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Tracing and memorializing Neruda: The Uruguay connections¹

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This essay considers those aspects of the literary/cultural afterlife of Pablo Neruda which primarily had their origins in Neruda's sojourns in Uruguay in the 1950s but which developed after Neruda's death in 1973. In general terms, I contend that the posthumous events and phenomena pertaining in some way to the Neruda life and *oeuvre* deserve scholarly attention *per se*. I would go further and suggest that such posthumous phenomena often now act as a kind of refractory mirror for current generations in so far as the Neruda life and *oeuvre* is concerned. They function as prisms through which new generations 'experience' Neruda.

¹ The author acknowledges the assistance in 2015 of the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, Santiago in accessing a copy from the Library's collection of the 2002 facsimile edition of Oda a las flores de Datitla published by Corporación Sintyses, Santiago. For various reasons the original 1956 floral chapbook album produced by Pablo Neruda and Matilde Urrutia was not available to the author at the time of his visit to Uruguay in 2015. He has, however, used as a reference the 2002 facsimile edition held by the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile which reproduced the totality of the 1956 unpublished floral chapbook discussed in the essay. The author also acknowledges the assistance of Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón of the Museo Paseo Neruda in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in providing information about the museum's development and activities. He acknowledges the initial suggestions by Dr. Stephen Gregory of Montevideo which first drew attention to some of the Uruguayan connections with the Neruda life story, and his interest and that of his wife, Lilian Pombo, in assisting with some of the visits made whilst the author was in Uruguay in 2015. Associate Professor Estela Valverde of Macquarie University, Sydney, has supported the author's research whilst at Macquarie University. The author states his appreciation of the hospitality shown by those school representatives and staff present when the author made a short visit in 2015 to the Colegio y Liceo Pablo Neruda in Atlántida. Finally, the author pays his respects to the memory of Ramiro Insunza Figueroa who died in 2011.

Integrally linked here are the processes of memorializing Neruda, whether they be physical memorials or more ephemeral forms such as festivals, exhibitions or performances. They can also privilege certain aspects of the Neruda literary output as particular works or extracts of the total Neruda works are presented in association with such memorializing processes or events. Publications which have some connections to the Neruda life and oewre but have entered the public domain after Neruda's death quite often exhibit new elements as material that may have been largely in the private or domestic Nerudian domain now enters a more public domain and via new contextual frameworks that were not specifically evident or present during Neruda's lifetime. In broader terms, we are accustomed to seeing the growth of organizations established as 'flame-carriers' for deceased, well-known writers, such as Pablo Neruda was in his lifetime, and here one thinks of the Fundación Pablo Neruda, established in the 1980s under the provisions of the last testament and will of Neruda's last wife, Matilde Urrutia. The Fundación has overseen the conversion of some of the residences in Chile Neruda used in his lifetime into casas museo, namely the house at Isla Negra, La Chascona in Santiago and La Sebastiana in Valparaíso. These now attract annually hundreds of thousands of domestic Chilean and overseas visitors. Once semi-private domestic spaces become public domains in many new ways in the posthumous era.

In Uruguay and in somewhat different circumstances the Museo Paseo Neruda-also known as Museo Paseo de Neruda-has taken on the task of keeping the life and works of Neruda in the public gaze. In the latter part of this essay we shall examine the development and roles of this museum, now located at Punta del Este, Uruguay. However, let us first encounter some of the intriguing ways in which Neruda's links to Uruguay from the 1950s have been memorialized and the background events that gave rise to these, even if the precise forms in which such memorialization would take place could not have been foreseen during the lifetime of the historical Neruda. Indeed, beneath the shade of pine and eucalyptus trees growing alongside the Rambla Presidente Tomás Berreta which runs parallel to the Playa La Mansa section of the northern shores of the vast Río de la Plata estuary, the visitor to the balneario or seaside resort town of Atlântida in Uruguay may chance upon a cement obelisk with black granite engravings inset on both sides and located a little distance from the roadway itself. The promenade dates from around the time when the town of Atlantida was established (1911) to cater mainly to well-to-do citizens in the Uruguayan capital city of Montevideo, which lies 45 kilometres to the south west. In 1874 the railway had been extended from Montevideo to this Uruguayan coastal region and by 1908 a highway, then National Route 5, had been constructed from Montevideo, making the locality accessible to those members of professional classes in Montevideo wanting to access subdivided land now being offered for sale for construction of vacation houses (chalets) in easy reach of the shoreline. Just before Atlántida's establishment in 1911 and afterwards, there were massive plantings of overseas tree species to build up the solidity of the shore line and nearby hinterland, utilizing Australian eucalypts and pine species from North America, Europe and Australian regions.

On the north-western side of the obelisk facing towards the town there is an engraving of the Neruda emblem, as adopted in Chile by the Fundación Pablo Neruda after Neruda's death. This well-known symbol is itself a replica of the hollow copper sphere featuring the engraved outlines of a fish through the centre of the metal sculpture and set up by Pablo Neruda in the grounds of his house in Isla Negra near the Pacific Ocean shoreline. The sculpture is still visible today to the many thousands of visitors who visit the *casa museo* at Isla Negra. Now, one presumes, the Fundación Pablo Neruda in Chile had agreed to the use of this symbol as part of the obelisk commemorating Neruda that is placed at Atlántida near the shore line that faces the Atlantic Ocean.

Beneath the engraved Neruda symbol on this obelisk in Uruguay are the words "Oda a Datitla." If the visitor has glimpsed the Neruda symbol and understands that this is a representation of the Chilean poet, it will be surmised that in this locality there is a connection between the poet and the place itself. Indeed, there is. For instance, just across the Rambla promenade on the town-side there is a residence which also displays (2015) the word "Datitla" on a large metal sign in the yard in front of the dwelling. The present-day owners of the bungalow located here have apparently elected to display this name for their property which is now periodically used as lodgings for tourists and holiday-makers who may be attracted by both the location close to the estuary beach (Playa La Mansa) a short distance away and because of the historical associations with the Neruda sojourn in Uruguay in the 1950s.

