

THE POEMS OF MAGISTER URSACHI
Translated by His Friends

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INTRODUCTION

The Poetry of Mihai Ursachi

Of the contemporary generations now in their forties, Marin Sorescu and Nichita Stanescu are probably the best known Romanian poets, inside Romania and abroad. Sorescu's stay and publication at the Iowa Workshop has made him familiar to many Americans, and his plays have been produced in many countries. Stanescu has been awarded the Herder International Poetry prize, and like Sorescu has been widely translated. Mihai Ursachi has likewise received the Romanian Writer's Union Award and ranks their equal in poetic power and maturity, but until the last few years has not been much known outside Romania.

In the United States, those readers who have surveyed the range of Romanian poets translated in MODERN ROMANIAN POETRY: AN ANTHOLOGY (Iasi, Editura Junimea, 1973) have with few exceptions found Ursachi to be their most striking discovery. Those editors of U.S. literary magazines to which I have submitted parts of this work have immediately accepted and praised him.

That readers of Ursachi should have been moved by a selection of individual poems interests me, because I feel that the effect of his poem increases in context. He's a story-teller. That is, the body of his work is increasingly more affective as he develops relationships poem to poem, and to a mythos which we hope to describe by the arrangement of the poems which follow. It is true his poems win us one at a time; but they convince us emotionally because they carry an open structure, like molecules that link with other elements larger than, themselves--mythic in size, and prophetic in stature.

But we have chosen to begin the selection of poems with the personal and idiosyncratic:

I am the ambassador of Melancholy,
and here are
my over-affectionate letters
as credentials

There follows after this disarming introduction in the first person, a small parcel of letters (poems) which one must take as addresses of various personae of the poet, though they are all from the land of Melancholy. One of the letters uses the royal "We" a mask I will speak of later. Another is only described ("Being written in the Melancholic language, in imperceptible characters, the letter is: addressed only to those who understand this language as such"), and the page is blank. The "Third Letter" is actually an "old" ballad from someone who could not (like the "Ambassador") enter the gate to bring a message. Since the series of poems themselves are, in one way, an exploration of the various roles of the poet, one might read this ballad as a facet of self-portrait.

This "Third Letter," (and this series of letters read as a whole) delights with its rapid shifts in experimental form, its levels of idiom, and its play with personae from the personal to

the archetypal poet. But it mystifies as well, in that it does not close but links finally with a larger enigma (since the messenger speaks, but says "I kept silent and went on"). To that enigma, we attach in the series a poem whose title is longer than the poem.

Post Scriptum at "Ring with Enigma:"

The Big Transversals or the Four Aesthetics.

Poem Written by Magister Mihai Ursachi When He Thought
Himself a Pelican

A man from Tecuci had a motor
but he didn't do anything with it.

I should add that the tone of this poem might have been best translated had the last line ended, "but he didn't do anything with it: So what?"

Beginning with the letters introducing the poet's personae and purposes, the following text we divided into mythopoetic topics in which a reader might find an organic growth and linkage. Without more comment on that arrangement, I would like to use the excuse of this introduction to speak of Ursachi's manipulations of "voice" which are the joy and despair of a translator of poetry. I will mention some of his language-effects which have aroused my admiration, especially to name three which this translation has consciously tried to render into English.

The "Magister" voice of the above poem's title, and its variations, can be traced through the majority of Ursachi's works-- though one is equally rewarded by the poet as Pelican or, in another case, as the snail Adeodatus. But the majestic tone, consciously modulated, results in tones particular to Ursachi. In general with Romanian poetry, much richness is carried by what might be called "aural allusions." That is, in the same way that modern Romanian poems use traditional motifs, also the language itself echoes established moods, old ballads, or known poetic musicality. Ursachi uses all these (for example, he echoes stanzas from the old ballad "Manole"). But he has extended the "voices" of his poetry into effects we might call: (1) royal pronouncement and incantations, (2) ancient prophetics and parable and (3) purple poetics and irony.

Manipulating these tones, mixing high seriousness with wry common idioms, and elevating the commonplace, he communicates unstated points of view and manages wonderful ironies of self-humor or general foible. But most of all the effect is that of an ancient anchorite, making proclamations from a mythic distance, from a deep understanding (including solitude and darkness).

As a translator, I want to address my impressions of these three poetic postures. First, the royal attitude does not, for Ursachi, imply an easy rule; usually the kingdom is under siege:

I belong to the house of the defeated.
A new King, come from the north lands

bearing the frightful name of I,
scattered my army of gold;
the light of my house, maiden and wife,
is shamed slave in his barbarian tent.
And I blinded hear around me
how the tender boughs roar like harps...

These poems trace the state of the realm, though they do not establish a specific geography or hierarchy. For one thing, this kingship of "we" has cosmic identifications:

We bestowed moments
have always been on other planets
even constellations unto which penetrate
none of our eye's rays.

For another thing, the royal tone, so rich with ironic possibilities can support a various populace ("Edict") :

We, Mikado of the forest, proclaim,
from this moment, the sacred order
of the Gold Chrysanthemum.

Our Splendid Majesty
raises Our dog Pooch,
for faith, wisdom, and courage
to the rank of Knight
of the Gold Chrysanthemum.

Besides the "royal" tone; another way of translating the oratorical and incantatory into English is to reference the sound of the King James Biblical translation, or liturgies spoken by some old bard of equal lineage. In "Eli, Eli," the one chanted over might well be the fated poet himself:

Eternal night for the one crucified in himself...
Because no ointment-bearing girl will cry at his feet,
and no apostle will herald his consecration...

But it is not the specific Biblical allusion that most often appears in this voice-range, rather the rhetorical reference "in the manner of" a liturgy. For example:

I got lost in the Forest of Desolation, mists
pressed like dark curtains, the mountains lay—
blind hills, giants omenating deserts...

The images themselves strike a dark cadence: night, crucified, mists, dark curtains, giants. But the wonder of languages (with a common archaic root, after all) is that English does bear some of the sound effects so striking in the Romanian, and so critical to the incantation of these poems (e.g., the striking equivalence of "...Desolation, mists/ pressed- like dark curtains"

to "ceturi/ ca niste valuri negre apasa"). In another example, Ursachi's evocation in "Soul of Evening" may or may not be a conscious quarrel with the pastoral vision of Lucian Blaga's classic Romanian poem with the same title. In any case, this poem's sonorous incantation-- even more pronounced in Romanian-- gives its singular power, whether one thinks of it as benediction or elegy:

Magnificent gallows lifted by the sunset.
The flaming faces of the dead
proffer ecstatic verbs above
the livid hills.
I tell you: there's a bloodbath in the Cosmos,
a sanguine defloration like a stabbing.
Do not invoke the gods of the day. In infinite
love, everything to be celebrated was celebrated.

