

THE NEW RURALISM:  
An Epistemology of Transformed Space

Joan Ramon Resina and William Viestenz  
(eds.)

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# A CATALAN PEASANT: DALÍ'S RENEWAL OF SURREALISM

*Enric Bou*

Landscape is nature that is  
aesthetically present to the gaze  
of a sensitive and feeling  
observer.

JOACHIM RITTER

## I. NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

One of the most salient features of Dalí's works is the transformative omnipresence of his native landscape in his paintings. A beach becomes a table and later on fills the canvas with the immensity of the Empordà plain. The importance of his Catalan roots is equally prevalent in his writing. The Empordà also constructs the picturesque linguistic background of his prose and poetry, noticeable in a strikingly innovative intonation, unexpected lexical choices, and imagery derived from this particular geographical realm. In all aspects of his art, Salvador Dalí's homeland is always at the root of the basic structures for the idiolect of this writer-painter without just one language. As Dalí's art matures over the years, the connection between his artistic expression and geographical idiosyncrasies grows. There is a startling difference between Dalí's early writings from 1919 to 1923, particularly in *Un diari 1919-1920*, in which we perceive an adolescent romantic voice, and the provocative voice we hear in his first prose poems and manifestoes published in *L'Amic de les Arts* or in the surrealist Paris journals, such as *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*. Gone is all the adolescent romantic paraphernalia and attitude, which have been replaced by a strong voice, equally innovative, yet shaped primarily by the light and atmosphere of the Empordà, the "most concrete

and the most objective piece of landscape that exists in the world" (Dalí 1942). There is still a lingering, albeit much more sophisticated reference to nature, very noticeable in his first "modern" prose, "Sant Sebastià". In his surrealist writings Dalí uses examples and situations extracted from his summer landscape at Cadaqués and Port Lligat, as is the case with his widely provocative "Rêverie", full of sexual confessions (attempts to seduce a minor, masturbation, voyeurism, etc.) intertwined with vivid descriptions of the light and nature of his native land. In both his writings and paintings, Dalí consistently made connections to the new surrealist aesthetics, using the rustic landscape of Empordà. His unique combination of ancestral words and images, aromas and sounds, may be considered one of the most radical contributions to Surrealist aesthetics, while at the same time maintaining alive a peasant tradition at the heart of Surrealism. I want to address this persistence of nature's presence in the work of this most remarkable avant-garde artist. It is a persistence which we cannot explain only in terms of longing for a lost paradise, but rather in terms of a sophisticated aesthetic program, which was crucial to the survival and renewal of Surrealism.

In a famous 1963 essay, "Landschaft: Zur Funktion des ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft", Joachim Ritter clarified the difference between nature and landscape. The landscape experience is disinterested, marked by a freedom from duties. This view of nature is specifically urban. As Ritter reminds us, in his "The Philosophy of Landscape" Georg Simmel had already made a useful distinction when he stated that landscape is apprehended through perception-based emotion:

We relate to a landscape, whether in nature or in art, as whole beings. The act that generates it for us is immediately one of perception and feeling, and it only gets split into these separated constituents through subsequent reflection. An artist is someone who carries out the formative act of contemplative perception and feeling in such a pure form and with such vigour, that the given material gets completely absorbed and then, seemingly out of its own, comes to be created anew. (Simmel: 29)

The main distinction between nature and landscape is human intervention, or a process of intellectualization. Ritter constructs his theory of landscape on the basis of a careful reading of Petrarch's "Ascent of Mont Ventoux", published in *Epistolae familiares*, and Schiller's poem "Der Spaziergang" (The Walk). He concludes that sky and earth, nature as a whole as seen by human beings is only possible under certain conditions, sta-

ting that "nature as landscape becomes apparent in modern society only under the condition of freedom" (162). Freedom is crucial for society's existence and comes into being through the domination of nature, which becomes its goal. In other words, artists and writers contribute to express this sense of domination through a sense of landscape, Simmel's idea of "Stimmung".

