

Fernando LOPES GRAÇA

SONGS TO POETIC AND FOLK TEXTS

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INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

THE SAD FATE OF FERNANDO LOPES GRAÇA

by Nuno Vieira de Almeida

Fernando Lopes Graça¹ (1906–94) was one of Portugal's greatest twentieth-century composers. Why, then, does so much of his music remain unknown? In spite of an immense output encompassing works for piano, voice and piano, choir, symphony orchestra, chamber orchestra, string quartet and a wide variety of other chamber ensembles, much of his legacy still awaits discovery.

The reasons can be summarised in a few words. First, Lopes Graça was associated with the Portuguese Communist Party and, for that reason, was idolised by a large body of committed yet uncritical supporters. At the same time, this affiliation inevitably aroused considerable hostility among sections of society whose political sympathies lay elsewhere. In addition, his uncompromising artistic vision and style gave rise to magnificent works that have remained challenging for audiences unfamiliar with his musical language. Then there is the persistent lack of interest shown by the Portuguese political establishment – regardless of ideological persuasion – in matters of music.

This background has led, and continues to lead, to the regrettable public neglect of a composer of enormous stature. It is a source of national embarrassment that such a significant figure should still have so many works awaiting both their premiere, even publication: musicians wishing to perform his music know they still have to do so from manuscript copies. For a major composer such as Fernando Lopes Graça, such a state of affairs is simply indefensible.

Lopes Graça did not confine himself to setting the poets of his own time or those within his circle of friends. His extensive literary culture enabled him to read, interpret

¹ I am aware that the name Lopes-Graça is generally written with a hyphen. However, from private conversations with the composer, I also know that in his later years he preferred his name to be written without one. I therefore use it as he himself would have wished: Fernando Lopes Graça.

and engage musically with a remarkable range of Portuguese poetry – and beyond – from King Denis (1261–1325 – ‘Dinis’ in Portuguese) to José Saramago (1922–2010), whose poem inspired his final work for voice and piano, included in this recording. His literary choices reveal a striking absence of ideological concern. Instead, he was guided solely by the literary and sonic qualities of the poetry. In each of these musical readings, Lopes Graça’s unmistakable voice is ever present. From the highly diatonic character of ‘Ó virgens que passais’ (‘O maidens passing by’), the first of the *Dois Sonetos de Antônio Nobre*, Op. 70/LG190 [18], to the incisive rhythmic profile of ‘Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens’ (‘O Lady, mother of mankind’), No. 24 of the *Canções Populares Portuguesas*, Série II, Op. 37/LG171 [25], his distinctive style is immediately recognisable.

His engagement with folk-music is one of the defining features unequivocally linking him with Béla Bartók, to whom he dedicated one of his most remarkable piano works, *In Memoriam Béla Bartók*, which contains no fewer than eight progressive suites. In addition to the collection of Portuguese folk-material undertaken with the French (indeed, Corsican) ethnomusicologist Michel Giacometti from 1960 onwards,² Lopes Graça also harmonised folksongs from many other countries. The *Seven Negro-American Folksongs*, Op. 75/LG195 (1952), exemplify this aspect of his work, which began in 1948 with the *Six Vieilles Chansons Françaises* (‘Six Old French Songs’), Op. 50/LG180.

In the American songs, it is particularly interesting to observe their predominantly diatonic character and the composer’s care not to distort the distinctive nature of the vocal line. The silences, where they occur, are respected, and the solemnity of the music is preserved. Fine examples can be found in the first song, ‘You may bury me in the East’ [1], the third, ‘In this lan’ [3], and the sixth, ‘Calvary’ [6]. In some of the strophic songs, such as the second, ‘Sunday mornin’ ban’ [2], and the fourth, ‘Shepherd, shepherd’ [4], Lopes Graça employs a restrained technique of variation that never unduly compromises the simplicity of the poems. It is illuminating to compare these settings with the far more advanced complexity of the variations found in the songs based on poems by Guerra

² Giacometti (1929–90) moved to Portugal in 1959 and spent the next three decades travelling the country and recording its oral traditions. He also built up a large collection of Portuguese musical instruments, a good part of which is now held in the Museum of Portuguese Music in Estoril, a little to the west of Lisbon.

Junqueiro (1850–1923). Here the variations occur only in the piano. There is no change in vocal line. The music transforms itself in isolation within the instrument to provide a slight change of colour; the harmonies remain unchanged. A different phenomenon occurs, as will be seen, in the songs set to texts by Guerra Junqueiro.

In my view, the *Tríptico de D. João* ('Dom João Triptych'), Op. 246/LG247 (1990), should be performed as a single, uninterrupted song. The unity of its three constituent sections [8] [9] [10] becomes far more apparent when they are heard without a break. Written in a musical language that is predominantly polytonal and densely textured, this brief cycle nevertheless reveals an unexpected lyricism. It is particularly striking that the intense and unmistakable eroticism of José Saramago's texts should have captivated an 84-year-old composer, in what would prove to be his final composition for voice and piano. Following Lopes Graça's seminal engagement with the poetry of Eugénio de Andrade and its underlying homoeroticism – clearly evident in the two cycles for voice and piano *As Mãos e os Frutos* ('The Hands and the Fruits'), Op. 117/LG211, of 1959, and *Mar de Setembro* ('September Sea'), Op. 149/LG225 of 1961–75 – never had Lopes Graça's music responded so radically to poetry offering such an unabashedly erotic celebration of women. The piano-writing is sonorous and weighty, requiring particular care in its balance with the vocal line.