A second unique voice I called "ancient prophetics." The numbers of these poems that can be thought of as parables, along with those Ursachi has actually titled parables, provide one way of understanding how the poems link to something larger than themselves. One could say that Ursachi's parables exist to give Enigmas a habitation. But the prophet knows they are still at large, since he seeks their amorphous homes. Ursachi's poems seem spoken by-- and often describe-- robed figures at the dimmest edge of known history and mythic time. This anchorite tone, most difficult to explain, I find most convincing and moving. The voice comes from an ancient who has lived inside metaphysical dilemmas outside time; who has an impeccable memory; and to whom (by the authority of his voice and experience) we must listen. Thus, perhaps, does the poet tell us where his imagination goes at night.

But before he takes his place beside the Old Chronologists, the poet passes under water or through caves, night-visions, forests. Such figures are archetypes of the rites of passage in mythos of all ages and cultures. They presage a domain of mystery and initiation. The "Vision at the Edge of the Forest" is typical of the preparation for passage:

O, God, with thunder the sky of rain and night broke
and in the splendor of light, to me descended
the terrified gold-feathered dragon.
And I stood petrified beside the forest's wall.
He had soft hair white as snow,
he stopped in front of me: "I am Basil
the good. Prepare" and I stood petrified
by the wall of the stone forest.

This rite of passage in another poem is accomplished in death-rebirth by "You all pale prince who in a sled drawn by six pairs of elks/ so seraphic run through the world's foothills,/so lovingly you kill me..." In another, "on time's margin/ a stake is kindled, with blue flames/ my soul is consumed..." The "ease" of the following passage from "Now I Shall Leave" recognizes the poet's familiarity with the timeless realms that strike the ordinary mortal mute:

My love I shall leave now for a known land.

Don't be afraid the path is short
and without dangers mellifluous woods
shed their flowers on both sides

These poems of passage convince the reader that Ursachi has often visited these ancient habitations and can authoritatively describe them. In one of the places discovered in poems of this voice, tablets or letters read "as if" the poem or the life had already been written: "All is written/in heavy letters of gold, on thick purple." Another locale has to do with timelessness, and is usually set in a desert. The Metaphysical City is another location from which the poet speaks with bardic tones of antiquity.

One should understand that Ursachi's work displays rapid shifts in tone, and that multiple effects blur such definitions of separate voices outlined here. Nevertheless, these poems which seek loci of metaphysical reality have a consistency of tone, which I hope the reader will find effective even in translation.

In those poems that locate a place (or time-place) "as if" all has been accomplished, the voice is believably from one who has been caught in a time-lock, and carves his words in stone. "Letters from Hexagonery" (one such location) are said literally to be carved in stone, "I write to you from Hexagonery"-- says the poet. ". . . Great luck I've had with bad luck." The purpose of the second epistle is a marriage proposal which "you" (the reader) must carry to somewhere. At a similar location, "Zero Hour", all the small watches are eaten by table clocks. Time has been superseded.

*From a favorite location of timelessness, the desert, the parable-speaking old prophet recounts his experience. In one case he encounters "A huge Clock's machinery in the stony desert." The machinery is guarded by a blind man, who
keeps counting something, using for this
little bones on his mummied hand*

"My golden deeds celebrated themselves under the rule/ of the desert," another poem begins, The melancholy destiny of the poet, his understanding of ultimate solitude, recognizes that somehow the sacred verses celebrate "deeds never done." Another mythic construction often linked with the desert is the "Great Lily," the constellation for the age of timelessness, the aegis of whiteness. It "waits for us two thousand years." Under this aegis, we understand ourselves as the deliriums of a ghost.

Here the poet becomes acquainted with-- is one of-- "The Old Chronologists." Their parable is presented in a chronicler's language, in prose-form. They are involved in an old dilemma, of counting time-- but understanding nothing about their relation to it, in a space without entrance or exit.

A short poem which combines the effectiveness of enigma, parable, and the intoning of an antique is "The Parable of the Ear and the Count." Ursachi references the Platonian idea that

*the world repeats itself every 16,000 years and imagines each cycle as a drop of the ocean:
"There's neither haste/ nor fatigue. The ear listens/how another drop adds to the sea..."
In addition to the parables of the desert and the "Great Lily" a third location, the "Metaphysical
City", carries many of the qualities of arithmetic abstraction which one finds in the desert:*

This town is built from ideas,
each of its bricks is a notion.
Therefore, on the Boulevard of the Excluded Tertium,
at the demonstration with the number 77, the syllogism
Barbara was listed first;
here I live, in a great and old dilemma
from which I never go out.

*Should one want to trace the theorems of the "tertium quid," an erudite Ursachi leads us
into esoteric and gnostic wisdoms. The ambiguous third "something," (which in mathematical
theory escapes an exhaustive division of things) becomes literal in this poem. It is the street
where the poet lives in Metaphysical City. The City is built on the "debris of shame and humility"
of a rotten city, "a beloved, so loved... stinking city" in which "power breaks like pottery/
shattering itself against the walls." But paradoxically, the construction of a new city on the
debris of the old, a city built of seductively pure Idea, is no better. From the Metaphysical City
and other poems, the poet proposes that "silence" is the most fitting language to convey the
wisdom of abstraction.*

*The third of the voices I introduced-- a style which Ursachi displays for myriad effects in
his ten-part "Purple Poem"-- often elevates the commonplace for ironic effect, or inflates
romantic proposals for subtle puncturing. Among these belongs "Poems in the Memory of
Three Peach Pits." The later poems in this collection include one for a commonplace sweater.
Another begins, "--And besides, we don't sell gloves for horses."*

*Among the romantic proposals deflated with good humor is that of poetry itself:
"Because of a very bad headache/ we went to the arbor where they gave cold drinks/ named, a
little romantically it's true, Poetry." But usually this voice gives service to love, in an extravagant
language which plays on traditional romantic excesses:*

Still we wander, love, shall we wander
that path of roses?
As if we remembered from forgotten
lives, from forgotten paths...

*Here he creates a virgin foliage: "vibrating with an/ early fever we shall sink/ in the delicate
woods." Then when the seduction would be complete for a Marvell, he tells her, "My love, it is
not real." Instead, reality is an endless "silence which descends." But
after proposing that stern reality, he turns the poem around again and says, "...let's go, I say, on
the path of roses."*

Another of the wonderfully funny but paradoxically nostalgic poems of this type is "In Memoriam." On one hand, the poet is self-consciously ironic. On the other, the language elevates the love believably to the realms of astral winds and serene constellations. "My love, like ripe fruit/ hang our lives on the branch of boundlessness."

