

The Gardens, Real Alcázar, Sevilla

March, 1991

Marzo 6

if only but,

the open gate

if only but,

the potted plant

if only but,

how the orange blossoms

if only but,

what single fountain

drips its gentle flow;
this columnal space,

if only but,

the window

the open grate

the open door

azul squares to unblemished white marble

the pattern of moss

if only but,

we

could pass through our gate

again.



The green vine which hangs from
the other side, to this facing wall high above,
this angle of light. When all one sees
is white.

Dream of the iron gate which opens
arch

to pass a phrase, words not firearms,
pass through solid doors. Temple
of what's just made idea. The doors.



The fount's pool not filled to brim, but
just this,

its proper means, the palms cut the leaves,
trim what is left dead. In the garden's soil, nothing left to mark
this course we ourselves cut.

Alcázar, Sevilla, 1996



The attentions put this — a walk, a plan, a wander from patio to next, haunted only by the smells current in air, the single song of a bird. Each death of friends, a patio. The path laid, the hibiscus bush ready to bloom, cusp. Cup. Up.

from this pool, three white trumpet blooms anchor us here to the bench, foot seeking relief, comes to leave the path.

More than any thing other, we leave you this corner, this waiting bench by a pedestal table, a vine marking its growth, more than any other thing, a place to sit down. Leave these words behind you.

●
To leave, leaf, leaves ●

left. To leaf,

Lift.

deft,

a theft. A thrift.

A drift.

Leaf.

#2

A leaf, a hand, a block to the path.

sun

bridge



a sharpened path; sand debris
glass on trail the mirrored past

a poem. Only good as its tribute
the public it finds of every race

in these early spring gardens, incipient and rare
the hue a turn a sit a cool promenade
turns up each glamourous cup, each colour
a potential voice sweet basso



Ivy-covered walls, the column which singularly stands. The resistance to the
shovel, gloved-hand forces its path; gives way the release of soil and impediment
any, a return to a block, another order of demand.



At the end of day, to remove the blue coveralls, leave them ready for another
day. The force at old knees bend, the faint sweet scent, rose on a low bush,
the dew brushed wet to the nose.



All about these grass grounds and sandy paths,
the piles of raked leaves and debris, the sounds of motors cutting away, the
laughter between those at rest from toil, rakes left leaning, empty pails on the
way. March, a month, an approach to Spring, the preparations of war, cut away
old wounds.

As the foot enters again. Here, straight from these eyes, in the distance, the
backs of others, leaving the path.



The world we might love, into which we pass
through some gate. A garden, the worn azul and yellow tiles
the assured passage so needed, then broken.

Entry through a gate under a stand of palms. The world
we might love, a gate always open.

Garden of El Alcázar

The itinerary through the gardens depends a little on the visitor's choice The first sector was originally occupied by the Muslim orchard and corrals and by the so-called Huerta de la Alcoba inside the walls of the Palace. On the site where the Islamic gardens lay and without their original structure being eliminated, the oldest gardens of the Alcázar in Seville were designed in the course of the 16C and 17C. Each fragment received a specific treatment following the Italian models and they are a real stage where myth and legend play an important role.⁷

Jardín de las Poetas

Most a garden of form, and aesthetic fixed order,
its sharded hedges, long pools with attendant columns. The pots above
pedestals with the overhang of plants, surrounded by towering palms.

A sore, drifting off,
the heavy heart, body,
the eyes suddenly close,
in fatigue, the warm
March sun.

>

Once entered this garden for poets, no one leaves

even the most separate text is part of this garden, in this text, on the bench, on the sandy path, by the bordering hedge which leaves undisclosed any pattern, but the view straight ahead, a poem in the making, your foot goes to sleep, your head swimming in the pool.



Today's Jardines Nuevos (New Gardens) were built at the beginning of the century There is also a section organized along the lines of an English garden and another of Romantic design. In this large area especially noteworthy is the so-called Garden of the Poets, which centres on a large pool and has boundaries consisting of myrtle hedges. (Garden of El Alcázar)



It is this balance upon the fingertip once left on a poem, a word, which descended the trip of water, sliding. In that deep pool (it was not, of course, but this murky one which held the shallow secret), a breeze in that hid, the body's need to walk these grounds itinerant and errant, abundant to the wander, through a path yet defined, to be in motion. Or to sit in the geometry of space, the cruciform space, to eye from each margin, the fixed perimeter of four corners, the palisades to gaze blinded at such a pool to blind and forget, abandon self repetition to the confusion, the flow of water to the patio, a reminder that cool like it, we must move on, to blind and forget, the palisades to look blinded at such pool.