The *Duas Canções de 'Finis Patriae'* ('Two Songs from "Finis Patriae"'),³ Op. 65/LG186 (1950–51), again setting texts by Guerra Junqueiro, likewise demonstrate Lopes Graça's distinctive approach to poetry through the principle of variation. In the first song, 'Mar pavoroso, mar tenebroso' ('Fearsome sea, dark sea'), in D minor [11], the piano acts as the principal vehicle for the variations throughout the first four stanzas of the poem, while the vocal line remains almost entirely unchanged. This feature presents a considerable challenge for the singer, as the variations in the piano become progressively more frenetic and violent. In the fifth and final stanza, voice and piano come together in a more elaborate, almost declamatory variation that brings the song to a close in an atmosphere of dread, to particularly powerful effect.

³ *Finis Patriae* ('The End of the Homeland') is a collection of eleven poems published by Empresa Litteraria e Tipographica in Porto in 1891.

The same principle is employed even more comprehensively in the second song, 'Falam pocilgas de operários' ('Workers' slums speak') [12], written in the same key as the first. Each of the six stanzas is treated as a genuine variation for voice and piano, employing a wide range of compositional techniques that unfold in a continuous crescendo of intensity. The central *parlato* episode, set at a more animated tempo, is followed by a return to a *sostenuto* pace, preparing with extraordinary effectiveness the true funeral march that concludes the work.

Lopes Graça's manuscript contains a few revisions that he never had the opportunity to complete. It should be remembered that he was a perfectionist: many of his works underwent alterations and corrections both before and after their premieres. One of his foremost interpreters, the pianist Maria da Graça Amado da Cunha (1919–2001), often remarked that these revisions were not always improvements, and, in this instance, I am inclined to agree with her. The version presented in this recording is therefore the original one.

Lopes Graça's first plan for his *Canções de 'Finis Patriae'* included a third song, 'O Cavador' ('The Digger'), which he abandoned halfway through its composition. Of the six stanzas of the poem, he set only the first three to music. It is nevertheless included here [13] because of its musical interest and historical relevance. The key of the preceding songs – D minor – is retained, although the formal design is more straightforward, following an ABA structure, B being declamatory. Yet Lopes Graça's reading of the poem is anything but predictable, revealing instead a melancholic lyricism. The poetic insights of major composers invariably hold unexpected discoveries, and this work is no exception.

The *Quatre Sonnets de Ronsard*, Op. 162/LG229, date from 1964. They belong to *Sur sa fin* ('Towards his end') (1585–86), a collection of poems written or dictated by Pierre de Ronsard from his deathbed and published posthumously. The three central themes of these sonnets – the farewell to love and to life, the rawness of the flesh, and sleepless despair – are all present in this selection. The first sonnet, 'Je n'ay plus que les os' ('All I have now is bones') [14], contemplates the physical decline of old age and the imminence of death. The second, 'Ah! Longues nuicts d'hiver' ('Ah! Long winter nights') [15], evokes the torment of insomnia, with the long nights portrayed as executioners. The

third, 'Quoy! Mon ame, dors tu engourdie?' ('What, my soul, do you sleep in stupor?') [16], is an appeal to the soul that anticipates death while drawing a parallel with Christ's suffering on the road to Calvary. The fourth, 'Il faut laisser maisons et vergers' ('One must leave houses and orchards') [17], accepts death with serenity, likening it to the song of the dying swan.

Although Lopes Graça never explicitly described these four songs as a cycle, the thematic unity of both poetry and music has that effect, just as with the *Tríptico de D. João*. None of the songs carries a key-signature, and only the final two include time-signatures. Another striking feature is the constant use of minor-second dissonances, through which moments of consonance acquire exceptional poetic significance and expressive weight. Although the first two songs begin at markedly different tempos, they share a similar musical design: in both, the final two lines of the second tercet are given a distinctive sense of space through an expressive change of tempo. In the second song this procedure is developed even further, producing one of the most compelling passages in the whole of Lopes Graça's output. In the third song, he effectively interrupts the narrative at the end of the third line of the second quatrain and, in a remarkable piano interlude, evokes the hardship and suffering of the final journey. The fourth song unfolds in a far more open lyricism, establishing at the outset, albeit in a concealed manner, the key of B flat major. The two tercets are written in an almost recitative style, and the final line, 'free from the bonds of the body, to be nothing but a spirit', dissolves into the piano, fading away through a succession of unexpected and exquisitely beautiful harmonies. It is a consummate example of tenderness, recalling the closing bars of Hugo Wolf's 'An eine Äolsharfe' ('To an Aeolian Harp'), No. 11 of his *Mörike-Lieder* of 1888.

The song 'Ó virgens que passais' ('O maidens passing by'), the first of the *Dois Sonetos de António Nobre*, Op. 70/LG190 [18], of 1951, is firmly rooted in the key of C major and is a typical example of Lopes Graça at his most accessibly melodic.

