

De Rada's "Milosao"

By ARSHI PIPA (Washington)

Circa 300 000 Italo-Albanians live today in Southern Italy. Not all of them speak Albanian, but all of them call themselves Arbëresh, i. e. Albanians. A conspicuous part are followers of the East Orthodox rite. Their ancestors came to Italy in the 15th and 16th centuries because they did not want to live under the Turks who conquered the Balkan peninsula. These Albanian emigrants managed not only to keep their language but also cultivated it. Italo-Albanian literature precedes literature in the mother country. Begun in the 18th century as a folk-like literature combining sacred songs and epic rhapsodies, it flourished in the 19th century with works by talented writers such as *Girolamo de Rada*, *Gabriele Dara*, *Giuseppe Serembe* and *Giuseppe Schirò*. The distinctive feature of the Italo-Albanian literature is its Byzantine ingredient. The great majority of the emigrants were East Orthodox, and many came from Greece, parts of which they had colonized before the Turks invaded the peninsula. The alliance of the Albanian language and Greek liturgy determined the survival of the Italo-Albanians as a distinct ethnic and religious group. They lived in Italy isolated from the rest of the population, speaking Arbëresh at home and preserving their customs. Italy remained to them "the foreign land" from which they hoped to return one day to their fatherland, a hope they nourished with epic memories of the bygone glory that had once been the Albania of *Scanderbeg*, their national hero. Thus, a romantic poetry *ante litteram* developed in the form of heroic folk songs combining some principal elements of European romanticism: praise of the Middle Ages and its Christian ideals, nostalgia of the past, and a sense of estrangement. The tradition of oral poetry was continued and cultivated in unison with South-European romanticism. Of this literature *de Rada* is the main representative figure and his "Milosao" its highest artistic expression.

The original "Milosao" is a text of thirty-three cantos and three monostrophes, a total of 1107 rhymeless octosyllabic lines. The "lyrical romance" was first published in Naples in 1836, with an Italian translation facing the Albanian text and also bearing an Italian title: "Canti di Milosao. The Son of the Prince of Scutari". The work is a collection of lyrics based on partly real and partly imaginary events, which are loosely connected but have a certain development and dénouement.

The young prince has hardly come home from a stay in Salonika when he meets a girl with whom he falls in love. The girl is named after her mother, "the daughter of Cologrea", a mark of her low social status. This difference keeps the lovers apart for quite some time, the prince's mother being opposed to their marriage. The hero goes to war against the Turks, then returns; his love seems hopeless. Suddenly an earthquake destroys Scutari, levelling social differences. The lovers abandon the city, which then falls in the hands of the enemy. They finally marry and a child is born to them.

But *Milosao's* happiness is short-lived, the child dies, followed soon after by the death of the bride. Faithful to her memory, *Milosao* never remarries, becoming in his bereavement more and more melancholy. This state of mind devolves eventually into a sentiment of bitterness towards his wife, "the stranger" who took him away from his mother. "Mother" stands here for 'motherland', *Milosao's* sorrow is remorse for having abandoned his country in order to enjoy life with his bride, a case of Cornelian conflict between love and patriotism — The "Cid" was a favorite text. The form, however, of his remorse is typically romantic: the hero longs for death, invoked to end a life felt as a failure. The last canto shows the prince among his soldiers, he has finally taken command of them to free Albania from the Turks. From the tent where he is dying of wounds he can see Scutari, discern its houses, and smell the aromas of its gardens brought to him by the wind as a last salute. In such atmosphere of homesickness *Milosao* is said to vanish as in a "dream".

A word should be added about the Byzantine element in the poem. The hero's name, *Milosao*, is an Italianized form of slavic *Miloslav* meaning compassionate. In Canto X, an "Easter Carol", the chorus extols the prince's "compassionate heart". He visits *Cologrea's* daughter at her home at Epiphany, a characteristic Byzantine holiday, highlighted by a ritual: in sites bordering on rivers, lakes or seas, the priest throws the cross into the water, for swimmers to pick it up. The Virgin of Constantinople, called *Mesosporite* because her festival is celebrated at wheat sowing time, recurs in the poem, invoked as the community's patroness. Indeed all important events until the hero's marriage occur on Byzantine festivals. "Milosao" is a Byzantine Calabro-Albanian romance.

This Byzantine element fades away in the poem's second edition (1847), written under the impact of the poet's love for an Italian countess, *Gabriella Spiriti*. *De Rada* wrote this version in Naples while a tutor at the *Spiriti* house and yearning to play an important part in Neapolitan politics. My article, "Milosao and Its Three Editions" (cf. *Südost-Forschungen* 28, 1969) demonstrates by textual comparison the drastic alteration of the original. The second edition stands to the original as *Tasso's* "Gerusalemme conquistata" stands to "Gerusalemme liberata". In his third edition of the poem (1873), minor changes are little improvement on the adulterated version.

