, amb una espasa de fusta a la mà, en actuació final i decisiva, un diable fumós, membrut i impressionant té intervencions de primeríssim paper. Més que un personatge de farsa, sembla una figura de tragèdia, un sàtir del cor de Dionís. Porta nus braços i cames, una pell cenyida al cos, màscara horrible i unes banyes de boc damunt el cap, entre les quals fumeja no se sap quina matèria pudent. Còmiques figures, més d'aquest món, el volten. Broll inestroncat de la vella comèdia! La vida hi és cruelment estrafeta, en els seus moments més grollers, amb primitiu i joiós realisme. És la festa paròdica dels mateixos actes habituals. Estètica de Valle-Inclán o de Solana. Sol ponent. Fred. Enginy esqueixat i saboroses paraules. Colors bigarrats, estranya alegria gesticulant.

“This year, they say there will be a pantomime,” comment some people in the know.

Those who intend to take part discuss the gags, laughing in advance at the mocking rhymes and coarse witticisms. But later on, dwarfed by the majestic beauty of the open countryside in the evening light, the ring of people will have a melancholy aspect, despite all the laughter. The huddle of spectators will watch the exaggerated gestures and familiar characters: the very old couple, the ubiquitous village idiot, the devil, and the couple getting married... Saint Michael and the Devil play the crucial roles of good and evil. At the final moment, the archangel, wooden sword in hand, will swoop down from a tree in decisive attack. Until then, centre stage is dominated by a smoking devil, brawny and intimidating. This character seems more tragic than farcical, like a satyr from a Dionysian chorus. The animal skin around his body leaves his arms and legs exposed, while his head is covered by a horrible mask with goat's horns, between which some mysterious substance gives off pungent smoke. He is surrounded by other comic figures, more of this world. Life at its very crudest is savagely caricatured, with primitive and joyous realism, in this uncontrolled resurgence of the ancient comedy! It is a burlesque celebration of basic existence, with

L'aire s'enduu uns versos rústics i estrofolaris:  
...fii de sa ruca d'es Puig  
i es matxo de sa Planeta.

Hem arribat, ja devers el final, a la farsa del casament. Un estrany personatge ha pujat damunt una taula, a maner d'estrada. Parla amb autoritat de ministre. Té al davant l'inversemblant parella, tot el ridícul acompanyament. La fantasia de cada disfressat ha estat l'única norma per al barroquisme del vestit. Sota les gales de la núvia i la imitació de certes rotunditats s'endevina el cos dur i els costats llisos del mascle. La declamació de les fórmules i recomanacions de la cerimònia ha estat encomanada a una veu clara i resoluta. Continua el romanç burlesc, amb amplexos gestos, des de l'estrada:

Vol contreure matrimoni  
amb na Rita Batibec,  
fia de pares banyuts...

Sí, hi haurà disfressada; però el lloc on ha de celebrar-se és objecte de controvèrsies. ¿No seria millor devora el

the aesthetics of Valle-Inclán or Solana. Motley colours and strange, hilarious gestures; wild ingenuity and salty words; the setting sun and the cold air, which carries away snatches of extravagant rustic verse:

...son of the she-ass of Es Puig  
and the mule of Sa Planeta.

Now, near the end, we have reached the wedding farce. A strange personage has climbed up on a table that serves as a stage. He speaks with all the authority of a priest. In front of him stand the unlikely couple and their preposterous companions. Only the fantasies of those taking part have limited the baroque assortment of disguises. There are hints of the hard body and lean shape of a man underneath the bride's gown and its imitation of certain rotundities. Chosen for his strong clear voice, the onstage orator declaims the ceremonial formulas and advice. With ample gestures, the burlesque recital continues:

He wishes to enter into matrimony  
with Rita Batibec,  
daughter of cuckolds...

poble, al peu del pi de capçada rodona que s'alça a l'entrada, al costat de la carretera?

—Allí hi ha més plaça i cau més avinent de tothom — insisteixen alguns, davant els qui asseguren que es farà enllà, cap a dins Benirràs.

El pi ver, tot rodó i ufanós, com un vigilant de l'arribada al poble! Indret acostumat, en algunes ocasions, de balls i disfressades. El Pla Roig ja s'estreny entre les serres, acaba al peu del Puig de Missa. És extens, elevat —però no prengueu aquests mots, ací, amb l'amplitud que tindrien al continent—; en aconseguir el poblet, el terreny es precipita cap a la costa, per dues ràpides torrenteres. Entre elles, vist des del pla, el Puig de Missa sembla una petita elevació sense importància; contemplat des del port, la seva alçària pren força més relleu.

L'església, alta i antiga, vigila maternalment els camps d'aparença agradable. Cap a la construcció més voluminosa s'enfilen algunes cases, les més velles a dalt, les noves a la falda. És bella una volta entorn del temple, la mirada estesa per la contrada, cap al Pla Roig o cap al

Yes, there will be a pantomime this year; but there is much less agreement over the place. Why not stage it by the roadside under the umbrella pine which stands right by the entrance to the village?

“There's more room there and it's more convenient for everyone,” insist some, while others argue that it should be held over towards the bay of Benirràs.

The umbrella pine, round and luxuriant, is like a sentry guarding the village! The site has often been used for dances and pantomimes. The flat area of the Pla Roig (“Red Plain”) narrows between two ranges of hills and comes to an end at the foot of the Puig de Missa. The plain is high above sea level and quite large, though on a very different scale from that of the Iberian mainland. On reaching the village, the land drops sharply away to the coast through two narrow valleys. In between them, seen from the plain, the Puig de Missa looks quite small, but its true height becomes apparent when it is viewed from the port.

The ancient hill-top church keeps a maternal watch over the pleasing array of fields. A string of houses leads up to this much larger building, with the oldest houses higher up and

port, cap a les serres de Rubió —clara toponímia romànica— o les de Benirràs— nom àrab i rotund—. L'encís principal de l'illa és la varietat, ací més accentuada: plana i puig; hort, secà i bosc; costa i terres interiors; cases escampades, conreus, arbredes, i la vastitud del mar, atalaiada entre l'angle de dues muntanyes. Si haguéssim de diferenciar les terres de Sant Miquel, diríem que són les fonts i els torrents els que donen alegria al paisatge. Cada font suposa un petit hortet que se la beu; cada torrent, una horta estreta que s'allarga fins al mar. L'aigua salta entre les pedres o es disciplina per la xarxa de sèquies. A banda i banda, el pagès treballa amorosament les grasses feixes esglaonades.

I ara és el febrer el que pinta amb els seus tons terres i caseriu. Camins de Sant Miquel!... ¿I on el situaríem, aquest poble? Eixint de Vila, en direcció al nord, arribaríem al cap de l'antic quartó de Balansat. Per què partir, però, d'un indret que no sigui el mateix Balansat? Per a l'infant que guarda la manada, i el fadrí xamós que prepara per al Darrer Dia les seves bromes escruixidores, i l'al·lota que, mentre cus a la porta, espera divertir-s'hi, i l'home que treballa, després enmig dels camps, el poble

the new ones on the lower slopes. The walk around the church itself is beautiful, with panoramic views of the Pla Roig, the port, the hills of Rubió (clearly a Romanic name) and Benirràs (unmistakably Arabic). The principal charm of the island is its variety, especially noticeable here: hill and plain; irrigated horticultural orchards (*horts*), dry arable land (*secà*) and woodland (*bosc*); coast and interior; scattered farmhouses, cultivated fields and trees; all with the vast backdrop of the sea, glimpsed through a gap in the hills. But we could say that the countryside of Sant Miquel is set apart from the rest of the island by the springs and streams that add joyous life to the scenery. Each spring gives rise to a small horticultural orchard that drinks its water and each stream to a fertile ribbon of cultivation, which stretches down to the sea. The water tumbles freely down over rocks and then is constrained in a network of irrigation channels. On either side, the peasants tend the lush terraces with loving care.

And now February is painting its colours on the land and houses. Ways to Sant Miquel! ...And how should we describe the location of this village? By heading north from Vila – the main town on the island – we would eventually arrive at the village of Sant Miquel, the capital of Balansat, one of the ancient administrative divisions of the island, known as

on aparegueren a la vida és el centre del seu món, el punt de partida cap a qualsevol camí, i, amb tot i la seva petitesa, un lloc no menys important que qualsevol altre. Camins de Sant Miquel... Mitjan hivern. Posat hiemal a les terres, atemperat per la Mediterrània. Encara duren les taronges entre la capçada sempre verda; estan ara al punt de més madura dolçor. Al peu del pinar del Puig de Missa els hortets semblen una mica devastats, no tenen el seu millor moment, que arribarà amb la calor, de tornada del seu exili. Enmig hi corre sense entrebancs el torrent, ara no desitjat, d'aigua freda i neta. Flors d'ametller i, arran del sòl, grogues, les molt humils de llevamà. El pesolar començà a florir.

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En l'atrotinat autobús —el camió, per als passatgers— pujava una família de Formentera. Aquells formenters no arribaven a Sant Miquel, sinó que es quedaven pel camí. De les al·lotes, dues eren agradoses de rostre, tenien sobretot un front i uns ulls bellíssims. S'endevinava l'origen pel vestit, amb el mocador al cap, un mocador negre, amb una sanefa de colors vius brodada segurament per elles mateixes. Prenien tots una

*quartons*. But, why start from anywhere other than Balansat itself? For the young child taking care of the flock, the charming bachelor thinking up excruciating jokes for the Last Day of Carnival, the girl sewing in the doorway who looks forward to enjoying it, and the man who is working, the centre of their world is among the fields and in the village where they were born. In spite of its small size, it is a place no less important than any other. It is the point of departure for any journey. Ways from Sant Miquel, then... It is the middle of the winter. The land is touched by the cold but tempered by the Mediterranean. Some oranges still hang amidst evergreen foliage; they are now at the peak of ripe sweetness. At the foot of the pinewood on the seaward side of the Puig de Missa, the little horticultural orchards look slightly devastated; their best moments will not come again until the warmth returns from its exile. In between the terraces, the cold, clear water of the stream runs unhindered, not needed for now. There is white blossom on the almond trees and humble yellow flowers on the field marigolds down below them, where the peas, too, are coming into bloom.

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actitud reservada, gairebé previnguda. Un jove eivissenc els preguntava sobre algunes qüestions, amb una ingènua curiositat, dirigint-se assenyalamment a les germanes més boniques; però no obtingué unes respostes massa clares. Havien de baixar a Santa Gertrudis, anar a una casa de la qual no deien el nom. El jove no podia així orientar-les.

Anaren agafant una mica de confiança. Les al·lotes ja s'atrevien a parlar, a mirar, a riure. Tot amb molta discreció, amb una gràcia popular meravellosa. Es miraven entre elles, amb unes llambregades plenes de sobreentesos, molt alegres i vives. Miraven també els camps que anaven travessant, tan diferents dels de la seva Formentera, malgrat la proximitat. Camps de Jesús, de Santa Maria, de Santa Gertrudis, amb verd als horts i als sembrats. Al fons, les serres de pinedes. Les noies s'estranyaven de les muntanyes, que si a Eivissa no són gaire altes, són inexistents a Formentera. I admiraven sobretot els tarongers, quan n'apareixia un tanco.

—És que fa tanta vista sa fruita, entre sa fuia verda! —es justificava una d'elles.

In the town, a family from Formentera was climbing aboard a dilapidated bus – known to its passengers as the *camió* (“lorry”). The Formenterans were not going all the way to Sant Miquel. Two of the girls had pleasing faces, with singularly beautiful eyes and foreheads. Their place of origin could be guessed from their dress, especially their black headscarves with brightly-coloured borders, no doubt self-embroidered. The whole family seemed reserved and slightly on guard. An Eivissenc lad started asking them questions, with ingenuous curiosity, addressing himself pointedly to the two prettiest sisters; but they gave him only vague replies. They were getting off at Santa Gertrudis and going to a house whose name they did not mention – the young man was thus unable to give them any guidance.

Their self-confidence gradually increased. The girls now dared to talk, look around and laugh. All with great discretion, with a marvellous natural grace. They exchanged lively, merry glances, full of private meaning. They looked, too, at the passing fields, so different from those of their native Formentera, despite its proximity. And, among them, the green irrigated plots and cornfields of Jesús, Santa Maria and Santa Gertrudis, with a background of pine-clad ridges. The young women were astonished by these modest



—Ai, callem, que pareixerà que no hem vist res mai! —  
temia sa germana.

—És que no hi ha tarongers, a Formentera? —  
preguntava el jove camperol.

—Pensau com havien de créixer, damunt aquelles roques  
—deia somrient la primera.

—A llocs hi ha millor terra que ací —concedí  
l'eivissenc.

Si el formenter és mariner i veu món, les dones han de restar a casa seva, sempre amb la mateixa i escassa terra al davant. Venir a Eivissa era per a elles un viatge fabulós, una aventura magnífica. Estaven avesades a l'austeritat del paisatge nadiu, a la línia horitzontal de la terra i del mar. I contemplaven la terra eivissenca amb ulls de novetat; un petit món vist des d'un món encara més petit. I l'escriptor, assegut davant elles, veia també aquella terra com si no l'hagués vista mai, i admirava en el moviment finíssim dels llavis, en el llambreig dels ulls, les encantadores reaccions d'aquelles vides joves i femenines. Una estranya simpatia naixia dins ell, i li

mountains, which – though of no great height on Eivissa – are non-existent on Formentera. And above all they admired the orange trees whenever a walled grove came into sight.

“It’s just that their fruit makes such a fine sight among the green leaves!” said one of them, defensively.

“Oh, come on, let’s hold our tongues, or they’ll think we’ve never seen anything!” her sister cautioned.

“You mean to say there aren’t any orange trees on Formentera?” asked the country lad.

“How do you think they could grow on those rocks?” replied the first girl, smiling.

“In some places, the soil is better than it is here,” the Eivissenc politely conceded.

Now, although the men of Formentera are sailors and see the world, the women have to stay at home, gazing endlessly at the same patch of ground. To come to Eivissa was for them a fabulous journey, a magnificent adventure. They were used to the austerity of their own scenery and the horizontal line of

hauria plagut ser més loquaç, parlar amb elles, declarar: —Com a vosaltres us agrada la meva terra, a mi m'ha corprès la vostra, si no es tracta d'una mateixa terra escampada. També la vostra illa és bella, amb una altra bellesa més seriosa i esquemàtica. I són polides i atractives les vostres cases, i tot té un encís profund que costaria de dir i que possiblement, després de moltes paraules, quedaria sense explicació. I vosaltres també sou belles, amb la vostra alegria que sobreïx damunt una evident contenció; amb la vostra discreta paraula, idèntica a l'eivissenca, i amb la vostra mirada carregada de vitalitat i d'intel·ligència.

Un nou tarongerar, a la dreta de la carretera; i el jove eivissenc explicava que com aquell n'hi havia d'altres a canalades ocultes, arrecerades del vent, fins a Sant Miquel, dins Benirràs, al nord de l'illa...

land and sea. And they contemplated the land of Eivissa with new eyes – a small world viewed from one yet smaller. And the writer, sitting opposite them, could also see that land as if for the very first time, relishing the charming reactions of those young feminine creatures in the merest movements of their lips and the sparkle of their eyes. A strange empathy stirred within him and he would have liked to be more talkative, to converse with them and to declare:

“Just as my own land pleases you, yours has won my heart too – if we can even think of them as being separate places. Your island has a beauty of its own, simpler and more austere. And your houses are attractive and charming. In fact, everything has a profound charm that is hard to put into words, challenging even the lengthiest explanation. And you yourselves are beautiful, with the merriment you try so hard to contain; with your measured language, identical to Eivissenc, and with your eyes, so charged with vitality and intelligence.”

Another orange grove, on the right hand side. And the young Eivissenc went on explaining that there were others like this in hidden terraced valleys, sheltered from the wind, even in Sant Miquel or in Benirràs, on the north side of the island...

## EL ROSARI DE LA QUARESMA

*La brisa dulce torna, un dia, al alma.*

Juan Ramon Jiménez

El Puig de Missa, cap a la tramuntana, és un alt pinar sense camins, només amb algun costerut carrerany. És el caire del fred, el costat solitari de l'enfilat i petit fossar. No hi ha cap casa en aquest bac, que té al fons uns feixons d'hort, devora el torrent, i com a perspectives el port i les serres costaneres; serres que mostren la part accessible i habitada, no la que cau tallada damunt la mar. En aqueixos puigs, les parts més extremes, no cultivables, de vegades rocalloses i amb poca vegetació, altres vegades cobertes de bosc, es diuen, al país, marines. Malgrat el ventot de març, fred i enutjós, he pujat a contemplar aqueixes marines i la mica de mar que deixen veure entremig, port enllà. Cap al Pla Roig i al migjorn, la façana de l'església, el coster suau, els camins, les cases que es van situant a plans diferents.

## LENT ROSARY

*The gentle breeze returns, one day, to the soul.*

Juan Ramón Jiménez

Just a few steep footpaths, but no roads, are to be found in the lofty pinewoods of the cold northern side of the Puig de Missa. The small graveyard perches on the lonely edge of this abrupt flank, where there is not a single house to be seen. At the bottom there are small, irrigated terraces bordering the stream. Beyond them can be seen the port and the coastal ridges, whose accessible and inhabited slopes conceal the vertical sea cliffs on the other side. The far reaches of these hills are barren and rocky, with sparse scrub or woodland, and they are known locally as *marines*. In spite of the keen March wind, cold and bothersome, I have come up to the church to contemplate those *marines* and the small wedge of sea that they allow you to glimpse through the gap by the port. The front of the church faces south, towards the Pla Roig, and the hillside is gentle, with roads and houses on different levels.

Cap al nord, entorn del fossar arrimat a les parets de l'església, la dura ventada, la solitud, les llunyanies escabroses, la mar amb escumes distants.

De dins el pinar ha aparegut un vellet. Havia pres la dreuera deserta, puig amunt, i ara se m'acosta, amb un feixet de llenya a coll. És un homenet petit, lleugerament encorbat, amb les cames una mica tortes, encara segures. Molt atentament ha saludat. Després ha deixat el feixet a terra, al seu costat, i s'ha aturat a reposar. Ja és molt prop de casa seva, de tornada de la llarga excursió, i pot entretenir-se un moment. Aquí sempre hi ha una oportunitat per a aturar-se i parlar una estona; la feina no és mai a una hora fixa, precisa. Ell, a més, ja ha complert el seu lliure jornal, amb el sol que s'acaba de pondre. En un altre sentit, relatiu a la seva existència completa, també es pot dir que ha satisfet la seva obligació. Però l'home s'aguanta fort, i sempre hi ha coses en què anar maldant. Mentre es pugui, cal treballar, per no perdre el costum i dur com més endavant millor la vida habitual. Tota una vida, encara no vençuda, de laboriositat. Passions, violències, egoïsmes? En tot cas, resten allà lluny, potser mig oblidats. En una caseta, vora l'església, viu amb la seva muller.

Here, on the northern side, around the graveyard up against the back of the church, there is a harsh wind, solitude, a rugged backdrop and distant white horses on the sea.

An old man emerges from the pines and comes up to me. He has clambered directly up the deserted hillside with a bundle of wood on his back. He is a tiny man with a slight stoop and bowed but sturdy legs. Greeting me very politely and setting the bundle down on the ground by his side, he stops for a rest. Nearly home now, after a long walk, he can afford to take a break. There is always some opportunity to stop and chat for a while; work here is never fixed nor precisely timed. Besides which, the sun has just set, ending his freely chosen working day. Much the same can be said of his life as a whole: he has done all that was required of him. But he is still full of vigour and there are plenty of things to be getting on with. He needs to carry on working as usual, to do as much as he can for as long as he can. A whole lifetime, not yet over, dedicated to hard work. Moments of passion, violence or selfishness? Perhaps, but they are well in the past and may be half forgotten. He has a wife and they live in a small house near the church.

“How old are you, John,” I ask, “seventy-five?”

—Quants anys teniu, Joan? —pregunto—. ¿Setanta-cinc?

—Oh, encara no! Només setanta-tres.

—Us aguantau ben fort! D'on veniu, ara?

—De sa marina. Hi tenia una mica de feina. Per no perdre es camí he vingut amb això...

Assenyala cap al feixet. Somriu. Sempre parla rient, i també amb una atenció estranya, amb un antic i cultivat respecte. És el vell capteniment pagesívol, per al qual no eren obstacle distàncies i entaforaments.

—Però sa vostra marina cau molt lluny, Joan. I ara, amb aquest feix, puig amunt...

Somriu; no dóna cap importància al fet.

—Ja hi he anat i n'he tornat unes quantes vegades, no es crega. Són ja molts d'anys.

“Oh no, not yet! Only seventy-three.”

“You seem to be in good shape! Where have you just come from?”

“From the coast. I had a bit of work to do there. And, so as not to waste the journey, I have brought that back with me...”

Smiling, he points at the bundle. He always chuckles as he speaks. But at the same time he has a rare attentiveness and the courteous composure of the peasant across the ages, for whom out-of-the-way places and distances present no problem.

“But the coast is a long way off, John. And now, uphill, with this bundle...”

He smiles again: to him, it is of no importance.

“I’ve been there and back quite a few times, you know... it’s been a good many years.”

Ho sé. Dies i nits al bosc, de jove, fent carbó. Ocupació alternada amb altres feines. Primer vivia al Pla Roig, cap a Aubarca. Després es comprà una caseta amb un poc de terra, a Rubió. Ara a Rubió hi viu la seva filla, casada. Encara té altres fills, crec, a diferents llocs.

El vent arriba de lluny, passa movent les nostres robes, deixa una remorosa agitació als pins propers. Mirant el paisatge, dic:

—Ara diuen que volen fer sa carretera per anar a's port. S'exclama la veu d'en Joan, sense queixa, qui sap si sense desig:

—Això serà p'es que vendran.

El seu pensament se'n va cap al passat, com en tots els vells.

—Encara em recorda quan feien sa que ve de Vila. L'any quinze hi estaven trebaiant. Va ser quan es va negar dins es safareig s'infant d'en Cosmi.

—Teniu bona memòria.

I know what he means. Days and nights in the woods as a young man, making charcoal – just one task among all the others. He originally lived in the Pla Roig, on the Albarca side. Later on, he bought himself a small house with a little land in Rubió. Now, a married daughter lives in Rubió and he has other children, I believe, elsewhere.

The wind reaches us from far away, ruffles our clothes as it passes, and leaves the nearby pines in a state of noisy agitation. Looking out over the countryside, I comment:

“I have just heard that they want to make the road up, as far as the port.”

“That’ll be for those to come!” exclaims John, neither complaining nor indicating any opinion.

His thoughts, like those of all old men, go readily back to the past:

“I can still remember when they built the road from town. They were working on it in 1915, the same year that Cosmi’s child drowned in the irrigation tank.”

La memòria d'en Joan, en efecte, és coneguda de tots els veïns. Recorda esdeveniments, noms i dates, àdhuc referents a les famílies dels altres, que els afectats obliden. Sovint li vénen amb preguntes, per provar-lo o per curiositat. És una espècie de memòria vivent del poble, una crònica escrita en l'aire, que amb ell s'extingirà. Aquesta crònica, amb una interpretació popular dels fets, comprèn els seus setanta anys de vida i alguns records dels pares i avis. Més endarrera... Però, qui es preocupa d'un temps anterior?

—Es camí vei passava per can Benet. Moltes de voltes l'he fet a peu. Quan jo era jove no hi havia camions ni bicicletes; només algun carro i sobretot asenets amb sàrries.

S'ha tornat a posar el feixet a l'esquena. Riu. Acomiadant-se, afegeix:

—Vostè deu quedar passejant...

—Sí, encara una mica més.

No oblida la fórmula final, ja anant-se'n:

“You have a good memory.”

John's memory, in fact, is renowned for miles around. He can remember names, dates and events; even those of other families which they have themselves forgotten. People often come to him with questions to test him or just out of curiosity. He is a kind of living record of the village, an ethereal chronicle, which will die with him. This chronicle, with its local interpretation of the facts, covers the seventy years of his life together with some memories of his parents and grandparents. Further back... but, who needs to go further back?

“The road used to go past Can Benet. I've done it many times on foot. There weren't any buses or bicycles when I was young; just a few carts and a lot of donkeys with big panniers.”

He lifts the bundle up onto his back again. He laughs. Taking his leave, he adds:

“I expect you will carry on walking...”

“Yes, for a while.”

—Estiga bo.

—Bona nit.

Encara es veuen, dins la fosca que avança, unes escumes al peu de les roques llunyanes, d'altres escumes mar endins. Mar dura, agitada per un vent que creix, i commoguda pineda.

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El vent nocturn, rei de la solitud i de la fosca! Tot el poblet i els seus camps per als aeris peus, pressuts i lleugers. Alta còrpora transparent, amb alguns nuvolots disformes i desig de clares estrelles. Rabent, mai no acaba de passar, i no es descuida de cap herbeta, de cap fulla, de cap terrat, de cap muntanya. El vianant, ja nit tancada, creix amb tota la terra que la ventada palpa. Illa perduda sota el llarg impuls cançoner. Imprecises notícies de mars i països llunyans, tal vegada d'astres o d'esperits. El vent és un amic que ens posa la mà pesada al bescoll, que ens sacseja i ens va dient tot de coses que no escoltem amb massa atenció. De dins la casa, encara, s'escolta la vaga xerrameca o el remorós missatge.

Already on his way, he doesn't forget the final formula:

“Farewell.”

“Good night.”

In the gathering dusk, it is still possible to make out the foam at the foot of the distant rocks and the white horses farther out to sea. A cruel sea, buffeted by the rising wind, and a commotion among the pines.

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The night wind, king of solitude and darkness! Its light, airy feet hasten around the whole village and its fields. A lofty invisible presence, with a few deformed clouds and a desire for bright stars. Racing by, but never ending, it leaves untouched not a single little leaf, nor plant, nor rooftop, nor mountain. The walker, when night has fallen, becomes just a part of the whole earth in the wind's sway; an island bemused by the persistent erratic pressure. Imprecise news of faraway seas and lands, perhaps of stars and spirits, too. The wind is a friend who grabs us by the scruff of the neck and shakes us, telling us everything there is to know about things to which



Pressió a les finestres i avalot veí dels arbres. ¿És una amenaça o una ampla companyia? Sentim el món més avinent, mentre fuig i s'acosta alhora la topada cega del vent, de sorolls contacte amb les coses, silencis i dur en l'altura, lliurement arremolinat amb ell mateix...

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La portalada del pati de l'església obre els seus tres arcs al cim del puig. Hi ha quatre o cinc cases blanques part deçà de l'entrada. Part dellà, el quadrilàter rústicament enllosat, voltat de parets eixalbades, amb dos arbres nus i el cel a dalt. Al fons, els tres arcs de l'atri —o porxet, com diuen aquí— es corresponen amb els del pati.

Sol post. Dins l'ombra de l'atri es passegen de cap a cap dues altes figures. Una, ensotanada, és la de mossènyer, el rector de la parròquia rural. Parlen, de vegades riuen. El vespre s'ha atansat lentament. Si no fos per les parets blanques, la foscor seria ja intensa. L'última llum del dia, però, s'enganxa a la calç invasora. Han aparegut dos o tres nins. Amb el permís de mossènyer comencen a tocar la campana. Tanc, tanc. tanc... Les campanades es repeteixen de tres en tres, allà dalt, i s'eixamplen cap a

we pay but little attention. Even from within the house, we can hear its vague gossiping or noisy message. Pressure on the windows and uproar among the nearby trees. Is it a threat or amiable company? We feel the world more closely, as it eludes yet embraces the blind impact of the wind and its noisy encounters with things below, while high above them the wind is strong and silent, swirling freely on its own...

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At the very top of the hill, a monumental triple archway opens into the courtyard in front of the church. There are four or five white houses just before the entrance. Once inside, the rustic flagstones of the quadrangle are surrounded by whitewashed walls, with two leafless trees and the sky above. On the far side, the three arches of the church porch itself — or *porxet* as it is called here — complement those of the courtyard.