Dalí wrote a very special chapter in this hermeneutical sequence, when he established unexpected relations with his familiar natural surroundings and used contrasting concepts related to Modernity to introduce a sense of domination. In the prose "Sant Sebastià", for example, he introduces, through Heraclitus, the idea that nature likes to hide itself from view. This he perceived as a result of nature's relation to human beings. Dalí goes on to mention Alberto Savinio's thought, that this "self-modesty" is the cause of irony. This type of irony is an important element of Dalí's works in general, as it demonstrates the intrinsic and at times contradictory relationship between nature and its artistic expression, as a process of "coming out of hiding". As an example he narrates an encounter with a Cadaqués fisherman, Enriquet, who, when observing one of Dalí's paintings, a representation of the sea, proclaims: "It's the same. Because there the waves can be counted".<sup>1</sup> In another section of the same prose, "Vents alisis i contralisis", Dalí presents a forest of apparatus in startling contrast with shells and rocks: "On the sand covered with shells and mica, precision instruments of unknown physics projected their explicative shadows, offering their crystals and aluminums to the disinfected light. Some letters drawn by Giorgio Morandi indicated: *Distilled Instruments*" (Gimferrer 1995: 17). This is a text dedicated to his friend Federico García Lorca, and obviously the reference to "*Aparells destil·lats*" is one of the first appearances of those apparatus or gadgets. These hybrid constructs, part nature, part technology, are not only the essential components of one of his most striking paintings of the 1920s, "Apparatus and Hand", and "Forest of Gadgets" (a painting also known as "La mel és més dolça que la sang", "Honey is Sweeter than Blood"), but also become the innovative trademark of his art in general, aimed at renovating the arts by creating a "systematization of confusion designed to destroy 'the shackles limiting our vision'" (Radford: 88).

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1. All translations from Dalí's early poetical prose come from Finkelstein 1998.

Dalí's renewal of Surrealism, his particular contribution to the renovation of the arts, feeds upon hybridism and confronting elements of nature (always seen as landscape and understood against the backdrop of the untamable and mysterious Empordà) with civilized, controllable society. In this crucial text from his pre-surrealist period, Dalí organizes his ideas around a dual structure, confronting concepts such as "Saint Objectivity" and "Putrefaction". Saint Objectivity is related to the industrial world of cars, phonographs, cinema, and shops filled with mannequins (or "tailor's dummies"). Against this he opposes "putrefaction": "cry-baby transcendental artists, removed from all clarity, cultivators of all germs, ignorant of the precision of the graduated double decimeter; families that purchase art objects to be placed on top of the piano; the public-work employees; the associate committee member; the university professor of psychology ..." (Finkelstein: 24). This concept of putrefaction condemned by Dalí echoes Breton's proclamation that "reality is elsewhere". This superior (sur)reality is found, according to the Catalan artist, in his peasant landscape, which he believed had been able to preserve a unique prehistoric, antediluvian quality, and whose "atavismos del crepúsculo" (crepuscular atavisms) (Dalí 2002: 117) become an important inspiration for his renewal of the arts.

Another important aspect of Dalí's radicalism is his lack of separation of life and art, art and artist. As nature and its representations are one, so are the artist, the native of Empordà, and his work. The presence of Dalí's private natural space, the landscape of his youth, allowed him through the years to intensify his self-representation as some kind of "pagès" (peasant). At the height of his brilliant surrealist period, representations of Millet's peasant from "L'angelus" became a psychological image of Dalí himself. Millet's peasant reflected the artist's own neurosis, his private obsession, written and painted, with incest and masturbation (Rojas: 129). At a later stage in life he perfected the fusion of artist and work, and even dressed up in a peasant's costume, wearing only "espadnyes" (espadrilles) and a "barretina" (a traditional Catalan peasant hat). Although this particular interest in the peasant as an innovative object of art is not uniquely Daliesque, his use of peasant imagery is still in sharp contrast with the much gentler one created by Louis Aragon in his *Le paysan de Paris* (1926), where to Walter Benjamin's delight, the author mythologized the arcades and parks of Paris. What Aragon was doing was creating a new kind of novel that would break all the traditional rules governing the writing of fiction and declared fuel pumps as "modern divinities (45). The work celebrated the city as a place of stimulating encounters in its cafés and parks. For a con-



temporary reader, Aragon's Paris appears rather idyllic and innocent, and one cannot but wonder if Benjamin had read Dalí. Compared to Dalí's writings, Aragon's portrait of the city sounds like a slightly updated recreation of 19<sup>th</sup>-century "costumbrista" writings (descriptions of popular mores), such as Robert Robert's depiction of Barcelona or Mesonero Romanos' of Madrid. By contrast, Dalí introduces in his surrealist writings a notion of landscape which is very close to that discussed by Joachim Ritter. It requires some distance from the objects observed, an aesthetic attitude. He makes the Empordà become a landscape while observing it with no practical purpose but his enjoyment in order to find himself in nature (Ritter: 150). In this self-reflecting view of the world, Dalí not only plays with a remembrance of his own country, but also introduces a mechanism to transform it into a surrealist apparatus.