I hope the richness of irony, seriousness, and humor of such poems comes across to those who read them in English.

* * *

Ursachi's awareness of ultimate silence in metaphysical deserts allows him to take nothing seriously and everything seriously, to language-posture every absurdity. But ultimately the poems arrive at a heart-stopping moment of annihilation. "Wedding" begins like one of the poems of romantic irony, suggests parables of society and myth, playfully echoes the priests' "for ever and ever amen," but ends on the blade of quite a different myth:

Finally, O finally all's all right.
the bride has no body.
Bride, bride, what kind of scythe
is that you carry?

The poems of Mihai Ursachi win the reader's admiration by their finesse and continuity as he extends an enigmatic voice and strategy to unbelievable lengths. I think of his poems as a balance-beam, projecting the poet himself over flames... Will his grace allow us as well to disdain the forge? He dances on the construction. We delight in another and another gesture: a playful bow, an extravagant poem.

Only gradually we recognize that this poet is not just the performer above it all. He provides the entire set for the drama. Creation can be shaped only from the light of something burning away-- which Ursachi recognizes in the myth of Demiurgos. In those terms, the poet himself burns to emanate light.

Ursachi is a young poet with an ancient voice. His anchorite faith includes a contemporary self-irony, but never masks his ultimate seriousness or relevance. His poems are a thoroughly modern response to Romanian tradition, a communist regime, and to the human condition at large. His voice displays an operatic range, but always consistent to a unifying score-- carved on stone perhaps, or a horologe somewhere in a windowless room, or written on the desert floor by a blind man, and sung now.

This short discussion cannot give full measure to Ursachi's vision. But I hope some of its coherence and voice can be heard by readers of the poems introduced here.

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LETTERS FROM THE PELICAN

Edict

*We, Mikado of the forest, proclaim,
from this moment, the sacred order
of the Gold Chrysanthemum.
Our Splendid Majesty
raises Our dog Pooch,
for faith, wisdom, and courage
to the rank of Knight
of the Gold Chrysanthemum.*

Letters from Hexagonery¹

I.

*I write you from Hexagonery.
You must know the truth,
so that nobody will pity me.
Great luck I've had with
loneliness.
Great luck I've had with
bad luck.
Great luck with
Hexagonery
Otherwise, in the open space
I would have been a sure victim
of a great flood
which is now announced*

II.

*I write to you from Hexagonery.
This construction is wonderful,
myriad of crickets in the walls.
But look at the purpose
of my epistle:
Please present it to that person
whose name I'll pass over in silence
For reasons which I'm sure
you'll approve;
I choose you, therefore, to present
my proposal of marriage.
I believe that you be
my adroit messenger.
That you will know how to gain
her consent. presenting her my situation
with all optimism.
You will know how to show her that even though
I live in Hexagonery,*

¹ We reproduce these texts especially for the reason that they raise a question, the solution of which seems impossible in the present stage of knowledge, although we're not without some fabulous hypotheses. Judging by the style and a few other similar inscriptions found nearby, it is almost sure that we have to work with fragments of letters. The strangeness lies in the fact that we have here inscriptions carved into massive slabs of grit-stone of which the smallest one was estimated to be over eleven tons. (Author's Note)

*From which I never get out
Nor ever receive visits,
And correspondence I have
But once a year,
By a definitive agreement
with you only,
you will know how to explain that all these
are insignificant in front of²*

*III. Love Song from Hexagonery
You, my love, who is not
With your eyes, large and sad
from that place that is not
You look to me with eyes so sad.*

*From behind the wall of silver wrought
which separates everything forever
those who are as if they're not
those who are not but will die never.*

*My love, with the lily face
from that time you fill, that place
in which forever you don't exist
You look at me with eyes of triste.*

² *Because of a species of microscopic lithophagous fungus which populated the inferior part of the slab, the inscription at this point is totally deteriorated, and the text is impossible to reconstitute. (Author's Note).*

Letter Written on the Shell of the Snail Adeodatus

*Because of the very long distance, the letters
come a bit late; this one that I am answering
I received from the last century. I haven't noticed
how time passes, and look, it's late,
but I hurry to answer you.*

*The diameter of my domain is naught,
and the radius of my world is of naught ;
there is a round lawn on the point of a needle,
and I, for a very long time,
have been quietly indulging in rearing snails.*

*As to my treatise "On Flames,
on Their Nature, Their Kinds and their Sweetness"
I can tell you
that it will remain unwritten. Because, if I wrote it,
who would go to the trouble of reading it? And if
somebody read it, to what good? It's enough that we lived
those fiery evenings when, blazing
our souls were burning, and from the flames
high worlds were born, more alive and purer...*

*You say "Let us save from death the beautiful images."
But they are deathless in themselves, and unchangeable,
they live in the shrines of Gods.*

*Now it's late, and night falls
on the round lawn on the point of a needle.*

*This letter I write
on the shell of my snail Adeodatus,
who, tomorrow at dawn, will start on a long
journey to you.*

The Dumb Song of the Snail Adeodatus

*From one leaf
to another leaf
There is an endless
distance,
I carry a letter
from the enchanted circle.
Everything changes
it was a dream
the mysterious language
in which it was written.
There is no leaf
to penetrate
what is written
upon the shell.
From one leaf
to another leaf
There is an endless
distance.
I carry a letter
from the enchanted circle.*

Lost Poem

*And I wrote that poem
in a forest, on yellowish maple leaves.
With no figures of speech,
in an imperceptible ink.
Only the deer, while chewing the written leaves,
shed tears and go silent.*

The Message

*I am the ambassador of Melancholy,
and here are
my over-affectionate letters
as credentials :*

First Letter

*We, Padishah
of all Melancholy,
Emperor of upper and middle Solitude
Lord
absolute of the Kingdom Longing
and senior prince
of Sadness,
Bid ye all notice to pay close attention
to the message of our envoy called Minstrel.*

-- Given today in the Citadel of Sorrow

The Second Letter

(Being written in the Melancholic language, in imperceptible characters, the letter is addressed only to those who understand this language as such.)