Indeed, in 1952 Neruda and his then-clandestine lover and later third wife, Matilde Urrutia, had first stayed in the bungalow at the invitation of its owner Alberto Mántaras Roge, and his wife Olga, when Neruda was *en route* to Chile from European exile. Initially, in referring to his poetry written in this period and then more generally in correspondence, Neruda began to adopt the word "Datitla" to refer to the locality; both the actual town, Atlántida, and within this, to the immediate area and its environs which he shared with Matilde. It was

this anagram from the locality name Atlántida, which Neruda constructed to represent in a somewhat mysterious way a place that, in day-to-day terms, was 'theirs' during their sojourn. It also represented the poet's imagined creative space at the time. Thus, without naming the precise locality in which he was now sojourning, he could also use this term in a way that was puzzling to most others, bearing in mind that he was still formally married to his second wife, Delia del Carril, in Chile. It has been this anagram which has served posthumously to delineate this phase of Neruda's life and indeed the Neruda traces in this very location alongside the La Plata estuary shoreline.

However, the reference not just to 'Datitla,' but also the idea of "Oda a Datitla" on the obelisk can be interpreted in various ways. For example, it may be interpreted as both present-day homage to the locality by those erecting the obelisk, and to the poet himself and his associations with Atlántida. It draws attention in the poetic register to the craft of Neruda just as much as to the locality through the focus on Neruda's poem, "Oda a las flores de Datitla." Indeed, if the visitor glances at the further engravings on the obelisk it will be evident that there is reproduced here an extract of lines from within the last section of the Neruda poem:

...Arenas de Datitla! junto al solemne estuario de la Plata en las primeras olas del gris Atlántico... (Neruda 1956)

The originators of the present-day obelisk have used this extract from Neruda's ode to draw attention to the location as being on the shores of the Río de la Plata estuary. The version of Neruda's poem inscribed on the obelisk corresponds to that in the 1956 chapbook which we shall discuss shortly. However, it appears that when it came to publication in book form—in Neruda's 1957 Tercer Libro de las Odas collection—Neruda altered the words "solemne estuario" to "abierto estuario" for reasons that are not known, but may better reflect the idea that the estuary is neither river nor ocean in the full sense, but an expanse of water intermediate to both. Below the extract from the Neruda ode is the symbol of Canelones, the Uruguayan Department in which the town of Atlántida is situated, with the accompanying words, Camara de Turismo de Camelones (CTC), indicating that the Chamber of Tourism of the Department of Canelones has thus taken the step of wishing to be associated with erection of the obelisk, no doubt in the belief that it could well be of interest to tourists visiting

the area and indeed in encouraging those with interest in the Neruda life and works to see this area of Uruguay in that context.

Possibly it was also an indication in the setting of the centenary of the establishment of Atlántida (2011) that it was time to leave aside any misgivings that may have existed in parts of the local community that by commemorating the Neruda sojourn in Uruguay it was commemorating the poet's clandestine love affair with his then-mistress. Indeed, publications in that anniversary year, such as that by Federico Bonsignore Caro (2011) and others, provide a kind of sanctioning acknowledgement that the Neruda sojourns in the 1950s should be regarded as part of the historical story of Atlántida's development from its establishment in 1911 and growth as a *balneario*.

On the other side of the obelisk and directly facing the shoreline are the words:

Bajo estos pinos el poeta chileno Pablo Neruda (12/7/1904 23/9/1973) se inspirió para escribir muchos de sus poemas, entre ellos "Oda a Datitla"



Obelisk dedicated to Neruda in the Comuna Canaria in Atlántida, Uruguay

Neruda's links with the locality are immediately evident through the use of the words, "Bajo estos pinos." These words are a variation of the actual words

of the Neruda poem, in that "los pinos" has been altered to become "estos pinos" on the obelisk. This association between 'place' as it is now, and the Neruda sojourn, is also couched in terms that it was a place for poetic inspiration, even if there is no reference to the poet's Nobel winning status as it is presumably assumed that any visitor will know this. Rather, the wording focuses on the fact that he is a foreigner, i.e.—Chilean, and hence, not Uruguayan. The visitor is also directed to the canopy of pines (and also eucalypts) which surround the actual location of the obelisk. Thus, it is not hard to imagine Neruda in this very spot, more than sixty years ago. However, the reference on the obelisk to "Oda a Datitla" solely refers to the imagined locality per se, and not to the longer title Neruda used for this particular poem. Even so, the wording on the obelisk does not specify the poems so inspired, but simply that they were many. Below these words is engraved an outline of Neruda's head profile with his trademark beret and the insignia of the local district or comuna in which the town of Atlántida is situated, Comuna Canaria, indicating local participation in the establishment of this memorializing space, quite apart from the involvement of the broader Department-wide Chamber of Tourism.

To uncover more of the background to the "Datitla" references in the present-day obelisk that now creates visual cues about the locality's associations with the life and works of the Chilean poet in this Latin American country situated across the Andes we need to retrace Neruda's steps as he journeyed with Matilde Urrutia from France by steamer in 1952 at the end of his three-year exile from Chile, including when the couple had stayed together on the island of Capri in Italy. They travelled by the transatlantic liner Giulio Cesare from Cannes, bound for Montevideo, and Neruda's eventual return to Chile. On board were Uruguayan architect and sometime cinematographer, Alberto Mántaras, and his wife Olga, who had been visiting Europe, including attendance at a film festival in Barcelona. The two couples apparently developed an amicable understanding during the voyage. Just before the ship reached Montevideo Neruda had sought advice from his shipboard companion, Alberto, if there might be some location in Uruguay where he could spend time with Matilde before his eventual return to Chile. Indeed, in an explanatory note titled "¡¡Porque Yo!! El Origen de una Amistad" (Mántaras 2002), Alberto Mántaras wrote after Neruda's death, it should be pointed out, in the following terms:

> Antes del desembarco en Montevideo Pablo me pidió si le podía conseguir un sitio tranquilo en la costa uruguaya para encontrarse con Matilde con discreción, sin que supiera la prensa y también sus amigos

uruguayos. Yo tenía un chalet en "Atlántida", frente el mar sereno y sobre la avenida de las palmeras (Rambla) y por supuesto, se lo ofrece...