At the time *de Rada* wrote "Milosao" there was no standard Albanian alphabet. He adopted one that had long been in use among the Byzantine

Calabro-Albanian clergy, a basically Latin alphabet with many Greek letters. The original "Milosao" has 23 Roman and 8 Greek letters. The alphabet of young *de Rada* reflects the impact Greek culture had on him at a time when philhellenism was fashionable in Europe, and particularly so among Orthodox Italo-Albanians, on account of the Greek language of their liturgy. In his mature years, *de Rada's* alphabet undergoes a process of Romanisation, which reaches its peak with the second "Milosao", where the Greek letters are reduced to three. The third "Milosao" contains five Greek letters — an attached page from *Hieronimus de Rada* (1978) tabulates the fluctuations of the poet's alphabet from one work to another.

De Rada wrote in an old-fashioned dialect of his native village, Macchia, which is also that of five other villages located at the foot of the Sila range in the Cosenza district. Since that dialect is hardly comprehensible to Albanians today, I considered transliterating the poem into standard Albanian and then translating it into some international literary languages.

The question of the poem's transliteration is not new. Jup Kastrati transliterated the original edition ("Këngët e Milosaos", 1956). Giuseppe Gradi-lone, who transliterated the third edition ("I Canti di Milosao", 1965) criticizes Kastrati for his failure to account for the phonetic value of the geminate vowels and consonants. The point is well taken. But Gradilone in turn fails to realize the metric value of geminate vowels. His phonetic transliteration is at the expense of the metrics, often causing the line to be deficient or excessive. My transliteration makes possible a metric reading of the poem by introducing a few diacritic signs so as not to mar the visual aspect of the text. I have thus limited those symbols to three: a dot subscribed to a vowel or consonant signifies that the sound is long, /ȧ = aa/ and /ḃ = bb/; an apostrophe sign subscribed to a schwa /ë/ signifies that the vowel is mute; and a Greek aspiration sign subscribed to /h/ symbolizes a particular sound, the voiced velar spirant [ɣ], which will be written /h̄/. Two Greek letters, /λ/ [λ] and /χ/ [ç] will be transliterated as /lj/ and /hj/ respectively.

As to the poem's translation, my English translation was completed in 1967, following an ACLS grant. The French translation is the work of Annie Prothin, a French native and an ABD of the University of Minnesota with a thesis on the French poet *Yves Bonnefoy*. Dr. Christine Körner studied Social Sciences at the University of Munich and wrote a dissertation, "Entwicklung und Konzeption der Presse in Albanien und der Albanischen Exilpresse" (1982), published as volume 22 of *Albanische Forschungen*.

A selection of four cantos translated into English, French, and German gives the reader an idea of the hybrid nature of the poem, which can be defined as a popular and classical Byzantine Albanian "lyrical romance".

Songs of "Milosao"

ΚΑΓΓΕΑΙ I. – Original

Λις jettá chioú ndyrrúar,
 Ui tù rii ndy deitit
 Καλθyruar te dit e ree:
 Por lumbaard e Anacreontit
 Ronej Teemp e mòcùme.
 Nd' ui gny dit vatte te malì
 E s'u pruar si chio ζαcoon.
 Vet cù atú s'e θaiti bora,
 S' e pyrγxaccu aculi,
 Se m'u reot gnera cù raa
 Tech e barda oπia imme.
 Cuur te dritta deu me oπii
 U sbulúia je deiti
 Si garéa cù del pyr siio,
 Mua mù ζyγχοi, tue fiuturúar
 Κελxevet finestyrys.
 M'u patáxa e ruata jaotin:
 Ruot pac scalancuur
 Δeut yyn i chiin xee;
 Λυλε λιυ tù gapura,
 Nd'era i tundyn e pyrζien,
 Nd' at ninυλ xeoùgnyn:
 Si attó λυλε κieli:
 Ti ruáje e sú cultóje
 Gnύ mbuiin gnerùζio:
 Calùζoret mby demát
 Mbain cayγele. Caa i gói
 Aghiena ndyr t'imme motùra
 Chioi' arryyn; e múma imme
 Ymùrin t' im θoi pyr ndù oπii.
 Gny garee m'u rod te curmi
 Si garéa mbrymies te otratti,
 Cuur váiζa e ngroghyt
 Ndien pyr tù párvyyn
 Sist cú mi frighien.

**Canto I –
 Transliteration by A. Pipa**

Ljis jeta kishë ndërruar,
 uj të rj ndë deitit,
 kaljthëruar te dit'e re.
 Por lumbardh' e Anakreontit
 5 ronej Tëmp' e moçëme.