The Third Letter

The ballad of Minstrel, who trekked along many a life's road up to there, but could not enter the gate and bring the message:

*There was a castle drowned in green,
on the dark gates a sculptured dragon
seeming to have always watched
that no strangers enter the donjon.
I was coming from afar – a blue dervish –
tired after the long row of years,
lines from Pali and psalms from the Koran
inscribed on my garment and forehead.
I was looking for nothing nowhere;
from the fields of roses could be heard
the strange canticles of Laostic,
lost in a deep and gentle hypnosis.
Barefoot, wearing a straw crown
of sedge, I was invited guest
(that was just on St. Michael's day)
at the big dinner after the tournament.
But I kept silent and went on,
without passing under the old gates,
I myself – my book encoded forever –
a dream song sounding in my ear.*

**Post Scriptum at "Ring with Enigma"
The Big Transversals of the Four Aesthetics
Poem Written by Magister Mihai Ursachi
When He Thought Himself a Pelican**

*A man from Tecuci had a motor
but he didn't do anything with it.*

THE MAPS OF MEGALOPOLIS

“In existential rapport it is childish to make a mythological place in the world; all places are the same. But from the poetic point of view it’s very comfortable. For my poetry I built right here in this sector Țicău³. I tried to mythify this miserly, humble place, and I named this place the Celestial City.”

³ Țicău is the name of the Iași district where the poet lives.

The City Rottenness

*O, I must build myself a new citadel
on the debris of shame and humility...
How painfully wild was the wreckage,
the hallucinatory siege and the hate against
that beloved, so loved, deeply rotten and stinking city...
The haughty power broke like pottery
shatter itself against the walls ;
no cunning and no poisons, not even perverse gifts
but only hope...
The Concentric tongs, that silent siege lasted, I say,
for at least three million years,
til the wall decayed on its own from time, from tears,
and it got transparent and thin as foil,
on the site of the citadel, loved citadel, o, so beloved
called Rottenness –
debris of nausea, shame, humiliation,
sickening-sweet smell of chloroform...*

*And look, now, much more alone, I call to myself:
--Come to see that new Citadel
on the dross of shame and humiliation,
in the desert !
And it is myself I answer, with a thousand voices :
--The Citadel of Rottenness, Rottenness...*

Celestial Phenomena

*Above that town there was a rain
of stars one summer, until everybody figured
they would be drowned in the light. But the clay
swallowed this too in silence. There remained
a new constellation in the sky, resembling
an immense flower, a lily; white stars
glittered like frozen diamonds – and they named it
The Constellation of the Lily.*

Vision in the Gothic Burgh

*God, a rain started, a livid rain of evening and night
In the Carpathian burgh...*

*The rotting forests had drowned in mists
and evil lightning raged like a terror.
From the tower window I looked lost
through the black fir branches, the black walls,
I lost what the hour was, what the century was...
And by the long light of dumb lightning
I saw, and fell in a faint under the icon...*

*On the blue pavement, of shining jade,
two tall shadows were running, berserk from my soul,
prolonged silhouettes of monks...*

Metaphysical City

*This town is built from ideas,
each of its bricks is a notion.*

*Therefore, on the Boulevard of the Excluded Tertium,
at the demonstration with the number 77, the syllogism
Barbara was listed first;
here I live, in a great and old dilemma
from which I never go out.*

A Little Walk to the Grove

*Because of a very bad headache
we went to the arbor where they gave cold drinks
named, a little romantically, it's true, Poetry.
Such a crowd I never saw, not even for halvah
(which has not existed since times prehistoric).
When our abullic gang came, like I said, desirous of lemonade,
I could see how they tore one customer into strips
which they then hanged on the iron-gilded spears of the fence,
while others, probably Achaeons, were shouting something in Greek,
something exciting, of which we understood only the word "hymen",*

*and some euphonic vowels before and after that word.
"Okay," we shouted in chorus, "we'll be happy even with Susan," while
the tallest and skinniest of that crowd,
a fellow I seemed to know from somewhere
or from a photo, was speaking in Esperanto,
or in Aramalic, something understandable in any case,
but we hadn't the courage to decipher,
instead came with "The Proclamation of Man," to general laughter,
and all that story insignificant at the beginning
lasted without our knowing it an epopeic time
and we got old and died away
and didn't even have time to write
our names in the Visitor's Book.*

Megalopolis

*My voice is unheard
in Megalopolis.*

*Look ! I speak, I raise my arms (I have a part of the sky),
let then my arms down and listen long,
a confused buzz, like a monotonous swarm,
from myriad voices that curdle the silence...*

*As to languages, they evolved analytically
synthetically and vice versa
to the most unanimous and unbelonging,
the silence of silence...*

Triple Poem for the Old Swineheard Garibaldi

Reawakening of His Image

So late, and ash

from my soul, from yours...

*Even now I pass under the wall with its door
deep in the Țicău Quarter*

O, drowned in the narcosis of big locust trees

I nearly forgot the old sandglass

*in the little wall room of our old swineherd
whom we nicknamed Chrysip*

*Though in fact he was Garibaldi, because of his patriarchal
beard, his hat, and the ableness*

*he showed n instructing his pigs, restive as stags
and immaculate as seraphs...*

So he was living in the wall in which he had a cell

and the hourglass I was talking about, with sand and ash

*and pigs all around, incredibly many, about a thousand,
some of the immense, some small on top of him, on the street,
because the door in the wall was forever standing open...*

*He loved them, "daddy's sons;" he carried without pause warm slops,
paid taxes on them, had a "receipt" for each one,
the old swineherd Garibaldi.*

The Sad and Meaningful Description

Of His Death

"A hole in the big wall won't do,"

they said, "a lair, an empty place in the citadel;

*tomorrow at dawn shall be cleared that miserable defect
in which you live. Our wall shall have to be perfect."*

He understood, he understood not... He fed his little pigs

like always and washed them till late at night;

he took out then a dusty flask of brandy

And stood all night long in the large doorway

looking into the deep Quarter Țicău. In his hand he held the hourglass.

When clear trumpets sang at dawn

they came with their tools :

*Seven great masters
journeymen and bricklayers.
They made mortar
of clean sand which they found.
Bubble-level and plumbed
so the wall's not crooked.
Scoops and trowels
agile and silvery
from the ground
a tall wall
of a sacred monastery.*

Inscription on the Wall in the Very Spot Where
The Door of the Old Swineherd Will Never Open Again

*In this enormous wall in which there was once a door,
rests forever a Swineheard and his pigs; they are all sublime.
Long ago they were changed into ashes,
but their shadows are in heaven; together with seraphs*

they haunt everlasting paths.