It should be noted here that Mántaras refers here to the *rambla* on which his chalet was located and that it was an "avenue of palms." The palms are still visible in present-day Atlántida on the side of the *rambla* adjacent to the town. The chalet he refers to was not on the same scale as the earlier two to three-story chalets built in the years immediately after the establishment of Atlántida in 1911, but rather was a single-story bungalow, namely that which now displays the name Datitla in the grounds of the present-day property referred to previously. However, its function as a holiday and weekend retreat in the 1950s was the essentially the same as the larger, double-story dwellings constructed in the same promenade and called 'chalets.' As González Bo (2011 104), notes, the Mantáras 'chalet' is described as having three bedrooms and a large dining room with fireplace, in this single-story dwelling.

Back in 1952 the Giulio Cesare duly arrived in Montevideo. Neruda did not directly travel directly onwards to Santiago, nor Matilde to go on immediately to stay in Buenos Aires and avoid the general more public media and other attention their clandestine relationship might attract. Rather they remained in the Mántaras holiday dwelling in Atlántida, even if Chilean friends and political comrades in Santiago grew increasingly disconcerted by Neruda's apparent reluctance to journey onwards to the Chilean capital and more public homecoming events. Indeed, there had been conflicting reports in the Chilean capital about when Neruda might be expected back in Chile. Finally, a group of political colleagues travelled to Montevideo to accompany Neruda back to Chile, including Communist Party representative and long-time friend, Sergio Insunza, whose architect son, Ramiro Insunza Figueroa, in 1972-3 would assist Neruda in the design and initial construction of the (never-completed) house (La Manquel) in the Santiago hills, as well as take a major role in the publication in 2002 of the facsimile folio edition of the Oda a las Flores de Datitla which we shall shortly discuss.

Eventually, on 12 August 1952 Neruda did travel alone back to Santiago leaving Matilde in Uruguay and the later staying also in Buenos Aires. In January 1953 Neruda and Matilde again stayed in the Mántaras dwelling at Atlántida, and as Mántaras later recounted, Neruda had, by then, freely adopted the nomenclature of the Datitla anagram when making any reference to his whereabouts in Uruguay: "Pasaron un mes de enero de 1953 juntos y felices,

compuso varias de sus "odas" y las firmaba ("Datitla Uruguay"), letras de "Atlántida", que por motivos obvios no lo podía nombrar" (Mántaras 2002).

We have already noted from the wording on the side of the Atlántida obelisk commemorating Neruda's sojourn where the designers of the obelisk utilize a variation of the first words of the opening phrase from "Oda a las flores de Datitla." The poem's opening lines are:

Bajo los pinos la tierra prepara pequeñas cosas puras: hierbas delgadas desde cuyos hilos se suspenden minúsculos faroles, cápsulas misteriosas llenos de aire perdido, y es otra allí la sombra, filtrada y floreada, largas agujas verdes esparcidas por el viento que ataca y desordena el pelo de los pinos... (Neruda 2013, 285)

As previously mentioned, this poem made its first appearance in the unpublished collection Neruda prepared as a poetic accompaniment to a selection, in pressed form, of flowers, grasses and tree leaves which Matilde had, either in Neruda's company or perhaps mostly when alone at Atlántida, collected from the local area on her walks around the locality. These floral items were later attached to large sheets of paper, giving preference, it seems, to the ways in which they might blend aesthetically with one another on the page. There seems to have been no attempt by either Matilde or Neruda to differentiate in regards to the floral and leaf items collected between species with origins from overseas, such as those larger tree species introduced into the Atlántida area in the early decades of the 20th century, and those species native to Uruguay and nearby regions in Brazil or Argentina, wherein most grasses, smaller shrubs and flowers species would have been native to the region. These flowers, grasses and leaves were now pressed into service in this botanical tribute to the couple's clandestine love. Neruda had referred in his poem, "Oda a las flores de Datitla", to some common or generic names for such in his poem, often with quite striking allusions to their colors and visual and other characteristics such as 'feel' when handled. By 1956 Matilde and Neruda had completed this assemblage of some of the leaves, pressed flowers and grasses: they put together in some twenty pages (or leaves) some of these items from their personal herbarium into what might best be described as a kind of floral chapbook album.



Image 1: 2002 facsimile edition of the 1956 'Oda a las flores de Datitla'

This chapbook thus displays the words of Neruda's poem, "Oda a las flores de Datilta." The poem's title is also the title of the chapbook and the title is set out on the cover in dark red with black ink outline upon the painted (light reddish water color) image of a leaf which is outlined in black ink but with interior veins of the painted leaf highlighted with white paint or ink. The leaf so illustrated by Neruda appears (to the present author) to be a variety of an Australia-derived eucalyptus species, seeds and cuttings for which were planted in and around Atlántida from 1908. Below this image of the leaf are the words "Pablo Neruda." We can then note the reference to the lines, "Arenas de Datitla! junto al solemne estuario de La Plata, en las primeras olas del gris Atlántico," which we can recognize from the usage in the modern-day obelisk at Atlántida. There follows overleaf an illustrated page featuring a photo of a small leaf and words in brownish-red pencil "Oda a las flores de Datilta," followed by the words "versos de Pablo Neruda" and below this, "herbario de Matilde." Thus, the couple project how they wish to attribute the respective responsibilities for the production. A dedication follows which reads "Dedicados a Olga y Alberto Mántaras," as well as a further set of wording which links the Mántaras couple to the imagined place Neruda has called Datitla: "A los Olgobertos que también son plantas de Datitla," written in white on a blue background.