The remaining songs all possess a more markedly popular character, even those not based on folk material. Such is the case with *Terra e Céu* ('Earth and Heaven'), Op. 83/LG197 (1955) [19], an amusing and not entirely good-natured provocation for piano and

voice – in this instance, the order is indeed piano and voice. Lopes Graça's melodic verve is equally evident in the lyricism of the *Duas Cantigas de Embalar* ('Two Lullabies'), Op. 122/LG207, of 1959 [20] [21].

The composer's interest in Portuguese traditional song, along with its transcription and adaptation for voice and piano, became evident between 1939 and 1942 with the first series of *Canções populares portuguesas* ('Portuguese Folksongs') for voice and piano. From that period, hundreds of adaptations of Portuguese folklore emerged, encompassing works not only for voice and piano but also for a *cappella* choir and choir with piano accompaniment. 'Ó minha amora madura' ('O my ripe blackberry') [22] and 'Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens' ('O Lady, Mother of mankind') [25] belong to the second series, Op. 37/LG171, the latter with a Stravinskian rhythmic violence, and Susana Gaspar achieves a feat of vocal intelligence by almost completely shifting her vocal placement for the chilling and mournful 'Canto da Carregação' ('Worker's Song') [24].

I met Fernando Lopes Graça in the early 1980s and, despite an age-difference of more than fifty years, the composer took an interest in my musical curiosity and we became friends. I was neither his student nor did I sing in his beloved choir at the Academia dos Amadores de Música, but he attended some of my concerts and, above all, was always eager to discuss music, and musicians, with me. Even with that age-difference, we argued a lot, and I learned to respect the man beyond the artist. Upon his death, I realised the true importance of his artistic stature and, for quite a few years now, I have dedicated myself to ensuring that his work for voice and piano receives the recognition it deserves.

The quality of the songs in this album testify to Fernando Lopes Graça's importance not only as a Portuguese composer but as someone who deserves to be far better known internationally as well. We hope that this recording might go some way to helping achieve that end.

A versão em língua portuguesa do presente texto encontra-se disponível no website da Toccata Classics em <https://toccataclassics.com/tocc0825text>.

The Portuguese soprano **Susana Gaspar** was a member of the Jette Parker Artists Programme in 2011–13 at the Royal Opera House (ROH), Covent Garden, during which time she appeared as Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Contessa Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, Gianetta in *L'elisir d'amore*, First Innocent in Birtwistle's *Minotaur*, Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* and Voce dal Cielo in *Don Carlo*. At the Linbury Theatre (also at the ROH) she sang in a new production of Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* and was Aurore in *Le portrait de Manon*, both recorded by Opera Rara. In 2013 she represented Portugal at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Her main operatic roles include Violetta in *La traviata*, Mimì in *La bohème*, Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Marguerite in *Faust*, Manon in *Manon*, Marschallin in *Der Rozenkavalier*, Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Suor Angelica in *Suor Angelica*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* (for the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian), Clara in *Il Proscritto* (Mercadante) and Azema in *Semiramide* (Rossini) (both recorded by Opera Rara), Clarice in *Il mondo della luna* (Avondano) (recorded by Naxos) and the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*. In 2025 she sang in a film of *La traviata* for OperaGlass Works, starring as Violetta Valéry.



Her work as a recitalist has paid particular attention to the songs of Berg, Debussy, Falla, Korngold, Lopes Graça, Mahler, Rachmaninov, Schumann, Richard Strauss and Ullmann. She has recorded four albums of works for voice and piano: by Fanny Mendelssohn with Malcolm Martineau (Champs Hill Records) and Fernando Lopes Graça with Nuno Vieira de Almeida (Volumes 1–3 of *Songs & Folk Songs* on Naxos).

The Portuguese baritone **André Baleiro** is regarded as one of the most distinctive singers of his generation, celebrated for the intellectual depth, stylistic versatility and communicative power of his performances. Equally at home on the opera stage, the concert platform and in the recital hall, he has established an international reputation as an interpreter of keen musical insight paired with an acute sensitivity to language and poetry. After studying at the Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa, he continued his vocal training at the Universität der Künste Berlin with the German baritone Siegfried Lorenz. His artistry has



been recognised with numerous international awards, including First Prize at the International Robert Schumann Competition (Zwickau, 2016), First Prize at the Rotary Foundation International Singing Competition (Lisbon, 2016), the 'Most Promising Talent' award at the 'Das Lied' International Song Competition (Heidelberg, 2017), First Prize at the SWR Young Opera Stars Competition (Kaiserslautern, 2019), and Second Prizes at the International Helmut Deutsch Lied Competition (Vienna, 2021) and International 'Schubert and Modern Music' Chamber Music Competition (Graz, 2022). A versatile singing actor, André Baleiro has appeared in a broad repertoire encompassing Britten, Debussy, Glass, Mozart, Verdi and Wagner. His principal roles include Don Giovanni, Conte di Luna (*Il trovatore*), Miller (*Luisa Miller*), Ford (*Falstaff*), Wolfram (*Tannhäuser*), Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Valentin (*Faust*), Tarquinius (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Ned Keen (*Peter Grimes*), Orphée (Philip Glass' *Orphée*) and Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*). He has also distinguished himself as one of Portugal's leading recitalists, performing widely across Europe in programmes ranging from Schubert, Schumann and Mahler to Britten and contemporary repertoire. A passionate advocate of Portuguese vocal music, he has consistently championed the songs of composers such as Fernando Lopes Graça, bringing to them the same textual acuity, stylistic refinement and expressive depth that characterise his work as an interpreter.