The sun is setting. Within the shade of the church porch, two tall figures are strolling back and forth. One of them, in a cassock, is *Mossènyer*, the rector of the rural parish. They are talking and sometimes laughing. The evening has arrived slowly. If it were not for the white walls, it would be much

les cases disperses, cap al pla i les canalades, fins a les muntanyes i el mar. Algun llaurador les recull encara entre els seus camps. Tot el crepuscle vibra amb els tres tocs persistents, que sembla que l'aturin i l'il·luminin amb el seu so cristal·lí. Les dues altes figures continuen parlant i passejant-se. Després en van apareixent d'altres, molt poques, divuit o vint, totes gairebé vellets i infants, que arriben de les cases més veïnes. I mentre van arribant aïlladament les petites ombres negres, els dos passejants s'adonen que ja no és la darrera resplendor del dia, sinó la llum de la lluna, la que s'aferra a les parets del pati. A dalt, la profunditat del cel

És el Rosari de la Quaresma. La pròxima lluna serà la del Dijous Sant. Abans vindrà la setmana de la missió, amb el predicador enviat de fora, i l'església s'omplirà de gent. Ara, amb els tocs seguits que tanquen el campaneig, el sacerdot obre la porta del temple i hi penetra, acompanyat pels comptats fidels.

Un llum d'oli i dues espelmes, des de l'altar, donen una claror tènue a la nau. Entre els bancs s'han agenollat, escampades, les divuit o vint ombres negres. Arriba confusa la veu, des del graó del presbiteri. El prec és un

darker by now. The last daylight, however, clings to the pervasive whitewash. Two or three children have appeared. With the priest's permission, they start to ring the bell. Dong, Dong, Dong... The bell rings three times, again and again, up on high, and the sound spreads out over the scattered dwellings, over the plain and the terraced valleys, as far as the mountains and the sea. It is caught by a ploughman or two, still out in the fields. The persistent triple chime makes the whole twilight vibrate, then seem to pause, enlightened by the purity of the sound. The two tall figures go on talking and strolling. Then others begin to appear, not many, eighteen or twenty perhaps, almost all old people or very young children, who come from the nearest houses. And, while the little black shadows are appearing one by one, the two strollers realise that it is no longer the final splendour of the day but rather the light of the moon which now catches the walls of the courtyard. Up above them, the sky is deepening.

It is the Rosary of Lent. The next moon will be that of Maundy Thursday. Before then, it will be the week of the mission, with a preacher brought in from elsewhere and the church full of people. Now, as the bell falls silent after a final, longer chime of repeated rings, the priest opens the doors of the temple and enters, followed by the faithful few.

murmuri, dins la foscor del recinte. «Pare Nostro que estau en lo cel...», «Déu vos salve, Maria...», «Janua coeli...», «Parce nobis, Domine...» Passen els mots litúrgics dels llavis de mossènyer als dels seus feligresos. Mots litúrgics d'una llengua litúrgica. La parla eivissenca o catalana pren en les oracions mormolades un to quasi tan antic i solemniat com la llatina.

D'on vénen aquestes velletes? On van aquests infants? La vella endolada deu recordar una munió d'éssers estimats, ja desapareguts, que ara rauen allí prop, darrera l'església, dins el petit fossar que guaita damunt la mar. Com han pogut passar els anys tan de pressa? Una nova família, fills, nores, néts, gradualment i imperceptiblement, han anat substituïnt els difunts. Fills, nores, néts, escampats per diferents indrets del poble, que la majoreta va veient ara i adés. També aquestes ancianes foren unes criatures com les qui han acudit al Rosari. Després foren al·lotes fantasioses, que venien a l'església, els diumenges al matí, pels llargs però alegres camins. La llum, la gentada, la festa, com un reflex joïós de la morta joventut. De tots els joves que les miraven, que anaven a festejar-les, un es distingia, prenia relleu; s'anava tornant quotidià, insubstituïble; era el seu

An oil lamp and two candles on the altar lend a tenuous brightness to the body of the church. The eighteen or twenty black shadows are kneeling here and there amongst the pews. The voice of the priest reaches them indistinctly from the presbytery step. The prayer is a murmur in the obscurity of the nave. “Pare Nostro que estau en lo cel...”, “Déu vos salve, Maria...”, “Janua coeli...”, “Parce nobis, Domine...” The liturgical phrases pass from the lips of the priest to those of the faithful. Liturgical words of a liturgical language. In these murmured prayers, it is hard to distinguish the ancient and solemn tone of the Eivissenc or Catalan phrases from that of the Latin ones.

Where do these little old women come from? Where are these young children going? The old woman in mourning must surely remember a host of vanished loved ones, now laid to rest close by, behind the church, in the small graveyard that looks out towards the sea. How can the years have gone by so quickly? A new family – children, daughters-in-law and grandchildren – has gradually and imperceptibly replaced the deceased. Children, daughters-in-law and grandchildren – scattered all over the parish and seen only now and then by their grandmother. These old women were themselves very young children once, like those who have come to the Rosary.

promès, el seu marit. Ara, pobres velles, esperen reunir-se aviat amb els qui les abandonaren. Les joves generacions sembla que les empenyin cap a la tomba, com elles hi empenyien, malgrat el seu voler, els majors afilerats. «Nostro pa de cada dia...», «Et in secula seculorum. Amén.» Són les últimes oracions. Van sortint els escassos devots, amb la fredor de l'aigua beneïda a la punta dels dits.

—Sa lluna porta rotlo. És senya d'aigo.

—Prou falta que fa. Podria ser un any de miseri.

—Si no plou molt, no sé com es podrà regar, tot s'istiu.

I el petit grup obscur es va disgregant dins la nit, puig avall...

I un dia s'adonen que l'aire ha canviat. La fredor de l'hivern ha desaparegut. Si fa vent, és un vent amb no se sap quina tebiesa, amb no se sap quina dolçor. S'insinua la nova primavera damunt l'amplària dels camps. L'incipient miracle renovellat commou recònditament els cors. Arriba l'oberta promesa, només que sigui d'un poc

Then they became fanciful girls, coming to church on Sunday morning by way of long but merry walks. The light, the people, the celebration; like a happy reflection of that lost youth. Of all the young men who admired them and came to court them, there was always one who was different, who stood out. He would come back each day, irreplaceable: he was to be their promised one, their spouse. Tonight – poor old women – they are waiting to re-join before long those who have left them behind. The younger generations seem to push them on towards the grave just as they, willy-nilly, had driven their own parents along the same line. “Nostro pa de cada dia...”, “Et in secula seculorum. Amén.” The prayers have come to an end. The small congregation files out, with the coldness of the holy water on the tips of their fingers.

“There’s a ring around the moon. That’s a sign of rain.”

“It’s about time. It could be a very bad year.”

“If it doesn’t rain a lot, the water for irrigation won’t last through the summer.”

And the small, barely-visible group disperses into the darkness, downhill...

d'escalfor damunt els membres enfredorits. La llum de dia, era ja francament intensa, entre els arbres, pel cel. I ara aquest alè suau, sota les estrelles, amb un record llunyà de totes les primaveres passades... D'allí baix, del bassiol voltat d'hortets, arriba, amb el so del rajolí de l'aigua, el clar desvetllament del rauc de les granotes.

And one day they note a change in the air. The winter cold has vanished. If there is a wind, it is a wind with a touch of mildness, of gentle and mysterious promise. The new springtime steals across the length and breadth of the land. The incipient miracle makes itself felt once again in the core of every heart. The promise is now here to stay, even if it is as yet no more than a little warmth on chilled limbs. The light of day has already become truly intense, among the trees and up in the sky. And now this soft breeze, beneath the stars, with its distant memory of all the springtimes past... From way below, from the pond among the irrigated terraces, there comes the sound of trickling water and the first loud croaks of a chorus of waking frogs.

## HORTS DE PRIMAVERA

*¡Cuánto abril!*  
Jorge Guillén

Ja han sonat arreu de l'illa, amb precipitació joiosa, atropellant-se, les campanes de Resurrecció. Pròximes i plurals, amb diversos sons confosos, entorn del pujol espès de la ciutat, com un vol de coloms; solitàries i remotes, damunt les esglésies rurals, estirant l'oïda dels pagesos enfeïnats al seu tros de terra cap al repic íntim i clar. Abril. Llum invasora, aquesta llum eivissenca que obliga a mirar amb els ulls mig closos. Capells de palma per als treballs. Verdor als camps. Fins i tot l'herba més humil té la seva flor, amb una gota de bellesa. S'encreuen els cants voleiadissos dels ocells, i, damunt, el cel és blau —més pàl·lid a les vores—, amb algun núvol lleuger i vagabund. És la primera primavera, encara tota tendra, sense res dur ni esgrogueït. I la terra té una densitat corpòria, per bé que vestida amb teixits

## ORCHARDS IN SPRINGTIME

What a lot of April!  
Jorge Guillén

The whole island has resounded to the joyous, impetuous bells of the Resurrection. The medley of neighbouring bells, swirling around the crowded hill of the town, like a flock of doves; solitary and remote bells, atop the country churches, with bright yet intimate chimes, pulling the ears of peasants at work on their plots of land. April. An invasive light, this Eivissenc light, which makes you peer through half-closed eyes. Palm-leaf hats for working. Greenery in the fields. Even the humblest plant has its own flower, with a smidgen of beauty. The songs of birds crisscrossing in flight. And above them the sky is blue – paler at its edges – with a few transient wisps of cloud. It is the tender beginning of spring, with nothing tough or yellowed as yet. And the earth has a corporal density, though dressed in light fabrics, with the precise line of the horizons retreating from the bright open

lleugers, amb la línia precisa dels horitzons retraient-se dels espais claríssims. Les figueres, que semblen mortes cada hivern, senten el goig de les múltiples aletes, petites flames verdes damunt la branca cendrosa, veus d'abril amb un ressò infantívol i jogasser.

L'escriptor no tem encetar el seu càntic primaveral. Les paraules, les imatges, seran les de sempre; però l'emoció és ben seva. Emoció seriosa, al fons de la mirada atenta a descobrir les meravelles que revenen cada any. La promesa que semblen aportar es va quedant vella. I si tots els abrils són iguals, no ho és l'ànima entorn de la qual s'instal·len, i cadascun diu uns mots entenedors de diferent manera. Al peu de cada nou abril influeix la fossa més i més pregona de les primaveres esvaïdes, i l'esperança va prenent tots els matisos del record.

L'escriptor ha vingut de la ciutat. Ja és a la florida llibertat de Sant Miquel, però abans ha passejat per uns camps més familiars a la seva infantesa. Ha tornat a veure, on els camps de Jesús deixen l'horta i comencen a fer-se muntanyosos, el paisatge quiet, amb pujols, pinedes, treballades parets de pedra, graonades de bancals o «solanes», «es canal» i «sa rota», que va

spaces. The fig trees, which look dead every winter, relish the joy of their many little wings, little green flames on the ashen branches, voices of April with a frisky, childlike quality.

The writer launches, unabashed, into his ode to Spring. The words and the images are always the same, but the emotion is his and his alone. A profound emotion, behind a gaze that tries to discover the marvels which return each year. The promise that they seem to bring gradually grows older. And if all Aprils are the same, not so the souls that they surround, and everyone has a different way of phrasing their own understanding. Every new April is undermined by a deeper and deeper pit of vanished springtimes, and hope gradually melds into memory.

The writer has come from the town. He is already in the flowery freedom of Sant Miquel, after passing through the more familiar countryside of his childhood. Leaving the irrigated plain behind at Jesús, where the terrain starts to become more mountainous, he has revisited the quiet landscape of hills and pinewoods, with the carefully-worked dry-stone walls and the terraces or *solanes* stepping up the slopes, the small valley (*es canal*) and an area reclaimed from the woods (*sa rota*); arriving finally at a simple dwelling of a

pujant cap a la casa senzilla, d'un color vermell que la particularitza, alta entre garrovers i oliveres, la caseta on habiten la humilitat i el treball. El qui hi munta, en arribar davant la porta fosca, sota la tènue enramada, veu, girant-se, tot el premi escampat de la modesta ascensió. El pla, distanciant-se, accepta l'ample contacte de la solellada. Descendeix lentament des de Sant Rafel, ençà de les muntanyes de ponent. La mar el retalla en una línia que s'allunya. Els terrenys rics, baixos i sense trenques torcen al peu de les muntanyes, cap a Sant Jordi i ses Salines. És el pla més extens de l'illa. I a la seva vorera, dos accidents importants, que es veuen petits com joguines: el port blau, immediat als barris ciutadans, la Marina, sa Penya, ja més alta, i el puig de Dalt Vila, que escalona el seu caseriu cenyit de murades; i, més llunyans, els immòbils estanys de la sal, amb els munts blancs reposant entre espills. Tota la història de l'illa s'endevinava en aqueixa mena de detallada il·lustració; fins i tot, en les seves línies generals, hi semblava pintada, Arriben naus, cauen unes murades i se n'elevan unes altres, un campanar munta amb gaudi d'amples veus, els petits ravals fora murs s'adensen, s'allarguen pels terrenys baixos amb creixent preponderància. I tot vora el pla sucós i extens,

distinctive red colour, high up among carob and olive trees – the very home of humility and hard work. But anyone who takes the trouble to go up there and stand in the shady doorway under the flimsy cover of branches sees, on turning around, the whole reward for his modest ascent spread out in front of him. The receding plain is bathed in sunlight. It begins with a slow descent from Sant Rafel, on this side of the western mountains, and is cut off by the sea in a clear line going off into the distance. The continuous expanse of fertile lowlands curves around the base of the mountains, towards Sant Jordi and Ses Salines. It is the most extensive plain on the island. And the coast is interrupted by only two features of note, seen in miniature, like playthings. The blue port of the town catches the eye first, together with the adjacent quarters of La Marina and, slightly higher, Sa Penya; and, above them both, Dalt Vila, whose massive walls encircle a crowd of buildings, stepped up the hill. Second, and farther away, are the immobile sea-salt lagoons, with white mounds resting between mirrors. The island's entire history is painted in broad lines on this panoramic canvas and it is not difficult to imagine the details. Ships arrive; walls fall and new ones are built; a church tower goes up, rejoicing in its ample voices; the small quarters outside the city walls gain importance as they become more crowded and spread out



segurament cultivat de molt antic, i no gaire distant dels amples estanys on, sota un cel molt alt, qualla el cor salat de la mar, en nítids terrossos que signifiquen riquesa. L'Eivissa substancial era tota allí, càndidament oferta, abraçada des d'un humil tossal, amb el seu passat bategant davall la tarda gloriosa. Cantaven ocells ocults, i la mirada no es cansava de recollir la succinta presència illenca. I com que allí jugava el passejant quan era criatura, ve de la llunyania, i dels arbres nombrosos, i de la terra assolellada, un alè de paradisiaca virtut, i l'esguard creu veure al mogut redol llums i colors que puguen de dins, d'una ànima aturada en altres abrils, i un airet fi descobreix a la pell infantívoles complaences.

La primavera, però, no se'ns ofereix total a cada moment del dia. Ens pot sorprendre en el nostre, treball, aliè a qualsevol estació, encarnada, per exemple, en un borinot que entra dins l'escola amb ràpid vol i voldria tornar a sortir cap al blau desitjable donant cops contra els vidres interposats. —Un barrinol!— es distreuen tots els infants, la mirada unànime cap a l'insecte brunzent. Els nostres pensaments, les nostres preocupacions ens allunyen de la festa primaveral. I si res no ens en distragués, aniria perdent intensitat ella sola, acabariem

along the flatland. And all this takes place on the edge of the succulent and extensive plain, cultivated without doubt since very ancient times; and never far from the broad lagoons, where, beneath a lofty sky, the salty essence of the sea thickens into unblemished nuggets, which signify riches. The essence of Eivissa is on display there, waiting to be embraced from a small hill, with the past of the island pulsating beneath a glorious afternoon. While hidden birds sing, the walker's untiring gaze takes in the succinct island presence. And, because he used to play there as an innocent child, a breath of paradisiac virtue comes from far away, and from the many trees, and from the sunlit earth; and he thinks he can discern in the shimmering arc of land, welling up from within, the lights and colours of a soul still living in other Aprils, and the subtle breeze on his skin brings back all the pleasures of infancy.

Spring, however, does not offer itself to us in its entirety at every moment of the day. It may surprise us when we are working, regardless of the time of year; embodied, for example, in a large insect which flies rapidly into the schoolroom and wants to get back out into the blue, bumping against the window-panes in the way. "A *barrinol!*" exclaim the children as one, welcoming the distraction, with their

per no veure-la. Aqueixa glòria externa, per la seva banda, cal reconèixer que s'esborra en moltes ocasions. Realment, la primavera és una sorpresa admirada en què coincideixen, per breus moments, un conjunt d'excel·lències de fora i una fonda desclosa de dins. Màgica confluència! Sortim, oblidats de tot, de la nostra capficada reclusió i ens obrim, meravellats, lliurats, a un miracle d'altres perfeccions: el cel puríssim, el ventijol just, la humitat necessària, la flor intacta, el braç rodó recentment descobert... Portem una primavera ideal posada al pit, sabem que existeix; però tantes vegades apareix malmesa! I és com un dolor a la nostra carn, aquesta imperfecció que fa malbé les coses que haurien de ser totes belles. Mireu: el vent bufa massa fort, o el cel és emboirat i fosc. No hi faria res, un núvol que portés la pluja: després en trauria més joia el dia, i unes gotes trèmules i netes restarien entre els pètals desclosos. Però manca aigua; hi ha nuvolots sense gràcia, dels quals no es desprèn el do fecund de la pluja; hom tem per les collites; el sembrat sembla malaltís, amb alguna fulla seca. Vet aquí l'abril que es perd, que no surt a l'encontre del cor amatent a un gest favorable.

unanimous gaze on the buzzing creature. Our thoughts and preoccupations wean us away from the celebration of springtime. And even if we were not thus distracted, it would gradually lose its own intensity, so that in the end we would not notice it. It must be said, moreover, that the external glory is frequently erased. In reality, the spring is a surprise gift, in which, for a few moments, a set of wonders from outside coincides with a rebirth deep inside us. A magical confluence! We emerge, forgetting everything, from our fretful reclusion and we open ourselves up, marvelling, liberated, to a miracle of lofty perfections: the purest of skies, the gentlest of breezes, the vital moisture, an untouched flower or a rounded arm recently discovered... In our breasts we harbour an ideal spring: we know it exists, but only too often it emerges malformed! And it is like a thorn in our flesh, an imperfection marring those things that should be wholly beautiful. Look: the wind blows too strongly or the sky is cloudy and dark. We would not mind if only a rain cloud were to come along: afterwards the day would seem more joyful, with a few clear, tremulous drops clinging to the open petals. But water is short; the clouds are ugly and useless, leaving behind no fecund gift of rain; people fear for their harvests; the crops seem sickly, with drying leaves. Here, we see an April that has lost its way and has failed to

Però ara s'han trobat en l'aire els dos esguards. La primavera és com una dona amorosa que ens mira. No cal sinó seguir un dels camins que s'ofereixen. Laberint de camins sobre el poble, sobre l'illa, amb les seves roderes, amb la seva roca nua, amb els seus marges d'herba. ¿A on menen aquests camins, aquests carreranyes, aquestes drecceres? Atzarosos per a qui s'hi abandona plàcidament, dreturats per a qui coneix l'espessa xarxa i duu mesurats objectius i distància. En passar fregant un arbre florit, escoltem una bonior d'abelles. El cel és vast i transparent, no travessat d'un sol vent llarg, sinó amb prou espai per als desvetllaments i caigudes d'un múltiple oreig forfoladís. Horts de Sant Miquel, ara, tarda de primavera, amb brancades lleugeres. Tanmateix, en arribar devora aquest dolç comellar, com altres cops, els camins vacil·len, equivoquen el seu moment, s'enfonsen cap a un temps remot, arran d'una morta primavera.

Aràbia, Síria. Millor, Eivissa musulmana, breu paradís per a unes hores lentes d'indolència sensual i contemplativa. ¿Per què aquest hort determinat m'evoca sempre una possible estampa a la vegada eivissenca i oriental? Una època que ací no té gairebé història, amb

come out to meet a heart ready to respond to any welcoming gesture.

Now, however, the two glances have met in mid-air. This Spring is like a loving woman who eyes us. We have only to choose one of the many tracks to wander along. There is a labyrinth of tracks both in the village area and over the whole island, with ruts in some places, bare rock in others, and wayside plants. Whither go these roads, these footpaths and these short cuts? Haphazard to the eye of the casual explorer, they are quite straightforward if you are familiar with the complexities of the network and have definite aims and places in mind. Brushing past a flowering tree, we hear the humming of bees. The sky is vast and transparent, with no sustained wind from any direction; but, instead, innumerable capricious gusts, springing up, rummaging around and dying down again. Today, on this spring afternoon, we have arrived at the irrigated horticultural orchards (*horts*) of Sant Miquel, with their light branches and foliage. On reaching this pleasant hollow, however, as on other occasions, the tracks begin to vacillate and lose their sense of time, sinking into the remote past, into a springtime long gone.

poques dates, quasi sense records, amb uns vagues fils cap a la d'avui, sura de sobte en el petit verger degotadís, gerd, acurat. Obscur homenatge als vells pobladors i al seu treball pacient, tot i no sentir una especial inclinació envers el seu món no del tot soterrat. Repòs senyorívol en un tendre recer refinadament conreat. Mentrestant, a la costa penyalosa es disposa i s'arma, ardida, la piràtica expedició. D'aquells segles apartats es pot dir que només resten a l'illa, concrets, una poesia i el nom d'un poeta. I amb el nom, el sobrenom, el motiu, evocador de les savines que creixen arreu d'aquesta terra. Dins aquest canal frondós i de bon reposar, en una reunió d'amics, hom hi hauria pogut recitar els versos en llengua ara oblidada: «Eren pesants els gots...», deien amb uns altres sons. El poemeta és delicadament anacreòntic, té tota l'espiritualitat que es pot demanar en un tema bàquic o que actualment ens ho sembla. Entorn del petit cenacle, cultivadament alegre, la natura en el seu aspecte més amable. En primer lloc, l'aigua, aquesta aigua que a Sant Miquel brolla en fins rajolins als indrets més impensats. En aquest racó, però, és una sinya la que dona humitat a la vegetació. El lloc és elevat, entre dos puigs, i devalla encongit i esglaonat cap al murmuri del torrent. Els altres horts són a baix, no tenen l'altiva soledat d'aquest.

Arabia, Syria. Better yet, Eivissa in Muslim times, a brief paradise for a few slow hours of sensuous indolence and contemplation. Why does this particular *hort* always evoke for me an image that is both Eivissenc and oriental? The Arabic epoch, which is almost forgotten here, with just a threadbare history and a few known dates, suddenly surfaces again in this little orchard, which is so tender, fresh and well kept. It renders an obscure homage to those former inhabitants and their patient work, even though there is not much love lost for their world, which is not yet totally dead and buried. A soft and sheltered corner of refined cultivation, fit for a king to rest in. Meanwhile, on the craggy coast, a daring pirate expedition is being prepared and armed. Of those long-lost centuries, it may be said that just one poem and a poet's name remain on the island. And with the name, the nickname [*Al Sabini*] which evokes the savines that grow on the island. This leafy and restful hollow is a good place for friends to meet and, perhaps, to recite those verses in a forgotten tongue: "The glasses were laden..." they would have said, using other sounds. The short poem is delicately Anacreontic; it has all the spiritual quality that may be demanded of a bacchic theme, or one which seems so to us today. A pleasanter natural setting for this cultured but cheerful literary reunion could not be found. Above all, the

El volten bastes parets, altes oliveres, garrovers, alguna alzina. Dins hi ha els arbres fruiters, molts ara en flor, i el verd tapís de les hortalisses. Les fileres de ceps, arran de marge, encara no han desclòs la tendror dels pàmpols. El rústic recinte sols queda obert a un costat, cap avall, ample portal esbatanat a les serres boscoses, ja amb la polsina lluminosa del ponent. Enmig, passat el torrent profund, el Puig de Missa, amb l'església que ens assegura del nostre temps escoladís i cristià...

water; this water that in Sant Miquel issues out in fine streams from the most unlikely places. In this spot, however, it is a *sínia* – a waterwheel above a well – that provides moisture for the vegetation. From this high point between two hills, the valley squeezes down steps towards the murmur of the stream below. The other horticultural orchards are down there; they lack the haughty solitude of this one. Outside the rough stone walls that surround it, there are tall olives, carobs and an occasional evergreen oak. Inside, there are fruit trees, many now in blossom, and a green carpet of vegetables. The lines of vines, along the edges, have yet to reveal the tenderness of their leaves. Facing downhill, the rustic enclosure is open only on one side; a wide gateway looking towards the wooded ridges, with the luminous haze already gathering in the west. In the middle distance, separated from us by the deep stream valley, we can see the Puig de Missa, with the Church that assures us of our own transient age of Christianity...

## L'ESGLÉSIA

*I parent proper dels morts...*  
George Santayana

Diumenge al matí. Avui l'home no ha acudit als camps, abandonats al conreu de Déu. Avui només treballa el temps, que estén la seva lenta acció per tota la diversitat de feixes, encaixades les unes al costat de les altres, amb mil formes diferents, separades per marges, parets, vies i viaranys, sèquies, arbredes. Feixes desertes i riques, sota la creixent lluminositat solar. Dia exaltat de maig. Encara verdegem els blats, però l'ordi és ja d'or, a punt de segar. Passen pels camins, entre els sembrats, petits grups de persones, aquesta gent dels camps, solitària i escassa. Són famílies que s'afilieren, a pas viu, amb robes on predomina el negre, però vistoses, fins virolades, quan es tracta dels mocadors de cap i espatllers, davantals i llaços de les al·lotes. Tots, des de diferents punts, des de l'escampall de cases que constitueixen el

## THE CHURCH

And a near relative of the dead...  
George Santayana

Sunday morning. Today the fields have been abandoned by man to the husbandry of God. Today time alone is at work, pursuing its slow course throughout the patchwork of fields, which fit together in a thousand different ways, separated by rough margins, stone walls, tracks, footpaths, ditches or clumps of trees. Rich fields now deserted in the growing sunlight. A glorious day in May. The wheat is still greenish but the barley is golden and ready for reaping. Small groups of people are passing by, along the tracks or through the crops. They are country families, who live here and there, few and far between. Filing past at a lively pace, they are mostly dressed in black, but the girls wear attractive headscarves, shawls, aprons and bows, in a variety of colours. People are coming from every corner of the scattered village, along the straight or winding tracks that all lead to the same central

poble, arriben pels camins que, amb més o menys marrada, duen a un lloc central. L'església ja traspunta, alta, per a alguns vianants. Tal vegada repica la campana de so conegut, la qual, des d'allà dalt, veu tots els angles de les vies confluents i la gent que el seu avís apressa o tranquil·litza. Els pagesos que van acostant-se, parlen una mica, contempen quintanes, tanques, rotes, planes, horts. El sol envesteix, després d'uns dies calitjosos, amb franc esclat, gairebé amb animositat agressiva. Moltes herbes han anat florint, ara una espècie, ara l'altra. Sembla que per aquest temps ja hagin passat les flors delicades, més primerenques. Estan obertes, pels marges i els guarets, les corol·les escassament fines dels cards i de les botges. També marges i pinedes s'alegren amb innumerables floretes blanques: les de l'estepa negra. L'altra estepa, de fulles color de cendra, bada així mateix les seves flors rosades, que semblen de paper. Tot arbre té una tendra espessor de fulles, i davall s'hi recull la negror de l'ombra, que invita a reposar-hi.