DEMIURGOS FROZEN IN THE DESERT

*“Poems of invocation spring from a soul-flux, from the interior,
from that interior harmony of things-because I believe there is a
harmony of things in the universe which the poet has access to...
We follow each one our own destiny.”*

The Prisoner

*I belong to the hours of the defeated.
A new King, come from the north lands
bearing the frightful name of I,
scattered my army of gold;
the light of my house, maiden and wife,
is shamed slave in his barbarian tent.*

*and I blinded hear around me
how the tender boughs roar like harps...*

Reprimand

*And when you reprimand me as the craziest of people,
I sadly gnaw moustache and keep still;
you will not understand
that I am the long-suffering badger
and sworn brother of the cuckoo;
that I am the surly owner of hidden vineyards,
the greedy bear near the kernel of silence;
the mute
with voice for weddings in heaven.*

Forbidden fruit

*Oh, oh, what fruit could this be,
its kernel bigger than its shell?
What fruit is this,
swelling over its edge
enveloping the ocean, the earth like a nut,
and the crystal sphere of Treasure?
Existing endless form outside, beyond itself,
its shell lies in the middle of the kernel
and borders it...*

Zero Hour

*It's plain madness to exist at such an hour.
The small watches like insects were eaten by table clocks,
fat round broodhens which cackle
and slander when they are swallowed whole
by some monstrous and irresolute pendulum.
They are slowly consumed by the pontifical horologe from the belfry.*

*Which dates from the twelfth century
of all eras.
The twelfth being the last hour,
it gnaws at itself from inside till it finishes
and nothing is left of it.*

At such an hour it's madness to exist!

The Parable of the Ear and the Count

*It is a mazed form of stone. A giant snail-shell
or a huge stone ear. There's a deep permanence
in the wash of the leaden sea. I am counting.
Look, the drop descends again
into the stone snail-shell. There's neither haste
nor fatigue. The ear listens
how another drop adds to the sea. Thus was born the whole Sea;*

*Thus it is being born. A drop
once
every sixteen thousand years.
This is all. I am the one who's counting.*

The Story of the Big Clock and the Blind Man

*A huge Clock's machinery in the stony desert,
like a giant basilica-mosque. None of you
travelers have ever passed through that land
named "The Stone Horologe." Its sound
melancholic heard – so they say – over all the earth;
But more truly, it is not heard anywhere at all,
(or, hearing it all the time, we get so used to it
that we never hear it.)
What seems strange to me is that its guard, a poor blind man,
keeps counting something, using for this
little bones on his mummied hand. He counts hastily
and, sometimes, his blind scorched visage, like an old palimpsest,
displays itself illuminated by hope and joy. Then he looks,
with his empty eye sockets, to the Horologe.
But soon he sinks again in his meager calculation
and nobody disturbs the great silence around.*

*This, honored travelers, is the story of
the Big Clock and the Blind Man,
which I have told you and now stop.*

Purple Poem

Invocation

*With unlimited knowledge of the limited
without the pains, without the happy drunkenness
of those who are deluded and mastered,
my soul comes close to you, o,
scented habitat of perfection.*

*The voice of gold was the cry of my
nocturnal seconds, I consummated
beloved bloodshed in your name
I fed on hot life, like
the sweet beasts of the forest.*

*The flow of the stream of gold was for me
the faithful sign of the deafening being.
Dreams of a moment are the endless, o, the endless
swift cavalcades in the deserts, the riled
deeds of my armies.
But clear as an enamel boulder in the desert
my soul now stands before
the thunder of gold. Received
something you don't know of, you, omniscient.
These victuals so hot and so tender.*

O, you, blinding abyss...

II.

*My golden deeds celebrated themselves under the rule
of the desert. Great pyramids
watched over the fulfillment of the destiny. And above all
there were voices of field lilies like a moan
sacred verses uttering, memorial
to those deeds never done, solemnizing
their glory in the solitude
of the Sphinx.*

*But not about this we speak, but about
the frenzy for virgin blood, about the leaf
pierced by the year, about the beloved head
tenderly rolling to my feet.*

*It was celebrated in order to
enslave the desert fully. The beloved skull
I converted into a sacred grail from the cult
of inexistent ones...*

*And above all
choirs of angels accompanied my tormenting dream.
But let it be! I shall also tell the story
of my treacheries, of cowardly poisonings and
of stranglings. All is written
in heavy letters of gold, on thick purple.
Certain signs were conceived never to be
understood.*

III.

*My love, do not listen to the whisper of the ghost; revenants
suck the blood of maidens, tempting
them first with tales. Along this clear shore
let us go, peaceful and conciliated
under the moon's great aegis, trust this,
we are these, all these are these, everything that exists
exists, let us go to the hill
of the Scythic grave. Under the aegis of the paleness,
Oceans of the world are phantasmagoria
Troops of phantoms, choruses tall as the stars,
huge galleons of constellations, the sky's galleys
driven by pale slaves of the depths. Under the white argis
The Great Lily
waits for us--two thousand years.
...Everything that exists. Everything that exists exists forever.
The death has no life. Phantom and dream is the history
of the sea of blood, red nightmare, everything was celebrated
in order to enslave the desert. The Desert.
Do not listen to what the ghost deliriums. These
we are ourselves, ourselves. It is about a hillock
very near, in Luxor of Egypt, it's a game of Nature.*

The Perfect History of Sagittarius

*In that clear night we gathered together
on the round island on the lake of the forest;
We wore light armor and helmets like Herods
and in nocturnal silence only severe gestures*

*tore the dead curtain of the moon-rays...
Strung in lines, changeable volutes
and orderly flocks, the mother mystic
silently ordered our moony hunting.*

*It was a bull's head, darkened entirely,
with a fixed stare that made me suffer:
Beneath a kind of beard, whiter than snow,
between his horns, yellow, glittered a water lily.*

*And late, each of us at a certain hour,
as was written, enter the circle hearing the voivodal sign
with garland and with archer's arms
and only one arrow, that arrow of crystal.
Kneeled in my circle and overwhelmed with blazons,
I aimed my arrow, my single arrow
at that water lily... over oceans time,
on the round island, in the night of snow...*

V.

Rightly or wrongly? Whether rightly or wrongly.

First he was given to the executioner that cut off both hands.

They fell like two fish on a pile of hands. That's the fate of captives, that's the fate of their hands. After a month they cut off

his arms to the elbows. This is the fate of outlaws.

Later they cut off his tongue, it is a perjurer's due.

His eyes they tore out with a red-hot spike, expiating thus his unfaithfulness.

His strangulation took place in darkness, with the string of the melodious bow.

Because this is the fate of those born.

