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'AFTER LORCA': TED HUGHES AND THE INFLUENCE OF FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA

The Spanish poet and playwright Federico García Lorca (1898–1936) created works at once archetypal and contemporary, traditional and new. His work was widely influential, and one of the best-known English poets to engage with his writing was the former British Poet Laureate Ted Hughes (1930–1998). Daniel Weissbort's *Ted Hughes: Selected Translations*, an invaluable addition to Hughes scholarship, shows how Hughes came into contact with, and was inspired to translate, the great continental Surrealists Paul Éluard, Yves Bonnefoy, and Federico García Lorca.[1] It is García Lorca's vision of poetry that makes him one of the most important foreign-language influences on Hughes.

'I have to say I am amazed at how well [Hughes] captures Lorca', wrote the eminent García Lorca scholar and translator Christopher Maurer to the present author.[2] In 1996 Hughes published his well-known version of *Bodas de sangre* (*Blood Wedding*), one of García Lorca's more surreal *poemas trágicas* set in a Spanish landscape rich in symbolism, ominous voices, and portents. Hughes's poem 'After Lorca', which places García Lorca's Surrealist tropes into an original English poem, shows the influence of García Lorca's non-dramatic poetry at a far earlier date. It was first published in *Poetry* (Chicago) in December 1963.[3] Weissbort's *Selected Translations* published for the first time the García Lorca translations in the Manuscripts and Rare Books Library (MARBL) at Emory University, Atlanta. However, one of Hughes's poems in the archive, which bears the hallmark of García Lorca's influence, has been left unidentified and unanalysed. Carol Hughes, Hughes's widow, has suggested that it might have been written during the late 1950s or early 1960s;[4] if it is indeed this early, it suggests that Hughes's engagement with García Lorca spanned many decades of his career. In this article I aim to show how Hughes's work reacts to, and harnesses, García Lorca's influence in his imitations and translations, to examine the translations in detail, and to present some new

I am very grateful to Carol Hughes and to the Ted Hughes Estate for granting me permission to publish the unpublished manuscript and to quote from Hughes's published works. Carol Hughes's help with reading the manuscript, her suggestions for its possible date, and the details she was able to provide about the chronology of events have been invaluable. Translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

[1] Ted Hughes, *Selected Translations*, ed. and intro. by Daniel Weissbort (London: Faber & Faber, 2006). Both of García Lorca's last names are used in this article; Hughes referred to him as 'Lorca'.

[2] Email correspondence, June 2011.

[3] *Poetry*, 105.3 (December 1963), 154–55; Ted Hughes, *Collected Poems*, ed. by Paul Keegan (London: Faber & Faber, 2007), Notes, p. 1246.

[4] Correspondence with the author, March 2012.

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findings about the hitherto unidentified poem. I evaluate the applicability of Harold Bloom's theories of influence to translation, arguing that, while the anxiety of influence rarely troubles Hughes's engagement with García Lorca, misreadings or revisions of the earlier author allow Hughes to distinguish his translations and versions of García Lorca from the original. I shall analyse how the grief of the literary world at García Lorca's assassination works on the poetry of Hughes.

Translating poetry presents many difficulties. Hughes 'took no part in the discussions' about translation theory, Daniel Weissbort writes.[5] Yet he does seem to have had clearly defined opinions about translation. Weissbort continues:

> [Hughes] may fairly be said to have subscribed to a foreignising tendency, a renewed readiness to allow translation of foreign texts to alter English itself, increasingly the world lingua franca. But more immediately, Hughes's involvement is surely related to his own needs as a writer and, as such, it provides additional clues to his development which have not yet received sufficient attention. It *has* been observed about his translations that, paradoxically, while intentionally remaining close to the ad verbum text, he nevertheless created works, maybe secondary, but unmistakably 'Hughesian'.[6]

Weissbort also observes that, in Hughes's translations, 'the irreducible minimum, the essential content or wisdom of foreign or remote texts, might be conveyed through scrupulous attention to the means of expression, sometimes even through painstakingly literal translations'.[7] Susan Bassnett notes that Hughes seems to have wished to return to the impulse that inspired the original poem: 'What mattered to Hughes in translating was to go back in some way to the source, a technique very similar to that of Ezra Pound.'[8]

Some theories of translation are particularly applicable to Hughes's poetic relationship with García Lorca. Walter Benjamin's view of translation resonates with Hughes's desire to perpetuate and disseminate other authors' ideas through translation. Benjamin writes that 'a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life. The idea of life and afterlife in works of art should be regarded with an entirely unmetaphorical objectivity.'[9] Hughes seems to have been concerned with sharing García Lorca's ideas and continuing his poetic legacy; the life of the text, and the life and early death of García Lorca him-

[5] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, p. viii.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., p. x.
[8] Susan Bassnett, *Ted Hughes* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2009), p. 85.
[9] Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', first published as the introduction to Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* (Heidelberg: Weissbach, 1923), repr. in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, 1973), pp. 70–82 (p. 72).

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self, seem to be significant concerns for Hughes, especially in the previously unidentified manuscript poem.

The translation process has complex ramifications when one considers the ways in which authors influence one another. For Hughes created not only translations of García Lorca, but also original verse paying homage to him. Can a model such as Harold Bloom's 'anxiety of influence' be applied to an author imitating the style of another, but in a language different from that of his or her precursor? Bloom summarizes the anxiety of influence as 'the immense anxieties of indebtedness' that one poet feels towards the precursor poets he most admires. He sees these anxieties as manifest in the antagonistic relationship between a young poet ('ephebe') and his 'strong' (canonical) precursor: 'My concern is only with strong poets, major figures with the persistence to wrestle with their strong precursors, even to the death.'[10] Poetry springs from a misprision, 'a misunderstanding or misreading'[11] of the precursor's work. The developing poet is thus 'placed in the dilemmas of the revisionist [. . .] but also wishes to open received texts to his own sufferings'.[12] Bloom admits that 'Nietzsche and Freud are, so far as I can tell, the primary influences upon the theory of influence presented in this book'.[13] He does not specify whether he is influenced by the original German or a translation. Both Benjamin's idea that translation provides a text with an afterlife, and Weissbort's observation that Hughes draws out the original, germinal wisdom of the text, imply a relationship between translator and translated poet that contains few 'anxieties of indebtedness'. The relationship between Hughes and García Lorca is founded on Hughes's respect for, and admiration of, the earlier poet's work. Translation, it would seem, is relatively free from the anxiety of influence in Hughes's case. In a few instances, though, Hughes does struggle to distinguish his work in a Lorcan vein, to achieve the 'Hughesian' quality that Weissbort finds in his translations.