<https://andre baleiro.com>

Nuno Vieira de Almeida was born in Lisbon. After graduating from the Lisbon Conservatoire he went to Vienna, on a scholarship from the Gulbenkian Foundation, to study with Leonid Brumberg and later to London to study with Geoffrey Parsons. As a Lied pianist, he has worked with some major singers, among them such as Gabriele Fontana, Gundula Janowitz and Peter Weber. In Lisbon, where he has been living for some years, he has worked with all the major Portuguese singers, including Elsa Saque and Elisabete Matos. He has recorded many albums with Portuguese music for voice and piano for the Portuguese label Tradisom. He has also worked with the Portuguese film-maker Manoel de Oliveira and recorded all the music for the film *Vale Abraão*.

He has a Ph.D. in historical musicology from Universidade Nova in Lisbon. He teaches repertoire at the Superior Music School in Lisbon and coordinates the voice department there.



Photograph: José Manuel Marques

Sung Texts and Translations

Seven Negro-American Folksongs, **Op. 75/LG195**

[1] You may bury me in the East *Spiritual*

You may bury me in the East,
You may bury me in the West,
But I'll hear the trumpet sound in-a that
morning,

In-a that morning, my Lord,
How I long to go
For to hear the trumpet sound in-a that
morning.

Good old Christians, in that day,
We'll take wings and fly away
For to hear the trumpet sound,
In-a that morning, my Lord,
How I long to go
For to hear the trumpet sound in-a that
morning.

[2] Sunday mornin' ban' *Spiritual*

What ban' that Sunday mornin'
Sunday mornin' ban'.
Jordan's deep an' Jordan's wide
Sunday mornin' ban'
And none can cross but the sanctified
Sunday mornin' ban'.

(O) Holy ban' that Sunday mornin'
Sunday mornin' ban'.

Looked over Jordan an' what did I see
Sunday mornin' ban'
A ban' of angels coming for me
Sunday mornin' ban'.

(O) What ban' that Sunday mornin'
Sunday mornin' ban'.

Born of God I know I am
Sunday mornin' ban'
I'm purchased by the dyin' Lamb
Sunday mornin' ban'.

(O) Holy ban' that Sunday mornin'
Sunday mornin' ban'.

[3] In this lan' *Spiritual*

Lord help the po' and the needy,
In this lan',
In this lan',
In that great getting up morning we shall face
another sun.

Lord help the po' and the needy,
In this lan',
In this lan'.

Lord help the widows and the orphans,
In this lan,
In this lan,
In that great getting up morning we shall face
another sun.
Lord help the widows and the orphans,
In this lan,
In this lan.

[4] Shepherd, Shepherd
Spiritual

Shepherd, Shepherd, where'd you lose your
sheep?
O the sheep all gone astray,
The sheep all gone astray.

Shepherd, shepherd, where'd you leave your
lambs?
O the sheep all gone astray,
The sheep all gone astray.

I pray to the Lord to bring them back some day.
O the sheep all gone astray,
The sheep all gone astray.

[5] Screw this cotton
Work song

Screw this cotton, screw this cotton,
screw this cotton, screw it tight.

Work ain't hard, boys, work ain't hard, boys,
work ain't hard, boys, work ain't hard.

Man ain't mean, boys, man ain't mean, boys,
man ain't mean, boys, man ain't mean.
Gwine have money, Gwine have money,
Gwine have money, sho's you bo'n.

[6] Calvary
Spiritual

Calvary, Calvary,
Surely he died on Calvary.

Ev'ry time I think about Jesus,
Surely he died on Calvary.

Calvary, Calvary,
Surely He died on Calvary.

Sinner, do you love my Jesus?
Surely He died on Calvary.

Calvary, Calvary,
Surely He died on Calvary.

[7] John Henry
Social song

This ol' hammer killed John Henry!
This ol' hammer killed John Henry!
This ol' hammer killed John Henry,
But this ol' hammer won't kill me!

This ol' hammer shines like silver!
This ol' hammer shines like silver!
This ol' hammer shines like silver,
But ring's like gol', ring's like gol'!

Take my hammer to the Walkin' boss,
Take my hammer to the Walkin' boss,

Tríptico de D. João, Op. 246/LG247
José Saramago

[8] I Orgulho de D. João no inferno

Bem sei que para sempre: onde caí
Não há perdão ou letra de resgate.
Mas fui, quando vivi, o sal da terra,
A flor azul, o cetro de escarlate.
Aqui, se condenado, não esqueci,
Nem morto estou sequer: torno a ser eu
No sangue da mulher que, acesa, pede
Aquele modo de amar que foi o meu.

[9] II Lamento de D. João no inferno

Das ameaças do céu me não temi
Quando da terra as leis desafiei:
O lugar dos castigos é aqui,
Do céu nada conheço, nada sei.
O cilício do Diabo não me cinge,
Nem a mercê de Deus aqui me segue:
A chama mais ardente é a que finge
Este cheiro de mulher que me persegue.

Take my hammer to the Walkin' boss,
Tell'im I'm gone, tell'im I'm gone.

If he ask you any questions,
If he ask you any questions,
If he ask you any questions,
You don't know, tell'im, you don't know.