Image 2

We can now note in Neruda's hand-writing in red crayon the words of the complete poem "Oda a las flores de Datitla" which accompanies, on each page of the chapbook, a selection of unidentified (by Neruda) pressed and dried grasses, flowers and leaves. It is not clear whether Neruda first composed the poem and then assembled the herbarium extract but close examination of the reproduction of the chapbook items and the layout of section of the ode in the chapbook, suggest to the present writer that the chapbook preparation and the version here of the poem were composed almost simultaneously. At one point Neruda crosses out a word and alters it in situ. The whole poem in Neruda's handwriting is set out over various pages although at times some phrases of the poem are repeated and placed next to the pressed floral and leaf items on another page too. For example, at one point pressed items such as flaxes and grasses collected from around Atlántida are set alongside words from the poem in Neruda's handwriting: "espadañas, espigas, matorrales." On another page a line from the poem, "hierbas afraneladas y plateadas con suavidad de guantes," is so placed as if to crown and arc the pressed collected specimens of a slender grass and a leaf that clearly has a flannel-like texture. This 1956 version of the poem, however, differs from the version in Neruda's 1957 collection Tercer Libro de las Odas in that here the four nouns "flora," "mar," "aire" and "silencio" in the 1956 version poem, are not capitalized. The 1956 version of the poem written out in the chapbook is completed with the addition of Neruda's referencing of the time and place of composition of the poem, namely with the words "Datitla 9 de Noviembre 1956 Pablo Neruda." On the opposite page are words, "hirsuto pabellones de acacia oscura y flor color de vino," surrounded on the page by small examples of these pressed floral items, and other pressed flower examples, some attached to a stalk and others separate as if in orbit.



Image 3

Yet the history of the floral chapbook after Neruda's death moves us beyond the realms of the bilateral relationships in the realm of private sphere between the Mántaras couple—to whom the book is dedicated—and Neruda and Matilde, to the more public domain, even if we can note that in 1968 it appears Mántaras approached Neruda to suggest that the chapbook be published for a wider readership. Neruda had apparently agreed to this but nothing was to come of the proposal during his lifetime. After Neruda's death in 1973 and with the belief that the illustrated chapbook deserved a wider readership, Mantáras made initial contact with Angel Rama, who was to progress the project but tragically died in a plane crash. Mantáras then turned to Sergio Insunza's son, Ramiro, in Santiago who, like Mántaras, was also an architect by profession. Mántaras even travelled to Santiago in 1992 to hand over the herbarium collection with Neruda's inscriptions and the words of the poem "Oda a las flores de Datiltla." However, a further decade was to pass before publication of a facsimile edition of the Neruda chapbook with expanded references and contextual material including details of

Mántaras's own connections with the story of Neruda's sojourns in Uruguay in the 1950s. Indeed, it was only in 2002 that a folio size album, *Oda a las flores de Datila*, was published in Santiago in an edition of 1500 copies by Corporación Sintesys, a Santiago-based company with various scientific and specialist technical publication interests.

This new folio edition—or special edition of the original 1956 chapbook—has had some remarkable provenances and to a considerable extent the story of this publication and its contents acts in many ways acts a kind of perpetual thread of the links between the historical Neruda and developments after his death. The 2002 edition contains the facsimiles of the contents of the 1956 chapbook with its 20 unnumbered pages, or leaves to be more precise, which Neruda and Matilde had initially developed from the overall assemblage of botanical specimens. However, it now supplemented this with pages showing reproductions of correspondence in the 1990s between Mántaras and Ramiro Insunza, son of Sergio Insunza, as well as explanations as far as possible of the botanical nomenclature of the dried flower and tree leaves inset in the original chapbook produced by Neruda for Mántaras and his wife in 1956. The 2002 publication also added a third dimension; that of the Corporación Sintesys's Leonardo Lavendaras, and the younger Insunza, Ramiro, to whom, in 1993, Mántaras had entrusted the reproduction. The publication details are given as: "Idea original: Pablo Neruda-Alberto Mántaras" and "Responsables de Edición: Ramiro Insunza, Leonardo Lavendaras. Edición: Corporación Sintesys, Las Dalias 2893, Santiago," with details of graphic and photographic production also mentioned. Ramiro Insunza is described in the 2002 publication as "ahijado de Neruda" or a kind of godson, and as mentioned previously, it was he who had worked with Neruda to design a house in the Santiago hills which would never be completed due to Neruda's death in 1973.

In their initial statement on the inside front cover of the 2002 publication co-editors Ramiro Insunza and Leonardo Lavendaras write that this book consists of:

Un herbario que tiene una larga historia, hecho y manuscrito por Pablo Neruda y Matilde en los años de su amor clandestino. Esta obra fue regalada a Alberto Mántaras, amigo de Pablo, en agradecimento a la hospitalidad que recibieron en la casa de aquél, en el balneario Atlántida en el Uruguay (1953-1956). (Neruda, eds. Insunza and Lavendaras, 2002)

A Prologue by the Corporación Sintesys outlines the publishers' suggestion that there is a kind of new paradigm in this fusion of "Science and Art" and of "Poetry and Art." Then follows an outline of what is called "Poética

de los Estuarios," being a history of the formation of this book. This section outlines the process by which Ramiro Insunza had become involved with the project and its origins in Neruda's sojourns by the shores of the La Plata river estuary. Publication in conjunction with Corporación Sintesys is portrayed as a logical consequence of steps taken in 1970 by his father, Sergio Insunza, who had helped Neruda set out his ideas for Fundación Cantalao, which would merge the propagation of the arts, science and politics. Clearly Ramiro Insunza, his son, had a view that the herbarium facsimile publication could be seen in part as linked to Neruda's ideas about a Fundación Cantalao; as a kind of scientific artistic project.

In the concluding leaves of the 2002 publication there are other items of interest. The first is the reproduction of the statement, as mentioned previously, and written by Mántaras: "¡¡Porque Yo!! El Origen de una Amistad." Reproductions of four hand-written small note-pad size pages of notes are set out against a backdrop of botanical and travel-boat imagery in which Mántaras sets out the reasons for "El origen de una Amistad." There are also copies of Mántaras's correspondence with Ramiro Insunza about the project. These consist of a note by Alberto Mántaras dated 4 Feb 1993 in which he thanks Ramiro for his interest in the project of seeing the Herbarium chapbook published (two letters), and two further notes dated 30 August 1993 and 12 January 1994, the last shortly before Mántaras's death that year.

There are also plates of examples of the 1956 herbarium plant items which are now, as far as possible, botanically identified; "El Herbario y la Botánica—Sobre los Ejemplos de Este Herbario." Here the 2002 compilers suggest that the herbarium was not developed with a strictly botanical focus in mind although it certainly had something in common with the aesthetic spirit or inclination of those who dedicated themselves to and cultivated this ancient practice. They suggest that, notwithstanding this, it was now appropriate to include in the new volume botanical attributions for each floral example or specimen which makes up the collection of "herborizados versos," even though it had not always been possible (2002) to give accurate botanic attribution in all cases.