Ted Hughes began to learn some Spanish while honeymooning in Spain with Sylvia Plath in 1956. Diane Middlebrook notes: 'Into his rucksack he packed an anthology of Spanish poetry and a Spanish grammar book [. . .] he planned to translate the poems for an English version of the anthology.'[14] He owned a Penguin Poets edition of García Lorca's *Selected Poems*, with prose translations by J. L. Gili;[15] the 2010 edition of the *Selected Poems* states that 'Ted Hughes said in his *Paris Review* interview (1995) that he had discovered

[10] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 5.
[11] Ibid., p. xxiii.
[12] Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 1–2.
[13] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 8.
[14] Diane Middlebrook, *Her Husband: Hughes and Plath. A Marriage* (New York: Viking, 2003), p. 83.
[15] No copy of this anthology is kept in the Emory archive.

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the work of Lorca through this book'.[16] Hughes also owned a copy of Angel Flores's *An Anthology of Spanish Poetry from Garcilaso to García Lorca in English Translation with Spanish Originals* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1961), which is now in the Emory archive.[17] None of his translations of García Lorca is a reworking of the poems that appear in Flores's anthology. His manuscript translations in the Emory archive suggest that he used Gili's *Selected Poems*; the prose translations in this volume convey the meaning of the original with little embellishment, and so he would have been able to use them to enhance his understanding of the Spanish. He also owned a Grove Press edition of García Lorca's 1930 collection *Poeta en Nueva York* (*Poet in New York*), which contains the Spanish text and Ben Belitt's translation.[18] The material that Hughes translated suggests that he knew Lorca's collection *Libro de poemas* (1921), which contains 'El lagarto viejo' ('The Old Lizard'), 'La balada del agua del mar' ('Ballad of the Water of the Sea'), and 'El concierto interrumpido' ('The Interrupted Concert'). He also read *Poema del cante jondo* (*Poem of Deep Song*, 1921), which contains the section 'Poema de la saeta' ('Poem of the Saeta'). Hughes translated only the first part of this series of poems, 'Arqueros' ('Archers'), which he entitles simply 'Poem of the Saeta'.

Hughes examined García Lorca's idea of the *duende*, a force of inspiration in the performance of song, music, and poetry, in two of his prose essays, a concept that García Lorca elaborated only comparatively late in his career, in his 1933 lecture 'Juego y teoría del duende' ('Theory and Function of the *Duende*').[19] Hughes seems to have seen *duende* as critical to García Lorca's work—and to poetry and music in general.[20] The dictionary definition attributes *duende* to song and dance, or to those who perform them: the *Diccionario de uso del español* defines its sixth meaning as '(Andalucía). Gracia o encanto inefable. Particularmente, el que se aprecia en el cante o baile o en los que los ejecutan' ('(Andalusia). Ineffable grace or magic. In particular, that which is appreciated in song or dance or those who perform them').[21] The musicality of recited language interested Hughes, and he wrote about it at length in prose. In his essay 'Inner Music', an analysis of recitation, he cites

[16] Federico García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by J. L. Gili (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960; repr. London: Anvil Press, 2010), Preface, p. 5.

[17] Emory MARBL archive, PQ6267 .E2 1961 HUGHES.

[18] Federico García Lorca, *Poet in New York*, trans. by Ben Belitt, intro. by Ángel del Río (New York: Grove Press, 1955), Emory MARBL archive, PQ6613 .A763 P633 1955 HUGHES.

[19] Gili relates that this lecture was delivered 'by Lorca in Buenos Aires and Montevideo in 1933' (*Selected Poems*, p. 159). I use his translation of the title.

[20] Hughes probably first read this essay in Gili's edition of the *Selected Poems*, where the original and Gili's translation are found on pp. 158–87 of the 2010 edition. Hughes had access to a different translation of the essay in his copy of García Lorca, *Poet in New York*, where it was collected in the appendices.

[21] *Diccionario de uso del español*, ed. by María Moliner, 2 vols (Madrid: Gredos, 1973), I, 1043.

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'Theory and Function of the *Duende*'. The extract he chooses illuminates his conception of the *duende*'s role in producing song and poetry:

> Whether we approve or not, we have to accept that when we recite verse or shaped prose we invoke something. And what hears us, and approaches, is human spirit: closer and fuller human spirit. The question is: what is human spirit? [. . .]
>
> In his lecture on the Duende, Lorca gives an account of what some people, at one time and in one place, expected of incantation. He describes the singing of the Andalusian flamenco singer Pastora Pavon, in a tavern in Cadiz:
>
> > She sang with her voice of shadow, with her voice of liquid metal, with her moss-covered voice, and with her voice tangled in her long hair. She would soak her voice in manzanilla, or lose it in dark and distant thickets. Yet she failed completely: it was all to no purpose. The audience remained silent . . . only a little man . . . said sarcastically in a very low voice: 'Viva Paris!' as if to say: 'Here we do not care for ability, technique, or mastery. Here we care for something else.'
>
> At that moment Pastora Pavon got up like a woman possessed, broken as a medieval mourner, drank without pause a large glass of cazalla, a fire-water brandy, and sat down to sing without voice, breathless, without subtlety, her throat burning, but—with Duende. She succeeded in getting rid of the scaffolding of the song, to make way for a furious and fiery Duende . . . that made those who were listening tear their clothes.[22]

Hughes's term 'human spirit' modifies the Spanish concept of the *duende* as a supernatural, external force possessing the singer and locates it within the person; yet his term 'spirit' does nothing to undercut the mythical, mystical tenor of his prose. Hughes and García Lorca concurred that the *duende* was evoked in music and recitation. This relationship between writers has none of the struggles that Bloom's work suggests, but it does perhaps contain a form of misreading: Hughes's modification of the idea of the *duende*. Hughes perpetuates and shares García Lorca's ideas via his prose, in much the way that Benjamin describes.