L'església, aconseguida des de tots els vents, des de totes les distàncies. Dos camins, el vell, que tira més a dret, i la nova carretera, de voltes suaus, s'enfilen pel puig. Els qui puguen, en tombar-se, veuen els conreus amb la

point. The church, high up, can already be seen by some of the walkers. They can probably hear the familiar sound of the bell, higher still, overlooking on all sides both the converging paths and the people whom it is urging on or reassuring. The approaching peasants chat or contemplate the cultivated fields, walled enclosures, irrigated plots, rough pastures, and terraces reclaimed from the woods. After a few hazy days, the sun is back on the attack, with a forthright glare, almost with an aggressive animosity. Many plants have come into bloom, first one kind, then another. The earlier, more delicate flowers seem to have come to an end by this time of year. On fallow land and margins can now be seen the coarse flowers of thistles and restharrow. The woodland and scrub are also enlivened by innumerable little white flowers: those of the oddly-named *estepa negra* (Narrow-leaved Cistus). At the same time, the other common rock rose, the grey-leaved one, is opening its own pink flowers, just like paper roses. The trees all have a tender cover of new leaves, casting deep, inviting, restful shadows.

The church may be reached from any point of the compass, from any distance. Two roads climb up the hill: the old one, which attacks it directly, and the new road for cars, with its smooth curves. Sitting at the top, one can see the crops on the

collita a punt de quallar: grocs rectangles d'ordi i civada i verds de blat. Les falçs ja s'han estrenat amb les faveres i els pesolars.

L'església de Sant Miquel no fou sempre parròquia. És vella, però no tenim notícies de la construcció d'aquesta església del *quartó* de Balansat, com tampoc de la de l'església del *quartó* de les Salines, Sant Jordi. Totes dues podrien datar del segle XIV, com les primitives de Sant Antoni de Portmany i de Santa Eulària. És possible que hi hagués una església d'aquell temps per a cada *quartó*, però tal vegada les de Sant Miquel i de Sant Jordi ja foren construïdes dins el segle XV. Sabem amb seguretat que són del XIV les dels *quartons* de Portmany i del Rei, per bé que aquesta, dedicada a santa Eulària, fou totalment reedificada el XVI, i a la de Sant Antoni, el XVII, hi realitzaren grans obres. L'església del *quartó* de Balansat, dedicada a l'arcàngel sant Miquel, és, com totes les d'Eivissa, molt modesta. Té, però, com les altres, caràcter i una certa elegància rústica. S'adiu perfectament amb un paisatge insular i mediterrani. Com a Santa Eulària, ací alçaren l'església al cim d'un pujol. El lloc, elevat, apartat del port i d'una costa que és per si sola una fortalesa, no devia oferir els perills de les

verge of ripening in the fields below: yellow rectangles of barley and oats, and green ones of wheat. The sickles have already made their debut in the fields of peas and broad beans.

Sant Miquel was not always a parish church. It is old, but we have no record of the original construction of this church of the former administrative area (*quartó*) of Balansat; no more than for Sant Jordi, the church of the *quartó* of Les Salines. Both may date from the fourteenth century, like the original churches of Sant Antoni de Portmany and Santa Eulària. There may well have been a church at that time for each administrative division, but it is also possible that the building of those of Sant Miquel and Sant Jordi was delayed until the fifteenth century. We do know definitely that the churches of the *quartons* of Portmany and of the King date from the fourteenth century; even though the latter – dedicated to Saint Eulalia – was totally rebuilt in the sixteenth century and important works were also carried out on the church of Sant Antoni in the seventeenth century. The church of the *quartó* of Balansat – dedicated to the archangel Saint Michael – is very modest, like all the churches on Eivissa. But, like them again, it has both character and a certain rustic elegance. It fits in perfectly with the Mediterranean island landscape. Here, as at Santa Eulària, they built the church on the



plagtes de Santa Eulària, de Portmany o del migjorn de l'illa, obertes a l'assalt sobtós dels moros. Amb tot i això, la construcció era una església fortificada i potser va estar algun temps artillada, com les seves germanes.

Les quatre esglésies, en la seva forma primitiva, devien ser semblants. Ara sobretot s'assemblen, de formes i de mides, les dels dos *quartons* que Montgrí va deixar a l'arquebisbat de Tarragona. Encara veiem, a Sant Miquel, a Sant Jordi, un cos central, més antic, de planta rectangular i de murs molt gruixuts, amb talús ben pronunciat. Conté la nau de l'església, de volta que descansa damunt arcs apuntats, però l'aspecte exterior és el d'una fortalesa. Vista des de la costa o des de ponent, l'església de Sant Miquel no ha perdut massa el seu aire de castell enfilat. Cap al poble, emblanquinada i amb les construccions afegides, ja no presenta tan clarament aquell aspecte de fort.

Amb tota la seva humilitat, aquest temple de Sant Miquel és obra de segles, com moltes catedrals. La part més antiga, com hem dit, és la nau amb la seva volta de costelles ogivals. Té la porta en un dels costats llargs, com a Sant Antoni i, abans, a Sant Jordi. Mira cap a

crown of a hill. It is a long way from the port and from a coast that is, in itself, a fortification: the elevated area would not have been as dangerous as the beaches of Santa Eulària, Portmany or the southern part of the island, which were wide open to surprise attacks by the Moors. But, even so, the church was fortified and, like its sisters, might have been furnished with artillery for some time.

The four rural churches, in their original form, must have been quite similar. Today, the two most alike in size and shape are those of the two *quartons* that Montgrí bequeathed to the archdiocese of Tarragona. We can still see, at Sant Miquel and Sant Jordi, an older central body, which has a rectangular base and massive walls with a pronounced slope. Inside it is the nave of the church, with a vault supported by pointed arches; but from the outside it looks like a fortress. Viewed from the northern coast or from the country to the west of it, the church of Sant Miquel still looks much like a prominent castle. From the village side, with whitewashed walls and added buildings, the resemblance to a fort is no longer so apparent.

In spite of its humble nature, this temple of Saint Michael is the work of centuries, just like many cathedrals. The oldest part, as we have said, is the nave with its vault of ogival ribs. Its

migjorn, mentre que l'altar major, on hi havia fins a la guerra un retaule barroc, assenyala cap a llevant. A l'altre cap hi ha el cor petit i alt, recolzat en una columneta. Com que aquesta nau, tota emblanquinada, és bastant reduïda, hagueren d'augmentar, més endavant, la capacitat de l'església. Dues pregones capelles foren construïdes a banda i banda de l'altar, tal vegada al lloc d'unes altres més petites, com les que hi ha al llarg dels murs, dins la seva gruixària. La de la dreta té uns esgrafiats del segle XVII, en part esborrats, i li diuen la capella pintada. En quatre medallons que formen part de la seva decoració poc refinada resta escrita la història de la capella, amb els noms dels qui la manaren edificar: «En temps del Rt. Barthomeu Orvay, Prebere y Recr. — sent Obrer lo Honorable Antoni Planells de Toni, Jurat, — sent Obrer lo Honorable Barthomeu Sallaras, — fonec feta esta capella lo any 1690». Tres noms arribats en aquests dies des d'una època remota. No sabem res més d'aquelles vides, vides humils que veieren uns camps com els d'ara, sota un nombre mesurat de primaveres. I aquelles comptades primaveres s'escolaren mentre la capella s'anava alçant, fugiren amb els homes que ens deixaven, duradora, la seva obra.

entrance is through one of the longer sides, as in the church of Sant Antoni and, formerly, in that of Sant Jordi. The church faces south, but the main altar, which had a baroque reredos before the war, faces east. The small chancel, supported by a pillar, is at the far end, quite high up. The limited size of the nave, whitewashed throughout, meant that the capacity of the church had to be increased later on. A large chapel was constructed on either side of the altar, perhaps replacing some smaller ones, like those that still line the walls, recessed into their ample width. The one on the right has some partly-erased, seventeenth-century decorative reliefs and is known as the painted chapel. On the four medallions that form part of its rudimentary decoration, there is an outline of the chapel's history with the names of its promoters: "In the time of the Reverend Barthomeu Orvay, Prebendary and Rector – the Wardens being the Honourable Antoni Planells de Toni, Juror, and the Honourable Barthomeu Sallaras – this chapel was built in the year 1690." Just the three names have survived from that remote period. We know nothing more about those lives; humble lives set in countryside much like that of today, with their due quota of springtimes. And those springtimes, so limited in number, slipped away while the chapel was going up, disappearing with the men who left us the lasting results of their labour.

Davant la porta hi ha l'atri, amb la seva arqueria oberta al pati enllosat. En un costat del pati hi ha la casa que diuen del Vicari. Més tard, edificaren damunt l'església la casa rectoral, i més recent encara és el campanar, d'un gust diferent, una mica detonant, amb la sola campana de clara veu, que sap alegrar-se o entristir-se, segons la nova que ha d'escampar pels aires.

Suara cridava a missa, pels aires incendiats. La nau i les dues capelles estan plenes de gent; tres recintes, com són tres les *véndes* o demarcacions de camp, amb les seves cases, del poble. Enmig, centrant aquesta feligresia que l'enfronta en tres direccions, el sacerdot canta la missa. Per damunt la gent, part dellà de la porta, es pot veure la doble arcada del pati, i més enllà les terres ajagudes, de verdor vibrant amb la llum del sol. Dins l'aire enxubat del temple, els fidels, espessament, s'agenollen, s'aixequen, s'asseuen. Les dones disposen de petits cadirons. No havent-hi prou bancs per a tothom, els qui seuen van cedint el lloc als qui han romàs drets, i així els homes es reparteixen equitativament el descans. Heus aquí el poble en part reunit i compacte, amb els vestits millors; un poble que viu dispers i que sentia seva unitat les festes al matí, a l'església i als seus volts. Calor. Un

The church entrance has a spacious porch, with arches opening out onto the flagstoned courtyard. On one side of the courtyard there is the house known as the Vicarage. The Rectory was built later on, above the church, and the bell-tower is even more recent, built in a different and slightly conflicting style, with a single bell, whose clear voice knows how to sound happy or sad, in accordance with the news it has to spread to the four winds.

The bell has just braved the burning air, calling people to mass. Both the nave and the two chapels are full: three separate sections, the same in number as the *véndes* (neighbourhoods) within the area of the parish. In the middle, the priest intones mass, with the congregation facing him from all three directions. Over the heads of the people, beyond the door, through the two archways of the courtyard and beyond them again, one can see the resting fields, bright green in the sunlight. In the stifling air inside the temple, the crowded congregation kneel down, stand up and sit down. The women have brought their own little chairs. As there are not enough pews for everyone, those sitting in them give way in turn to those standing, and in this way all the men have a fair chance to rest. This is a compact meeting of a part of the village, in its finest clothing; a scattered village that feels its unity in church, or

infant s'agita amb desfici, un jove es passa el mocador pel front, una al·lota es gira dissimuladament, una altra sense cap dissimul. No hi ha pressa per a res, però els més joves senten la frisança del dia que espera. S'interromp l'ofici i mossènyer parla a la gent: avís de misses i funerals, amonestacions; per a després de la processó convida a la casa rectoral les autoritats i poble en general. El sacrifici continua. Ah, aquest poble inquiet, viu, resignat, aplec de misèries i egoïsmes, amb les seves preocupacions, els seus treballs, els seus amors, els seus pecats, les seves esperances, les seves petites i costoses virtuts, els seus sacrificis! Generació ara aixecada, com s'aixeca aquest dia de maig, i que un altre maig ja no veurà. Darrera l'església, sota el cel violent, dorm mig oblidat l'estret cementiri. Els murs del temple, allí de pedra nua, formen dues de les parets del quadrilàter d'herbes i creus. Les altres dues parets són baixes, estan curosament emblanquinades. Des d'aquest fossar es veu el puig que davalla, vestit de pineda, la vall entre muntanyes, l'aigua del port. Però els morts confosos amb la terra, no veuen res, i ací vindran a raure, un a un, oblidats els dolors i els gaudis, els cossos dels qui ara es disposen a sortir de l'església i senten, sense meditar-hi massa, la influència primaveral. Sí, reposaran

close by, on festive mornings. Heat. A small child stirs restlessly; a young man wipes his forehead with a handkerchief; a girl looks around surreptitiously, and another one quite openly. There is no real need to hurry, but the younger people are impatient to get on with their day. There is a break in the service while Mossènyer talks to the people, giving notice of masses and funerals, and asking banns; he then invites the authorities and villagers in general to go to the rectory after the procession. The Sacrifice of the Mass continues. Oh, this unquiet, shrewd, fatalistic people: a gathering of poor selfish wretches, with their worries, their tasks, their loves, their sins, their hopes, their small but costly acts of virtue, and their sacrifices! A generation now standing here, like this day in May, which will not see another May. Behind the church, beneath the fierce sky, half-forgotten, the narrow cemetery lies sleeping. The bare-stone, outer walls of that part of the church make up two sides of the quadrangle of crosses and small plants. Its other two walls are low, and carefully whitewashed. From this graveyard can be seen the pine-clad descent, the valley between the mountains and the water of the port. But the dead, mingling with the earth, see nothing. And, one by one, with joys and woes forgotten, more bodies will end up lying here: the bodies of those getting ready to leave the church, who now feel, without giving it much thought, the influence of

entre les quatre parets, com hi reposen, possiblement, el reverend Bartomeu Orvay, i n'Antoni Planells, jurat, i en Bartomeu Sallaràs, obrer d'aquesta església, i tantes generacions de miquelers anònims.

Acabada la missa, ja fora la gent, l'obrer major reparteix les atxes entre els prohoms del poble, per a la processó. Dins l'ombra del temple, entre els joves portadors, graviten damunt els baiards les imatges que tot d'una veuran la lluminositat del matí. Brilla ja la creu, alçada entre els qui esperen la religiosa corrua, a l'eixida. Campaneg, corregudes d'infants. Enlluernament successiu, als ulls no protegits per l'ala del capell, dels qui traspassen el llindar. Dèbils flametes, que aviat s'apagaran, enmig del dia evident. Es gronxen, seguint el seu camí, les imatges llampants; sant Miquel, sant Roc, sant Antoni del Porquet, que duen els fadrins; la Mare de Déu, conduïda per noies de vestit llarg i posat seriós. Apareix la bandera parroquial. Ara mig acluquen la mirada, a l'escomesa del sol, el sacerdot i els homes que marxen darrera d'ell. Passen entre la gentada. Unes cases, les portes de les tavernes, i el camp, sempre el camp entorn, sense l'ombra d'un núvol. Pels camins del puig, desnivellats, la comitiva sembla més petita. Van

spring. Yes, indeed, they will rest between these four walls as do, perhaps, the Reverend Bartomeu Orvay; Antoni Planells, Juror, and Bartomeu Sallaras, warden of this church; and many generations of anonymous *Miquelers*.

The mass is over and the people are outside; the senior churchwarden gives the local worthies large ceremonial candles for the procession. Still in the shade of the temple, the images that are resting on litters, with young bearers on either side, will suddenly experience the full brightness of the morning. The cross can already be seen glistening above the heads of the people waiting by the doorway for the religious parade to begin. The bell rings and children run around. People cross the threshold and are dazzled, one after another, if their eyes are not protected by the brim of a hat. There are weak little flames, which will soon be extinguished in the clear light of the day. The vivid and swaying images follow them: Saint Michael, Saint Roch and Saint Anthony with his Piglet, all carried by the lads; and the Mother of God, carried with due solemnity by girls in long clothing. The parish standard appears next. And then, with half-closed eyes, attacked by the sun, the priest and the men who walk behind him. They pass through the crowd. A few houses, tavern doors and the countryside: the countryside always around, without a trace of a cloud. On the sloping roads

baixant els sants, oscil·lants, alts damunt els caps. Les ales obertes de l'angèlic patró tenen, però, un vol curt i difícil. A estones passa la brisa. Mentre segueixen lentament el camí acostumat, els pagesos veuen la seva terra, exigent en esforços, no massa pròdiga en fruits, amb la collita que es cuida abastar, sempre insegura. El torrent, al fondal, s'esmuny entremig dels seus horts. Comença la pujada de sants i mortals. La processó avança, bellugadís fragment del paisatge, que ara s'obre cap a la banda de mar, amb el port al fons, i més enllà les ones, i més enllà...

of the hillside, the procession seems smaller. The saints go on down, swaying to and fro, perched above the heads. The patron angel, with wide-open wings, has a short but difficult flight. There is a breeze at times. While they are slowly tracing the customary route, the peasants survey their land, exacting and slow to reward, with the hard-won harvest ever uncertain. The stream, down below in the valley, winds through its horticultural orchards. Saints and mortals are starting to go back up the hill. The procession advances, a moving fragment of the landscape, which now opens up towards the sea, with the port in the distance, and beyond it the waves, and beyond them again...

## EL TORRENT

*Val més la teva imatge que no mil pensaments.*

Carles Riba

El mes de juny, més que qualsevol altre tascó, parteix en dues meitats el gir de l'any. És la cresta alterosa que separa dos vessants. Mes encès, lluminós, de dies llargs. La gent a penes dorm, enfeïnada amb la sega; no reposen les falçs. Després, a l'era, lluen les messes daurades, comença el tràfec del batre. I la nit, que dóna una breu abraçada als fatigats pagesos, s'encén encara amb els focs alegres de sant Joan i amb els més humils de sant Pere. Endarrera, s'esborren la primavera i l'hivern, de camps humits i tendres. D'ara endavant, s'instal·la amplament l'estiu, amb el cel de cegadora ardència damunt els camps de rostolls, els marges ressecs, els camins polsosos. Els arbres, però, tenen tot el seu fullam i atorguen tota la seva protecció. Prestigi i

## THE STREAM

Your image is worth more than a thousand thoughts.

Carles Riba

The month of June is the wedge that – more than any other – splits the yearly round into two halves. It is the haughty crest that separates two opposite slopes. A month aflame, with long light days. People have little time to sleep: they are too busy reaping and the sickles never rest. When the golden corn is at last shining on the open-air threshing circle, the bustle of threshing begins. And the night, which briefly embraces the weary peasants, is still set alight by the lively fires of Saint John and the humbler ones of Saint Peter. Spring and Winter have disappeared, along with their soft, damp fields. From now on, Summer takes over, with a sky of blinding radiance over the fields of stubble, the dried-up verges and the dusty tracks. The trees, on the other hand, now have all their leaves and provide full protection. It is a privilege to rest in the shade

repòs de les ombres, recollides davall les figueres, els garrovers, els aristocràtics pins vers. Fresques ombres, encara recents, dels fruiters, ja dins el domini dels horts. Albercoquers i pruneres ofereixen el seu fruit de color viu i madur, tan sucós i dolç. Els magraners ensenyen les gotes vermelles de la seva flor. És a les brancades vestides i a les feixes d'hort on es refugia la tendror vegetal. I, per contrast amb els camps abrussats, la breu riquesa verda pren una importància amable i confortadora, arran de la correntia de les sèquies i el torrent.

Escoladís i prim tresor de l'aigua, ara que avança l'estiu, enmig de la terra assedegada! Si el pou és l'humil tresor de plata colgat dins foscors de cova, la font és el raig de monedetes vessat amb liberalitat més ostentosa. D'un fontinyol modest se n'alegra tot un hortet, aturat als faldars del puig, devora el pinar. D'unes fonts més despreses es forma el torrent, i al seu costat s'acullen els horts, allargats cap a la mar. El torrent troba al mes de juny la seva festa. Passegeu-vos una tarda seguint el de Sant Miquel, on l'aigua clara neix, on corre sempre amb una remor fresca, on s'esbalça per disformes escalons de roca, on s'engorga i miralleja, on és gairebé ofegat

that gathers under the fig trees, the carob trees and the noble umbrella pines. Meanwhile, in the irrigated domain, there are cool new shadows under the fruit trees. Apricot and plum trees offer their ripe, vividly-coloured fruit, so sweet and juicy. The pomegranates flaunt their scarlet drops of flower. Leafy branches and irrigated terraces are refuges of tender vegetation. And, contrasting with the scorched fields of stubble, the brief green richness takes on a kind and comforting significance, down by the running water of the ditches and the stream.

A slender, trickling treasure of water, now that summer is advancing, in the middle of the parched countryside! If a well is a humble treasure of silver buried in the dark depths of a cave, a spring is a generous shower of coins for all to see. Even a modest source of water can enliven an entire small horticultural orchard in the folds of a hill, close by the pinewoods. The more important springs produce the stream, lined on either side with irrigated terraces stretching down towards the sea. The stream valley is at its festive best in the month of June. Just take a stroll one afternoon down the valley of Sant Miquel where the water rises clear; where it makes refreshing sounds as it runs; where it leaps headlong down rough rocky steps; where it lies quiescent in a deep pool,



per la múltiple vegetació. Esguardeu, a les vores, l'impuls verd i tremolós del creixent canyar. Contempleu, nascuts de pedra i aigua, entre els tolls, o més amunt, fins on arriba una almoina d'humitat, els baladres de flor vermella i persistent, ara tota oberta. Encara hi ha la planta que ací anomenen aríngel, amb blanca florida, i aviat floriran, també càndidament, la murta i la vidiella. No tot és suavitat de molsa o d'herba. Si no punxen els joncs, esgarrinxen els esbarzers, i es presenta així mateix la duresa agressiva d'algun coscoll. Quanta de vida agafa força al contacte del torrent! I encara petites sèquies li prenen l'aigua escassa. Un safareig encalma les mirades cap a l'altura. Un molí espera, atrafegat i renouer, les carretades de blat, el lliura en sacs de farina? I els feixons esglaonats són tots gerds, i les fulles fresques toquen els turmells mullats o els calçons fangosos del pagès que posa en la part d'hort la seva cura més sol·lícita.

Difícil verdor! Plou poc a l'illa. Es succeeixen dies i dies de cel clar, sense núvols. O els núvols tranquils, formosos, es passegen entremig del blau. De vegades s'amunteguen les altes ombres i el dia s'enfosqueix. Mirades anhelants s'aixequen cap a la difusa promesa.

shining like a mirror, and where it is almost smothered in luxuriant growth. See, at the edges, the quivering green force of the burgeoning cane-beds. Contemplate, among the pools – or higher up, while there remains a small dispensation of moisture – the oleanders, born out of rock and water, with their long-lasting red flowers now in full bloom. There are still some ingenuous white flowers on the plant known here as *aríngel* (*Smilax aspera balearica*) and soon they will be joined by those of the myrtle and clematis. But not everything is as soft as the mosses and herbage. If the reeds fail to prick you, the brambles will scratch you and, at the same time, you may discover the aggressive roughness of a kermes oak. What a lot of life takes on new strength when touched by the stream! And little irrigation ditches go on stealing its precious water! Its hopeful glances towards the open seas are frustrated by an irrigation pond. A noisy, bustling mill awaits the arrival of cartloads of wheat and gives them back again in sacks of flour. And all the small, stepped terraces are fresh and tender. And cool leaves brush against the wet ankles or the muddy trousers of the peasant, whose most devoted attention is reserved for his horticultural orchard.

Difficult greenery! It rains but seldom on the island. Day after day of blue sky, with no clouds. Or with clouds that are calm

Però vents adversos l'escampen i resta una altra vegada l'espai desenteranyinat, amb lluminosa indiferència. Quan ve la pluja, no sol anunciar-se amb llargs preparatius. Estrepitós arravatament, o bé continuada concessió, mig llangorosa mig alegre. Regal de les gotes que cauen, seguides, sobre els camps que les esperaven, preparats per l'home. Els sembrats s'aviven, arriba la humitat a les arrels més pregones —tanta munió d'arbres la necessitava!—, creix el dipòsit subterrani, l'aigua filtrada empeny totes les parets de les coves ocultes, cerca el negre i llarg camí que assoleix la llum, munta al doll ben rebut de tot l'any. La gent, esperant sempre la pluja, sap quins vents poden portar el do líquid i quins allunyar-lo; fins i tot hi matisa la generositat de l'obsequi. El cel és oberta lliça de forces contràries, i del resultat de la contesa en caurà la sort o la desgràcia. El dau finalment aturat mostrarà la cara de l'aigua, menys probable, o una de les cares de la sovellada. «El mestral» —el blau i llustrós mestral— «és el raspall del cel», s'enduu tot vestigi de boira o núvol. No cal esperar-ne sinó sequedat i transparència a la terra, pures blavors al cel. Sol ploure, en canvi, de llevant, i més de gregal. D'aquest punt principalment arriben les llargues pluges, les pluges persistents i

and shapely, wandering through the blue. Then, occasionally, tall shadows pile up and the day darkens. Anxious eyes look up at the vague promise. But the clouds are dispersed by adverse winds and, once again, there is just the uncluttered space, with its luminous indifference. When the rain does come, it tends to start without preamble. Either with a sudden deafening rage or else in a continuous ration, half languid, half animated. A gift of falling drops, going on and on, falling on the waiting fields made ready by man. The crops revive. The moisture reaches the deepest roots – the roots of a host of thirsty trees! The underground reservoir grows: the water filters down and thrusts its way past all the walls of the hidden caves; it seeks out the long dark passage that leads back up to the light, where, gushing out, it is welcomed all through the year. People, always anxious for rain, know which winds may bring the liquid gift and which will take it away from them; they even subtly classify the generosity of the gift. The sky is an open combat between opposing forces and on the outcome of the contest rests fortune or failure. When the die stops rolling, its rainy face may be revealed or, more likely, one of its sunny faces. “The north-west wind goes by,” – the bright blue *mestral* – “sweeping the sky.” It carries away every trace of mist and cloud. Nothing can be expected from it but transparent dryness on the earth and pure blue skies. It does

fredes de la tardor i de l'hivern. Una altra opinió, sustentada pel refrany, diu que «el que el gregal mou, la tramuntana ho plou». No sempre és així. També és sabut que «de ponent no corre torrent». No, no és fàcil, amb aquest vent, que la pluja sobrera, la que la terra no té temps de beure's, hi corri per damunt, convergeixi, roja, en la fúria del torrent; però pot dar-se el cas, «i si corre, corre valent». «De llebeig, aigua veig», diu l'agricultor de llarga experiència; i si és eivissenc, per més desenganyat, completa el presagi amb el dubte: «aigua veig, aigua no veig». I encara menys en veurà d'altres vents, perquè els refranys, tan saberuts, no en diuen res, ni tan sols els anomenen, pel que fa a la pluja. No parlem de la neu, tan rara a l'illa, tan ràpidament fosa si algun any, entre molts, en cauen uns borrallons. Seria —la rima és obligada i la veritat evident —«any de Déu». Estiguem-li agraïts si ve la pluja en abundor, puix que ja és sabut que «quan Déu vol, de qualsevol vent plou». Però pot mancar una anyada, i encara no arribar la següent, en la quantitat necessària. I tant de bo si les pluges, escasses, vénen a temps, com enguany. La collita no ha estat dolenta, car ha begut a ragets curts, però en moments decisius; fins i tot hi ha hagut un bell esplet d'ordi. Però la frescada

tend to rain, on the other hand, when the wind is from the east, especially the north-east. From this direction come most of the prolonged rainfalls, the persistent cold rains of autumn and winter. Another point of view backed up by a proverb claims that “The north wind rains what the north-easterly retains,” but it is not always so. It is also well-known that “When the west wind comes by, the torrent stays dry”. It is certainly not common for this wind to bring a surplus of rain that the earth has no time to absorb and which rushes across it to converge, redly, in the fury of the torrent; but it can happen: “...and if it doesn't stay dry, the torrent will fly!” “From the south-west quarter, I see water,” says the farmer of long experience; but if he is Eivissenc, with fewer illusions, he finishes the maxim with due caution: “...now I do; now I don't.” And he sees even less in the winds from other quarters, because the proverbs, in all their wisdom, have nothing to say about them; nor are they even mentioned, as far as rain is concerned. Likewise, we have little to say about snow: so rare on the island and so rapidly thawed when, one year in many, a few flakes do happen to fall. Such a year would be – the rhyme is inevitable and its truth evident – “a year of God”. [*Any de neu, any de Déu!*] Let us thank him if rain comes in abundance, because it is well known that: “When God wills it, the water comes from any quarter.” It can be missing a whole year through, however, and

haurà arribat amb penes a les arrels dels arbres, i encara més en pateixen les fonts i les aigües pregones de sínies i molins.

