Drinking in the Dark, Imitating under Bright Lights

A Comparative Study of Herberto Helder's *O Bebedor Nocturno* and Robert Lowell's *Imitations*

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During the 1960s, Robert Lowell's *Imitations* (1961) and Herberto Helder's *O Bebedor Nocturno* (1968) (The Nocturnal Drinker) were published. Although their authors avoid the term, both collections contain *translations*. *Imitations* has polarized critics, with some leaping to defend the daring of his enterprise,[1] whilst others have criticized Lowell for the treatment of his sources.[2] Helder, who also appropriates the material that he translates and makes important changes to his sources, has avoided the sort of negative criticism levelled at Lowell for being too free with his material. The difference has been that critics have tended to analyse Lowell's practice as a translator in *Imitations*; an almost inevitable approach for the Western critic given Lowell's provocative title and 'Introduction', as well as the selection of canonical European texts that the poet translates. The poems in Helder's collection, on the other hand, have not been analysed as translations, as the texts on which his versions are based would be largely unknown to most readers. *O Bebedor Nocturno* contains translations of texts hailing from a variety of marginal cultures: Malagasy hainteny, Japanese haikus, Inuit poems, Arabic-Andalusian texts, amongst many others. Furthermore, Helder only cites one of the sources for his translations.[3]

Although major studies of Lowell's career often avoid in-depth analyses of *Imitations*, when they do address Lowell's poetic translations they normally subsume the collection into the poet's *oeuvre*; similarly, Helder's critics have also frequently understood *O Bebedor Nocturno* with regard to what lies chronologically either side of it.[4] Although considered by critics as side-projects, there is a critical consensus that these works are integral to the poets' wider artistic development. Nevertheless, several important features of these works have not yet been appreciated. In this article, I begin by reading the framing texts that precede *O Bebedor Nocturno* and *Imitations*, and suggest that both authors, although in different ways, are searching for some kind of unity in their collections. These searches for unity are, at their core, political enterprises. *O Bebedor Nocturno,* I argue, represents a cryptic subversion of the core tenets of the New State, the Portuguese dictatorship headed by António Salazar, whilst Lowell's homogenizing of Western European writers entails a claiming of a certain canonical literary tradition in the context of the Cold War. I then draw out some of the hidden mechanics of Helder's translational practice. I read two texts that do not appear in *O Bebedor Nocturno*, but which shed light on the identity of the mysterious figure of the Nocturnal Drinker. I argue that two of Helder's main sources for his translations were a French-language anthology compiled by Roger Caillois,[5] and a Spanish-language translation by Emilio García Gómez of an anthology of Arabo-Andulusian poetry compiled in 1243 by Ibn Said al-Magribi.[6] Thus, Helder's contact with his seemingly diverse range of cultures is in fact mediated through French and Spanish academics.

SEARCHES FOR UNITY

One of the first questions that confronts the reader when they open either one of these collections is how to classify *Imitations* and *O Bebedor Nocturno*. Lowell calls his book a 'small anthology of European poetry'.[7] Helena Buescu and João Ferreira Duarte deny *O Bebedor Nocturno* the appellation 'anthology', preferring to think of Helder's five volumes of translations as 'more akin to commonplace books' because of their 'very personal assemblage'.[8] For Patrícia de Baubeta, the production of anthologies is a highly personal activity, since it involves processes of selection. Behind the all-important table of contents, there is someone who chooses what will (and what will not) be included: 'Anthologies by their very nature require processes of selection and organization and are necessarily made from a particular point of view.'[9] What are these crucial 'points of view' in Lowell's and Helder's books? We might find some answers to this question in these works' framing texts: Lowell's 'Introduction' and Helder's 'Nota' ('Note'), as well as the various subtitles to *O Bebedor Nocturno*.[10]

Helder's 'Nota' is split into two paragraphs. In the first, Helder depicts his idea of the polyglot's existence, before turning to himself in the second. A dichotomy is established between the polyglot, who 'exists in a state of Babel', and Helder, who claims disingenuously not to 'know languages'.[11] In spite of this, both polyglot and Helder are really searching for some kind of unity. For Helder, in the polyglot 'there is no doubt a mute desperation […], for in the disjunction of languages he searches for an improbable unity'. For the Helderian polyglot, this unity is unlikely; for Helder, who is fortunately ignorant of languages, this unity is possible: 'As for myself, I don't

know languages. This is my advantage. It allows me to render poetry from Ancient Egypt into Portuguese not knowing the language.' The vehicle of this unity is Helder's native tongue, Portuguese. Helder suggest that ignorance of the original source texts allows him to read *The Songs of Songs* 'as if it were an English or French poem', resulting in not just an original poem written in Portuguese, but a text appropriated and then transcreated[12] by Herberto Helder: 'I take the *Song of Songs* […] and boldly dare to turn it not only into a Portuguese poem but also into a poem by me.'

There are many similarities between Helder's search for unity and the claims made by Lowell in his 'Introduction' to *Imitations*. Lowell has 'hoped somehow for a *whole*, to make a *single volume*, a *small anthology* of European poetry' (my emphasis). This wholeness and singleness is achieved, it is implied, through the channelling of the disparate texts and authors that constitute Lowell's 'small anthology' through the single poetic subject, Lowell himself: 'This book […] should be first read as a sequence, one voice running through many personalities, contrasts and repetitions.' On this matter, Matthew Reynolds has criticized Lowell for 'imposing his own voice' on his source material, a move that results in his 'turning away' from the original texts and, more crucially, from 'the challenge of the source'.[13] Lowell later writes that he has 'tried to write alive English and to do what my authors might have done if they were writing their poems now and in America'. This declaration seems to echo Dryden's definition of the imitation as a 'libertine' mode of translation in his 'Preface' to his translation of Ovid's *Epistles*. For Dryden, imitation is not simply a case of translating a text, but an author. Imitation is:

an endeavour of a later poet to write like one who has written before him on the same subject: that is, not to translate his words, or to be confined to his sense, but only to set him as a pattern and to write as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age in our country.[14]

It should be noted, however, that Dryden advocates imitation only in extreme cases, such as the 'wild and ungovernable' Pindar. He warns, as Robinson would warn later,[15] that 'Imitation and verbal versions are in my opinion the two extremes [of poetic translation], which ought to be avoided'.[16]

