



Jaime Gil de Biedma

Poeta español nacido en Barcelona en 1929 en el seno de una familia de la alta burguesía. Su poesía, de tono elegíaco, enlaza con la de Vallejo, Antonio Machado y con el delicado erotismo de Cernuda. Aunque su obra no es muy extensa, es una de las que más influencia ha ejercido en las generaciones recientes. Murió en Barcelona en 1990.

He deliberately stopped writing poetry some ten years before his death. He insisted that the character he had invented, the poet Jaime Gil de Biedma, as opposed to the respectable bourgeois businessman of the same name, had nothing left to say and he refused to go on playing the role of a poet in literary society. He died in 1990 of AIDS. Among Spanish readers, he is commonly considered one of the most consummate anglophiles in the field of contemporary peninsular literature. This Anglophilia was initiated when he first read T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets (translated in 1952). Poetically, Gil de Biedma belongs to the group of poets known as the 'Generation of '50', a loose term referring to poets who come from the cultivated social realism in the wake of the Civil War. Gil de Biedma was known for his hard-partying ways and his unrepentant social life, and addressed the schism between public and private personae in several famous poems, arguably the most well-known being 'Contra Jaime Gil de Biedma' ('Against Jaime Gil de Biedma') or 'Después de la muerte de Jaime Gil de Biedma' ('After the death of Jaime Gil de Biedma'). Along with Francisco Brines, he helped to reinvigorate homoerotic topics on poetry, probably inspired by the exiled Luis Cernuda. As a homosexual in a strongly conservative environment, Jaime Gil de Biedma suffered discrimination all his life. Nevertheless, he did not hide his sexual orientation and displayed it openly in his poetry. He was rejected for membership of the then illegal

Spanish Communist Party, allegedly because Franco's dictatorship could use his sexuality to threaten him if he were discovered to be a communist.

Poet Rafael Alberti, when he was a member of the jury for the Cervantes Prize (Spain's most important literary prize), tried to award the prize to Gil de Biedma. Some believe that this was because of his sexual orientation.

No volveré a ser joven

Que la vida iba en serio
uno lo empieza a comprender más tarde
-como todos los jóvenes, yo vine
a llevarme la vida por delante.

Dejar huella quería
y marcharme entre aplausos
-envejecer, morir, eran tan sólo
las dimensiones del teatro.

Pero ha pasado el tiempo
y la verdad desagradable asoma:
envejecer, morir,
es el único argumento de la obra.

Poemas póstumos. 1968

De Vita Beata

En un viejo país ineficiente,
algo así como España entre dos guerras
civiles, en un pueblo junto al mar,
poseer una casa y poca hacienda
y memoria ninguna. No leer,
no sufrir, no escribir, no pagar cuentas,
y vivir como un noble arruinado
entre las ruinas de mi inteligencia.