In Abbasid and Andalusī nature poetry, orchards, flowers, fruits, fountains, trees and flowing streams became not only common images but direct objects of description, together with the man-made creations of palaces, ponds, orchards and shady arbours (the forlorn anguish of Ibn Khafaja, discussed below, was an exception), while the muwashshahat [sic] also incorporated and confirmed the whole repertoire of this kind of facile, pleasant and enjoyable landscape imagery.

The nawriyyat (poems describing flowers), rawdiyyat (poems describing gardens and lovely scenery) and al-rabi-yyat (poems describing the spring season) came to represent a distinct genre in Andalusī and Eastern poetry — but particularly in al-Andalus.

— Salma Khadra Jayyusi

Nature Poetry in Al-Andalus and the Rise of Ibn Khafaja



It is the demand of an organizing principle that repeats with each current of tourists, each seasonal moment in an economy that allows a leisure class travel, time to live with the shift of focus, hearts exposed to the breeze, our dangling obsessive limbs lopped off just the shirt on our backs which we might trade a million times over, a parable and vocable without embargoes, only the frail passage of these terms.



A grove most wanted: a cuckoo in our ear, the pollen discovered, centuries old, evidence of the orange trees in this sunken garden. We can start once again the planting of the garden of old, the ascents/descents to alter the lines, respect the patterns of motion and means of change.

Friday, March 8

What is it which returns us to these places where each time we find comfort, the space to walk unhindered but for our own thoughts, fascinations, target.

It has been eight years, yet as these recent days have passed, this garden has become increasingly familiar, though the paths keep me ordered, not so much my own plans, but they in their proper directions and tangents.

How odd in this quiet sector of the English Garden, are the birds, ducks about among the yellow clover, wandering, feeding.

How odd this the English Garden which is given by its meandering through intentioned paths, with its circular plots of flowers and plants.

Now, the rosemary bushes, dense, which in hesitant violet bloom. Which, it is a parkland setting though with its palms and tropical plants: I am given to the meandering way.

This and the rigid elegance of the Italianate Renaissance plan seem to bring delight though it is much the Arab, the Oriental I have sought in Andalucía. To find in the garden solace, the verdant solace. To find what is in the self, the tired legs, this fragment I am, European, the other of Asia, the features read on my face. Oh, this language, the non-sense gibberish which kids taunt, this is the taut language, oh, Spain, in hurt, a solace yet.

The garden here seemingly imposes nothing, but by plan and structure, one is physically transported through it, in both natural and incidental course.



In all ways do gardens plant us into a form, a way of moving, a way of looking, a way of hearing and smelling. Proposes a field of economies, of leisure and agriculture, of defining frontiers of stopping and impending. Yet the constant natural is no longer content, but common bond to plants, growth to ultimate decay and death which our fatigue knows.

In a garden can we accept both heaven and hell, the dichotomous self, as we are part passage in time to our own proper demise.

There is ultimately no control. The garden continues, growth and change and we enter and depart.

That our memories by nature must fail us in ways we seldom perceive. The architectural structure remains, the 200-year old tree remains: and the field we are thrown to — of change, that memory and nostalgia is finally vague, supported only by our thoughts so profoundly brief.

Here then, we can be English and Italian, a Renaissance soul and a believer of the piers of the Qur'an as was written in al-Andalus.



If my own trails are for some clarity — as archaeologist and others define these gardens as destroyed, changed and no longer purely Persian —:

:I learn about the passage from here to there — if euphony crossing from inside to outside — structure and patio to garland which is to the harmony of the Italian Renaissance Garden next to the Persian, of the labour of the theorists, and gardeners who have planted American plants next to Andalusian myrtle, South African trees by medieval mosaic.

:A garden, a collection of gardens collage plant and debris, accord and nature's ultimate touch, can bear no argument for war, gives only the moment of the breath, the next step. A next step so partial, so ephemeral, the fallen lemon blossom, rudely shaken too young from its branch by a bird, the orange uneaten, gray and rotting in a pool of still orange goldfish, the rain setting its concentric circles to the margins of the recessed pool.

:A patio's organizing structure day after day. How this holds one closed, unmoving to write, advance when the body fades, dazed, with no force to proceed, breathless.

:And yet, the light is next changed, again the pool revives with the light it constantly reflects.

●

But within the European garden tradition there exists a profound dichotomy represented on one hand by Le Nôtre in France and on the other by Capability Brown and Humphry Repton in England. If Versailles conforms to Cartesian criteria, that is to say, the triumph of reason over nature, with man imposing his will upon the external world, and the romantic English landscape garden symbolizes the unconditional surrender of the human spirit to that same nature (as in Wordsworth), the Islamic garden betrays — in a equilibrium of both elements, the rational and the natural, in a felicitous compenetration where each one supplements the other. The only remaining dimension — the imaginative — was furnished by the architecture, without which no garden was complete.