Where Dryden and Lowell diverge in their theory reveals one of the fundamental tensions of Lowell's introduction: by saying that he has tried 'to do what my authors might have done if they were writing their poems now and in America' *and* suggesting that we read his collection as 'one voice running through many personalities, contrasts and repetitions', Lowell is really saying, as Robinson points out, that what we actually end up reading is:

European poetry as it might have been if the poets had been writing then and in America — a heterogeneous set of extraordinarily talented immigrants space — and timetransported to Kennedy's United States, all imitating the manner and tone of its prominent poet Robert Lowell.[17]

In these introductory texts, both poets emphasize their role as unifiers of disparate elements. For Lowell, this unity is achieved through the imposition of his voice on select poets of the European canon, in what Irvin Ehrenpreis describes as the 'drawing up of a genealogical tree' where Lowell substitutes 'the Lowells and Winslows by Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Rilke'.[18] Helder's unity is reached by bringing the diverse texts of the *O Bebedor Nocturno* onto ground that is familiar to the poet: the Portuguese language. In this way, Helder obliquely follows a tradition established by Fernando Pessoa, but with a self-deprecating twist, as Helder suggests that he has taken the Portuguese language as his homeland simply because, for lack of any natural ability with languages, it is the only one that will do.

However, although both poets search for unity, their individual quests are very different. Lowell's 'small anthology of European poetry' stands in stark contrast to Helder's assortment of mostly non-canonical and non-European texts, most of which the Portuguese reader will not recognize. Lowell expects his reader to be familiar with the French, Italian, German, Russian, Latin, and Greek poets that he imitates. Lowell boasts that he has 'been almost as free as the authors themselves in finding ways to make them [the poems] ring right for me'. The 'almost' betrays Lowell's awareness that his versions entertain a peculiar relationship of dependency with their sources, an unhappy tension between reliance and autonomy that is summarized in the first line of the 'Introduction': 'This book is partly self-sufficient and separate from its sources.' Vladimir Nabokov, and to a lesser extent Robinson, see Lowell's translational liberality, a product of this emphasis on freedom and originality, as a source of peril.

Nabokov imagines the naïve North American college student, 'so docile, so trustful, so eager', as a 'potential victim' of the 'eccentric teacher' — the Humbertian Lowell;[19] whilst Robinson writes that Lowell's translational practice is 'a more toxic example than Nabokov's', as it 'has been taken as an invitation to "legitimized" slapdash'.[20] However, despite these warnings of danger, Lowell clearly writes for a reader who will immediately recognize the sources for *Imitations*. There is a brashness to the paragraph in his Introduction that begins 'My licenses have been many': he claims that his 'first two Sappho poems are really new poems based on hers' and boasts that he has 'left out' almost a third of Rimbaud's *Le Bateau Ivre*. In short, Lowell has had no scruples in changing anything of his sources: 'I have dropped lines, moved lines, moved stanzas, changed images and altered meter and intent.'

The texts that make up *O Bebedor Nocturno*, in contrast, hail from a historically and geographically diverse range of cultures, with one conspicuous omission: Helder, unlike Lowell, avoids 'civilized' Europe. Juliet Perkins asserts that the texts chosen evoke a 'world of magic, ritual, myth and folklore'; 'a world of natural forces and erotic desire, a desire that is often pubertal and characterized by yearning, idealism and sacrifice'.[21] However, as 'rich and varied' as Helder's world may be, Helder would not have had direct contact with the original source texts for his collection. In his 'Nota', Helder alludes to the fact that he could only have read translations of the source texts in European languages with which he was familiar: 'I take the *Song of Songs* in *English or French as if it were an English or French poem*' (my emphasis). The highlighted phrase brings us back to the problematic territory that landed Lowell in trouble with Nabokov and Robinson, as Helder implies that reading

European versions of these texts allows him to appropriate the material and make 'a poem by me'. Helder's free use of the possessive recalls Lowell's description of the sources for *Imitations* as 'his', but Helder's appropriation has been seen as far less problematic. In the next section, I discuss the underlying mechanics of Helder's subtle appropriation of his source texts and underline some of the problems with Helder's translational practice.

CANON POLITICS

What do Lowell's focus on canonical, Western European Literature and Helder's conspicuous rejection of it say about these two anthologies and their selector-poets? I would argue that Lowell's and Helder's respective positions represent different ways of reacting to the Canon, where the former looks to, and attempts to stamp his mark on, European poetical classics, while the latter seemingly searches outside Europe (through European sources) for his material. Helder's access to the diverse range of texts that constitute his selection was mediated through Western European academics. Maria Estela Guedes assumes that we should 'partir do princípio que verte do castelhano, do francês e do inglês' ('[...] assume that [the poetry] comes from Spanish, French or English [sources]'),[22] whilst according to Brazilian poet Jorge Souza Braga, Helder used Roger Caillois's *Trésor de la poésie universelle* as the basis for many of *O Bebedor Nocturno*'s poems.[23] Indeed, around two-thirds of *O Bebedor Nocturno*'s poems also appear in Caillois's compendium, whilst all of the texts that appear in the section dedicated to Arabo-Andalusian poetry seem to be versions of a 1942 Spanish translation by Emilio García Gómez of an anthology compiled in 1243 by Ibn Said al-Magribi.[24]

Callois's anthology also includes a poem that does not feature in Helder's collection, but which seems to have provided the title for *O Bebedor Nocturno*. I quote below the first three lines of this Aztec hymn, titled 'A Xipe Topec, Le Buveur nocturne':

O Buveur Nocturne, pourquoi te fais-tu prier?
Revêts ton costume cérémoniel,
ton vêtement d'or, mets-le !

('Oh Nocturnal Drinker, why do you drag your feet?
Don your ceremonial dress,
your garment of gold, put it on!')[25]

Helder alludes to this text from the Caillois anthology in a prose poem written in 1964 called 'Poeta Obscuro' (Obscure Poet), in which the invocation to the nocturnal drinker acts as one of several artistic stimuli (along with a Japanese sketch and a 'solemn and ambiguous' piece of music) that provoke a synesthetic mixture of impressions as the speaker in Helder's prose poem examines his body.[26] The speaker sees a thread that links the Japanese drawing, the unnamed piece of music, and the Aztec poem. The obscure poet, the speaker, is the vehicle through which, if not a unity, a commonality may form:

Isto não é de modo algum uma unidade, mas quando considero esta luta por uma constância, uma fidelidade, uma permanência de certos sentidos — vejo que se procura atravessar todos os fogos, mantendo intactas algumas virtudes, como por exemplo, talvez, determinado silêncio capaz de dar poder e dignidade à nossa morte.

