

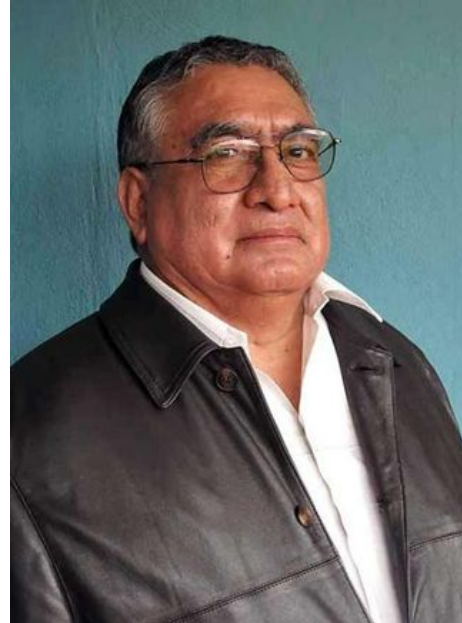
# VICTOR DE LA CRUZ

MEXICO (1948–)

LANGUAGE: ZAPOTEC

## DIIDXA' BISIAANDA'

Ti diidxa'  
ti diidxa' si,  
ti diidxa' si ñapa'  
lu bata naya',  
ndaani' xquendabianne'  
ndaani' ladxidua'ya'.  
Ti diidxa' si  
ñabe lii lu gueela',  
ra nibáninu siadó' guie'ru',  
ne riuunda' sti' guirá' mani huiini',  
lu ca yaga nuu Lahuoyaga.  
Ti diidxa' si,  
ti diidxa' ma' biaanda' naa.



Victor de la Cruz is a Zapotec poet from Oaxaca. The Zapotec civilization originated in southern Mexico over 2,500 years ago and flourished until the Spanish invaded in 1521. According to various Zapotec legends, its people were born from rocks, or else transformed from jaguars, trees, or clouds. In Zapotec, the language itself is called *Diidxazá*, combining the words for “tongue” and “cloud,” or “language of the clouds.” During the 1970s, a movement began in Oaxaca to revive the Zapotec language and culture. At the center of the movement was Victor de la Cruz, who founded the magazine *Guchachi' Reza* (Sliced Iguana) to promote indigenous literature. Today there are over 750,000 speakers of Zapotec spread out as far as Mexico City and Los Angeles. Victor de la Cruz continues to write poetry and teach anthropology at the University of Oaxaca.

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY		
WORD	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
bata naya' (n.)	the inner surface of the hand between the wrist and fingers	palm of my hand, my cupped hand
biaanda' (v.)	from the verb meaning "to fail to remember"	forgot, cannot recall, escaped memory
bisiaanda' (adj.)	not remembered	forgotten, lost, left behind, abandoned
ca (adj.)	used to identify specific people or things observed by the speaker	those, the, those there
diidxa' (n.)	a single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing	word, term, phrase, utterance, language, idiom
gueela' (n.)	the period of time between sunset and sunrise	night, nighttime, darkness, nightfall, sunset
guirá' (adj.)	used to refer to the whole quantity or extent of a particular group or thing	all, each, every
ladxidua'ya' (n.)	the center of a person's thoughts and emotions, especially love and compassion	heart, soul, center, core, compassion, humanity
Lahuoyaga (n.)	the Zapotec name for the town in Oaxaca, Mexico, known for its springs and forests; also the hometown of the poet	Lahuoyaga
lii (pron.)	used to refer to the person or people that the speaker is addressing	you
lu (prep.)	referring to a location in time or space	in, about, on, at, during
ma' (adv.)	before or by the present	already, by now, so far, before now, until now
mani huiini' (n.)	warm-blooded, egg-laying animals with feathers, wings, and a beak	birds, fowls
naa (pron.)	used by the speaker to refer to him or herself	I

WORD	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
ñabe (v.)	utter words so as to convey information	to say, to utter, to voice, to pronounce, to speak, to give voice to
ñapa' (v.)	from the verb meaning "to be in possession of"	I had, I possessed, I owned, I retained, I kept, I enjoyed
ndaani'	1. <i>noun</i> —the front part of the human torso containing the stomach 2. <i>preposition</i> —expressing the situations of being enclosed or surrounded by something else	belly, intestines; inside, within, in
ne (conj.)	in addition to	and, with, plus
nibáninu (v.)	from verb meaning "to emerge from a state of sleep"	we wake up, we awake, we stop sleeping, we get up
nuu (prep.)	belonging to or associated with	of
ra (conj.)	at or during the time that	when, at which point
riuunda' (n.)	the act of making musical sounds with the voice	singing, crooning, song, music, tune
si (adv.)	no more than	just, only, merely, simply
siadó' guie'ru' (n.)	literally means "morning's flower"	at dawn, at breaking dawn, at sunrise, at morning's bloom
sti' (prep.)	belonging to or associated with	of
ti (adj.)	not more than one	one, a, an, single, lone
xquendabianne' (n.)	from <i>xquenda</i> meaning "characteristic" and <i>bianne'</i> meaning "light"; the center of a person's objective reasoning and understanding	mind, intelligence, intellect, brain, head, thoughts, judgment
yaga (n.)	plants with a trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing branches	trees, woods, saplings, forest

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PHRASE BY PHRASE

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## REFLECTING AND FINDING MEANING

Group Member Names:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Pick a scribe for the group, and work together to answer the questions.

What are the best parts of this translation, and why do you think they are good?

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What elements of the original poem did you lose in the translation? What did you manage to keep?

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Did you achieve something new with your translation, and if so, does it make sense in the poem or not?

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