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Grave, Cavern

Marko Vešović

O, Arabic writing, you are full of curved
Sabers and crescent moons.

There are no more dragons in the Ropušnica Cavern
But the treasure is also gone upon which they once lay

Through here, who knows when,
The conquerors rode their horses,
And even now, we still sneeze from the dust
That their hooves
Disturbed.

And where has it gone now, the hundred-eared soul of the child
That listened to the paths of the snowflakes.
Listened to the steps of the shades from before the Nemanjićes.

Are you crumbling, o world, o flower of the orange tree,
Or am I ever more gossamer,
Just as this writing from Asia is shallower and shallower every day,
Fainter and fainter

These Damascus swords, these new moons
On the slanting gravestone.

Translated by Wayles Browne and Omer Hadžiselimović – © 2008 Wayles Browne and Omer Hadžiselimović

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