('This is in no way any kind of unity, but when I consider this fight for a constancy, a fidelity, a permanency of certain senses — I see that it is looking to cross all fires, keeping intact some virtues, such as, perhaps, a given silence, capable of granting power and dignity to our death.')[27]

Prompted by the memory of that invocation to don the Aztec god's robes, the speaker finds, only 'perhaps', a silence that connects these arcane pieces of art. In *O Bebedor Nocturno,* Helder wholeheartedly responds to the entreaty in the Aztec hymn ('A Xipe Topec, Le Buveur nocturne') by assuming the mantle of the Nocturnal Drinker to bring together (but not 'unify') on a grander, but still modest, scale the various obscure cultures contained within his anthology.

This imbiber to whom the Aztec hymn is addressed is the god Xipe Totec: Lord of Liberation, Lord of Flaying,[28] or 'our flayed lord'.[29] The 'garment of gold' is, according to Laurette Séjourné, 'the same yellow flayed skin whose acceptance frees him [Xipe Totec] from the encumbrance of matter'.[30] In order to understand this imagery, we need to realize that 'Aztec notion of life was […] intimately related to death and the concept of renewal' and, moreover, that 'for the Aztecs, the idea of

rebirth was epitomized by snakes shedding their skins'.[31] This conception of death fits with the themes of regeneration and the triumph of life over death, which Juliet Perkins identifies as one of the key strands of the initial phase of the 'mythic pattern' of Helder's poetry taken as a whole.[32] Xipe is a 'nocturnal drinker', as Séjourné points out, because the sacrifices to the deity, believed to have 'the power of raising man to spirituality', would occur at night.[33] However, the title of Helder's book, like the texts it contains, appears completely out of its original cultural, symbolic, and religious context, compounded by the fact that the hymn to Xipe is not included in *O Bebedor Nocturno*. For many readers, Helder's imbibing will not be that of Xipe, who was said to drink the blood drawn from the ears of human sacrifices as part of the ritual to elevate man to spirituality.[34] Rather, the title of Helder's 1968 anthology, and the publication of a collection called *Antropofagias* three years after *O Bebedor Nocturno*, have invited critics to place Helder's poetic consumption of foreign cultures in the Lusophone context of Brazilian anthropophagy.

Oswald de Andrade's well-known line from his 1928 *Manifesto Antropófago*, 'Tupi, or not tupi that is the question',[35] embodies the dynamic process of Brazilian *Antropofagia*, the aim of which is 'not to deny foreign influences or nourishment, but to absorb and transform them by addition of autochthonous input'.[36] It seems likely that Helder would have come across Brazilian *Antropofagia* through António Pedro, who spent a year in Brazil in 1941 and whom Helder would have met in the context of Portuguese surrealism.[37] Around the same time that Helder was preparing *O Bebedor Nocturno*, Brazilian poet, translator and critic Haroldo de Campos created a discourse around Brazilian anthropophagy that leant towards 'a view of *Antropofagia* as a critical, poetic and ideological operation'.[38] Elsa Vieira concludes that *Antropofagia* is

but one mode whereby cultures and societies might be theorized differently. Rather than the utopian horizontal of materialism, or the religious verticality of transcendalism, a *trans-jectory* of movement both *across* frontiers and through the *uplifts* of self in other, other in self, becomes operative. Through such *translation* the writing self is to be located in writing others — multi-epigraphically, mosaically.[39]

This last sentence recalls Irvin Ehrenpreis's 'genealogical tree' image for *Imitations* — except, of course, genealogy is vertical, a thread connecting many people across linear, historical time. In *O Bebedor Nocturno*, all the various verticalities — including those of religious significance in different cultures and those of chronological significance across time —are invisible. The different groups of texts are presented as if they were isolated cultural moments, held together inside the body of the nocturnal drinker. This body is a vessel made spirit through the sacrifice of the blood offerings (poems) that the poet imbibes and which are bound by the thematic commonalities between the various translated texts, and Helder's wider poetic corpus.

These sacrifices do not simply fortify the deified poet, as death in *O Bebedor Nocturno* is often a gateway to rebirth or regeneration. First, the source texts are, at least, partially resurrected by Helder who 'changes them into Portuguese' and thereby introduces a cultural diversity to the Portuguese reader. Second, death is regenerative in the poetic imagery of many of the texts in *O Bebedor Nocturno*, including the collection's very first poem, which establishes the symbolic framework in which

death should be considered. The ‘Ode do Desesperado’ (Desperate Man’s Ode) is an enumeration of similes for death and, although Helder’s rendering seems to follow closely the French version in *Trésor de Poésie Universelle*, Helder makes some subtle changes, which introduce a greater ambiguity to the Portuguese translation. At first glance, the text seems to link death to regeneration and life-giving at the level of the images evoked:

A morte está agora diante de mim
como a saúde diante do inválido
como abandonar um quarto após a doença. (*BN*, p.9)

(‘Death is now before me

like health before the invalid

like abandoning one’s bedroom after illness.’)

A rereading of the text, however, reveals other possible interpretations. The presence of the abstraction ‘saúde’ (‘health’) before the invalid could be haunting rather than regenerative, as the sick man could simply be dreaming of health because he is so close to death. Furthermore, Helder embellishes the French ‘quitter’ by rendering the idea of leaving by ‘abandonar’, reinforcing the reading that the ‘abandoning’ of the room could be a metaphor for the departure from an earthly existence. The preposition ‘diante’ (‘devant’ in the French) allows these readings as a certain distance is maintained in each simile between what is being compared and the comparative

image. This interstitial space links the opening poem about death to the themes of creation and regeneration (on an interpretative level). Meanwhile, the insistent, ritualistic repetition of 'A morte está agora diante de mim' gives the sense of a cycle in which death will continually return as part of the recurring processes of nature. Thus, this opening ode is both a text that attracted Helder for its imagery and its incantational form, and a text that the poet lightly adorns with his own subtle variations, which together make for a more ambiguous text.

