

from *Antígona González*

by Sara Uribe

Translated from the Spanish by John Pluecker

This morning there's a massive line

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Here we are all invisible. We have no face. We have no name. Here our present seems suspended.

I'll wake up at any moment, I say when I try to lie to myself, when I can't stand it anymore, when I'm about to collapse.

But that moment never comes: what happens here is the truly real.

They told me they'd found a few dead bodies, that there was a chance. They told me they were going to bring them here.

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I came to San Fernando to look for my brother.
I came to San Fernando to look for my father.
I came to San Fernando to look for my husband.
I came to San Fernando to look for my son.
I came with the others for the bodies of our own.

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[I thought I was entering the town of the dead, my homeland.

You were the homeland.

But wasn't the homeland destroyed?

Wasn't there a plague in the city?

Weren't useless prayers said to the gods?

I realized I would see a city under siege.

I realized Tamaulipas was Thebes
and Creonte this silence stifling everything.]

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But there are more people reported missing than bodies found.

[But no, I'm out, outside.

*Throat dry, heart hollow
like a pitcher of thirst.*

I'm here, in the shadows.]

Sources:

[They told me they'd found...] – From *Una foto...lo que les quedó de Jaime* [A photo...what they still had of Jaime's], published in *El Universal* newspaper Friday, April 15, 2011, the testimony of Guadalupe Hernández

[I thought I was entering...] – María Zambrano, from *La Tumba de Antígona* [Antigone's Tomb]

[there are more people reported missing...] – SanJuana Martínez, from *Vale más saber lo que sea, clamor de familiares en busca de desaparecidos* [It's better to know anything, outcry from

family members looking for disappeared people], a text published in La Jornada on Sunday, April 25, 2011, the testimony of Olga Arreola, Juana, Georgina and a forensic chemist

All translations by the translator.

de *Antígona González*

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Esta mañana hay una fila inmensa

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Aquí todos somos invisibles. No tenemos rostro. No tenemos nombre. Aquí nuestro presente parece suspendido.

Voy a despertar en cualquier momento, me digo cuando intento engañarme, cuando no resisto más, cuando a punto del derrumbe.

Pero ese momento nunca llega: lo que ocurre aquí es lo verdaderamente real.

Me dijeron que habían encontrado unos cadáveres, que era una probabilidad. Me dijeron que los iban a traer aquí.

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Vine a San Fernando a buscar a mi hermano.

Vine a San Fernando a buscar a mi padre.

Vine a San Fernando a buscar a mi marido.

Vine a San Fernando a buscar a mi hijo.

Vine con los demás por los cuerpos de los nuestros.

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[Yo creí que iba a entrar en el pueblo de los muertos, mi patria.

Tú eras la patria.

Pero ¿la patria no estaba devastada?

¿No había peste en la ciudad,

no se hacían invocaciones a los dioses inútilmente?

Yo supe que vería una ciudad sitiada.

Supe que Tamaulipas era Tebas
y Creonte este silencio amordazándolo todo.]

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Pero son más los ausentes denunciados que los cuerpos aparecidos.

[Pero no, estoy fuera, afuera.

*Seca la garganta, el corazón hueco
como un cántaro de sed.*

Estoy aquí, en la tiniebla.]

Notas:

[Me dijeron que habían encontrado...] – de Una foto... lo que les quedó de Jaime, publicado en El Universal el viernes 15 de abril de 2011, el testimonio de Guadalupe Hernández

[*Yo creí que iba a entrar...*] – María Zambrano, de *La tumba de Antígona*
[*son más los ausentes denunciados...*] – SanJuana Martínez, de *Vale más saber lo que sea, clamor de familiares en busca de desaparecidos*, de Sanjuana Martínez, texto publicado en La Jornada el domingo 24 de abril de 2011, el testimonio de Olga Arreola, Juana, Georgina y un químico forense

Sara Uribe is from Querétaro, Mexico but has lived in the border state of Tamaulipas since 1996. She has published six books: *Lo que no imaginas*, *Palabras más palabras menos*, *Nunca quise detener el tiempo*, *Goliat*, *Antígona González y Siam*. Her poems have appeared in periodicals and anthologies in Mexico, Peru, Spain, Canada and the United States.

John Pluecker is a writer, translator and co-founder of the language justice and literary experimentation collaborative [Antena](#). His texts have appeared in journals in the U.S. and Mexico, including *The Volta*, *Mandorla*, *Aufgabe*, and *Fence*. His most recent chapbooks are *Killing Current* (Mouthfeel Press, 2012) and *Ioyaiene* (Handmade for Fresh Arts CSA in Houston, Texas, 2014). He is currently at work on the translation of Sara Uribe's *Antígona González*.