



El caminant i el mur

Salvador Espriu

Attempted canticle in the temple

How tired I am of this
my craven, ancient, savage fatherland;
how it would delight me to leave and go
beyond the farthest north,
where the people, they say, are noble and clean,
cultured, rich and free,
unsupervised and happy!
But then my disapproving brethren would tell the congregation:
«Leaving his native place a man becomes
like a bird leaving the nest»,
while I, in the distance, laughed at
the law, the antique wisdom,
of this my arid people.
But the dream will never be followed,
I'll stay here till my death.
For I too am full of cowardice and savagery,
and also in despair and pain love this poor land,
my sad, unclean, unlucky fatherland.

Translated by Pearse Hutchinson