If Helder's translations are anthropophagous gestures, his consumption of the source texts for *O Bebedor Nocturno* is an instance of 'amorous devouring', since the digestion, for Vieira, 'ultimately entails a tribute to the other's strength that one wishes to have combined with one's own for greater vitality'.[40] Buescu has understood Helder's translational practice as part of a suggestion for an alternative world literature. According to Buescu, with his collections of translations Helder proposes: 'Uma forma de literatura mundial […] que "ousa" […] mostrar-se em permanente diálogo com as suas margens, em permanente estado de vulnerabilidade para melhor ser ela mesma' ('A form of world literature […] that "dares" to show itself in permanent dialogue with its margins, in a permanent state of vulnerability in order to be better itself').[41] By 'dialoguing' with marginal and obscure texts, Helder has avoided the charges of problematic appropriation levelled against Lowell. Nevertheless, previous critical appraisal notwithstanding, Helder is in fact also guilty of such charges.

Because Helder's anthropophagy is undertaken by a Portuguese rather than a Brazilian poet, his feeding involves a different sort of political upsetting to that of the rupturing of the colonial dialectical of giver/receiver. Rather, *O Bebedor Nocturno*, published in the same year that another of Helder's works, *Apresentação do Rosto* (I Show My Face), was censored by the Portuguese regime,[42] appears to take aim at the social ideals of Salazar's Portugal, which were informed by a highly conservative Catholicism. By including his own translations of Biblical, pre-Christian texts at the beginning of the collection, Helder seems to claim canonical writings in order to undermine the New State's conservative Catholic message. A. H. de Oliveira Marques has written that one of the consequences of the effective and highly repressive censorship of Salazar's New State was the 'rise of a highly original crypto-writing on the part of authors and to a sharp understanding on the part of readers and listeners'.[43] Helder's subversive politics are astutely concealed: they may be glimpsed in the author's inclusion of a translation of the *Song of Songs*, with its themes of erotic love and its privileging of a woman's voice, as well as in several passages that invite contemporary political readings, such as the ambiguous last two stanzas of 'Ode do Desesperado', which I quote below:

A morte está agora diante de mim

como o fim da chuva,

como o regresso de um homem

que um dia partiu para além-mar.

A morte está agora diante de mim

como o instante em que o céu se torna puro,

como o desejo de um homem de rever a pátria

depois de longos, longos anos de cativeiro. (*BN*, p. 9)

(‘Death is now before me

like the end of the rain,

like the return home for a man

who one day left for overseas.

Death is now before me

like the instant in which the sky becomes pure,

like a man’s desire to see his fatherland again,

after many, many years of captivity.’)

The ‘maison’ in Callois’s anthology has become ‘pátria’ (‘fatherland’) in Helder’s rendering, a clear reference to item two of Salazar’s slogan: ‘Deus, Pátria, Família’ (God, Fatherland, Family). Death is linked, but only cryptically, to the prospect of one man’s returning home having been overseas and another’s desire to see his fatherland again. Helder, who travelled throughout Europe and visited Angola, obliquely

expresses the poet's dread at the idea of the return to Portugal in the context of censorship, which was, in effect, a sort of captivity.

This theme of exile is continued in Helder's versions of the psalms, before the Nocturnal Drinker leaves the Western canon behind, undermining another key nationalistic tenet of the New State, 'orgulhosamente sós' ('proudly alone'), as he moves towards obscure, non-European, and non-Portuguese texts. This movement, from the culturally (given the New State context) sacrosanct texts of the Old Testament to pagan texts, recalls Erich Auerbach's comparison between an episode from Homer's *Odyssey* and Abraham's sacrifice in Genesis.[44] Helder's gesture is ultimately subversive: whereas Auerbach compares (an act entailing equivalence) a sacred and a canonical literary text, Helder places Christian poems alongside texts that were considered sacred in the cultures that begot them.

Helder's anthropophagic 'trans-jectory' across cultural, historical, and geographical boundaries is compounded by his collection's anthological nature, as the poet creates a space in which a 'colisão de tradições' ('collision of traditions') takes place: traditions and cultures, which, as a whole, represent a '*não-tradição*' ('non-tradition') or a 'proposta de um cânone radicalmente diferente' ('proposal for a radically different canon').[45] Helder's conspicuous rejection of a European tradition allows him to choose his own sources and influences, which Izabela Leal terms 'afinidades eletivas' ('elective affinities').[46] It is for this reason that Helder avoids the kind of criticism levelled at Lowell as a 'mutilator of his betters', those 'defenceless dead poets – Mandelshtam, Rimbaud, and others',[47] as he resurrects texts to which the

Portuguese reader would ordinarily not have access; avoids canonized European texts; and stays clear of Nabokov's virulently defended poets. The relationship between the texts appropriated and the poet is mutually beneficial: Helder translates into Portuguese texts that the Portuguese reader would previously only have been able to read in French, Spanish or English, and revitalizes the rather flat and prosaic French versions of the *Trésor de la poésie universelle*.

That is not to say, however, that Helder's practice as a translator is not entirely unproblematic. The formula above is missing one, indeed, *the*, crucial element — the source text as it was originally composed. It is the obscurity of the texts that Helder selects and translates that gives the poet licence to change and manipulate the sources to his own ends. Worse still, the structure of Helder's anthology reduces a series of cultures to a handful of texts, and in some instances a single poem. This is most apparent in the titles of the collection's sub-sections. The heading 'Canções Indonésias' ('Indonesian Songs'), suggests that the six texts chosen and then translated by Helder are representative of Indonesian poetry, when in fact the poems selected were likely no more than a handful that Helder happened to come across while reading Roger Caillois's anthology. No indication is given as to the historical period in which these texts were written, or from which of the many islands of the Indonesian archipelago they originate. Indeed, Caillois merely identifies these 'pantouns' as originating from the 'Archipel indonésien', before providing a short definition of this 'forme de poésie populaire' in a footnote.[48] Thus, Helder continues Caillois's imperialist exoticism by identifying these poems as no more than 'Indonesian', as if a Portuguese rendering of six short texts could possibly embody the

cultural and literary spirit, if such a thing exists, of an archipelago of around six thousand inhabited islands.[49]

LOWELL'S IMPOSITIONS

Lowell, on the other hand, gravitates towards Western Europe and, even though the authors that he imitates are culturally, historically, and linguistically diverse, Lowell homogenizes them by placing them under the umbrella of an idea of a cultural Europe and by rendering them not only in American English, but Lowellian English. Peter Robinson, having analysed Lowell's imitation of the final quatrains of 'Le Bateau Ivre', fears that there is a political motive for such a liberal rendering of a canonical European poet in the context of the Cold War. Commenting on Lowell's decision to translate Rimbaud's 'Si je désire eau d'Europe…' as 'our Europe has no water', Robinson writes the following: 'but why "our" Europe? I dearly hope it isn't the free world's Europe as opposed to the eastern bloc's. It's hardly Lowell's, and Rimbaud doesn't claim it in that presumptuous fashion either.'[50] Robinson's comment alludes to Lowell's problematic claim that his anthology is one of 'European poetry' — it is not: *Imitations* is a collection of translations of canonical *Western* European texts (in which Lowell includes the Russians, Pasternak and Annensky) published in a Cold War climate where Europe was divided into East and West by the Berlin Wall.