According to Hughes, the *duende* was a frightening and powerful source of inspiration, linked to encounters with death and extreme suffering. He uses the term rather loosely, and he seems to have expanded its meaning to encompass a wide range of ideas that he had about poetry. He even analyses it in the context of an essay on visual art. In 'The Hanged Man and the Dragonfly (Note for a Panegyric Ode on Leonard Baskin's *Collected Prints*)', written as an introduction to the collected artwork of his friend and collaborator Baskin, he describes it thus:

[22] Ted Hughes, 'Inner Music', in *Winter Pollen: Occasional Prose*, ed. by William Scammell (London: Faber & Faber, 1994), pp. 244–50 (pp. 246–47). In the quotation within the quotation, the ellipses are Hughes's. Hughes cites Gili's translation (*Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, pp. 167–69), and adapts it at certain points. He calls Pastora Pavón by her name (spelt without an accent), rather than the sobriquet 'La Niña de los Peines', which Gili preserves in his translation. He capitalizes the word Duende and removes Gili's italicization of it, and replaces Gili and García Lorca's suspension points with a dash between the words 'but' and Duende'.

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Whatever this musical influx may be, human societies are apparently not too sure about it. [. . .] It is as if it were some ambiguous substance, simultaneously holy and anathema, some sort of psychological drug flourishing in the blood-stream. Lorca gave it a name, calling it the Duende, when he described how even in one person, in one half-minute, it irrupts from the faintest titillation to the soul-rending. In his Arab–Andalusian setting he shows how naturally it can be taken for God—a divine horror—a thunderbolt beautiful and terrible.

And he makes the suggestive point—that it seems to come from 'beyond death'. As if he meant that it comes from 'beyond life'.

Yet it is the core of life, like the black, ultimate resource of the organism. Maybe that is why it rouses itself only in an atmosphere of crisis, at extreme moments.[23]

Moreover, Hughes's 'musical influx' manifests itself at moments of crisis. García Lorca's account of the *duende* at work, in the singing of Pastora Pavón, presents a situation in which the singer's art reached a point of crisis. Hughesian poetic crisis, however, occurs in yet more extreme situations:

This Duende-music, or music within music, or ectoplasmic essence or whatever it is, has a more familiar role as *mana*. However it is obtained, and in whatever intensity, *mana*, and the roots of music, and healing, are all mixed up in the same medicine, which oozes from that tree in the gulf.[24]

Hughes's analysis, evoking 'all historical cultures', is in the tradition of James Frazer and Robert Graves. Not all world mythologies are identical, and García Lorca's *duende* is not identical to the Maori concept of *mana*—but Hughes seems to modify García Lorca's *duende* by stressing its similarity to *mana*. Here, Bloom's theories *do* seem applicable to Hughes and García Lorca. Perhaps this is a case of poetic misprision, of the reader who is 'placed in the dilemmas of the revisionist'.[25]

Carol Bere, in her analysis of the *duende* in Hughes's work, identifies it as a force with which the poet must struggle.[26] But when it comes to García Lorca's influence on Hughes's poetry, there seems to have been less of a struggle. Hughes's work is marked by the influence of multiple powerful canonical voices: Shakespeare, Hopkins, Owen, Eliot, Graves, and Williamson, to name but a few. These are all predecessors whose influence he seems to have welcomed, while taking care to distinguish his own work from theirs. Plath's influence is extremely important, and, as Heather Clark has shown, it presents a special case of influence-related anxiety because it does *not* fit

[23] Ted Hughes, 'The Hanged Man and the Dragonfly', in *Winter Pollen*, ed. by Scammell, pp. 84–102 (p. 92).

[24] Ibid., p. 93.

[25] Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 1.

[26] Carol Bere, 'Artistic Inspiration, Mysterious Power: Ted Hughes and the Notion of Duende', unpublished paper given at 'Fixed Stars Govern a Life', International Ted Hughes Conference, Emory University, Atlanta, 2005, p. 1.

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Bloom's paradigm.[27] Hughes was interested in eulogizing poets who died young, as I shall explain later. Federico García Lorca's assassination at the age of thirty-eight[28] did not allow him to finish his poetic and theatrical œuvre; perhaps this inspired Hughes's perpetuation of his literary legacy. He is more like Adonaïs than Bloom's Miltonic God, who is a 'dead but still embarrassingly potent and present ancestor, or rather, ancestral poet'.[29]

Hughes's evocation of García Lorca's 'Arab–Andalusian setting' above stresses the Spanish poet's roots and primitivism. It is unusual that he does not mention the gypsies, who inspired García Lorca's *Romancero gitano* (*Gypsy Ballads*, 1924–27). Hughes's reading of García Lorca does run the risk of exoticizing him. Yet this reading of García Lorca informs a reading of Hughes's own Lorcan poetry, both original and translated. Weissbort writes in his introduction to Hughes's translations of García Lorca's poetry:

> The term duende [. . .] is, according to Maurer, applied in Andalusia to the charm of certain gifted people, especially flamenco singers—'the Andalusians say that a *cantaor* has *duende*.' For Lorca it was 'a protean earth spirit with three important traits: irrationality, demonism, and fascination with death'. Lorca describes how, '[a] few years ago, in a dancing contest at Jerez de la Frontera, an old woman of eighty carried off the prize against beautiful women and girls with waists like water, merely by raising her arms, throwing back her head, and stamping her foot on the platform; in that gathering of muses and angels, beauties of shape and beauties of smile, the moribund duende, dragging her wings of rusty knives along the ground, was bound to win and did in fact win.' However, he was also aware that if it be 'true that I am a poet by the grace of God—or the devil—I am also a poet by virtue of technique and effort, and knowing exactly what a poem is'.[30]

Hughes's best translations from the Spanish are moved by García Lorca's influence, while deftly embellishing and subtly changing the tenor of the original. They are also the most significant for a consideration of Hughes's poetic development, since by deliberately changing the sense of the original, Hughes leaves his stamp on the work of a powerfully influential voice and makes the verse his own.