The Game

*Let's go and play love
let's play Ildiko and Attila.
This is my fur tent
where I brought you against your will.*

*But the game is not a real one.
We see phantoms, like madmen do;
once upon a time, an emperor lived...
These wedding guests are not the Huns.*

*My love, why is it
that this river is so red?
And what is its name?
This is the Danube, love.*

*My love, do you think my brothers
sleep quietly under red waters?
And might my father be with them?
Come close to me, my love.*

*My love, all these things have passed,
let me tell you one of my many dreams;
But first let me kiss you
since all the doors are closed.
It seemed we were children once
in the green septentrion
and our nurse read to us
from the book of Marcel Brion.*

*We played a strange game
a game with flames and blood;
My love, now please give me
your dagger, something tightens on me.*

*Let us play a beautiful game
to be written in histories.
... thick dust layers above the steppe
and cranes wailing long.*

VII. Authors Confession: His Weakness before the World, The Passing of Time and the Purple Poem

*So, this is the author ; he carries a lily on his shoulder as if it were a gun,
Thus armed, everything that there is bites him.
He will often say : "O, frailty, thy name is Art."
Being thus so ridiculous and weak, his attempt is in vain,
just like the bricklayer's, his brother's,
who wanted to build a pyramid in Țicău.
But, in particular,
the hour seems late to him, and much is he afraid
that time does not suit his modest tools.
Therefore, full sad, he suggests this story to you:*

VIII. The Old Chronologists

Two fellows had been staying for a very long time in a gateless construction ; they did not know exactly how long they had been staying there, though they meticulously counted each passing day and had calculated exactly, with the help of monk Damaschin's digital calendar, all the holidays and more important dates for many thousands of years. One might say they had become experts in chronology, since they knew precisely on what date Easter had fallen in 1054 and whether that day in 1453 had been a Thursday or a Friday: their dream was a complete calendar for sixteen thousand years.

Sometimes they would say: 24th April, 11007 will be a Tuesday before Palm Sunday...

Still they could not say how long they had been in that room, though they remembered precisely the day of their arrival there, as well as the exact number of days that had passed since.

Towards the end they said: the complete calendar for sixteen thousand years is finished-made from the little bones of our fingers, and we know for certain that sixteen thousand years from today will be Tuesday before Palm Sunday.

But in that moment one of them sighed and said: listen, now I shall die, you keep on with the chronology,

And the other one: I also feel I am dying.

Then, looking at their mummified wrists and their parchment skin, where the sixteen thousand years were minutely marked, they both died.

IX.

*Here where we are is true peace. True peace.
At your feet, love, the wild plum-tree has blossomed,
the whole hillside is sowed by angels with the flowers
that werenaamed "Immortal"... from my heart
a field poppy is kindled once a year. It's night,
and at your feet, love, the wild plum-tree has blossomed.*

*The sea deeply watches the white silences
in which our speech drowned, and the moon, as in the old holy poems,
lights up the lily-shaped construction. A meditating lily,
thus we were, and we passed along this shore
beside the sea. The whole universe is a lily.*

Here where we are is true peace. True peace.

X. Annex: A Student's Scratching on the White Slate Of the Scythian Tomb

*My non-existent love
with large eyes so sad
from your non-existent place
you watch me with eyes so sad*

*from behind the silver wall
which separates all things
the ones which are as if they are not
the ones which are not as if deathless*

*my lily-faced love
from that time so full of you
where you forever non-exist
you watch me with eyes of triste.*

--CARMEN EXPLICIT--

EDICTS ON FRUIT AND FLOWERS

“On mythic poetry I have at times used the word exultant, the same as the sexual act: the sensation amplified to voluptuousness.”

Wedding

*Look, now I present myself
for the wedding that can't be put off.
I bear the white sign, a silver tiara,
and under the tiara those seven stigmas.
I know, I know it's very late
as if it never had been.*

*I have ordered for everybody here joy
put on ice, for such a duty
we accomplish only once in life
for ever and ever.*

*So what if the Priest is blind,
when everybody here from the witnesses on back
pinch each other's asses and laugh like fools...*

*Finally, o, finally all's all right,
The bride has no body,*

*Bride, bride, what kind of scythe
is that you carry?*

Winter Apparition

*E-hey, in rich winter, (the generosity
of winter prodigious) in rich winter, in rich winter,
Guess who you see, leisurely wandering "through the blue snow drift?"
It's the master
of nightmare, the great
Histrion.
He's in sable furs, leisurely
his northern drunkness (he doesn't care)
Look! We contemplate his ghost –
That genial burlesques under the four-century-old walnuts,
Olympian walnuts, tolerant in their winter cerement.
Who calls him by name, who has the defiance
to cheer his shameful name?
The concave mirror of the sky, the eye
of the universe considers him; in the pure bell
which is the Universe, his impersonal name
is heard to the inverted recesses of nonexistence.
Oh, yes, in fantastic furs he dresses up
with fair locks to his shoulders (just like young Rodica),
(dyed moustache to hide
his years), he wears kneeboots with designs on them showing
"Stag hunting," and apologizes:
"Forgive me, my lady, my prose, you will soon discern
the scores of 'Missa' composed by me
four centuries ago expressly for your ears."
(I heard form afar, how in that strange house
fine fingers passed voluptuously over harpsichord keys.) He pronounces,
meticulously wandering through winter prodigies,
"I have come, I have come, I have come..."*

The Talisman

*"Ich komme, ich komme!" the golden-faced woman was calling from afar
and from afar I could perceive the blaze of her hair.
But my brother and I picked from the shore
of the lake that was named ONE NIGHT,
The sloping lakeside drowned by woods, where the rays
humbly fall like leaves in autumn--we gathered
small barges ("messengers of the word"), strange ships,
no longer than a foot each, and in which
as in a kind of a small coffin, wrapped in slik,
lay writing instruments, one in each barge.
This game pleased us much ("children we were both")
and the lake whose name I mentioned, lasting and heavy lake,
did not frighten us, did not scare us, did not worry us.
We knew only this: there is a stone tower like fire,
that watches, waits, listens, Up to
the crown of the hill we must climb.
Meanwhile
was heard as in a dream the voice of the burning one.
Soothing, like a weeping: "Ich komme, ich komme."
Where could I find advice
for my clarification and strength? A charm
to heal weakness, ferocity?
Like a good talisman and a healing herb on the paths
of solitude...
We did not notice that something was happening.
"Something's happening, is happening!" a subdued voice was calling from afar.
("Mere illusion, mere illusion.")
Men different in size but vigorous and rough
Gathered wet and heavy oars from the shore and out of the reeds;
an immense dark skiff they prepared for departure.
Everything was done in silence, only short groans
penetrated from the depths. Then
from the lake whose name I mentioned broke
a kind of roar.
If the Universe truly is an animal,
that animal roared. I say nothing more.*

*The white foam of fear seemed to illuminate the lake
with a fragile light. The big mountain
(its name is Okeanos) invoked me (I was sure now).
On the crest, like a torch was burning that tower*

*built from massive boulders of fire. My face
turned to gold, my hair
a blaze of burning serpents, and I whispered
with a voice from afar: "Ich komme, ich komme..."*

Poem about Miss Gabriela Serban and about Our Single Meeting in a Swedish Painting Exhibition