## 2. REACTIONS TO AN INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD

Dalí's renewal of the arts is based on contrast, confrontation, hybridism and anthropomorphism. The unique geographical features of his homeland, as captured in his paintings and writings, forged his radical perspective on nature, technology and civilization. This complex relationship between civilization and nature is of course deeply rooted in the tradition of modern Western thought as implied by Ritter's reading of Petrarch and Schiller. A brief recapturing of some key points, such as the rejection of city life, the identification of soul and nature, or the elegiac attitude towards country life, may shed even more light on the radicalism and originality of Dalí's art.

A contrast between country and city has been permanent in human life: the joys and freedom of nature, as opposed to the rigors of life in the city, have made their mark on human thought. A recent Canadian film by Denys Arcand, *L'âge des ténèbres* (2007), presents a bleak picture of a conventional subject, Jean-Marc, and his monotonous, intolerable, and gloomy life, caught up, as Dalí would say, in the putrefaction of bourgeois (un)reality. The film is diverted from realistically depressing scenarios to humorous absurdity thanks to active imagination and escapism. It portrays a depressing picture of our contemporary society: dismal bureaucracies, violent gangs, life in boring suburbia, ridiculous marriage situations (what is left after love is gone). By the end of the film a possible yet utopian solution is presented to the spectator. A way out can be found in a

return to nature, a purer lifestyle. Some long forgotten activities become full of meaning and are thought to be a solution: caring for your own garden (growing vegetables), peeling an apple, possibly alluding to the end of *Candide*, Voltaire's philosophical novel about the search for knowledge and happiness. The last images of the film fade out into a "still life" painting modeled upon Cézanne's work. It makes perfect sense: at a time of deep financial, moral, and political crisis, yearning for a backward way of living may be the best remedy for a sick society and its illnesses.

This film makes us enter into the realm of Utopia. After Thomas Moore, and particularly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, several alternatives to industrial society were offered: utopian, imagined places or a state of things in which everything was perfect, opposed to dystopian societies in which life was characterized by human misery, poverty, oppression, violence, disease, and/or pollution. Even science-fiction offered alternatives to a consumer society. This utopian approach (and its surrogates) has emphasized the best and the worst in our (post) industrial world: on the one hand authoritarian attitudes, asceticism, and uniformity. And on the other hand a push in favor of the fulfillment of desires, pleasures, gaiety in the hope of a world where everything is possible, and any individual need will be satisfied. Works by Bacon, Fénelon, Diderot, Sébastien Mercier, Saint-Simon, Fourier, William Morris and many others can be considered products of "sublime dreamers".

In his novel *Candide*, Voltaire presented a Turk who lives on the land. He acknowledges that he has no more than twenty acres, which he cultivates with the help of his children: "Our labor wards off three great evils: idleness, vice, and want". To which Candide adds: "we must take care of our garden". A remarkable sentence, which is amplified by Pangloss: "when man was put into the garden of Eden, it was with an intent to dress it; and this proves that man was not born to be idle" (Voltaire: 355). This powerful metaphor addresses one of the on-going discussions of Modernity: how to live with less, how to learn to be content in an "aurea mediocritas", or golden mean, the felicitous middle between the extremes of excess and deficiency. Dalí's constant return to nature as landscape brings about a reenactment of this metaphor. His recreation of a familiar landscape can be easily related to this attitude. As Josep Pla has argued, Dalí's work is put at the service of discovering the landscape of Alt Empordà. He even mentions the "miratge de l'apropament" (mirage of proximity): "everything in Dalí's painting is tarnished precisely by the mirage of proximity, by an inclination to be invaded by landscape, to get closer to our senses, to make us feel their presence" (Pla: 161).