— James Dickie

The Islamic Garden in Spain

Sunday

Jardín de las Flores

To be placed above, a vantage point where, a pleasure to view the order given by the faint movement of a pool. To see from this point, down to another, seated in the protective arch and bench adjacent to this water. These pleasures to look, consider if only with errant thoughts, the interventions with the joke and laughter of your companion, hand in hand, or hand released to take up the camera, to hold this water's peace forever.

It is but for these moments that we plan to build a garden, a pool which invites this gaze, to catch that other seated there, and then forgotten, perhaps out of the frame of the catch of the lens.

Oh, the orange gleam of fish seen but faintly and to descend, find that seat by the pool, waiting for the other, but no one enters, no one behind that green iron fence to meet the eye, the heart's incipient rhythm.



Once former strangers, next to next
coincident on a bus. No one there to that place above the gentle pool, no gaze
to meet,
behind the fence in its
infinite stand.



Anything, anybody here. What
is prominent to view. No, not much,
we pass on, leave our regards
for those of another.



And those who come, to stay to admire the view, the others who come barely
scan eyes but quickly pass on, there is no conflict in the Jardín de los Flores.

Martes

Source, sorcery, to find a way
to water. The difficult times we gaze
and nightmare, fields where language
plays fear to the ears of those of host land.

A source, stopped. But to irrigate fields,
dig the plan, of fill and drain.

Pool, this is
no reflection, no mirror to pretend
some Bodhidharma peace. Without pretensions
what's on this daily plate, which will imprint
again again from the night's fallen arch,
the chill of the moon, and too caffeinated
(oh rest, hold the penis in hand, gentle, gentler).

The ever-changing level of water,
the spigot's fill dance with light upon the walls
no peace, and only what's possible
to dream,
the goldfish swim, electric orange
in the dark moving green.

That once these waters channelled through
to the fields outside the walls, the crops brought to table.
Now gardens by which to walk, no clarity

in these lines, no way
out of this machine, moving.



Here in the 11th year since,
always the 12 pots around this pool, marked by leaf,
goldfish swim, debris.

Long-handled broom bound
of twigs, to sweep up the leaves
firm strokes side to side, keep clear
these public paths, firm
moss-wet sandy paths
paved ways under our steps.



As the sounds of birds persist, but fade into the common tableau of day, only
machines, sound we know as saw-tooth cutting, provokes our hearts outwards,
no intervention, gentler thought of repose, work of our leisure, the history of
crops and the hedges of our gardens, a worthy book in hand, a meal with family
or good friends, a rich bottle of wine, the dirt upon hands still caught in these
lines.

A conference homage to these gardeners and labourers, a tributary of tears to
Roy and bp, Takeshi and shaunt to papa to mama, a tribute by this pool found
11 years later with debris, the clear of goldfish swimming, 12 pots, 12, the
numerals in this heart.

Only this 12, as they are.



If the gardens of al-Andalus give us the immense presence of the seat, place to hold thus, in such station, the smallness we are to think. What we are not astonished. That here to a garden of paths which curve and vein and we follow, only intermittently to think of our way, it is this hour, hand in hand, a way to come together, lover with lover, or friend with friend, in ways the city outside only rarely invites. To place here then, place of birds, insects and lizards play, exist in peace, to place here the scents we do not recall by name, but only as they arrive.

Then it is, there is upkeep, to control the growth, to keep populations under control. How do I live here. What is the friendship between gardener with gardener worker to worker: the water from the patio in a season of drought, the crops, the hibiscus in the fields, where we might to the ends of our lives, errance.

^a Values are means ± SD; * indicates significant difference from control ($P < 0.05$) by Student's *t*-test.