The first pressed leaf examples in the actual herbarium collection now reproduced in the facsimile edition consist of small leaves collected by Matilde but these were not yet able to be identified for the 2002 publication. However, the second type of leaf collected by Matilde and then pressed into the chapbook page is now identified as *Eucalyptus l'herit*, which is a species that has its origins in Australia. More commonly known outside Uruguay as *eucalyptus obliqua l'herit*, it

takes its name after the French botanist, Charles L'Heritier (1746-1800), who first named the genus *encalytptus in* 1788 after his examination of specimens, at Kew Gardens, England brought back by the expeditions to the South Pacific Ocean led by English naval officer, Captain James Cook. It also seems probable (to the author) that the eucalyptus leaf from Atlántida which found its way into the Neruda chapbook in 1956 was derived from the seeds propagated in Uruguay by Punta del Este-based Antonio Lussich, who, in 1896, first experimented with the growing from seed Australian and United States-derived tree species that would appear ideal for coastland stabilization and/or plantation planting such as occurred in 1908-13 in and around Atlántida. Even today at the Arboretum Lussich at Punta del Este to the north of Atlántida, about 25% of the tree species growing there are derived from seeds of species originally from Australia and its environs.

Interestingly, we can note that in his poem "Oda a las flores de Datitla" Neruda refers to "miles de copas mínimas el eucaliptus deja caer." This would accord also with the growth by the early 1950s of trees of the eucalyptus genus in the Atlántida area and still extant today quite close to the obelisk mentioned earlier in this chapter, even if most of the remainder of specimens in the Neruda chapbook reproduced in the 2002 publication are indigenous to the local Uruguay, Brazil and Northern Argentinian areas, as might be expected. Yet the reference in the ode to acacias—"hirsutos pabellones de acacia oscuro"—suggests to the current author that the foliage noted by Neruda in his ode, and perhaps also collected by Matilde, was the flower from the tree commonly known in the southern regions of Latin America as acacia caven (ie. native to Uruguay, Chile and Argentina) and not from not an Australian-derived acacia species, given the "wiry" nature of the foliage. Indeed, González Bo (2011, 219) lists an acacia caven, or its common (vulgar) name Espinillo, as growing in current-day Atlántida in the Plaza de los Escolares.

However, the 2002 publication—and the contents of the 1956 chapbook therein showing foliage, grasses and leaves collected in and around Atlántida—has no examples of the "pine fronds" to which Neruda refers to in his poem. It is likely that the variety of pine that Neruda perhaps had in mind when he wrote the poem can be sourced to the plantings of European or North American pine varieties in the 1908-1913 period in and around Atlántida, rather than to any Australian variety, or even Uruguayan native species. Norfolk Island pines, *Araucaria Excelsa*, originally from an island adjacent to the Australian mainland, are recorded by González Bo (2011, 245) as being planted in 1913 in front of the

(former) Atlántida Hotel. There is also the Australia-derived *Araucaria bidwilli* still extant at Avenida Circunvalación in Atlántida, even if it is likely to have been Europe or North America-derived pine species as a part of the 1908-13 plantings around Atlántida that is the species of pine Neruda mentions in his poem, and which have found their way into the wording on the obelisk mentioned earlier.

Thus, what we do have before us is the development of Neruda's anagram, "Datilta" into a variety of new forms of expression—as a word in a poem—extracts of which are now part of the visual landscape in modern-day Atlántida in the commemorating words on the obelisk, and as part of the title of the floral chapbook of the herbarium composed in 1956 by Matilde Urrutia and Pablo Neruda as a kind of floral tribute to place and relationships, not just theirs but importantly, to their Uruguayan ship-board companions of that voyage of 1952. This conversion of Neruda's "Datitla" into the symbolism of the floral herbarium that Matilde constructs and which Neruda accompanies with words and painted assemblages of floral items, and which Alberto Mántaras had struggled to make available to the wider world after Neruda's death, was finally achieved in 2002, eight years after his own passing in Uruguay in late 1994.

Yet it was not just Mántaras's struggles to achieve wider publication of the herbarium book. It was also a tale of the difficulties the younger Insunza felt he encountered in seeking just such publication. In an article dated 27 October 2002 in Diario Los Andes (Mendoza, Argentina), Ramiro Insunza was quoted speaking about his frustrations in getting the project to completion. He said he had tried to interest the Fundación Pablo Neruda in Santiago in the project, but the Fundación had reportedly decided not to take it on as a publication "as the poem, 'Oda a las flores de Datitla,' had already earlier found publication in 1957" i.e.—in the Neruda collection Tercero Libro de Odas Elementales. However, as Ramiro Insunza saw it, the problem was more that such publication would be considered to celebrate "clandestine love": "nadie quiso antes editar una obra que resulta un canto al amor clandestino." Whether that was exactly the case is unclear, as Ramiro Insunza had also sought to also link the Neruda chapbook reproduction with publication of some of his own writings mentioning Neruda, from the troubled times in 1973. One could also note that the Fundación had itself been established as a legal entity under provisions of the last testament and will of Matilde Urrutia herself, even if it is unclear whether or not in 2002 the Fundación would have preferred to not be associated with a publication that had a specific focus on the earlier period of her relationship with Neruda. Nevertheless, one suspects that Ramiro Insunza would have been pleased that in the 2002 Corporación Sintyses publication there is mention of how the reproduction of the herbarium book might be linked to the ideas of a Fundación Cantalao, which his own father, Sergio Insunza, had started to draw up with Neruda, but never completed to legal finality. Yet the irony does not rest there. Indeed, as the 2002 publication began to reach finality a joint agreement between the Corporación and the Fundación Delia del Carril was announced as taking effect on 22 April 2002. The details of the Agreement are not mentioned in the 2002 book publication but it is intriguing to note that, according to the book's notes in its "Poética de los estuarios" segment mentioned previously, the 2002 publication might not have seen the light of day in its crucial last stages without a degree of support—whether financial or otherwise is not clear—from a Foundation set up to commemorate the life and work of Neruda's second wife, Delia del Carril!