No; el que és el torrent de Sant Miquel no baixa cofoi com altres estius. Els recs que alimenta corren minsos i fatigats. Hom aprofita fins la darrera gota que neix a l'Assut, dins un borboll d'arenas, o que brolla de l'enclotada font d'es Tur, amb una embranzida debilitada, entre roques on s'amaga la falzia. El torrent té el curs interromput en molts de trets, tota l'aigua girada cap a l'exigència dels horts. I amb tot, mireu aquestes feixes, aquesta procurada ufana. Difícil verdor! Decididament, Eivissa és l'illa de la verdor alçada amb un secret i desesperat esforç de la terra. El resultat d'aquest deler pregon, ajudat per l'home, aconseguit enfront d'un cel desinteressat, es refugia, en arribar l'estiu, als puigs vestits de bosc, a l'arbreda abundosa del pla, a l'hortada gran o petita que s'escampa per nombrosos indrets. Mireu aquests regadius esponerosos de Balansat. Verda, prometedora riquesa! No sabem, enguany, si es podrà regar tot l'estiu. Esperem, sobretot, que l'any vinent sigui de pluges més propícies. Mentrestant, davant la terra seca,

it may still be insufficient the next year. And it is so much better when the scarce rains come at the right time, as they have this year. The crops have not been bad, because they have been able to drink at critical moments, though only in brief mouthfuls: when all is said and done, the harvest of barley has been a fine one. But the moisture will barely have reached the roots of the trees. And the springs and the deep waters of the waterwheels and windmills are suffering even more.

No, indeed, the Sant Miquel stream no longer flows with the pride of other summers. The watering channels that it feeds have been reduced to a tired trickle. Good use is being made of every last drop of water that rises by the sluice gate (*l'Assut*), bubbling up from the sands, or that which still attempts to spurt out from a rocky hideaway of maidenhair ferns, in the hollow of Tur's spring. The course of the stream is interrupted at frequent intervals, with all the water being diverted to the needs of the horticultural orchards. And, after all, just look at these terraces, this nurtured luxuriance. Difficult greenery! Decidedly, Eivissa is the island of greenery raised with a secret and desperate effort of the earth. The product of this deep longing, achieved with the help of man and in the face of an indifferent sky, takes refuge, when the summer arrives, in the woods which clothe the hillsides, in the many trees planted in

necessitada, tenim al cor una estranya angúnia, el sentim assedegat, talment un terròs eixut i polsós dels camps, a ple sol.

the plain and in the large or small irrigated areas, scattered here and there. Just look at these lush irrigated terraces of Balansat. A green treasure, full of promise! We do not know, this year, whether we can go on watering right through the summer. We fervently hope that next year the rains will fall more favourably. Meanwhile, when we see the earth begging for water, we feel a strange distress in our heart: we feel that it too is thirsty, like a dusty dry clod of soil in the open fields, in the full sun.

## EL PORT

*Olors de mar vetllada per clars estius.*  
Salvador Espriu

El torrent ja no salta; ha deixat allà dalt el Pla Roig, s'ha esmunyit entre els puigs. L'església es veu aixecada i llunya, al capdamunt del pinar. El reguerol d'aigua ja no corre encaixonat, sinó superficial i lent. Té davant una esplanada, amb serres a cada costat. Del fons obert arriba l'airet de la mar. El torrent es degué trobar indecís del seu camí, ja no assenyalat imperiosament. Va fer, sempre molt modest, una ampla corba pel camp, assolí el soral de la cala. Ara, a l'estiu, és finalment un solc eixut entre els horts. Tanmateix, els baladres i tota una espessa vegetació acompanyen un record d'aigua esvaïda. Ginebres, savines, joncars. Trepitgem còdols rodons, arena, herbes que l'ona portà, ja resseques. En un cantó, un bassalot final, separat de l'aigua salada per una barra. Som al port de Sant Miquel.

## THE PORT

Aromas of a sea watched over by bright summers.  
Salvador Espriu

The stream leaps no longer; from the heights of the Pla Roig, it has slipped away down between the hills. Looking back, we can still see the church in the distance, up above the pine woods. The water no longer rushes between narrow banks. It is shallow and slow moving, as the steep-sided valley flattens out ahead and a sea breeze comes to meet us from the inlet. Its route no longer dictated, the stream must have wondered where to go next. With due modesty, it meandered around a wide curve to reach the sands of the cove. And, today, at the height of summer, it finishes in a dried-up furrow between the terraces. Even so, oleanders and a whole mass of thick vegetation continue to remind us of the vanished water. Junipers, savines and reed beds. And then we are treading on rounded pebbles, sand, and dried seagrasses left by the waves. We pass by a final pool, separated by a sandbar from the salt water of the sea. We are at the port of Sant Miquel.

Solellada de juliol damunt l'aigua de mar neta i redossada, damunt els penyals que la mig cenyeixen, damunt les pinedes que ens acompanyen entorn, damunt la casa emblanquinada que es dreça a la vorera, amb els seus pallers, última manifestació pagesívola en dret de la mar que comença. Els treballs extrems de l'home ja són unes vies de fustes llimades i amarades, per on treuen els llaüts a la mar: uns petits escars que acaben en una enramada o en una construcció de pedra, sota les quals reposen les embarcacions. Els llaütets són cinc o sis, i els propietaris alternen la pesca amb altres oficis, l'agricultura principalment. Idèntica mà aguanta el mantí de l'arada i mou el rem. Les soltes són recollides pel mateix que aplega les gavelles. A certes hores es veuen aquests homes a la platja. De vegades tenyeixen les xarxes o s'ocupen en alguna altra feina. Soledat. La naturalesa s'imposa sobre l'home. L'embarcació s'acosta o se'n va, petita entre les ones; ha desaparegut darrera les roques. Com que som al temps de la calor, tal vegada podem veure, mentre dura la tarda, uns nois que es banyen devers un extrem de la platja. A la matinada sol arribar el peix. Si hom anuncia que el posa a la venda, al port o pels camins, s'alça el so llarg del corn, com un bruel continuat. Fer brular un corn, diem a Eivissa. La mà dura i greixosa

July sunshine on the clear water of the sea in the sheltered inlet, on the semicircle of cliffs behind, on the surrounding pines and on the whitewashed house that stands near the shore, with its small rounded haystacks, the last signs of farming before the sea takes over. But the very last works of man are some slipways, used for small wooden fishing boats, called *llaüts*. Made of polished lengths of wood, cured in salt water, the slipways lead up to a rough covering of branches or a stone boathouse. There are five or six *llaüts* in all, and their owners alternate fishing with other occupations, mainly farming. The same hands wield the oars and steady the plough. The nets are gathered in by the same men who bind up the sheaves. At certain times of day, these men can be seen on the beach. They may be dyeing the nets or performing some other task. Solitude. Nature imposing itself on man. A boat is approaching or going out to sea, bobbing among the waves, and now it has disappeared behind the rocks. As it is the hottest part of the year, we may be able to see a handful of children bathing at one end of the beach, for as long as the afternoon lasts. The fish, on the other hand, normally arrives first thing in the morning. When there is fish for sale, either at the port or by the roadside, it is announced by the prolonged sound of a conch, like a continuous roar. On Eivissa, we say *Fer brular un corn* (“to make a conch bellow”). The rough, greasy hand of the

dels pescadors l'aguanta per la concavitat llisa, nacrada; les galtes s'inflen, i el bruel o brul se sent de molt lluny, escampa un pàl·lid reflex de mitologia.

D'aquesta cala extensa que una mena de península —l'illa d'es Bosc— cuida tancar, que s'endinsa entre penyes i acaba a la corba remorosa de la platja, se'n diu el port de Sant Miquel o de Balansat. A la sortida, coronant un morrot, s'enfila una vella torre de defensa: la torre d'es Molar. La rodona talaia roman ara pacífica i abandonada. Ja no avisa de perills de moros. Contempla l'extensió de la mar i veu, ara i adés, fumarelles que creuen lluny, vaixells de formes rares, que no són del seu temps. Només la mar és la mateixa, amb les seves calmes immenses i les tempestes que rompen al peu del penya-segat, mogudes per vents que coneix bé, antics companys rondinaires. Sempre la torre davant gregals i tramuntanes, esmolada i ferma. Si es gira cap a dins la cala, veu una aigua transparent, blava o verda, que en certs moments pot encalmar-se com un mirall. Enfora, cap a llevant i cap a ponent, s'encarcaren alterosos espadats, sòlida muralla de rocams, amb taques grogues, grises, vermelles. El pins, a dalt, guaiten retorts. Som a la costa nord de l'illa, tota de cingles elevats.

fisherman supports it by its smooth pearly concavity; his cheeks puff out and the roar or bellow can be heard in the far distance, spreading with it a faint aura of mythology.

The Port of Sant Miquel – or the Port of Balansat – is the name given to this large cove, which is protected by a peninsula of sorts, the Illa des Bosc – the “Wooded Island” – and which forms an inlet among the cliffs, ending in the noisy curve of the beach. High above the port’s exit, crowning a promontory, there is an old defensive tower: the Torre des Molar. The round watchtower is now abandoned and peaceful. It no longer warns of Moorish threats. It contemplates the open sea and watches, now and then, the terns wheeling in the distance and the strange shapes of the ships of a different era. Only the sea remains the same, with its immense calms or huge waves that break at the foot of the cliffs, brought by the winds that are the sea’s long-standing, cantankerous companions. Always the tower, scoured clean, but firm in the face of north-easterly and northerly gales. Looking back into the cove, there is clear water, blue or green, which at times may be as smooth as a mirror. Outside, to the east and to the west, there is a solid rocky battlement of high cliffs, with patches of yellow, grey and red. On the top, twisted pines are standing guard. We are on the north coast of the island, cliff-bound for almost its entire length.



Però encara per dos altres llocs, sense sortir de Sant Miquel, l'home pot posar-se en contacte fàcil amb la mar. A llevant no és gaire lluny el port de Benirràs, on desemboca una altra canalada que va baixant entre serres. Enmig d'aquesta bella cala sorgeix, impensat, un illot erecte, una alta roca que té per nom es Cap Bernat. També alguns llaüts tenen a la platja el seu refugi. L'estiu i el silenci pesen ara damunt aqueixos paratges. La geologia, impressionant, esdevé solitària; la mar eixampla enllà el seu desert recorregut d'una inquietud menuda. A Rubió, cap a ponent, ja no hi ha cala. La costa, després de girar la imponent punta de sa Creu, és un espadat seguit. Es succeixen els penya-segats de noms a bastament expressius: sa Penya Roja, es Cingles. Alguns perillosos senders davallen fins a mar, com a Na Xemena. Tan sols a's Portitxol els penyals cedeixen el pas a un breu recer. És el cau dels pescadors de Rubió: un petit refugi sota les penyes. Damunt, molt alta pel puig, la font d'es Margaió, d'aigua puríssima i fresca, evoca entre aquests camperols un atur de cacera, un lloc de repòs i d'esbargiment, amb el prestigi de copioses dinades. La costa continua abrupta cap als penjalls d'Aubarca i de Corona. La mar creix, immensa, contemplada des

Nevertheless, there are two more places where the sea may be easily reached within the boundaries of Sant Miquel. To the east, the port of Benirràs is not far away, at the mouth of another terraced valley which slopes down through the ridges of hills. In the middle of this beautiful cove there emerges from the sea, unexpectedly, a tall rock pinnacle known as Cap Bernat. In addition, a few fishing boats find shelter on the beach. Summer and silence now dominate these parts. The impressive geology becomes lonely; beyond it stretches the broad restless desert of the sea. To the west, at Rubió, there are no longer any coves. The coastline, after going around the imposing point of Sa Creu, is a continuous wall of rock. The cliffs that follow on, one after another, bear appropriate names: the Penya Roja ("Red Cliff") and the Cingles ("Crag"). There are a few perilous footpaths which climb down to the sea, as at Na Xemena. But only when we reach Portitxol is the line of cliffs briefly broken, providing the second point of access to the shore. This is the hiding-place of the fishermen of Rubió: a small haven under the precipices. Above it, way up on the hillside, the spring of Es Margaió, with its very pure, cool water, evokes for these country people a pause in the hunt or a place of rest and diversion, often chosen for copious picnics. The sheer coastline goes on again towards the cliffs of Aubarca and Corona. The sea grows immense, contemplated

d'aquests cims; sembla que s'aixequi l'horitzó d'un blau pàl·lid; lentes ones moren a baix. Ja no som davant l'idil·li i la pau. Si hi ha pau, ha restat aturada en un gest imponent i desesperat. És un repòs d'enorme animal mort, les sacsejades del qual devien ser terribles. Ja l'home és insignificant damunt la carena que consent el seu peu amb indiferència. No pesa damunt la roca, com no hi pesen l'arbre ni l'atzur.

Amb tot, aquesta soledat geològica, almenys al redòs acollidor del port de Balansat, té així mateix la seva festa. Cau, naturalment, a l'estiu, quan la mar es fa més amiga de la terra, quan l'home busca la seva fresca companyia. Estiu i mar tenen una intimitat al nostre pensament. I a Eivissa aquesta unió amb la mar estival es manifesta, sobretot, el dia de sant Cristòfol. Vella festa de l'aigua, en què sembla que l'home celebri el seu encontre anual amb l'aigua accessible i propícia de l'estiu. A Vila era dia d'esquitxos, de bàrbars mullenes. Hom no distingia entre aigua dolça i salada; ambdues servien per a l'alegria i les bromes, molt sovint excessives. A fora, les famílies acudeixen a unes platges determinades, les més properes per a cada redol. Una de les platges escollides és la del port de Sant

from these cliff tops; it seems that the pale-blue horizon rises, while slow waves die far below us. No longer do we have a peaceful idyll before us. If there is peace at all, it has come to a halt in a compelling, desperate gesture. It is the repose of an enormous dead animal, whose agony must have been terrible. Man is now insignificant on the ridge that chooses to ignore his footsteps. He makes no impression on the rock, and nor do the trees and the azure sky.

This geological solitude, however, has its very own festival, at least in the friendly refuge of the port of Balansat. It takes place, naturally enough, in the summer, when the sea becomes more of a friend to the earth and when man seeks out its cool company. Summer and sea share an intimate place in our thoughts. And in Eivissa this affinity with the sea of summer is apparent, above all, on St. Christopher's day: the ancient water festival, in which it seems that man celebrates his annual meeting with the accessible and propitious water of summer. In the town it was a day of splashings and barbarous soakings. No distinction was made between salt water and fresh water: both served for the fun and practical jokes, very often excessive. In the country, families gathered on certain beaches, the most convenient ones for each area. One of the chosen beaches is that of the port of Sant Miquel. People make their

Miquel. Hom hi va a peu o en carro, i, tot i això, la geografia resulta massa gran per a la gentada. Sobra platja, sobren penyes; manquen únicament, ran de l'aigua, les bones ombres. La més avinent és la d'unes figueres, en uns bancals al peu del puig. Allí s'instal·len les famílies. És platxèria de tot el dia i, per tant, de dinar succulent, allí mateix preparat. D'unes pedres fumades surten els fornells; per a la llenya basta anar al bosc, a la vora. S'han dut els estris necessaris, i amb ells les provisions, no mancant-hi pollastres ni conills. Hi ha qui compta amb el peix, agafat aquella nit, arribat, fresquíssim, al matí: peix gustós, de roca. Hom ha procurat, punt molt important, que no hi escassegi el vi. Ara ja els uns es podran dedicar al passeig, al bany, a la pesca, mentre els altres s'encarreguen de la cuina. A la ciutat la festa semblaria poc espessa, excessivament oberta i perduda entre el paisatge. Ací la gent no està avesada a les grans aglomeracions. La diversió, encara que popular, és més solitària. Es passegen els llaüts, carregats d'improvisats mariners. Hi ha els festeigs, les parelles amoroses que es mostren indiferents a allò que passa al seu entorn; que somriuen, de vegades, dedicant-se mútuament el somris provocat pel fet extern. I abunden els al·lots, es nota sobretot la

way there on foot or by cart, but, even so, the local geography dwarfs the crowd. There is more than enough beach and there are too many high cliffs; the only things lacking are good shady spots at the water's edge. The closest to hand are those of some fig trees on the terraces at the foot of the hill. There, the families install themselves for a whole day of relaxation and, accordingly, of succulent midday meals, prepared right there and then. Smoke-blackened stones become stoves; the nearby woods provide fuel for the fires. The necessary household items have all been brought, along with the provisions, not forgetting the chickens and rabbits. There are some who have fish, tasty rockfish, caught during the night and still perfectly fresh in the morning. Due attention has been given to a most important point: that there should be no shortage of wine. By now some will be strolling, bathing or fishing, while the rest take charge of the cooking. The townspeople would consider this celebration to be too sparse, too open and lost in the scenery. But here people are not accustomed to large crowds. Their recreation, even at popular gatherings, is enjoyed more separately. The fishing boats meander about, laden with improvised sailors. There are courting couples: the loving pairs who show indifference to all that happens around them but who smile sometimes, dedicating to each other alone the smiles provoked by external

presència dels al·lots, que criden, juguen, ploren, envesteixen les altres persones; poc vigilats, lliures, i de tant en tant estranyament aturats i vacants, sense un objectiu immediat. Tota aquesta dispersió es recull a l'hora de dinar, tan important en aquesta classe de diversions. Ningú no ha volgut quedar més malament que el veí, quant a excel·lències alimentàries. Hom menja amb gana, però encara és més el menjar que el desig. I els glops de vi, repetits una vegada i una altra, acompanyen la cullerada d'arròs o l'aleró de pollastre. El plaer neix d'allò que no es pot tenir els altres dies: de les llargues hores sense feina, del menjar saborós i abundant, del vi liberalment buidat. El vi fa parlar més i més fort. La rialla acudeix fàcil a la boca. Els ulls són encesos, lluents, entre el vi i la solellada. Sempre hi ha algú que ha begut una mica massa. Oh, deixeu-lo anar! Ell es diverteix i fa divertir. Calor, amb brises mediterrànies. Mosques insistents, que sovint no intenteu fer fugir, a les mans, a la cara. La frase, molts de cops, ja no és intencionada, és procaç. La diversió és al fons de cada cor solitari, oculta rera l'aspecte congestionat o el gest insegur d'embriaguesa. Tota la tarda dura el traüt, amb buidors sobtades de cansament. Ajuda a l'alegria el ball, ball pagès. El tambor persistent

events. And children abound. Their presence above all captures our attention: shouting, playing, crying and bumping into other people. They are quite free from control, but are subject from time to time to strange and vacant pauses, lacking any immediate purpose. All this scattered activity comes together at lunch time, so central to this kind of diversion. No one has wanted to be outdone by his neighbour in terms of culinary excellences. They eat with enjoyment but, even so, the meal is greater than their appetite. And swigs of wine, over and over again, accompany the spoonful of rice or the chicken wing. Their pleasure is born out of those things that are not possible on other days: long hours without working, abundant and tasty food, and wine freely flowing. The wine makes voices grow louder and louder. Laughter comes readily to mouths. Eyes are alight and shining, from the wine and sun. There is always someone who has drunk a little too much. So what? ...Let it go! He is amusing himself and others. Heat, with Mediterranean breezes. Persistent flies, which are often left undisturbed on hands and faces. Very often, the careful speech gives way to ribaldry. There is amusement in the depths of each solitary heart, hidden behind the flushed cheeks or the insecure gestures of drunkenness. All afternoon the activity goes on, interspersed with sudden bouts of sleepiness. The revelry is enlivened by peasant dancing: *ball pagès*. The

marca el ritme de la festa camperola. La gent s'arremolina. Entremig, s'alcen els caps dels balladors, saltant a compàs. Un balla amb les castanyoles i, voltat de l'estrepitosa música que ell mateix es procura, té una viril, indubtable grandesa. L'al·lota, ritualment seriosa, gira amb les seves passes menudes i seguides; tota la dansa és l'actitud hieràtica i aquest acompassat fregadís de les espadnyes de pita, que traspunten sota la llarga gonella. Sentiu crits. I si hi ha una baralla, els cops, les paraules, la intervenció dels amics, donen una nota dramàtica, dura, avarament recollida pels espectadors. És allò que demà comentaran, allò que reconstruiran amb tots els detalls i ocults motius i intencions. Compararan forces, coratge, i amb aquesta ocasió seran recordats fets semblants, altres proeses dels mateixos cercabregues o de gent més vella, igualment baralladissa.

Però demà el port serà de bell nou solitari i quotidià. Una ona, una altra ona, una de més forta. Les barques reposen. Un corn damunt una coberta. Bellesa desolada d'aquestes cales entre penyals, tramuntana de l'illa!

persistent drum taps out the rhythm of the rural feast day. People mill around. In the middle, the heads of the dancers bob up and down, as they leap in time to the music. The man dances holding large castanets and – surrounded by his own boisterous music – he has an unquestionable virile grandeur. The girl, ritually solemn, performs turns with small continuous steps: her whole dance is this hieratic attitude and this compassed shuffling of pita sandals, which peek out from under her long dress. Shouts can be heard. And if it is a quarrel, the blows, the words and the intervention of friends add a harsh note of drama, avariciously taken in by the spectators. That is what they will talk about tomorrow and reconstruct with all the details, hidden motives and intentions. They will compare strengths and courage, and along with this one they will recall other similar events, other exploits of the same troublemakers or of older people, no less quarrelsome.

But tomorrow the port will return to its lonely daily routine. One wave, another wave and then a stronger one. Boats at rest. A conch lying on one of the decks. The desolate beauty of these coves among high cliffs: the north side of the island!

## NOTÍCIES DEL POBLE

*Porque en amor locura es lo sensato.*

Antonio Machado

El mercat i els seus voltants, amb tots els fruits multicolors de l'estiu, amb totes les mostres més o menys ben presentades. Durant les hores matinals aquests carrers de la capital de l'illa són vius d'un bellugueig de gent. Importància i manifestació del comerç. Les paraules, els gestos, les mirades fan referència a exhibicions, a oferiments, a refusos, a adquisicions. Cistells, paquets, mercaderies variades. Exposició d'hortalisses, de sabates, de robes, de gerres i cànirs, de llamins. Hi ha el mercat de la carn i del peix —les cent formes i colors del peix damunt la pedra humida—, amb el rotllo de taules i el patiet central, i el mercat per a fruites i verdures, de columnata neoclàssica, obert, amb taques d'ombra i sol, a la plaça principal. I hi

## NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE

Because, when in love, it is wise to be mad.

Antonio Machado

The market and its surroundings, with all the multi-coloured fruits of summer and all the wares arranged to more or less advantage. In the morning these streets of the island capital are alive with a throng of people. Trade flaunting its importance. Words, looks and gestures all relate to displays, offers, refusals and purchases. Baskets, packages and goods of all kinds. Displays of vegetables, shoes, clothes, jugs, pitchers and confectionery. There is the meat and fish market – a hundred forms and colours of fish upon the damp slabs – with a small central area ringed around with tables; and the fruit and vegetable market, with neoclassical columns, open to the air, with patches of sunlight and shade, in the main square. And there are shops of different sizes, side by side, in the square and in the streets that lead away from it. Passers-by

ha botigues i botiguetes, una al costat de l'altra, a la plaça, als carrers que volten i als carrers que s'allunyen. Roden el transeünt ciutadà i el pagès que ve de fora a les seves compres, a les seves vendes. Uns coneguts es troben, se saluden o parlen una mica, se separen. Calor, solell untant el carrer i tot un costat de cases: blanques, grogues, vermelles. Pa, cordes, cordills, camises, pintures, joiells. La ferreteria, la tenda de comestibles, la merceria, la botiga amb pretensions de luxe. I cafès, petits cafès, ara quasi buits. Tot dins un espai reduït, on la gent va d'un lloc a l'altre, inquireix, s'allunya. Passa un carro, un cotxe, bicicletes. Un carrer ample, ja al final del barri comercial, on paren els camions de passatge, a l'altra banda del teatre i el banc. Aquí treballen: la fusteria, la ferreria, la sabateria. Cada obrador, cada establiment té la seva olor pròpia: de pa, de cuir, de vi, de fusta, de roba, de verdures. Una placeta. L'església. Al fons d'un carrer recte, els pals d'un vaixell: un petit veler. Més embarcacions, el moll, el port, tot de llum, amb les muntanyes calitjoses a l'altra vora. Darrera una cantonada us espera la frescor d'una lleugera brisa de llevant. Barriada mercantil i marinera, essencial d'aquesta ciutat. El comerç, la pesca, la navegació constitueixen un dels grans fonaments sobre els quals

from the town alternate with the peasants from outside who have come to buy and sell. Acquaintances meet, exchange greetings or chat for a while, before going on their way. Heat. And sun spreading over the street and all the houses on one side – white, yellow and red. Bread, rope, twine, shirts, paintings and jewellery. The ironmongery, the grocery, the haberdashery and the boutique with its pretensions of luxury. And cafés, little cafés, now almost empty. All this within a small area, where people go from place to place, make enquiries and go off again. A cart goes by, then a car and then bicycles. A wide street at the end of the commercial area, where the passenger vehicles stop, on the other side from the theatre and bank. Here, there is work being done: a carpentry shop, a forge and a shoemaker's. Each worker and every establishment have a smell of their own: of bread, leather, wine, wood, clothing or vegetables. A small square. The church. At the end of a straight street, the masts of a vessel: a small sailing ship. More boats, the quayside and the port, all in sunlight, with hazy mountains on the other side of the water. Around a corner there awaits you the freshness of a light easterly breeze. The mercantile and marine quarter, an essential part of this small city. Commerce, fishing and navigation constitute one of the main foundations on which the old urban centre rests. The other fundamental element is

reposa el vell centre urbà. L'altre element fonamental és més amagat, no s'exhibeix d'una fàisó tan llampant, si més no en la vida diària. Espera les grans ocasions, les solemnitats, els actes, les processons. És l'Eivissa oficial: caire administratiu, judicial, cultural, eclesiàstic, al qual podríem ajuntar el de les professions liberals. Aquesta vida més silenciosa actua, en gran part, als seus edificis d'un barri més vell i elevat. Dalt Vila. Altes i sòlides murades, construcció completa, gegantina, que sembla despreciar les cases que té a baix i pesar damunt les més pròximes. Poderosos baluards, tapareres entre les pedres antigues. La defensiva sobrietat militar permet, de sobte, l'austera elegància clàssica d'un portal. La vila vella, amb placetes i carrerons populars, amb nobles carrers tranquils, comença la seva ascensió cap a l'alt replà de la Catedral i del Castell. Jardinets entre murs, per damunt els quals guaiten unes flors, l'esveltesa d'una palmera, un breu Getsemaní d'oliveres. Cada rost vençut, cada escala aconseguida, és una perspectiva nova de terrats inferiors, d'un tros de muralla, de carrers mariners, de la mar i les costes de l'illa. Emmarcats per la calç, apareixen una porta que dona a una entrada profunda, una finestra gòtica o renaixentista. Descrostats, un balcó caigut, una casa enrunada. Empedrats desiguals, ortigues. Des de la

more hidden, not so strikingly on view, at least in day-to-day life. It waits for the great occasions, solemnities, ceremonies and processions. It is the official Eivissa: its administrative, judicial, cultural and ecclesiastical aspects, to which we could add that of the liberal professions. This more discreet activity takes place, for the most part, in the buildings of an older, higher part of the town: Dalt Vila. A complete, gigantic construction with high solid walls, which seems to scorn the houses down below and to weigh heavily on those closest to it. Powerful bastions, with capers growing between the ancient stones. The austere and classic elegance of a portal briefly alleviates the defensive military sobriety. The old town with small squares and well frequented alleyways, and with quiet, noble streets, starts its ascent towards the small level space near the summit, where the Cathedral and the Castle stand. Small gardens within walls, over the top of which peer a few flowers, the slenderness of a palm tree, or a little Gethsemane of olive trees. Each slope conquered and each flight of steps surmounted yields a fresh perspective of lower roofs, a part of the walls, streets near the quayside, or the sea and coasts of the island. Within whitewashed frames, there appears a Gothic or Renaissance window, or a door that opens into a deep hallway. Flaking stone, a fallen balcony and a house in ruins. Uneven cobblestones and nettles. From the



fortificació, mirant cap a la mar lliure, us demaneu un record de naus enemigues: turques o angleses. Una església, damunt el penya-segat, amb cobertes de teula a nau i capelles. Més amunt, una altra esglésieta, blanca, de monges. Escales humides, escuts sobre les llindes. Dues torres medievals, al cim, amb voluntat d'altura, d'amples espais: una militar, desfigurada, esborrada per les restauracions; l'altra religiosa, el més pur vestigi d'un temple gòtic, després reconstruït, més endavant adaptat a les necessitats de la nova seu. Patis amb cornetes, clamors eixamplats de campanes. Per diferents miradors, allà baix, tot el port voltat pel verd dels horts; els illots de la seva boca; els freus que separen les dues illes; els camps meridionals de la major, camps eivissencs que dedicaren a sant Jordi, plans i quiets sota una llum espaiosa, que s'intensifica damunt les blanques salines.

