

ALSO BY OCTAVIO PAZ

Configurations

A Draft of Shadows

Eagle or Sun?

Early Poems 1935–1955

Selected Poems

The Collected Poems of Octavio Paz

1957-1987

Edited and translated by Eliot Weinberger

With additional translations by
Elizabeth Bishop, Paul Blackburn, Lysander Kemp,
Denise Levertov, John Frederick Nims, Mark Strand,
and Charles Tomlinson

A NEW DIRECTIONS BOOK

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(y el rumor de sus sandalias
sobre las púas secas de los pinos)

Santa:

la tierra de

(era como si pisara) los Vedas.

(cenizas.)

El hombre

(Con el índice)

empezó a pensar

(categórico)

hace cinco mil años

(el pandit me mostraba)

Aquí . . .

(los Himalayas,

las montañas más jóvenes del planeta.)

INTERMITENCIAS DEL OESTE (3)

(México: Olimpiada de 1968)

A Dore y Adja Yunkers

La limpidez

(quizá valga la pena
escribirlo sobre la limpieza
de esta hoja)

no es límpida:

es una rabia

(amarilla y negra
acumulación de bilis en español)
extendida sobre la página.
¿Por qué?

*La vergüenza es ira
vuelta contra uno mismo:*

si

*una nación entera se avergüenza
es león que se agazapa
para saltar.*

(Los empleados
municipales lavan la sangre
en la Plaza de los Sacrificios.)

(and the murmur of his sandals
on the dry pine needles)

is Holy:

the land

(were as though he were walking) of the Vedas.

(on ashes.)

Man

(With a strict)

began to think

(finger)

five thousand years ago

(the pandit showed me)

Here . . .

(the Himalayas,

the youngest mountains on earth.)

INTERRUPTIONS FROM THE WEST (3)

(Mexico City: The 1968 Olympiad)

for Dore and Adja Yunkers

Lucidity

(perhaps it's worth
writing across the purity
of this page)

is not lucid:

it is fury

(yellow and black
mass of bile in Spanish)
spreading over the page.
Why?

*Guilt is anger
turned against itself:*

if

*an entire nation is ashamed
it is a lion poised
to leap.*

(The municipal
employees wash the blood
from the Plaza of the Sacrificed.)

Mira ahora,
 manchada
 antes de haber dicho algo
 que valga la pena,
 la limpidez.

HIMACHAL PRADESH (3)

5 pequeñas abominaciones
 vistas, oídas, cometidas:

El festín de los buitres.
 Comieron tanto que no pueden volar.
 No muy lejos, sobre una peña,
 un águila tullida
 espera su resto de carroña.

En la veranda del *dak bungalow*
 el *barrister* de Nagpur pesca al extranjero
 y en un inglés enmelado le ofrece un trago,
 un cesto de ciruelas de su huerta, un mapa,
 un almuerzo de *curry*,
 noticias verídicas del país,
 el balcón de su casa con una vista
 única . . . Su mujer lo observa, oblicua,
 mascullando injurias en hindustani.

Ya por tomar el fresco o sorprender
 ese momento de armisticio
 en que la media luna es verdadera
 mente blanca y el sol es todavía el sol,
 se asoma al aire la pareja de viejitos.
 Se animan, resucitan
 una pasión feroz de insectos.
 Sonaja de semillas secas:
 la hora de las recriminaciones.

En el patio del club seis eucaliptos
 se ahogan en una casi luz casi miel,

Look now,
 stained
 before anything worth it
 was said:
 lucidity.

HIMACHAL PRADESH (3)

5 little abominations
 seen, heard, committed:

The vultures' banquet.
 They've eaten so much they can't fly.
 Nearby, on a rock,
 a crippled eagle
 waits for his scraps of the meat.

On the verandah of the *dak bungalow*,
 the *barrister* from Nagpur hooks the stranger
 and in mellifluous English offers him a drink,
 a basket of plums from his garden, a map,
 a curry lunch,
 reliable national news,
 the balcony of his house with a special
 view . . . His wife watches, obliquely,
 muttering insults in Hindustani.

Now, to take the air, to surprise
 that moment of cease-fire
 when the half-moon's truly blank
 and the sun is still the sun,
 the old couple appears outside.
 They become excited, reviving
 a furious insect passion.
 Rattle of dry seeds:
 the hour of recriminations.

In the patio of the club six eucalypti
 drown in the half-honey half-light,