

worth's potential involvement in Paris in the autumn of 1792 was with the Oswaldian scheme of a direct cross-channel attack on London, and the establishment of "just tribunals," then a number of things fall into a coherent pattern: his keen interest in the "philosophic war" that Plato taught to Dion; his praying (in the summer of 1793) for French victories and his veiled hope that God's lightning would strike the British fleet in Portsmouth every time he heard the sunset cannon; and in his autobiographical *Prelude* his discussion of the tempting subjects that he had abandoned to tell his own story. The tempting heroic subjects all involve a military commander warring against tyranny who, though driven to strategic retreat, sustains his troops to fight another time or preserves the "Soul of Liberty" and hence the morale of a free people.

His own experiences, the poet believed, domestic as they largely were, supplied firmer ground for the kind of leadership the cause of liberty required than the

battlefield experiences of Oswald—or the famous but false "champion of Jacobinism," Napoleon:

The tenderest mood
Of that Man's mind— what can it be? what food
Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could *he* gain?
"Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.

Standard British courage, in peacetime in 1802, to defy the great Buonaparte. Sixteen months later war resumed and Wordsworth joined the Grasmere Volunteers, surprising his wife and sister by entering into the mustering and marching "heart and soul." Wordsworth was not given a commission and the excitement subsided; but when telling of the Volunteers in his poem *The Excursion*, he called the Grasmere commander "Oswald," still a name for his alter ego.

Angel Cuadra Landrove, a lawyer and poet, is currently held at Boniato Prison in Cuba. Cuadra was first imprisoned from 1967 until 1976 charged with "conspiracy"; he again was imprisoned in March of 1977 after his book Impromptus was published in the United States. A year later there were rumors that, after accepting the government's "reeducation" plan, he was to be released. Unfortunately, Cuban authorities discovered that a new book of Cuadra's poetry had been published—A correspondence of Poems (Solar Press, 1979). He was then transferred to Boniato Prison, the worst penal institution in Cuba.

At Boniato, Cuadra is forbidden to write letters or, even to possess pencil and paper. His case has been adopted by Amnesty International.

POLICE EFFICIENCY

Poetry is the height of letters
JUANA ROSA

Your poems have got lost.
I wasn't in the house.
But they came in with arms, with orders,
with many evil intentions,
prying into corners.
A gust of terror
scattered papers across the floor.
They went looking for crimes preserved in envelopes,
words that let their echoes trail
like the gossamer of the stars.
They found crimes like these:
"the first year of the dream,
we are poets; therefore we love,
as a child I remember a courtyard,
on my elbows in the rainbow,
the violet ash,
or April that stood on tiptoe to brush your angel..."
And they finally came upon the accomplished crime
under your name of distance,
a perfect epistolary crime:
your poems,
"the height of letters."

THE TASK

*like one who can
display against the light
a chalice territory.*
JUANA ROSA

when you go about the world
with overcoat and hair,
with the exact brand of skin
and abstract papers that keep falling from your hands;
when you drop my name in the carelessness of a gesture,
and have to give explanations—
because they always ask for them—
concerning a mystery so simple
that it has no need for alphabets;
and they ask you about my face, which you don't know,
and about my character which you have known since birth,
because you bore it
in a birth of bread and tears...
don't utter, of the shadows of my iron bars, more than the
sign,
don't speak of the vultures that scratch at me
for crumbs of hatred
and take light from the human clay;
speak to them of the poem that I defend
against a corrosion not from my iron bars,
tell them about the strophe—symbol in which I am
the link of a transparent fire
on the move from the depths of time,
of the leaf beneath the north wind that persists
in the timeless verdure;
of the clear duty
to cultivate "a chalice territory"
for the possible display against the light
and confess to them that is why
you have wished to save the verse of which I am composed.

From A correspondence of Poems, translated by Donald D. Walsh and reprinted with permission of Solar Press.