Susan Bassnett notes that, early in his career, 'Hughes made a clear distinction between literal versions and what he called imitations. His last work

[27] Heather Clark, *The Grief of Influence: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[28] For information about García Lorca's life see e.g. Ian Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989), and Francisco García Lorca, *Federico y su mundo*, ed. by Maria Hernández, 3rd edn (Madrid: Alianza, 1981), trans. by Christopher Maurer as *In the Green Morning: Memories of Federico* (New York: New Directions, 1986), which mixes biography with critical essays.

[29] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 20.

[30] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, pp. 136–37. In the first citation, Weissbort quotes page 171 of Gili's translation in the *Selected Poems*.

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shows that this distinction still held.'[31] As I shall explain later, the unidentified manuscript does seem to blur this distinction at certain points. By imitating García Lorca, Hughes was replicating a poetry that claims to evoke the primitive, the primordially natural, the frightening powers of the unconscious. Although Hughes modified García Lorca's idea of the *duende*, the two poets concurred that it was essential to song and recitation. Song and recitation become invocations and incantations, the means by which poetry can call up the dead. They are the stuff of the 'quasi-ritual' by which a strong poet lays his precursor to rest and progresses his own poetic career, according to Bloom.[32] In Hughes's work, the ghostly voice of García Lorca is allowed to discourse once more; but Hughes quite often answers it directly, and not always as antagonistically as Bloom would have it, either. Yet the relationship of Hughes's voice to that of the earlier poet is complex. When Hughes significantly adapts and embellishes upon an idea taken from García Lorca, perhaps he is striving to make the verse his own.

His poem 'After Lorca' begins:

> The clock says 'When will it be morning?'
> The sun says 'Noon hurt me.'
> The river cries with its mouthful of mud
> And the sea moves every way without moving.[33]

Here is a verse which parallels almost exactly the movement of ideas and the pattern of dialogue in a poem by García Lorca. 'Cantos nuevos', from his first collection *Libro de poemas*, evokes in its title the 'new songs' that García Lorca set out to write, inspired by nature and the deepest levels of unconscious human nature:

> Dice la tarde: '¡Tengo sed de sombra!'
> Dice la luna: 'Yo, sed de luceros.'
> La fuente cristalina pide labios
> y suspiros el viento.

The afternoon says: 'I thirst for a shadow!' The moon says: 'I thirst for bright stars!' The crystal clear fountain asks for lips, and the wind for sighs.[34]

The inspiration at work when García Lorca wrote his new songs weaves its spell in the work of the English poet. An oneiric dialogue between two inanimate objects opens each poem, while the night-time setting of the first line of Hughes's poem and the first two lines of García Lorca's plunge the reader into a dreamlike world. The poetic landscape of each then moves to an aquatic setting, with Hughes evoking the river and sea in response to García

[31] Bassnett, *Ted Hughes*, p. 90.
[32] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 66.
[33] Hughes, *Collected Poems*, p. 105.
[34] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, p. 37.

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Lorca's fountain. He would also seem to engage with a later García Lorca poem, 'Asesinato' ('Murder') from *Poet in New York*, in which 'el mar deja de moverse' ('the sea moves no more').[35] He was able to read this poem both in the original and in translation, in Ben Belitt's edition. The direct speech of inanimate objects evokes a mythic world, while Hughes's evocation of the voices that seem to resonate in nature shows that his conception of the *duende* was intimately linked to recitation, incantation, evocation, and the cadence of ritual language. It is as if the poem performs a ritual that calls up the ghostly voice of García Lorca, and then attempts to outperform him in a poetic battle to see who can channel the voices of nature at their most wildly primitive. Hughes's poem provides just the sort of new song the Spanish poem ushers in: a song that gives voice to seemingly inert, inanimate nature.

García Lorca's 'Romance de la luna, luna' ('Ballad of the Moon, Moon') is yet more surreal than 'Cantos nuevos', and this oneiric poem also gives speech to an inanimate thing—in this case, the moon. It seems that Hughes did not translate this poem, but he does engage with it in 'Full Moon and Little Frieda'. This poem was collected in *Wodwo* (1967); its first publication, in 1963,[36] suggests an earlier date of composition. A subtle allusion to García Lorca is heard in the description of cows as a 'river of blood',[37] which suggests the 'river of lions'[38] representing a young man's strength in 'La sangre derramada' ('The Spilt Blood'), the second part of García Lorca's elegiac sequence for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías; earlier in this section of the Spanish poem, a cow licks spilt blood.[39] The final lines of Hughes's poem read:

> 'Moon!' you cry suddenly, 'Moon! Moon!'
> The moon has stepped back like an artist gazing amazed at a work
> That points at him amazed.[40]

García Lorca's poem stages a dreamlike dialogue in a smithy, between a young gypsy boy and the moon, who is personified as a dancer; at the end of the poem she takes him away into the sky.[41] The boy is anxious that the gypsies will forge the moon's metallic heart into 'necklaces and white rings'; the moon retorts that the boy himself might end up on the anvil when the gypsies arrive.[42] García Lorca evokes the moon's dance and the gypsies' creation of

[35] Federico García Lorca, *Poet in New York: Complete Spanish Text with a New Translation by Ben Belitt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1955), pp. 46–47.

[36] Hughes, Notes to *Collected Poems*, p. 1252.

[37] Hughes, *Collected Poems*, p. 183, l. 7.

[38] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, p. 135, l. 53.

[39] Ibid., ll. 15–17. The blood-jet ('chorro', p. 134, l. 34) suggests that Plath might have read García Lorca, and echoed him in her 1963 poem 'Kindness': 'The blood-jet is poetry' (Sylvia Plath, *Collected Poems*, ed. by Ted Hughes (London: Faber & Faber, 1981), p. 270, l. 18).

