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mirror[34] and multiple references to rhetoric and theatrical scenarios,[35] establish a discursive framework of multilayered meanings until the breaking point: when the dead appear in the poem, the language changes from creative ('construir') to destructive ('romper', 'fragmentos'). It is noteworthy that the destruction of discourse in 'se les rompió por fin el discurso'[36] and the mirror in 'se les rompió, de pronto, el espejo', does not eliminate the dream itself, as the masquerade continues in the last two stanzas. While the clash between destruction/death and the apparent wellbeing of the city is reminiscent of the conflict between the existence of the tragedy and the government's denial thereof, it also evokes the discord between subjective and objective realities, although it remains unclear which scene corresponds to which reality. The images of dead students, the church existing in several timelines, the myth of Huitzilopochtli placed in present time, jade and plumage in reference to Quetzalcóatl, combined with allusions to the Conquest[37] and the Porfiriato,[38] connote the cyclical nature of history and therefore denounce the linear perception of time.

Temporal discrepancies in Tlatelolco poetry provide an insight into the connection between the dream and myth narratives. A progression of the narrator's temporal displacement and the consequent rupture of linear time is a result of the incomprehensibility of violence. In Oscar Oliva's 'Concentración de cólera',[39] the temporal position of the event is fixed objectively in the present, yet the violent images perceived by the narrator contradict such an assignation and lead to

33 'The Stone Mirror' (Becerra, 80–1).
34 'se les rompió, de pronto, el espejo' – 'suddenly their mirror broke' (Becerra, 81).
35 'su oportuna y mestiza retórica', 'la escenografía para las fiestas del fantasmagórico país' – 'their timely and hybrid rhetoric', 'a stage design for the celebrations of the phantasmagoric country' (Becerra, 80).
36 'finally their discourse broke' (Becerra, 81).
37 'Cacique gordo de Zempoala' – 'the fat chief of Zampoala' (Becerra, 81) refers to Chicomeacatl, the last chief of Zempoala; don Nuño de Guzmán was one of the conquistadors and served as governor of Panuco and Nueva Galicia in 1528.
38 José Yves Limantour (Becerra, 81) was the leader of technocrats and Secretary of the Finance in 1893–1911.
39 'Concentration of Fury' (Oliva, 83–7).

the separation of timeframes in the images of two trains running through the narrator's body:

> un tren no me deja respirar.
> Otro no me deja dormir,
> desgarra mi piel,
> entra por el túnel de mi boca,
> se descarrilla en mi corazón[40]

The poem is narrated like a dream sequence: the narrator is going through a series of interlinked scenes representing the shooting at Tlatelolco. His fixation on the time of the incident,[41] combined with the questions asking for information about his own actions,[42] and about the shooters' identity,[43] represents not only his apparent confusion evident in the jumbled images of the city and the train, but also his inability to comprehend the incident within the contemporary time-frame. The narrator is not clearly defined: he takes on the characteristics of a wounded student, a peasant, a lover, a corpse, thus representing a potential victim or eyewitness of the event.

In an attempt to ensure self-preservation or to protect his/her sanity, the narrator may separate the event from objective reality by assigning it the characteristics of a dream or a fantasy. In this case, the rupture of a linear timeline becomes the prevalent means of the destruction of reality. Juan José Oliver's 'Variaciones sobre un mismo fantasma'[44] employ tense changes as a means of rupturing linear time. The first section of the poem, written mainly in the past tense, contains three lines in the present tense describing the shooting:

40 'a train does not let me breathe. / Another does not let sleep, / it tears my skin, / enters through the tunnel of my mouth, / derails in my heart' (Oliva, 84).
41 'Hoy me calzo de cólera. / Hoy me visto de viento', '¿Qué año es?' – 'Today I put on anger / Today I am wearing wind', 'What year is it?' (Oliva, 83).
42 '¿De dónde diablos he llegado?', '¿Qué estoy diciendo?' – 'Where the hell did I come from?', 'What am I saying?' (Oliva, 87).
43 '¿Quién dispara esa ametralladora? / ¿Quién conduce ese tanque de guerra?' – 'Who is firing that machine gun? / Who is driving that war tank?' (Oliva, 86).
44 'Variations on the Same Ghost' (Oliver, 100–3).