A second way of connecting civilization and nature can be perceived in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* (1782). There we encounter yet another version of the appropriation of nature, in a sort of precursor of Eliot's "correlative objective". In Rousseau's account, the narrator walks by a lake in the evening of his "fifth promenade":

the noise of the waves and the movement of the water, taking hold of my senses and driving all other agitation from my soul, would plunge it into a delicious reverie in which night often stole upon me unaware. The ebb and flow of the water, its continuous yet undulating noise, kept lapping against my ears and my eyes, ... and it was enough to make me pleurably aware of my existence, without troubling myself with thought. (1045)

For an aging Rousseau, reverie supplanted both social life (as a path toward happiness) and philosophy (as a path toward understanding). T.S. Eliot expressed a similar idea (the "objective correlative") in a more elaborate way in his 1919 essay on *Hamlet*. What he meant by "objective correlative" is an objectification of emotions that transmutes abstractions into feelings. He explained it in these terms: "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; ... a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that particular emotion" (145). In Dalí's work we may detect a reelaboration of this approach in his treatment of landscape. Through painting and writing he depicts a surrealist version of the objective correlative, one correlation that breaks away from standard logic. By hiding the direct connections between emotion and what he uses as objective correlative (Empordà's nature), he transforms the Eliotian definition of objective correlative, taking it a step further. In his doing so we can recognize the surrealist use of imagery in his quest for a transformation of the world, as seen in texts and paintings, such as "Peix perseguit per un raïm" or "Platja antropomòrfica", both from 1928.

A third way of incorporating nature's separation from the city into literature is through elegy. A disappearing world or way of living is fixed thanks to reminiscent images. Pere Gimferrer in his *Dietari* (1979) made an acute remark about what had changed in the perception of nature in the (post)industrial world. Commenting on "Ode to Autumn" by John Keats, he writes:

We do not feel the sun's warm air on the fields of that distant September in Winchester; our eyes, which are blackened by the smoke of the industrial world,

do not understand the diffuse light of the fields where the year's cycles kindle and deaden things; in nature we have become forever passersby, intruders. (55-56)

Gimferrer's reaction to Keats's poem reminds us of how difficult it is to have a sense of nature when living in the city. He is painfully aware of what has changed in a world that has lost sight of nature's cycle. This experience of loss permeates Dalí's work as he recalled in many passages of *The Secret Life*. Dalí cultivated his own garden, used nature as a powerful and innovative objective correlative and he longed for a disappearing way of life. Had he only done this he could be only considered an example of late Romanticism, a late bloomer, anguished by the disappearance of his world. Dalí, nevertheless, reacted in an original way, renewing the plea for a lost paradise with exciting new words and combinations of images, which in turn renewed surrealist aesthetics.

### 3. DALÍ'S RENEWAL

From the start of his career, Dalí showed a knack for expressing violent disparities. His inclination towards provocative thought is already visible in his diary from 1919 and 1920 (Dalí 1994). In a sort of manifesto, "Nous límites de la pintura" (New Limits of Painting), he embellished the text with acrostic illustrations, which express the core of his current aesthetics (DYNAMISM/ LIGHTNESS/ ONIRISM/ SUPERREALISM, etc.). The text ends with a series of gaudy images, which stress an oxymoronic approach to reality:

Does it matter that today's artist neglects the concerns that, for a brief moment, appeared fundamental, for the sake of physically miniaturized concerns? And that very far from cold and hot things, he finds the true fire and ice in trying only to let the embers freeze in the pupil of the rotting donkey, and lets the feather duster, its feathers dyed in blood-red, become by a skillful transformation a ball of fire, slowly moving in the night of our amorous simplifications? (Gimferrer 1995: 87)

His prose poems of the 1920s, published in *L'Amic de les Arts*, "defy the reader's attempts to perceive a consistent narrative structure" (Finkelstein: 17). The so-called "strange metaphors" are based on an accumulation of elements, which refer to his past provincial world (Figueres and Cadaqués) and the cosmopolitan one, which he is discovering, first in Madrid and Barcelona, and finally in Paris. Many of the "peasant" elements have an origin: the beach, where he spent his summers: fish, fish spines, sea urchins, snails, seashells,

cork, stones of varied colors and shapes. As Finkelstein indicates, "these 'small things' undergo incongruous metamorphoses of matter; they are the protagonists of a dialectic involving the juxtaposition of hardness and softness" (17). But this apparently chaotic enumeration hides (as in the case of Picasso's surrealist poems from the time when he painted *Guernica*) a deliberate mixture of elements from the peasant and the cosmopolitan worlds.