Ciutat d'Eivissa, no tancada d'esguards, sempre abocada als camps o cap a la mar. Ací l'escriptor, ara passat de poeta a prosista, va obrir els ulls ja fa anys —semblen tan llunyans alguns records!—, i encara els manté oberts amb expectant admiració davant el seu paisatge. Ací escolta veus d'amics, que puguen, com ell, del fons de l'oblit. Aquest és el seu medi: un putget allargat al sud de l'illa, un

fortifications, looking out at the open sea, you cannot help but remember the ships of the enemies: Turkish or English. A church above the cliffs, with tiled roofs over the nave and chapels. Higher up, the small white church of the nuns. Damp stairways with coats-of-arms over the lintels. Two medieval towers crown the hill, competing for height and space: one is military, disfigured and effaced by restorations; while the other is religious, the merest vestige of a Gothic temple, reconstructed later on and then adapted to the requirements of a new island bishopric. Courtyards with cornets or swelling clamours of bells. From the different viewpoints you can see, down below, the whole port surrounded by the greenness of irrigated horticulture; the islets at its mouth; the straits which separate the two islands; and on Eivissa – the larger one – the southern fields dedicated to Saint George, which are flat and still under a spacious light, intensifying over the white salt lagoons.

City of Eivissa, not hidden from the gaze, always overlooking the fields or the sea. Here the author, a poet now writing prose, first opened his eyes years ago – some memories seem so far away! – and he still keeps them open in expectant admiration of this scenery. He hears the voices of friends who re-emerge, like him, from the depths of oblivion. This is his

dels seus vessants cap al port, tot revestit d'edificacions, tot remorós de gent, la nua pedra traspuntant impensadament pel carrer, davall la sabata; l'altre vessant de roca solitària i menudes herbes aromàtiques, que van florint una darrera l'altra. Ara, a l'agost, ja s'han assecat les flors de frígola i han badat les de tomaní. El turó s'estén cap a ponent, coronat d'envellits molins sense vela, sempre amb la mar al peu de la roca. Fresques brises desvagades passen entre els molins eixalats; duen, al límit inferior, petites ones que es fonen entre les pedres i tot just empenyen, com en un joc, els nedadors de pell bruna, el jovent devot de l'aigua. ¿Què escolliríem com a més característic d'aquest variat paisatge que volta la península urbana, diferent des de cada cantó de murada, des de cada un dels set baluards? ¿Els molls i les seves embarcacions —els bells bastiments en què s'ha afinat una necessitat humana—, o l'amarga roca que s'esbalça damunt la mar oberta, o l'horta d'espessa verdor, o aquest molinar derrotat, alçat costa amunt, amb declivis d'oliveres negreses i retortes, i entremig, pel roquissar ressec, l'excavat de tombes púniques, cent voltes devastades, ja amb l'entranya badada? Ah, el passeig solitari, entre mar i terra, per aquesta cresta de molins, voltats d'estiu esbatanat i de silencis!

home environment: a small, elongated hill in the south of the island. One of its sides, facing the port, is full of buildings and the bustle of people, with naked stone unexpectedly appearing underfoot in the street. On the other side are solitary cliff-tops with small aromatic shrubs, flowering one after another. Now, in August, the thyme flowers have shrivelled up and the lavender flowers have opened. The hill extends towards the west, crowned by old windmills without sails, with the sea always at the foot of the cliffs. Lazy, cool breezes pass between the wingless mills; they produce little waves on the shore below, which melt away between the stones and lightly, playfully jostle against the brown-skinned swimmers, the young acolytes of the water. What should we choose as the most characteristic feature of this varied scenery that surrounds the town's peninsula, different from every corner of the walls and from each one of the seven bastions? Should it be the docks and their boats, the elegant craft into which a human necessity has been refined; or the sour rock which drops down to the open sea; or the irrigated fields of dense greenery; or this defeated group of windmills, climbing up the ridge, with hollows containing dark, contorted olive trees, and amongst them, in the parched rock, the chambers of Punic tombs, vandalised a hundred times, with their innermost parts already opened up? Ah, to walk

I un dia —ja en fa més de trenta que hem deixat Sant Miquel—, notícies del poble. ¿Què era adés Sant Miquel per a nosaltres, submergits de nou dins un ambient familiar, que ens circueix estrenyent-nos, que creix i ens agafa des de dins? Una vegada més, la ràpida visió interior, amb un somrí somiós, d'uns camps, unes cases, uns al·lotets, uns amics. Bellesa amorosament reconeguda, plaent quietud, treball profitós, unes veus antigues i germanes. La planta no tria la terra on arrelar, però de vegades les arrels deuen enfonsar-s'hi amb una íntima complaença. És un amic el qui em duu el record i les noves d'una terra ben bé escollida dins la fatalitat de moltes de les nostres passes.

L'amic és alt, sec, de dures mans de terrassà, de diserta paraula. Sent el gust de parlar. El temps no compta massa, dins la lentitud dels camps, i són llargues les hores de feina i solitud. La conversació és un plaer que hom allarga de bon grat, en tenir-ne l'avinentesa. És un discurs que es prolonga sense por de detalls, amb una certa cantarella, però viu en totes les seves parts i incidències. Hi ha també la llengua, la vella llengua eivissenca, que es desplega harmoniosa i acolorida davant el nostre amor, com desplega el mar les seves

alone, between the sea and the earth, along this crest of windmills, surrounded by silences and the wide-eyed summer!

And one day – it is already more than thirty days since we left Sant Miquel – there is news from the village. What did Sant Miquel mean to us just then, submerged again in familiar surroundings, which squeeze us in their embrace and which grow and hold us from within? Once more, we have a brief internal vision, with a dreamy smile, of some fields, houses, children and friends. Beauty lovingly acknowledged, pleasing quietness, fruitful labour and a few ancient and kindred voices. A plant does not choose where to take root but there must be times when it sinks its roots down with an intimate compliance. A friend has brought me the memory and the news of a place very well chosen from among the haphazard destinations of our many footsteps.

My friend is tall and lean, with the rough hands of a land worker, and well-spoken. He enjoys talking. Time does not matter much in the slowness of the fields, with the long hours spent working alone. Conversation is a pleasure which one stretches out contentedly whenever the chance arises. It is a discussion that is prolonged without fear of details, with some

ones. Dipòsit profund, fons comú de la parla tradicional, i ara, gronxat en un accent baronívol, el som oneig que romp a les nostres arenes. ¿Què conta el minuciós i expressiu interlocutor? Etern interès de tota història novel·lesca i amorosa! El cas ja haurà estat comentat i esgotat per tot el poble; ara només arriben ací les últimes escumes. L'assumpte és, breument, un rapté; o, des d'un altre punt de vista, i per dir-ho amb el mot tècnic eivissenc, una fuita. Coneixíem quasi tots els protagonistes d'aquesta novel·leta verbal. De la seva narració l'amic de Sant Miquel en fa gairebé un gènere literari. El mot acudeix decidit i exacte, la trama es va arrodonint. No manca alguna exclamació, de vegades sense els tradicionals eufemismes. Literatura parlada, d'un home que ignora què és literatura. Si sap llegir, no n'aprenué per dedicar-se a la lectura de novel·les. Però aquesta gent ama les de la realitat i sap contar-les amb precisos detalls, amb imatges aclaridores i saboroses. Ara és evocat el raptor, personatge que no coneixíem. Les seves relacions amb l'al·lota eren amagades i difícils. Sols una mirada, alguna carteta. Car la noia tenia un xicot, estava promesa. Composició i exigència familiar, altrament. Es tractava de sumar dues propietats, d'unir la donzelle hereva amb un hereuet anomenat. És

redundancy, but animated at all times and whatever the topic. There is also the language, the ancient Eivissenc tongue, which unfolds itself harmoniously and colourfully to our admiration, as the sea unfurls its waves. A rich store, a common fund of traditional speech, and now, lingeringly delivered in manly tones, a shallow swell that breaks on our sands. What is the expressive and meticulous speaker talking about? The eternal theme of every fictional and romantic story! The topic will already have been talked about and exhausted by the whole village; now only the last bits of froth are arriving here. The event in question is, in short, an “abduction”; or, from another point of view and giving it the technical Eivissenc name, a *fuita* (an elopement, literally a “flight”). We knew almost all the protagonists of this oral novelette. Our friend from Sant Miquel converts his narration almost into a literary genre. The flow of words is decided and well-chosen, and the plot goes on developing. No exclamation is lacking and he does not always resort to the traditional euphemisms. Oral literature, from a man who does not know what literature is. If he can read at all, he did not learn to read in order to spend his time on novels. But these people love real stories and they know how to recount them with exact details and with clear, spicy images. Now the abductor is evoked, someone unknown to us personally. His

el cas, però, que les il·lusions i el cor inquiet de l'al·lota anaven per un altre caire. Quants la contemplaven amorosament, quants la pretenien! Un d'ells, resolut i ben plantat, fou l'escollit. Una nota romàntica és sempre ben rebuda pel poble. Alegrem-nos nosaltres també que una vegada més l'amor vencés —o s'esforcés a vèncer— el càlcul material. Sí, prenem partit pel fadrí airós i pobre, una mica eixelebrat. No ens costa gaire d'aplaudir generosament l'oculta determinació de l'al·lota, quasi una criatura. L'havien promesa amb un de la seva edat, massa joves. Voluntàriament raptada. Aquestes fuites es pot dir que són una institució eivissenca, sempre santificades al final pel matrimoni. Abunden els casos, per poca resistència familiar que es trobi. Sovint els poders han intentat lluitar contra aquest costum, amb èxit escàs. Darrerament han canviat les circumstàncies i potser es dona amb menys freqüència. ¿Quines notícies podien arribar de Sant Miquel? Un fet intranscendent, que surt una mica de la vida diària: vet aquí el que conta amb agudesia, complagut, l'amic camperol. Tot el seu cos l'acompanya en el discurs. Adesiara estreny les barres, clou els punys, tot ell es tensa com una ballesta. Es queixa de com acabaren els fets. Si hagués estat ell! Segons el seu parer, els interessats volgueren fer les

relationship with the girl was covert and difficult. Just an exchange of glances and an occasional brief letter. After all, the girl had a boyfriend: in fact, she was engaged. Moreover, it was a family arrangement and requirement. Two properties were to be joined in due course, by uniting the young virgin heiress with a similarly young male heir. It happens, however, that the unquiet heart of the girl led her to fancy another. What a lot of loving admirers she had, what a lot of suitors! One of them, handsome and resolute, was her choice. A romance always goes down well with the villagers. Let us join them in celebrating yet another victory – even if contrived – of love over material concerns. Yes, let us take sides with the rather reckless bachelor, poor but proud. It costs us nothing to applaud generously the hidden determination of the girl, a mere child. They had betrothed her to a boy of her own age, too young. Abduction by consent. These *fuites* are, we can say, an Eivissenc institution, always sanctified by marriage in the end. There are many cases, since there is usually little resistance from the family. The authorities have often tried to put a stop to this custom, but with little success. Lately, however, circumstances have changed and it may well be happening less often. What news could arrive from Sant Miquel? An event of marginal significance, which departs a little from the daily routine:

coses massa bé. Una fuga no demana sinó la parella sola, sense testimonis, i les ombres de la nit damunt els llargs i perdedors camins. Això obliga i convenç. Però no té cap força quan es fa d'una manera asèptica —ell no usà aquest mot, ben segur—, amb còmplices i a ple dia. Els pares, així, poden recuperar la filla, de la casa on fou dipositada, i el jove sofrir el pes, no massa feixuc, de la justícia. Oh terres de Balansat! Ara evocades des de l'absència, l'amor i la rebel·lia juvenívola encara poden donar-vos un escreix de bellesa.

such is the story that our rustic friend tells with such acuity and satisfaction. His whole body accompanies his discourse. Now and then he clenches his teeth or closes his fists: all of him is as taut as a bow. He grumbles about the outcome of the events. If only it had been him! His view is that the parties concerned wanted to do things too correctly. A *fuga* does not need anyone but the couple alone, without witnesses, among the shadows of the night on the long wandering byways. That is convincing and forces the issue. But the abduction has no weight when it is done in an aseptic fashion – he does not use this word, of course – with accomplices and in broad daylight. The parents, in this case, can recover their daughter from the house where she was deposited and the young man may suffer the weight – not very heavy – of justice. O land of Balansat! Evoked here and now, in our absence, your beauty can still be enhanced by love and youthful rebellion.

## SANTMIQUELADA

*...los días de fiesta.  
Estos son los mismos  
de nuestras madres viejas.*  
Federico García Lorca

El mes de setembre corre a les seves acaballes. S'acosta la festa del sant patró del poble i hom es prepara dignament per a l'alegria de la diada. Sant Miquel, des de l'altar major, amb gest triomfal —alta l'espasa simbòlica, el dimoni recargolat als seus peus que trepitgen els núvols—, acceptarà l'homenatge dels fidels. Com el vell arcàngel profanat, de barroca robustesa, la nova imatge escoltarà, sense cap estremiment a les boniques ales desplegadas, tot ensucrat el rostre, el sermó amb què un sacerdot, arribat per a la festa, exaltarà enfront d'ell, des de la

## MICHAELMAS DAY

*...the feast days.  
They at least  
are still those  
of our old mothers.*  
Federico García Lorca

The month of September is rapidly drawing to a close. It is nearly time for the *Festa* of the patron saint of the village and people are getting suitably ready for the celebration of the day. Saint Michael, in triumphant pose, will receive the homage of the faithful from the high altar – his symbolic sword held high with the contorted Devil at his feet, which are treading on clouds. Baroquely robust, like the former, profaned archangel, the new image will listen with sweet countenance and not the slightest quiver of its handsome outstretched wings to the sermon of the visiting priest in front of him, who is here for the feast day. From the pulpit surrounded by distracted ears, the

trona voltada d'orelles distretes, la victòria de Déu i el càstig de l'angèlic pecat. Després duran en processó pels rostos camins, una vegada més, aquesta imatge on s'immobilitza en un pas de ball la ràpida escomesa contra les rebel·lions de la sobergueria. Santmiquelada: així anomena el poble divertit la festa de la parròquia. Plàtica i processó, tavernes amb gent a vessar, abundosa dinada, el festeig per al jovent, el ball del vespre, a la nova manera. Cap a les darreries de setembre solen caure les primeres pluges. Sempre hi ha el perill que sigui el mateix dia de sant Miquel. La gent recorda els anys que ha plogut durant la festa o, almenys, dins la vigília expectant. Els xàfec alternen amb hores o dies d'un cel clar, meravellós. Els boscos agafen un color rentat que assenyala un temps nou, amb camps freqüentats pels llauradors, amunt i avall amb l'arada. Al sol encara fa calor, i la terra espera àvidament el regal de l'aigua copiosa. Enguany s'acosta sant Miquel amb les cisternes buides i els pous mig eixuts. Propera Santmiquelada! Nova passada de calç a les parets, vestits per estrenar doblegats a la caixa, primales ja escollides per a l'olla, cansada de l'austeritat dels quotidians llegums. Ja han estat collides les garroves i ametlles, però encara duren les figues

priest will exalt the victory of God and the chastisement of the fallen angel. Afterwards, this image, which captures in a dance step the swift attack against the rebellions of arrogance, will be carried once again in procession along the steep roads. The popular sobriquet for the parochial feast day is "Santmiquelada". Sermon and procession, people overflowing from taverns, plentiful midday meals, courtship for the young and dances in the new style in the evening. Towards the end of September, the first real rainfalls tend to arrive. There is always a danger that it will happen on the very day of St. Michael. People remember the years when it has rained during the *Festa* or, if not, then during the expectant build-up to it. The heavy showers alternate with hours or days of marvellous clear skies. The woods acquire a freshly-washed hue which heralds a new time of fields frequented by farmers, going up and down with the plough. It is still hot in the sun and the earth avidly awaits the gift of copious water. This year, we are approaching St. Michael's Day with empty cisterns and half-dry wells. Santmiquelada is almost here! A fresh coat of whitewash for the walls, new clothes folded up in the chest and ready to wear, young lambs or kids already chosen for the pot, wearied by the austere daily routine of vegetable stews. The carobs and almonds have already been collected, but there are still some Oriola figs on the trees. With hands still clasping the bill-hook



orioles. Amb el falcó de la verema a la mà i els peus rojos de la fonyada, l'any agrícola s'ha acabat, i el camperol, tanmateix resignat, espera que sigui millor el que ara comença.

Lleugeres pluges havien rentat la pols dels camins, però els camps, com malalts enfebrats als quals han prohibit beure, només havien sentit la humitat que una mà benèvola frega pels llavis ressecs. Dia de sant Miquel. A la nit encara han caigut dos breus ruixats, i el matí es desclou incert i fresc, visurat per molts d'ulls inquisidors. El sol fa la seva via darrera els nuvolats, que s'espesseixen cap a la tramuntana. Acudeixen alguns feligresos a la primera missa. Quan es troben dos coneguts, els comentaris s'han de referir al temps, a les poques paraules.

—Mirau com han adornat es Puig.

—S'ha de conèixer que és sa festa d'es poble.

—Enguany diu que hi haurà molta de gent.

—Si es temps s'aguanta així... Què trobau que farà?

of the wine harvest and feet reddened from treading the grapes, the farming year has come to an end and the country people, though resigned, are hoping that the year just starting may be better.

Scattered showers have damped down the dust of the tracks, but the fields, like feverish invalids who have been forbidden to drink, have barely responded to the moisture which a kindly hand brushes across their parched lips. St. Michael's Day. During the night there have been two more short downpours and the morning is starting off cool and uncertain, under the stern scrutiny of many eyes. The sun goes on its way behind the clouds, which are getting thicker in the north. A few faithful attend the first mass of the day. When two acquaintances meet, it cannot be long before the conversation turns to the weather.

“Look how they have decorated the church hill.”

“It has to be made clear that it's the village feast day.”

“This year, they say that there will be a lot of people.”

“If the weather gets no worse than this... What do you think it'll do?”

—Jo no ho sé, però sa gent es podria haver d'adesar.

La placeta alta i inclinada, efectivament, està arranjada per a la festa. Canyes i murta davant l'església, quatre banderetes i flocs de paper de casa a casa. És festa rústica, amb la despreocupada senzillesa d'aquestes diades. Tota la diversió la fa la gent, agrupant-se, contemplant-se a ella mateixa. Els qui primer han arribat han estat els venedors i rifadores de torrons i confits, de galetes i caramels, amb les seves tauletes portàtils, i ja les han cobertes amb les petites mercaderies. Constitueixen una tropa sol·lícita i cridanera, que va visitant tots els pobles el dia del patró, resseguint un extens santoral. Figures conegudes de tothom, populars entre els infants i el jovent, cada any apareixen amb els seus llamins i galindaines, amb les seves crides i exhortacions. Han pres estratègicament el cim del Puig, davant els cafès, a banda i banda del camí. Ara i adés una mà agita un arruixamosques de paper per damunt els productes aferrissosos. També els cafeters han fet recapte de begudes i refrescos. Els uns i els altres, amb els carnisers que ahir sacrificaren cabrits i porcells, són els beneficiats de la festa, els qui en trauran el profit, si

“I don't know, but people may need to take cover.”

The small, high and sloping square is certainly ready for the *Festa*. Reeds and myrtle in front of the church, four little flags, and paper streamers from house to house. It is a rustic festival, with the spontaneous simplicity of such events. All the entertainment is provided by the people themselves, gathering together in mutual contemplation. The first to arrive were the sellers and rafflers – of nougats, sweetmeats, biscuits and confectionery – with their portable tables, now covered with their small wares. They constitute a vociferous and importunate troop, which pays a visit to every village on its patron saint's day, making its way gradually through the whole sanctoral calendar. Figures known to everyone, but especially popular with the small children and young people, appear year after year with their titbits and trinkets, and with their cries and exhortations. They have strategically taken the crown of the hill, in front of the cafès and on both sides of the road. Now and then a hand waves a paper fly swat over the sticky goods. The café owners, too, have stocked up with drinks and refreshments. All these people, together with the butchers who yesterday killed young goats and piglets, are the beneficiaries of the *Festa*: those who will make a profit from it, if the rain holds off during the day. They are watching people arriving,

el dia aguanta sense ploure. Contempen els qui van venint, alguns de pobles llunyans, amb gruix de bitllets a la cartera. Si no ploqués!...

Cotxes i autobusos s'aturen al peu del tossal. Ara han arribat uns músics de Vila. Ja se senten més veus, el públic es va condensant. Un coet xiscla, retrona allà dalt. Els músics inicien la pujada tocant un pas doble. L'aire, cada vegada més fosc, té com un sobresalt de llum i d'alegria popular. Una bandera vermella i groga, a alguna banda, crida contra el plom amuntegat del cel.

Les rifadores, entre el públic, ofereixen les cartes de la sort, rebregades, lligades de quatre en quatre. Colors i formes ibèriques de la baralla: groc dels oros, verd dels bastos, violentes espases, copes que evocuen el vi d'on es traurà l'alegria d'avui. Comprovada experiència a les boques que comprometen, que pregunten els pagesos mudats, acabats d'arribar. Bromes amb una llarga tradició, oferiments de segura eficàcia.

—Són ses darrers. Ses darrers.

some of them from distant villages, with a wad of notes in their wallets. If only it doesn't rain! ...

Cars and buses stop at the foot of the hill. Some musicians have now arrived from town. More voices make themselves heard; the crowd is getting denser. A rocket whistles up and explodes on high. The musicians start moving up the hill, playing a lively two-step. The atmosphere, getting steadily darker, suddenly seems to brighten along with the merriment. A red and yellow flag, on one side or the other, shouts out against the leaden cumulus filling the sky.

The rafflers, among the people, offer them well-worn cards of luck, tied together in bundles of four. The colours and forms of the pack are Iberian: golden coins, green cudgels, violent swords, and goblets that evoke the wine from which today's merriment will be drawn. The mouths, with practised skill, coax and cajole the peasants dressed in their Sunday best, as soon as they arrive. Time-honoured jokes and irresistible offers:

“They're the last. The very last!”

Un grup juvenil accepta el diàleg, còmicament agressiu. Un fadrí fantasiós, de vistós capell amb ala inclinada, adquireix el seu lot de sort. Immediatament apareixen unes noves cartes.

—Ses darrers. Anam a escapçar.

Una veu rogallosa d'home avia la seva crida, mentre uns cigars són exhibits per entre les colles:

—Per fumar tot es dia. A provar sa sort.

Encara hi ha un poc de buit entorn de les veus. Les dones van pujant, amb les seves filles. Llargues gonelles, mocadors, llaços, rulls cap a les orelles, llargament, meticulosament elaborats. L'or ha anat desapareixent dels pits, però es pot veure algun vestigi de les velles «emprendades». Segueixen cap a l'església, a veure si encara hi troben un seient; passen per entre llambregades i comentaris dels joves. Fins a la sortida de missa no començarà el festeig. La gent, malgrat venir de lluny, no sembla témer l'amenaça del temps, i va omplint el temple, la plaça, les tavernes. Els companys es troben i comencen les seves rondes

A group of young people swallow the bait with mock aggression. A fanciful lad, in a smart hat with an angled brim, acquires his cards of fortune. Some fresh cards appear at once.

“The very last ones. Don't be disappointed!”

A hoarse male voice starts up its cry, while some cigars are shown to one group, then another:

“Enough to smoke all day! Try your luck!”

There is still a little space remaining between the criers. Women are making their way upwards, with their daughters in long dresses, with head scarves, bows, and a twist of hair towards each ear – lengthily and meticulously elaborated. Nowadays, most of the gold has disappeared from the women's busts, but there can still be seen a few vestiges of the ancient *emprendades*. They continue towards the church, hoping to find an empty seat. They have to get past the looks and comments of the lads. The courtship will not begin until the mass is over. The people, in spite of coming from quite a distance, seem unworried by the threatening weather and they go on filling up the temple, the square and the taverns. Friends meet up and start making the rounds of the bars. Around the

davant els taulells. Entorn de les taules seuen famílies o grups d'homes seriosos que prenen cafè i alguna copa. Contrasta l'exaltació gesticulant del jovent amb el repòs dels pares de família. Aquests fadrins que ara riuen i plaguegen es trobaran un dia, com per encantament, canviats en sentenciosos, senequistes barons. D'aquests, els més importants es van reunint, alguns s'encaminen cap a l'església a saludar mossènyer i els altres capellans que han acudit per a les cerimònies del culte o simplement convidats. Es forma, a l'atri, un grupet de distingits, amb alguna dignitat. Negres vestits de laics i clerecia, entre la calç. Encaixades, les nombroses i enrevessades frases eivissenques de compliment, somrisos ben mesurats. Pronòstics, records, anècdotes de sagristia. Una veu eclasiàstica evoca:

—Aquell any deia es sermó mossènyer Canals...

Persones que es respecten, que saben contar i celebrar una facècia, un succeït, una dita. Estan contents amb el goig dels qui els volten, del poble ingenu i fester, i mediten complagudament que aquella pau es deu una mica a ells mateixos. Al costat de l'autoritat hi ha el

tables sit families and groups of solemn-looking men drinking coffee and the odd glass of spirits. There is a marked contrast between the gesturing excitement of the youths and the calmness of the family men. These young lads now laughing and joking will find themselves one day converted, as if by magic, into sage and sententious male adults. The most important ones are gathering together and some are starting to walk towards the church to greet Mossènyer and the other priests who have come for the rites or simply because they have been invited. A small group of distinguished people, with a certain dignity, forms near the entrance. Black clothes of lay persons and clerics alike, among the whitewash. Boxed in, they exchange the many and intricate Eivissenc phrases of courtesy, with nicely-measured smiles. Forecasts, memories and vestry anecdotes. An ecclesiastical voice reminisces:

“That was the year that Mossènyer Canals gave the sermon...”

They are people who respect one another, who know how to relate and to make the most of a joke, an event or a saying. They are content with the enjoyment of those around them – the ingenuous and festive populace – and they meditate complacently that this peacefulness is owed in part to them. Along with the authorities there are those who, because of the

qui, pel prestigi de la posició o de la influència, es creu més alt que l'autoritat mateixa, que passa, mentre que el seu prestigi sempre dura. Vigila enmig de la gent la guàrdia civil.