Robinson's suggestion that there might be a political motive for Lowell's insistence on freedom overlooks another explanation, one which becomes apparent when we compare Helder's enterprise in *O Bebedor Nocturno* to Lowell's treatment

of almost exclusively dead white male poets in *Imitations*. The following comment from Helena Buescu regarding Helder's collection is particularly illuminating if we apply the reverse to Lowell:

[…] esta família de poetas, ou de poemas, sublinha a sua menor ênfase sobre o conceito de produção autoral: não é exactamente a «angústia da influência» de Harold Bloom que aqui se joga, entre outras razões porque não existe diálogo privilegiado entre duas vozes, uma responsável pela influência e outra pela angústia.

('[...] this family of poets, or of poems, underlines a minimal emphasis on the concept of authorial production: it is not exactly Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence" at play, amongst other reasons because there is no privileged dialogue between two voices, one responsible for the influence and the other for the anxiety.')[51]

Lowell's emphasis on the originality of his poems makes a reading of *Imitations* in the light of Harold Bloom's anxiety of influence tempting. Lowell's imitation(s) of Arthur Rimbaud's 'Le dormeur du val' is one striking example where Lowell attempts to stamp his mark on a source text, by radically changing the all-important tone of the original poem. Imitation*s* in the plural because 'The Sleeper in the Valley' is not the only version of Rimbaud's 1870 text that Lowell published. In 1973, a substantially revised iteration of the poem from *Imitations* appeared in *History*, titled 'Sleeper in the Valley'. In the 'Introduction' to the 2003 Faber edition of Lowell's *Collected Poems*, Frank Bidart cites a comment made by Lowell regarding the two versions of a

non-imitation poem called ‘Waking Early Sunday Morning’, which we might relate to the two translations of Rimbaud’s ‘Le dormeur du val’.[52] Having discovered that both Lowell and Bidart had struggled separately to reconcile the two versions, the former said the following: ‘But they both exist.’[53] An illuminating comment when we consider that Lowell’s versions underwent ‘considerable re-writing’ both during the production of *Imitations* and after the publication of the collection in 1961.

Rimbaud’s original operates through a series of subtle oppositions, including the main contrast between the effervescent natural setting and the inert soldier. However, this opposition is not a straightforward binary, as there is a concurrent, underlying process in which the soldier, who regresses to a childlike state, is uterinely absorbed by Mother Nature as he is digested by the grass and the river. Rather than attempt the delicate balancing-act of Rimbaud’s poem, Lowell uses what Robinson terms ‘strongarm tactics’ in order to make the opposition between the soldier/nature contrast and their contemporaneous fusion more pronounced.[54] Lowell’s approach produces some jarring results: his literal rendering of ‘trou’ as ‘hole’ works for the bullet holes that puncture the soldier’s corpse, but sounds simply odd in English to describe a valley: ‘The swollen river sang through the green hole’.[55] Rimbaud’s ‘trou de verdure’,[56] on the other hand, has a pleasing strangeness to it, owing to the poetical use of the ‘de’ followed by the leafy ‘verdure’, which both soften the initially jolting ‘trou’. Lowell seems to have been unsatisfied with his 1961 solution, as in the *History* version he adds a verb of incision to clarify the surprising use of ‘hole’. The first line of the poem from *History* is: ‘The river sings and cuts a hole in the meadow’ (*CP*, p. 489). However, the addition of the ‘cutting’ entails a different sort of departure from the French: the river now cleaves rather than ‘sings’, introducing a violence to the

river that goes against Rimbaud's warbling stream. In Rimbaud's poem, the strangely poetic phrase 'trou de verdure' is redeemed at the end as it completes a cycle that links the language associated with soldier and nature, thereby connecting the poem's final stanza to its first and fulfilling nature's absorption of the soldier, a process suggested most strongly in the second stanza:

Un soldat jeune, bouche ouverte, tête nue,
Et la nuque baignant dans le frais cresson bleu,
Dort; il est étendu dans l'herbe, sous la nue,
Pâle dans son lit vert où la lumière pleut.

('A young soldier, mouth open, head bare,
Neck on a pillow of cool cress,
Sleeps, stretched out in the grass, sky above,
Pale on his green bed where light teems down.')[57]

Lowell's 'green hole', meanwhile, has a clumsy, prosaic strangeness that the final line of his version cannot save.

Rimbaud's lightness of touch, demonstrated by his suggestion and balancing of foaming tensions, is lost as Lowell exacerbates Rimbaud's oppositions. One such tension is the delicate contrast between maternal Nature and the infantilized soldier, whom the poet entreats to rock because 'il a froid'. Beyond the third stanza, where

this image occurs, the warmth emanated by the sun, and which permeates the valley, is suggested in the first four lines by the effervescence of the solar rays in the valley. The 'foaming trough of light' only comes at the stanza's end, suggesting a transfer of energy, originating from the sun, which is carried all the way down and through the landscape — an effect achieved through enjambment as words tumble down from one line to the next: '[…] où le soleil, de la montagne fière, | Luit: c'est un petit val qui mousse de rayons'.[58] Lowell, on the other hand, intensifies the opposition between heat and cold: Rimbaud's 'montagne fière' becomes 'hot hills'; the bruises of Lowell's soldier are 'baked' by the sunlight; and we are told that the hay-feverish soldier's 'hot eyes' will water no longer. Lowell's valley is a kiln in which the soldier's frozen corpse lies stiff, towered over by 'hot hills' as it is broiled by scorching sunrays. In short, Robert Lowell heightens and makes literal what is only suggested by Rimbaud. Whereas Rimbaud evokes a reverse-death/birth cycle where the soldier moves osmotically ('la nuque *baignant* dans le frais cresson *bleu*') across and into nature, Lowell feels the need to spell it out: 'The river sucks his hair.'

