

**ENRIQUE
SACERIO-GARÍ**

Multiple Places

...greater poverty than yours shall you see.

—Don Juan Manuel, in “Exemplo X”
from *El conde Lucanor*

Neruda taught us
to see
two worlds on
Earth to
enter the atom
with a telescope
to open the door
to the elements and reveal paths
of green and fire.

Faded maps
suffer the external debt
of changes imposed
by globalizers
of the steel shovel
and there is no
heaven no
peace and joy
no mothers without the scourge
of war but rather the stern
fortitude of Evaristo Estenoz:
the external debt we all owe to color
the segregation that obscures
the stars buried in our breast.

* * *

Also two Earths
revolve with the World
one Earth fights
with its natural rhythm
with all its strength
for each bud at sunset
for the color blazing horizons
for fruit from the tree
for the true blues of the ozone
and the empty breast
of another Earth trembles
gathering carnations torn to bits
fanning crimson red flames
or dreaming of the first Earth
filled with breads lost
in a space of illusions or mad frenzy.
On withered fields cars
speed along, drunk on gasoline.
Calcified flags fall cracking
crazed nuclei
shoot sparks and bits of time
as the planet turns on its
fragments of steps.

* * *

We turn our faces
and feel the states
of this doubling:
Two Earths
Two Worlds
night and day
the two islands
in one Cuba
of Segismundo’s
world is a dream.

* * *

In fragments
multiple lives
translated
to be one man
to be one woman.
Let us live the two Earths
the one with her nucleus of lava
with her thick green hair
and the hands of a goddess
and the other who bleeds
clouds that burn the air
and darken the sky.
We must write for both
to defend their marrows crammed
with bullets and flowers
the planet texting
its many faces
with the same smile.

* * *

Martí felt
the wings of the Earth.
Two wings for the canary
and the sparrow hawk to fly
pecking, repeating
heartbeats
of the cenzontle and the quetzal.
Two nations as one we might glimpse
Martí’s two hands
Cuba
in the night of the poets.

—Havana, February 2011

—Translated from the Spanish by Suzanne Jill Levine

Enrique Sacerio-Garí is the Dorothy Nepper Marshall Professor of Hispanic and Hispanic-American Studies at Bryn Mawr College. His poetic works include *Comunión* (a concrete poem) and *Poemas interreales* (Pennsylvania, 1981; Madrid, 1999; La Habana, 2004). His most recent book of poems is *Para llegar a La Habana (To Arrive in Havana, Madrid, 2013)*, from which this poem is taken. His scholarly work includes editing a selection of Jorge Luis Borges’s early articles.

Suzanne Jill Levine, a distinguished translator of Latin American literature, is the Director of Translation Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her books include *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction*, the literary biography *Manuel Puig and the Spider Woman: His Life and Fictions* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), and her five-volume edition of Jorge Luis Borges’s poetry and essays for Penguin Classics.