Va acostant-se, precedint l'entrada dels més alts càrrecs, un so de música del país. Són dos vellets contractats per a la festa. Avancen amb la flauta a la boca, fent sonar al mateix temps el tambor. Els dits de la mà esquerra tapen i destapen els forats del canó de baladre, polit i dibuixat, d'on surt la senzilla melodia, i els de la dreta aguanten el «tocador» o maneta amb què és percutida la canina pell del tambor. És la música de tota festa eivissenca: un ritme, uns acords que vénen de lluny i ens corroboren la terra de l'illa. Tot un ahir somiat acudeix davall aquest cel entelissat, entre la cridòria d'aquesta gent. Totes les festes de sant Miquel reviu una mica amb el so agut i idíllic, que acompanyen les greus redoblades del tambor. Però aquests joves terrassans ja no porten dins el cor, com els seus avis, l'estremiment d'aquesta música. El temps passa i, lentament, fins en aquesta apartada contrada, es modifiquen gustos i costums. La ciutat va indicant modes i aficions, i arriben a odiar-se, o almenys a

prestige of their position or influence, believe themselves to be above the authorities themselves, who are temporary, whereas their prestige always stays the same. Meanwhile, the Civil Guard is on watch among the people.

While the highest officials are waiting to enter the church, the sound of traditional music draws nearer. Two old men have been contracted for the *Festa*. They advance with a flute in their mouths, sounding a tabor at the same time. The fingers of their left hands cover and uncover the holes in the polished and engraved oleander pipe, from which the simple melody emerges, and those of the right hand hold the *tocador*, the stick used to strike the dog-skin of the tabor. The music is that of every Eivissenc feast day: a rhythm and chords which come from far away and yet belong to the land of this isle. All of a dreamed yesterday is present beneath this cloudy sky, amid the noise of these people. All the past feast days of Saint Michael come to life again for a while with the high idyllic notes which accompany the low drum rolls. But, now, the younger sons of the land no longer carry the beat of this music in their hearts like their grandparents did. Time passes and, slowly, even in this place apart, tastes and customs change. The city leads the way in fashions and pursuits, and the old customs come to be loathed or, at least, looked down on. The men abandoned their

despreciar-se, les velles habituds. Fa molts d'anys que l'home va abandonar el seu vestit típic. Les dones, més quietes i tradicionals, encara l'usen; però són moltes les joves que segueixen les modes generals. Dins el mateix vestit eivissenc hi ha hagut una evolució; no té ara la distinció antiga. El ball pagès gairebé s'ha deixat anar; per al vespre està anunciat un ball a l'estil modern. Encara no en saben, són en un punt neutre del canvi; però acabaran per adaptar-s'hi a la seva manera. Hi ha hagut un intent de revaloritzar les coses velles. Després de la processó s'ha de celebrar un ball típic, amb les antigues danses, la llarga i la curta. Alguns fadrins s'han ofert de bon grat i ballaran amb els vestits de la pagesia eivissenca, vestits autèntics, desenterrats del fons de les caixes. Tornaran a veure la llum del pati de l'església la barretina i els vells mocadors, les camises brodades i els florits mantons, els jupetins amb botonada de plata i les joies familiars, els blancs calçons que s'estrenyen devers el turmell i les austeres gonelles tavellades. Amb la música de flauta i tambor repicaran les grans castanyoles —si la pluja no ho destorba tot—, vibrants i estrepitoses entre les mans enèrgiques del ballador. I la dansa —però aquesta pluja sembla cada vegada més imminent— desplegarà els

typical dress many years ago. The women, more reserved and traditional, still wear it, but many of the younger ones now follow the general fashions. The Eivissenc costumes themselves have undergone an evolution; they have lost their ancient distinction. The *ball pagès* – the peasant dance – has almost been allowed to die out; a dance in the modern style has been announced for the evening. They are still not sure about it all: they are at a neutral turning-point, but they will end up by adapting in their own particular way. There has been an attempt to revalue the old ways. After the procession there will be traditional dancing, with the ancient dances of the *llarga* and the *curta*. Some young men have been happy to volunteer and they will dance in Eivissenc peasant dress: authentic costumes, disinterred from the bottom of the coffers. The cloth berets and the old headscarves will return to the light of day in the church courtyard, along with the embroidered shirts and the flowery shawls, the silver-buttoned waistcoats and the family jewels, the white trousers gathered at the ankles and the austere pleated dresses. If the rain does not upset everything, the music of flute and drum will be enhanced by the sound of the large Eivissenc castanets, vibrant and very loud in the energetic hands of the dancers. And the dance – but this rain seems increasingly imminent – will reveal its steps and its colour, in a reconstruction which we will contemplate with nostalgia.

seus passos i el seu color, en una resurrecció que contemplarem nostàlgicament.

Sí, aquesta lluita entre nou i vell es veu en tot, a les danses i els vestits com a les cases i àdhuc als mots. Un món que encara batejava quan érem infants desapareix davant els nostres ulls, almenys en la seva part més externa. Tanmateix aquests temps recents no sols destrueixen; també aporten les seves millores. Quina actitud adoptar? Acomiadem amb recança algunes pèrdues i saludem amb un cor jove les adquisicions, bo i distingint entre els elements essencials que volem defensar, com la llengua, i les particularitats més accidentals i mudables, com un vestit. Voldríem... ¿Serà possible alguna vegada un món a la mida del nostre cor? Ah, primera juvenesa, amb amor contemplativa d'un món que no era ben bé el seu, encara que unit a ella pregonament! ¿Per què el dolor i l'estranya adhesió a les persones i coses més fondes i lligades a la terra? Petita pàtria, que la mar estreny i delimita amb precisió!

Tota aquesta divagació venia amb un so de música popular. Els dos músics vellets s'instal·len, per a la

Yes, this struggle between old and new can be seen in everything: in the dances, in the costumes, in the houses and even in the words. A world still fully alive when we were infants is disappearing before our eyes, at least in its most visible aspects. However these new times do not only destroy; they also bring improvements. What attitude shall we adopt, then? Let us say goodbye with sadness to some of the things lost, while we greet with a youthful heart the new things acquired, distinguishing of course between the essential elements that we want to defend, like the language, and the more incidental and changeable features, like an item of clothing. We would like... but will a world that suits our heart ever be possible? Ah, primal youthfulness, contemplating with love a world never really its own, in spite of being deeply united with it! Why this sorrow and this strange bond with the people and things which are more profound and tied to the land? The tiny land of our birth, which the sea embraces and delimits with precision!

This whole digression stemmed from the familiar sound of the folk music. The two elderly musicians settle themselves down for the mass in the presbytery itself, with the authorities and wardens around the small step, holding lit ceremonial candles. There are long ceremonies and chants as the Mass of Angels



missa, al mateix presbiteri, i les autoritats i obrers entorn del petit graó, amb les atxes enceses a la mà. Les llargues cerimònies i cants. Mentre dura la Missa d'Àngels, d'improvís, arriben veus de l'exterior. Sembla que la gent es reculli a l'atri, amb un clamor estrany. L'obrer major diu a l'orella del regidor veí:

—Em pareix que tenim aigo.

Plou. Alguns ho veuen a través del portal, per sobre els caps de la gernació refugiada, i per la finestra de la sagristia. Uns capellans guaiten per l'alt observatori. A penes es veu el port; les muntanyes són siluetes vagues; els arbres, a prop, brillen amb les gotes, cada cop més espesses. Es formen petits torrentons al peu de la finestra. El do llargament sospirat arriba a la fi, en moment poc oportú.

Mossènyer ho anuncia als feligresos. A causa del temps queda suspesa la processó. No sortiran les imatges ja preparades a les capelles laterals, els sants a la del costat de l'Evangelí, voltats pels fadrins portadors; les santes a la de l'Epístola, a càrrec de les donzelles de llarga falda i pit creuat d'or. S'ha enfosquit

follows its course. Then, unexpectedly, voices can be heard from outside. It seems that people are gathering in the porch, causing a rare commotion. The senior churchwarden speaks into the ear of the town councillor at his side:

“I believe we have rain.”

Yes, it is raining. Some people can see it through the doorway, above the heads of the sheltering throng, or through the sacristy window. The clergy in the sacristy look out from this high vantage point. The port can barely be made out; the mountains are vague silhouettes; the trees, nearby, glisten with droplets, more numerous by the moment. Small rivulets appear at the bottom of the window. The long-awaited gift has arrived at last, at the least opportune moment.

Mossènyer breaks the news to the faithful. Because of the weather, the procession will not take place. All the sacred images are ready and waiting in the side chapels; but the male saints, surrounded by their bachelor bearers, in the chapel on the left side looking towards the altar, will not go out after all; nor will the female saints in the chapel on the right side, which are in the care of the maidens in long skirts with a golden cross on their bosoms. The light behind the small high window has

més la llum darrera l'alt finestrell. La missa, ara, s'acaba ràpidament.

Desert el pati de l'església, sota la pluja que hi bat; desert el camí que hi mor davant. En canvi el porxet és atapeït de poble; no s'hi pot dar una passa. Igualment plens els cafès i els porxos de les cases més veïnes. Els venedors ambulants han desertat dels seus llocs, amb les seves taules i mercaderies. Les tires de paper, de cantó a cantó, pengen lànguidament, apagadament; es rompen. El cim del Puig ha pres un aspecte de desolació. El cel és una sola nuvolada, igual, grisa. Es veu com cauen els fils de la pluja davant les serres properes. Ragen abundantment les canals que recullen l'aigua dels terrats. Enguany s'acaba aquí la festa de sant Miquel.

Bellesa dels camps sota la pluja, contemplats benignament, mentre els fadrins beuen i canten a la taverna! No hi ha vent. Els núvols s'han encantat damunt el poble i semblen inesgotables. Si algú gosa sortir de l'aixopluc, queda xop en un moment. Transita algun paraigua, amb més serenitat. I mentrestant els qui han romàs a les alqueries llunyes, enllà de les rutes

become even dimmer. The mass, now, quickly comes to an end.

The church courtyard is deserted under the rain that beats down; the road that leads up to it is equally deserted. In contrast, the church porch is packed with people; it is impossible to move. The cafés and the living rooms of the nearby houses are equally full. The itinerant vendors have deserted their posts, together with their tables and wares. The paper streamers, from corner to corner, hang languidly and lifelessly, and then break. The crown of the hill has taken on an aspect of desolation. The sky is just one large cloud, uniformly grey. The falling strands of rain can be seen against the backdrop of the nearby ridges. The copious water from the rooftops rushes down through the pipes designed to collect it. This year, the *Festa de Sant Miquel* ends here and now.

Beauty of fields in the rain, contemplated benignly, while the lads drink and sing in the tavern! There is no wind. The clouds are stationary above the village and they seem inexhaustible. If anyone dares to leave their sheltering place, they are soaked in a moment. An occasional umbrella moves about quite calmly. And, in the meantime, those who have stayed in the distant farmhouses, at the far end of the muddy tracks, interrupt their

enfangades, interrompen la preparació del gran dinar de la festa, que Déu sap a quines hores podrà celebrar-se. Malmesa Santmiquelada!

A mitjan tarda sembla que vol esparir una mica. El dia, cap a les seves acaballes, s'il·lumina delicadament. Ja les famílies es busquen, molts aprofiten la clariana per a tractar d'anar-se'n. La pluja és més fina, es va enretirant. Les dones maniobren entre els tolls amb els seus faldellins i falde. Amb una part es cobreixen el cap, pujant-los per darrera; i encara, per tapar-se les cames, en queden tres o quatre, de diferents colors, tots amb els seus brodats. La pluja ha dat avinentesa, si més no, per a aquesta exhibició de roba de davall abundant i vistosa. El poble va restant desert, amb el crepuscle que s'allarga. Estranya malenconia de la pluja que torna a insistir. Al cafè on acaben d'encendre el llum de gasolina, crida el borratxo, amb el puny damunt el taulell, doblant-se:

—Malviatge s'aigo! Encara que haguéssem d'estar dos anys sense beure!

preparations for the celebration of the sumptuous midday feast: God only knows how late it will be now. Michaelmas Day ruined!

Halfway through the afternoon the weather abates a little. The day gets slightly lighter, although drawing towards its end. Family members start looking for each other and many take advantage of the lull to try to get away. The rain is finer; it is dwindling. The women, with their ample petticoats and skirts, make their way carefully between the puddles. They cover their heads by lifting up their skirts from behind and yet they still have three or four more, all embroidered and of various colours, to hide their legs. The rain has at least provided the opportunity for this display of abundant and attractive underwear. The village is becoming deserted in the gathering dusk, which lasts longer today. There is a strange melancholy in the rain, which gets heavier again. In the café where they have just lit the petrol lamp, banging his fist on the bar, the drunkard shouts out:

“Curse the rain! Even if it means we have to go two years without drinking!”

## PLUJA I LLAVOR

*Los colegiales  
estudian. Monotonía  
de la lluvia en los cristales.  
Antonio Machado*

Passat el dia de sant Miquel, comencen els al·lots a assistir en gran nombre a l'escola. Alguns vénen de molt lluny, es van trobant pels camins, arriben a l'escola en petits grups. Les seves veus posen una nota escandalosa en el matí del poblet, que sense ells estaria buit i silenciós. Inicien els seus jocs, d'una duresa, d'una brutalitat sana i adorable, o bé de gran paciència, d'una habilitat que suposa un llarg aprenentatge. Cossos lleugeríssims, infatigables, on apunta la vigoria que els caldrà per a les feixugues feines agrícoles. No són escassos els ulls blaus, els cabells rossos. Algun té una morenor pujada, que ressaltava damunt el to general. Una camisa o un jersei, pantalonets llargs, peus nus i

## RAIN AND SEEDS

*Schoolchildren are  
studying. Monotony  
of raindrops on window panes.  
Antonio Machado*

Now that the day of Saint Michael has come and gone, a large number of children are starting to attend school. Some come from a long way off, meeting one another along the tracks and arriving at the school in small groups. Their voices bring a note of rowdiness into the morning of the small village, which would be empty and silent without them. They start playing games, both harmless, adorable rough-and-tumbles and other games that demand great patience and well-practised skills. The untiring bodies are almost weightless, with just a promise of the vigour that will later be needed to carry out heavy agricultural tasks. There are more than a few of them with blue eyes and fair hair. There are also some whose dark brown skin stands out from the tone of the rest. A shirt or jersey, long

forts dins les grosses espadenyas. No tenen por de la fredor que comença, de l'aigua dels tolls. Solen tenir una vivesa en la conversació que s'apagarà sovint davant les preguntes del mestre. Quines diferències, ja des d'aquesta edat primerenca, quant a capacitat intel·lectual, voluntat, caràcter, tendències. Ara, en el joc, semblen confoses totes aquestes discrepàncies. S'empaiten, els més grans, amb salts i regirades violentes. Corre esforçadament una figureta prima i ràpida, d'aparença delicada i músculs fins i acerats. Intenta una contorsió alliberadora per escapar del company que cuida abastar-lo. L'altre no es deixa enganyar, el toca pel cos fugisser:

—Salat!

Duen caquis, codonys, magranes: les fruites del temps. També roseguen les aspres glans, que ara maduren; no es cansarien de menjar. La parla eivissenca flueix espontània i graciosa dels seus llavis. De vegades imiten amb burla la pronunciació o algun mot de Vila: han observat les diferències, gairebé imperceptibles. La e neutra tònica és ací, tal vegada, una mica més oberta, sobretot en els infants; però no oberta del tot, com a

trousers and strong bare feet in large sandals, made from esparto grass and pita. They are not bothered by the onset of colder weather or the water in puddles. Their conversation often has a lively quality that tends to vanish when the teacher starts asking questions. What a lot of differences there are between them, even at this early age, in intellectual capacity, will, character and tendencies. Now, at play, all these differences are blurred. The older children chase about, violently jumping, twisting and turning. A slender, darting figure, lithe and wiry in appearance, runs as if possessed. It dodges about in an effort to shake off its close pursuer. But the other child is not taken in and touches the fleeing body:

“You’re it!”

The children bring with them persimmons, quinces and pomegranates: the fruits of the season. They also chew sour acorns, which ripen at this time, and they never tire of eating. The Eivissenc language flows from their lips with spontaneous wit. Sometimes they imitate mockingly the accent or vocabulary of the townspeople: they have noticed the very slight differences. Here the stressed, neutral “e” is perhaps a little more open in sound, especially among the younger children, but not totally open as it is in the west of the island.

ponent de l'illa. Quan és àtona tampoc no sona exactament igual que a la capital. Repeteixen tot el que senten dir, les paraules bones i les poc o gens recomanables. Ja un accent viril reforça les veus d'infant. Quantes coses han d'aprendre encara de la vida, del mestre! Però també poden ensenyar-ne. El professor pregunta, ja no socràticament, sinó per informar-se, enfront dels camps veïns, quan han sortit de classe:

—Quina herba és aquesta, Vicentet?

Una veu segura respon:

—Això és granerola. Ara tot just comença a florir, però arribarà a estar tota plena de floretes grogues.

En Vicentet, en Joanet, en Pepet, en Miquelet saben moltes coses que un home de ciutat ignora. Al costat de la formació escolar en reben una altra, complexa, parant esment en els treballs familiars i ajudant els pares i germans grans. Comencen a exercitar-se en els múltiples oficis d'aquests pagesos, que els practiquen tots al mateix temps. Àvidament contemplen, en primer

Even when unstressed it still does not sound the same as in the island capital. They repeat everything they hear: the good, bad and ugly words alike. Now, a man's voice is added to those of the children. What a lot of things they have yet to learn from life or from the schoolmaster! But they too can teach him new things. When they are outside the classroom, looking at the neighbouring fields, the teacher, no longer Socratic, turns to them for information:

“What is this plant, young Vincent?”

A sure voice replies: “That's a spurge olive. At the moment it is only just starting to flower, but soon it will be covered in small yellow flowers.”

Young Vincent, John, Joseph and Michael know many things about which a town man is ignorant. Alongside their schooling they receive another education, a complex one, by attentively helping their parents or older brothers and sisters with the tasks of the family. They begin to learn the many skills of these peasants, who practise them all together. In the first place, they keenly observe the never-ending basic agriculture. They also know about livestock and flocks of sheep and goats: they themselves work as shepherds. Some of these children have

lloc, la feina pròpia de l'agricultor, interminable i bàsica. També entenen de bestiar i ramades, són pastorets ells mateixos. Alguns d'aquests infants tenen el pare pescador o caçador, a més de pagès, i poden copsar notícies d'aquests oficis. Uns altres pares es dediquen a l'apicultura, i ja no parlem de gallines, coloms, galls dindi o indiots, ànecs, etc, generalment a càrrec de la mare. D'altres tallen llenya i soques al bosc: són llenyataires. Encara fan carbó, en apartades carboneres o *sitges*, o rosteixen les pedres apilades als forns de calç. Han de ser també una mica picapedrers i paletes. No podrien passar sense un carro i una mula o cavall: són també carreters. I flequers, encara; a cada casa pasten i couen el seu pa. Com així mateix carnisers, quan arriba el temps de la matança del porc que ara s'engreixa. ¿Quantes plantes, llavors, fruites, aigües, pedres no toquen? ¿Quants estris, eines, guarniments, animals no manegen? Hem de pensar que l'agricultor no és ací especialista en cada cultiu. Ho és alhora d'hort i de secà, de plantes i d'arbres fruiters. Llaura, sembra, sega, cull, poda, cava, rega, adoba, eixarcola. Les criatures allí al seu predi es van iniciant en aquestes diverses tasques, cada una de les quals ha de fer-se al seu temps. No diguem ignorants a aquests

fathers who fish or hunt in addition to farming, and they can pick up information about these skills too. Other fathers devote themselves to bee-keeping, not to mention hens, pigeons, turkeys, ducks, etc., which are generally in the mother's charge. And yet others cut wood and fell trees: they are woodsmen. They still make charcoal in isolated charcoal ovens, called *sitges*, or roast piles of stones in lime-kilns. They also have to be acquainted with the crafts of stone-working and building. They could not get by without a cart and a mule or horse: they are carters, too. And bakers, moreover: each household prepares and cooks its own bread. Likewise, they are butchers when the time comes for killing the pig that they are now fattening. How many plants, seeds, fruits, waters and stones will escape their touch? How many household or farm implements, harnesses and animals will they fail to handle? We have to realise that the farmer here does not specialise in any one crop. At one and the same time, he is a specialist in both wet and dry farming, in cereals, vegetables and fruit trees. He ploughs, sows, reaps, harvests, prunes, digs, waters, fertilises and weeds. There on the farmstead, from infancy, the children are initiated into these many different tasks, each of which has to be carried out in turn at the correct time. We should not call these young children ignorant if one of them hesitates when asked a slightly complicated question. Nor should we be

noiets, si algun vacil·la davant un problema met una mica complicat. Ni estranyem massa que aprenguin dels pares, amb tants coneixements útils, la niciesa del poder de les bruixes, de certes influències lunars o d'altres creences igualment fantàstiques, que el preceptor intenta, amb èxit dubtós, de desprestigiar.

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La gran concurrència d'escolars es redueix visiblement els dies de pluja. Acudeixen els més veïns, nou o deu, a la sala fosca malgrat les altes finestres, darrera les quals remoreja la pluja. Després de la del dia de sant Miquel n'han vingut d'altres, enguany. Prolongades, abundants. La terra no sembla la mateixa. És molla, fresca, i el pagès aprofita les pauses per girar-la amb l'arada; terra esquinçada, oberta en roigs terrossos davant el tall de la rella. Ha aparegut, tendríssima, l'herba. Han revingut les aigües de pous i fonts. Els torrents han corregut impetuosament, tots renouers del rodar de l'aigua terrosa, que sona a cada pedra. Després encara passava, roja, fonda, mig oculta per les llargues canyes, que tenen una mena de plomall al cap brandador. El soroll del torrent acompanya el vianant, i

surprised that, along with so many useful things, they learn from their parents such silly nonsense as the power of the witches, the influence of the moon or other equally fantastic beliefs, all of which the educator tries to dispel, with only limited success.

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On rainy days, the large number of children attending school visibly declines. Only nine or ten, from the nearest houses, appear in the schoolroom, now dark in spite of its high windows, from behind which comes the muffled sound of the rain. This year, there have been more storms since the one on Saint Michael's Day. Prolonged and abundant. The earth does not seem the same. It is fresh and soft, and the peasant farmers take advantage of any breaks to turn it over with the plough, shredding the earth into red clods with the blade of the ploughshare. Slender new blades of grass have appeared. Water has returned to the wells and springs. All the torrents have run impetuously, resounding with swirling muddy water, dashing noisily against every stone. Farther on, the deep red water passes, half hidden, through the tall canes with their waving feathery plumes. The sound of the torrent accompanies the walker and, when it reaches the great waterfall, it throws itself



en arribar al gran salt el doll es llança amb decisió i es romp per tots els sortints de l'alta penya. Molt al fons, el recull sencer una bassa, voltada d'esponerosa vegetació. Als horts mullats de la vora s'aixequen les dretes dacseres i s'estenen les taules de moniato i d'alfals. A la nit encara s'arrossega la veu solitària del torrent, com una vaga companyia. Després l'aigua fangosa es va clarificant a poc a poc, ateny a la transparència i al curs normal, una fina correntia de plata de gorg a gorg.

Verament, és formós un dia de sol després de la pluja, a la tardor. A la parra, davant la casa, encara pengen uns últims raïms, de treballada dolçor, reservats per a més endavant, quan seran més valuosos. A prop hi ha un forc de cebes daurades, i damunt la calç de la paret un raig de nyores carmesines, posades a assecar. És temps de fruites grosses i dures: l'aromàtic codony, l'atapeïda i opulenta magrana de pell coriàcia, però que conté, com un bell paisatge, infinits tons cremats. Colors seriosos i matisats, colors de tardor, sense l'esclat dels fruits estivals. Només el caqui es distingeix pel seu color enter, que recobreix una carn tova, un poc fada. Es preparen a madurar les nesples, gairebé

over boldly, breaking up on the craggy face of the high cliff. Way down below, the water all meets again in a pond, surrounded by lush vegetation. In the damp adjacent irrigated terraces there is maize, standing tall and straight, and patches of sweet potatoes and of lucerne. Even at night-time the solitary murmur of the torrent provides a little company. After a while, the muddy water slowly clears and then is transparent again in its normal course, a fine silver stream from one deep pool to the next.

The evening of a sunny day after it has rained is truly beautiful. The last few bunches of grapes, with nurtured sweetness, still hang from the vine in front of the house; they are reserved for later on, when they will be more valuable. Close by, there is a string of golden onions and, left out to dry on the whitewashed wall, a bunch of small hot crimson peppers (*nyores*). It is the season for large hard fruits: the aromatic quince and the opulent pomegranate, packed with red seeds. Its skin is leathery but beautiful, a small landscape with a myriad of scorched hues. The colours of the autumn fruits, with their sober tones and subtle shades, are less vivid than those of summer fruits. Only the persimmon is different, having the same colour all over, with soft and rather insipid flesh inside. The medlars are beginning to ripen: almost a winter fruit, they

hivernenques, que encara necessitaran l'escalf de la palla per oferir-se amb color i gust de terra. Són la mateixa terra comestible i ensucrada, amb un punt d'agror.

El Pla Roig és ara més roig que mai, amb una gradació que arriba al color de vi dels camps llaurats i molls i al cremat de les vores, pel límit de les garrigues. El cel és també matisat i divers. Res no brilla, sinó la rosada dels matins, damunt les teulades. L'octubre és un mes distingit, sense cap de les violències de l'estiu, però amb més color. Voltant la rosada, hi ha hagut dies somiosos, amb una delicada boirina. Després de les darreres pluges, l'aire ha restat transparent, amb una mica de vent netejador. Grans nuvolades, bellíssimes i errabundes, componien el paisatge del cel, amb forats del blau més tendre. Els camps tenien un daurat madur, al sol, amb grans ombres negreses i fredes.

El bosc s'ha embegut l'aigua que li cal per al seu enorme i pausat esforç. El sòl és tou i olorós sota la fullaca, sota la malesa atapeïda: ginebres, argelagues, cepells, mates, romanins, esteperes. Està preparat per a la ràpida i variada producció de bolets. Els buscadors

will need warming in straw before they offer up their earthy colour and taste. They are the very earth itself, sweetened and edible, with just a hint of bitterness.

The Pla Roig – the red plain – is now redder than ever, with a gradation from the wine-red of the soft ploughed fields to the baked hue at the edges, where the garrigue begins. The colours of the sky too are subtle and varied. Nothing glistens, except for the early morning dew on the tiled roofs. October is a distinguished month, with none of the violence of summer, but with more colour. Dreamy days, with a delicate mist, have accompanied the dews. After the last rainfall, the air has stayed transparent, with a cleansing breeze. The skyscape is composed of large, wandering, very beautiful banks of cloud, with gaps of the softest blue. The sun has given the fields the sheen of old gold, with large patches of cold, nearly-black shade.

The woodland has drunk up all the water that it needs for its gradual, enormous effort. The soil is soft and odorous beneath the leaf litter, under the crowded shrubbery of junipers, brooms, heathers, mastic bushes, rosemary plants and rock roses. It is ready for the rapid production of an assortment of mushrooms and toadstools. The seekers of *pebrassos* (edible milk caps) violate the whispering quietness and disturb the

de pebrassos violaran els silencis murmuriosos, remouran la terra intocada, s'emportaran el tresor dels tímids i saborosos bonys, tenyits de rovell, de sang, de verd, amb el fi dibuix del ventre.

I arreu, altra vegada, la feina inicial. Cau la llavor al solc, entre els crits del pagès a la mula. A algun lloc apunten uns brins arrencats: verda, delicada promesa. Inlassables, continuen la vida i l'esforç. Camps clàssics, que exigeixen un conreu continu, ordenat. Les velles oliveres han començat a amollar el seu fruit damunt la terra.

