

ANTONIO COLINAS

Like the Flames of Old Chandeliers

—Translated from the Spanish by Maria C. Fellie

Like the flames of old chandeliers, the
humble lights of boats on the sea
ignite in the distance.
Your flute opens the night's heart on the island.
Its sound, deranged and full, vanquishes words,
rises with the grass at its waist.
If with our backs to the sea we wander the fields,
your flute swells in our blood
the powerful course of the moons;
its sound is a robust lance
that cuts through the Shadow's cadaver.

Onto the stumps of grapevines,
onto the tortured candelabra of fig trees,
onto the open wounds of men,
night and melody place relief
and continue on, intertwined.
And an anxiety and a passion that come
from other times discover
eyes behind the gates, smiles
upon disfigured lips,
beliefs in the myths of love and war,
primitive reveries
that the murderous eyes of lighthouses
enlarge in the distance, an instant, and
that the immense space
full of black water
devours.

Antonio Colinas is a writer, critic, and intellectual from León, Spain, whose literary career spans over fifty years. He has been awarded a wide variety of literary prizes, including Spain's National Prize for Literature (1982) and, recently, the Queen Sofía Iberoamerican Poetry Prize (2016), presented at the Royal Palace of Madrid. Within the world of Spanish letters, Colinas's work and reputation are renowned and highly respected.

Maria C. Fellie has been translating the poetry of Antonio Colinas for over ten years with the poet's collaboration. She is an assistant professor of Spanish at Penn State Berks, specializing in contemporary Spanish literature and culture as well as translation studies. She is currently translating into English a selected anthology of Colinas's poetic works.

JACK CHAPMAN

From the Bridge, 2017
Analog chromogenic print, 16 x 20 in



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