*What melancholic trumpets rocked the Universe
on that autumn afternoon in which I, a strange
and embarrassed man, wandered through towers and houses...
But Gabriela Serban didn't know
that the sky sounded especially with trumpets
from my single meeting with her.
Of course before that millenniums measured out, even Napoleon had died
and many times to vigils
I in the evenings went happily.*

*But this Miss her searchlight eyes
violet in night as from a sleep woke me,
eternal Miss, the very image, careless as to her many shortcomings.
The cause of her strange presence, this event, was now and again only herself,
she seemed to know it too well, though she didn't know it,
and though it lasted but a moment, an insignificant detail
was given strictly to know she is, for her to know I am.*

*Her lights, her lives, were for her but odd souvenirs
together with Angora cats and toys on a pleasure yacht
inside nebulous, and for me unknown, spheres,
while my worlds were impure labyrinths
with smoking torches and ancient tools of torture
to which an obscure nostalgia called her.
There, in the hall with profoundly Swedish nudes
shamelessly tangled, greenish in color and a little to fat,
the tall, beautiful Miss had something military,
something of a young gambling cadet, something I ask myself in vain,
something urban and rural as well, anyhow she stopped in front of the most obscene
of the nudes, investigated with delicate and expert looks
while my blood rose up to my cheeks,
because I sensed that soon I would lose her.
I wanted to bumble an excuse, she fixed me with a curious look
(she was so beautiful)
then ambled amused towards a book
with signatures and impressions, wrote something there in English
and then vanished between life and death
into the leaves that rained over us.
But for you this whole story doesn't matter.*

Poem in the Memory of the Three Peach Pits

*About something we will never speak anything.
Look therefore for unforgetfulness in those days on the shore
where salvation seemed so near;
A sweet brotherhood sprang from nothing, and the miracle
of the threefold hidden love, known by all three of us,
float intangibly today over the dunes, on that shore...
We did not lay great stress on poems nor did the long
contemplation of water mean anything: you were
of a tender ferocity, while I was called the Pelican
and our joyful life we lived carelessly as if
nothing had ever been, and in fact there were
but illusions of gestures, a happy
longing to remain so for ever.
About this let us tell nothing.
We wanted to celebrate your irresolute birthday, but
this gift from God was taken back, and in hurry
I ran stealthily away, pretending I had leprosy,
Even if from cowardice, and sentimental,
the pits of those three peaches eaten by us
I planted in the sand, in exactly that place.
About this we'll never tell anything.*

Rosalba

*Happy love is the love for Rosalba;
its intricate pleasures, its wandering ways,
o, fragile death named Rosalba...
With mastery of self and wisdom,
without eagerness, wanting her is a tower
of pain, sinking into depths.
From the wall, sovereigns deceased of Sicily watch
how we, clenched together, pull with out teeth
and throw away like petals our bleeding nails.
Rosalba has two blue knitting needles
from my retinas; with the burning grace
of virginity she plunges them into the blue voids
so that the whole light of her being
enters my eyes like the sap of death,
of the fragile death who is called Rosalba.
The chorus of pages sings psalms in romance
the wailed grievings of passion without
end, the underground grievings.
On the mosaic moor Rosalba is dancing
in Spanish boots, the happy dance
that racks me on the eternal wheel.*

The Sweater

*You remember of course the purple sweater,
that sublime sweater I put on
for the most beautiful of our evenings,
that you said looked on me like
an enameled armor, you know, on that evening
when we started burdened with carnations and jasmine
to Jerusalem... when Mrs. Zambilovici
gave us two sandwiches each (to have on the way)
the sweater which I afterward brought back
fluttering like a banner tattered by wars,
which I afterwards wore
in frenzy on my body skinny as a miser
til it was absorbed through pores and assimilated itself
into all the cells of my body
and into my skeleton
and its shining texture became tissue.
Why do you try to deny
why do you try to pretend you don't know that sweater
what evening what Jerusalem and so on?
Why do you want by all means to touch it, to see it,
to have me take it off just now when it can't be done,
why do you pretend there was not, there was no sweater,
that you don't see me, you don't feel me, you don't recognize me?*

The Path of Roses

*Shall we wander, love, shall we wander
that path of roses?
As if we remembered from forgotten
lives, of forgotten paths...*

*It was early leaf and the forest
of roses glowed
in the depths.*

*The foliage virgin and vibrating with an
early fever "we shall sink
in the delicate woods."*

*Deep vaults, voluptuous arches,
our shadows remained for ever
shy and pale, the childish
shadows...*

*There, you will say, stretches a plaza,
uproar rules on stone tiles,
for a thousand years there's been a plaza there.
My love, it is not real, listen
to the sacred silence which descends;
let's go, I say, on the path of roses,*

*through cool vaults we will meet, under sacred arches,
our shadows embracing,
the childish shadows...*

Receive This Rosebud

In a white sled.

In a white sled as big as a ship.

In a sled as big as a city.

In the sled Annunciation

I'm sailing to you love.

You are in the forest of roses.

Crowned with roses.

You are in a rose.

From the rose Floribunda, my love,

You're looking at the sky, how comes nearer

The majestic most gracious coleoptera beetle.

And look, love, how the sled of the sky

descends on a rose.

Look at these petals, look and believe, how the petals

enclose it, 43 petals, a rose

embraces, embraces, tightens around it, hides it,

look love, this is the rosebud,

in its heart is a sled,

is my white sled Annunciation.

In Memoriam

*My love, like ripe fruit hang
our lives on the branch
of boundlessness soon
the austral wind will descend, herald
of the great snowstorms, O, it is proper
that we should keep the patriarchal memory
of that warm night in which
it was revealed, from under long weeping willows,
glittering hypnotically, as in the depths of oceans,
Țicău governed by moonlight.
Or, at the same time,
let us not go without remembering
that rosy apricot tree on Savescu Street.
He, his flowers
stripped in spring as brides undress.
My love, I seem to hear
ripe apricots falling. They fall
without pain, in serenity. Above
are constellations, never changing. Or, our souls,
ever, ever...*

Now I Shall Leave

*My love I shall leave now for a known land
don't be afraid the path is short
and without dangers mellifluous woods
shed their flowers on both sides
don't be afraid I'll come dressed
in some different garb and it's possible
you won't recognize me maybe
I'll have another face and don't be afraid
I'll be a little strange please don't cry
everything changes look
those hot years are no more
now I shall leave for a known land*

PARABLES CARVED WITH THE KNIFE SOLITUDE

“Trust in the words is a rock that springs from the great discouragement of the millennia. I am beaten; I am poor and beset. But there is great luck in having no luck... I have described the end of all human life “Race to the Stars,” about our planet turned to cosmic dust, about that explosion, about everything that exists turning on the edge of the edge of the universe, at the limits of the Galaxy. When the Earth has gone, we still live at the heart of the Great Logos.”