Canto I. – De Rada's translation

La terra avea mutato querce, acque
 nuove nel mare s'inazzurravano a soli
 novelli, ma ancora la colomba d'Ana-
 creonte viveva in Tempe.
 Volò un giorno per acqua alla mon-
 tagna e non tornò come tenea co-
 stume.
 Pur non la neve aveala assiderata, nè
 tinta di sangue lo strale: ma volò lon-
 tano e posò sulla bianca mia casa:
 Allorchè il nìre e la Terra con torri,
 si disvelarono alla luce del mattino,
 nella guisa che l'allegrezza vien fuor
 su gli occhi, mi desto battendo dell'ali
 su i vetri della mia finestra.
 Balzai e corsi coll'occhio l'esterna
 campagna: le uve semimature decora-
 vano il nostro territorio. Chi ha ve-
 duto i dischiusi fiori de'lini quando
 un zeffiro li mesce e commove, ed essi
 sorridono a quell'aerea lor cuna?
 Come quei fiori avea colore il cielo.
 Le spigolatrici cantavano presso i co-
 voni: Tu guardavi e non ti sovvenia
 ch'in quello spazio eranvi umane
 cure.
 Io tornato era quei giorni alle so-
 relle da paese straniero; e mia madre
 camminava per le camere con in
 bocca il mio nome.
 Una gioia mi corse per la persona
 simile a quella che di sera prova la
 vergine, quando dapprima s'accorge
 nel letto che a farsele turgide comin-
 cian le poppe.

**Canto I –
 English translation and notes by
 A. Pipa**

The earth had put on new oaks,
 new waters in the sea
 became blue in the new day.
 But the dove of Anacreon
 5 lived in Tempe as of old.

De Rada's "Milosao"

<p>Nd'uj një dit' vate te malji, e s'u pruar si kish zakon. Vet çë atë s'e thaiti bora, s'e përgjaku akuli; 10 se m'u resht njera çë ra tek e bardha shpia ime.</p> <p>Kur te drita dheu me shpi u zbulua je deiti si harea çë delj për sish, 15 mua më zëgjoi, tue fiuturuar qelqevet finestërës.</p> <p>M'u pataksa e ruata jashtin. Rusht pak skalankur dheut tën i kijn hje. 20 Ljulje ljiu të hapura, nd'era i tundën i përzien, nd'at ninulj qeshënjën. Si afo ljulje qielli.</p> <p>Ti ruaje e së kuljtoje 25 një mbuñ njerëzish.</p> <p>Kallëzoret mbë dhemat mbain kangjelje. Ka i hoi ahiena ndër time motëra kishi' arrën; e mëma ime 30 emërin tim thoi për ndë shpi.</p> <p>Një hare m'u rodh te kurmi, si harea mbrëmies te shtraçi kur vaiza e ngrohët ndien për të parëzën 35 sist çë m'i frihien.</p>	<p>To the mountain spring she flew one day, this time not to return. But no snow froze her, nor arrow made her bleed, 10 on and on she flew until she came to my bright house.</p> <p>When the land with its homes and the sea unveiled itself in the dawning light beaming like joy from the eyes, 15 she woke me, fluttering her wings at my win- dow.</p> <p>I sprang from my bed and looked out. The ripening grapes made our land rich; 20 the flowering flax that the breeze rocked and mingled smiled in that lullaby. Like those flowers was the sky.</p> <p>I watched, oblivious 25 of human sorrows.</p> <p>Among the sheaves the gleaners sang. From foreign soil I had come to my sisters, and my mother made 30 the house ring with my name.</p> <p>Joy flooded my body as when a maiden feels, the night in her bed, a warmth that ripens 35 her breasts.</p>
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A new cycle of life begins on earth, a sea change, announced by the flight of a dove. The bird wakes the hero who has just come back home from abroad.

1—3. The oak, a symbol of longevity, also figures on *De Rada's* family coat of arms. The renewal of the sea is an image probably suggested by the myth of Venus' birth from the waves. Cf. *Foscolo* ("A Zacinto") "... dal greco mar da cui vergine nacque/Venere".

4—11. Anacreon, born in Teos in Asia Minor, emigrated to Athens after a long stay in Samos. According to a theory accepted by *De Rada*, the Albanians descend from the Pelasgians who used to live in Thessaly and also in Asia Minor.

Tempe (which he considers an Albanian word: “timpë” ‘roc’) is the Thessalian *locus amoenus* celebrated in pastoral poetry. Anacreon’s dove leaving Tempe to settle at the poet’s home in Calabria signifies allegorically that Greek poetry, dormant (“frozen”) for a long time, has been revived by the Albanian poet. The poet belongs to a diaspora that faced the threat of extinction (the “arrows” shot at the dove) during continuous emigration, from Epirus to Greece and to Italy.

12–14. The “awakening” is rendered in Dantesque language: “dawning light” recalls “l’alba vinceva l’ora mattutina” (*Dante*, Purgatorio I, 115), and “beaming like joy from the eyes” translates almost literally from “luce/ come pupilla per letizia viva” (Paradiso II, 143–144).

