

# Hidden Words

On his eighty-eighth birthday, the poet Dragutin Tadijanović offered us, and himself, a present of sixteen new lyrical poems characterized by mature simplicity and deep mystery

**Tanko Maroević**

The new collection of poems by Dragutin Tadijanović, entitled »The Home of Secrecy«, was published by the Biškupić Collection as the sixth volume of the Speculum editions, and introduced to the public on the 4th of November. While the title tickles our curiosity by its associative links, and calls for our attention by the acoustic parallelism with the author's initials, the sub-title is very clear and precise: lyrical poems 1990-1993. During the last three years, after a large edition of his collected poems (and his complete literary work), a fresh, not formerly published handful of verses has appeared. By publishing them, the poet testifies not only to his unusual spiritual vitality, but also deepens his essential concern for the destiny of the word, for the sound and sign of man's existence and his passage through the World.

The mature, late, recent (or even »other«, in his otherwise undoubted unity) Tadijanović is really in the first place a poet of poetry. In the eighties he wrote a series of lyrical texts inspired by poetry, paraphrases or variations of other poets' motifs, and addressed his brothers in verse from different epochs and places. So this book begins with an emblematic homage to Giacomo Leopardi, and pays respect to the memory of his friend Jure Kaštelan. One of the poems explicitly testifies that Tadijanović was inspired and motivated by the poetry of S. M. Karlovčanin (Slavko Mihalić), and of a similar character is al-

so the greeting to the »artist's hand« of Ivan Lacković. Goran (Kovačić) is also present, if only as a shadow, in the miraculous splendor of green moonlight and the tender evocation of a privileged anecdote. But all these learned and bookish references do not have the effect of pure literature, they are a part of the author's most lively experience, adopted a long time ago and fused into his veins and mental metabolism.

The present time, so sad and war-torn, has also entered, if discretely, into the poet's space, but has not succeeded in changing his currents and intonations. The memory of those who have nothing, »not even a grave of their own«, or invocations

against violence *Sažeži ubojicu* (»Burn the Murderer«) are left beside the elementary possibility of expression: »Words are too weak for this horror«. However, the problem of the word itself and the question of making verses which would correspond with the blessed moments without forsaking the real burden of the actual experience, these are the preoccupations of the poet even at the times when he apparently only toys with his creative ability. The poem *Tko zna jesam li...* (»Who knows if I am...«) was born out of the doubt and ambiguity of the search, only to recognize in the end the happiness of the form: »Verses hug in a line«. This poem has served the author of the preface, Hrvoje Pejaković, as a basis for many of the pertinent remarks in his perceptive introduction (in which we encounter even a surprising, but lucid, recollection of Michaux's »ignorance«).

Tadijanović has not for a single moment fallen short of his optimal range, and knows how to utter both prayer and colloquialism, in a most natural but strictly organized way. It is sufficient to listen to the music of some of the titles, *Sipila je sitna kišica* (»Drizzle drops« or *Molba munji nebeskoj* (»A prayer to the lightning in heaven«) or *Nema me... i krik se razliježe* »I am no more... and a scream spread«, (at the same time implying the confessional stratum), and we will easily comprehend that a Gentle Word in the Home of Secrecy is right when it implies that he really is »one of the chosen«.



Dragutin Tadijanović

Dragutin Dumančić