Dom João's pride in hell

*I know full well that forever, where I have fallen,
There is neither forgiveness nor ransom to be
found.
But when I lived, I was the salt of the earth,
The blue flower, the scarlet sceptre.
Here, if condemned, I have not forgotten,
Nor am I even dead: I become myself again
In the blood of the woman who, aflame, calls for
That way of loving which was mine.*

Dom João's lament in hell

*I did not fear the threats of heaven
When I defied the laws of earth:
The place of punishment is here,
Of heaven I know nothing, nothing at all.
The Devil's cilice does not bind me,
Nor does God's mercy follow me here:
The fiercest flame is the one that feigns
This scent of woman that pursues me.*

[10] III Sarcasmo de D. João no inferno

Contra mim, Dom João, que pode o inferno,
Que pode o céu e todo o mais que houver?
Nem Deus nem o Diabo amaram nunca
Desse amor que junta homem a mulher:
De pura inveja premeiam ou castigam,
Acredite, no resto, quem quiser.

Duas Canções de 'Finis Patriae', Op. 65/LG186
Guerra Junqueiro

[11] No. 1 Mar pavoroso, mar tenebroso

Mar pavoroso, mar tenebroso,
Profundo mar!
Fúrias eternas, fúrias eternas...
Nas ondas negras há cavernas
Com monstros verdes a ulular...

Mar soluçante, mar trovejante,
Nocturno mar!
Ventos e frios, ventos e frios...
Nas ondas torvas há navios
Com marinheiros a cantar...

Mar de tormenta, mar que rebenta,
Convulso mar!
Noites inteiras, noites inteiras...
Nas praias tristes há lareiras
Com mães e noivas a rezar...

Mar vagabundo, mar furibundo,
Soturno mar!
Ais e tumultos, ais e tumultos...

Dom João's sarcasm in hell

*Against me, Dom João, what can hell do,
What can heaven do, or anything else that may
exist?*

*Neither God nor the Devil have ever loved
With the love which joins man and woman:
Out of sheer envy they reward or punish,
As for the rest, believe what you will.*

Fearsome sea, dark sea

*Fearsome sea, dark sea,
Deep sea!
Eternal furies, eternal furies...
In the black waves are caverns
With green monsters howling...*

*Sobbing sea, thundering sea,
Night sea!
Winds and cold, winds and cold...
In the sinister waves are ships
With sailors singing...*

*Stormy sea, bursting sea,
Convulsed sea!
Whole nights, whole nights...
On the sorrowful shores are firesides
With mothers and brides praying...*

*Wandering sea, enraged sea,
Sullen sea!
Wails and tumult, wails and tumult...*

Nas ondas roucas andam vultos
De marinheiros a boiar...

Mar infinito, mar infinito,
Maldito mar!
Noite e procelas, noite e procelas...
Entre lençóis, restos de velas,
Há orfãozinhos a chorar!...

[12] No. 2 Falam pocilgas de operários

Crianças rotas, sem abrigo...
A enxerga é pobre¹ e a roupa é leve...
Quarto sem luz, mesa sem trigo...
Quem é que bate ao meu postigo?
– A Neve!

A usura rouba a luz e o ar
E o negro pão que a gente come...
Inverno vil... Parou o tear...
Quem vem sentar-se no meu lar?
– A Fome!

Lume apagado e o berço em pranto
Na terra húmida, Senhor!
A mãe sem leite... o pai a um canto...
Quem vem além, torva de espanto?
– A Dor!

Álcool! Veneno que conforta,
Monstro satânico e sublime!...

*In the hoarse waves drift figures
Of sailors floating...*

*Infinite sea, infinite sea,
Damned sea!
Night and storms, night and storms...
Among sheets, remnants of sails,
Little orphans are crying!...*

Workers' slums speak

*Children in rags, with nowhere to shelter...
The pallet is poor and the clothing thin...
A room without light, a table without bread...
Who knocks at my little window?
– The Snow!*

*Usury steals the light and the air
And the black bread that we eat...
Vile winter... The loom has stopped...
Who comes to sit by my hearth?
– Hunger!*

*Fire gone out and the cradle in tears
Upon the damp earth, Lord!
The mother without milk... the father
in a corner...
Who comes yonder, grim with dread?
– Sorrow!*

*Alcohol! Poison that brings comfort,
Satanic and sublime monster!...*

¹ 'Podre' no poema original de Guerra Junqueiro.

Beber! beber... e a mágoa é morta!...
Quem é que esp्रेita à nossa porta?
– O Crime!

Doze anos já, e seminha!
A mãe, que é dela?... o pai no ofício...
Corpo em botão d'aurora e lua!...
Quem canta além naquela rua?
– O Vício!

A fome e o frio, a dor e a usura,
O vício e o crime... ignóbil sorte!
Oh vida negra! Oh vida dura!...
Deus! quem consola a desventura?
– A Morte!

[13] O Cavador, LG186
Guerra Junqueiro

Dezembro, noite, canta o galo...
Rouco na treva canta o galo...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –
Aldeão não durmas!... Vai chamá-lo,
Miséria negra, vai chamá-lo!...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –
Bate-lhe à porta, é teu vassalo,
Que traga a enxada, é teu vassalo,
Miséria negra, o cavador!