18–23. Idyllic tableau of rural life.

26–27. The note on human labor (“Among the sheaves the gleaners”), transcends the idyllic tableau into a vision of life, “sheaves”, “grapes” and “flax” symbolizing such elementary human needs as food, drink, and clothes.

27–30. In the Albanian ethos, the sister (“motër”, cognate with Lat. *mater*) is a substitute for mother (see Cantos XXVI, XXVII and XXX).

31–35. The original sensual simile introduces the main theme of the poem, love.

Canto I – French translation by A. Prothin

La terre avait changé ses chênes,
les ondes de la mer redevenaient bleues
avec les jours nouveaux.
Mais la colombe d’Anacréon
5 restait à Tempe comme jadis.

Elle vola à la source de la montagne
et ce jour-là ne rentra pas.
Mais ni neige ne la gela,
ni flèche ne la fit saigner,
10 son vol dévia
et sur ma maison blanche vint se poser.
Quand la terre, ses maisons et la mer
se découvrirent dans la lumière de l’aube
comme la joie qui rayonne des yeux,
15 elle me réveilla
battant des ailes aux vitres de ma fenêtre.

Je bondis du lit et regardai dehors:
le raisin presque mûr
embellissait notre pays,
20 les fleurs du lin,
quand le vent les balançait
souriaient dans leur berceuse.
Comme ces fleurs était le ciel.

Je les regardais, oubliant
25 les soucis humains.

Parmi les gerbes, les glaneuses chantaient.

De Rada's "Milosao"

D'une contrée étrangère
j'étais à peine retourné chez me soeurs,
et ma mère faisait retentir
30 la maison de mon nom.
Une douce chaleur m'envahit le corps,
comme celle qui connaît une jeune fille,
le soir dans son lit,
quand elle sent pour la première fois
35 s'épanouir ses seins.

I. Prélude. Un nouveau cycle commence sur la terre, annoncé par le vol d'une colombe. Elle éveille le héros à l'aube. Il est à peine de retour de l'étranger, et se sent renaître à la vie.

1—3. Dans la lettre-préface à Zagarese, l'auteur raconte qu'il écrivit ce chant à sa sortie du collège. Il aimait parcourir la montagne et contempler »la surface bleue de la mer lointaine« agitée par »le vent du nord qui faisait craquer les branches argentées des oliviers . . .« »Ce coin du monde en proie à l'agitation [des vagues] et au sifflement [du vent] me faisait penser au tumulte des générations humaines.« Cf. *Leopardi*, »L'infinito«: »E come il vento/ odo stormir tra queste piante, io quello/ infinito silenzio a questa voce/ vo comparando« (l'édition définitive des »Canti« parut à Naples la même année que le »Milosao«). — Le chêne est symbole de longue vie et d'endurance (sur le blason de la famille figure un chêne, que le poète interprète comme »le chêne de Dodone« dans »Specchio di umano transito« II, VI, 3). Le renouvellement de la mer a son mythe dans la naissance de Vénus. Voir *Foscolo*: »... del greco mar da cui vergine nacque/ Venere« (»A Zacinto«).

4—11. »La colombe d'Anacréon« semble provenir d'une anacréontique où le poète grec offre à Venus un poème en échange d'une colombe. Le char de Vénus était tiré par des colombes, et Anacréon chanta le vin et l'amour: »colombe d'Anacréon« équivaut à »poésie érotique«. — Anacréon était de Téos, en Asie Mineure, d'où il émigra à Athènes, après un long séjour à Samos. Selon une théorie acceptée par *de Rada*, les Albanais sont les descendants des Pélasges, qui habitaient la Thessalie et une partie de l'Asie Mineure. Le Tempé (que *de Rada* considère comme un mot albanais: »timpë« »rocher«) est la vallée de Thessalie célébrée dans la poésie pastorale. La colombe d'Anacréon qui quitte le Tempé pour venir se poser sur la maison du poète en Calabre signifie, allégoriquement, que la poésie grecque classique, née en Asie Mineure (*Homère*), et de là passée au continent grec, a trouvé son digne héritier dans le poète albanais. Avec lui commence un nouveau cycle de poésie hellénique en terre latine, le premier cycle étant celui qu'*Andronicus* et *Ennius*, natifs de la Magna Graecia, inaugurèrent dans la littérature latine. La poésie hellénique »se réveille« avec le poète après des siècles de léthargie, ayant survécu au »gel« de l'oubli et aux vicissitudes de son transfert (les »flèches« décrochées contre la colombe dans son vol: le poète pense aux tracasseries infligées à l'émigration albanaise en Italie). — Mais la colombe volant sur les eaux est aussi une image biblique (le déluge, l'Ararat). Une théorie encore courante au XIX^e siècle assignait aux Albanais le Caucase comme terre d'origine. Il est très possible que *de Rada* fasse allusion à cette autre légende: son père était prêtre orthodoxe et sa famille était de lignée ecclésiastique (*Milosao* assume des fonctions sacerdotales au chant XV; le chœur l'acclame comme *figura Christi* au chant X).