However, Lowell stamps his mark on more than Rimbaud's imagery. Whereas most of the verbs in 'Le dormeur du val' are in the present, the verbs in Lowell's 1961 version begin in the past, before switching to the present at the end of the third stanza. This temporal switch is effective as the closing, insistent images in the final stanza become more immediate. However, these last lines also contain some of the greatest departures from the Rimbaud text. The idea that the smells in the valley 'ne font pas frissoner la narine' of the dead soldier is changed to the more maudlin 'The flowers no longer make his hot eyes weep', an image which reinforces the idea that the poem takes place during a (hot) summer, as it is through hay fever that flowers might have

brought tears to the soldier's eyes. The notion that the soldier is sleeping is brought forward so that it is jarringly juxtaposed with the revelation that sleep is only a metaphor for death: 'He sleeps. In his right side are two red holes.' The carefully placed caesurae in 'Le dormeur du val', whose strength varies according to the different punctuation that Rimbaud employs, are instead a series of full stops in the first and final stanzas of Lowell's poem. E. H. and A. M. Blackmore, remarking that Rimbaud's text operates on a central 'conflict' between nature and civilization, make the following assessment of 'Le dormeur du val': 'The scene is studied with a passionate irony kept (barely) under glacial control, and driven by an intense compassion for the victims of civilization and convention.'[59] Rimbaud's poem finely balances a series of tensions, which constantly threaten to split the poem at the seams. Whereas Rimbaud 'barely' controls his passions, Lowell cannot contain himself and creates a brazen and bold poem out of a delicate and suggestive original.

Lowell was right when he said that 'they both exist'. The problem with imitating canonized, classical texts is that comparisons will inevitably be drawn, and it is to be supposed that Lowell knew full well that his versions would not be spared scrutiny. The imitator's attempts 'to keep something equivalent to the fire and finish' (*CP*, 195) of 'his' sources have led to versions like 'The Sleeper in the Valley', which include nice solutions for tricky images, but which ultimately suffer from their knotty, filial, and therefore vertical, relationship with their august father-texts. Lowell's aim is for his poems to exist in their own right — but simply to exist is not enough. It is for this reason that he wants to impress us with the daring of his enterprise and his cavalier attitude towards quasi-sacrosanct texts. However, as with most supposedly audacious ventures, Lowell's enterprise reveals an inner fragility. It is this curious

admixture of insecurity and imperiousness that characterizes Lowell's treatment of his material: he is only assertive when he brings foreign texts on to the *terra firma* of his personal voice.

HELDER'S VANISHING-ACT

Helder, on the other hand, seems to disappear between the lines in *O Bebedor Nocturno*. His explanatory 'Nota' has not prefaced *O Bebedor Nocturno* since the 1973 edition of *Poesia Toda* and, even though he does make some subtle changes to the texts from his French and Spanish sources, the reader is very unlikely to be aware of Helder's deviations. Helder counts on the reader's being ignorant of the majority of cultures that appear in *O Bebedor Nocturno*. The translational changes wrought by him do not take centre stage, as the reader is not expected to be able to draw a comparison between the translation and the source text. It is worth returning to Helena Buescu's comments about Bloom in relation to *O Bebedor Nocturno*, as she contends that Helder's selection of texts for *O Bebedor Nocturno* places no emphasis whatsoever on authorial production, and suggests that Helder's choices might be a way of indirectly circumventing what Bloom would later term the anxiety of influence. However, Buescu does suggest that Helder's engagement with obscure texts might be a way of responding to the shadow left by Fernando Pessoa over poetic production in the second half of the twentieth century in Portugal.[60] Buescu's suggestion implies that there is an underlying vertical, paternal genealogy that has been adeptly masked by the nature of Helder's alternative project. There is a parallel to be drawn between Pessoa's euro- and androcentric heteronymic scheme and Helder's poly-cultural anthology, in which the feminine voice features prominently:

two different semblances of plurality that are separately filtered through one, masculine poet.

Another latent genealogy is the fact that Helder's main source is an anthology edited by a French academic who looks away from the European canon because he has become disillusioned with French poetry. Caillois's turning away from French poetry seems to be provoked by his disgust with free verse, which he describes as an 'aberration éphémère'. He concludes a tirade against this poetic with the assertion that: 'Il faut maintenant rechercher ce qui primitivement et universellement caractérise la poésie […].'[61] Helder and Caillois both look away and beyond Portugal and France because they have become disenchanted with what is going on at home. The politics of *O Bebedor Nocturno*, as well as the collection's paternal genealogies and its forefathers — Caillois, Gómez, Pessoa — however, are masked by obscurity.

Even if Helder's presence is not felt, the spectre of the poet/translator haunts every line of *O Bebedor Nocturno*, as he manipulates the texts and the poetic language of historically and geographically distant cultures for his own political and artistic ends. Helder's textual evanescence corresponds to another kind of disappearance, his retirement from the Portuguese literary scene and public life: 'Herberto Helder coloca-se no lado sombrio do silêncio e afasta-se da obra, recusando entrevistas ou qualquer outro tipo de possibilidade de se poder estabelecer pontes entre biografia e poesia.' ('Herberto Helder positions himself on the dark side of silence and distances himself from his *oeuvre*, refusing interviews or any possibility of being able to establish bridges between biography and poetry').[62] The cultures

contained in *O Bebedor Nocturno* are many, but the vessel that contains them absents himself as, in a rewriting of the Xipe myth, his sacred ingestion of a plurality of texts makes him invisible in a collection that is both politically subversive and deeply personal.

