

EPIGRAPH

Ernest. Gilbert, you treat the world as if it were a crystal ball. You hold it in your hand, and reverse it to please a willful fancy. You do nothing but re-write history.

Gilbert. The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it. That is not the least of the tasks in store for the critical spirit. When we have fully discovered the scientific laws that govern life, we shall realize that the one person who has more illusions than the dreamer is the man of action. He, indeed, knows neither the origin of his deeds nor their results. From the field in which he thought that he had sown thorns, we have gathered our vintage, and the fig-tree that he planted for our pleasure is as barren as the thistle, and more bitter. It is because Humanity has never known where it was going that it has been able to find its way.

From Oscar Wilde ([1890]/1997) *The Critic as Artist*. Copenhagen: Green Integer, p. 50.

Ernest: Gilbert, tratas al mundo como si fuera una bola de cristal. Lo sostienes en la mano y le das la vuelta para satisfacer los caprichos de tu imaginación. No haces más que reescribir la historia

Gilbert: Nuestro único deber con la historia consiste en reescribirla. Y no es de las menores obligaciones que incumben al espíritu crítico. Cuando lleguemos a comprender todas las leyes científicas que sustentan la vida, entenderemos que nadie alberga más ilusiones que el hombre de acción. Ignora tanto el origen como las consecuencias de sus actos. Donde creyó haber sembrado espinas, cosechamos racimos, y la higuera que plantó para complacernos es tan estéril como el cardo y más amarga. La humanidad ha encontrado su rumbo porque jamás ha sabido adónde se dirigía.

Translated into Spanish by Margarita Savchenkova