Chance Denied

*We, bestowed moments
have always been on other planets
even constellations unto which penetrate
none of our eye's rays.
But look how our eyes, crystal spheres,
will petrify in the dust which is the same
in all the Universe
O, bits of cosmic dust
which only once were Myself,
will they renounce forever the chance
by happenstance denied?*

Soul of Evening

*Magnificent gallows lifted by the sunset.
The flaming faces of the dead
proffer ecstatic verbs above
the livid hills.*

*I tell you: there's bloodbath in the Cosmos,
a sanguid defloration like a stabbing.
Do not invoke the gods of the day, in infinite
love, everything to be celebrated was celebrated.
Look, now installed in the white forest
of lilac, in the woods of secular lilies,
is a rule of peace, a reconciliation,
and the bird of solitude in itself omens:
"wait for me yesterday."*

*You allpale prince who in a sled drawn by six pairs of elk
so seraphic run through the world's foothills,
so lovingly you kill me as one kills his hostile twin brother,
and angelic bind my soul in fragile cords...
And like a good victual put me in they tiny gracious sled
while the one I know breathes like always
not remembering you. With years
he is more and more stupid and understands ever fewer words.
But I come back to the divine burden:
You put it in an ebony chest
with music scent and polar furs.
O, I know it is useless, the most useless uselessness
to ask you...*

The Well

*I fell into the dark-deep well
beside the gate,
with its water seething
in the fire-core of the Earth.
When I arrived
it was like a triangular meadow,
a fragile light like some filigree or a virgin's veil,
on the shore of the forest named Eden
there was a wood well in the middle, around
which Easter flowers, yellow and others purplish,
swayed in the naïve rivulet.
I sat on the dark-greenish casing
suddenly understanding my own name
childishly carved there with a pocket knife,
I fell into the depths, and arriving,
I found a green by the gate,
where there was a well.*

Eli, Eli

*Eternal night for the one crucified in himself...
Because no ointment-bearing girl will cry at his feet,
and no apostle will herald his consecration...
They don't wrap him in any eternal cloth
and nobody burnt either incense or spices for him.
His father turns his eyes back to the clouds
while he, losing his soul, pleads for forgiveness...
O, his blood dropping in the hot dust
gives birth to no purple shrines, changes into
no orgies of burning carnations... and these three tear-drops
turned into no pearls.
Night eternal for the one crucified in himself.*

Vision at the Edge of the Forest

*O, God, with thunder the sky of rain and night broke
and in the splendor of light, to me descended
the terrified gold-feathered dragon.*

*And I stood petrified beside the forest's wall.
He had soft hair white as snow,
he topped in front of me: "I am Basil
the good. Prepare" and I stood petrified
by the wall of the stone forest*

*... late – summer rain in the forest,
and honey locusts shed holy white flowers
upon his purple footprints...*

Forelia—A Legend

*I got lost in the Forest of Desolation, mists
pressed like dark curtains, the mountains lay –
blind ill giants omenating deserts.*

*There I've seen Forella's visage, a light
happily descended onto the place of the forgotten, at the shore of clear water
the air as deep as water, like a whirlpool
of sky in worlds beyond. And it seemed in a water
that the icon mirrored herself forever lost...
She appeared to be beside the water she bathed in
and her hair, like gold water to her ankles,
drowned her out of sight. Her little hand
was fondled by it, like a child playing
In flowing ripples. The fisherman stood beside
... And lightningstruck, down I fell on the familiar slab,
so the icon might burn out in my eyes. Around me stand the mountains,
gloomy witnesses, mists
forever unexplored on the water which flows
through the Forest of Desolation.*

The Chose One

*Here he is: this is the one bearing the signs,
this is the one overwhelmed by luck and by coats-of-arms,
this is the one who goes silent.
Congratulate him, overpraise him, and take
pity on him.*

Stray Thoughts About the Farmer

*In his self-acceptance, and yet
completely dependent on changes of weather,
the farmer expiates himself daily
with the heavy fruits of solitude.*

*During work, of course,
there are voices which call him, and even a mission
on behalf of the Senate...*

*Very rare letters, containing particular
seeds of strange plants, prescriptions
and news of those who were missing in action.*

*As to his reading, I can say
that he avoids Sextus, and he doesn't research
the origin of plants.*

About women he doesn't think anything; about death the same.

*His errors consuming
he weighs with the big fruit
of solitude.*

Naturforschung

*. . . And besides we don't sell
gloves for horses.*

*This I was told by the wonderful one
beautiful as Cleopatra
in the shop up the fourth lane
where they sell by the piece.*

*And I humbly lifted to my back the burden
of seven domestic suitcases full
of hay and straw dried under the moon's rays
according to my top-secret prescriptions.
In fact I only wanted to consider her teeth
when she neighed,
a curiosity befitting one who studies
nature.*

Lacustrine Discovery

*In a lake of Suceava⁴ county
a small tubular animal was discovered
In which they suspect
that the map of the Peninsula Kola might be drawn,
in its smallest detail.*

⁴ *A county in northern Moldavia*

Narcissus Kidnapped

*But the water didn't stay in place.
Its substance came at a call, it seemed,
from the shapeless nights from caves,
his image faithfully to show.
And arriving there, the water
was for a moment his image
with which it filled its depths;
and each of its grains, for a moment only,
was Narcissus.*

*But the water didn't stay in place.
But descending, always in each grain
it wore something of his image
And the whole stream was him.
And descending always it turned into a brook
and into big rivers, and in the great Ocean
his icon dissolves, as does salt.*

*In that clearing, by the stream,
was left a flock of flowers.
Because the water didn't stay in place.*

The Rooster of the Day Releases the Bow

*Hu-hu-huaa, the roosters roar, a million roosters at dawn,
In terror crack my head against the ceiling
while the roosters yip in chorus,
a million dreaming roosters.
I am a bow of blue steel
tensed, crouched all night long in bed.
Huaa-gurigaa, the roosters shriek, I exploded
I sprang to the rafters, my whole head is a lump.
Their dreaming bellow terrifies me.
To hell with it, you madman, they are ghosts
shrieking in graves
of fogs and rains.*

Crepuscular Ode

Enchantress...

*At the great world's twilight, on time's margin,
a stake is kindled, with blue flames
my soul is consumed for the last time...*

Chimera...

*The world is tired now because of love,
the power of faith is exhausted, the world is dead,
but my soul is the harp of love for you.*

Absolver...

*Nothing was ever perfect on earth,
sick sufferings are our moments, but even so
perfection spills rich over the last hour.*