[40] Hughes, *Collected Poems*, p. 183, ll. 9–11.

[41] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, pp. 61–63.

[42] Ibid., p. 62, ll. 12, 15–16.

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jewellery; Hughes's poem dramatizes the moment of astonished recognition that seems to pass between an artist and his creation. The Spanish poet's words, 'Huye luna, luna, luna' ('Flee, moon, moon, moon')[43] are echoed in the joyful, repetitive exclamations of the child in Hughes's poem. Frieda is Hughes and Sylvia Plath's daughter; 'Full Moon and Little Frieda' is inspired as much by Frieda herself as by García Lorca. Hughes's poem celebrates the processes of artistic creation and procreation. García Lorca makes a poem about the dance of the moon and the gypsies' jewellery-making. From this poem and from his daughter's joy at discovering the naming of things, Hughes fashions his own poem.

The call-and-response effect of García Lorca's poetry is heard later in Hughes's career, in *Adam and the Sacred Nine* (1979). The opening poem, 'The Song', echoes a poem by García Lorca that is anthologized by Flores, entitled 'El canto quiere ser luz' ('The Song Wants to Be Light'). Although he did not translate this poem, he responds to it in original verse. Here is the Spanish original:

> El canto quiere ser luz.
> En lo oscuro el canto tiene,
> hilos de fósforo y luna.
> La luz no sabe qué quiere.
> En sus límites de ópalo,
> se encuentra ella misma
> y vuelve.[44]

The translation by Rachel Benson and Robert O'Brien in Flores's edition (p. 306) reads thus:

> The song wants to be light.
> In the darkness the song holds
> threads of phosphorus and moonlight.
> The light does not know what it wants.
> Within its opal limits
> it meets itself
> and turns.

In the first nine lines of Hughes's poem the song rejects air, sky, hill-slope, leaves, and water, even though these are the elements through which it echoes. Hughes continues to describe the song in Lorcan terms:

> The song did not want its own mouth
> Was careless of its own throat
> [. . .]

[43] Ibid, p. 62, l. 9.
[44] *An Anthology of Spanish Poetry*, ed. by Flores, p. 508.

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The song made of joy
Searched, even like a lament

For what did not exist

Pouring out over the empty grave
Of what was not yet born[45]

Hughes was to use a similar nexus of imagery in 1984, when writing about the *duende* in the essay 'The Hanged Man and the Dragonfly', cited above. The ability of the song to become an ode to joy or a lament recalls the twofold role of the *duende* as coming from beyond death and beyond life, from the empty grave of the unborn, also analysed in this essay. The song's carelessness of its throat recalls Pastora Pavón's performance that she gave with 'her throat burning', in Hughes's quotation from Lorca in the essay 'Inner Music'. We cannot know how closely Hughes meant to reference García Lorca in this poem, for, in contrast to 'After Lorca', the source of influence is not mentioned in the title. Nevertheless, the most important facet of this poem when it is considered in relation to García Lorca is the emphasis on song as an entity seemingly in control of the poet who sings it, and the fascination with death and that which is beyond life. It also seems to start up a dialogue with the poetry of the older poet. García Lorca states what the song *wants* to be, and Hughes responds by stating what the song *does not* want to be. García Lorca's influence informs but does not dominate the poem, allowing Hughes to create an original piece that is recognizably his own.

So much for Hughes's published imitations of García Lorca. The translations he made of García Lorca's poetry alternate between the literal and the embellished. There are a few passages that seem to strain away from the meaning of the original. Hughes's translations of García Lorca's non-dramatic poems were not published in his lifetime; they seem unrevised, and some are more successful than others. A close analysis of the ways in which Hughes translated García Lorca's poems illuminates our understanding of how he was influenced by the Spanish poet.

Hughes's methods for translating verse are illuminated by Daniel Weissbort's *Selected Translations*; he does not seem to subscribe to a 'foreignizing' tendency when translating García Lorca, but rather emphasizes the poignant and melancholy aspects of the verse. Seeming to give his rendition of 'El lagarto viejo' more of an ominous sense of fatality than the original Spanish, Hughes slightly increases the sense of time passing in the last few lines. The stanza before the penultimate one had ended with a menacing reminder that the worms will eventually eat the lizard.[46] Hughes's translation, 'A cuckoo

[45] Hughes, *Collected Poems*, p. 443, ll. 10–11, 14–18.

[46] Federico García Lorca, *Obras completas*, ed. by Arturo del Hoyo, 19th edn, 2 vols (Madrid: Aguilar, 1975), I, 94.

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chimes in the darkness | Of the poplars',[47] adds greater menace to the original 'canta un cuco en la umbría | de los alámos'.[48] 'Canta' simply means 'sings' or 'chirps' when used of birds; Hughes's 'chimes' evokes the fleeting passage of time. Similarly, Hughes darkens the literary word 'umbría', which means 'a shady place or spot', with a more sinister tint when he translates it as 'darkness'. In Hughes's version of the poem, nightfall is already upon the landscape where the lizard lives. He emphasizes the sense of mortality conveyed by the Spanish original. Here is Hughes's poetic voice successfully negotiating García Lorca's original to create a work that is part translation, part original poem. The translation even seems to highlight the weaknesses of the original by proposing alterations; in this respect, it corresponds to Bloom's theory of the shaping of a poet's talent. Hughes counters García Lorca's dark sublime with sublimity of his own, creating a work that outdoes the original poem in its brooding ominousness.