12—13. Le réveil du héros à la vie nouvelle est en même temps la »découverte« de »la terre« et de »la mer« »dans la lumière de l'aube«. Cf. *Dante*: »L'alba vinceva l'ora mattutina/ che fuggia innanzi, sí che di lontano/ conobbi il tremolar de la marina« (*Purg.* I, 115—117). La similitude du vers 14 est dantesque: »luce/ come pupilla per letizia viva« (*Par.* II, 143—144).

18—26. C'est un matin d'été: le raisin n'est pas encore mûr, le lin est en fleur; mais le blé est déjà moissonné. Tableau de la vie paysanne dans ses travaux champêtres: promesse de satisfaire aux besoins humains élémentaires: nourriture (le blé), vêtements (le lin), avec en plus la joie de vivre (le vin).

27—30. L'accent sur la soeur est typiquement albanais: la soeur (»motër«, apparenté à »mater«) remplace souvent la mère (c'est le cas de la soeur de *Milosao*, chants XXVI et XXVIII).

31—35. L'image, sensuelle et païenne, présage la naissance de l'amour.

Canto I – German translation by Ch. Körner

Neue Eichen trug die Erde
neue Wasser im Meer
wurden blau im neuen Tag.
Doch die Taube von Anacreon
5 lebte noch in Tempe.

Zur Bergquelle flog sie eines Tages,
diesmal um nicht zurückzukehren.
Doch kein Schnee liess sie frieren,
kein Bogen vergoss ihr Blut,
10 immer weiter flog sie bis sie
mein weisses Haus erreichte.

Als das Meer und die Erde mit ihren Häusern
sich im Morgenlicht enthüllten
wie Augen, leuchtend und strahlend,
15 weckte sie mich,
mit ihren Schwingen an mein Fenster schlagend.

Ich sprang auf und schaute hinaus.
Halbreife Trauben
bedeckten unser Land.
20 Der blühende Flachs
den der Wind wiegte und verwebte
lächelte zum Wiegenlied.
Wie jene Blumen war der Himmel.

Ich schaute zu und vergass
25 die menschlichen Sorgen.

De Rada's "Milosao"

Unter den Garben sangen
die Ährenleser. Von fremder Erde
war ich zu meinen Schwestern gekommen,
und meine Mutter liess das Haus
30 von meinem Namen erschallen.

Freude durchflutete meinen Körper
wie ein Mädchen sie fühlt
des Nachts in ihrem Bett,
eine Wärme die ihre Brüste
35 schwellen lässt.

Canto VI – English translation and notes by A. Pipa

The snow falling on the sea
whitened the wings
of moorhens among the seaweed.
I long for sleep,
5 my body vanishes in the distance,
as a woman walking in the evening
through Morbella
hears the noise of the water-mills
and the barking of dogs vanishing
10 above Milone and sees in the vineyards
fires that blaze and flicker,
signs of enduring life.

Oh that my dark-haired girl
Would make my bed softly,
15 then spin in the twilight
humming a song!
I would forget
the sowings and the fountains
which nourish our life
20 lost under the snow,
forget the high-born lads
drumming loudly from Samranganate
toward the distant vineyards
as if saying: we protect you.

Arshi Pipa

25 I would fall asleep dreaming
that the two of us, hand in hand,
went through the fields, the homes of men
recognizing us at dawn
as the stars left.

30 And if my unloosed horse galloped
toward a group of startled women,
she alone among them
would seize the reins on the ground
and tame him with her beauty

35 by looking into his eyes,
then my sweating chest
she would wipe with her handkerchief,
blushing at being watched.

Not in silken sheets was born

40 my good-natured girl,
so in the glaring summer days
I am content with an abandoned cabin
fanned by the wind,
from where I can see the bright shore,

45 the mountain and the river.
There I long to hold in my arms
the one who holds my heart.

Romantic rêverie. The prince dreams of eloping with the beautiful girl who has cast a spell over him.

7, 10. Morbella is a locality on the eastern slope of Macchia's hills. Milone (μύλος "mill") is another site just outside Macchia on the road to San Cosmo Albanese, where the ruins of two water-mills are to be found.

17—24. The poet contrasts young nobility revelling in Samranganate (probably the name of an estate owned by an Italian lord) with peasants working in their vineyards or carrying their wheat bags to the watermills. "We protect you", referring to the feudal custom of protecting the poor and the weak, is ironical.

30—38. The detail of the horse subdued by the heroine's look is indicative of her magic charm, a motif developed in subsequent cantos (VII, XL). She has bewitched the hero, who will, for her sake, disobey his mother and neglect his patriotic duty.