"Oda a las flores de Datitla" is but one of twenty-eight (28) poems written by Neruda and considered by latter-day Uruguayan cultural pioneer Selva Santurión to have Uruguayan resonances. As Santurión explained in 2014 in a Uruguayan press article, "Neruda es un poeta del mundo que tiene 28 poemas dedicados a Uruguay, referiéndose a nuestros paisajes" (El País (Montevideo), September 2014, 8). On many other occasions over the last twenty or so years Santurión has drawn attention to the ways in which she considers Neruda is "a poet of the world," but whose works have provided an opportunity to elucidate the Uruguayan facets of Neruda's life story. She has noted the ways in which Neruda's life and work may provide a leit-motif for cultural and educational outreach in Uruguay. Indeed, in email communications (October 2013) to the present author she wrote, inter alia:

Desde 1998 la tarea de difundir las estadías del poeta en Uruguay se amplió, para incluir un mensaje del resguardo de la memoria local, convirtiéndonos en un pequeño Centro Cultural, dándole relevancia a temas como la inmigración y emigración in nuestro país...cada tema que abrazamos, digamos un tema por año, relacionan a nuestra comunididad con Neruda...

Indeed, the history of the Museo Paseo Neruda—now in the Uruguayan coastal city of Punta del Este, although first located in 1998 in Atlántida—is inseparable from the personal stories of museum founders, Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenon. Santurión had departed Uruguay in the 1970s in the wake of the 1973 military coup. She returned to Uruguay in 1990 after a long period in exile in the United Kingdom during which time she had worked at times as a teacher, having trained in this field initially in Uruguay. With Miguel Quenón, after his

thirty-year career in the field of theatre direction in Italy and in Europe, Santurión set about operating a restaurant and hotel, Hostería Fortín, at the location of Fortín de Santa Rosa, which is an old Spanish colonial era strongpoint, now located at Avenida Santa Rosa and Calle 2 to the north of the main Atlántida township area. It was during this period that they became particularly intrigued by the traces of, and references to, Neruda's historical links with Uruguay through his various sojourns in the country.

As Selva Santurión has explained in the 2014 *El País* (Uruguay) supplement mentioned, the couple have dedicated an important part of their lives in closely investigating and following in the footsteps of the Chilean poet in the Uruguayan coastal regions; "a desentrañar y rastrear el paso del poeta chileno por las costas orientales." Thus, she also explains (2014 8):

Pablo Neruda se nos adentró en la piel, y nos empujó junto con el viento que sopla en nuestras costas, hasta que, ese material, esos poemas y anécdotas que nunca se agotan, encuentran su primero lugar en una casona en Atlántida, y luego en otra casona cerca del Puerto de Punta del Este, convertido gracias al esfuerzo mancomunicado de muchos en el Museo Paseo de Neruda...

The history, to date, of the Museo Paseo Neruda may be divided into three stages. The initial stage from the early 1990s onwards involved both the gradual accumulation of material related to Neruda and Uruguay and the search for a suitable site to house and display the items so collected. It was intended to offer exhibitions and other activities in line with the objectives of acquainting both the Uruguayan public-at-large and visiting domestic and foreign tourists with a perspective on Neruda both as a statement about the contribution of the Chilean poet, but also more broadly as a means of fostering new and innovative ideas about literature and society. As Selva Santurión explained in interview with the present author (April 2015), after the death of Alberto Mántaras in 1994 and during the couple's explorations into the Uruguayan traces of the Neruda presence in Uruguay, contact was made with María Lires Laureiro, the second wife of Mántaras, to clarify the nature and extent of the Neruda-related holdings that Mántaras had bequeathed to her. Maria Lires Laureiro made available to Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón, as Directors of the proposed Neruda museum, material bequeathed by Alberto Mántaras so that it could be displayed in the proposed museum with exhibition facilities once suitable premises were found and converted for such usage. This arrangement included aspects of the rights to the original botanical items which comprised the herbarium that Matilde Urrutia and Pablo Neruda had assembled during their stays in Uruguay from 1952 to

1956. Other material from the Mántaras family related to Alberto and Olga Mántaras's twenty-plus year association with Pablo Neruda and Matilde Urrutia was also made available to assist in the establishment of a comprehensive coverage of the materials that was associated with Neruda and Matilde's various periods of stay in Uruguay, and Neruda's links with Uruguay more generally.

The search for suitable premises led Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón to the chalet built in 1911 for Dr Coppola, at the corner of the Rambla La Mansa (now also known as Rambla Tomás Berreta) and Calle No. 10 across from the beachside. Indeed, Dr. Coppola had been one of the first to acquire land after the initial sub-division along the Playa La Mansa road as a member of the society known as la Sociedad Anónima Territorial Uruguaya (Bonsignore Caro 2011, 258). The building had been used for a variety of purposes after Dr Coppola's death, but by 1998 Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón secured use of the upper floors for museum exhibits, specifically related to the Neruda themes. The museum to commemorate Neruda's Uruguayan sojourns and his life and works more generally opened its doors in 1998 (Bonsignore Caro 2011, 146). On the uppermost (or third) level of the chalet it was soon possible to watch two short documentary films Mántaras had made and which included Neruda speaking as Mántaras was filming during one of Neruda's sojourns in Uruguay. In one of the two rooms on the second floor of the chalet was a photographic exhibition by Sara del Carmen Facío featuring Neruda in Isla Negra in Chile. On display in the other room of the erstwhile chalet was an exhibition featuring items dedicated to Neruda's stay in Alberto Mántaras' house in Atlántida, with objects that had belonged to the poet, such as manuscripts, photographs, and most importantly, some items from the herbarium which Matilde and Neruda had assembled (2011, 146). However, it should also be noted that most of the items directly linked to the Oda a las flores de Datitla chapbook discussed earlier would not yet have been returned to Uruguay as Ramiro Insunza had not finalized the production of the facsimile folio copy edition (late in 2002). Even after the 2002 publication, some time elapsed before the museum directors in Atlántida in Uruguay could secure the return by Ramiro Insunza in Chile of the 1956 chapbook produced by Neruda and Matilde so they could complete the collation of all items linked to the herbarium process.