Hughes's 'Ballad of the Water of the Sea' ('La balada del agua del mar')[49] is haunted by traces of other influences, in addition to that of García Lorca. It is a lament set by the sea shore, the locus of such famous poems by Plath as 'Full Fathom Five' and 'Suicide off Egg Rock'. Thus the translation must negotiate the dual influence of García Lorca and Plath. Weissbort notes that the seventh line of Hughes's manuscript was illegible due to a defective photocopy;[50] a second look at the manuscript, and at the original Spanish, suggests an alternative reading of this and the sixth line. The Spanish 'con los senos al aire?'[51] is more literally rendered 'With your breasts bare?'[52] than Weissbort's 'Of etc [*sic*] your breasts bare?'[53] The seventh line, illegible in Weissbort's photocopy, reads 'I sell, sir, the water',[54] corresponding to '—Vendo, señor, el agua'.[55] Hughes's translation alters the sense of the original Spanish in a few significant places. Lines 17–18 of the Spanish contain the words 'amargura | seria',[56] literally 'serious bitterness', which Hughes renders as 'bitter | Weight'.[57] The tenor of this part of the translation is more oppressive than the original. Here, Hughes successfully conveys García Lorca's meaning, while creating a translation that bears the hallmark of his own poetic voice. His awareness

[47] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, p. 140, ll. 78–79.
[48] García Lorca, *Obras completas*, I, 94, ll. 78–79.
[49] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, ed. by Weissbort, pp. 140–41.
[50] Ibid., p. 140.
[51] García Lorca, *Obras completas*, I, 111.
[52] Emory MARBL archive, collection 644, box 131, folder 3.
[53] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, p. 140, l. 6.
[54] Emory MARBL archive, collection 644, box 131, folder 3.
[55] García Lorca, *Obras completas*, I, 111.
[56] Ibid., p. 112.
[57] Hughes, *Selected Translations*, p. 140, ll. 17–18.

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of García Lorca's early death, and the mournfulness of Plath's sea poetry, perhaps inspire the sombre tone of this translation.

The last manuscript in the MARBL archive at Emory University has been left out of Weissbort's *Selected Translations*. It is handwritten in ink across four pages of an unlined notebook, 240×215 mm, and it is labelled 'Unidentified Federico García Lorca poem' in the catalogue. This label is the archivist's hypothesis, based on the other translations in the notebook, from which Weissbort takes the García Lorca translations in his edition. Neither the poems in Volume I of Arturo del Hoyo's edition of García Lorca's works nor the drama of Volume II contains anything to correspond to this poem. Nor does it correspond to any translation or original in the Flores anthology that Hughes owned. The poem, 'He lies under the red crust', reads very much like a translation from García Lorca. All the thematic tropes of his poetry are there: the short-line antiphonal dialogues and choric voices of his verse dramas, words and objects from his lexicon, patterns of words from his poetry. I would like to put forward the idea that, like 'After Lorca', it is not a translation at all, but an imitation in English of García Lorca's style. Christopher Maurer has confirmed that this manuscript is a 'rough draft' of an English-language imitation of García Lorca.[58] Here is a transcription:

He lies under the red crust [fol. 1v]
O girl of sap & of honey,
Girdled with adders & crowns,
Sunk into sudden boredom.

Alas, warrior of the thorn,
A night with one cloud
Waving a single lightning
My soul bears toward your spire

Alas, ancient of rivers
Mind filling the mouth with mud,
Waving the [*illegible*] with scales,
I offer you my breastbone
Split by the tongue of [*illegible*].

Warrior, warmth be with you
I will go on on this side of you
Toward the horizon
Beside whose profile I shall lie on.

Farewell, woman with the broken stem
Toward love you go,
Lasting as stone,
And I toward death.

The horses are harnessed with copper,
My brain fades like a gong.

[58] Email correspondence between Christopher Maurer and the author, June 2011.

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The mountain stands above, skin ~~of ashes~~, [fol. 2r]
of molten metal

What do you sell, lady, your eyes half cloud?
your breasts bare,
Not ~~hidden behind [*illegible*] challenging me?~~
I sell the stone of the earth.
What do you carry, boy,
That makes your blood shake the hand [*illegible*] holds
~~[*illegible*] on over heaven~~ you
I carry the stone of the earth.

What are these tears mother
Red as poppies, molten as water.
I weep the stone of the earth.

O heart, this weight
Where has it grown?
Heavy is the earth's stone.

The mountain stands above, skin of ashes,
Heart [*?*] of molten metal.

The horses are harnessed with copper. [fol. 2v]

Where are you going, girl,
Of sun & of shining sap?

I'm going to the dandelion
Under the dark sod.

The dark sod is cold
Cold & full of dew.

My love fears nothing of that sort
Nor grasshopper nor magpie.

Fear the moon, girl,
Of honey & lilies

It has gone from my hair
From my mouth-corner for ever.

Who are you, coppery girl,
Where are you come from?

From white beds, in dark rooms
From open mouths I come.

The horses are harnessed with copper.

What do your lips keep in
That are close on an eglantine stem

The star of my lover
Alive & dead.

What troubles your breast
Where none dare put his hand?

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The dagger of my love, [fol. 3r]
Alive & dead.
What do your eyes hold
That are wells of shaken water
The face of my lover
Alive & dead
Why do you wear
The white cloak of holiness
Alas, I have left the world,
Lacking all I wanted,
Heir of the worst,
Widowed of the best.
Whom are you seeking
If your love lies dead?
The body, the body
Of the lover I honoured.
Love you seek, treacherous widow.
And I wish you may find it.
The love of the hot star,
Hot at my window,
Burning away with love
For me, maybe, maybe.[59]

Christopher Maurer has suggested in his correspondence that this manuscript might contain more than one Lorcan poem, although there are no clues in the lineation or the page breaks to show where one ends and the next begins; it may equally be one long poem. The manuscript is full of poetic dialogues, closely following and imitating the style of the older poet. It engages particularly closely with three poems from *Libro de poemas* (1921).[60] At times, Hughes even includes direct quotations from his own translations: the girl with her breasts bare, for example, is taken from 'The Water of the Sea'. The speaker who sells the stone of the earth is adapted from the same poem, in which the element of water, not earth, is a saleable commodity. Hughes creates a near-translation of a section from 'Balada de un día de Julio' ('Ballad of a Day in July'), a poem about a widow who seeks her husband, the Count of the Laurels, who is described as alive and dead. Hughes creates some important revisions of the original. Where García Lorca's heroine is to fear the 'sun of sun and snow', Hughes's is to fear the moon of honey and lilies; García Lorca's is a 'white maid', while Hughes's is a coppery girl.[61] The 'sword'[62] she

[59] Emory MARBL archive, Ted Hughes papers, collection 644, box 131, folder 4. I have attempted to replicate the (sometimes unclear) line spacing of Hughes's original.

