

## “Veles e vents” in English Translation

Alisa J. Tigchelaar<sup>1</sup>

**Resumen:** Lo siguiente es una traducción al inglés de “Veles e vents,” un poema escrito por el poeta valenciano Ausiàs March (1400-1459). Entre los primeros en hacerlo, March escribió éste y otros poemas en la más asequible lengua vernácula en vez del occitano del trovador. “Veles e vents” presenta un tema igualmente inmediato, el conflicto de deseo y mortalidad visto a través de los esfuerzos del amor romántico humano. El sujeto pódico sigue su gran deseo contra dos fuerzas opuestas (y yuxtapuestas), una física, y la otra, psicológica: un mar tempestuoso y sus propios miedos y esperanzas. La traducción que se presenta aquí, una de pocas hasta la fecha del poema entero, mantiene las decasyllabas del original, y por lo tanto mucha de la cadencia rítmica que imita tanto el mar como los arrebatos de emoción en el corazón del poeta.

**Palabras clave:** Ausiàs March, “Veles e vents,” traducción al inglés.

**Abstract:** The following is an English translation of “Veles e vents,” a poem written by Valencian poet Ausiàs March (1400-1459). Among the first to do so, March wrote this and other poems in the more accessible local vernacular instead of the troubador’s Occitan. “Veles e vents” presents an equally immediate topic, the conflict of desire and mortality as seen through the strivings of human romantic love. The poetic subject follows his greatest desire against two opposing (and juxtaposed) forces, one physical and the other, psychological: a raging ocean and his own inner fears and hopes. The translation presented here, one of few to date of the entire poem, maintains the decasyllables of the original, and thus much of the rhythmic cadence that mimics both the sea and the surges of emotion in the heart of the poet.

**Keywords:** Ausiàs March, “Veles e vents,” English.

### “Veles e vents”

Veles e vents han mos desigs complirfaent camins dubtosos per la mar:  
mestre i ponent contra d’ells veig armar;  
xaloc, llevant, los deuen subvenir,  
ab llurs amics lo grec e lo migjorn,  
fent humils precis al vent tramuntanal  
que en son bufar los sia parcial  
e que tots cinc complesquen mon retorn.

Bullirà el mar com la cassola en forn,  
mudant color e l’estat natural,  
e mostrarà voler tota res mal  
que sobre si atur un punt al jorn.  
Grans e pocs peixs a recors correran  
e cercaran amagatalls secrets:  
fugint al mar, on són nudrits e fets,  
per gran remei en terra eixiran.

---

<sup>1</sup> Alisa Tigchelaar is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA. Her main scholarly pursuits include studies that show how people construe meaning for themselves and how these understandings help them navigate their lives, as the poet does here.

Los pelegrins tots ensems votaran  
e prometran molts dons de cera fets,  
la gran paor traurà al llum los secrets  
que al confés descuberts no seran,  
e en lo perill no em caureu de l'esment,  
ans votaré al Déu qui ens ha lligats  
de no minvar mes fermes voluntats  
e que tots temps me sereu de present.

Jo tem la mort per no ser-vos absent,  
perquè amor per mort és anul·lats,  
mas jo no creu que mon voler sobrats  
pusca esser per tal departiment.  
Jo só gelós de vostre escàs voler  
que, jo morint, no meta mi en oblit.  
Sol est pensar me tol del món delit,  
car, nós vivint, no creu se pusca fer:

aprés ma mort, d'amar perdau poder  
e sia tost en ira convertit.  
E jo forçat d'aquest món ser eixit,  
tot lo meu mal serà vós no veer.  
Oh Déu! per què terme no hi ha en amor,  
car prop d'aquell jo em trobara tot sol?  
Vostre voler sabera quant me vol,  
tement, fiant de tot l'avenir!

Jo son aquell pus extrem amador  
aprés d'aquell a qui Déu vida tol:  
puix jo son viu, mon cor no mostra dol  
tant com la mort, per sa extrema dolor.  
A bé o mal d'amor jo só dispost,  
mas per mon fat fortuna cas no em porta:  
tot esvetlat, ab desbarrada porta  
me trobarà, faent humil respost.

Jo desig ço que em porà ser gran cost  
i aquest esper de molts mals m'aconhorta;  
a mi no plau ma vida ser estorta  
d'un cas molt fer, qual prec Déu sia tost.

Lladoncs les gents no els calrà donar fe  
al que amor fora mi obrarà:  
lo seu poder en acte es mostrarà  
e los meus dits ab los fets provaré.

Amor, de vós, jo en sent més que no en sé,  
de què la part pitjor me'n romandrà,  
e de vós sap lo qui sens vós està.  
A joc de daus vos acompararé.

### **“Sails and Winds”**

Sails and winds shall fulfill my deep longings,  
forging uncertain paths along the sea.  
Mistral and Ponent rise up against them;  
Sirocco and Levanter must then resist,  
with stalwart allies Gregal and Noonday,  
making humble plea to wind Transmontane  
to lend them favor with her billowing  
that, as one, five might aid my swift return.

The sea will boil like a crock on the flame,  
transforming her natural color and shape;  
she will reveal how she distains all  
that seek her refuge even for a moment.  
Fish both great and humble, left succorless,  
will seek a secret nook or hiding place,  
fleeing what once engendered and protected  
to pursue a desperate landlocked rescue.

With one voice, all seafarers will take oath,  
pledging gifts of supplicatory wax;  
the terror there will unlock the secrets  
until then unconfessed, hence unabsolved.  
Through such peril, you will not leave my thoughts,  
and to the God who joined us, thus my plea:  
that I be steadfast in my firm resolve,  
and you my strong companion all the while.

I fear death for the absence it will bring,  
because love, in death, is perforce annulled;  
but I do not believe this departure  
will reverse my own desperate longing.  
I yearn deeply for your lukewarm heart, and  
pray my death does not cause your disregard.  
Life's joy is banished by this thought alone  
(though while we live I doubt it will happen):

that when I die your love will soon falter  
and all its fury be turned into rage.  
And I, forcibly cast out of this world,  
I will only regret not seeing you.  
My God, were love not infinite, boundless  
I would stand alone at its furthest point!  
Then I would know the measure of your love,  
and trust it all to fate, if fearfully.

No one has loved more ardently than I,  
save any man whose life God took for love;  
I, who live, cannot show the heartfelt pain  
revealed best and alone in lovelorn death.  
Yet I am at love's call, for good or ill,  
and although such fortune ne'er befall me,  
will stand prepared, unbarred doors open wide,  
where I'll be found in humble readiness.

I so want that which will cost me dearest  
that there is solace in waiting alone!  
I am not content to be spared the worst  
--Dear God, it is my life's most fervent plea—  
for then all who watch will see, in action,  
love's universal and external works  
made powerfully manifest in me,  
as these many words I confirm with deeds.

Love, in you, feeling undermines thought,  
so that to me falls the worst of all lots:  
as with a bet at any gaming table,  
discernment is for those not so enticed.

Recebido para publicação em 02-08-14; aceito em 16-09-14