O vento ulula... tremem ninhos...
Na noite aziaga tremem ninhos...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –

*Drink! drink... and grief is dead!...
Who lurks at our door?
– Crime!*

*Twelve years old already, and half-naked!
Her mother – where is she?... her father at work...
Body budding with dawn and moon!...
Who sings out there in the street?
– Vice!*

*Hunger and cold, pain and usury,
Vice and crime... ignoble fate!
Oh black life! Oh arduous life!...
God! who consoles misfortune?
– Death!*

The Digger

*December, night, the cock is crowing...
Hoarse in the darkness, the cock is crowing...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –
Peasant, do not sleep!... Go and call him,
Black misery, go and call him!...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –
Knock at his door, he is your vassal,
Let him bring his hoe, he is your vassal,
Black misery, the digger!*

*The wind howls... nests tremble...
In the ill-fated night, nests tremble...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –*

A neve cai, fria d'arminhos...
Na escuridão fria d'arminhos...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –
Passa maldito nos caminhos,
D'encxada ao ombro nos caminhos,
Fantasma negro, o cavador!

Vem roxa a estrela d'alvorada...
Vem morta a estrela d'alvorada...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –
Montanhas nuas sob a geada!...
Hirtas, de bronze, sob a geada!...
– Oh, dor! oh, dor! –
Torvo, inclinado sobre a encxada,
Rasga as montanhas com a encxada,
Fantasma negro, o cavador!

Quatre Sonnets de Ronsard, Op. 162/LG229

Pierre de Ronsard

[14] No. 1 Je n'ay plus que les os

Je n'ay plus que les os, un squelette je semble,
Decharné, denervé, demusclé, depulpé,
Que le trait de la mort sans pardon a frappé ;
Je n'ose voir mes bras que de peur je ne tremble.

Apollon et son fils, deux grands maîtres
ensemble,
Ne me sçauraient guerir, leur mestier m'a
trompé.
Adieu, plaisant Soleil, mon œil est estoupé,
Mon corps s'en va descendre où tout se
desassemble.

*Snow falls, cold as ermine...
In the ermine-cold darkness...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –
The accursed passes along the roads,
Hoe upon his shoulder, along the roads,
Black phantom, the digger!*

*The dawn star appears purple...
The dawn star appears dead...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –
Bare mountains beneath the frost!...
Rigid, bronze, beneath the frost!...
– Oh, sorrow! Oh, sorrow! –
Hideous, bent over his hoe,
He tears the mountains with his hoe,
Black phantom, the digger!*

All I have now is bones

*All I have now is bones, I look like a skeleton,
de-fleshed, de-nerved, de-muscled, stripped of
pulp,
struck down by the merciless arrow of death;
I dare not look at my arms lest I shake with fear.*

*Apollo and his son, two master-physicians
together,
could not cure me now, their profession has let
me down.
Farewell, pleasant Sun, my eyes are blocked shut,
My body is descending to where everything is
torn apart.*

Quel amy me voyant en ce point despoillé
Ne remporte au logis un œil triste et mouillé,
Me consolant au lict et me baisant la face,

En essuiant mes yeux par la Mort endormis ?
Adieu, chers compagnons, adieu, mes chers
amis !
Je m'en vay le premier vous preparer la place.

[15] No. 2 Ah ! Longues nuits d'hiver

Ah ! Longues Nuits d'hiver, de ma vie
bourrelles,
Donnez moy patience, et me laissez dormir !
Vostre nom seulement, et suer et fremir
Me fait par tout le corps, tant vous m'estes
cruelles.

Le Sommeil tant soit peu n'esvente de ses ailes
Mes yeux tousjours ouvers, et ne puis affermir
Paupiere sur paupiere, et ne fais que gemir,
Souffrant comme Ixion des peines eternelles.

Vielle ombre de la terre, ainçois l'ombre d'Enfer,
Tu m'as ouvert les yeux d'une chaisne de fer,
Me consumant au lict, navré de mille pointes :

Pour chasser mes douleurs ameine moy la
Mort :
Ha ! Mort, le port commun, des hommes le
confort,

*What friend who sees me stripped to this extent
does not head home with sad and tearful eyes,
after consoling me in bed, kissing my face,*

*and wiping my eyes which Death has lulled to
sleep?
Farewell, dear companions, farewell, dear friends!
I'm on my way ahead to prepare a place for you.*

Ah! Long winter nights

*Ah! Long winter nights, executioners of my life,
Have pity on me, and let me sleep!
Your very name makes me sweat and tremble,
Throughout my body, so cruel are you to me.*

*Sleep does not even lightly fan my eyes
With its wings, which remain forever open,
and I cannot close
Eyelid upon eyelid, I do nothing but moan,
Suffering, like Ixion, eternal torments.*

*Old shadow of the earth, or rather shadow
of Hell,
You have opened my eyes with a chain of iron,
Consuming me in my bed, pierced by a thousand
spikes:*

*To drive away my sufferings, bring me Death:
Ah! Death, the common harbour, the comfort
of mankind,*

Viens enterrer mes maux, je t'en prie à mains jointes !

[16] No. 3 Quoy! Mon ame, dors tu engourdie ?
Quoy mon ame, dors tu engourdie en ta masse ?
La trompette a sonné, serre bagage, et va
Le chemin deserté que Jesu-Christ trouva,
Quand tout mouillé de sang racheta nostre race.