After ten years in Atlántida and for a variety of reasons, the two Neruda Museum directors decided to re-locate the museum's operations to Altos de Puerto, Punta del Este, the larger tourist center to the northeast of Atlántida, in the Department of Maldonado. In this new setting in Punta del Este the whole of

the building proposed for the museum and its immediate surrounds at the location of Calle Virazón y Las Salinas, Altos del Puerto, in Punta del Este, could be utilized in a ground floor setting, with space for construction of a small theatre area at the rear. The museum now also adopted a policy of only opening for general exhibition activities in high tourist season times—from September to end April—as it was likely to benefit from the higher international profile of Punta del Este as a Uruguayan destination for both domestic and foreign tourists. The Museo Paseo Neruda at its new location in Punta del Este offered its first series of exhibitions and activities at this site from 20 September to 30 November 2008. The theme for the 2008 series of program activities was "Neruda y nuestro Mar." The museum directors explained in publicity about the exhibition and activities that their overarching principles for this exhibition was one which was guided by the poetics of Neruda—'la poética nerudiana'—and the opening exhibition featured the idea that the sea presents itself as the driver of progress, of the resort town (balneario) and of the Department of Maldonado. Sponsors for the 2008 program of the museum included the Department of Maldonado, the Embassy of Chile, the Municipal Authority of Maldonado, and the Uruguayan Ministry of Education and Culture. Activities at the museum ranged across genres—dance, painting, theatre, films, conferences, literary events, testimonies, and books launches, all linked in some way to the theme of the sea. A session of dance performances interpreted and was inspired by the Neruda poem, "Oda al Mar". In another session, Selva Santurión discussed Neruda's historical connections with Punta del Este, and the poetry that resulted from this. In a further session, she explored Neruda's involvement in the 'Winnipeg' boat voyage bringing refugees from the Spanish Civil War to new homelands in Chile and other Latin American countries.

In 2013 the theme for the museum's series of events was aligned more closely to the chronology of the life of the historical Neruda, given the theme that year of commemorating the 40 years since Neruda's death—"Homenaje a Pablo Neruda, a 40 años de su muerte." The Neruda poetic reference featured in conjunction with this event was "Pido silencio. Sucede que voy a vivirme." This text was also the basis for a contemporary dance performance by Juan M. Ibarlucea and the subject of a talk by Selva Santurión, on the life and death of the poet. The exhibition on this occasion was a series of sculptures in wood and glass by local artist Lorenzo Loppert with accompanying texts by Pablo Neruda

² Editor's note: This line appears in "Pido silencio" in Estravagario (1958).

selected by Selva Santurión. Workshops in popular song for young people were arranged in conjunction with the School of Music of Maldonado Department.

In early 2015 the theme for the museum was set out as 'Letras Planetarias', a developmental project initiated within the framework of the Uruguayan National Museums System and the Network of Museums and Education Institutes, involving other Uruguayan museums, including those commemorating the life and work of Uruguayan writers Juana de Ibarbarou, Juan José Morosoli and Horacio Quiroga, respectively, with the Museo Paseo Neruda being the only Uruguayan museum specifically focused on an overseas writer and his work. The interactive voyage of text and multimedia displays took visitors through the life and works of each writer.

Apart from these temporary, themed exhibition foci, there have been more permanent displays at the museum. As far as the author is aware (2017) the Neruda and Matilde herbarium-related items now reside in toto with the museum although they are not usually on general display. On 12 July 2004 and in the context of the commemoration of the centenary of Pablo Neruda's birthday the then-President of Chile Ricardo Largos presented Presidential Medals of Honor to Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón. The medals, with accompanying certificates and photographs of the occasion in Santiago, are on display at the museum. There is also correspondence from Neruda such as a letter to Alberto Mántaras dated 8 November 1968 from the Hotel Crillón in Santiago in which Neruda asks about a suitable time to visit Punta del Este "to be with you for a month in Punta del Este," and another dated 30 Nov 1972 and headed with his emblematic 'coat of arms' from Isla Negra. There is also material from a display in the United Kingdom when Selva Santurión and Miguel Quenón journeyed there in 2002 for Neruda-related activities. In Turnbridge Wells, where Selva Santurión had resided for a period in exile, she and Miguel Quenón had now returned to cocurate and participate in, amongst other Neruda-related events, an exhibition titled "Love, Sea, Neruda" with photographs by Sara del Carmen Facío, whose Neruda-linked images of Neruda had also been exhibited earlier at Atlántida. The event and associated workshops and poetry readings and discussions was cosponsored by the Trinity Theatre and Arts Centre and the Fundación Fortín de Santa Rosa which the couple had established to support the Neruda-related activities. The museum directors also visited Spain and Chile (2004) to contribute to various programs associated with the life and works of Neruda in the poet's birth centenary year.

Just as Neruda's poem "Oda a las flores de Datitla" has found its way in the posthumous Neruda era into the memorializing of Neruda at Atlántida, so too the links of Neruda's poetry to the area around Punta del Este where the Museo Paseo Neruda is now located are featured in the museum. Hence, it is not surprising that the wording of Neruda's poem "Al Puente curvo de la Barra de Maldonado", written by Neruda in Punta del Este in 1968 to pay tribute to features of this bridge located a little to the north of the main commercial area of Punta del Este, is on display. The words of this poem are displayed in a room of the museum together with a photo of this bridge which is built in curved sections and hence its attraction. The poem's opening lines, for example, immediately capture that fleshy characteristic of so much of Neruda's poetry of that era that deals with the material world:

Entre agua y aire brilla el puente curvo, entre verde y azul las curvaturas, dos senos y dos cimas con la unidad desnuda...

In the Chilean Bicentennial year of 2010, and in conjunction with the Embassy of Chile, the open area on the eastern side adjacent to the La Barra bridge was named as 'Plaza Pablo Neruda.' The association of Neruda and the La Barra bridge continues to find its way more recently into presentations (2016) of the Punta del Este area to foreign and domestic tourists alike as being "an opening to more rural aspects" of the wider reaches of the Maldonado region with its rivers and lakes and associated natural attractions beyond the mega tourist area of Punta del Este itself. Indeed, in the 2016 edition of the web-based Annuario Coleccionable of Puntadeleste.com, an article appeared titled "La vida en la Puente de Neruda", which included extracts from the opening lines of the above-mentioned Neruda poem, in Spanish, with Portuguese and English translation (http://www.puntadelesteinternacional.com/ 166).