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Al matí s'ajunten unes poques persones al costat del vell autobús que ha de partir cap a Vila. Encara no ha traspuntat el sol damunt el puig d'En Besora. Fa uns dies, uns quants pagesos parlaven amb un comerciant d'un poble veí. El comerciant necessitava un pi, un gran pi que havia de dur a la capital, per a la drassana. No podia ser un pi ver i havia de tenir més de dos pams de diàmetre al cap més prim. Els pagesos indicaven els pins de la rodalia que podien servir. No bastava que

untouched soil; they carry off the treasure of timid and tasty morsels, rust and blood-coloured with touches of green, and with a delicate tracery on their caps.

And everywhere, once again, the work recommences. The seed falls into the furrow, while the farmer shouts at his mule. Rows of young shoots are beginning to show here and there: a delicate green promise. Life's struggle is unending. The classic fields demand continuous and orderly care. And the ancient olives have started to let their fruit fall to the ground.

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In the morning a few people collect by the side of the old bus that is waiting to go to town. The sun still has not risen above the Puig den Besora. A few days ago, some peasants had been talking to a businessman from a neighbouring village. The businessman needed a pine tree, a large one that he had to take to the shipyard in the capital town. It could not be an umbrella pine and the narrower end had to be more than two hand spans wide. The peasants picked out pines in the vicinity which might serve. It was not enough for them to be large; they also had to be easy to remove.

fossin grans; calia que es poguessin treure amb facilitat.

—Ja no n'hi ha molts —deia un—. S'acaben es pins d'aquesta grandària.

—Jo crec que serviria un que en conec arran d'es camí, a Benirràs —oferia un altre—. Es camí fa barda, però no importaria treure'l per mar.

—És mellor un camí que faça costa, enc que siga llarg, que un de curt però arenós, on s'estaquin es carros —sentenciava un tercer.

Parlaven de la futura víctima amb indiferència. Sabien que s'acabaven els grans pins, que cada un requeria moltíssim de temps per a fer-se; però no es preocupaven sinó dels diners que en donarien. Ni un mot per a la bellesa o la majestat d'un pi vell d'aquestes terres. La veien; ells, tanmateix, no podien tenir sentimentalismes, pensar en la profunditat d'anys que caurien amb la corpulenta soca, amb l'elevat ramatge, veure en el pi un patriarca assassinat, al qual donem una consciència abatuda de l'antigor. Calia rebutjar

“Pines of that size are hard to come by” one of them said. “There aren't many left nowadays.”

“I know of one that should be all right, by the side of the road at Benirràs” suggested another. “It's a steep road, but it can always be taken by sea.”

“A steep road, even if it's long, is better than a short and sandy one, which the carts may get stuck on” decided a third.

They spoke about the future victim with indifference. They knew that the great pines were coming to an end and that each one took a very long time to grow, but they were only preoccupied with the money that they would be given for it. Not a word about the beauty or majesty of an old native pine. They did see it, but they could not afford the sentimentality of thinking about the weight of years that would fall with the stout trunk and the high branches, nor that of seeing the pine as an assassinated patriarch, to whom we attribute an ancient awareness, now lost. There was no room for such qualms. Excessive felling in a wood is like a painful wound and these giants, moreover, seem to conserve a kind of robust strength and a set of memories that will vanish with them. In the shipyard, to be sure, it will play an important role: a frenzy of

aquestes angoixes. Una tala excessiva al bosc és com un dolor a la carn, però aquests gegants, a més, sembla que guarden una robustesa i uns records que amb ells desapareixerien. Sí, és clar; a la drassana el pi farà un gran paper; entorn s'agitarà l'activitat; l'embarcació llenegarà damunt la seva fusta llisa, cap a l'aigua tranquil·la del port, que s'obrirà d'antuvi, per a sostenir-lo després, amb un dolç balanceig. Però ¿i tots aqueixos anys que dormen al cor de l'alçada, de la condemnada reialesa?

I els nens tornen, com cada matí, a l'escola. Darrera dels dies, que els semblen interminables, de la seva infantesa, els espera el treball, la responsabilitat, el govern de la hisenda i del poble, tota l'aventura misteriosa de la vida, tota l'angúnia de la fi. Hauran de decidir, també, si tomben o no aquest pi indeterminat que creix juntament amb ells. Mentrestant, juguen, abans de la classe. No pensen, com els de Vila, en pel·lícules, en novel·letes amb extraordinaris esdeveniments. Tenen els seus jocs. ¿Com es deia aquell a què jugàvem amb els fills dels majorals, quan els nostres pares ens duien a fora? Ah, sí! El bòlitx. Un rotllo entorn i alguna cosa que cal evitar que hi caigui

activity will surround the pine and then the new vessel will slide down its smooth wood towards the harbour's calm waters, which will give way at first, then support it, gently swaying. Even so...what about all those years asleep in the heart of this lofty condemned monarch?

And the children are going to school, just as they do every morning. After the days of childhood, which to them seem never ending, will come work and responsibility, taking charge of their estates and the village affairs, all the mysterious adventure of life and all the anguish of the end. They, too, will have to decide whether to fell this pine or that pine, which has grown up alongside them. Meanwhile, they are at play, before the class begins. Unlike the children in the town, they do not think about films or story books with extraordinary happenings. They have their own games. What was that one called which we used to play with our farm manager's children, when our parents took us out of town? Oh yes: *el bòlitx*! You had to stand in a circle, wielding a stick to stop something from landing inside. I have not seen them play this game in Sant Miquel, however. The sun is already shining on the windows through the foliage of the trees in the garden, which are starting to feel the influence of autumn. The children are about to go in. As well as their books, they are carrying

dins, amb un bastó a la mà. A Sant Miquel no he vist que hi juguessin. El sol ja dona a les finestres, a través del fullatge dels arbres del jardí, que comencen a sentir la influència tardorenca. Els infants estan a punt d'entrar. Duen, amb els llibres, magranes i codonys, i els pinyons i les nous que anuncien la propera diada de Tots Sants.

pomegranates and quinces, and the pine seeds and walnuts that herald All Saints' Day.

## LA HISTÒRIA DE SANT MIQUEL

*Mira com passa la vida,  
d'ara i del seu temps més vell.*

Isidor Macabich

El novembre ha començat amb el plany de les campanes pels difunts de la nostra fe. Al poblet, però, no sona la campana; en canvi un llumet d'oli vetlla tota la nit per les ànimes familiars. El rosari vespral, en algunes cases. També era costum coure una bona fornada de pa, posar totes les fogasses ben visibles al tinell, perquè els morts estimats s'alegessin de l'abundància. Per als vivents, per a la inescotable fam dels vivents i la seva llepolia, s'han inflat els rossos bunyols, han crepitat dins la paella d'oli fregint. Amb els bunyols ensucrats, els fruits de la terra; la densa magrana i els de dura clofolla, que ha de ser trencada per tal d'arribar al gra apetible: el petit i intens pinyó, la

## THE HISTORY OF SANT MIQUEL

Look how life passes by,  
ancient and modern alike.

Isidor Macabich

November has started with the lamentation of bells for the dead of our faith. The village bell, in contrast, stays silent, but a small oil lamp keeps vigil all night long for the departed souls of each family. There is an evening rosary in some houses. And it used to be customary to bake a good ovenful of bread and leave all the round loaves open to view on the shelf so that the dead loved ones could rejoice over the abundance. For the living – for the infinite hunger and sweet tooth of the living – the light brown doughnuts have swollen up and sizzled in the oil of the frying pan. Together with the sugared doughnuts, there are the fruits of the season: dense pomegranates, and nuts with hard shells, which have to be broken to get at the appetising kernels – the small and intense pine seed, the tasty wrinkled walnut and the

nou arrugada i gustosa, la importada castanya. Ah, les delitoses, profundes sabors a la llengua mortal! I els morts: recents difunts, oblidats difunts, morts anteriors a la fe, pols escampada dins aquesta terra de límits precisos. Amb aquesta pols jeu el passat de l'illa, del poble, i Què en resta, d'aquest passat del poble? Veiem velles obres més o menys modificades, la seva influència en les actuals, unes tradicions de treball i costums, l'herència de vida de les noves generacions. I també tenim la història. Una petita, esborradissa, poc detallada història: la història de Sant Miquel. Ni tan sols sabem si podem emprar plenament la paraula. La població rural està quasi mancada d'història, o aquesta és una pàgina molt tènue. Són les ciutats les que fan la història. Dels camps provenen molts de soldats sense nom. Els camps donen també un lloc per a les batalles. Damunt aquest paratge torna a passar després la rella intemporal. Camps de batalla, a Sant Miquel? En tot cas, d'escaramussa, de petit encontre. Als camps i per la mar. També la mar eivissenca coneix aquestes topades intranscendents per a la gran història, importantíssimes i dures per a la local. Quant de coratge, quant de braó esmerçats en aquesta llarguíssima, penosa i sangonant defensa de les cases i els predis familiars, d'un racó de

imported chestnut. [“Imported” to an Eivissenc means from anywhere outside the island, in this case probably from the Iberian Peninsula.] Ah, these profound and delectable tastes on the tongues of mere mortals! And what about the dead: the recently departed ones, the forgotten ones and the ancient pre-Christian dead, now just dust scattered within the clear bounds of this land? The pasts of both the island and the village rest in this dust. But what now remains of the village past? We can see old buildings modified to a greater or lesser degree and their influence on the new ones, and certain work traditions and other customs, the common heritage of the new generations. And we have history as well. A small, easily-erased, poorly-detailed history: the history of Sant Miquel. We are not even sure that we can use the word in its full sense. The rural settlement is almost completely lacking in history: it would scarcely fill a page. It is the cities which make history. From the countryside come many unknown soldiers. The fields also provide a place to hold battles. Later on, the timeless ploughshare will pass over it once again. Battle grounds in Sant Miquel? Perhaps not. But there may well have been minor clashes and skirmishes – both on land and sea. The Eivissenc waters have a long acquaintance with such encounters, hard-fought and extremely important in local terms, but of little consequence in the wider schemes of history. What a lot of courage and manpower invested in



pàtria! Illa oblidada i famolenca, que es va refent a poc a poc quan s'esborren damunt la Mediterrània els deixants de pirates i corsaris, quan per una banda s'acaba la força que surt de la costa africana i per l'altra Espanya deixa les guerres exteriors i és deixada en pau, lassa, pels seus inveterats i poderosos enemics europeus. Quan s'acaba la glòria, comença a Eivissa, per bé que migrat, el benestar.

Per a aquests pagesos lligats a la terra, ¿existeix la història, el passat? ¿O només compta, amb el present, un curt record? Amb els vells que van morint s'esvaeix la memòria del passat més remot que pot tenir importància per als qui resten. Tanmateix, des dels anys d'infantesa dels ara més vells fins avui, no han estat escassos els canvis a la vida del poble, com a tot el món. Aquell ancià —sentim dir a algú— encara es recorda de quan no hi havia més que un carro al poble. Ara hi ha un carro a cada casa, i els vells asenets i someres, portadors de somada, s'han convertit en mules i cavalls. No parlem de les innombrables bicicletes, dels cotxes, dels camions que s'enduen, carretera avall, garroves, ametlles, ben olents troncs de pi. Han canviat —estan canviant— els sistemes i procediments de

countless years of arduous and bloody defence of the family houses and estates of such a small part of our country! This forgotten and famished island started to recover, little by little, only when the last traces of pirates and corsairs had been wiped from the Mediterranean, when on the one hand there were no more attacks coming from the African coast and on the other hand Spain wearied of fighting external wars and was left at last in peace by its inveterate and powerful European enemies. When the glory came to an end, better times began for Eivissa, although life here is still not easy.

For these peasants tied to the land, does history or the past really exist? Or do only the present and a short memory have meaning for them? As old people die in turn, there fades away with them the memory of the most remote past that could be of interest to those who remain. And yet, between the years of infancy of the oldest people now alive and the present day, there has been no shortage of changes in the life of the village, as in the rest of the world. That old fellow – we hear someone say – can still remember the days when there was only one cart in the whole village. Now every household has a cart, and mules and horses have replaced the small donkeys and jennies that used to carry loads. We scarcely need mention the innumerable bicycles, the cars, and the lorries that go off down the road laden with carobs,

cultiu, ha augmentat l'extensió conreada, l'horta és més gran, els camps produeixen més. Els camperols ja no estan arraconats dins les seves terres, confinats dins el seu poble. Quan aquests vellets eren joves, costums, diversions i vestits eren els tradicionals, duraven amb poques modificacions. Cançons, música i balls eren els que ara s'esborren ràpidament, els que venien, intactes, d'una avior desconeguda, com l'aigua d'un riu que ve d'una font inexplorada. No és que encara no arribin molts de fils d'aquella sang i d'aquell viure enterrats, forjats pels segles: n'arriben molts més que no creiem. Encara es fila amb bastants borrallons de la llana d'ahir. De vegades considerem complaguts aquest cap de fil que el passat ens amolla.

Malgrat els canvis últims, molts d'ells superficials, podríem caracteritzar amb un mot la vida d'aquests camps que ara contemplem: continuïtat. La vida col·lectiva, damunt la terra, apareix i se'n va amb un broll igual i compassat. Un broll, una font: tal vegada la sang que ha arribat de fora ha estat durant molts de segles escassa, i és més aviat aquesta terra la que ha deixat escapar les existències sobreres. Al camp, generalment, no s'hi arriba; s'hi neix. I en cas necessari

almonds or fragrant pine logs. The systems and techniques of cultivation have changed and are still changing: more land is being ploughed and more is being irrigated, so that the fields in general are more productive. The country people are no longer hidden away on their own farmland or confined to the vicinity of the village. When these old people were young, the traditional customs, diversions and dress showed few modifications. Their songs, music and dances –which are rapidly disappearing now – had come down intact from the remotest antiquity, like the water of a river from an unknown source. That is not to say that there are no strands left today of that blood line and buried way of life, wrought by the centuries: there are many more than we realise. We still often spin with hanks of yesterday's wool. And, sometimes, we contemplate with pleasure this small thread end that the past lets us keep.

In spite of the latest changes, many of which are only superficial, we could characterise in a single word the way of life in these fields that we are now looking at: continuity. Based on the land, country life as a whole appears and disappears in a steady, rhythmic stream. A single stream and a single source: it would seem that fresh blood from other places has been scarce for many centuries and that, instead, this land has had to let its surplus sons go elsewhere. In general, you do not arrive in the

se'n surt, s'emigra. ¿Serà gaire diferent la raça que ara pobla Sant Miquel de la que poblava la comarca en temps dels cartaginesos? Amb els canvis de dominació hi ha hagut aportacions importants, indubtablement; però és ben possible que un nucli que podríem dir indígena, amb fort component púnic, hagi anat travessant les edats i hagi arribat fins aquests dies. S'hi ha afegit sang romana, germànica, aràbiga i catalana; entre aquests puigs, però, mai no es deu haver extingit del tot la llavor primitiva.

¿I què en resta, de material i objectiu, d'aquells segles apagats? Tan poca cosa! A Sant Miquel s'hi deuen haver trobat, com arreu de l'illa, ossos, monedes, estris o figuretes de terrissa, joiells, de l'època cartaginesa o de la romana. Tal vegada, vora els testos púnics, n'han aparegut uns altres d'origen musulmà. Hi ha vestigis de murs a l'illa —un petit illot, a la sortida del port— que diuen Murada; vestigis que ningú no sap de quin temps són. La resta ja és dels segles inaugurats pels catalans: l'església, una torre de defensa a la costa, algunes altres de més petites i potser més antigues, entre els camps, destinades a grups de veïns.

country: you are born there. And, when it is necessary, you leave: you emigrate. Is the race of the people in Sant Miquel today really any different from that of the local inhabitants in Carthaginian times? With changing dominions, there have been important additions, no doubt; but a nucleus that we could call indigenous, with a strong Punic component, may well have survived right down through the ages to the present day. Roman, Germanic, Arabic and Catalan blood have been added to it; but, amongst these hills, the original seed would never have been completely extinguished.

And what remains of the material objects of those lost centuries? So very little! Some bones, coins, earthenware, clay figurines and jewellery, from Carthaginian or Roman times, must have been found in Sant Miquel, as in any other part of the island. Pieces of pottery of Moslem origin may have appeared alongside the Punic ones. And there are vestiges of walls on the little island called Murada (“Walled Island”) at the mouth of the port; vestiges of which no-one knows the date of origin. The rest is all from the centuries inaugurated by the Catalans: the church, a coastal defence tower and some other smaller, possibly more ancient, defence towers inland, which provided refuge for groups of neighbours.

Àmfores i monedes ens parlen de l'època en què Eivissa ha tingut més importància, dins el món mediterrani. Aquests encontorns devien ser lloc de boscos i conreus, com ara, i els pobladors, pagesos amb algun pescador. Cap a migjorn, distant, la capital: una considerable ciutat, comercial i rica, amb fortaleses, temples, molls. Potser, des d'una certa distància, semblant a l'actual. En ser a mitjan camí, el camperol, les poques vegades que hi anava, ja la devia veure, redreçada allà lluny, amb el port als seus peus i la mar lliure al costat i darrera. El puig d'es Molins, per on s'uneix a la terra, no es deia així ni tenia molins: ample lloc sagrat, pròxim als murs, per als enterraments. I davant, entorn del port, la verdor de l'horta.

Han passat els segles. Sempre, per als llauradors, el treball, que vincla cap a la terra. La ciutat és lluny, abrigada, com en tots els temps, entre murades, ara de diferent construcció. Ací hi ha les alqueries disperses, les propietats més grans. El nom àrab de Beniçàmít ha esdevingut el nostre de Balansat. La llengua és la catalana. Encara no ha pres totes aquestes particularitats que la separen una mica de la que es parla a Mallorca, a Tarragona, a Barcelona, a València. És una època de

The amphorae and coins take us back to an age in which Eivissa played a more important role in the Mediterranean world. Then, as now, this part of the island must have been woodland and farmland, inhabited by peasants and a few fishermen. In the distance, to the south, was the capital: a rich commercial city of some significance, with fortifications, temples and docks – and, perhaps, viewed from some way off, quite similar to the present one. Only halfway there, on one of his infrequent visits to town, the country dweller must have been able to see it standing proud in the distance, with the port at its feet and the open sea at the side and beyond it. In those days, the hill linking it to the land was not yet known as Puig des Molins (“Windmill Hill”) because there were no mills there: it was instead a large sacred area for the burial of the dead, close to the city walls. And in front of it, near the harbour, the greenery of the irrigated fields.

Centuries have gone by. But the farmers’ work goes on as usual, tying them to the land. The town is far away, protected, as it always has been, by high walls, now rebuilt and modified. But, here, there are scattered farmhouses and the largest farms on the island. The Arabic name of Beniçàmít has become our Balansat. The language is now Catalan. It has still not taken on the peculiarities which will separate it slightly from the tongues

grandesa per a aquests regnes. Les nostres naus solquen victorioses la Mediterrània. Al quartó de Balansat de l'illa d'Eivissa arriba de tard en tard una notícia important. El segle XIV o el XV es deu bastir l'església. Els murs gruixuts ja estan mig alçats, damunt el pujol d'amples perspectives. La gent és clara, i no cal que el temple sigui gaire espaiós. El tancarà una volta senzilla amb l'estil d'aquell temps, ogival. L'església solitària recollirà els diumenges el lleure dels habitants de la rodalia. Alguns vindran a missa de molt lluny. Tardaran alguns segles a existir les esglésies ara més properes: les de Sant Joan, Sant Mateu, Santa Gertrudis. Els dies feiners regarà la terra exigent la suor dels camperols, esclaus d'una obligació duríssima, sempre pobres.

Han passat nous segles, llargs períodes de perill per als eivissencs. De perill i de misèries. Illa assetjada, atacada, sense un moment segur. Encara el segle XVII l'enemic assalta ara i adés les nostres costes. Odi secular, de sang, de religió, d'interessos. També els eivissencs ataquen les naus i les platges africanes. Abordatges, foc, coltellades, preses, captius. Alguns moros captius són uns útils auxiliars per a treballar aquestes terres. Els seus germans lliures irrompen, però,

of Mallorca, Tarragona, Barcelona and Valencia. It is a period of greatness for these realms. Our ships victoriously plough the waters of the Mediterranean. From time to time, an important item of news reaches the division of Balansat on the island of Eivissa. In the fourteenth or fifteenth century the church is to be built. Now the thick walls are half raised, on top of the small hill with panoramic views. There are not many people, so the temple does not need to be very spacious. It will be covered by a simple ogival vault in the contemporary fashion. On Sundays, the solitary church will take up the leisure time of the local inhabitants. Some will have to come a very long way to mass. The churches of Sant Joan, Sant Mateu and Santa Gertrudis, which are closer for these people, will not come into existence for several centuries more. On weekdays, the peasants, always poor and slaves to an unrelenting routine, will go on watering the demanding earth with the sweat of their brows.

More centuries have gone by, with long periods of peril for the Eivissencs. Peril and famines. Their island is under siege, with no respite. Even in the seventeenth century, the coasts are still subject to sporadic raids by the enemy. Secular hatred, born of blood, religion and interests. The Eivissencs likewise attack the African ships and shores. There are boardings, fire, stabbings, captures and slaves. Some of the Moorish captives are put to

quan menys esperats són. S'aixequen unes torres de vigilància i defensa a la costa eivissenca. N'hi ha una damunt l'entrada del port de Balansat. Torre rodona i elevada, des d'on els guaites avisen amb fum o foc, segons l'hora, la proximitat de l'enemic. La torre, enfilada al caire dels cingles, sobre la mar. Dura un dia llarg i solitari d'un any qualsevol del segle XVIII. La mar deserta o, a la llunyania, amb unes naus desconegudes. Hostils? Talaia previnguda, amb hores lentes, desocupades. Al peu, l'espaiosa cala, blava, verda, amb l'arc arenós i les penyes que la voregen. Semblen naus piràtiques! Hom cala foc a la llenya,, s'eleven les flames i el fum de l'alta, ben visible alimara.

A la darrerria del mateix segle l'església esdevé parròquia. La parròquia de Sant Miquel depèn de la nova seu eivissenca. Els perills són menys freqüents, s'allunyen. Les noves generacions no recorden el combat dins l'illa. Per mar, un dels últims i més gloriosos, ja en començar el segle XIX, fou el d'un petit xabec contra una corbeta amb bandera anglesa; lluita que fou contemplada, allà, des dels murs de Vila, per una ansiosa gentada. Desafiant el foc, els eivissencs

good use as farm labourers. Their free brothers, however, make violent appearances when least expected. Defensive watchtowers are built around the coast. There is one above the entrance to the port of Balansat: a tall round tower, from which the watchers warn of the approach of the enemy by smoke or fire, depending on the hour. The tower stands out on the edge of the cliffs, above the sea. It is any long solitary day during the eighteenth century when the sea seems deserted...Or is it? In the far distance, there are some unknown ships: are they hostile? The watchtower is on the alert during slow, unoccupied hours. At its foot the spacious bay, blue and green, with its arc of sand and surrounding cliffs. They do look like pirate vessels! The wood is lit and the flames and smoke rise up from the high, very visible blaze.

Towards the end of the same century the church becomes a parish. The parish of Sant Miquel depends on the newly-created Eivissenc bishopric. The dangers are less frequent and begin to go away. The new generations do not remember the combats on the land. But, just after the turn of the nineteenth century, one of the last and most glorious of the sea combats took place: a small xebec attacked a corvette flying the English flag and the struggle took place in full view of the anxious crowd on the walled ramparts of the town. Ignoring the shots of

arribaren a l'abordatge. Hores després entrava el xabec portant de remolc el vaixell vençut. Ja la guerra, si n'hi ha, és lluny, a la Península; o, la segona meitat del segle, al Marroc, a Cuba o a Filipines. A l'illa hi ha més cases, més camins, més abundància. Sempre els fills, però, hereten dels pares els treballs i la mort. Tanmateix hi ha, per a cada jovesa, una ratxa d'il·lusions, una hora abrusada d'amor. I aquesta és la història de Sant Miquel. La vida sempre comença, sempre acaba. Uns romanen, lleguen els ossos a l'estret cementiri rural; els altres se'n van, lluny: Alger, Amèrica. De tant en tant n'arriba —si arriba— una carta inexpressiva, notícies. Al poble hi ha infants, adults, vellets. Sembla sempre la mateixa gent. I aquest novembre, aconseguit dins el gran dipòsit del futur, s'assembla als altres novembres passats. Aquest novembre, aquest any, que aviat seran també història.

La terra, per aquest temps, pren un to obscur. Les garrigues, les penyes, els sembrats són foscos, fins i tot quan el cel es desentela. Hi ha una invasió de verd. Herbes i sembrats assalten la terra a tendres onades. A la vora de la Mediterrània són pocs els arbres que perden la fulla. Pins, garrovers, oliveres, tarongers resten

the enemy, the Eivissencs got close enough to board. Hours later, the xebec returned with the conquered vessel in tow. From now on, though, any wars that do occur take place far away: on the Peninsula or, in the second half of the century, in Morocco, Cuba or the Philippines. On the island there are more houses, more roads and more affluence. But, as always, the children go on inheriting work and death from their parents. And yet, for every span of youth, there is a handful of dreams and an ardent time of love. And this is the history of Sant Miquel. Life is always starting and always ending. Some stay here and leave their bones in the small rural graveyard, while the rest go far away: to Algiers or America. From time to time, there is news of them – if it arrives – in an inexpressive letter. In the village there are children, adults and old people: they always look the same. And this November, taken from the great storehouse of the future, resembles all the other past Novembers. This November and this Year, which will also soon be history.

The earth takes on a sombre note at this time of year. The garrigue, the cliffs and the fields of crops are all darker, even under a clear sky. There is an invasion of greenery. Gentle waves of new crops and herbage assault the earth. On the Mediterranean shores few trees shed their leaves. Pines, carobs,

inalterables. No hi ha aquella espectacular tardor de fulles seques d'altres climes. Es van despullant figueres i ametllers. Uns altres arbres fruiters tenen una fulla escassa i groguinosa. No així els caquis, que ara la tenen encesa, vermella. Cada copa és com un incendi, una taca de foc entre els tons negrosos. La seva mort, avall, cap als horts, és singular i aparatosa, més i més a l'hora d'una posta de fredes roentors. Quan tot entra dins la vida hivernenca, hi ha una fruita que madura, que primer deixa tot just de confondre's amb les fulles obscures i brillants i que després hi va encenent entremig el seu color vistós. Són les taronges, cada vegada més alegres i lluminoses, mentre el món fa cada dia una passa cap al fred i la tristesa. Una passa feta pel camí dels dies curts i del sol afeblit. L'octubre tenia encara una mena d'alegria; el novembre és ja completament seriós, i amb tot i això no menys bell. Hi ha dies d'una greu serenitat i d'una transparència freda, tot tocat d'un punt de melangia, que són els que més s'adiuen amb alguns estats preferits de l'ànima. La llarga nit o les nuvolades insistents roben el sol al dia. Quan el sol aconsegueix apartar els núvols, els estesos sembrats s'alegren de l'almoïna, resplendeixen a contrallum. Hom duu l'oliva al trull. El fruit, ja passat per la mola, s'amuntega en cofins d'espart, sota la premsa.

olives and orange trees never alter. We do not have the spectacular autumn of other climates, with drying leaves. Fig and almond trees gradually undress themselves. Some of the other fruit trees have sparse and yellowing leaves. But not so the persimmons, whose leaves are now glowing red. The top of each tree is like a fire, a patch of flames among the sombre tones. Their death, down below, towards the horticultural orchards, is a rare spectacle and more so in the company of a cold, candescent sunset. When everything else is entering into its winter state, there is one fruit which is still ripening and prefers to stay camouflaged at first amongst the dark shiny leaves, but then gradually kindles into flamboyant colour. These are the oranges, which get brighter and more cheerful every day, while the world takes another step into coldness and sadness. A step along the road of short days and feeble sunlight. October was still slightly cheerful; now November is completely serious, but no less beautiful for all that. There are days of grave serenity and cold transparency, touched with a little melancholy, which are those that go best with some favourite states of mind. The long night or persistent banks of clouds steal the day's sunshine. When the sun does manage to break through the clouds, the charitable gift is joyfully received by the glistening backlit crops spread out below. The olives are taken to be pressed. The fruit, after being milled, is put into a



S'estrenyen els cofins i l'oli regalima, espès, ajudat per l'aigua calenta; per una sequiola corre al dipòsit enclotat. Braços esforçats a la manuella, nova estreta de la premsa, quan l'oliva deixa d'amollar el seu suc. Abans hi havia els trulls de fusta, que deien de biga. Vella tasca mediterrània.