My comparison of these very different collections of poetic translations has revealed two counteracting movements. Lowell's homogenising of the various European texts that serve as his sources under the umbrella term 'Europe' entails the double-edged gesture, in the vein of Renaissance *imitatio*, of claiming the work of a forefather before stamping a mark on the source. The 'our Europe' at the end of 'The Drunken Boat'; the 'our new art' and 'our new age' in the Hugo imitation called 'At Gautier's Grave'; and the 'our métier' in his version of Mallarmé's 'Toast funèbre' (also called 'At Gautier's Grave'), are all signs of Lowell's attempts to make this selected, and selective, 'European' poetic tradition his own — where the 'our' represents a cultural-genealogical in-club of Lowell's chosen influences. Helder's 'elective affinities' originate from obscurity, meaning that he avoids the minefield that is canonized European poetry, a move that grants the poet the sort of freedom that Lowell might have enjoyed, in order to do with his sources as he wishes. After all, who would know if Helder's version of an Eskimo text were unfaithful to the source, for, in order to make such a judgement, the critic would need to be both an expert in the culture in question and a speaker of the Portuguese language? Even if such a critique were possible, Helder would shirk the blame because of the political nature of his exercise: his cryptic subversion of the social conservatism of a fascist state through the introduction of the Other (in the form of feminine and non-Portuguese voices rendered in Portuguese) into the culture of an isolated and misogynistic

Portugal. In *Imitations* and *O Bebedor Nocturno*, as personal anthologies, Lowell and Helder both appropriate, in different ways, the texts that they translate. Whereas the former rises, like the reverse of Baudelaire's albatross, prominent but ungainly, over the dead poets that he imitates, Helder vanishes behind the obscure fog of enigmas, hymns, odes, haikus, songs, hainteny, mysteries, which all constitute o Bebedor Nocturno: anthology and poet.

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[1] See Ben Belitt, '*Imitations*: Translation as Personal Mode', *Salmagundi*, 1(4) (1966), 44-56; Stephen Yenser, 'Many Personalities, One Voice: *Imitations*' in *The Critical Response to Robert Lowell*, edited by Steven Axelrod (Westport, Conn.; London: Greenwood Press), 109-116; Alfredo Rizzardi, 'Robert Lowell's Imitations of Italian Poetry', in *Robert Lowell: A Tribute*, edited by Rolando Anzilotti (Pisa: Nistri Lischi, 1979), pp. 135-142.

[2] See John Simon, 'Abuse of Privilege: Lowell as Translator', *The Hudson Review*, 20(4) (1967), pp. 543-562; Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters 1940-1977*, edited by Dmitri Nabokov & Matthew J. Bruccoli (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson), pp. 385 and 387; Peter Robinson, *Poetry & Translation: The Art of the Impossible* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), pp. 26-47; Matthew Reynolds, *The Poetry of Translation: from Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 59-72.

[3] Helder notes at the beginning of the section dedicated to the Psalms that his source for his translations was Jean Grosjean's edition. I have used the edition of *O Bebedor Nocturno* that Porto Editora published immediately after the death of Herberto Helder in March 2015. Citations from *O Bebedor Nocturno* are followed hereafter by the

abbreviation *BN* and a page reference. Herberto Helder, *O Bebedor Nocturno: Poemas Mudados para Português*, 3ª edição (Porto: Porto Editora, 2015), p.15.

[4] Maria Lúcia dal Farra considers that *O Bebedor Nocturno* occupies a central position in the timeline of Helder's work and that, like Janus, the text simultaneously looks forward and backward. For Juliet Perkins, *O Bebedor Nocturno* closes the first phase of Helder's poetry, a stage in which the feminine takes the form of the Great Mother. Maria Lúcia Dal Farra, *A Alquimia da Linguagem: Leitura da Cosmogonia Poética de Herberto Helder* (Lisboa: INCM, 1986), p. 155; Juliet Perkins, *The Feminine in the Poetry of Herberto Helder* (London: Tamesis Books, 1991), p. 55.

[5] Roger Caillois, *Trésor de la poésie universelle,* edited by Jean-Clarence Lambert (Paris: Gallimard, 1958).

[6] Ibn Sa'īd, 'Alī ibn Mūsá, *Poemas arábigoandaluces*, ed., Emilio García Gómez (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe Argentina, 1942).

[7] I use the Frank Bidart, David Gewanter and DeSales Harrison's edition *Collected Poems* for quotations from Lowell's poetry. Citations from this edition are followed hereafter by the abbreviation *CP* and a page number. All quotations from Lowell's 'Introduction' are taken from pages 195-96 of *CP*. Robert Lowell, *Collected Poems*, Frank Bidart, David Gewanter & DeSales Harrison, eds, (London: Faber, 2003), p. 196.

[8] Helder published three volumes of translations in 1997: *Ouolof* (October); *Poemas Ameríndios* (Amerindian Poems, November); and *Doze Nós Numa Corda* (Twelve Knots in a Rope, December). Before *O Bebedor Nocturno* (1968), Helder had previously published *As Magias* (Magic, 1987). Helena Carvalhão Buescu & João Ferreira Duarte, 'Communicating Voices: Herberto Helder's Experiments in Cross-Cultural Poetry' in *Forum for Modern Languages Studies*, 43(2) (2007), p. 175.

[9] Patrícia Anne Obder de Baubeta, *The Anthology in Portugal: A New Approach to the History of Portuguese Literature in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 13.

[10] The 'Nota' first appeared in the 1973 edition of Helder's collected poems, *Poesia Toda* (1953-1971), in which *O Bebedor Nocturno* is subtitled 'Versões' (Versions). The 1981 *Poesia Toda* (1953-1980) carries the same subtitle, but the 'Nota' has been omitted. In the 1990 *Poesia Toda*, the subtitle has been changed to 'poemas mudados para português' (poems changed/mutated into Portuguese). The 'Nota' then reappears in *Photomaton & Vox* (1979), but this time does not preface *O Bebedor Nocturno*.

[11] I say disingenuously because, as will soon become clear, Helder could read French and Spanish. For all quotations from Helder's 'Nota' I use Helena Buescu and João Ferreira Duarte's English translation. Buescu & Duarte, 'Communicating Voices', p. 176.

[12] I use Elsa Vieira's English rendering of Haroldo de Campos's term 'transcriação'. Elsa Vieira, 'Liberating Calibans: Readings of Antropofagia and Haroldo de Campos' poetics of transcreation' in *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, edited by Susan Bassnett & Harish Trivedi (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 96.

[13] Reynolds, *The Poetry of Translation*, pp. 69-70.

[14] John Dryden, 'Preface' to *Ovid's Epistles* in *The Poems of John Dryden: Volume 1*, ed., Paul Hammond (London: Longman, 1995), p. 387.