Let me discuss some of these problems in a specific text from 1929, "Peix perseguit per un raïm" ("Fish Pursued by a Bunch of Grapes"). In this prose poem Dalí presents what seems to be a "story" filled with enigmatic, incoherent, irrational, absurd, inexplicable elements. As was the case with "Un chien andalou", Dalí's position was to reject any attempt to interpret the film (or the text for that matter), since he considered such attempts as reflecting the "imbecile" notion that facts are endowed with clear significance and coherent sense (Finkelstein: 118). When describing Dalí's writing Finkelstein mentions the presence of a voice, and he explains that it is "a voice that we can almost hear with all its idiosyncratic diction, strange inflections, and exaggerated pronunciation" (11). His writing has an "acting" constituent, as if it were the text for a theater performance. His writings can thus be related to perlocutionary acts, that is, they provoke an effect in the audience because of the way they are spoken/expressed by the speaker. Dalí imposes his ideas through the perlocutionary energy he uses when speaking or writing. This use of writing seems to go against "supplementarity", one of the principles described by Derrida as fundamental in writing. Writing is a supplement because it is a sign of a sign, occupying the place of spoken discourse. In the case of Dalí we are facing the opposite situation. Spoken discourse becomes a supplement to written discourse.<sup>2</sup> Finkelstein has declared that Dalí's poetry "tends to fluctuate between the conceptual or abstract and the visual, with the visual often taking the lead" (17). The reason for this is his dual activity as a painter and writer, but with the same notions to be explained. Rattray has stressed the fact that Dalí's poem begins with a detailed description, in intricate detail, of "a surreal still-life". The presence of the Cadaqués coastline, which provides the backdrop for many of Dalí's famous paintings, was also the inspiration for his experiments in the paranoiac-critical method (213). But the critic fails to notice the striking combination of rural and cosmopolitan elements. This is especially noticeable in a series of parallelisms.

---

2. "If supplementarity is a necessarily indefinite process, writing is the supplement par excellence since it proposes itself as the supplement of the supplement, sign of a sign, taking the place of a speech already significant" (281).

In the poem we can distinguish a central section (lines 5-34) where Dalí describes the still life, the beach, until the beginning of the car chase. In this section there are four specific links between landscape and a cosmopolitan world:

a) First he introduces the pebbles: "On the beach there are eight pebbles: One is the color of a liver, six are covered with moss, and one is very smooth." (10). These elements are amplified in great detail, adding connections between the rural and the cosmopolitan: "The pebbles are none other than its sweetness; the livercolored pebble, its venomous sweetness; the others covered with moss, the six new and latest phonograph records" (14-16). These links can be represented in a series of oppositions:

---

EIGHT PEBBLES	→ ←	SWEETNESS
LIVER COLORED PEBBLE	→ ←	VENOMOUS SWEETNESS
SIX COVERED WITH MOSS	→ ←	SIX NEW AND LATEST PHONOGRAPH RECORDS
A VERY SMOOTH PEBBLE	→ ←	BLEEDING BLUES

---

b) Secondly, we read another two sentences in which elements from a beach are anthropomorphized: "There is also a damp cork that dries up in the sun; there is a round hole in the cork in which nest feathers." (11-12); "the cork, its skeleton; the feathers; the seeds; the tender reed broken in its center, the wings" (16-17).

---

CORK WITH A HOLE	→ ←	SKELETON
FEATHERS	→ ←	SEEDS
TENDER REED	→ ←	WINGS

---

c) Thirdly, there is a direct link between champagne and the wine grapes from Cadaqués: "It was this same bunch of grapes, submerged at the bottom of a goblet of champagne, that evoked in me the clarity of the vines of Cadaqués." (20-21).