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1. 2017年12月31日，本公司应收账款账面余额为1,000,000.00元，坏账准备余额为100,000.00元，计提比例为10%。

[illegible]

1958年11月22日

the 1930s

[illegible][illegible]

The imposition of sanctions against Iraq decided by the Security Council of the United Nations, can be compared to an undeclared war. For the population, the results are the same: same destruction of its well-being, same hypothesis on its future.⁸

— Denis Halliday

Le Monde Diplomatique

Archivo

What traces found beneath the built with what is too further in construction; a recession a sunken pool now raised up, filled nearly to this surface; an adornment painted which once left bare; a plant imported where now soil holds the pollen of perhaps orange, myrtle of the past. What we transform and now is in our grasp this finger tracing the faded azuejo in edging a brick-planter against the palace walls. A museum and the tiny blue blooms, the thorn of roses yet, to bloom flies eyes follow and lose their station of thought oh good. What has been filled in an angle of cruciform revived, so that the walk is the same in structure: each point to rest, a common perspective. What we lay upon layer, change in view, can yet be changed and retraced again. What we dig up, as the garden's war and decay, we raise yet again the tasks. Here then, the sound of water, from chamber to chamber, beneath arches in this organized crossing of paths, the cool chambers to release all symmetric, but from the Berber desert danger.

Hedges cut to a flat level in form enclosed squares, a cruciform, this sense of level, of platform, plant form, planta, the rest of our legs. At this level we look down upon, into enclosed space, peering past edges, catching always the margins of all sides, receding ideas.

À Annie

Qu'elle ressemble à toi, cette femme, que
tu sois quelque part à ta mesure,
sur le Plateau-Est, Montréal.

Cette chaleur en mars, comme à l'époque
l'envoi dans ce ruisseau, ce patio
comme à l'époque
que nous nous sommes
promenés dans un jardin jusqu'à la fin —
l'étang, au Japon.

Épuré, une vie ici, un banc,
le monde au passé, Nasirid.

Une croissance, *cruceform*, à travers
les sentiers qui se croisaient
il était une fois, à la fois c'était nous.

Cette seule, une petite mouche qui se balade
sur mon crayon, ma main "ne sais que le soleil
loin de tes espoirs,

mais mise au point, jusque-là
tes belles paroles de ta propre
mesure, "cour couronnée de la musique
qui arrose l'intérieur même l'extérieur c'est aussi
le retour
Andalousie.



The sounds, cut short briefly once above and before these lines, merge. Collage deep a group of children pass through, enter and depart the arcades behind. The cats who wander here, find the food left by gardeners. Upon this patio vista over fields Granada's valley. Here, the British bomber, force of United Nations, a young Iraqi baby burned, in the arms of a nurse. Who is this image of victim in the mind, my obsessive thirst, I walk the calles and avenidas and supermarket aisles, the cans and cans of preserved meats, fish in oil, the cured cheeses. What is this pleasure alone in the sun, the glaring patio floor once filled with rain, once filled with picnic and tears, the bulerías of downcast, outcast eyes, the rosemary stems sewn to the breast.

In this heat, reprieve from the wind, to wish for lizard, the comma to soil the mind with movement.

Vega Inclan

Upon these paths by which we walk the garden perimeter always, a place to sit. We come to lose the way, take in this plan, progressively more familiar, lose the way again.

“Cafe, a guest room.”

When the birds sing from these trees, it is this stone bench, but yet the terrace table the view from the window of a night's lodging it is to camp where the land gives both shelter and nourishment, the garden as orchard, fruit trees and shade trees so near to our touch.

Here in the Vega Inclan garden, the columns seem at first magisterial, suggest some better past whose values and truth were measure of a better world. At once then, to descend, to sneer at past politics, that architecture and decoration interfere with pure heart stranger to stranger, or companion. Then such columns become mere signatures of order, to inform a simple thought in the garden of the Vega Inclan. The trees of the orchard offer the music of birds, the shade, the wind's volume in our ears with constancy, and different each day.

of tall slender palms, slender tube-like cypress, — longitudinal views to, to small pedestal fountains —



. . . the history of world poetry does also show the rise of movements that are purely aesthetic, shunning the human element in traditional art and focusing solely on the presentation of aesthetic elements which are . . . divorced from usefulness and the idea of any kind of gain. The rise of aestheticism in 19th-century Europe is a clear example of this, but I feel certain that such movements can be found in many poetries of the world, and that our embarrassingly limited knowledge of world poetry and poetics merely indicates the unfinished and as yet unsubstantiated nature of modern critical theories. Arabic poetry is certainly one major world poetry that has been either overlooked or misunderstood by literary theorists; many Arab literary historians and — until the last few decades — the majority of Arabists have at times subjected it to a faulty, sometimes stunted and even pejorative evaluation. (Jayyusi)

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Of what proportions form and content, the garden? So often, a sleek modern cafe, in those sectors which seem to most welcome on voyage, those sections of the city residential, palm-lined streets with immaculate modern apartment complexes. It is just past six in the afternoon (this word echoing of the *gacela* of Lorca); time for coffee and sweets, the light still clear, in the early shadows of evening. To look from this pastry cafe, its sweet smell of coffee, hot milk and sweet baking, with its long windowed view to a treed but sandy playground, its green jungle gym, its slides, children playing between these apartment buildings, lamps still unlit. A garden is but a kind of anxious joy and companion — serenity of these things. There is in this, the yearn for the quotidian and for the childhood, for the trigger of sweet and family, the promise of return to home, and in such solid immaculate structures housing so many lives, a kind of longing perpetually present in my hands, a change, a space removed from the childhood of old houses and flats and urban noise, sense of civilization once a part of this body, yet desire for green, those tree-lined streets, this courtyard protected from traffic, the green, the green canvas awnings over the balconies with their spill of vines and palms.