Canto VI —

French translation by A. Prothin

La neige en tombant sur la mer
a blanchi les ailes
des poules d'eau parmi les al-
gues.
5 J'aspire au sommeil, mon corps
s'évanouit dans le lointain,
comme le bruit des moulins d'eau
et l'aboïement des chiens,
lorsqu'une femme monte
à Morbella, le soir,
10 et voit les feux qui brillent
dans les vignobles, signe
de vie pas encore éteinte.

Ô, si la fille aux cheveux châ-
tains
me faisait le lit tendrement,
15 et tissait au crépuscule
en fredonnant un air!
J'oublierais les jeunes seigneurs
les semences et les fontaines
qui alimentent la vie
20 perdues sous la neige,
j'oublierais les jeunes seigneurs
qui, battant le tambour à Sam-
rangate,
font résonner les distants vigno-
bles
comme pour dire: nous vous pro-
tégeons.

25 Je m'endormirais en rêvant
que nous allons tous les deux aux
champs
main dans la main, reconnus
par les maisons des hommes
à l'aube, quand les étoiles nous
quittent.

30 E si mon cheval detaché galopait
vers un groupe de femmes
effrayés,
elle seule
prendrait les rênes par terre,

Canto VI – German

translation by Ch. Körner

Der Schnee der auf das Meer fiel
bleichte die Flügel
der Moränen unter den Algen.
Ich verlange nach Schlaf,
5 mein Körper löst sich auf in der
Ferne.
Wie eine Frau, die abends durch
Morbella wandert,
dem Lärm der Wassermühlen
lauscht
und dem Gebell des Hundes der
10 über Milone entschwindet und
die in den Weingärten
die Feuer betrachtet, lodernd
und flackernd,
als Zeichen ewigen Lebens.

Oh machte doch mein dunkel-
haariges Mädchen
mein Bett so weich,
15 dann sich im Zwielight drehend
ein Lied vor sich summend!
Ich könnte vergessen
die Wurzeln und Quellen
die unser Leben nähren,
20 verloren unterm Schnee,
vergessen die hochwohlgeborenen
Kerle
die laut trommeln von Samran-
gate her
den fernen Weingärten zu,
wie um zu verkünden: wir be-
schützen euch.

25 Ich könnte schlafen und träumen
dass wir beide, Hand in Hand,
durch die Felder streiften, Heim-
stätten der Menschen,
die in der Dämmerung uns wahr-
nehmen
nachdem die Sterne verblichen.

30 Und wenn mein gezäumtes Pferd
galoppierte
auf eine Gruppe erstaunter
Frauen zu,
sie allein unter ihnen

Arshi Pipa

35 et le calmerait par sa beauté,
en le regardant dans les yeux;
puis avec son mouchoir elle
essuierait
ma poitrine en sueur,
rougissant d'être vue.

40 Ma bien-aimée au si bon naturel
n'est pas née dans des draps de
soie.
Moi, quand les jours d'été
éblouissent,
une cabane abandonnée me suf-
fit:
la brise l'évente,
de là je vois le rivage blanc,
45 la montagne et la rivière.
Là il me tarde de tenir dans mes
bras
celle qui tient mon cœur.

ergriffe die schleifenden Zügel
es mit ihrer Schönheit bezäh-
mend
35 indem sie in seine Augen blickte,
um dann meine schweissbe-
deckte Brust
mit ihrem Tuch abzuwischen,
errötend, wenn jemand sie beob-
achtet.

Nicht in seidenen Tüchern ward
sie geboren,
40 mein gutherziges Kind,
so dass ich an flimmerndheissen
Sommertagen
zufrieden mich gebe mit einem
einsamen Zimmer
vom Wind durchfächelt,
von wo aus ich die helle Küste
sehe,
45 die Berge und den Fluss.
Dort sehn ich mich in meinem
Armen zu halten
die, die mein Herz gefangen.

Canto XXIX – English translation and notes by A. Pipa

The rains are past, the North wind is fallen,
the fields and mountains are clothed in green.
As I watch you, spring, you seem an angel's path and I am
afraid.

5 Children unwitting of life's cruelty,
like lambs in the meadows,
smile at you.

The rose briars
shed their dew in the wind;
10 the drops fall on a girl's hair
wreathed with violets;
they fall on the neighbor's child
who plays in her lap.
She kisses him, blushing,
15 as she dreams of her own child
born of love.

Man tames the mares for riding,
plucks feathers from the birds

De Rada's "Milosao"

- to grace his head,
20 dries flowers like the North wind,
undoes acres of silkworms
to make himself a garment.
Happy if he could weave
the rays of the sun!
- 25 Spring adds to his wonderment:
flowers, white and yellow,
pendant and open,
lack only voice to speak to him.

Canto XXIX. Ode to spring.