---

BUNCH OF GRAPES, SUBMERGED AT THE BOTTOM OF A GOBLET OF CHAMPAGNE	→ ←	THE CLARITY OF THE VINES OF CADAQUÉS
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---

I would like to stress particularly the case of "ràim, submergit en el fons del cap del xampany" (*bunch of grapes, submerged at the bottom of a goblet of champagne*), a syntagm that Dalí makes up in the same way as other

Empordà expressions: "He who has no hair is called a *cap pelat* ("peeled head"), *cap de catífol* ("crock head", Empordà), *cap de llauna* ("tin can head", Empordà) ("Diccionari català-valencià-balear"). The copy of this poem at the Fundación FGL has an inscription. It is dedicated "to a conversation between Federico and Lídia" (Gibson: 161). Lídia is obviously "Lidia de Cadaqués", the woman infatuated with Eugeni d'Ors, about whom Dalí wrote in *Vida secreta*:

Lidia possessed the most marvelously paranoiac brain aside from my own that I have ever known. She was capable of establishing completely coherent relations between any subject whatsoever and her obsession of the moment, with sublime disregard of everything else, and with a choice of detail and a play of wit so subtle and so calculatingly resourceful that it was often difficult not to agree with her on questions which one knew to be utterly absurd. She would interpret d'Ors's articles as she went along with such felicitous discoveries of coincidence and plays on words that one could not fail to wonder at the bewildering imaginative violence with which the paranoiac spirit can project the image of our inner world upon the outer world, no matter where or in what form or on what pretext. The most unbelievable coincidences would arise in the course of this amorous correspondence, which I have several times used as a model for my own writings. (Dalí, 1942: 265-6)<sup>3</sup>

These lines corroborate the deep correlations between his surrealist appropriation of the world and many experiences from his youth in this particular setting, the Empordà, which gave him a sense of the peasantry. Moreover, this is the way that Dalí appropriates nature transforming it into landscape, including a compelling notion of his intellectual contribution and alteration of it.

d) Finally there is a fourth link, which in fact permeates the entire poem, gives a possible meaning to the whole text and expresses a series of transformations:

SALT > FISH > RING'S DIAMOND  
BUNCH OF GRAPES > BIRD SHOT

---

3. A presence of a cosmopolitan nature landscape can also be perceived in Buñuel-Dalí's film, *Un chien andalou* (1929), particularly in the final part of the film, when the central character walks on a beach and discovers a copy of Vermeer's "De Kantwerkster" (Talens).

What is happening here, as is the case with many poems from this period, is an experiment with critical paranoia, something which would become Dalí's trademark in later years, and a major contribution to surrealism, an aesthetic movement locked between the constraints of automatic writing and communist political commitment (Santamaria). Dalí's critical paranoia, with its characteristic combination of elements from different worlds – rural and cosmopolitan – meant a radical upheaval of the surrealist movement.

As I mentioned at the beginning, in his writing and art Dalí combines atavistic words and images, aromas and sounds with the most avant-garde elements. The combination of tradition and innovation expresses the opposition between country and city in Dalí's proposal for a reenactment of ruralism. Dalí's use of this dialectic is his way of contesting *Noucentista* notions of "Catalunya-Ciutat". Anchoring his art in the atavistic surroundings of his native Empordà allowed Dalí to reconcile traditional peasant elements with surrealist imagery. The continuous tension in his work between ahistoric nature and controlling modernity, between the radically innovative and the fundamentally traditional, recalls Raymond Williams' concept of "knowable communities".<sup>4</sup> From this perspective, Dalí can be seen to express the loss of a "structure of feeling" that Catalonia was experiencing. But his way of expressing this loss was not straightforward. As mentioned before, Ritter's idea that freedom is crucial for society's existence and comes into being through a domination of nature can be seen in Dalí's attitude. Like other artists and writers Dalí contributed the expression of a sense of domination through a sense of landscape, Simmel's idea of "Stimmung". By representing a certain landscape in its "Stimmung", he developed a new way of reading it and provided Surrealism with the means to overcome the limitations of "automatic writing". His later work on critical paranoia provided Surrealism with its final foundation. Only a cosmopolitan peasant with a sense of landscape could have overcome such an impasse.