[15] In fact, Robinson places Nabokov's 'dogmatic theory of devotion to the literal meaning of the original' in opposition to Lowell's equally extreme 'powerful appropriation in the name of poetic freedom'. Like Dryden, Robinson advocates a middle course: 'Lowell and Nabokov represent two extremes, sharing the same ground in their opposition to each other. Between both, in a reformulation that takes

us away from such zero sum territory, lies the space in which poetry is translated — losses, gains, luck, or lack of it, and all'. Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, pp. 42-47.

[16] Dryden, 'Preface', pp. 385-388.

[17] Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, p. 35.

[18] Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'The Age of Lowell', in Irvin Ehrenpreis, Elizabeth Jennings, eds, *American Poetry* (London: E. Arnold, 1965), p. 90.

[19] Nabokov quoted in Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, p. 40.

[20] Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, p. 42.

[21] Perkins, *The Feminine in the Poetry of Herberto Helder*, p. 55.

[22] Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own. Maria Estela Guedes quoted in Claudio Alexandre de Barros Teixeira, 'Herberto Helder e a refabulação do oriente', <http://qorpus.paginas.ufsc.br/como-e/edicao-n-017/herberto-helder-e-a-refabulacao-do-oriente-claudio-alexandre-de-barros-teixeira/> [accessed 8 February 2016].

[23] Jorge Souza Braga quoted in Claudio Alexandre de Barros Teixeira, 'Herberto Helder e a refabulação do oriente', <http://qorpus.paginas.ufsc.br/como-e/edicao-n-017/herberto-helder-e-a-refabulacao-do-oriente-claudio-alexandre-de-barros-teixeira/> [accessed 8 February 2016].

[24] I discovered that Emilio García Gómez's translation of the Ibn Said al-Magribi anthology, titled *Poemas arábigoandaluces*, contains Spanish versions of all the texts that appear in the Arabo-Andalusian poetry section of *O Bebedor Nocturno*. Furthermore, Helder follows Gómez's spellings for the Arabo-Andalusian poets' names and keeps many of Gómez's titles.

[25] Roger Caillois, *Trésor de la poésie universelle*, p. 179.

[26] This text comes from the collection of prose poems *Os Passos em Volta* (The Surrounding Steps). 'O Poeta Obscuro', in *Os Passos em Volta*, third edition (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1970), pp. 141-145.

[27] *Os Passos em Volta*, p. 144.

[28] Laurette Séjourné, *Burning Water: Thought and Religion in Ancient Mexico* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p. 148.

[29] Tom Phillips, Eduardo Matos Moctezuma & Felipe R Solís Olguín, *Aztecs* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2002), p. 171.

[30] Séjourné, *Burning Water*, p. 152.

[31] Phillips, *Aztecs*, p. 171.

[32] Perkins, *The Feminine in the Poetry of Herberto Helder*, p. 5.

[33] Séjourné, *Burning Water*, pp. 152-156.

[34] Fr. Bernadino de Sahagún quoted in Séjourné, *Burning Water*, p. 152.

[35] Oswald de Andrade, 'Manifesto antropófago', http://www.ufrgs.br/cdrom/oandrade/oandrade.pdf [accessed 20 January 2016].

[36] Vieira, 'Liberating Calibans', p. 98.

[37] Maria de Fátima Marinho remarks that a passage from Helder's 1968 collection *Apresentação do Rosto* seems to have been directly influenced by António Pedro's 1942 surrealist novel *Apenas uma Narrativa*. Maria de Fátima Marinho, *O Surrealismo em Portugal* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa de Moeda, 1987), p. 286.

[38] Vieira, 'Liberating Calibans', p. 102.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

[41] Helena Carvalhão Buescu, 'Herberto Helder: uma Ideia de Poesia Omnívora', *Diacrítica*, 23(3) (2009), p. 62.

[42] Maria de Fátima Marinho, *Herberto Helder. A Obra e o Homem* (Lisboa: Arcádia, 1982), pp. 11-17.

[43] A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal. Vol. 2: From Empire to Corporate State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 187.

[44] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: the Representation of Reality in Western Literature* translated by Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 3-23.

[45] Buescu, 'Herberto Helder: uma Ideia de Poesia Omnívora', pp. 51-52.

[46] Izabela Leal quoted in Geovanna Marcela da Silva Guimarães, 'Haroldo de Campos e Herberto Helder: a Antropofagia como Criação Poética', Abralic XIV (September 2014), http://www.abralic.org.br/anais/arquivos/2014_1434478694.pdf [accessed 20 January 2016].

[47] Nabokov, *Selected Letters 1940-1977*, pp. 385; 387.

[48] 'Le pantoun, forme de poésie populaire, est composé de deux distiques qui semblent éloignés l'un de l'autre par le sens' (The pantoun, a popular poetic form, is composed of two couplets, whose meanings are seemingly removed one from the other.') Roger Caillois, *Trésor de la poésie universelle*, p. 487.

[49] *The World Factbook* 2013-14 (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html> [accessed 7 March 2016].

[50] Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, p. 40.

[51] Buescu, 'Herberto Helder: uma Ideia de Poesia Omnívora', p. 60.

[52] The first version of 'Waking Early Sunday Morning' appeared in *The New York Review of Books* (August 5, 1965) and the second in *Near the Ocean* (1967). *CP*, p. 1158.

[53] Frank Bidart, 'Introduction: "You Didn't Write, You *Rewrote*"' in *CP*, p. xii.

[54] Robinson, *Poetry & Translation*, p. 34.

[55] All quotations from 'The Sleeper in the Valley' come from *CP*, pp. 267-268.

[56] All quotations from 'Le dormeur du val' come from Arthur Rimbaud, *Œuvres completes* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009), p. 112.

[57] I quote here Martin Sorrell's rendering, 'Asleep in the Valley', from *Collected Poems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 57-59.

[58] Lowell's image of the frothing beer-glass, incidentally, is very good at conveying the Rimbaud's 'val qui mousse de rayons'.

[59] E. H & A. M. Blackmore, 'Introduction', in *Six French Poets of the Nineteenth Century: Lamartine, Hugo, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). p. xxx.

[60] Buescu, 'Herberto Helder: uma Ideia de Poesia Omnívora', pp. 60-61.

[61] Roger Caillois, 'Préface', in *Trésor de la poésie universelle*, p. 10.

[62] Guerreiro, Ana Lúcia Guerreiro, 'A "Antropófaga Festa": Metáfora para uma Ideia de Poesia em Herberto Helder', *Diacrítica*, 23(3) (2009), p. 21.