[60] These influential poems are 'Balada de un día de Julio', 'La balada del agua del mar', and 'Cantos nuevos', which are found close together in Gili's *Selected Poems*.

[61] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, p. 31, Gili's translation cited.

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bears in her breast is replaced by a dagger, and her 'black cloak of death',[63] by the 'white cloak of holiness'. At times, Hughes translates entire sections. 'La estrella de mi amante | Que vive y que muere'[64] is the source of 'The star of my lover | Alive and dead' (ll. 62–63). '"¿Tú buscas el amor | viudita aleve? | Tú buscas un amor | que ojalá encuentres"'[65] is the original of 'Love you seek, treacherous widow, | And I ask that you may find it' (ll. 82–83). The igneous energy of 'The mountain stands above, skin of ashes | Heart [?] of molten metal' (ll. 40–41) recalls the voice 'de estaño fundido',[66] of molten tin, with which Pastora Pavón sings in García Lorca's lecture on the *duende*. Hughes is imitating the syntagm noun of noun, noun of noun, that characterizes García Lorca's poetry,[67] as in 'knight-errant of the cypresses | A night of moon', a literal translation of lines 55–56 of 'Balada de un día de Julio'.[68] In his manuscript, Hughes would also seem to echo García Lorca's elegy sequence *Llanto por Antonio Sánchez Mejías* (1935). The line 'Mind filling the mouth with mud' (l. 10) responds to García Lorca's description of the dead who sing with mouths full of 'sol y pedernales' ('sun and flints').[69] It is also possible to hear echoes of the collection *Romancero gitano*. In 'Romance de la pena negra' ('Ballad of the Black Pain') García Lorca describes the heroine Soledad Montoya as having 'muslos de amapola'[70] (poppy thighs); this is the source of Hughes's 'tears [. . .] | Red as poppies' (l. 35). She also has coppery flesh: 'Cobre amarillo su carne', 'her flesh like brass',[71] as Gili translates it, or 'yellow copper her flesh', according to Robert G. Havard's word-for-word rendition.[72] The 'white cloak of holiness' (l. 73) would seem to recall 'La monja gitana' ('The Gypsy Nun'), which Gili also anthologized.[73] These two echoes of García Lorca are especially significant: Hughes has taken 'Balada de un día de Julio', and replaced the whiteness of the girl and the darkness of her cloak with colours found elsewhere in García Lorca's work, in poems published later in his career. Hughes seems to be revising early García Lorca poems by reading later ones, as though to make revisions that the earlier poet did not live to make. This is a very sensitive reworking of the Spanish poet's verse.

[62] Ibid., p. 32, Gili's translation cited.
[63] Ibid., Gili's translation cited.
[64] Ibid., p. 31, ll. 23–24.
[65] Ibid., p. 33, ll. 42–45.
[66] Ibid., p. 166. Gili translates this expression as 'liquid metal' (p. 167).
[67] I am very grateful to Christopher Maurer for suggesting this, and several parallels with *Romancero gitano*, which I include in this article (email correspondence, 27 August 2012).
[68] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, ed. by Gili, p. 33; the original is 'caballero errante | de los cipreses, una noche de luna'.
[69] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, trans. by Gili, p. 139, l. 33.
[70] Ibid., p. 74, l. 34.
[71] Ibid., p. 73.
[72] Federico García Lorca, *Gypsy Ballads*, bilingual edn, ed. and trans. by Robert G. Havard (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1990), pp. 64–65.
[73] García Lorca, *Selected Poems*, ed. by Gili, p. 69.

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Perhaps the most important element that Hughes has taken from the earlier poet is a preoccupation with meditations on death and mourning. It is as if Hughes were trying to negotiate a place for himself after his death among the ancestors of his dramatic poetry by welcoming their influence. He had undertaken several translation projects during the latter part of his career: work on *Alcestis* began in 1993, with one part left unfinished until 1998.[74] The project that would eventually inform *Tales from Ovid* was undertaken at the suggestion of the poets Michael Hofmann and James Lasdun, for the anthology *After Ovid: New Metamorphoses* (London: Faber & Faber, 1994). His translations of Wedekind's *Spring Awakening* and García Lorca's *Blood Wedding* were suggested by the theatre director Tim Supple, who subsequently directed the plays.[75] Hughes perceived in García Lorca's essay that the *duende* animating live performance seemed to come from beyond life: hence the insistence on utterances of grief and mourning in this particular poem. Here are yet more elegies in addition to those ably explained by Edward Hadley.[76] Hughes had a great sympathy for poets whose work was cut short by their untimely death. The most important of these was Plath. But his poem 'Wilfred Owen's Photographs'[77] reflects his interest in Owen's work, while his 'Three Poems for J. R.'[78] eulogized the Australian poet Jennifer Rankin.

What if the unidentified manuscript poem contained elegies for Federico García Lorca himself? Hughes inscribes himself into a Spanish tradition of elegies for, and inspired by, García Lorca. Perhaps most notably, the great Spanish poet Antonio Machado (1875–1939) wrote 'El crimen fue en Granada' ('The Crime was in Granada'),[79] an elegy for García Lorca that denounces Franco's forces and stages an oneiric, very Lorcan, dialogue between the poet and Death. This is collected in the anthology by Angel Flores that Hughes owned; an explanatory footnote makes it explicit that the poem was written about García Lorca. Hughes was clearly interested in the life of the poet, since he owned the biography of García Lorca by Ian Gibson[80] and a translation of Francisco García Lorca's *In the Green Morning: Memories of Federico*.[81] Yet it would seem that he was also interested in the *death* of Lorca, since he owned Gibson's *The Assassination of Federico García Lorca*.[82] Could this poem be, in part, a lament for García Lorca, who lies under the red crust?