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4. "Identity and community became more problematic, as a matter of perception and as a matter of valuation, as the scale and complexity of the characteristic social organization increased. ... The growth of towns and especially cities and a metropolis: the increasing division and complexity of labour; the altered and critical relations between and within social classes: in changes like these any assumption of a knowable community – a whole community, wholly knowable – became harder and harder to sustain" (Williams 165).



## APPENDIX

## PEIX PERSEGUIT PER UN RAÏM

Aquell peix i aquell raïm no eren res més que cosetes petites: eren, però, cosetes més rodones que totes i estaven quietes dalt dels indrets. Hi ha cosetes que són estels amb cua, i quan se les canvia de lloc ho deixen tot mullat.

Aquella coseta, que era un estel amb cua, estava dalt de la taula.

Hi ha cosetes planes; hi ha cosetes que s'aguanten amb una cama.

D'altres són un pèl, d'altres havien estat sal. El peix en qüestió havia estat petita sal; aquesta petita sal brillava i fou portada a Europa entre els pèls d'un arrissat abric d'esquimal, arraconat a la popa d'aquell yacht que tenia un nom d'illa.

Ara aquella petita sal era un peix, gràcies a un xec especialíssim.

A la platja hi ha vuit pedres: una de color de fetge, sis plenes de molsa; i una de molt llisa. Encara hi ha un suro mullat que s'asseca al sol; el suro té un forat rodó on fan niu les plomes.

Al costat del suro, una canyeta tendra, partida pel ventre, és posada dalt de la sorra. Tot plegat no és res més que un ràpid i veloç gotim de raïm. Les pedres no eren sinó la seva dolçor; la pedra color de fetge, la dolçor envenenada; les altres cobertes de molsa, els sis darrers nous discs de fonògraf; el suro, el seu esquelet; les plomes, els grans; la canyeta tendra trencada pel ventre, les ales; i la pedra més llisa de totes, ¿em caldrà encara dir que es tracta del blues més dessagnat que em cantà l'altra tarda la meva amiga, posant els ulls guenyos, i arrufant el nasser com una petita bèstia?

Era ben bé aquell raïm, submergit en el fons del cap del xampany, el que m'evocava la claror de les vinyes de Cadaqués. Jo provava de fer entendre a aquell peixet, mitjançant el lleuger tremolar de les meves cartes i sense per això interrompre la partida de pòker amb la baronessa de X, com allà a les darreries d'agost, quan para l'aire, se sent el soroll de l'endolcir-se les vinyes, que ve a ésser un soroll semblant al que fa la pluja sobre les perdiuetes. Fou en aquest just moment — i potser a causa de l'agitació que promogué, en el brill de les joies de l'esmentada baronessa, el record momentani de l'origen de la petita sal del peix — que el raïm es llançà, emocionat i veloç, a la persecució d'aquell peix. Aquest, gràcies a una hàbil transformació en el brillant de l'anell de la meva nòvia, fugia dissimular en el seu dit, i endut vertiginosament per l'auto que jo mateix guiava. Llavors el petit raïm decidí d'adoptar la forma de velocitat diferent, que era la mateixa que havia vist adoptar als pinyols de préssec, les llargues temporades que han de passar tancats en els indrets buits. Així és que començà a disminuir de tamany, fins a esdevenir un petitíssim raïm, de qual ben aviat només en restà la pinyolada, la qual romangué volant, suspesa com una petita constel·lació de perdigons.

A cada moment era més gran la munió d'autos carregats de bandits, que ens perseguïen a trets; els bandits portaven petites gorretes de llana i, alguns,

ulleres per al vent; el camí era un flabiol de 8 forats, i a cada forat hi havia un petitet ase podrit.

Sentim a la vora llurs motors.

Llancem l'ampolla de Whisky. S'eriçà la terra de fulles de Gillette. Un pinyol de raïm és llurs ulls.

Sentim el galopar vermell de llurs cavalls.

Dos pinyols de raïm són una petita sal.

Tirem el tub de carmí. Neu.

Sentim el lliscar de llurs trineus.

A la fi t'has després, i llançat el teu vestit de ball d'argent; i una ampla mar, il·luminada per la lluna, ens ha allunyat dels nostres enemics.

La petita sal volia explotar com una cendra.

Ara, si volguessis, podríem perllongar aquell bes interromput en el dancing. Però, ¿no som a la tarda? ¿No és el sol encara alt?