C'est un chemin facheux, borné de peu d'espace,
Tracé de peu de gens que la ronce pava,
Où le chardon poignant ses testes esleva ;
Pren courage pourtant, et ne quitte la place.

N'appose point la main à la mansine, apres,
Pour ficher ta charüe au milieu des guerets,
Retournant coup sur coup en arrière ta vüe :

Il ne faut commencer, ou du tout s'emploier,
Il ne faut point mener, puis laisser la charüe ;
Qui laisse son mestier, n'est digne du loier.

Come bury my sorrows, I beg you with folded hands!

What, my soul, do you sleep in stupor?
What, my soul, do you sleep benumbed in your torpor?
The trumpet has sounded, gather your things and go,
Take the deserted path that Jesus Christ once trod
When, drenched in blood, he redeemed our race.

It is a difficult path, confined within narrow bounds,
Trod by few, paved with brambles,
Where the piercing thistle raised its heads;
Take courage nonetheless, and do not abandon your post.

Do not lay your hand upon the plough-handle, only then
To leave it in the middle of the fields,
Turning your gaze again and again behind you:

One must either not begin, or else devote oneself entirely,
One must not guide the plough, then leave it;
He who abandons his trade is not worthy of his reward.

[17] No. 4 Il faut laisser maisons et vergers
Il faut laisser maisons et vergers et jardins,
Vaisselles et vaisseaux que l'artisan burine,
Et chanter son obsequé en la façon du Cygne,
Qui chante son trespas sur les bords Maeandrins.

C'est fait, j'ay dévidé le cours de mes destins,
J'ay vescu, j'ay rendu mon nom assez insigne,
Ma plume vole au Ciel pour estre quelque signe,
Loin des appas mondains qui trompent les plus fins.

Heureux qui ne fut onc, plus heureux qui
retourne
En rien comme il estoit, plus heureux qui
sejourne,
D'homme fait nouvel ange, auprès de Jesu-
Christ,

Laissant pourrir çà bas sa despouille de boüe,
Dont le Sort, la Fortune, et le Destin se joüe,
Franc des liens du corps pour n'estre qu'un
esprit.

Dois Sonetos de António Nobre, Op. 70/LG190
António Nobre

[18] No. 1 Ó Virgens que passais
Ó Virgens que passais, ao Sol-poente,
Pelas estradas ermas a cantar!

One must leave houses and orchards
One must leave houses, orchards and gardens,
Tableware and vessels engraved by craftsman,
And sing one's own funeral like the Swan,
Who sings of his death upon the banks
of the Maeander.

It is done, I have spun out the course of my
destiny,
I have lived, I have made my name sufficiently
renowned,
My quill flies to Heaven, there to leave some sign,
Far from the worldly allurements that deceive
even the wisest.

Happy is he who never was, happier he who
returns
To nothing, as he once was, happier still he who
remains,
A man made into a new angel, beside Jesus
Christ,

Leaving down here his muddy remains to rot,
Played with by Chance, Fortune and Destiny,
Free from the bonds of the body, to be nothing
but a spirit.

O Maidens passing by
O Maidens passing by, under the setting sun,
Along the desolate roads, singing!

Eu quero ouvir uma canção ardente,
Que me transporte ao meu perdido lar.

Cantai-me, nessa voz onnipotente,
O sol que tomba, aureolando o Mar,
A fartura da seara reluzente,
O vinho, a Graça, a formosura, o Luar!

Cantai! Cantai as lípidas cantigas!
Das ruínas do meu lar desaterrai
Todas aquelas ilusões antigas

Que eu vi morrer num sonho, como um ai...
Ô suaves e frescas raparigas,
Adormecei-me nessa voz... Cantai!

[19] Terra e Céu, Op. 83/LG197
Carlos de Oliveira

Os anjos cantam? Não cantam.
Canto eu, que me apetece:
Quando a voz dum homem canta
a voz do Céu emudece. Ah!

Cantam as fontes? Talvez,
porque o meu canto as impele:
Quando a voz dum homem canta
A Terra canta com ele. Ah!

*I want to hear an impassioned song
That will carry me back to my lost home.*

*Sing to me, in that omnipotent voice,
The sinking sun, haloing the Sea,
The abundance of the gleaming grainfield,
The wine, Grace, beauty, the Moonlight!*

*Sing! Sing the limpid songs!
From the ruins of my home, unearth
All those ancient illusions*

*That died in my dream, like a sigh...
O gentle and blooming girls,
Lull me to sleep in that voice... Sing!*

Earth and Heaven

*Do angels sing? They do not.
I do sing, because I feel like it:
When a man's voice sings
the voice of Heaven falls silent. Ah!*

*Do fountains sing? Perhaps,
because my song impels them:
When a man's voice sings
the Earth sings with him. Ah!*

[20] O meu menino é um anjo
Traditional

O meu menino é um anjo,
O teu é um passarinho;
O meu voa para o céu,
O teu voa para o ninho.

[21] Faze ó ó meu pequenino
António Botto

Faze ó ó meu pequenino,
Anda lá fora um rumor...
Voz do mar, ou voz do vento?
Faze ó ó seja o que for!

Vejo as estrelas brilhando
Através desta vidraça.
Sinto-me triste, mais só...
E a minha voz vai cantando:
Ó, ó ó, ó ó, ó...

