

## THE SHADOW

Francesc Parcerisas

I AM THE SHADOW THAT FOLLOWS THE YEAR,  
THE YEAR OF THE LIGHT OR OF FALSE SHADOWS,  
THE YEAR THAT ILLUMINATES THE DAYS OF FORGIVENESS.  
NOW IT LIGHTLY RAINS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE SUBWAY  
AND THE SHELLS ARE FULL OF SILENCES,  
OR FULL OF SCREAMS. AUTUMN HAS PASSED,  
SPRING REJOICES, WITHIN THE LINES,  
LIKE THE HELPLESS HAND OF A CHILD  
WHO LIVES IN A LANGUAGE THEY ARE STEALING FROM HIM.  
WE DON'T WRITE TO SAVE OURSELVES,  
OR TO SAVE IT. DAY AND DARKNESS SLEEP  
AT THE BOTTOM OF ONLY ONE HAND, OF ONLY ONE THING.  
YOU SAVE US, LANGUAGE. SAVE US OR  
TELL US HOW TO BURY THE HAPPINESS  
OF NAMES—OR THE PAIN OF NAMES—  
UNDER THIS VINEYARD WHICH ONCE WAS OURS.

(TRANSLATED BY JORDI TORRES)

**Francesc Parcerisas** (Begues, Barcelona, 1944). Poet, translator, and literary critic, is Professor of translation at the UAB (*Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*). His poetic works up until 1983 are collected in the book *Triomf del present* (Triumph of the Present, 1991). His most recent books are *L'edat d'or* (The Golden Age, 1983), *Focs d'octubre* (October Fires, 1992), *Natura morta amb nens* (Still Life with Children, 2000) and *Dos dies més de sud* (Two More Days of South, 2006). He defends the idea that modern poetry conveys emotions through the singular use of words. His work has three striking features: reading and translations, the evocation of love, and evidence of the passing of stages. In his most recent work, Parcerisas seems to have found a definitive voice. The poems exude a treasure of wisdom.