Les herbes més fines tenen un costat il·luminat, i l'altre ombrívol com els planetes.

Allà, darrera la casa, sé l'indret on hi ha un petit escarabat sec.

Dalt de la pedra, una oliva està quieta.

Si apreto els teus dits, aixafó grans de gotim de raïm del meu berenar; i si vull recordar les teves cames, no aconseguixo sinó reveure aquell torbador ase podrit amb el cap de rossinyol.

L'oliva quieta porta una petita faldilla.

Jo tinc una bonica foto de Nova York.

## [FISH PURSUED BY A BUNCH OF GRAPES]

[That fish and that bunch of grapes were nothing more than very small things, yet small things rounder than most, and were kept up quietly in their place. There are small things that are shooting stars, that get altogether wet when their place is being changed.

That small thing, which was a shooting star, staved on the table.

There are small things that are flat; there are small things that stand on one leg.

The others are merely a hair, the others had been salt. The fish in question had been fine salt. This fine salt glistened and was brought to Europe in the hairy of a frizzy coat of an Eskimo, left in the stern of that yacht that bore the name of an island. This fine salt is a fish now, thanks to a very special check.

On the beach there are eight pebbles: One is the color of a liver, six are covered with moss, and one is very smooth. There is also a damp cork that dries up in the sun; there is a round hole in the cork in which nest feathers.

Alongside the cork, a tender reed, split in its midst, is placed in the sand. All these together are nothing more than a small bunch of grapes, swift and hasty. The pebbles are none other than its sweetness; the livercolored pebble, its venom-

ous sweetness; the others covered with moss, the six new and latest phonograph records; the cork, its skeleton, the feathers, the seeds; the tender reed split in its midst, its wings; and the smoothest pebble of them all, do I still have to say that all this has to do with the most bleeding blues that my girlfriend sang to me the other afternoon, her eyes crossed and her nose puckered, like a small animal?

It was this same bunch of grapes, submerged at the bottom of a goblet of champagne, that evoked in me the clarity of the vines of Cadaqués. I tried to make this small fish understand, by means of the light trembling of my cards and, for all that, without interrupting the poker game with Baroness X, how over there toward the end of August, when the air stands still, one hears the sound made by the sweetening of the vines, a sound resembling the sound of rain coming down on small partridges. It was at this very moment — perhaps because of the agitated flickering of the jewels of the said Baroness, caused by the momentary recollection of the origins of the fine salt of the fish — that the bunch of grapes launched itself, excited and swift, in a pursuit of that fish. The latter skillfully transformed itself into a diamond in my fiancée's ring, fled by hiding in her finger, and was vertiginously carried away by a car which I drove myself. The small bunch of grapes decided then to adopt a different form of speed, the same one he had seen taken by the pits of peaches during the long periods in which they had to remain locked up in empty places. He then started to diminish his size, thus becoming a very small bunch of grapes, of which finally there remained only a cluster of pits which kept on flying, suspended like a small and frantic constellation of bird shot.

From moment to moment there grew the number of cars filled with outlaws following us with their shots; the outlaws had woolen caps on, and some wore goggles against the wind; the road a flageolet with eight holes; in each hole there was a very small rotten donkey. We hear their motors close behind us.

We throw out the whiskey bottle. The ground bristles up with Gillette blades. A grape seed is their eyes.

We hear the black gallop of their horses.

We cast off the fan made of feathers. The road is a river of blood.

We hear the red gallop of their horses.

Two raisin pits are a fine salt.

We throw the tube of rouge. Snow.

We hear the sliding of their sledges.

Finally you unfastened and threw off your silvery ball gown, and a vast sea illuminated by the moon distanced us from our enemies.

The very small salt wished to explode like ash.

Now, if you wish to, we could continue the kiss interrupted at the dancing. But is it not the afternoon? Isn't the sun still high?

The finest herbs have one side lightened up, with the other side shadowy like the planets.

There, at the back of the house, I know a spot with a small dry beetle.

An olive is motionless on a pebble.

If I squeeze your fingers, I crush the seeds in the bunch of grapes I have for an afternoon snack; and if I wish to remind myself of your legs, I only see that donkey with the Nightingale's head.

The motionless olive wears a little skirt.

I have a beautiful picture of New York. ]