1—7. The first two stanzas of this ode, so similar to an "idillio" by *Leopardi*, project unto a cosmic plane the theme of human sorrow lulled by hope. Spring conspiring with innocence to conceal "life's cruelty" is indeed a motif dear to the Italian poet.

8—16. The detail of the girl's kissing the neighbor's child and then "blushing" as she thinks of her own child after she marries, is the last touch in *De Rada's* vast picture of idyllic life in a Calabro-Albanian village.

17—24. The third stanza, of classical inspiration, was probably suggested by the second choral song in *Sophocles' "Antigone"*:

Man full of ingenuity
Entraps in folds of woven meshes
And leads away the tribe
Of flighty-purpos'd birds,
And the kindred of wild beasts,
And the ocean brood, whose home is in the waters.
With viles he tames
The mountain-beast that roams the moor:
And fastens, yoking him about the neck,
The long-maned steed and stubborn mountain-bull.
(transl. by *J. W. Donaldson*, 1868)

Canto XXIX – French translation by A. Prothin

- Après les pluies, le vent du nord a cessé,
champs et montagnes se revêtent de vert.
Printemps, tu ressembles au chemin
d'un ange et j'ai peur.
- 5 Les enfants, ne connaissant pas

Arshi Pipa

la cruauté du monde te sourient
comme les agneaux dans les prés.
Les rameaux de l'églantier laissent pleuvoir
la rosée au vent, les gouttes
10 tombent sur les cheveux d'une fille
couronnés de violettes,
sur l'enfant de la voisine
qu'elle balance sur ses genoux.
Elle l'embrasse et rougit
15 rêvant à son propre fils,
le fruit de son amour.
L'homme dompte les juments
pour les chevaucher, plume les oiseaux
pour parer sa tête,
20 sèche les fleurs comme le vent du nord,
détruit des acres de cocons
pour se faire un habit.
Heureux s'il pouvait tisser
les rayons du soleil!
25 Le printemps l'enchanté encore plus,
les fleurs, blanches et jaunes,
pendantes ou ouvertes;
il ne leur manque que la voix pour lui parler.

Canto XXIX. Ode au printemps.

1—16. La première partie de cette ode magnifique projette sur un plan cosmique le thème de la souffrance humaine soutenue par l'espoir. Le printemps conspire avec l'innocence pour cacher à l'homme, resté enfant, »la cruauté du monde«. L'image de la fille — peut-être celle que tourmente sa marâtre — qui tient l'enfant de la voisine comme s'il était le sien, est la dernière touche mise au vaste tableau de vie communale calabro-albanaise, inspiré d'un idéal de solidarité humaine qui est, sa coloration chrétienne mise à part, semblable à celui de *Leopardi* dans »La ginestra«.

17—28. La deuxième partie s'inspire de *Sophocle*:

L'homme, plein d'adresse, enveloppe, dans ses filets faits de cordes, la race des légers oiseaux et les bêtes sauvages et la génération marine de la mer; et il asservit par ses ruses la bête farouche des montagnes; et il met sous le joug le cheval chevelu et l'infatigable taureau montagnard, et il les contraint de courber le front (»Antigone«, chœur II; trad. par *Leconte de Lisle*).

De Rada's "Milosao"

Le poète albanais traite en romantique le thème classique de l'intelligence humaine qui asservit la nature, par ruse ou violence: la cruauté du monde est plus terrible chez l'homme, qui tue les agneaux aussi bien que les hommes. Intelligence n'est pas sagesse, et l'homme devrait, pour être vraiment heureux, apprendre le langage des fleurs: car ce sont elles qui savent »tisser les rayons du soleil«.

Canto XXX – English translation and notes by A. Pipa

The mountain wind has blown,
bringing down the oak's shade.
My blood flows in the river Vodhe.

Open my tent,
5 my warriors, that I may see
Scutari and my sister
at the window before me.

Nevermore shall I awake there
among flowers which the wind
10 moves in unending waves.

My companions will gather at night
in town by their hearths.

I have left them like a dream.

Canto XXX. Elegy of *Milosao's* death on a battlefield.

3. Vodhe is an imaginary river ("voda" means water in Serbo-Croatian).

4. The tent was woven by *Milosao's* mother, so that he could lead the Albanians against the Turks. The hero hesitated a long time, and his mother died heartbroken because of his inaction.

13. The oak tree has shed its leaves; the river flows into the sea, carrying the hero's blood. The longed-for death has finally come. The hero expires in the tent woven by his mother and sewn by his sister — a tent become a shroud. A last salute to the flowers, a farewell to his far-away sister, and *Milosao* sinks back into the sleep from which the dove had awakened him, thus completing the "dream" of his life.

25—28. Unlike *Sophocles* who praises man for his conquest of nature, the Albanian poet draws attention to the destruction of nature by civilized man. Ingenuity is not wisdom. Man should learn the language of flowers, for it is flowers and plants that "know" the secret of how to "weave" sunrays.