●

And who is it here proceeding arm in arm through the glass? Mitsuko Mukai, Masajiro Shikatani — their daughters Masako, Junko, Miyako; their son Masato. And carrying a box of ashes of Takeshi, a dead lost son, loaded down with string-wrapped belongings out of Slokan, out of the train which ran through the bush of B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario, with most a weight they yet do not know to rear, yet not born, Noboru, Osamu, transform these ashes with the nurturing foods of their labour, the cold water flats of Spadina, Ogden School and Central Tech, the sweet oil smells of french fries from the Crescent Grill, this perfume of Andalusia, los fritos in squid, dogfish and small whiting, two women at this table, into this Sevilla evening, the family enters, bearing their love.

Compañeros

Can we say we ever visit a garden without its evolution of labour? For always it is this divine intervention concrete to break the soil, till and weed.

Such to bring us the pleasure to behold, promenade, think. In every place we want such space to once again breathe, is there the labour to make place. I cannot come to this garden to simply profit from these labours. A small little thing, but this to come face to face, alongside those who tend the gardens. A garden is first a place; then a donation of labour to exist for itself and for others. It is out of such tribute these words try to take presence, each scribbled mumble a breath in the line of their toil. Labour too, which us in friendship and sharing, “compañero” they call me, to bestow more justice than I’m due, but yet this is the text I attempt, and the naming which transforms.

In the garden we share names and biographies: Anna María, Miguél, Diego from the North whose family is now spread through Andalucía. How they can tolerate my little attempts at work. But this is theirs, these words. To weed out the gardens, to break the soil with cutting hoe— to take a glass of water. Anna who’s been here 26 years, of her 48, these are the people who bring joy and peace. To work the land which was a garden hundreds of years ago, take me into their everyday lives.

Much of the language of these texts is reduced to the work I’ve done today, helping.

The smells of the Alcázar *naranjo*, the hundreds of types of trees in these gardens — to create a cover of white roses — because it was as the loved one of al-Mutamid wanted— These histories which hold forth in a garden. Miguél trims the plants and clears the moss, how poetry must enter my world, by what I’ve

forgotten of their words, which form the lost, the dream still in my hands— a place to enter, for me to say only— their kindness.

A garden exists with labour. There is no other. This which is nature and civilization, the constant tillage of stories and the sharing of water between workers — the passing conversations.

All these hold forever in a garden, as much, much as all words are ephemeral and pass on. The gardeners, as Anna feeds bread to the gardens' ducks, give most, the path to peace.



Even in the simplest acts, a plan come through, through repetition, how best to proceed through. The way Anna might move, scrape the moss from the surface of soil, then break the ground, to contain the moss, filling over with the dark mossless soil; to best not repeat, to move most efficiently over a space, the time to talk each day, during the toil, her light brown hair the colour of the gardener's corduroy jacket she wears in this morning's cool air. Diego, Miguél, Juan, Anna and all those their fellow-workers, so much a family in their lives of the Alcázar. (A stranger arrives unannounced from another place, asks to work for a day or two. And too how quickly is he received into their daily toil, for in the share of labour with the soil and plants, are open hearts, the knowledge of what we are is barely a space between seasons, the placement of garden tools beneath trees, in the break for breakfast in a nearby cafe.)

The jardín gives gifts. The perfume of roses and rosemary, the colour of hibiscus. The way the hearts of those who work here day after day can open to me, a stranger. This remains the ultimate message — of how this force transferred here becomes less the politic, strategic idea, but simply the life swept away by the arms of Anna and Miguél, Diego pulling up the weeds his 4 day growth of beard the joking banter at breakfast of tostadas and cafe. When the gathering breaks, we return to the gardens, it's left this trail of laughter, the pollen was, as discovered, five, six generations old, the oldest orange tree, says Jose María, four hundred years old.

I've come to you this way. Bear no arms, no magic ideas, only some dry ham and bread, a bottle of water to clear the days, this spot on the bench, dream once more of the mosaics as the fountain trickles on and through.