[74] Letter from Carol Hughes to the author, 17 August 2012.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Edward Hadley, *The Elegies of Ted Hughes* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[77] Hughes, *Collected Poems*, pp. 78–79.
[78] Ibid., pp. 837–40.
[79] *An Anthology of Spanish Poetry*, ed. by Flores, pp. 267–68 (English translation), pp. 484–85 (Spanish original).
[80] Emory University Woodruff Library, General Libraries, STACKS PQ6613 .A763 Z647713.
[81] Emory University Woodruff Library, General Libraries, STACKS PQ6613 .A763 Z63913.
[82] Emory University Woodruff Library, General Libraries, STACKS PQ6613 .A763 Z64769.

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García Lorca is reported by Manuel Castilla Blanco, a Communist co-opted into digging graves for the victims of the Fascist regime, to have been buried with other executed dissenters 'in a narrow trench, on top of each other, beside an olive tree'[83] near the village of Víznar. The girl's actions parallel those of García Lorca's friend, the guitarist Ángel Barrios, who visited the spot where the poet's body was buried and found that the mass grave he lay in had been covered in quicklime.[84] Since García Lorca was openly homosexual, it is unlikely that the girl in 'He lies under the red crust' was a lover of the poet. She is, instead, a character from one of his poems or verse dramas rather than a real person whom he knew. She must necessarily lament the loss of her man, for García Lorca's dramas, especially the triad *Bodas de sangre*, *Yerma*, and *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, examine crises of heterosexuality. The verse dialogue 'Balada de un día de Julio' is the most important precursor of 'He lies under the red crust', and Hughes responds to García Lorca's poem, in which the Count of the Laurels cannot be found, by stating that the dead lover is under the red crust. Yet echoing as an undertone in the widow's lament is Hughes's elegy for her creator. Translations and imitations of his work continue to inspire impassioned laments. García Lorca becomes a potent source of inspiration for younger poets. Benjamin's idea that translation provides an afterlife for texts resonates with Hughes's perpetuation of García Lorca's poetic legacy.

If it was so astonishingly close to García Lorca's poetry, why did Hughes not publish the verse in this manuscript in his lifetime? The answer is perhaps that it was too close to the original: too imitative. Here is a case of the form of influence that Bloom calls '*apophrades*',[85] after those cursed days when the ancient Greeks believed their dead returned to haunt them:

> [. . .] strong poets keep returning from the dead, and only through the quasi-willing mediumship of other strong poets. How they return is the decisive matter, for if they return intact, then the return impoverishes the later poets, dooming them to be remembered—if at all—as having ended in poverty, in an imaginative need they could not themselves gratify.[86]

It is remarkable to read poems in English that so fully and convincingly capture the spirit of García Lorca's work. Hughes would seem to have conjured up the ghost of a poet who refused to rest in peace. Moreover, by eulogizing García Lorca, Hughes was echoing the voice of a Spanish poet of equal stature,

[83] Gibson, *Federico García Lorca*, p. 468.

[84] Ibid., p. 469. Despite attempts to find his remains at the site of the mass grave, García Lorca's body has never been recovered to this day, perhaps because the bodies were moved by Fascist forces after Barrios had buried them: Fiona Govan, 'Lorca's Civil War Grave Found Empty,' *Telegraph*, 16 December 2009 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/6826532/Lorcas-civil-war-grave-found-empty.html> [accessed 9 July 2012] (para. 13 of 17).

[85] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 139.

[86] Ibid., pp. 140–41.

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Antonio Machado. Translating Lorcan tropes into English was possibly not sufficient to make Hughes's verse overcome the influence of these powerful Spanish voices. It is likely that this experimental echoing of García Lorca's poetry was written early in Hughes's career, and it sheds important light on his poetic development. Hughes recalls in a letter to Keith Sagar, dated 18 July 1998, that Plath kept 'experimental improvisations & versions of Lorca that I'd made, on her desk',[87] at the time of her death. It is possible that this is one of Hughes's 'versions of Lorca'. The paper Hughes used is headed 'SMITH COLLEGE MEMORANDUM'; Hughes and Plath had moved to the States when Plath took up a post as an instructor at Smith College in 1957.[88] Its possible presence in Plath's flat at the time of her death makes this elegiac poem seem especially poignant.

Hughes's engagement with García Lorca spans much of his career, from the early 'After Lorca' (1963) and (possibly) 'He lies under the red crust' through to his translation of *Bodas de sangre* (1996). Between 'After Lorca' and 'The Song', some significant changes have taken place. Hughes went from acknowledging and embracing the influence of García Lorca's verse in 'After Lorca' to responding to the Spanish poet in 'The Song'. The translations, uncollected until the publication of Weissbort's book, contain elements that are refreshingly original, and their dark tenor is darkened even further by Hughes's use of portentous language. 'He lies under the red crust' was not published in Hughes's lifetime perhaps because it echoes the voice of its predecessor too directly. In this respect, it conforms to Bloom's theories of the anxiety of influence. However, it very much succeeds as an elegy for and tribute to García Lorca. This shows a very anti-Bloomian respect for and admiration of García Lorca's work. Hughes's most successful work in a Lorcan vein is his 1996 translation of *Bodas de sangre*, because it infuses the original verse with Hughesian rhythms.[89] A complex engagement with García Lorca, spanning many years of Hughes's career, shows that Benjamin's theory that translation provides an 'afterlife' for the text is applicable to Hughes's relationship to García Lorca's writing. By 1996, towards the end of his career, he had successfully allowed the influence of García Lorca's work to inform his own poetry and poetry translations, while retaining their Hughesian quality.

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[87] Ted Hughes, *Selected Letters*, ed. by Christopher Reid (London: Faber & Faber, 2007), p. 720.
[88] Middlebrook, *Her Husband*, p. 104.
[89] For more information about how Hughes's translation *Blood Wedding* differs from the original see my article at <http://www.thetedhughessociety.org/bloodwedding.htm> [accessed 24 August 2012].

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