Canto XXX – French translation by A. Prothin

Le vent de la montagne a soufflé.
faisant tomber l'ombre du chêne
on sang coule dans la rivière Vodhe.
Ouvrez ma tente, mes soldats,
5 que je puisse voir
Scutari et ma sœur
penchée à la fenêtre.
Là, jamais plus je ne me réveillerai
parmi les fleurs que le vent
10 balance en vagues sans fin.
Le soir mes compagnons retourneront
au village près du foyer.
Je les ai quittés comme un rêve.

Canto XXX. Elégie de *Milosao* mourant sur le champ de bataille.

1—13. Le chêne s'est dépouillé de sa couronne, la rivière («voda» en slave signifie eau) porte le sang du héros à la mer. La mort tant désirée est finalement venue. Le héros expire sous la tente — son linceul — tissée par sa mère, cousue par sa soeur. Un dernier salut aux fleurs, un adieu à la soeur lointaine. Et *Milosao* sombre à nouveau dans le sommeil d'où la colombe l'avait éveillé, ayant vécu le «rêve» de sa vie.

Canto XXIX – German translation by Ch. Körner

Verflogen ist der Regen, der Nordwind gefallen,
Felder und Berge sind gekleidet in Grün.
Ich sehe Dich, Frühling, einem Engelspfad gleichend,
und fühle Furcht in mir.
5 Kinder, der Grausamkeit des Lebens nicht bewusst,
wie Lämmer auf den Wiesen weidend,
lächeln Dir zu.
Die Rosensträucher
vergiessen ihren Tau im Wind;
10 die Tropfen fallen auf des Mädchens Haar,
mit Veilchen geschmückt.
Sie fallen auf des Nachbarn Kind
das in ihrem Schosse spielt.
Errötend küsst sie es,
15 von ihrem eigenen, aus Liebe geborenen,
träumend.

De Rada's "Milosao"

Der Mensch zähmt wilde Stuten
und pflückt der Vögel Federn,
sein Haupt zu zieren,
20 trocknet Blumen wie der Nordwind,
vernichtet Tausende von Seidenraupen
für seine Kleider.
Wie glücklich, könnte er
die Sonnenstrahlen weben!
25 Frühling lässt ihn staunen.
Blüten, weiss und gelb,
sich öffnend und neigend,
möchten gern zu ihm sprechen.

Canto XXX – German translation by Ch. Körner

Von den Bergen bläst der Wind,
den Schatten der Eiche mit sich tragend.
Mein Blut fließt in den Fluss Vodhe.
Öffnet mein Zelt,
5 Krieger, damit ich
Scutari und meine Schwester
am Fenster vor mir sehe.
Niemals werd' ich mehr erwachen
unter Blumen, die der Wind
10 in unendlichen Wellen wiegt.
Meine Freunde werden sich des Nachts
in der Stadt um ihre Kamine sammeln.
Ich habe sie wie im Traum verlassen.

Arshi Pipa

De Rada's Alphabet

Standard Albanian	»Collezione« 1834	Milosao A 1836	Milosao B 1847	Milosao C 1873	Serafina C 1897	IPA
a	a	a	a	a	a	a
b	b	b	b	b	b	b
c	z zz	z zz	z zz	z zz	z zz	ts
ç	c	c	c	c	c	tʃ
d	d	d	d	d	d	d
dh	ð	ð	dh	ð	ð	ð
e	e	e	e	e	e	e
ë	y v	y v	y v	ē ë	ē ë	ə
f	f	f	f	f	f	f
g	γ gk	gx gk	gc gch	gc gch	gc gch	ɣ
gj	γh	γχ γγ	gk	gj	gj	ʃ
h	gh h	gh h	gh g h	gh g h	gh g h	h
i	i	i	i	i	i	i
j	j	j	j	j	j	j
k	c ck k	c ch	c ch	c ch	c ch	k
l	l	l	l	l	l	l
ll	~	~	~	~	~	ɫ
m	m	m	m	m	m	m
n	n	n	n	n	n	n
nj	gn	gn	gn	nj	ñ	ɲ
o	o	o	o	o	o	o
p	p	p	p	p	p	p
q	x	x	k	x	kj	c
r	r	r	r	r	r	r
rr	rr	rr	rr	rr	rr	R
s	s ʃ	s	s	s	s	s
sh	sc	ç	sh	sh	š	ʃ
t	t	t	t	t	t	t
th	θ	θ	θ	θ	θ	θ
u	u	u	u	u	u	u
v	v	v	v	v	v	v
x	z	z	z	z	z	dz
xh	g	g	g	g	g	dʒ
y	~	~	~	~	~	y
z	ç	ç	zh	ç	ç	z
zh	~	~	~	~	~	ʒ
~	gl	λ	lh	lh lj	lj	λ
~	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	ç
~	x	x	x	x	x	ks