Canções Populares Portuguesas

Série II, Op. 37/LG171

[22] No. 6 Ó minha amora madura
Ó minha amora madura
Diz-me quem te amadurou:
Foi o sol e a geadá

My little boy is an angel

*My little boy is an angel,
Yours is a little bird;
Mine flies up to heaven,
Yours flies to the nest.*

Go to sleep, my little one

*Go to sleep, my little one,
There is a murmur outside...
Voice of the sea, or voice of the wind?
Go to sleep, whatever it may be!*

*I see the stars shining
Through this windowpane.
I feel sad, more alone...
And my voice goes on singing:
O, o o, o o, o...*

O my ripe blackberry
*O my ripe blackberry,
Tell me who ripened you:
It was the sun and the frost,*

E o calor que ela apanhou.
E o calor que ela apanhou,
debaixo da silveirinha:
Ó minha amora madura,
Minha amora madurinha.

Série III, Op. 49/LG178

[23] **No. 13 Ó, ó, menino, ó**
Ó, ó, menino, ó,
Teu pai foi ao eiró,
C'uma vara d'agulhão,
P'ra matar o perdigão.
Ó, ó, menino, ó,
Teu pai foi ao eiró,
Tua mãe à borboleta,
Logo te vem dar a teta.

[24] **No. 12 Canto da Carregação**
Ih! Quando o meu pai morreu,
Ih! oh ai li lá lá lá,
Ih! Minha mãe m'abandonou,
Ih! Qu'ria qu'eu chamasse pai,
Ih! oh ai li lá lá lá,
Ih! Ao amante que arranjou.

Série II, Op. 37/LG171

[25] **No. 24 Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens**
Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens,
Estás a meia ladeira,
Mais abaixo está Marcolos,

*And the warmth she received.
And the warmth she received,
Beneath the little bramble:
O my ripe blackberry,
My mellowed blackberry.*

O, o, little boy, o
*O, o, little boy, o,
Your father went to the field,
With a spiked stick,
To kill the partridge.
O, o, little boy, o,
Your father went to the field,
Your mother went daydreaming,
She'll soon come to breast-feed you.*

Workers' Song
*Ih! When my father died,
Ih! oh ay li la la la,
Ih! My mother abandoned me,
Ih! She wanted me to call father,
Ih! oh ay li la la la,
Ih! The lover she had found.*

O Lady, Mother of mankind
*O Lady, Mother of mankind,
You are halfway up the hillside,
Lower down lies Marcolos,*

Mais abaixo Salvadeira.
Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens,
Eu inda hei-de lá ir,
Hei-de ir pagar a promessa
Do meu amor cá qu'rer vir.

*Lower still, Salvadeira.
O Lady, Mother of mankind,
I shall go there one day,
I shall go and keep the promise
That my love should come here.*

—Translations by Antóni Jorge Marques

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FERNANDO LOPES GRAÇA Songs to Poetic and Folk Texts

Seven Negro-American Folksongs, Op. 75/LG195 (1952)

[1] No. 1	You may bury me in the East	2:29
[2] No. 2	Sunday mornin' ban'	1:53
[3] No. 3	In this lan'	3:00
[4] No. 4	Shepherd, shepherd	1:43
[5] No. 5	Screw this cotton	1:38
[6] No. 6	Calvary	3:38
[7] No. 7	John Henry	1:44

*Tríptico de D. João, Op. 246/LG247 (1990)**

[8] I	Orgulho de D. João no inferno	5:23
[9] II	Lamento de D. João no inferno	1:35
[10] III	Sarcasmo de D. João no inferno	2:17
		1:31

Duas Canções de 'Finis Patriae', Op. 65/LG186 (1950–51)

[11] No. 1	Mar pavoroso, mar tenebroso	9:55
[12] No. 2	Falam pocilgas de operários*	3:12
		6:43
[13] <i>O Cavador</i> , LG186 (195?)*		3:59

*Quatre Sonnets de Ronsard, Op. 162/LG229 (1965)**

[14] No. 1	Je n'ay plus que les os	13:18
[15] No. 2	Ah! Longues nuits d'hiver	3:36
[16] No. 3	Quoy! Mon ame, dors tu engourdie	3:36
[17] No. 4	Il faut laisser maisons et vergers	2:59
		3:07

Dois Sonetos de Antônio Nobre, Op. 70/LG190 (1951)

[18] No. 1	Ó virgens que passais	2:47
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Terra e Céu, Op. 83/LG197 (1955)

		1:53
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*Duas Cantigas de Embalar, Op. 122/LG207 (1959)**

[20] No. 1	O meu menino é um anjo	3:57
[21] No. 2	Faze ó ó meu pequenino	2:03
		1:54

Canções Populares Portuguesas

Série II, Op. 37/LG171 (1946)

[22] No. 6	Ó minha amora madura	1:02
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Série III, Op. 49/LG178 (1947–49)

[23] No. 13	Ó, ó, menino, ó	2:27
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[24] No. 12	Canto da carregação	1:35
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Série II, Op. 37/LG171

[25] No. 24	Ó Senhora Mãe dos homens	1:53
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TT 64:16

Susana Gaspar, soprano [1]–[6] [11]–[13] [18] [20] [21] [23]–[25]

André Baleiro, baritone [1] [3] [7]–[10] [14]–[17] [19] [22]

Nuno Vieira de Almeida, piano

* FIRST RECORDINGS