Novembre. Les puntes d'algunes branques sobresurten damunt el fullam esgrogueït i escàs. Fulles seques, caigudes entremig de la verdor naixent. Sota els pins, dins el bosc d'ombres i humitat, una abundosa floració: les floretes apinyades dels cepells, d'un malva pàl·lid, i les grogues i vives de l'argelaga. També comencen a badar diminutament i blavosa les floretes de romaní. Rústica competència a les roses i crisantems dels jardins. Es veu el que té la tardor de primavera invertida. A les roques i damunt la terra, a la vora d'aquesta desclosa boscana, s'arrapa i s'estén la molsa, amb llums d'un verd humit, intensíssim. L'abella s'emporta al rusc la dolça matèria de la seva indústria, emplena les bresques que l'home, en una mena de cop de mà nocturn, robarà, ardit, per treure'n la mel que ha d'endolcir l'eivissenca salsa de Nadal.

pile of shallow esparto-grass baskets, underneath the press. The round baskets are squeezed and with the help of warm water the thick oil trickles out; it runs down a channel into a sunken deposit. Arms strain on the bar; there is a renewed squeeze from the press and the olives have released their last drops of juice. The olive-presses used to be made of wood and were called beam presses. An ancient Mediterranean task.

November. The ends of some of the branches stick out from the sparse yellowed foliage. Dry leaves falling among the budding greenery. But under the pines, in the humid shady woodland, there is an abundance of flowers: the crowded little pale-mauve flowers of the heathers and the lively yellow flowers of the broom. The small light-blue flowers of the rosemary bushes are also starting to come out. Rustic competition for the roses and chrysanthemums in the gardens. We are looking at Autumn's share of inverted Spring. On the ground and rocks at the edge of this clearing, the moss takes hold and spreads, with intense damp green hues. The bees are busy garnering nectar in their hives and filling the combs, which man, like a thief in the night, will boldly plunder for honey to sweeten the Eivissenc Christmas Sauce (*salsa*).

## **DEL TEMPS D'ADVENT A LES MINVES DE GENER**

*Així a la llàntia vigilant d'estudi...*  
Costa i Llobera

Si les primeres setmanes de novembre ens han dut un temps de pluges, les seves acaballes i l'entrada del desembre han estat una temporada tranquil·la i dolça, sense vents, sense fred, amb núvols abundants durant el dia i matinades de rou. L'hivern s'atansa tan suaument que sembla que no hagi d'arribar mai. El dia curt és aprofitat intensament per tal d'acabar el sementer. I els vespres deixen un ample lleure al jovent per a acudir al festeig, de vegades a llargues distàncies, i a fadrins i casats per a jugar interminablement a cartes. El joc és una forta passió d'aquesta gent, que fins en el treball ha d'esperar de la sort l'èxit o el fracàs. ¿No serà un cop de

## **FROM ADVENT TO THE JANUARY NEAP TIDE**

And now a lantern will keep watch while we study...  
Costa i Llobera

Although the first weeks of November brought us some rain, the month has ended as December has begun, with calm and mild weather, with morning dew and abundant clouds during the day but not cold nor windy. The winter is drawing in so gently that it seems as if it will never arrive. Full advantage is taken of the short days to finish off the sowing. And the evenings give the young men ample spare time to go courting – sometimes a long way away – and for the married and unmarried alike to play endlessly at cards. Gambling is a real passion for these people who have to wait for fate to decide their success or failure even in their work. Will it not be a stroke of luck if the present labour of sowing gives a good

fortuna el que decidirà el resultat dels afanys actuals de la sembra? No sabem si són fatalistes tots els pagesos, a causa de l'atzar del qual depenen les bones o les males collites, o si ho són especialment els eivissencs, per motius de tradició. El cert és que aquesta afecció al joc que manifesten, s'adiu amb un evident fatalisme, que els fa esperar d'una carta el guany o la pèrdua.

Una feina pròpia d'aquests dies es converteix per als nostres terrassans en una diada de diversió: són les matances, en les quals se sacrifiquen i transformen en diferents viandes per a tot l'any els porcs aviciats i encevatats. Són un motiu de reunió per a la família dispersa, i la feina de tot el dia acaba en un magnífic sopar. Uns estómacs gairebé vegetarians agraeixen la menja greixosa, precedida de bunyols i ben acompanyada de vi. Després vénen els jocs i el festeig, si no acudeix a la casa —diversió ja infreqüent— una comparsa de disfressats, amb les seves rústiques i desvergonyides farses. No és doncs la matança una feina freda i estricta, com la de les ciutats, sinó que conserva tota l'alegre llibertat i tota la pausada fantasia d'un món pretèrit. Patriarcalment hi conviuen vellets i infants, homes i dones; tot cap dins el petit món de la matança, i

result, and equally bad luck if it does not? We do not know if all peasants are fatalists, given that good or bad harvests depend on sheer chance, or whether the Eivissenc peasants are especially so for reasons of tradition. What is certain is that their obvious fondness for gambling fits in well with an evident fatalism, which leads them to look to the turn of a card to make a gain or a loss.

One of the tasks of this time of the year is converted into a day of diversion by our farmers, namely the *matances*: the slaughter of the fattened, pampered pigs and their transformation into different kinds of food for the whole year to come. This provides an excuse for the dispersed family to get together and the whole day's work ends in a magnificent supper. After the doughnuts earlier in the day, the almost-vegetarian stomachs now welcome the fatty meal, with liberal helpings of wine. Afterwards the games and courtship will begin, even though nowadays it is less usual for them to be enhanced by the bawdy rustic farces of a visiting group of masked people in fancy dress. The *matança* is not, then, a cold and clinical task like slaughter in the cities, but one which conserves all the joyful freedom and unhurried fantasy of a former world. In patriarchal fashion, the old people and children, and men and women, all fit together in the small

són la llengua destravada, l'acudit espontani i la broma tradicional allò que crea el clima fabulós de diversió.

La natura segueix un camí que a vegades sembla no tenir res a veure amb els homes. Brillants estels, entre núvols; lluna creixent, que s'amaga o surt d'improvís en un racó del cel, amb una pàl·lida almoina per als camins nocturns; herbetes matinals, amb gotes de rosada; dia argentat, amb hores contades per a la feina o per al lent viatge amb el carro, fins a Vila. Així aquest temps d'Advent ens acostava a l'annual Naixença, a la nit estremida i cristiana, a la magna festa del dia de Nadal. La gatzara, el vi i les menges suculentes i abundoses no destrueixen el cor íntim de la diada.

Alguna tarda, amb el bon temps, és agradable una passejada més llarga que d'ordinari. El puig d'En Besora, a la vora del poble, ens tempta amb la seva alçària coberta de pins. Fa tant de temps que no hi hem pujat i no hem gaudit dels amples espais que el volten! Sembla partir-lo una canalada, on l'home ha construït una escala gegantina de bancals, amb bosc a banda i banda: una paret de pedra seca, un petit replà amb una figuera, altra vegada una paret i un replà, i així fins a dalt. Pugem pel marge costerut d'aquests esglaons. Cada poc tret, una

world of the *matança*; and the untrammelled tongue, the ready wit and the traditional joke are what creates the fabulous atmosphere of merriment.

Nature follows a course which sometimes seems to have nothing to do with mankind. Brilliant stars in between the clouds; a waxing moon, which hides itself or suddenly appears in a corner of the sky, with a pale donation for the nocturnal byways; morning greenery with drops of dew; silvery daytime, with just enough time for working or for the slow trip by cart to Vila. And so this time of Advent brings us closer to the annual Birth, the emotive Christian night and the grand celebration of Christmas Day. The intimate significance of the day is not destroyed by the festive uproar, the wine, and the succulent and plentiful meals.

One afternoon, we take advantage of the fine weather to enjoy a longer walk than usual. We are tempted by the pine-covered summit of the hill called Puig den Besora, on the edge of the village. It is such a long time since we last went up it and enjoyed the views of the wide-open spaces that surround it. The hill seems to be divided in two by a dry valley, in which man has made a giant stairway of terraces, with woods on either side: first there is a dry-stone wall, then a small flat area

aturada, per a respirar i per a considerar els assoliments. Aviat som a la mateixa altura del campanar de l'església; ara ja som molt més amunt. El poble sembla enfonsar-se, mentre que l'horitzó marí, al nord, apar que puja. En acostar-nos al cim, una mica de vent gemega entre les fulles dels pins. Aquests, a dalt, no deixen veure el paisatge tot a l'entorn. Hem de mirar per sectors. D'aquí estant es veu el port, com si fos tot tancat per l'illa d'es Bosc, i la mar per damunt els puigs que el volten. La torre d'es Molar és alta, en un primer relleix de roques, sobre el qual hi ha el segon relleix de la punta de sa Creu. Cap al port davalla ràpidament el torrent, que mostra només, com un mirall romput, uns petits fragments brillants. Cap a migjorn s'obre també el paisatge a la vista de la mar. Ens adonem, certament, que som en una illa. Cal travessar-la tota amb l'esguard per arribar al meridional relleu de Vila, petit pujol de cases que s'ofereix entre serres, blanquinós, voltat d'una aigua que es confon amb el cel, amb l'illa de Formentera al fons, com un núvol. Cap al sud-est se succeeixen alguns plans —el d'Aubarqueta és encara de la parròquia— fins a Santa Eulària i la seva costa, d'una mar tan blava. Cap a llevant, les altes muntanyes de Sant Joan ens clouen la vista de la mar. I això mateix passa a ponent i en

with a fig-tree, then another wall, then another small flat area and so on, right up to the top. We climb up the steep slope at the side of these steps, stopping frequently to catch our breath and measure our progress. We soon reach the same height as the bell tower of the church and then we go on much higher. The village seems to sink down, while the sea horizon, to the north, appears to rise. When we get close to the summit, a light wind is moaning among the pine needles. These trees on top prevent us from seeing the whole view around us. We have to look at one sector at a time. From here the port appears to be closed in by the island known as Illa des Bosc, and the sea can be seen over the top of the surrounding hills. The watchtower, Torre des Molar, is high up on a first line of cliffs, above which there is the second line of the point of Sa Creu. The stream descends rapidly towards the port but shows us only a few brilliant fragments, like a broken mirror. Towards the south, as well, the landscape opens out into a view of the sea. There is no mistaking that we are on an island. We need only glance across it all to make out the southerly profile of Vila, the capital town: a small whitish hillside of houses, which can be seen between the ridges and which are framed by water merging into the sky, with the island of Formentera in the background, like a cloud. Towards the south-east, there is a succession of small plains – that of Albarqueta still lies within

direcció al sud-oest, enllà de l'amplària del Pla Roig, que tenim sota els peus. A la llum de la tarda morent, el Pla Roig té una riquesa de setí o de ras. Entre la catifa maragdina dels sembrats hi ha els illots més foscos d'alguns pinars i les taques morades de la terra llaurada, amb un escampall de casetes blanques. Es veu com és d'elevat aquest pla, en relació als camps que volten el port, i que el Puig de Missa és un contrafort o baluard de l'alt planell, amb un ràpid declivi cap a les terres baixes. El poblet petitó reposa a la falda més curta que mira cap al Pla, cap a migjorn. Encongit entre aquests camps. Silenciós i quiet com al fons d'un tou o vidre transparent. Blocs d'aire damunt, com un enorme dipòsit. Des d'aquest puig es nota sobretot la presència de l'aire, estès damunt la terra, voltant-nos. El cor, un moment, s'avia amb un ocell per travessar-lo, per nedar-lo, en veloç davallada cap al sòl de la massa espaiosa. El descens serà ràpid, però humà. Una senda ens guiarà entre el bosc, sortirem aviat a un camí, el camí ens farà passar per davant una casa...

La gent és a treballar; només resta, feinejant a la seva porta, una al·lota. Ens parlem a certa distància, unes frases indiferents. Entre el crepuscle, brillen els seus

our parish – and they reach as far as Santa Eulària and its coastline, with its deep blue sea. Towards the east, the high mountains of Sant Joan block out the sea. The same is true of the west and south-west, beyond the expanse of the Pla Roig, which is directly below us. In the dying afternoon light, the Pla Roig has a richness like that of silk or satin. Among the emerald carpet of crops there are some darker islets of pine groves and purple patches of ploughed ground, with a scattering of white houses. We can see how high this plain is in relation to the countryside around the port, and that the Puig de Missa is really a raised spur or buttress of the high plateau, dropping off steeply towards the low ground. The little village nestles on the shorter face of this spur, looking south towards the plain. It appears even smaller in this countryside. Silent and still, as if deep under water or transparent glass. With layers of air on top, like an enormous reservoir. The presence of the air all around us, and spread out over the earth, is what we notice most of all from this hilltop. For a moment, our heart takes off with a bird to fly across it or to swim through it, swooping down to earth through the spacious mass. But our descent, though rapid, will be human. A path will lead us through the woods; we will soon come out onto a track; the track will take us past a house...

grans ulls negres. Té un bell somrís una mica trist, sensual. Es veu que no li sap greu aturar una estona l'atenció d'algun vianant. Tot el que té de dona es redreça i es posa alerta quan un fadrí entra dins el seu camp d'acció. Feminitat descoberta, una mica indefensa, o tal vegada conscient del seu poder. És jove, no duu la falda pagesa. En tornar a caminar, quan les paraules ja no poden allargar-se, hom troba més buit i fosc el camí indefugible.

Al vespre, dins la casa solitària, la companyia d'un llibre. El medi rústic, oblidat entorn, ja mig abaltit o abaltit del tot: portes closes als camps, llumeners apagats, camins deserts, lluna cap al ponent. Al llibre que la mà aguanta, cercant tota la llum del quinqué, es desperta un món diferent, màgicament pres entre les lletres. Una darrera l'altra, avui, s'il·lumina les altes paraules que contenen el pensament d'un apartat escriptor. Apartat en el temps i en l'espai. Rigorosa mètrica, reglada inspiració. Els apassionats alexandrins no forcen mai la puresa de l'estil. El bon gust i la raó han emmotllat amb elegància tots els excessos del sentiment. Els versos repiquen rimats de dos en dos, amb una perfecta harmonia. La còlera implacable i el gemec amorós alternen amb l'expressió

A girl is busy at the doorway; the other people are all out at work. We speak from a slight distance, a few inconsequential sentences. Her large black eyes shine in the fading light. She has a lovely, sensual, rather sad smile. It is clear that she does not mind capturing the attention of a passer-by for a while. All her womanly instincts sit up and take note when a marriageable man comes within range. Femininity on display, a little helpless, or perhaps conscious of its power. She is young and does not wear peasant dress. When the exchange of words can be prolonged no more and we are walking on again, the inescapable road seems darker and emptier.

In the evening, in our own solitary house, a book keeps us company. The rustic life around us is now forgotten, drowsing or already asleep. Doors shut out the fields, oil lamps are doused and the tracks are deserted under the moon in the western sky. The book, held up in our hands to catch the full light of the lantern, awakens a different world, magically captured within the small letters. Here and now, one after another, the lofty words light up, revealing the thoughts of a distant writer – distant in both time and space. Rigorously metric, measured inspiration. The passionate Alexandrines never violate the purity of the style. Good taste and reason have elegantly moulded any excess of sentiment.

del deure forçós, en el vers estremit d'una fina inquietud. Els personatges de la tragèdia se cedeixen la paraula pulcrament agitada, amb gentilesa de cortesans. Sospiren la resignació i l'anhel, en una refinadíssima boca femenina:

*«Non que la peur du coup dont je suis menacée*

*Me fasse rappeler votre bonté passée.*

*Ne craignez rien; mon coeur, de votre honneur jaloux,*

*Ne fera point rougir un père tel que vous;*

*Et si je n'avais eu que ma vie à défendre,*

*J'aurais su renfermer un souvenir si tendre.*

*Mais à mon triste sort, vous le savez, Seigneur,*

*Une mère, un amant attachaient leur bonheur.*

*Un roi digne de vous a cru voir la journée*

*Qui devait éclairer notre illustre hyménée».*

En la callada nit de Sant Miquel ressusciten admirablement els versos polits de la *Iphigénie*. L'edició que els conté recorda la seva estrena a Versailles, segons les paraules d'un contemporani: *La decoration représentait une longue allée de verdure, ou, de part et d'autre, il y avait de bassins de fontaines... Cette allée se terminait dans le fond du théâtre par de tantes qui*

The verses chime in rhyming pairs, with a perfect harmony. Implacable anger and amorous complaints alternate with the expression of obligations of duty, in verses tremulous with subtle anxiety. With true courtesy, the characters in the tragedy allow one another to say their beautifully emotional words. An utterly-refined feminine voice whispers with resignation and yearning:

No fear of the fate that will soon overtake me

Prompts a call to your kindness that once used to be.

Have no fear; my heart, e'er jealous of your good name,

To a father like you are, would never cause shame;

If I were, of my life only, the defender,

I would have guarded a memory so tender.

But on my own sad fate, as my Lord comprehends,

A mother's, and a lover's, happiness depends.

A king worthy of you thought the day had arrived

When our illustrious wedding would be contrived.

The polished verses of “Iphigenia” come alive again admirably in the silent night of Sant Miquel. The edition which contains them recalls their first performance at Versailles, where, in the words of a contemporary: “The scenery represented a long avenue of greenery with round



*avaient rapport à celles qui couvraient l'orchestre; et au delà paraissait une longue allée qui était l'allée même de l'Orangerie... Sur ce théâtre... la troupe de Comédiens du Roi représente la tragédie d'Iphigénie, dernier ouvrage de sieur Racine, qui reçut de toute la cour l'estime qu'ont toujours les pièces de cet auteur.* Sant Miquel. Versailles. El nostre record de l'Orangerie, sota un cel delicadament blau, amb alguns núvols molt enlairats: les altes, majestuoses escales, i, entremig, a baix, l'espaiosa plaça, amb els tarongers arrengrerats dins els seus testos. A dalt, l'elevada esplanada, unes fonts, el palau. Cap a l'altre costat, enllà de l'Orangerie, l'oberta, meravellosa perspectiva: avingudes, aigües, jardins amb esveltes arbredes, el bosc que cobreix els allargats tossals del fons. Com el rei i la seva cort el segle XVII, però amb un altre esperit, assaborim ara la poesia d'una tragèdia on el geni de Racine fa parlar uns personatges que els grecs ens lliuraren. «Així a la llàntia vigilant d'estudi...» No hi ha una pàtria determinada per a aquestes grans produccions dels poetes. Més ben dit, els bons llibres són una segona pàtria per a nosaltres; un territori mental i vast damunt el nostre territori geogràfic, que pot ser, per exemple, una parròquia rural d'una petita illa mediterrània. El pas d'aquesta pàtria

fountains here and there... This avenue ended at the back of the stage with awnings in keeping with those covering the orchestra; and beyond this could be seen another long avenue, which was the real avenue of the Orangery itself... On this stage... the troupe of the King's Actors performs the tragedy "Iphigenia", the latest work of M. Racine, which was received by the whole court with the admiration always reserved for this author's plays." Sant Miquel. Versailles. Our memory of the Orangery, under a delicately blue sky, with a few very high clouds: the majestic stairway and, below it, the spacious central square, flanked with the orange trees in their pots. Up above, the elevated esplanade, some fountains and the palace. In the other direction, beyond the Orangery, there is a marvellous open perspective: avenues, water, gardens with slender trees, and the woods covering the low elongated hills in the background. Like the king and his courtiers in the seventeenth century, although from a different viewpoint, we still relish the poetry of a tragedy in which the genius of Racine provides the words for characters handed down to us from the Greeks. "And now a lantern will keep watch while we study..." There is no particular homeland for these great poetic works. Or, to express this better, good books are a second homeland for us: a vast mental territory on top of our geographical territory, which may be, for example, a rural

física, tan estimada i insubstituïble, a la pàtria dels llibres és habitual i planer; cada dia el fem. Ens traslladem de l'una a l'altra regió sense cap esforç, i en les dues vivim intensament. No s'exclouen, de cap de les dues no podríem prescindir. Les Ifigènies i els Agamèmmons tenen la seva correspondència, a la deguda escala, entre la gent del poble. I l'esforç de la tasca diària, entre els éssers de carn i ossos, es correspon amb l'escreix de treball dins el regne d'ombres de la literatura.

Dels llibres —aquesta interpretació de la realitat— a la realitat del poble; del poble a Vila... I a Vila i a fora ja som damunt Nadal, arriba el dia de preparar la famosa, la discutida salsa. El símbol eivissenc d'aquestes festes és indubtablement la salsa nadalenca. No deixen de fer-ne a cap casa del camp, i és així mateix una pràctica ciutadana. Massapà, torrons, confits, i encara la substanciosa, l'espessa salsa, aquest torró líquid i calent, aquest brou ametllat i emmelat. El Nadal eivissenc canta entorn de la gran olla de la salsa. Dins la important tradició gastronòmica d'aquestes festes, Eivissa ha donat una nota d'originalitat. Els cent sabors que integren la salsa es fonen en un pregon, especial sabor únic. La fusió d'elements salats i dolços li comunica un

parish on a small Mediterranean island. The step from this physical homeland, so loved and irreplaceable, into the homeland of books is simple and habitual: we take it every day. We move effortlessly from one region to the other and we live intensely in both. They are not mutually exclusive, nor could we dispense with either of them. The Iphigenias and Agamemmons have their counterparts, on a different scale, among the people of the village. And the effort put into their everyday tasks, by these beings of flesh and blood, stands comparison with the zealous endeavours of literature's realm of shadows.

From books – reality interpreted – to the reality of the village, and from the village to the town... And in town and country alike we are nearly at Christmas. It is time to prepare the famous and much-discussed *salsa*: this Christmas sauce is undoubtedly the Eivissenc symbol of the festive season. Every country household makes some and it is also customary in the town. In addition to marzipan, nougats and sweets, we have the thick substantial *salsa*: this hot liquid nougat, this honeyed broth of almonds. Christmas on the island revolves around the great pot of *salsa*. Eivissa has added an original touch to the notable gastronomic tradition of the festive season. The hundred flavours which go into the

entremaliament, una potència inigualables. Massa intensa per a prendre-la sola, requereix, com saben tots els eivissencs, el complement del bescuit, també de fórmula i preparació insulars. De tal manera incorporats a la mansuetud d'aquest la vivesa i el grau de la salsa, la resultant no pot ser més equilibrada i gustosa. No s'esgota l'olla de la salsa amb el dia de Nadal. Torna a bullir cada festa de les que segueixen el solstici d'hivern; es vessa, ardent, dins les grosses escudelles. Han arribat els freds, els temporals que solen envestir-nos durant aquestes festes nadalenques i de cap d'any. El vent corre i rumbeja, gairebé sol, part de fora de finestres i portes embarrades, però el fred ha entrat dins les cases. S'atura una mica, respectant el foc de la llar i l'escudella de salsa que bruseix, carregada d'espècies i de violència. Ara l'illa és més illa que mai, amb els camins de la mar desfets i turmentats. Grans onades s'enfolleixen sota la ventada, la costa és assotada amb furiosa empenta, i les naus s'estan quietes al port esperant un dia i un altre que acabi de passar el trasbals del temperi. Plou una altra vegada damunt l'illa i damunt la mar, una pluja menuda i glaçada, arremolinada dins l'envestida cega del vent.

sauce mingle into a unique, profound, special taste. The fusion of salty and sweet elements gives it a little mischief, an unmatched potency. Too intense to be taken alone, it requires, as every Eivissenc knows, the complement of *bescuit*, a type of flavoured bread, also home-made using an island recipe. With the mildness of the *bescuit* to temper the liveliness and character of the *salsa*, the result could not be tastier or better balanced. The pot of *salsa* is not exhausted on Christmas Day. It goes back on the boil again on every festive day which follows the winter solstice; it is poured, scalding hot, into big bowls. The cold weather has arrived with the storms which often attack us during the festivities of Christmas and the New Year. The wind, almost alone, struts and bustles outside the windows and barred doors, but the cold has entered the houses. It hesitates for a while, respecting the fire on the hearth and the fiery bowl of *salsa*, charged with spices and violence. Now the island is more of an island than ever, with the sea lanes tormented and broken. Huge waves, driven mad by the winds, attack the shore with a furious force while the ships sit in the port for days waiting for the bout of rough weather to finish. It rains again on the island and on the sea, a fine icy rain, swirling about in the blind fury of the wind.

I amb aquest temporal hem entrat dins l'any nou i ha començat una volta més la roda del temps. Mai no s'atura el seu gir, que ara toca damunt un gener altre cop amansit. Fugiren els núvols, el cel un dia s'encalmà. No hi ha vent, o sols un llebeig imperceptible. Humitat a la terra, i, amunt, la resplendor del sol, curta i encesa guaitada. La mar està baixa i tranquil·la: entorn de les roques i a les pedres del moll es veu la franja negrosa que les aigües, havent baixat de nivell, deixen al descobert. Són les minves o calmes de gener. A Sant Miquel hi ha un silenci aturat i meditatiu damunt la terra. Llargues nits d'estrelles i gel. Matinades fredes, amb la blancor ruixada enmig dels verds delicats. El sol que surt troba mil reflexos humits a les herbes i branquetes i unes tènues bromes, endormiscada fumassa que s'estira pels camps baixos, entre els arbres. La terra té una fredor cruel per als peus dels llauradors, però ara és temps d'escassa feina. Munta el sol, s'escalfa el dia, l'hivern mediterrani s'esforça cap a la bellesa i la dolçor. Alguns ametllers, com impacientats davant la imminència d'una cursa, anticipen el moment de la seva floració, concedeixen a l'aire unes primeres floretes estranyades. Sobre els camps roman estès el gran silenci astral del món. Torrent, ocells, homes a penes torben la seva

With this stormy weather, we have entered the New Year and the wheel of time has been reset. Turning without pause, it now presides over a January tamed anew. A day comes when the sky is calm again and the clouds have flown away. There is no wind, or just an imperceptible south westerly breeze. Dampness underfoot and, above, the splendour of the sun, keeping a brief but burning watch. The sea has receded and is still: around the rocks and on the stones of the quayside can be seen the dark fringe revealed by the drop in the water level. This is the January neap tide. In Sant Miquel there is a still and meditative silence on the land. Long nights of stars and frost. Cold mornings, with whiteness sprinkled among the soft shades of green. The rising sun picks out a thousand damp reflections among the plants and twigs and tenuous mists – sleepy masses of vapour spreading across the lower fields, among the trees. The earth has a cruel coldness for the feet of the farm workers, but there is not much work at this time of year. The sun climbs higher; the day warms up and the Mediterranean winter makes an effort to be gentle and beautiful. Some almond trees, as if impatient to start a race, break into early blossom, with a few small astonished flowers open to the air. The great astral silence of the world still holds sway over the countryside. The stream, the birds and men scarcely affect its transcendence. One feels a sacred respect,

excelsitud. Hom sent un sagrat respecte, un amor admirat, una pau fins a l'enuig, una peresa, una mort. Reconeix la vella terra, el vell hivern, la vella passa. La feina diària és a la vora, esperant. Petita pausa assolellada, tranquil·la, verda, blava, gairebé alegre.

*Sant Miquel, 13 de gener de 1954.*

an admiring love and a peace which passes into anger, lethargy and a death. One recognises the old earth, the old winter and the old pace. The daily routine is on the side, waiting. A short sunny pause... calm, green, blue and almost joyful.

*Sant Miquel, 13th of January 1954.*