With the move to Punta del Este, the museum has also explored the perhaps lesser-known Neruda links with the area around Punta del Este, including the site near Faro de José Ignacio (José Ignacio Lighthouse) where Mántaras developed a new holiday cottage, besides the one he had kept at Atlántida. This seaside cottage featured an example of what Neruda had apparently termed a "Chinese oven" for cooking outside, and which Neruda had had installed at his house at Isla Negra in Chile. More importantly, the directors of the Museo Paseo Neruda in Punta del Este have also established in recent years various outreach programs; "Neruda en las escuelas rurales de Maldonado," to schools in rural

areas of Maldonado utilizing as one aspect of their pedagogy Neruda's *Libro de las Preguntas* (1971-73) to foster creative thinking, and attention to local issues particularly for younger generations.

Apart from the work of the directors of the museum bearing Neruda's name in Punta del Este itself, there is also a school established in 2006 near the Atlántida township which bears the name of Neruda. The Colegio y Liceo Pablo Neruda is situated 45.8 kms from Montevideo on the Ruta Interbalneareo at Pinares de Atlántida at Calle Laborido esq. Calle 50. This school has presented itself as the first Integral college on the Uruguayan 'Gold Coast' providing education from Inicial, Primaria, Ciclo Básico to Bachilleratos. It initially offered high school level education only but in 2013 it commenced offering Primary Education. The school's insignia features an image of Neruda's face and it is likely that the school's founders decided that Neruda as a literary figure having standing not just in Latin American countries but world-wide through the winning of the Nobel Prize was a suitable name for the school given the local Atlántida associations already mentioned. It perhaps also reflects the comparatively recent origins of the Atlántida area as a balneario compared to some localities in the coastal regions of Uruguay that had links with Spanish-era centres of administration and from the early days of the Uruguayan Republic, such as Maldonado further north and in which Charles Darwin lodged when he ventured from Montevideo on July 26, 1832 as part of his voyage with the 'Beagle' around the world.

Although there are schools in Chile, notably Neruda's old school in Temuco, which have adopted the Neruda *leit motif* as an educative symbol, there are no known such schools outside Chile, aside from this school near Atlántida in Uruguay. Inter-country excursions by senior students from the school have opted for visits to Chile. The school has occasionally adopted phrases from Neruda's writings as a means of providing an educational 'thought-trigger' for youngsters. Indeed, in the Atlántida school, at the time of the present author's visit in April 2015, amongst the many broader educational notices there was an interesting poster depicting a picture of Neruda's face and the quote attributed to Neruda himself: "Queda prohibido no sonreír a los problemas, no luchar por lo que quieres, abandonar todo por miedo, no convertir en realidad tus sueños." It is accompanied with an image of school children raising each other on their shoulders to reach for the ultimate heights. Surely the historical Neruda would have been intrigued to have known that more than sixty years on from his ship-

board landing in Montevideo with Matilde in 1952 his Uruguayan sojourns have been commemorated in new and often quite-inspiring ways!

I have now explored some facets, in the Uruguayan context, of what has elsewhere been termed, 'Post-Nerudaism' (Campbell 2012, 181-188). This is the rubric term which seems to me to best cover the cultural developments and ways in which the life and *oewre* of the historical Neruda is re-contextualized in the era after Neruda's physical death in 1973. The idea here is that the literary/cultural afterlife of a writer—often well-known in his or her lifetime, such as Neruda was—has a role in fashioning the ways in which such a writer and the *oewre* is perceived, evaluated and 'experienced' by the generations that follow, and in differing societal contexts. The writer's works also may be regarded as also having an afterlife and in this essay, I have traced the example of the ways in which Neruda's poem, "Oda a las flores de Datitla", developed during Neruda's lifetime, and importantly continues to be re-contextualized in new ways after Neruda's death.

The posthumous era for any writer of merit is, to a greater or lesser extent, one in which the processes of memorializing the writer and the associated works can take on a momentum of their own, somewhat unfettered by the author's own precise considerations of how he or she might wish to project their image into the wider society, posthumously. Sometimes, as in the case of the initiators of the Museo Paseo Neruda in Punta del Este, it is because specific individuals recognise the value of making new links in the ways in which Neruda's works can be valued and projected into new historical and societal contexts which others before had not grasped, or perhaps acted upon. This always becomes a challenge for the 'flame-carriers' for the posthumous great writers, be they individuals or larger organizations: how to project the value and loyalty to the continuing merit of the works concerned and at the same time contextualize them in new and relevant ways in ways to new generations. It is a challenge that the Museo Paseo Neruda in Uruguay has eloquently addressed through its ongoing exhibitions and activities.

Much more can be done in terms of research into the literary/cultural afterlife of Pablo Neruda in a variety of societal and cultural contexts. There are the numerous musical and cinematic and indeed operatic adaptations that have emerged, largely although not exclusively, since Neruda's death, which have some linkages and associations with Neruda's life and/or works or both. Neruda has also appeared as a quasi-fictional character or as the inspiration for, or at least starting point for, new literary works, by poets and writers in countries as diverse

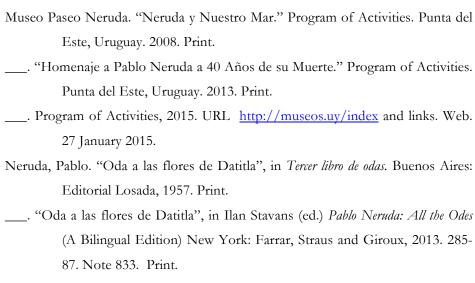
as Indonesia and Australia, let alone those in or from Chile. As suggested at the beginning of this essay, the totality of these efforts—especially in the posthumous Nerudian era acts—acts as a powerful prism though which 'Neruda' can be and, dare say, will be perceived and 'experienced' in coming years. Neruda's poetry will be presented in new ways, so that the life of these works continues long after the death of their author. Thus, if we consider the posthumous developments and phenomena since Neruda's death and the adaptations and compositions with Nerudian themes we can say that these add a new layer of interpretation to the core literary works of the poet and the ways in which his life and times has been presented—more than forty years after his death in 1973!

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