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RESEÑAS

Quintanilla, Luis. *Radio: Wireless Poem in Thirteen Messages & Uncollected Poems*. Bloomington: Cardboard House Press, 2016.

A Strident Voice Recovered from a Forgotten Past

The work of avant-garde writer Luis Quintanilla (*nom de plume*: Kyn Taniya) is, in essence, an elegant clangor reproduced in the newly released collection of translated poems by David Shook under the name *Radio: Wireless Poem in Thirteen Messages & Uncollected Poems* (Cardboard House Press 2016). The value of the collection comes as an act of literary archeological work and as a reintroduction of Mexican poetry to a generation of readers in a timeline where *Estridentismo* is locked away in a forgotten literary past. The strident essence of the movement founded in the Mexico of the 1920s under the direction of Manuel Maples Arce had a counterbalance effect to the then popular *Contemporáneos* group and their *high-brow* literary culture. Kyn Taniya, nonetheless, published two collections of poetry, *Avión* (Cvltvra, 1923), and *Radio* (Cvltvra, 1924), one of which we now have a translation to benefit from.

Kyn Taniya's *Radio* is rich in sound and embodies the imitation of the 1920's 'cutting-edge' technologies to give the poetry a sense of freshness, trendiness even. The onomatopoeic vividness is persistent in the grand majority of the poems; the latter does not exclude the translations where the reader (or listener) will find hard to avoid the tumultuous imagery presented in the strident poetry. Example of this can be found in the poem titled "IU IIIUUU IU" where Kyn Taniya simulates the sound of the tuning radio as the dial turns. David Shook, for his translation, decides to keep the original name leaving behind the reproduction of the high pitch radio whistle as it is being tuned:

IU IIIUUU IU

ULTIMOS SUSPIROS DE MARRANOS DEGOLLADOS EN
CHICAGO ILLINOIS ESTRUENDO DE LAS CAIDAS DEL

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NIAGARA EN LA FRONTERA DE CANADA KREISLER
RISLER D' ANNUNZIO FRANCE ETCETERA Y LOS JAZZ
BANDS DE VIRGINIA Y TENESI LA ERUPCION DEL
POPOCATEPETL SOBRE EL VALLE DE AMECAMECA ASI
COMO LA ENTRADA DE LOS ACORAZADOS INGLESSES
[...] (sic)

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IU IIIUUU IU
LAST GASPS OF SLAUGHTERED PIGS IN CHICAGO
ILLINOIS ROAR OF NIAGARA FALLS AT THE CANADIAN
BORDER KREISLER RISLER D'ANNUNZIO FRANCE
ETCETERA AND THE JAZZ BANDS OF VIRGINIA AND
TENNESSEE THE ERUPTION OF POPOCATEPETL OVER
THE VALLEY OF AMECAMECA AS WELL AS THE ENTRANCE
OF THE ENGLISH BATTLESHIPS [...]

The musicality given by the stress in the syllables in Spanish divides the poem regardless of its prosaic appearance without the need of punctuation. The prosaic poetry, a style not unfamiliar to Mexican *avant-garde* poets, can be followed by the constant imagery lashed out by the poetic voice. The early radio pastiche results as a delight of an organized chaos. Imagery that persists within the translated work. Shook, carefully places the collage built by Kyn Taniya avoiding interruptions of imitating the rhythm found in the original piece. The approximation by Shook to the poems does accomplish what the original intended, a catalog given by the effect of listening to a radio and the many narratives available as one tunes throughout its received waves. The poem continues with the ongoing collage leaving the reader with a sense of the unimaginable traveling via invisible waves:

Todo esto no cuesta ya más que un dólar
Por cien centavos tendréis orejas eléctricas
y podréis pescar los sonidos que se mecen
en la hamaca kilométrica de las ondas

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... IU IIIUUU IU ...

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*All this now costs no more than a dollar
For a hundred cents you'll have electric ears
and you'll be able to fish for the sounds that sway
in the kilometric hammock of the waves*

... IU IIIUUU IU ...

Kyn Taniya is able to give in well structured alexandrine verses a few ideas with a lot of presence in our early 21st century: *wireless narratives at a low cost*. The intuitiveness of Kyn Taniya into the future is not a far fetched idea, rather, it is a reminder how some poets arrived at places where the sciences are still speculating about.

The multiplicity and invisibility of waves have allowed a production of an unimaginable pastiche that a poem as "...IU IIIUUU IU ..." is able to capture the idea of living in a place where an unnoticeable collage surrounds us, accessible only if we pay, as the poetic voice remarks, for "a hundred cents" you will be able to "fish for the sounds."

Sounds are exactly the key to approach *Radio's* poems. The fine tuning of a radio, or the poetic voice given in an opening of the collection where the syllabic ensemble resonates with its translation. Besides the emphasis in sounds, the collection is a call to the sensory reception of the world. Poets still look up and find a way to describe the universe in modern times as our inventions expand our reach to places beyond our imagination. Such a sentiment could be traced throughout the collection of poems; "Noche verde" / "Green Night" is a prime example of the latter:

Mariposas espirituales
los átomos alados se embriagan de la luna
Los astros
son pájaros eterizados que cantan la melodía
del día
y esta lucidez interplanetaria es un orfeón de voces de oro
que llena de alegría el espacio de cristal

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Spiritual butterflies
the winged atoms get drunk on the moon
The Stars
are etherized birds that sing the melody
of the day
and this interplanetary lucidity is a choir of golden voices
that fills the crystal space with joy

The collection of poems translated by David Shook follow the order Kyn Taniya intended in his first edition. Moreover, the edition by Cardboard House Press adds the presence of art pieces simulating the 'hammocks of waves' grafted by Daniel Godínez-Nivón. The bilingual collection is an invitation to travel in time and (re)discover the *Estridentismo* poetry.

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