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WAITING FOR THE BOGUMILS

Milorad Pejić

For Mak Dizdar

Just as Tibetan nomads choose their headman by a throw of dice in which the one who loses the gamble wins, it's fallen to me to continue to wait for the Bogumils after you. So that there is always someone who will go out to meet them in the language they understand.

Every day I open the house of our forefathers, bring out figs, and pour the wine, reading the stone while I wait for the Bogumils. I enjoy this work but I can see that my children are already growing old and that my time on earth is running out, too. Soon I will go lie down, like you, in the coldness of space and cover myself with a stećak* like with a comforter. I therefore seek someone to relieve me, someone who will wait for centuries to come out to meet me in the language I understand.

Translated by Omer Hadžiselimović

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^{*} Stećak, pl. stećci: medieval tombstones in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighboring countries.